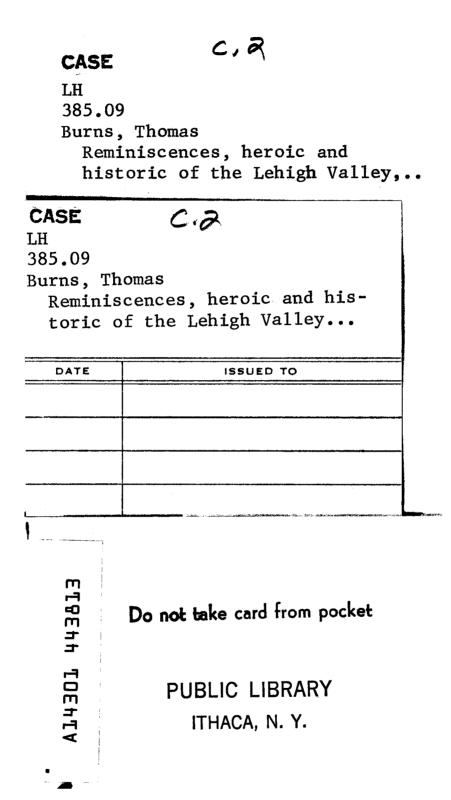
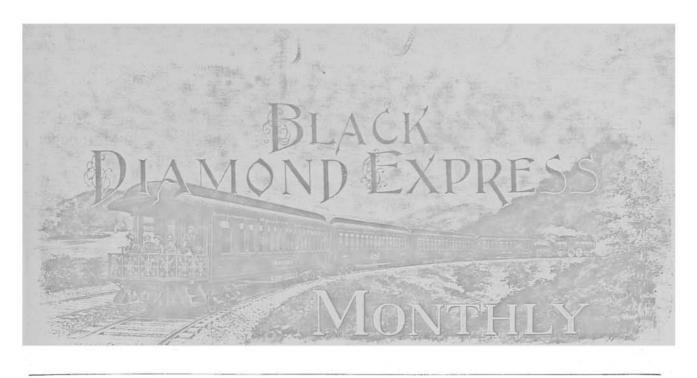


NAVIGATING A SEA OF RESOURCES

Title:	Reminiscences, heroic and historic, of early days of the Lehigh Valley System in southern and central New York.
Author:	Burns, Thomas W.
Call number:	LH 385.09B
Publisher:	Photocopy of Black Diamond Express Monthly, January, 1905.
Owner:	Ithaca - Tompkins County Public Library
Assigned Branch:	Ithaca - Tompkins County Public Library (TCPL)
Collection:	Local History (LH)
Material type:	Book
Number of pages:	19

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Vol. IX.

JANUARY, 1905.

No. 1.

REMINISCENCES, HEROIC AND HISTORIC, OF EARLY DAYS OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY SYSTEM IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL NEW YORK.

A glance at the last page of the cover of this magazine will show a network in miniature of the railroads known as the Lehigh Valley System. It extends from Manhattan and Perth Amboy through New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York to Buffalo on Lake Erie, to North Fair Haven on Lake Ontario, and to Camden near the Adirondacks. Some world-trotter has christened its route through the mountains and valleys of Pennsylvania-"' The Switzerland of America." Another has named its route through the Lake Region of New York "The Killarney of America"-titles that exhaust the language of scenic and geographical comparison. The lands over which "a through passenger" rides in a Lehigh Valley coach are both the highest and the lowest east of the Rocky Mountains. The lakes and streams that line its routes supply waters to the rivers that empty into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, New York, Delaware and

Chesapeake Bays, and the Gulf of Mexico. It is all historic territory.

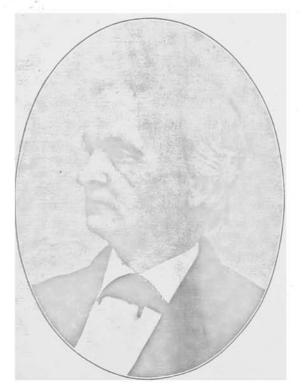
It is the early history of the Lehigh Valley roads in this "Lake Region" that begin at the New York and Pennsylvania State Line, and radiate in various northerly directions that I select as a companion for the brief but intensely interesting chapter relating to the opening of the original Lehigh Valley Railroad published in these columns last May.

