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THE LOUISA RAILROAD
(1836-1850)

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(In this paper, there will be found facts concerning the lives of many of the characters connected with the railroad.)

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CONTENTS

	Page
Background and Agitation	1
Organization	2
Frederick Harris	11
Organization (continued)	15
The Opening	26
The Louisa Opening	28
The First Dividend Declared	29
The Gordonsville Extension	30
Schedule Change and Capt. Harris' Report	31
Advances Made During 1839-40	33
C. Y. Kimbrough	39
The Stockholders' Meeting of 1842	40
The Retrenchment Program	41
The Transportation Contract Renewal	42
Events of 1844	42
Edmund Fontaine	44
Annual Stockholders' Meeting	44
The Stockholders' Petition of 1846	45
Early Desires for Extension Westward	46
The R. F. and P. Railway Co. Contract Set Aside	47
Controversy over Westward Extension	47
The Stockholders' Decision	51

CONTENTS (continued)

	page
The Mandamus Nisi Case	52
The Powell's Gap Extension	53
Extension to the Richmond Docks	53
The R. F. and P. Railway Co. Vs. Louisa Railroad Co.	54
Further Extensions	56
The Act of February 2, 1850	57
The Sixteenth Annual Report	58
Conclusion	59
Map	
Scenes	

1.

1. BACKGROUND AND AGITATION.

The first railroad built in Virginia was chartered March 8, 1827. By the year 1860, there were 1,350 miles of railroad in Virginia.¹ Among the first to be chartered was the Louisa Railroad from which the great Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad of today has its origin. This paper is a history of this railroad during the years it was known as the Louisa Railroad.

There had been much agitation, prior to 1836, for a railroad that would extend from somewhere in the neighborhood of Taylorsville by Louisa Courthouse to the stage-coach road leading from Charlottesville to Fredericksburg. This would end on the ridge between the headwaters of the North and South Anna Rivers near Gordonsville in order that, later, it might be continued to Barboursville and Swift Run Gap.² Some talked of its continuance to Harrisonburg and Jennings' Gap and a section might even extend to Orange Courthouse, Madison, and Culpeper. The main purpose of this railroad was to accommodate trade, as the portion of the populace reached was quite inaccessible to water carriage. The first terminus would be placed at Gordonsville where travelers from Charlottesville might

1. Richard L. Morton, History of Virginia, Vol. III, p. 356.
2. Report of B. M. Francisco, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, Sept. 22, 1835.

board the train.³

At Louisa Courthouse, on September 14, 1835, a meeting of interested citizens was held to consider the building of such a road. Thomas Johnson was elected chairman and B. M. Francisco, secretary. Edmund Fontaine took the floor and declared that \$590 had already been raised to defray the expenses for surveys of possible routes for the proposed railroad. These surveys were to be finished prior to the convening of the legislature. A resolution was made to request Moncure Robinson, if engagements permitted, to survey two routes, one on either side of Little River and report the advantages of each.⁴ The fund spoken of above and other similar funds raised were deposited to the credit of Moncure Robinson in the Bank of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.⁵

II. ORGANIZATION

In the session of the legislature of 1835-36 the bill to incorporate the stockholders into a company called the Louisa Railroad Company was introduced. Frederick Harris, later the first president of this railroad, was a member of the House of Delegates from Louisa, at that time. The Senate passed the bill with the provision that

3. Richmond Inquirer, Nov. 20, 1835.

4. Report of B. M. Francisco, sect'y., Ibid., Sept. 22, 1835.

5. Richmond Inquirer, Oct. 6, 1835.

the terminus might be placed at Newark instead of Gordonsville. The House of Delegates, on February 4, 1836, on the motion of Mr. Harris discussed the bill with the Senate amendment. Finally, Mr. Harris moved that they recede from their disagreement. However, the motion was decided in the negative.⁶

On February 18, 1836, the bill was passed and the Senate amendment was so changed as to be a compromise. The act provided first, for the opening of the stock subscription books in Richmond under the direction of Richard Anderson, Captain Thomas Nelson and others; at Taylorsville in Hanover, W. D. Winston, Edmund Fontaine, and others; at Jackson's Tavern in Louisa, David Richardson, Frederick Harris and others; at Louisa Courthouse, Richmond Terrill, B. M. Francisco, and others; and at Gordonsville, William F. Gordon, Colby Cowherd and others. They were to secure subscriptions to the amount of \$300,000 at \$100 per share to form a joint capital stock for the purpose of running the railroad from a certain point on the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad in the vicinity of Taylorsville to a point in the County of Orange near the eastern base of the Southwest Mountains. They might extend it to the vicinity of Harrisonburg later.

6. Virginia Advocate, Feb. 10, 1836.

The company was to provide everything required for convenient transportation. If the stockholders after a general meeting, thought it injurious to run the railroad to the point determined, then they might end it at some point between Newark and Gordonsville.⁷

If the commissioners should sell 3000 shares of stock within ten days, then it was their duty to reduce the number of shares subscribed proportional to the number each subscriber took. The books were to remain open for ten days and after 1000 shares had been subscribed the Louisa Railroad Company would be incorporated. The subscribers might pay as little as two dollars down per share for the stock and the residue was to be paid in instalments. If they failed to meet their payments, the company could get judgement against them in the local courts.⁸

A stockholders' meeting should be called, after incorporation, in which a majority was required to be present. At this meeting, the president and directors would be selected who could be removed by the vote of the majority of the stockholders. In case of absence of the president, the directors were to elect one of their own members to act as president pro tempore.⁹

7. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company and the Several Other Acts of the General Assembly Relating to the Same, pp. 1-3.

8. Ibid., p. 4.

9. Ibid., p. 5.

The president and directors would have the rights required to construct, repair, and maintain the railroad; to place as many tracks as necessary and lateral lines not to exceed ten miles. They had to get a two-thirds vote of the stockholders in favor of the above before carrying out such. The first funds were to be used for the expenses of surveying the proposed routes. If further funds were needed, they might require more from the stockholders until the full amount of their subscriptions had been paid in. The stock might be increased to \$500,000, if it was found necessary. The president and directors would have the power to borrow money and issue certificates convertible into stock.¹⁰

The president, directors, their officers, agents, and servants would have the right to enter upon the lands and tenements through which the tracks would run. They could not be laid nearer than a hundred feet from a dwelling or burial ground without the consent of the owner. For the depots and other buildings not more than one and one-half acres were to be used. If the owner of this property would not agree to the terms offered by the company for the land and materials secured there from, a board of five disinterested citizens would be appointed to de-

10. Ibid., p. 6-7.

decide the amount due the owner after a thorough investigation of the evidence on both sides. If this board could not agree, then a second board would be selected to decide on the same issue. Meanwhile, no injunction could be awarded by any court or judge to halt proceedings of the work unless it could be shown that the company was transgressing the authority given them. The president and directors were to be allowed to go on lands adjacent to the route and secure timber, stone, etc., for the building of the road. If the owners were not satisfied with the sum paid for such, a board of three would be chosen to decide on the fair compensation to be paid.¹¹

If the company in entering a person's property willfully damaged it, they were to be required to pay to the person injured double the amount assessed to the owner by the jury.¹²

If the tracks should intersect a road, they were to place them so as not to interfere with the travel on the road. In passing through a man's property, they would have to provide a crossing over the track for him. To lessen the number of crossings, they might change the road a little if such would be equally as good.¹³

11. Ibid., pp. 7-12.

12. Ibid., p. 12.

13. Ibid., p. 13.

The president and directors were to purchase with the funds all machines, wagons, vehicles, carriages and teams which they might deem necessary for transportation. They could contract with some other company to do their transportation for them, if they so desired.¹⁴

The new company would have the exclusive right of transportation and in return they were to make it safe and convenient. After payment of tolls they should deliver goods, etc. in proper condition at convenient places indicated by the owners. No undue preference was to be shown customers. The charges were to be eight cents per mile per person and ten cents per ton for freight. Should one ride less than ten miles there would be a charge of fifty cents extra per person. The charge for mail would be agreed on later, and the rates for delivery, storage, and weighing of produce and commodities at the depots and warehouses would be the same as ordinary warehouse rates charged in the City of Richmond.¹⁵

Bridges should be built large enough to admit the passage of the county roads as well, and tolls charged for their use were subject to the regulation of the Board of Public Works.¹⁶

14. Ibid.,

15. Ibid., p. 14.

16. Ibid.

As soon as ten miles were completed the president and directors were to declare annually or semiannually such dividends as they considered proper from the net profits of the company.¹⁷

At the annual meeting of the stockholders each member would be allowed one vote for every two shares above two and not exceeding ten shares, and one vote for every five shares above ten held by him in the company. No person or corporation might have more than sixty votes. At this meeting, the president would give a report of the financial conditions of the company.¹⁸

The actual construction of such a railroad would have to begin within two years and be completed in ten years after the first stockholders meeting, otherwise the charter would be forfeited.¹⁹

Certificates were to be written, signed by the president and treasurer, and issued to each of the stockholders. The number of shares held by him would be shown on these certificates. They were to be transferable.²⁰

If any person willfully destroyed the property of the company, they would be punished according to the laws in

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

force at that time for the protection of public works or property of the Commonwealth.²¹

Should the tolls and rates enable the president after the payment of necessary expenses to pay out as dividends an amount more than fifteen per cent of their capital stock, then the rates and tolls should be reduced by the president and directors.²²

On May 9, 1836, the stock subscription books were opened at the places mentioned above for ten days. The Merchant's Coffee House was the place where the Commissioners were located in Richmond. At the close of the tenth day, reports were sent to Conway Robinson, one of the Commissioners of Richmond, showing the total number of shares sold.²³

The stock sold rapidly and soon after the books were opened, the Commissioners gave notice that a thousand shares of stock had been sold. A meeting of the stockholders was called to meet at Louisa Courthouse, the second Monday in June. The Commissioners were requested to bring their books with them and open them just prior to the meeting.²⁴

On June 13, 1836, the meeting was held. Dr. J. M.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Richmond Inquirer, May 10, 1836.

