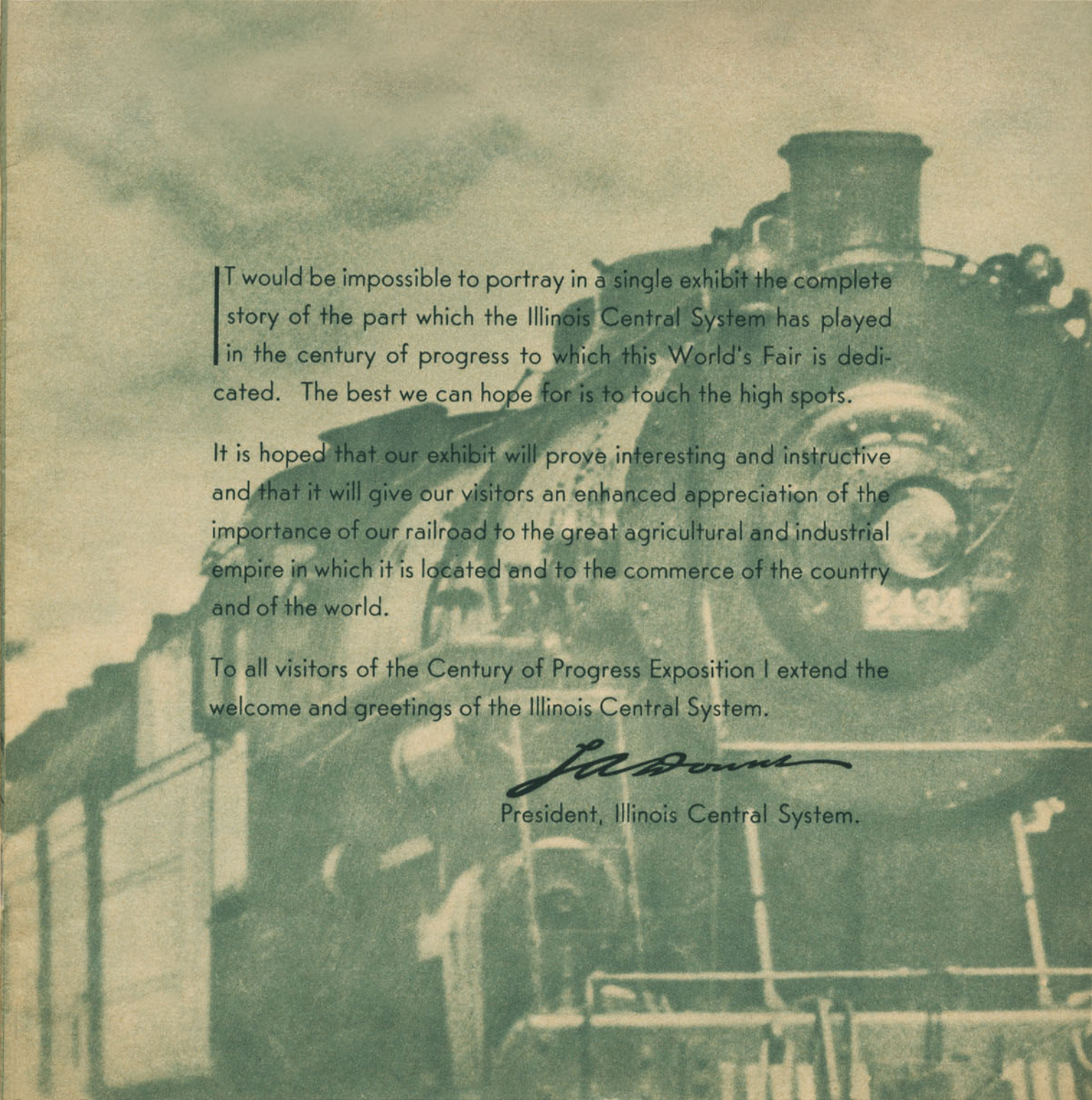






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It would be impossible to portray in a single exhibit the complete story of the part which the Illinois Central System has played in the century of progress to which this World's Fair is dedicated. The best we can hope for is to touch the high spots.

It is hoped that our exhibit will prove interesting and instructive and that it will give our visitors an enhanced appreciation of the importance of our railroad to the great agricultural and industrial empire in which it is located and to the commerce of the country and of the world.

To all visitors of the Century of Progress Exposition I extend the welcome and greetings of the Illinois Central System.