These New York branches were chartered between 1866 and 1872, and were often changed as they were extended and developed. Originally they were: The Southern Central Railroad, the Cayuga Lake Railroad, the Ithaca & Athens Railroad, the Geneva & Ithaca Railroad, the Ithaca & Cortland Railroad and the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad. The Southern Central was opened to traffic in December, 1869, from Owego to Auburn. Its chief promoters and builders were Thomas C. Platt, of Owego; Jeremiah W. Dwight, of Dryden; Chauncev P. Rich, of Richford; Daniel H. Marsh, of Groton, and J. Lewis Grant, of Auburn. and it connected with the Lehigh Valley

Railroad at Waverly over the Erie tracks from Owego.

Otis E. Wood, of Ithaca, first proposed the Ithaca & Cortland R. R. He was a brother-in-law of Ezra Cornell, who contributed his approval and support. Edward S. Esty, Charles M. Titus and O. B. Curran, of Ithaca; H. P. Goodrich, of Cortland, and Gen. William L. Burt, of Boston (a native of Ithaca), joined Mr. Wood in his work. The road was chartered in 1869 and they obtained the consent of adjoining towns to bond for the road. The struggle was severe, but successful, for the railroad fever had taken firm hold of the community.

Ezra Cornell was so profoundly interested in the development of his university that he personally took up the work of the road-bed contractors who, financially distressed, had abandoned their partly completed work of construction. He invested in this road about \$900,000, only \$7,000 of which was repaid to him. Otis Wood made heroic efforts to push the road to Cortland, and he, too, made personal sacrifices and to-



O. B. CURRAN.

day is proud of the part he performed in the enterprise.

The first time-table issued or published by this railroad appeared in local papers, this being a fac-simile of one in the *Ithaca Journal*, January 3, 1871:

 "RAIL ROAD to ITHACA! and CORNELL UNIVERSITY. Cars leave Auburn for Ithaca over the Southern Central R.R. at 8.30 A.M. and 3.45 P.M. DAILY SUNDAYS EXCEPTED. Fare from Auburn, including carriage to Hotels and private houses in Ithaca, \$1.75. Freight delivered without charge in all narrow guage cars. M. L. WOOD, SUPT. ITHACA & CORTLAND R. R. 	_		
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Itilaca January 1st, 1871.		Ithaca January 1st, 1871.''	

Not a word or figure relating to the departure of any train from, nor arrival at Ithaca, nor any stopping place on the Ithaca & Cortland Road; nor of the time of connection with the Southern Central at Freeville. The first two lines contain the whole story and give expression to Ezra Cornell's ambition; a railroad to Ithaca and his university, to bring passengers to, not from, Ithaca and Cornell. It was not of much moment how they should leave Ithaca, nor when. Ezra Cornell probably prepared that first schedule for publication.

The depot was a 15 x 20 ft. shanty erected near the present site of the Armory on the Cornell campus, on a wooded and desolate plateau 450 feet above, and a mile from the village proper. Even the University was in its infancy, its doors having first opened to students in October, 1868.

The Ithaca & Cortland Railroad was nicknamed "The Shoo Fly" for many

Ithaca & Athens R. R

1 All Conce

185

years. After a very brief period of operation this advertisement appeared in the village press :

"TRAFFIC ON THE ITHACA & CORT-LAND R. R. is discontinued. Our locomotive, the AMHERST, is disabled. Due notice will be given when it returns from the repair shops ready again for service."

The road was then finished enough to be opened to Freeville, ten miles from Ithaca and eleven

from Cortland, where it made connection with the Southern Central. But in view of other railroads then being built in and around I thacait was a grand achievement, and a promise of grander and greater, for Southern and Central New York.