24. Ibid., May 24, 1836.

Morris was called to the chair and Charles Thompson appointed secretary. The two possible routes, that the railroad might take, were discussed. The one lying between the North Anna River and the Little River had already been surveyed. The other lay between the South Anna River and the Little River. It was resolved to have the latter route surveyed and the engineers make a report as to the advantages of each route. In the event that the president and directors could not agree unanimously as to the best route, a general stockholders meeting would be called to decide the question. The report was made that \$149,000 had been subscribed and \$10,000 more had been subscribed that morning. The people on both sides of Little River were working hard to secure a large number of subscriptions, so as to influence them to run the railroad in their territory, it was said. Since the cost of construction of the railroad from Taylorsville to Newark would be nearly \$400,000, it was deemed desirable that the subscriptions of individuals reach three-fifths of that sum. Remarks were made as to the fine feeling that prevailed toward the railroad and that the people were determined to run it up as far as Newark. The continuance of this to Gordonsville it was felt would depend upon the people in Albemarle, Madison, Culpeper, and Rockingham Counties. The points which would be taken in consideration in choosing the route were dis-

cussed and are as follows: distance, cost of construction, probable trade and travel and releases of land on each route. The president, after he was chosen, was directed to ascertain how far releases might be obtained so at a future meeting they might know to what extent preference should be given to either route on that point. There was already talk that the state might subscribe to part of the stock. The following officers were chosen: Captain Frederick Harris, president with a salary of \$1500 per year; Messrs. James M. Morris, Peter Scales, Thomas Johnson, C. Y. Kimbrough of Louisa and Charles Thompson Jr. of Hanover as directors. The president was requested to keep the stockholders informed as to the progress of the road.²⁵

III LIFE OF FREDERICK HARRIS

Frederick Harris was appointed president because he had shown great interest in the work and had appeared to be a very active, zealous, and good manager of his own affairs.²⁶ He was a member of the Quaker Harris family of Louisa. His father Frederick Harris Sr., son of William Jr., lived in Louisa County on the upper branch of Little River. He married Eliza, daughter of Richmond and Nancy

25. "Compiler," Richmond Inquirer, June 24, 1836.

26. Ibid.

Overton Terrill. From this union Frederick Jr. was born January 14, 1780.²⁷ Very early in life, he began to write poetry. One of his poems is mentioned in a letter of J. Shelton Watson, dated February 11, 1798, to his brother Davy, who was a student at William and Mary College at the time. The poem was called Spring in which the author gave a description of the seasons. Watson commented on the importance of certain words therein and his description of certain impulses of man, as for example: (from lines 271-308)

Of envy - Base, envy withers at another joy
 And hates that excellence it cannot reach

Of fear - Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full....

Hence, around the head
 Of wandering swain, the white-winged plover wheels
 Her sounding flight, and then directly on
 In long excursion skims the level lawn, to tempt
 him from the nest.
 The wild-duck, hence,
 On the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
 The heath-hen flutters, pious fraud'g to lead
 The hot pursuing spaniel far away.²⁸

He was a lieutenant in the War of 1812 and had represented Louisa in the legislature. To Catherine Nelson Smith of Spotsylvania County, he was married December 28, 1805. From this union, there resulted eight children, five girls and three boys. Two of his daughters married into the Pendleton family thereby uniting two prominent fami-

27. Malcohm H. Harris, A History of Louisa County, Va., pp. 347-351.

28. Virginia Historical Magazine, Vol. XXIX, pp. 136-37.

lies of the county. Charlotte Rebecca married James K. Pendleton, at one time member of the legislature. Nathaniel was depot agent for many years at Fredericks Hall.²⁹

General David B. Harris, another son, graduated from West Point and became Chief of Engineers on Beauregard's staff.³⁰

Fredericks Hall, from which the village nearby gets its name, was the home of Frederick Harris, which he built probably in the "twenties." The house still stands today, a large brick structure with high portico and pillars of brick reminding one of the past. A little distance away is the site of old Brookville which was the name of the village before it was changed to Fredericks Hall.³¹

In a letter to the Louisa justices of peace, on March 30, 1814, Gov. James Barbour appointed Frederick Harris to receive funds for the purpose of establishing schools for the education of the poor in the county according to certain acts passed by the legislature. This fund was called a Literary Fund which was to be provided for partly from unclaimed wills, letters of administration granted to creditors, and other surpluses that remained unaccounted for. The court was instructed to make inquiries and get in

29. Harris, op. cit., p. 351.

30. Ibid., p. 130.

31. Ibid.

touch with persons with balances. These person would be required to hand over such to Frederick Harris.³²

To him much credit is due for the success of the railroad. He fought for its extension time and time again. In 1841, he resigned because of ill health.³³ He kept interested in the enterprize until the time of his death which occurred April 9, 1842.³⁴ His wife passed away December 26, 1848.³⁴ They, with a number of their children, are buried halfway between their old home and the station in a cemetery containing the Harris and Pendleton families, enclosed by a wall of half brick and half stone.

On April 11, 1842, the court of Louisa resolved to bear testimony of his usefulness as a citizen and that such be published in the Richmond Inquirer.³⁵

His will is interesting in that he said, "It is my will and desire that no part of my family put on the outward vailments of mourning in consequence of my death."³⁶ He desired his estate held together until 1845, his store continued under the management of his son, Nathaniel, and,

32. Letter found by the writer at Louisa Courthouse, June 1936.

33. J. P. Nelson's, History of the C. and O. Railway Company.

34. Dates taken from tombstones by the writer, February 1937.

35. Report of John Hunter, Clerk of County Court, Richmond Inquirer, May 13, 1842.

36. Virginia Historical Magazine, Vol. XXXVI, p. 254.

finally, he willed some land in Goochland County to the same son. Other portions of land in Goochland, he gave to Frederick, Sarah, his wife, and David. His personal property, including a portrait of David Bullock and himself, was given to Frederick. To his five daughters he willed lots in Richmond and Henrico County. The executors of the will were his two sons-in-law, William J. Pendleton, James K. Pendleton, and two of his sons.³⁷

IV ORGANIZATION (continued)

So great was the interest in the railroad that very quickly the stock was subscribed by the citizens. The president and directors talked of the extension of the railroad into the Valley of Virginia at the first meeting of that body, on June 14, 1836, at Louisa Courthouse. They resolved to open stock subscription books to receive funds for its extension to Gordonsville.³⁸ They invited the citizens of Orange County to come and meet with them.³⁹

On June 27, 1836, at a second directors' meeting at Taylorsville, which was called for six o'clock in the morning.⁴⁰ John H. Hopkins was appointed chief engineer. Hopkins had formerly been with the R. F. and P. Railway

37. Ibid., pp. 254-56.

38. Report of Nathaniel Thompson, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, June 24, 1836.

39. Richmond Inquirer, August 5, 1836.

40. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., June 21, 1836.

Co., and had, according to report, discharged faithfully his duties there. The directors felt themselves very fortunate in obtaining his services. Assistant engineer Sanford was ordered to organize a corps of engineers and to begin preliminary surveys preparatory to the location of the road. They aimed to have twenty-five miles for letting by November.⁴¹ To realize this they desired to contract for graduation, masonry, timber and superstructure for the building of the first division of the road.⁴² It was determined to do this for only twenty miles at first. Such contracts were received at Taylorsville until November 22.⁴³ The last date was extended to December 5th, since some of the party of engineers who were engaged in the location were sick.⁴⁴ For some unknown reason, James Hunter took the place of Sanford, about this time.⁴⁵

There were early calls for funds from the stockholders who had subscribed prior to October 15th, they being required to pay three dollars per share. Those who subscribed after that date were required to pay five dollars.⁴⁶ A little later, the president and directors demanded twenty dollars per share.⁴⁷

41. Ibid., June 28, 1836.

42. Report of J. H. Hopkins, C. E., Ibid., Oct. 18, 1836.

43. Ibid., Nov. 27, 1836.

44. Ibid., Nov. 25, 1836.

45. Ibid., Oct. 18, 1836.

46. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., Sept. 27, 1836.