J. A. Brown
President, Illinois Central System.

A GIANT semisphere occupies the entire north wall of the exhibit. Color and light combine to illustrate the extensive influence of the Illinois Central System upon the welfare and happiness of millions of people.

Animated lines indicate how thousands of miles of steel rails bind together hundreds of villages, towns and cities and how through its connections the Illinois Central System serves the nation and the world.



The relief map and diorama, by synchronized light, motion and sound, illustrate the lecture which is printed on the opposite page.



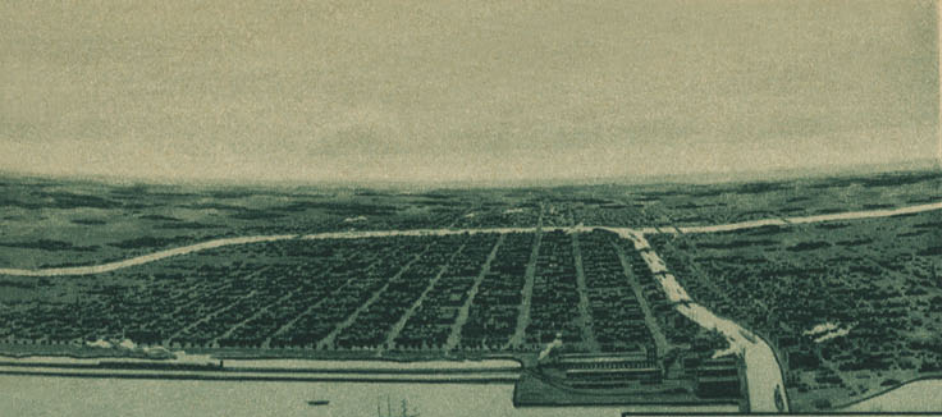
A CENTURY ago the Mississippi Valley was the western frontier of American civilization. The northern section of this valley was, for the most part, an untamed wilderness, inhabited by Indians and a few adventurous fur traders and frontiersmen. Under primitive methods of transportation then available the rapid development of this territory was impossible. It awaited the coming of the railroads — the great builders of empire. Eighty-two years ago the Illinois Central Railroad received its charter for building 705 miles of railroad in Illinois. Completed within five years, it took rank then, as the longest railroad in the world.

At first confined within a single state, this pioneer railroad soon stretched forth to play a major part in the development of the great Mississippi Valley. Today, its arms of steel link together in their gigantic embrace sixteen great states within whose borders throbs the economic heart of the nation. Railway transportation was the key to the rapid development of this territory which soon became the world's richest agricultural empire. Today the Illinois Central System represents an investment of more than 800 millions of dollars. If its thousands of miles of track were so arranged they would form seventeen railroads abreast, extending from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Its sixteen hundred stations, each serving a city, town or farming community, are illuminated on this map in proportion to their size. The wealth of this great empire springs not only from agriculture, but also from its rich forests and mineral resources and from its thousands of manufacturing plants. The numerous manufacturing cities make this one of the greatest industrial regions of the world. Its superb central location is evidenced by the fact that within this territory are located the nation's center of population—the nation's center of agricultural production — and the nation's center of manufacturing activity. Here, all economic factors combine to promote industry and commerce. The Illinois Central System is an east and west railroad, and the leading north and south railroad of the country. One cannot cross the United States

by land without intersecting its rails. No other one railroad links Chicago, the metropolis of the Middle West, with New Orleans, the great Mississippi Valley port.

In the winter, while the North is blanketed in snow, the Illinois Central carries thousands of vacation seekers to the nation's winter playgrounds. Leaving cold and care behind, one is transferred over night to the sunny southland of song and story. Louisiana, with its picturesque bayous, New Orleans, City of Romance, the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast, exotic Florida, tropical Cuba, Mexico, the alluring Caribbean, all are within easy reach by the Illinois Central System. Its wide climatic range results in a great diversity of products which help to feed and clothe untold millions of people in other parts of this country and in foreign lands. Here are produced in abundance those great staples that supply the world's basic needs. . . . The northern states embrace the hay and dairy belt. . . . Extending across Iowa and Illinois is the greatest corn belt of the world, with its allied grains and livestock. . . . To the south extends the corn and winter wheat belt, embracing Kentucky, which also leads the nation in tobacco production. . . The cotton belt spans the southern states. . . The Gulf Coast and Florida constitute the subtropical crop belt with its rice, sugar cane and citrus fruits.