The construction of the road from Ithaca to Elmira, and from Cortland to Canastota, was a repetition of the construction of the road to Cortland, with Joseph Rodbourn, of Breeseport, Chemung County, and Sydney Fairchild, of

Cazenovia, added to the list of active and influential promoters and builders: O. B. Curran, Ezra Cornell, Otis Wood, General Burt and H. P. Goodrich. It was chartered in 1872 as the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad and included the Ithaca & Cortland road. It is now the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Branch of the Lehigh Valley R. R.

The charter of the Ithaca & Athens

Railroad was granted in 1870. To the public generally and to Ithaca in particular it was the most important and most popular of them all. It was to be a direct and natural continuation of the Lehigh Valley Railroad and promised the most extensive benefits to Ithaca and its vicinity. Its leading promoters and builders were Lafayette L. Treman,

Leonard Treman, Chauncey L. Grant. Ezra Cornell and George McChain, of Ithaca, Amos Hixon, of Van Etten, John A. Nichols, of Spenand er, Col. Charles Wells, of Athens. They obtained the vote of various towns for bonding, and although much longer than the original Ithaca & Cortland, its construction was more rapid. LafayetteL. Treman was chosen secretary. He was a very popular merchant. successful industrialorganizer and distinguished banker. During the winter of 1870

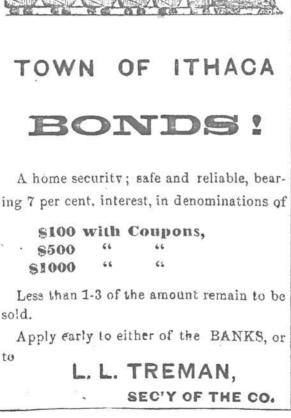
the winter of 1870 and 1871 above advertisement appeared in the *Ithaca Journal*.

In September, 1871, the following appeared in the same paper:

"ITHACA & ATHENS R. R. CO.

At the request of the Company's directors a train for passengers and freight will leave Ithaca every morning at 8 o'clock and arrive at Athens at 11 o'clock ; returning, leaving Athens every afternoon at 5 o'clock, arriving at Ithaca at 7.45 o'clock while the road is being constructed.

C. W. CHURCH Supt for Contractors,"



The first passenger train that passed over the Ithaca & Athens Railroad was run under peculiar conditions. The president of the company, Chauncey L. Grant, and Secretary Treman, inspired by the prospects of an early completion of the road, authorized E. M. Treman, a son of the secretary, to compose and issue this invitation :

"ITHACA & ATHENS R. R. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY. ITHACA, July 20, 1871.

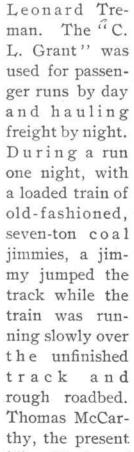
You are invited to become one of the passengers to ride in the first train that will run from Ithaca to Athens and return next week, Wednesday. It will be a jubilee train. This will pass you free.

Yours, etc. L. L. TREMAN,

Secretary "

The train was made up of coaches loaned by President Asa Packer of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. The contractors refused their consent to the running of the train, but the company disregarded the objection of the contractors. Men were stationed by the contractors at the switches along the road with instructions to run the already entered into contentions that later resulted in the contractors suing the company for \$500,000, the balance due upon the construction contract. General H. A. Dowe and his partner, B. G. Ferris, of Ithaca, were attorneys of record for the company, and Judge Maynard,of Williamsport, Pa., as counsel, tried the case for them in the court house in Towanda, Pennsylvania. It was a long trial, but before it was submitted for decision the contractors settled for \$50,000.

The first passenger and freight depot of the Ithaca and Athens road was a 10 x 16 feet shanty. Its first locomotive was named after its president, Chauncey L. Grant, its second one for its director,



EZRA CORNELL.