47. Ibid., Nov. 25, 1836.

The president and directors hired a number of negro men for very liberal wages for the construction. The company needed especially a large number of sawyers.⁴⁸

The question of receiving help from the state arose. A meeting of stockholders was called for Louisa Courthouse on the second Monday in February to consider the matter of applying to the legislature to authorize the Board of Public Works to subscribe to the stock of the company.⁴⁹ However, before the meeting, a bill was introduced into the legislature for that purpose. The company would secure from the Internal Improvements Fund a sum equal to two-thirds of the amount of the capital subscribed by the stockholders through this bill. The Orange Representative had offered an amendment to the bill. This would change several of the provisions of the charter. Two of these changes were that the company should make no lateral lines for two years and that the company should make use of all possible means in order to continue the road to Gordonsville. The meeting was held, as planned, to assent to this amendment. Many of the stockholders were against such, for they felt that lateral lines were more important than the extension to Gordonsville. Others felt that

48. Ibid., Oct. 11, 1836.

49. Ibid., Jan. 12, 1837.

it should be extended only to Newark. The "Wilderness", one of the stockholders brought out, is on a high ridge and produce would have little trouble in coming down to Newark. A remark was made that the inhabitants above Gordonsville were not subscribing to the stock very well, which showed a lack of interest in the enterprize on their part. President Harris was very much in favor of the bill and spoke in its behalf at Louisa Courthouse. The same stockholder said of this, "I humbly conceive if our president had stayed at home last thirtieth day of cold weather it would have been better for his health, ... His zeal is too great for his judgement."⁵⁰ In closing, he warned the stockholders not to sell their stock for less than par.⁵¹

Another stockholder advised the others not to vote for James K. Pendleton to represent them in the legislature because he favored the bill. He believed such extension would only reduce dividends and if the people of Orange County desired the extension, let them provide for it out of their own pockets. The bill before the legislature provided that the state should subscribe to a portion of the stock of the company.⁵²

The bill was brought before the senate where several

50. "A Stockholder," Ibid., Jan. 26, 1837.

51, Ibid.

52. "A Stockholder," Ibid., Feb. 18, 1837.

amendments were added. If the company accepted the subscription, it would be their duty to carry the mails over their road. Should the rates to be charged not be agreed upon, a commission of three would be appointed to decide on reasonable rates. They would be handed to the governor for his approval, and if approved, they had to be abided by. The section of the act which exempted the profits and property from taxation was to be repealed. On February 20, 1837, on the motion of Mr. Woolfolk, the bill was taken up with the amendments in the house. The bill was passed February 25, 1837.⁵³

The act authorized the Board of Public Works to subscribe to two-thirds of the stock on behalf of the state, which money should be taken out of the Fund for Internal Improvement. Should this prove insufficient, they could borrow on the credit of the state at a rate of interest not exceeding six per cent per year. This money, which could not exceed \$120,000, was to be paid into the treasury. Certificates would be issued on the sum. The principle sum was not to be redeemable for twenty years. If the dividends more than paid the interest, the remainder would be applied to the purchase of the certificates. The company was to use all the funds raised for two years,

53. Richmond Inquirer, Feb. 22, 1837.

beginning January 15, 1837, for the construction of the road. If the company accepted the subscription, the legislature would provide for the transportation of the mails. The amendment regarding taxation, spoken of above, was included.⁵⁴

At a meeting of the president and directors, March 14, 1837, it was resolved to have a general meeting of the stockholders in April to take up the matter of accepting the above act.⁵⁵

At this meeting called by the directors, Charles S. Jones was appointed chairman and Nathaniel Thompson, secretary. It was decided to charge, with interest from May 15, 1837, those stockholders who had not fully paid for their stock.⁵⁶ It is assumed that they accepted the provisions of the act of February 25, 1837.

An act of the legislature, passed on March 30, 1837, provided that the R. F. and P. Railroad Company, after securing the consent of the majority of its stockholders should subscribe for \$60,000 worth of shares in the Louisa Railroad Company. A second act of the same day empowered the latter company to contract with any of the other incorporated railroad companies in Virginia, in order to carry

54. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, pp. 16-9.

55. Report of Nathaniel Thompson, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, March 16, 1837.

56. Ibid., May 2, 1837.

on their transportation for them.⁵⁷

On June 12, 1837, the annual stockholders meeting took place at Louisa Courthouse and the same presiding officers were chosen as were selected at the last meeting. In the report of the president and directors which was read, the secretary and treasurer received \$100 for his services. John H. Hopkins and his assistant received \$3,200. After the report was finished, President Harris offered gratuitously to act as treasurer of the company. Reports were heard regarding the surveys of the two possible routes. The northern route was regarded by the surveyors as the most favorable one for the following reasons: it was the shortest by six miles, less expensive by \$46,950, had greater upkeep and economic advantages, and the nature of the ground at the intersection with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company was better, which would prove more favorable for building and would admit curvature toward Richmond. The stockholders voted unanimously in favor of the northern route. The road had been put under contract, it was revealed, for a distance of twenty-two and a half miles at the cost of \$8,500. This was to be completed by the end of the year in order that it might transport passengers and freight in connection with a daily line of stages to and from Charlottesville. As a result of the currency

57. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 20.

derangement and depression, the stockholders decided to be a little lenient in their demands on those who had not fully paid up the amounts due on their stock subscriptions. Two water stations, at the cost of \$1000 each, were ordered to be constructed along the road about ten and a half to twelve miles apart from each other. It was brought up that the people of Hanover County had been much more content with damages given by the railroad to those persons through whose property the tracks were laid than the people in Louisa County. After having agreed to make a contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company for carrying out the transportation, the stockholders heard a report of the expenditures and receipts of the company. On hearing recommendations by Edmund Fontaine regarding the reduction of administrative cost, the following salaries were decided upon: president, \$1000; secretary, \$300; chief engineer, \$2000; and directors, \$2.30 per diem. Captain Frederick Harris' contract respecting the construction of a house of accommodation at Harris' (Fredericks Hall) was recommended.⁵⁸

It was resolved to send a memorial to the legislature to require the R. F. and P. Railroad Company to increase their capital in order that they might subscribe to the stock of the Louisa Railroad Company "for effecting trans-

58. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, Aug. 8, 1837.

portation" on the road of the latter. An act passed by the legislature was desired requiring the Board of Public Works to pay requisitions upon the stock held by the state and to proceed according to the legislative act of March 11, 1837 authorizing the president and directors to recover their requisitions from delinquent stockholders. The following by-laws were included: a meeting of the stockholders might be called if stockholders holding not less than two hundred shares in the aggregate should apply for such; neither the president nor the directors could have any interest directly or indirectly in the company after 1837; and no contract was to be made unless twenty days advance notice had been given. Charles Y. Kimbrough made the motion that the president and directors be requested to have an engineer make a report on the advantages and disadvantages of steam locomotion on the railroad.⁵⁹

Due purely to motives of economy, J. H. Hopkins was discharged and James Hunter was chosen to fill his place. The former's report was read stating that much of the iron for the tracks had been contracted for. However, the depots and fixtures, spikes, and splicing plates had not been contracted for, as yet. Furthermore, the order for two locomotives from the Newcastle Manufacturing Company had been withdrawn. In conclusion, he said that the character

59. Ibid.

of the land had proved very good and so far no sharp curves or steep gradings had been necessary. Frederick Harris was reelected president, and Charles Thompson of Hanover, Dr. James W. Pendleton of Louisa and Nathaniel Mills of Louisa were selected as directors. The meeting was adjourned.⁶⁰

The treasurer was required, as a result of a directors' meeting of July 10, 1837, to take necessary steps after the month of August to recover by warrant all requisitions due from delinquent stockholders before June last, together with instalments due August 1, 1837.⁶¹

The directors resolved August 14, 1837, to increase the stock of the company to \$500,000 so books were opened on September 1, 1837 for one month.⁶²

In November, terms were decided on for carrying on transportation on the Louisa Railroad. The Louisa Railroad Company was to keep the road in order at its own expense for which it would receive half of the receipts from the transportation of the mails and the freight and two-thirds from the transportation of passengers. The R. F. and P. Railroad Company for providing the cars and doing the actual transporting would receive one-half from the freight and mails and one-third from the passengers. As a result the Louisa Railroad Company was to be relieved

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., August 4, 1837.

62. Ibid., Sept. 1, 1837.

of the heavy expense of providing workshops and engines.⁶³

After much discussion the act of February 15, 1838 resulted, providing that the R. F. and P. Railroad Company provide transportation on the road according to such terms as had been agreed on or would be agreed on by the presidents and directors of both companies. The R. F. and P. Railroad Company could augment, from time to time, the capital of the company by amounts not exceeding \$60,000. However, it was unlawful for the president or directors to apply or divert any part of this fund to the construction, repair, or improvement of their road or any branch thereof if the company should cease to effect transportation on the Louisa Railroad in the future.⁶⁴

The people, on the whole, were very anxious to have the railroad completed as soon as possible. They helped to secure the timber needed and many homes were kept busy preparing food for the laborers. Some were against the building of it altogether, and refused to allow any of their timber to be used. One felt his neighbors' mules were good enough for hauling his produce to market.⁶⁵

63. Richmond Inquirer, Nov. 17, 1837.

64. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 21.