Nature has dealt bountifully with this region. There is enough coal in the sixteen states served directly by the Illinois Central System to supply the world's population for centuries to come. The mineral wealth of this territory is immeasurable; iron, petroleum, lead, zinc, gypsum, limestone and numerous other rich deposits lay in untold quantities beneath its soil. The diversified traffic that flows in unending stream over the Illinois Central System typifies the nation's wealth. This railroad serves every basic industry—agriculture, forestry, mining and manufacturing. Its traffic flows in all directions. Through its numerous connecting lines, it serves the entire nation and through its steamship connections it links every town and city in its far-flung territory with foreign lands.



CHICAGO 1856

ADORNING the walls of the exhibit are three mural paintings showing progressive stages of Chicago's lake front development — one in 1856, when the Illinois Central Railroad entered the city on a wooden trestle driven into the bed of the lake; another in 1893, at the time of the first Chicago World's Fair; and the third showing the lake front as it is today.

Chartered in 1851, eighteen years after the village of Chicago was incorporated, the Illinois

Central has been closely identified with the city's growth for more than eighty years. Chicago was then a city of 30,000 inhabitants. The railroad acquired by purchase the lake frontage and riparian rights between Fiftieth Street and Park Row and between Randolph Street and the Chicago River. For the privilege of entering the city along the lake shore, the company assumed the expense of building and maintaining a break-water protection between Randolph Street and the southern city limits.

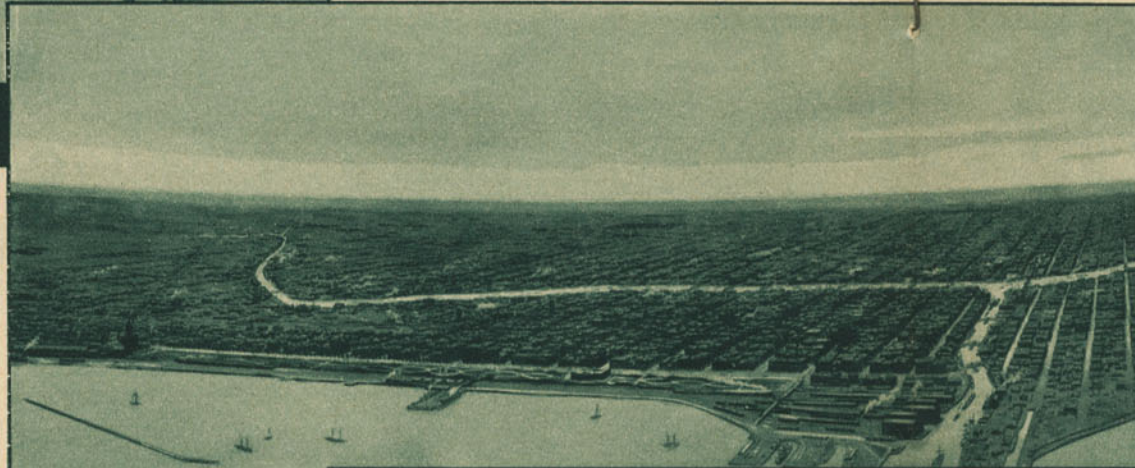
Illinois Central co-operated in the consummation of this plan and donated to the city its valuable riparian rights along four miles of lake shore south of Park Row to enable the South Park Commission to construct the lake front park upon which have been erected the Field Museum of Natural History, the John G. Shedd Aquarium, the Adler Planetarium, Soldiers' Field Stadium and A Century of Progress Exposition.

For nearly seventy years the Illinois Central continued to maintain, at its own expense, the break-water along several miles of lake frontage. Shortly after the great fire that laid Chicago to ashes in 1871 the trestle and the lagoon between Michigan Avenue and the railway right-of-way were filled in with debris from the fire-swept areas.

The Illinois Central also entered upon an extensive program for the modernization of its Chicago terminal facilities. This included the reconstruction of station, yard and shop facilities, the separation of grades, the construction of retaining walls and pedestrian subways, the reconstruction of signal and interlocker facilities and the electrification of hundreds of miles of tracks in the Chicago terminal district.

As Chicago grew to a great metropolis there developed among its leaders a civic consciousness that found expression in the "Chicago Beautiful Plan" for the development of an extensive system of parks, boulevards, beaches and playgrounds along many miles of lake shore. The

The conversion of suburban passenger service from steam to electric operation, completed in 1926, provided Chicago with a local transportation service unsurpassed in America for speed, comfort and cleanliness and represented a major contribution to lake front improvement.