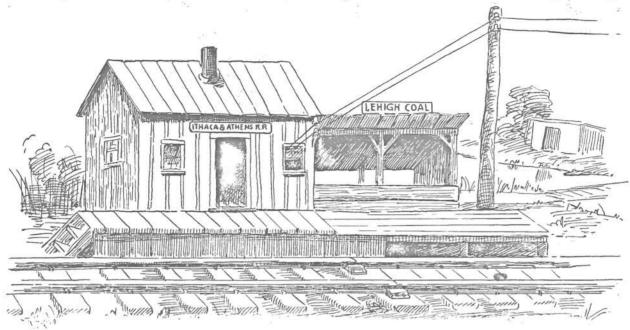
train on the side tracks and prevent it from going over the road. But a posse on the train forced the men away from the switches and the trip was made in safety to the great satisfaction of all who were on the train.

The company and the contractors had

Superintendent of Public Works of Ithaca and former Track-Master of the New York branches of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, was conductor of the coal train. No tool, rope, chain, bar nor thing was on the train that could be used to replace the derailed coal car

on the track. No tarmnouse was in sight. Necessity and wit furnished a remedy. The train had been descending a hill. The locomotive, under Conductor McCarthy's command, hauled the cars officials of the road, who had appointed him their first track-master.

During the trial, the cross-examiner for the contractors displayed his knowledge of railroad construction by attempt-



+ FIRST COAL, FREIGHT AND PASSENGER DEPOT, ITHACA & ATHENS R. R.

in front of the derailed car farther down the hill, yanking the car, bit by bit, a short distance with them. The cars behind it were not moved until it was alone and at a safe distance behind the forward part of the train. The rear jimmies were then "cut loose" and started, with brakemen aboard, to ram the lone car They sped down and off the track. struck it at the lucky angle and knocked it off the track down the embankment into the "ditch." The rammers kept the track and were halted by the brakes. Conductor McCarthy, who was congratulated upon his inventive genius, made up his train again and proceeded to Ithaca.

Mr. McCarthy had been a foreman for the contractors and knew how they had performed their contract in constructing the road. This knowledge he used for the benefit of his new employers, the ing to prove by Mr. McCarthy, who was testifying as a witness, that both ends of an iron rail were spiked to one tie. He contended that such must have been the manner of spiking rails. The presiding judge, with smiling face, assured him that he would not believe Mr. McCarthy if he made such a statement under oath. —The cross-examiner doubtless meant that two ends of two rails must have been spiked to one tie.

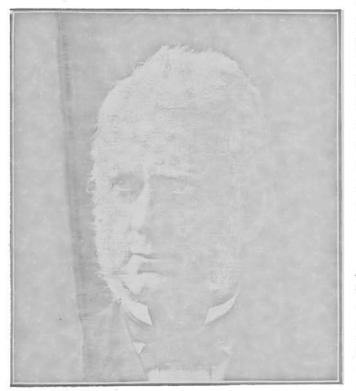
The company's witnesses on the trial, John Haden, who had been a water-boy in the employment of the contractors, and Mr. McCarthy, testified that the grade-stakes had been manipulated, unknown to the company's civil engineers, for the contractors, so that the roadbed was constructed on an average of nearly six inches lower than the grade named in the contract and fixed by the gradestakes of the surveyors, but that the grade of the bridges was not changed by the contractors. This was carried on from East Waverly to Ithaca. Haden

[†] From a pen sketch made for this article by Jason P. Merrill, the first railroad telegrapher stationed at Ithaca.

#2594

testified that he cut notches in the stakes six and eight inches above the surveyors' notches and drove the stakes deeper in the ground the same distance. The contractors answered that they did not know the grade had been changed by their own or any other men.

About the time of the running of the "Jubilee Train" on the Ithaca & Athens Railroad, the contracts were awarded for the construction of the roadbeds of the



JEREMIAH W. DWIGHT.

Geneva & Ithaca and the Cayuga Lake Railroads.