65. Harris, op. cit., p. 146.

V THE OPENING

The railroad was completed to Fredericks Hall, December 20, 1837, and the event there was marked by a great celebration which has not been equalled since. It was said that Christmas came five days early that year.⁶⁶ On a beautiful Wednesday it occurred with people joyous and wine flowing. The cars left Richmond at nine o'clock in the morning, three arriving at Fredericks Hall with a band playing and the American Colors flying.⁶⁷ Many notables were aboard. Lieutenant-Governor MacFarland, Thomas Richie and others were the chief speakers of the day.⁶⁸ Many of the crowd kept saying, "Who could have expected to see this?"⁶⁹ Captain Harris entertained a number of the guests at dinner at his home. Among the interesting toasts rendered at the dinner were these:

Frederick Harris - Chartered Rights: Upon their sanctity depends the further improvement of Virginia by private capital.

Lieutenant-Governor - Railroad Companies: The Practical Union Party, who binds the nation with bands of iron.

H. L. Hopkins - The State of Virginia: If there be here a stranger ignorant of her heart, we will point him to the County of Louisa.

66. Ibid.

67. Richmond Inquirer, Dec. 22, 1837.

68. Harris, op. cit., p. 146.

69. Richmond Inquirer, Dec. 22, 1837.

J. A. Cowardin - Fredericks Hall: The very hall of hospitality.⁷⁰

Afterwards the cars returned to Richmond reaching there about five-thirty in the afternoon after stopping at the various wood and water stations along the way.⁷¹

The cars used were either of the four or eight wheel type and were made of wood. In winter, a stove placed in the center, heated each individual car and according to one writer, made it just as comfortable as if one was in his own parlor by his fire place. There was an apartment for the ladies in each car.⁷² The engine was small and went at a speed of fifteen to twenty miles an hour.⁷³ The R. F. and P. Railroad Company braged^g that they had carried forty thousand passengers and not a single injury had been received.⁷⁴

As to the charges and the schedule, the following is taken from one of the newspapers of that day:

From Fredericks Hall depot to	
Beaverdam	\$0.75.
dodo Junction.	1.75.
dodo Richmond.	2.75.
do . . do Fredericksburg	3.75
A daily train leaves for Fredericks Hall at 12:30 p. m.	
Fredericks Hall for Richmond and Fredericksburg at 4:00 a. m. ⁷⁵	

70. Ibid.
 71. Ibid.
 72. Ibid., Jan. 16, 1838.
 73. Ibid., Dec. 27, 1837.
 74. Ibid., Jan. 16, 1838.
 75. Ibid., Dec. 27, 1837.

April 3, 1838, an act of the legislature authorized the Board of Public Works to pay the residue of the stock subscription of the Commonwealth of Virginia which now remained unpaid to the company according to the terms of the act of February 25, 1837.⁷⁶

Almost as soon as the railroad was completed as far as Fredericks Hall, the company began to plan for its extension to Louisa Courthouse. The route was decided on and the rails quickly laid. By April 20, 1838, specifications for the depot and water station were to be had at Fredericks Hall.⁷⁷

VI THE LOUISA OPENING

This extension to Louisa was completed by December 1, 1838.⁷⁸ January 8, 1839, a dinner was given in honor of its opening at the Louisa Hotel under the direction of Garland Taylor. An extra train was put on for the occasion by John H. Hopkins. W. M. Ambler presided and Dr. B. M. Francisco assisted him. Many toasts were given of which two are listed below:

The eighth of January: The day on which internal strength so far overcame external force, as to protect the fair and wealthy from the

76. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 22.

77. Report of J. Hunter, C. E., Richmond Inquirer, March 27, 1838.

78. Nelson, op. cit., p. 124.

hands of ruffians, and left the free to the enjoyment.

Railroads and Canals: The arteries which convey the life blood of the body politic.⁷⁹

The train now left Richmond daily at six o'clock in the morning and arrived at Louisa Courthouse in the afternoon.⁸⁰ Passengers enroute to the Springs, whose route lay through Louisa, would take the stagecoach from here.⁸¹

VII THE FIRST DIVIDENDS DECLARED

At a directors' meeting held at Fredericks Hall, December 22, 1838, a two and a half per cent dividend was declared. Purchasers of new stock were to be required to pay into the Farmers' Bank of Virginia, to the credit of the company in quarterly payments a sum amounting to seventy-five dollars on each share subscribed.⁸²

The president called a meeting for July 20, 1838 of the stockholders to consider extension of the railroad to Gordonsville.⁸³

VIII THE GORDONSVILLE EXTENSION

Early a controversy arose as to whether the road

79. Richmond Inquirer, Jan. 15, 1839.

80. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1839.

81. Harris, op. cit., p. 147.

82. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, Jan. 8, 1839.

83. Richmond Inquirer, June 19, 1838.

should be run from Louisa to Gordonsville or the route be changed so as to run straight to Charlottesville. Some who favored the latter assembled at the Albemarle County Courthouse, on July 2, 1838, for the purpose of considering the extension. Col. John R. Jones was called to the chair. They resolved to prevail upon the citizens to buy stock in the Louisa Company and to encourage the legislature to pass an act authorizing the extension of the railroad directly to Charlottesville. A. Rives, J. W. Saunders, W. H. Meriweather, Mann Page, James H. Terrill, John R. Jones and others were selected to attend the meeting at Louisa Courthouse, on July 20, in order to gain the consent of the company for such plans.⁸⁴

Some of the stockholders were against any further extension, for they pointed out that two hundred shares would need be sold and that the stock subscription books already had been opened sometime for the extension from Louisa with not a single dollar obtained as yet. Furthermore, one pointed out that the legislature had passed an act authorizing the state to subscribe to part of the stock should private individuals subscribe. However, this had not encouraged subscriptions. His reason for this was that such would cost more than it was worth. The stock had already fallen to thirty or forty cents on the dollar, he

84. Report of Thomas Ward, sect'y., Ibid., July 10, 1838.

pointed out.⁸⁵

At the meeting of July 20, the stockholders learned it would cost \$8,000 per mile for the extension, necessitating the securing of two hundred shares of stock in addition to the amount already obtained. The other two hundred shares would be taken by the contractors themselves.⁸⁶ A large crowd was in attendance and good will prevailed. Governor Barbour and Judge Barbour both spoke in favor of the Gordonsville route. The Governor was the first speaker. Edmund Fontaine, Captain Harris, and Dr. Shepherd of Hanover spoke during the session as well. The final decision was in favor of the Gordonsville route.⁸⁷

IX SCHEDULE CHANGE AND CAPT. HARRIS' REPORT

In July, a change was made in the schedule whereby the trains left for Fredericks Hall at five o'clock in the morning, in turn leaving there at one o'clock in the afternoon, enabling passengers leaving Charlottesville in the morning to get to Richmond the same day, an hour earlier than by any other line.⁸⁸ In 1839, the schedule was again changed so that the train left Richmond for Louisa Courthouse at a quarter to six in the morning, leaving the Courthouse for Richmond at a quarter after

85. "A Stockholder," Ibid., July 10, 1838.

86. Richmond Inquirer, June 26, 1838.

87. Ibid., Aug. 3, 1838.

88. Ibid., July 13, 1838.

twelve in the day.⁸⁹

There was an urgent call for funds, in 1839, to make the Gordonsville extension possible, stockholders being urged to pay up punctually all the requisitions due before February 2, 1839.⁹⁰

To the speaker of the House of Delegates, Captain Harris sent a report, on March 11, 1839, showing the salaries and the stock of the company which was as follows:

Frederick Harris, president,	annual salary	\$1000
N. Thompson, clerk and treas.,	annual salary	500
Charles O. Sandford, engineer,	annual salary	1000
James M. Morris, David Anderson Jr., Charles Thompson, J. W. Pendleton, and N. Mills, directors,	per diem	2.50
Hill Jones, agent of repair,	annual salary	150
Claiborne Jones, sub. agent of repair,	annual salary	650

The last two named are employed by the R. F. and P. Railroad Company, who have undertaken to transport for us. The repair is by the transportation company, at the cost of the Louisa Railroad Company and thus salaries of the last two are annually paid by the latter.

Capital stock of Louisa Railroad Co.	\$415,000
State proportion	<u>189,000</u>
Owned by individuals	\$226,000 91

X ADVANCES MADE DURING 1839-40

The legislature, by the act of March 27, 1839, authorized the extension of the railroad to Charlottesville.

The books would be opened for receiving the subscriptions

89. Ibid., Mar. 7, 1839.

90. Report of N. Thompson, treas. Ibid., Feb. 19, 1839.

91. Richmond Inquirer, Mar. 16, 1839.

to the amount of \$300,000 should the company accept the act. If they failed to begin construction within four years, a new company would be chartered to carry on the extension. The extension would accomplish two ends: increase the profits of the Commonwealth and the stockholders and be a convenience to the Counties of Albemarle, Green, Orange, Madison, Rockingham, Culpeper, part of Louisa and Spotsylvania. The Board of Public Works was authorized to subscribe to the stock in the usual manner, if the company decided in favor of the extension.⁹² The legislature, as one can see, was very anxious to increase the amount of railroad mileage in the state.