CHICAGO 1893

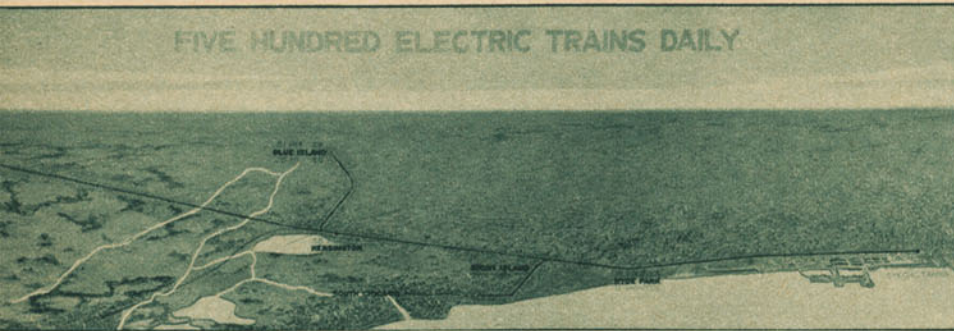


CHICAGO 1933



Other Murals

Towering skyscrapers, huge buildings, spacious parks, busy industries and speeding trains express the spirit of Chicago — gigantic, pulsating metropolis of Mid-America.



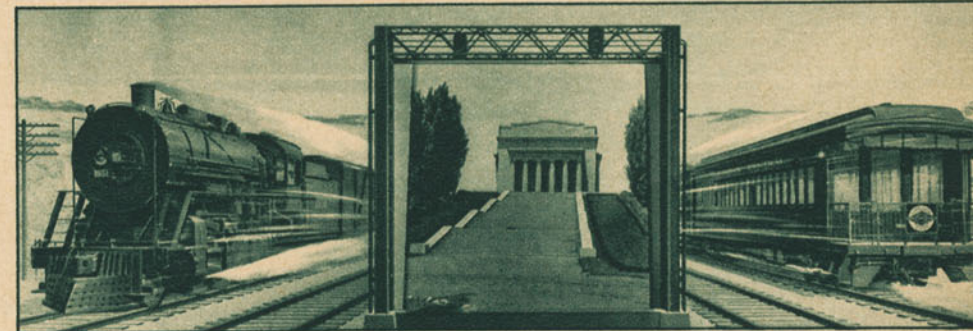
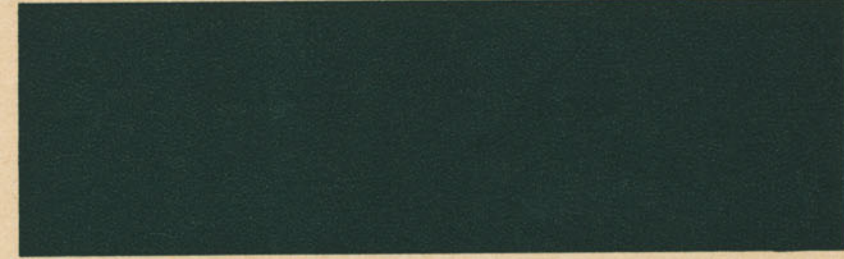
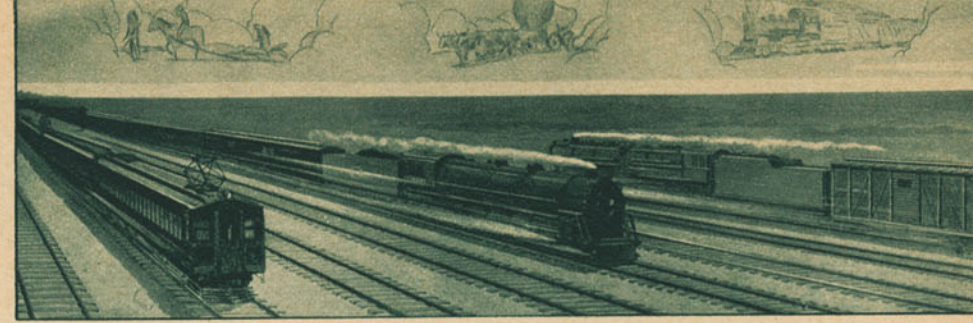
Hundreds of swift electric passenger trains carry throngs of commuters daily to and from the Chicago loop business district.