The Legislature granted a charter for a railroad from Ithaca to Geneva in 1832. Ebenezer Mack and other Ithacans procured it for the self-evident purpose of extending their Ithaca & Owego Railroad toward Buffalo, but that Ithaca & Geneva road was never graded. Mr. Mack was giving his attention to the construction of railroads from Owego to the Hudson River at the base of the Catskill Mountains, in Green County, and TO NEW YORK BY ANOTHER ROUTE, THE

Geneva & Ithaca Railroad became, as intended, an extension of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, forty years later. Mr. Mack was elected to the State Senate in 1833, and served as Chairman of the Committee on Railroads until 1838. He proposed and, against great opposition, by Chairman Yonng of the Committee on Banks, and many other financiers, carried through both branches of the Legislature and obtained for it the ex-

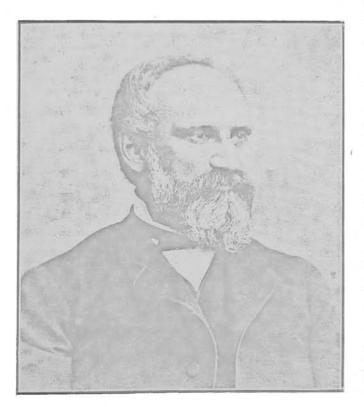
ecutive approval, a bill giving the credit and guaranty of the State for \$3,000,000 to aid in building the Erie Railroad, during the panic that followed President Andrew Jackson's battle with the banks. Senator Mack advocated the construction of railroads to develop Southern New York as the Erie Canal was developing Northern New York, and to secure the fast freight traffic of the great West for New York common carriers.

He was founder of the *Ithaca Journal* (1816) and the ablest and most influential Democratic editor west of the Hudson River, and his paper was a powerful advocate of railroad development in general. He was an industrial organizer, a statesman, an eloquent debater, a crafty politician and leader of his party in

the Legislature. Ill health prevented him from becoming governor of the State, and he refused the portfolio of State in President VanBuren's cabinet for the same reason. His memory is worthy of special regard in railroad centers forever. He retired from public life in 1838 and, ten years later, passed away, aged 57. His last years were devoted to the quiet and pleasant pursuit of agriculture and literature in a magnificent residence which he erected high above Ithaca and which gave him unobstructed view of the tablelands, valleys, Lake and streamsthat are famous the

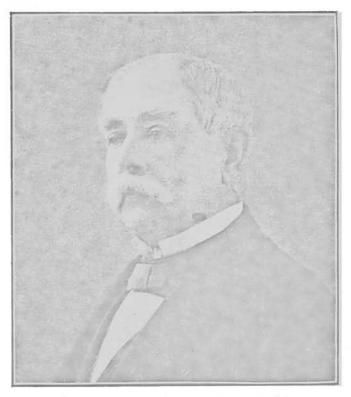
world over. His daughter was married Philadelphia and convinced the most Lafayette L. Treman. successful bridge companies in that city

Charles M. Titus, Ezra Cornell, John Rumsey, of Ithaca; Nelson Noble, of Trumansburg; R. R. Steele, of Romulus, and a lawyer named McDonald, of Geneva, were chief promoters and builders of the Geneva & Ithaca Railroad, chartered in 1870. President Titus was an enthusiast and an influential citizen, but this railroad becoming involved in the general railroad and financial distress preceding Black Friday, before it was half built, proposed to his directors to construct the bridges over its many gulfs and ravines with the bonds of the company. The directors ridiculed the proposition as impossible. They had almost decided, like the Sodus Bay directors, to abandon further work on the road, but he cheered their sunken hopes by saying: "It will cost you nothing to let me try it. Only pass a resolution giving me authority." The resolution was passed. He went to



OTIS E, WOOD

Philadelphia and convinced the most successful bridge companies in that city that the industrial interests of Pennsylvania were to be among the chief bene-



LAFAVETTE L. TREMAN.

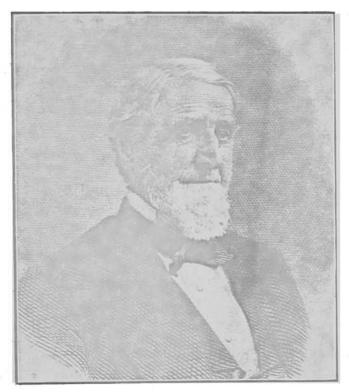
ficiaries of the line that was being extended from Athens to Geneva, and that they must soon find terminals at the Great Lakes. "We never have taken railroad bonds in payment for our bridges," they answered his apparently audacious proposition, "but we will do so for you." They constructed the bridges and accepted bonds of the road for payment. The bridge companies, as creditors, were the leading bidders for the road against Asa Packer when Receiver Wilbur, of Waverly, sold it in front of the Tompkins House in Ithaca. Their bid was \$110,000 and his \$100,000. They withdrew their bid and bluff and Packer made a new bid for \$50,000 and, it being the only bid left standing, he was given the roads and paid cash for them to the receiver, on the spot.