The annual stockholders' meeting was held at Louisa Courthouse, June 17, 1839, with Charles Y. Kimbrough, chairman, and N. Thompson, secretary. The annual directors' report was read which stated that in pursuance of a resolution, adopted at the extra meeting of July 20, a contract had been entered into by the directors with James Hunter and Elisha Melton for the extension to Gordonsville. The stock would have to be increased by \$115,000 which would make the total subscription \$415,000. It was hoped that forty-nine miles of the road would be completed by January 1, 1840. By adding thirty-seven per cent to the cost of the

92. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 23,

company and by making an extension of fourteen miles they would penetrate into a fertile region of the valley, it is said. The R. F. and P. Railroad Company was now effecting transportation on the road. However, the directors felt the annual compensation for the transportation of the mails at the rate of \$75 was too low. A report of the gross receipts for the first four months of the present year showed an increase of two hundred per cent over last year. It was anticipated that probably a five or six per cent dividend would be declared by October 31. The reason there was only a two per cent dividend declared on July 15, 1838, was because a large portion of the returns was needed to defray the annual expenses of the road. The report concluded by saying that Charles O. Sanford had been appointed to take the place of James Hunter for the latter had contracted to build the railroad from Louisa to Gordonsville which made it illegal for him to remain in his position.⁹³

The contract made with James Hunter and Elisha Milton, dated July 27, 1838 stated that no curve of the extension should have a smaller radius than 1910 feet, the superstructure should be made of good timber and the same size iron was to be used as formerly. At some point between Louisa Courthouse and Newark double tracks were to be laid

93. Report of Frederick Harris, pres., Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Louisa Railroad Company, pp. 73-88.

and a depot, water station and woodhouse would be constructed there similar to those at Fredericks Hall. At Gordonsville, a double track would be placed. The total amount allowed for the buildings would be \$5000.⁹⁴

The report of the R. F. and P. Railroad Company, which was referred to a committee for study, showed that the gross receipts, for the past sixteen months, were \$14,540.⁹⁵

A committee, made up of James Mitchie, C. S. Jones, F. W. Jones and J. Todd Quarles, reported in regard to reducing the expenses of the company. They were of the opinion that the overseer's salary should be reduced from \$650 to half that sum, that the directors should be charged for riding on the train and that the president's salary should be reduced. Another point brought out was that the amount of work done on the line from Louisa to Gordonsville was not in proportion to the pay rendered the contractors. The result of the report was that a committee was charged with the duty to affect some reductions in the general expenses. It was decided to reduce the president's salary to \$500 per year.⁹⁶

Just before adjournment, it was resolved to place a turnout near Toler's Tavern in order to convenience Mr. Mayberry, who had put up a pig iron plant there.⁹⁷

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

The papers reported, November 1839, an accident which occurred some two miles above Louisa Courthouse. It had resulted from an explosion in the freight cars of gunpowder which was being transported to a man in Newark. A train hand was killed, the fireman and engine driver stunned. The merchandise was scattered into the adjoining fields. After this event the president threatened to prosecute anyone who delivered to them for transport such explosive goods.⁹⁸

At a director's meeting, held December 9, 1839, a three per cent dividend was declared. On February 4, 1840, it was decided to sell to the highest bidder the delinquent stock of the company, at the Merchant's Coffee House.⁹⁹ The sale was to be held at twelve-thirty o'clock and twenty shares of stock were to be sold for current notes.¹⁰⁰ Just one year later, a four and a half per cent dividend was to be declared.¹⁰¹

A letter by one of the customers will give us a little idea of some of the benefits that were being derived from the railroad in 1840. The freight charged on wheat, transported from Trevillians to Richmond by rail, was eighteen cents per ton which was twelve cents cheaper than by wagon. This amount saved could be invested in shares of stock

97. Ibid.

98. Richmond Inquirer, Nov. 19, 1839.

99. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., Jan. 9, 1840.

100. Report of J. H. Lynch, Ibid., Dec. 25, 1839.

101. Report of N. Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., Dec. 22, 1840.

which offered a three per cent dividend. He was of the opinion that the farmers instead of the capitalists should own the stock.¹⁰²

At the fifth annual stockholders' meeting, in June of 1840, Edmund Fontaine was made chairman and N. Thompson, secretary. It was reported that the road was opened to Trevillians in August of 1839 and to Gordonsville, April 10, 1840. As a result of the current business stagnation, the freight was not very heavy. A turnout had been constructed near Marberry's furnace as well as an engine house, turntable, and platform at Gordonsville.¹⁰³

The report showing the receipts and disbursements indicated the gross income of the company, for the six months prior to May 1, 1840, amounted to \$9,682.59 and the expenditures to \$2,429.73.¹⁰⁴

There was discussion as to whether their contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company, which would expire in July of 1843 should be renewed. Many felt that they should do their own transportation. It was decided that dividends would not be declared until the stockholders had expressed themselves on this point.¹⁰⁵

A report of the standing committee stated that the records had been neatly kept, fares had been increased,

102. "A Buckskin," Ibid., Feb. 22, 1840.

103. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Report of the Stockholders, p. 3.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid., p. 5.

smaller dividends were in store due to the general business conditions, and that expenses were too high.¹⁰⁶

An investigation was planned to discover by whose authority some men had worked on the road between Louisa and Trevillians about nine months before the contract was let to Hunter and Melton. The stockholders wanted to know why the contractors terminated the railroad a half mile on this side of Gordonsville instead of extending it into the town proper.¹⁰⁷

The Secretary-treasurer's salary was fixed at \$250 per year.¹⁰⁸

Charles Y. Kimbrough was chosen president, Frederick Harris having resigned, on April 13, 1841 due to poor health. Charles Thompson, Nathaniel Mills and Dr. J. R. Pendleton were named directors.¹⁰⁹

Just before the meeting was brought to a close, C. R. Mason, Superintendent of Transportation, was ordered to reduce the number of laborers employed in keeping the road in repair.¹¹⁰

C. R. Mason had been connected with the railroad, from the beginning, and helped to measure the first mile. For many years afterwards he had in his possession a ruler,

106. Ibid., p. 7.

107. Ibid., p. 9.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid., p. 6.

110. Ibid., p. 9.

with which he measured the first mile of the road.¹¹¹
 Though uneducated, he was gifted in handling figures and estimates. In the great campaign of 1862, he was Jackson's right hand man.¹¹²

XI C. Y. KIMBROUGH

Charles Y. Kimbrough, the new president, lived at Louisa Courthouse. He was a member of the House of Delegates, representing his home county, from 1824-29. In 1833 when only one delegate was chosen to represent each county, he was named to represent Louisa.¹¹³ He had been long prominent in county affairs and had been connected with the railroad from the first. His grandson was the late Judge F. W. Simms, who for many years was prominent in the affairs of the county and state.¹¹⁴ He entered office immediately after being appointed president, in which capacity he served until his death on October 13, 1845, which occurred suddenly at his home.¹¹⁵

There was much talk in regard to extending the railroad to Barboursville, about seven miles west of Gordonsville. Before the end of the year 1842, the stockholders had authorized the receiving of the stock subscriptions for the construction in that direction.¹¹⁶

111. Religious Herald, Feb. 13, 1873.

112. Nelson, op. cit., p. 69.

113. Harris, op. cit., p. 441.

114. Ibid., p. 145.

XII THE STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF 1842

At the annual stockholders' meeting of 1842, William Williamson was appointed chairman and N. Thompson, secretary. The president, in reading his report, compared the gross income of the company of the six months period ending April 1842, which was \$22,838.99, with the period of six months ending October 1841, which was \$12,840.24. This showed to the stockholders just how well their company was progressing. Other points which he laid before them were as follows: 1) the legislature in its last session had voted in favor of extending the railroad further west; 2) the stockholders, as a whole, seemed to desire a reduction in transportation rates; 3) they thought it advisable to renew their contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company; 4) finally, that judgements had been gotten against delinquent stockholders.¹¹⁷

Several resolutions were made, which were as follows: 1) the president and directors would be required to arrange for transportation if the contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company was not renewed; 2) Superintendent C. R. Mason was to make a report of the list of tools furnished and their condition; 3) finally, the president was requested to find out the amount laid out for transportation by the

117. Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of Stockholders, pp. 4-5.

R. F. and P. Railroad Company.¹¹⁸

The president was reelected and Charles S. Jones, Nathaniel Mills and William Williamson were chosen as directors for the coming year.¹¹⁹

XIV THE RETRENCHMENT PROGRAM

As a result of the general economic conditions of the nation the returns were not as great as had been anticipated. A retrenchment program was begun and at a directors' meeting, August 4, 1843, it was resolved that Supt. C. R. Mason should receive a salary of \$650 per year and the overseers \$200 per year. Before adjournment, they decided that there should be a reduction in the number of white carpenters employed.¹²⁰

XV THE TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT RENEWAL

The agreement between the R. F. and P. Railroad Company and the Louisa Railroad Company regarding transportation was not made until April 23, 1844. They could not come to terms and finally they called in the Board of Public Works to arbitrate the matter. According to the agree-

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid., p. 6.