Ships of the seven seas receive and discharge passengers and cargo daily along the famous "Crescent" of New Orleans, the mid-west's gateway to Latin America and the Orient.

Other Murals

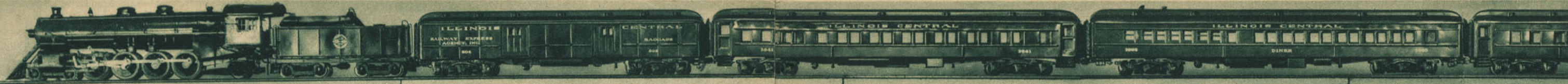
Spanning the vast distances of the continent, linking city with city, coast with coast, mine with factory, the railroads are indispensable to our modern civilization.



From northern lakes to southern seas the Illinois Central route presents an ever-changing panorama to the traveler.



The fleet of the Illinois Central owned Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah plies between Savannah, New York and Boston.



THE one hundred years of history of the Illinois Central System is too full of romance and human interest to be included in so brief a story as this booklet tells. But a fleeting glimpse of the past may be given. Steam locomotion was in its infancy and most of the Mississippi Valley was a wilderness when the oldest lines of the Illinois Central System were projected. Some of its lines in the South were under construction a full century ago. Primitive and crude as these pioneer lines were, they proved to be a vast improvement over former methods of land transportation. By 1840 four of these pioneer railroads were in service, and by the outbreak of the Civil War more than 2200 miles of railroad now embraced in the Illinois Central System were in operation.

As early as 1832 a "Central Railroad," to penetrate the heart of Illinois and open its fertile prairies for settlement, had been proposed. The "Central Railroad" project became the backbone of Illinois' ambitious internal improvement plan of 1837, of which Abraham Lincoln, then a member of the state assembly, was a leading sponsor. During the

next decade several unsuccessful attempts were made to build the railroad.

Finally, in 1850, Senator Stephen A. Douglas, supported by Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, John Calhoun and others, obtained a congressional land grant to aid in the construction of the railroad. In February, 1851, the Illinois Central Railroad Company received its charter to construct a 705-mile railroad from Cairo to East Dubuque, with a "branch line" to Chicago.

As the rails were flung across the prairies in the early 1850s settlers flocked in, farms were opened, towns sprang up, land values mounted, industry took root and the foundations were laid for the great agricultural and industrial development which has since taken place.

The building of the Illinois Central across the virgin prairies, at a time when western railway development was in its infancy, was a stupendous undertaking, for its day—an undertaking that engaged the attention of the entire country and attracted many prominent men to its standard.

Abraham Lincoln was one of its early attor-

neys. Robert Rantoul, Jr., of Boston, successor to Daniel Webster in the United States Senate, Gouverneur Morris, Jonathan Sturgis and Franklin Haven, prominent business men of New York and Boston, were among its incorporators. General George B. McClellan was chief engineer and vice-president of the company. General A. E. Burnside, General Grenville M. Dodge, General Mason Brayman and General Nathaniel P. Banks, all of Civil War fame, were among its early officers and employees.

During the Civil War, the Illinois Central proved of inestimable value in the movement of troops, ordnance and supplies to the scenes of military operations in the lower valley.

Following the Civil War the Illinois Central entered upon a program of expansion. Its operations were extended to Sioux City in 1870; to New Orleans in 1882; to Madison, Cedar Rapids and Sioux Falls in 1888; to Memphis in 1889; to Vicksburg and Natchez in 1892; to St. Louis in 1895; to Paducah and Louisville in 1897; to Omaha, Peoria and Evansville in 1900; to Birmingham in 1908. In 1909 the Central of Georgia Railway, with its subsidiary, the

Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah, were acquired. In 1911 the system's operations were extended to Indianapolis, in 1925 to Gulfport, and in 1926 to Shreveport and Meridian.

Throughout its history the Illinois Central has centered its attention upon the agricultural and industrial development of its territory. The Illinois Central was the first railroad in the United States to conduct an extensive advertising campaign to promote the colonization of its territory. It pioneered in the use of coal as locomotive fuel and in the shipment of perishable fruits under refrigeration. It has been active for many years in establishing manufacturing industries in its territory. It has encouraged modern farming methods, diversification, dairying and reforestation.

Above all, the Illinois Central System seeks to promote the interests of its territory by providing its patrons with efficient, adequate and dependable transportation service. That it has succeeded in these efforts is evidenced by the fact that it enjoys in a marked degree the good will of its patrons and of the communities which it serves.