President Titus, as an individual, purchased the new passenger coaches operated on-his road, as the company could not, but he sold them later to the Lehigh Valley R. R.

The first locomotive constructed for the road was named "Charles M. Titus," and he was so admired by the new owners of the roads that he was elected vicepresident, Robert A. Packer being president, after their sales by the receiver and their consolidation; but he had more

railroad experience than he desired and declined to accept the position. He had also been a director of the Ithaca & Cortland road, and like Ezra Cornell, he had contributed his full share of money and patriotism to the development of the railroads centering in and around Ithaca and retired from the railroad business. The Cayuga Lake R. R. chartered in 1867, was built close to the

east shore of the lake for thirty-eight miles, and the roadbed was washed out by the waves, mile after mile, annually, in the spring, which caused long delays in general traffic in addition to ruinous expense for refilling the bed and relaying the new track. The road soon ceased to meet its financial obligations, foreclosure followed, and the road was purchased at a forced sale by Lehigh Valley financiers, and added to the Lehigh Valley System. One small depot, near the Cavuga Inlet, was then made to serve three consolidated roads: The Geneva & Ithaca, the Ithaca & Athens and the Cayuga Lake. The Cayuga Lake roadbed was then given permanent protection by its new owners who constructed a costly riprap of rocks against which the waters of the lake have dashed harmlessly for many years. Henry Morgan, his brother Col. Edwin D. Morgan, Talmage Delafield, of Aurora, and Leonard Treman were principal promoters of this road. It is the only



ASA PACKER.

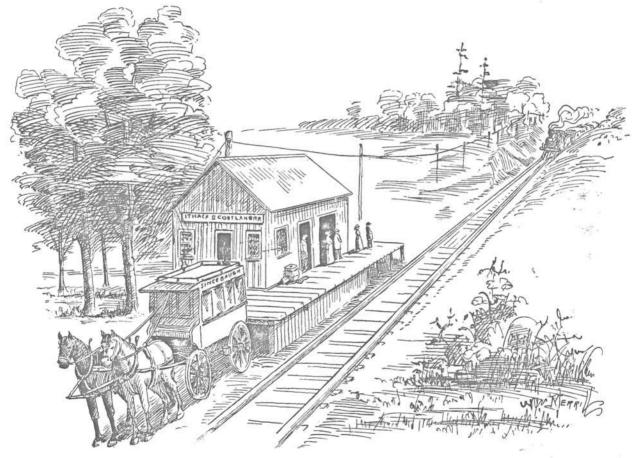
railroad reaching Ithaca that has a perfectly level grade its entire length, from Ithaca to Cayuga and to Auburn. Ezra Cornell did not aid in its promotion or construction, nor did Ithaca bond for it, as he opposed any movement that would cause interference with steamer traffic on Cayuga Lake.

Asa Packer and his associates rendered these new railroad promo-

ters and builders encouragement and aid in many ways. His own Lehigh Valley road was too well founded and too solid in its finances to be seriously disturbed by the panic that opened up to him the golden opportunity which he so wisely accepted. The logic of railroad events made him a friend of our new and bankrupt roads; our people became his friends and were willing that the roads should fall into such strong and friendly hands. It is not easy to point to any mistake made in the building of

the roads, the benefits already received from them have compensated the builders well for all they cost. We still feel that they are our roads, the people's roads, and still near and dear to us.