120. Ibid., p. 15.

ment, the R. F. and P. Railroad Company agreed to provide cars, engines, coaches, officers, agents, hands for the train, depots, water stations, shops, oil and wood in return for which it would receive one half of the gross profits plus \$15,000. The Louisa Railroad Company was required to lend it \$20,000 for which it would receive interest. An additional train would be placed thereon if it was felt necessary by the companies. This agreement was to last for three and half years. If an accident occurred due to a fault in the structure of the railroad, then the Louisa Railroad Company would be held for damages, The rates were to be decided upon between the two companies. The contract signed by the presidents of both companies, M. Robinson being the president of the R. F. and P. Company at that time.¹²¹

XVI EVENTS OF 1844

On June 17, 1844, the annual meeting of the stockholders was held at Louisa Courthouse. Clayton G. Coleman was their chairman and A. W. Talley, secretary. The president's report showed that the gross receipts for transportation, for the period ending April 30, 1844, were \$40,424.08, while for the corresponding period in 1843, they were only \$37,529.22. This indicated to the stockholders that business was again on the upgrade after a season of

121. Ibid., pp. 17-8.

general business stagnation. The net income of the past three and half years had been \$31,886.96. The report concluded by saying that the transportation contract had been renewed to last until July 1, 1845.¹²²

A resolution was made requiring a written report from Elisha Melton and R. F. Omohundro of investigation regarding repairs of the road during the period in which they had been in contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company. After the above resolution, the president was reelected and Edmund Fontaine, David Anderson, and Charles S. Jones were chosen as directors.¹²³

The following report was submitted along with other interesting ones at the above meeting:

(List of officers and their compensations).

Chas. Y. Kimbrough, pres.	per annum \$450.	
A. W. Talley, sect'y.-treas.	125.	
Claiborne Mason, supt.	650.	
William A. Netherland, overseer	200.	
B. F. Tyler, overseer	200.	124

Charles Y. Kimbrough died on October 13, 1845, as has been said. The directors elected Edmund Fontaine to take his place, November 10, 1845. Charles Thompson was

122. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders, pp. 3-5.

123. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

124. Ibid., p. 13.

chosen to take Fontaine's place on the board of directors. The following year the new president's salary was increased to \$1000.¹²⁵

XVII EDMUND FONTAINE

Edmund Fontaine, who lived at Beaverdam, Virginia, had been connected with the railroad from the beginning. In 1835, he had represented Louisa in the legislature.¹²⁶ His term of office lasted until November 1865, when William C. Wickham was appointed in his place. The following year Fontaine was reappointed and remained president of the company until 1868.¹²⁷ His death occurred in 1869.¹²⁸

XIX ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF 1846

The eleventh annual meeting of the stockholders was held in June 1846, with the same officers presiding that presided at the last. An agent was chosen to investigate the advisability of extending the railroad to Harrisonburg. There was much discussion of the bill before the legislature to deviate the westward route of the railroad. A report was read showing that the cost of transportation did not exceed \$17,500 annually. It was pointed out that since 1843 they

125. Nelson, op. cit., p. 78.

126. Harris, op. cit., p. 444.

127. Nelson, op. cit., p. 78.

128. Ibid., p. 208.

had paid the R. F. and P. Railroad Company \$22,901.40 annually for such. The directors indicated they favored doing their own transportation. A report was given on the tariff charged at each station and the variations noted in each. This led to a resolution to have further reductions effected, which would apply to all stations and not just to a few of the upper stations. They resolved to renew the contract with the R. F. and P. Company. Just before adjournment, the same officers were reelected.¹²⁹

At a meeting of the directors, June 16, 1846, a three and a half per cent dividend was declared which was to be payable July 18.¹³⁰

XX THE STOCKHOLDERS' PETITION

After the annual meeting, many of the stockholders expressed their opinion that the railroad should do its own transportation. Finally, a petition was sent to the directors, which requested them to call a special stockholders' meeting to consider rescinding the resolution permitting the renewal of a contract with the R. F. and P. Company. This request was rejected. Those stockholders then wrote letters to the other stockholders to get them

129. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Stockholders' Meeting, p. 5-11.

130. Report of A. W. Talley, sect'y., Richmond Inquirer, July 10, 1846.

to demand such a meeting. The above petition was signed by John Poindexter, R. M. Kent, B. S. Winston, John R. Quarles, John S. and A. F. Bulter, R. T. Gooch, Elisha Melton,, John and Robert Ellis, P. Hockett, William Crawford, John Hunter, William Ragland, Robert N. Trice, N. Harris, David Lipscomb, M. S, Valentine, George Crutchfield and others. All those in favor of such meeting were requested to send their names into W. A. Talley, secretary.¹³¹

In reply to this, Fontaine had a letter published stating that he felt no need for such a meeting, as the majority still favored the transportation contract with the R. F. and P. Railroad Company.¹³²

XXI EARLY DESIRES FOR EXTENSION WESTWARD

Great interest was shown in the westward extension during these months. At a meeting of a portion of the stockholders at Hanover Courthouse, October 7, 1846, J. M. Shepherd, William D. Winston, and D. F. Darracott were chosen to attend a meeting at Staunton, Virginia, for the purpose of discussing extension.¹³³ Out in Bath County, delegates were chosen for the same meeting.¹³⁴ J. K. Pendleton, Elisha Melton, and Philip H. Jones were the delegates chosen to attend the meeting of the stockholders at Louisa

131. "A Stockholder", Ibid., Aug. 21, 1846.

132. Letter of E. Fontaine, pres., Ibid., Aug. 26, 1846.

133. Report of Charles Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., Oct. 10, 1846.

134. Report of John Brockenbrough, sect'y., Ibid., Oct. 13, 1846.

Courthouse.¹³⁵

At the Staunton Convention, the delegates expressed the desire that the proposed road would not be extended to Paynes's Run from Stanardsville, but if such a route was taken, they felt the people of that section would take little interest in it.¹³⁶

On March 8, 1847, an act was passed by the legislature providing for an increase of capital by \$250,000 in order that the road might be extended to the eastern base of the Blue Ridge, This was to be made with regard to further extension westward. The Board of Public Works would subscribe to part of the stock, in the same manner as formerly.¹³⁷

XXII THE R. F. AND P. RAILWAY CO. CONTRACT SET ASIDE

After much debate, the Louisa Railroad Company decided to do its own transportation. The contract with the R. F. and P. Railway Company therefore was set aside, July 1, 1847, and from then on the Louisa Company carried on its own transportation.¹³⁸

XXIII CONTROVERSY OVER WESTWARD EXTENSION

A big problem arose as to which route should be taken westward. One of these routes lay through Powell's Gap,

135. Report of Cleyton Coleman, sect'y., Ibid., Oct. 21, 1846.

136. Richmond Inquirer, Nov. 7, 1846.

137. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 27.

138. Nelson, op. cit., p. 128.

the other lay through Albemarle County. In August 1847, surveyors were busy surveying the latter, commonly referred to as the southern route. Nearly \$50,000 had been subscribed by the people of that section. The people of Green and Rockingham Counties were subscribing in increasing amounts as well. Each group was working hard to secure the railroad for their section.¹³⁹

A special meeting of the stockholders was called to find out whether they were in favor of the proposed extension to the eastern base of the Blue Ridge. This meeting was to be held September 23, at Louisa Courthouse.¹⁴⁰

Four objectives would be realized, a citizen of Albemarle County said, by taking the southern route, namely, (1) accommodation of the trade of the Valley of Virginia, (2) facility and economy in the mountain approach, (3) facility and economy in the crossing of the mountains, and (4) ultimate extension of the road westward would be accomplished best by this route.¹⁴¹ Many letters were written and frequent meetings were held by both groups endeavoring to win support for their particular route.

A meeting about this time, of which General William Lambert was chairman, was held in Richmond to discuss the extension. Six gentlemen were appointed to wait upon the

139. Report of Thomas T. Chandler, treas., Richmond Inquirer, Aug. 4, 1847.

140. Ibid.

141. "Albemarle," Ibid., Aug. 20, 1847.

stockholders in order to persuade them to vote in favor of the route through Powell's Gap.¹⁴² An editorial of the Richmond Inquirer said of this meeting, "we have rarely seen the popular current run so high on any question, as it seemed to run on Tuesday night in favor of the northern route."¹⁴³

The following reasons were given in a letter addressed to the stockholders by one in favor of the southern route: "by taking that route, every mile of extension will add immediately to the productiveness of the whole line of improvement. When the road reaches Rockfish Gap, that point will become the center toward which all the track and travel of a large district of country will move - - - Augusta, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Bath, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph will all contribute their quotas to swell the tonnage and augment the travel of the whole road. When the time comes for tunneling the mountains, too, everyone acquainted with the relative merits of Powell's Gap and Rockfish must concede that the latter can be approached and penetrated at much smaller cost than the former. (By taking the southern route) you observe the happy medium between the Baltimore road on the one hand and the James River on the other. By taking this route, you enlarge the gap between the line of the railroad and Winchester, so

142. Richmond Inquirer, Sept. 10, 1847.

143. Ibid.

as greatly to diminish the hazard of having trade and travel diverted down the valley."¹⁴⁴

W. A. Kuper, the Chief Engineer of the Louisa Railroad, who lived for many years at Fredericks Hall, made surveys of both routes. In his report to the stockholders, he favored the southern route although the extension to Powell's Gap would cost less. He said, if they should decide on the latter route, it would found to be steep, the mountains requiring too much detouring. The other points brought out were very similar to the ones already mentioned in this paper. In closing his report, he said the following:

Let me add in conclusion, that your road is to occupy a prominent position in the scale of public improvements, and is destined to effect a complete revolution in the prosperity of Virginia, in developing its agricultural and mining wealth, and in community of feeling and interests uniting the two grand divisions of the state.¹⁴⁵

After the report, the spirits of the Richmonders were dampened toward subscribing to either route, for the majority of those interested who lived in Richmond were in favor of the Powell's Gap route.¹⁴⁶

Other surveys were made of the same routes by Col. Claudius Crozet and others.¹⁴⁷ Col. Crozet was to play

144. "Rockfish," Ibid., Sept. 8, 1847.