Not one of their promoters was an experienced railroad man; they were leaders in their communities, "captains" in commercial, industrial and agricultural affairs. They inspired public sentiment to demand the railroads and the railroad chartered in the State (1828) and one of the first two railroads constructed and operated in America (it would have been the first had it not been so much longer than the other), continued in operation. It was inspired and promoted mainly by Editor and Senator Ebenezer Mack, of Ithaca, to connect the Erie Canal traffic with the Susquehanna River via the port of Ithaca, Pennsylvanians promising to channel



; "SHOO FLY" DEPOT, ITHACA. N. Y.

towns and villages to bond for them. Mechanics, laboring men and farmers joined capitalists in subscribing for the bonds.

The railroad fever struck hard in Central and Southern New York, but it struck hardest in Ithaca and the vicinity, notwithstanding the fact that the old Ithaca & Owego R. R., the second that river, for commercial purposes, to Baltimore; a promise never honored.

The little seventeen mile Schenectady & Albany R. R. was chartered in 1826, and its charter amended in 1828. The Railroad Commissioners of New York, in their published reports of New York railroads and their charters, give the year 1828 as its charter year, but the session laws of 1826 contain that charter. It is now asserted by one of the oldest

[‡]From a pen sketch made for this article by Jason P. Merrill.

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living inhabitants of Ithaca that at least part of the Ithaca & Owego R. R. was in operation as early as was the Schenectady & Albany R. R. Ithaca, an orig-



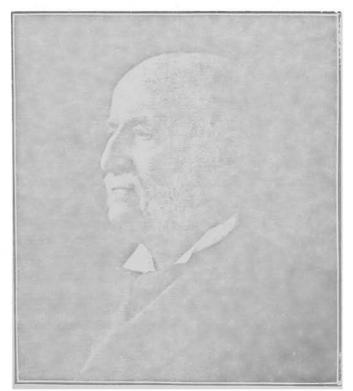
* EBENEZER MACK.

inal and pioneer railroad town, was made a railroad center by the construction and operation of the new railroads that form the New York L. V. System.

Three other new railroads were in process of construction at this period in the same territory. The New York & Oswego Midland, the Sodus Bay & Athens and the Auburn & Homer Midland. The Oswego Miland skirted Ithaca territory on the east, part of its abandoned roadbed being put into use by the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira management, east of Cortland. The Sodus Bay roadbed was perfected from Spencer, N. Y., to Seneca Falls, almost paralleling the Geneva & Ithaca and the Ithaca & Athens roads, and via the same counties, avoiding the "hills" of the Cayuga valley by following the tableland a few miles west of Ithaca.

Rails were never laid on the Sodus Bay roadbed, although the usual signs "Look out for the Cars," were erected along the line, and it is now reverting to the owners of farms through which it was built, according to the original agreements. John Rumsey's work as a promoter and director of the Geneva & Ithaca road was powerful. He discouraged and "killed off" the completion of the Sodus Bay road and saved the life of his own road. Mr. Titus offered the Sodus Bav R. R. promoters control of his road if they would build it through Ithaca, but they were obstinate and refused the offer.

Trains ran for several years on the Auburn Midland road from Auburn to Freeville; but it was abandoned because the Southern Central and the Cayuga Lake roads paralleled it



CHARLES M. TITUS

^{*} From a painting by Charles Merrill, of the art and painting department of Cornell University; now published for the first time

on either side, and only a few miles distant. It had been purchased by the Lehigh Valley R. R. Co.

Part of a roadbed built in the late "forties" and early "fifties," and known locally as the "Murdock Line"—running along the brow of the "hill" east of Auburn R. R., chartered in 1836 and chartered again in 1843 under the name of Cayuga & Susquehanna R. R. Murdock was its champion and a resident of Cayuga County. Hundreds of cords of first-class ties rotted in piles along the roadbed in Caroline after the road was

Penn'a & A. Y.	Canal &	R. R. Company,	
TIME		10.1.	
TO TAKE EFFECT ON	WEDNESDA	Y, JANUARY Ist, 1868	
For the government and inform the right to char	nation of Employes age it as circumstan		
DOWN TRAINS.		UP TRAINS.	
SOUTHWARD.	STATIONS	NORTHWARD	
P. M. P. M. A. M. 6:359:00	WAVERLY	A. M. A. M. P. M. 8:1011:455:10	
6:559:20	ATHENS	7:55	
7:159:35	MILAN	7:4011:15	
7:30	ULSTER	7:2511:00	
8:001:4510:15 P. M. P. M. A. M.	TOWANDA	7:00	
	J	OHN P. COX,	
Office Penn'a & N. Y. C. & R. R. Co., Towanda., Pa. Jan. 1, 1868.			

Ithaca from Cayuga County, to connect with the old Ithaca & Owego R. R., at a station in Caroline, eight miles from Ithaca—was utilized by the builders of the Ithaca & Elmira R. R. The "Murdock Line" was probably the Ithaca &

abandoned. They were never distributed or laid. Some of the creek and sluice bridges of the Murdock road remain in good condition and in public use in the highways. The Ithaca & Port Renwick R, R, chartered in 1834, and

the Ithaca & Chemung R. R., chartered in 1837, were never built except upon map and chart. The railroad fever of that period had spent its force.

Thomas C. Platt and Lafayette L. Treman were credited with having been the mental forces that led these railroads into the Lehigh System and from the control of amateur owners and managers and from possible abandonment. They all went through receivership sales or foreclosures upon defaults in mortgage or bond obligations, the Southern Central possibly excepted.

Ezra Cornell invested \$2,000,000 in the roads. He died in December, 1874, overwhelmed with the worry and havoc wrought by Black Friday, his university also struggling for its life in the general financial disaster. Able and crafty financiering by his son Franklin C. Cornell, as administrator of his estate, saved about \$560,000 from the \$2,000,000. It was paid by President Packer for the Cornell interests in the Geneva & Ithaca and Ithaca & Athens roads. The crafty and unjust means used in securing a \$700,000 judgment against Ezra Cornell for alleged infringement of a patent justified his son's resort to craft to thwart its collection. His success was great and the estate was thereby saved from practical bankruptcy. He settled the \$700,000 judgment by paying the judgment creditor's lawyer, Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, \$45,000. It is now asserted that Gen. Butler was ignorant of the ownership by the estate of any railroad securities worth a dollar. Of course the administrator did not inform him of such ownership.

Black Friday annexed 189 miles more trackage to the Lehigh Valley R. R. in New York in the manner I have described. Those 189 miles have increased to upwards of 600 miles, in New

The Black Diamond Express York. now speeds through the Lehigh, Wyoming and Cayuga valleys twice each day and thus makes neighbors of many towns and cities between Manhattan and Buffalo. Charles M. Titus and Otis E. Wood, still living, have dreams of bygone years and of the men who aided them in making her course through Ithaca possible, the men who have nearly all passed away, but left noble monuments behind them. Peace to their ashes; gratitude to their achievements; honor to their memories. They sowed but we reap the harvest.

T. W. Burns.

"THE GATHERING OF THE CLANS."

When the fiery cross has spread its blood red tidings o'er the world,

- When the banner of the end of time is everywhere unfurled,
- Then frae ilka vale and clachan in oor ain and ither lands,
- We shall gather, gather, gather, where oor Chieftain Prince commands.
- We shall leave behind oor Psalms and hymns, oor Bibles, auld and new,
- There'll no be time to parley what we did or didna do,
- And we needna wait to buckle on the claymore and the dirk,
- A' oor fechtin' will be endit when we gather in the mirk.
- We shall gather, gather, gather, but the boasted white cockade
- Shall be missing; we maun leave it where our ither gear is laid, We shall come wi' empty pockets, we'll hae
- naething in oor hands---
- But we'll wear oor ain bit tartans at the gathering o' the clans.
- Tho' your tartan may be scarlet and my tartan may be blue,
- Wi' a streak o' green and yellow rinnin' mixter maxter through,
- Yet, I'm thinkin' we'll no brag aboot the glories of oor name,
- When we see oor glarin' colors and the Chief's are no the same.
- Noo we needna be complainin' o' the color which he gave,
- He was never kent to say that ane was better than the lave,
- But it's hoo we wore the tartan that shall place us 'neath his ban
- Or exalt us-his dependents, to be members o' his clan-Balharrie.

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