145. Report of W. A. Kuper, C. E., Ibid., Sept 13, 1847.

146. Richmond Inquirer, Sept. 22, 1847.

147. Ibid.

an important part in the affairs of the railroad in years to come. He rendered valuable services to this state in many ways. His home was located near Fredericks Hall.¹⁴⁸

At a meeting held in Richmond, September 20, additional subscriptions were secured for the Powell's Gap route to the amount of \$24,000. A Mr. Chrisman spoke indicating the discrepancies in the various surveys and criticizing sharply W. A. Kuper's report.¹⁴⁹

XXIV THE STOCKHOLDERS' DECISION

The stockholders, in their special September meeting, voted in favor of the southern route by a vote of 1,048 to 78, after an animated and interesting discussion. The session lasted two days and the vote was taken at twelve-thirty, Saturday night.¹⁵⁰ The people of Richmond were very much taken back as a result of this.

Contracts were let during October and November for bridging, masonry, superstructure, depots for fourteen miles of the line beyond Gordonsville, which was to be completed by July 1848.¹⁵¹

The directors, in a meeting November 1847, resolved to issue bonds to the stockholders for ten per cent on their shares of net receipts invested in stock for doing

148. Nelson, op. cit., p. 74.

149. Richmond Inquirer, Sept. 22, 1842.

150. Ibid., Sept. 28, 1849.

151. Report of W. A. Kuper, C. E., Ibid., Oct. 25, 1847.

transportation, payable November 1, 1852.¹⁵²

XXV THE MANDAMUS NISI CASE

The Board of Public Works refused to subscribe to the stock of the company, issued for the westward extension, on the grounds that they desired to know more about the route. The stockholders of the central and western part of the state felt that the Richmonders were arrayed against them due to their unfavorable attitude towards the southern route.¹⁵³

This resulted in the Mandamus Nisi Case of the Louisa Railroad Company against the Board of Public Works, which came before Judge Nicholas in the Circuit Court of this district. John R. Cooke was Counselor for the Board of Public Works and Messrs Patton and Lyons were the Counsel for the Louisa Railroad Company.¹⁵⁴ In the decision, the following propositions were conceded: The Writ of Mandamus was not the proper remedy for the wrong supposed by the petitioner and before the Board of Public Works could withhold the subscriptions it must prove or have reason to believe that private subscriptions were being withheld. The Board of Public Works was required to subscribe to the stock of the company.¹⁵⁵

152. Report of Chas. Thompson, sect'y., Ibid., Nov. 16, 1847.

153. Letter of E. Fontaine, pres., Ibid., Nov. 24, 1847.

154. Ibid., Dec. 21, 1847.

155. Ibid., Dec. 29, 1847.

XXVI THE POWELL'S GAP EXTENSION

During the session of the legislature of 1847-48, a bill was introduced which proposed in specific terms to extend the railroad to Powell's Gap.¹⁵⁶ On March 24, 1848, the bill was passed which provided that the capital of the company should be increased by \$250,000 for the purpose of extending the road from Gordonsville through Greene County, along the ridge dividing the waters of the Rapidan and Rivanna Rivers to Harrisonburg. The Board of Public Works was to subscribe the stock in the same manner as formerly.¹⁵⁷

XXVII EXTENSION TO THE RICHMOND DOCKS

Many of the stockholders desired the extension of the railroad to the Richmond docks for they were tired of being a tributary to the R. F. and P. Railway. A bill introduced into the legislature to that effect found little favor at first. It was argued that the Louisa Railroad Company had been given a charter with just as many rights granted as the R. F. and P. Railroad Company. The rates demanded from the Louisa Company by the R. F. and P. Railroad to carry the freight and passengers from Doswell to the city docks were thought to be too high. Others felt that

156. Ibid., Dec. 11, 1847.

157. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 28.

Richmond needed more than one railroad entering her bounds.¹⁵⁸

An act of the legislature passed March 27, 1848 authorized a stock increase of \$200,000 in order that the extension to the docks might be made. The same rates were to be charged on this section, after it was completed, that were being charged on the other portion of the railroad.¹⁵⁹

XXVIII THE R. F. AND P. RAILROAD CO. V. LOUISA RAILROAD CO.

The R. F. and P. Railroad Company strenuously opposed such extension. Many were the articles written pro and con on the subject. The R. F. and P. Railroad Co. was not to be appeased, however. The case was appealed before the state supreme court, which declared that the Louisa Railroad Company had the right to extend its tracks eastward. The bill, which enjoined the courts to stop the Louisa Railroad Company, insisted that the act was inconsistent with the previous grant to the R. F. and P. Railroad Co, and that it impaired the obligation of the contract with them. The R. F. and P. Railroad Co. requested that the respondents be enjoined from entering on the lands condemned for their use, from further building of the roads towards Richmond, and from carrying passengers, freights and mails on such

158. Richmond Inquirer, Mar. 9, 1848.

159. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 29.

a road as might be constructed between the Junction and Richmond. The respondents denied that the act violated the Bill of Rights of the Constitution and that it was not their purpose to invade any rights or privileges of the R. F. and P. Railroad Co. by the manner in which they would use their road if they were permitted to construct such. The Supreme Court of Virginia declared that the privilege or the monopoly guaranteed to the R. F. and P. Railroad Co. by the thirty-eighth section of the act of incorporation was that of transporting passengers between Richmond and Washington, but that the legislature did not part with the power to authorize the construction of railroads between Richmond and Fredericksburg for other purposes. Secondly, a grant of a franchise to one company to construct a railroad or canal is not infringed by authorizing another railroad or canal to be laid across it. Thirdly, if the Louisa Railroad Company should use the new section of its railroad to violate the thirty-eighth section, then the R. F. and P. Railroad Co. would have their rights under the law. The case was taken before the Supreme Court of the United States during the December term of 1851. The judgement of the lower court was confirmed which gave the Louisa Railroad Company the right to construct such a road to the docks at Richmond. The majority opinion was handed down by Justice Grier. Justices McLean, Wayne and Curtis rendered a dissenting opinion.¹⁶⁰

XXIX FURTHER EXTENSIONS

Sealed proposals were to be had, during April 1848 at the engineers office at Charlottesville for the superstructure, graduation, and masonry on the extension to Charlottesville.¹⁶¹

On August 14, 1848, the railroad was completed to Cobham and in December to Roger's Mill.¹⁶²

An act of the legislature, passed March 5, 1849, provided for further extension to a point near Waynesboro. This was to be accepted within twelve months or another company would be chartered for that purpose. It was accepted.¹⁶³

Charles Thompson, treasurer, demanded more money to be paid in by the subscribers of both the eastern and western extension, in May of 1849.¹⁶⁴

The extension to Shadwell, Virginia was completed May 1, 1849, T. J. Randolph being the contractor for this section.¹⁶⁵ Very soon afterwards, there was a demand for stonecutters and masons for the building of bridges on the extension to Charlottesville.¹⁶⁶

At the eastern end, proposals were to be had for build-

160. 13, Howard, p. 71.

161. Report of W. A. Kuper, C. E. Richmond Inquirer, April 11, 1848.

162. Nelson, op. cit., p. 124-5.

163. Charter of the Louisa Railroad Company, p. 31.

164. Richmond Inquirer, May 4, 1849.

165. Ibid., May 15, 1849.

166. Report of W. A. Kuper, C. E., Ibid., June 1, 1849.

ing a depot in Richmond between Broad and Grace Streets.¹⁶⁷

After July 1, 1849, it was announced that the freight charges on the railroad would be settled separately between Richmond and the Junction. Freight charges on all freight or property of any kind in transport from Richmond would be paid at the depot by the sender before the articles were taken away. Freight charges would be paid in Richmond by the consigner to the agent on the following articles sent to Richmond: wheat, oats, corn, cornmeal, bacon, butter, apples, yarn, tobacco, lard, pig iron, beef, pork, and lumber of all kinds. The company declared it was to charge the same rates as were given on the last table of rates of the R. F. and P. Railroad Schedule.¹⁶⁸

John Garrett was chosen secretary and treasurer of the company at the annual stockholders meeting in June 1849.¹⁶⁹

XXX THE ACT OF FEBRUARY 2, 1850

On February 2, 1850, an act of the legislature changed the name of the company to the Virginia Central Railroad. The authorities of Virginia had been satisfied that the destiny of the railroad was different than was first anticipated.¹⁷⁰

167. Ibid., June 5, 1849.

168. Ibid., June 29, 1849.

169. Report of John Garrett, sect'y., Ibid., July 31, 1849.

170. Nelson, op. cit., p. 7.

The railroad had a mileage of 64.6 by February 1850.¹⁷¹ The receipts totaled in September of that year \$91,076.83 while for the corresponding period in 1849, they were only \$77,730.84. The road had not been completed to the docks, as yet.¹⁷²

XXI THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

The following memorandum was included in the sixteenth annual report of the president and directors to the stockholders at their annual meeting in October 1850. It was a report of the equipment they possessed in that year, which was as follows:

8	locomotives
5	passenger coaches
3	baggage cars
100	four-wheel freight cars
23	eight-wheel freight cars
16	hand cars
2	stationary locomotives. ¹⁷³

Thus this railroad which had been started by the people of Louisa had spread far out, being destined to become one of the foremost railroads in the state. When the Civil War broke out the railroad had been extended to Jackson's River, ten miles west of what is now Clifton Forge. Here,

171. Ibid., p. 124.

172. Sixteenth Annual Report of the President and Directors of the Virginia Central Railroad Company to the Stockholders, p. 17.

173. Ibid., p. 19.

it stopped until the close of the war.¹⁷⁴

During the war, the Virginia Central Railroad rendered great service in bringing supplies from the Valley of Virginia for the southern armies. The men who captured John Brown traveled over it. Jackson and his men traveled over it on a number of occasions. Portions of the track were destroyed by the raids of Stoneman and Sheridan.¹⁷⁵ During the whole of the war, it remained fairly intact, at least, until 1865 when it was almost entirely dismantled. In 1865, the rolling stock had been sequestered, bridges destroyed and the treasury depleted.¹⁷⁶ It was rebuilt after the war and in 1878 was absorbed by the Chesapeake and Ohio System.¹⁷⁷

XXXII CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let us get some idea of the value of the railroad to the counties through which it ran. B. M. Jones, a civil engineer of that period, in a long report shows that land in any of those counties affected increased in value. Land in Louisa County was valued at \$11.08 per acre which showed an increase over land in counties of

174. Nelson, James P., The Realization of the Dream of George Washington, the Surveyor on the Banks of the Kanawka.

175. Harris, op. cit., pp. 147-8.

176. Nelson, op. cit., p. 13.

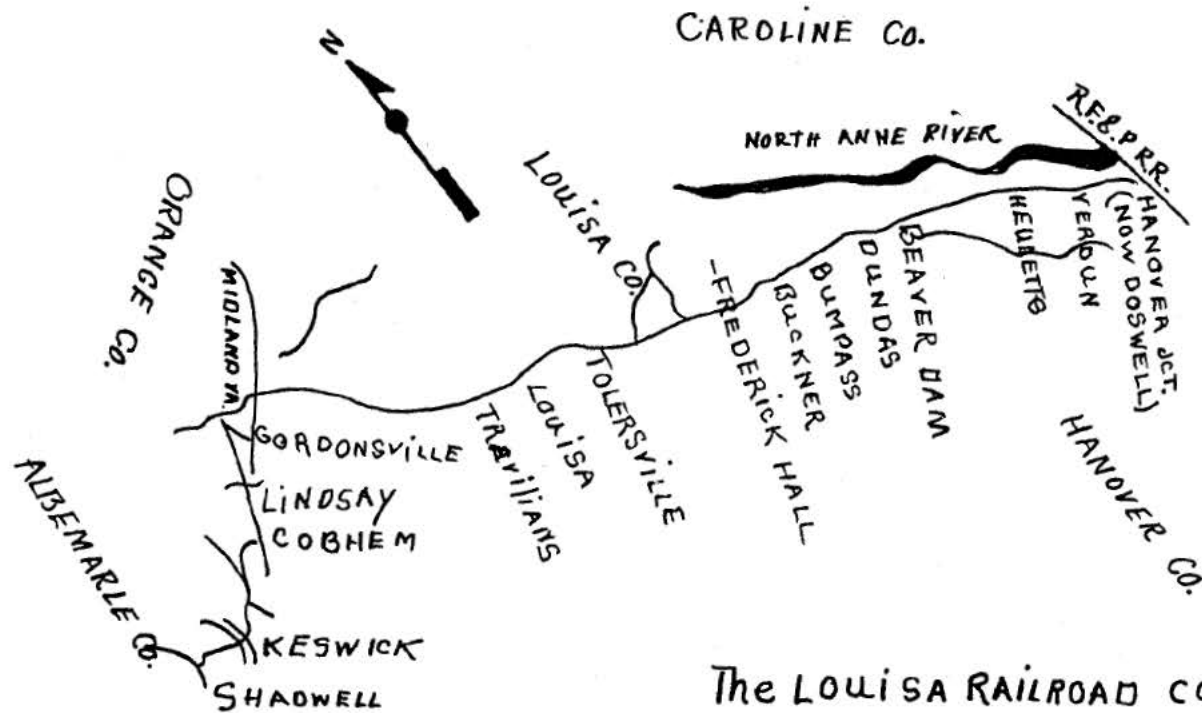
177. Morton, op. cit., p. 361.

1838-50. This noticeable difference was partly due to the better means of transportation provided in these Virginia Counties.¹⁷⁸ The population of Louisa County increased by twelve per cent during this same period while in the decade before it had suffered a loss of three per cent.¹⁷⁹ The tobacco and wheat crops about doubled in the vicinity of Louisa Courthouse, after the construction of the railroad.¹⁸⁰ Thus one may get a glimpse of the important part the Louisa Railroad played in the life of Virginia during the period 1836-50.

178. B. M. Jones, Railroads: Considered in Regard to their Effects upon the Value of the Land, p. 15.

179. Ibid., p. 46.

180. Ibid., pp. 96-7.



The LOUISA RAILROAD CO.

HANOVER JCT. VA (DOSWELL) TO SHADWELL VA.

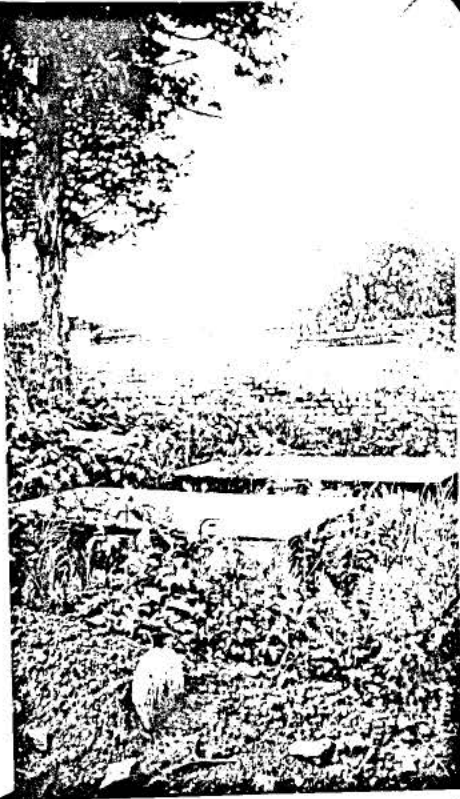
64.60 MILES

CONSTRUCTION BEGUN 1836
 COMPLETED - 1849

CONSTRUCTION WEST BY VA. CENTRAL
 R. R. CO. SUCCESSOR TO LOUISA RR. CO.

SCALE  MILES

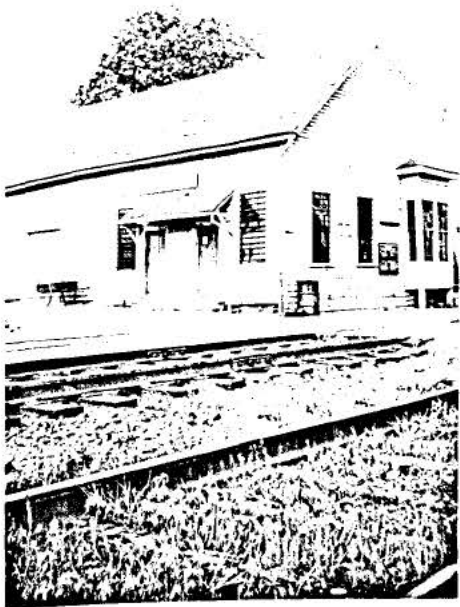
Taken from Nelson's History of The C. and O. Railway Company P. 129.



1.



2.



3.

1. The graves of Frederick Harris and his wife at Fredericks Hall.

2. The home of Frederick Harris as it looks today.

3. The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad depot at Fredericks Hall near the spot where the opening of the Louisa Railroad took place on December 20, 1837.