

**A GENERAL CHRONOLOGY
OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY
ITS PREDECESSORS AND SUCCESSORS
AND
ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

By Christopher T. Baer

1839

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All data subject to correction and change

- Jan. 1, 1839 Camden & Amboy opens for revenue service between a point south of New Brunswick (Millstone Jct. or "COUNTY" interlocking) and Trenton running along Delaware & Raritan Canal; New Jersey Railroad opens between New Brunswick and "COUNTY"; all-rail service begins between Jersey City and Camden; cuts New York-Philadelphia travel time to 5:30 vs. 6:50 via South Amboy; fare is \$4 or \$1 higher than via South Amboy; New Jersey Railroad receives only 1/6 of earnings, although it makes up 1/3 of route; Camden & Amboy inaugurates two new round trips via Camden and New Brunswick and two connections over Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad.
- Jan. 1, 1839 Edwin A. Stevens devises means of evading transit duty on traffic carried via Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad, treating as way traffic because passengers must walk across the canal at Trenton. (Lane)
- Jan. 1, 1839 Associates of the Jersey Company transfer operating lease and sell boats and docks of Paulus Hook ferry from Francis B. Ogden, Samuel Swartwout and the heirs of Cadwallader Colden to the New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Company, it having purchased the Jersey City Ferry Company of 1836 and its four boats *New Jersey*, *Essex*, *Sussex* and *Washington*; ferry becomes officially known as Jersey City ferry; the Jersey City landing is moved from the foot of York Street to the foot of Montgomery Street at Hudson Street. (Valentine, HC, Winfield, McLean)
- 1839 Philadelphia & Trenton changed from 4'-8½" to 4'-10" gauge and connected to Camden & Amboy in Trenton, forming unbroken railroad between Jersey City and Kensington; most traffic routed via Trenton and Camden because of distance from Center City, Philadelphia to Kensington. (according to MB, this apparently not done til spring and summer of 1841?)

- Jan. 1839 Train of freight cars owned by Craig, Bellas & Martien displayed in Philadelphia; five 4-wheel and one 8-wheel; to be used in through service to Chambersburg once the Susquehanna River bridge at Harrisburg opens.
- Jan. 2, 1839 Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad declared 6% dividend. (MB)
- Jan. 2, 1839 First \$100,000 of N.Y. state stock in the New York & Erie Railroad sold to Nevins, Townsend & Co. at 89. (Mott)
- Jan. 3, 1839 Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad authorizes negotiation with Cumberland Valley Railroad for through business. (MB)
- Jan. 3, 1839 Post Office makes first rail mail contract west of Allegheny Mountains with Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad. (Waggoner)
- Jan. 4, 1839 Allen Cuthbert advertises the "Black Horse" inn and adjoining railroad depot on north side of Market Street above 11th in Philadelphia for lease.
- Jan. 5, 1839 Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad contracts 1839 passenger service to P. Lucianna for \$2,000, payable in summer months only. (MB)
- Jan. 7, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad authorizes purchase of locomotive *Osceola* from Coleman Sellers & Co.; contracts to build 40 platform cars for O'Connor's Portable Car Body Line. (MB)
- Jan. 7, 1839 North Carolina act authorizes a state endorsement of \$500,000 in bonds of the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad, the first N.C. state support of a railroad company. (Brown)
- Jan. 8, 1839 PW&B Board approves design of Newkirk Monument; sets fare to Baltimore at \$4.00; orders importation of rail to compensate for those borrowed from Little Schuylkill & Susquehanna Railroad. (MB)
- Jan. 8, 1839 Mail contractors between Williamsport and Elmira are authorizes to switch to the Williamsport & Elmira Railroad as far as it is completed. (HistRyMail)
- Jan. 9, 1839 Ice in the Delaware River is so bad that New York passengers are prevented from crossing by boat to Camden; some cross on the ice and others take Philadelphia & Trenton. (PubLdgr)
- Jan. 10, 1839 Cumberland Valley Railroad Pres. Thomas G. McCulloh in report to Legislature calls for extending a railroad without inclined planes from Chambersburg to Pittsburgh, following the stagecoach route of the

Southern Turnpike. (Wilson)

- Jan. 10, 1839 Pioneer contracting firm of Colket & Sterns takes the contract to build the Tioga Navigation Company and Tioga Coal, Iron, Mining & Manufacturing Company railroads from Corning to Blossburg, Pa., to open the Blossburg Coal Field. (Scharf)
- Jan. 10, 1839 Lehigh Crane Iron Company organized by Josiah White, Erskine Hazard, Nathan Trotter and others associated with the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company; Robert Earp, Pres. (Mathews/Hnggrfd)
- Jan. 10, 1839 Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad suspends service for lack of business while Lake Erie is closed. (Gerstner)
- Jan. 1839 Boston & New York Transportation Company accedes to Cornelius Vanderbilt's threats and buys the now too-small steamboat *Lexington* from him for \$60,000, while the New York, Providence & Boston Railroad pays an additional "bonus" of \$10,000; this amounts to a \$40,000 bribe to end Vanderbilt's competition. (Stiles)
- Jan. 11, 1839 Resolution introduced in the Maryland House of Delegates alleging malfeasance in the construction of the Eastern Shore Railroad. (Rept)
- Jan. 12, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna extends street trackage in Baltimore from Belvidere Station at Eager Street down Guilford Avenue to new station at Saratoga Street; also from Bolton Station down Cathedral and Howard Street to Franklin Street, connecting with a branch of the B&O; and from Guilford Avenue and Monument Street down Monument and Canal Streets to the City Block on Inner Harbor, connecting with the PW&B. (BaltAm, AR - City Block & Howard St. lines actually not completed until 1840)
- Jan. 12, 1839 First section of Williamsport & Elmira Railroad opens between Williamsport and Ralston, Pa. (Taber)
- Jan. 12, 1839 Edward Miller makes first report on survey for Sunbury & Erie Railroad; rejects low-grade route via Bennett Branch and Sandy Lick on account of greater distance in favor of route through highlands via Kane and Johnsonburg; probably done at the urging of Thomas Struthers (1803-1892) and Jacob Ridgway (1767-1843), who have huge but isolated land holdings there: cost estimated at \$4.4 million (Rept, Rosenberger)
- Jan. 12, 1839 Delaware & Raritan's iron propeller steam tug *Robert F. Stockton* tested on the Thames River at London towing four coal barges below Blackwell; built in the summer of 1838 by Lairds. (ARJ)

- Jan. 12, 1839 Forest Improvement Company incorporated in Pa. to take over the 15,000-acre tract of the old New York & Schuylkill Coal Company on the West Branch of the Schuylkill River west of Minersville; Pennsylvania had declared the old company's New York charter void in Pennsylvania, forcing it to operate on a reduced scale through trustees; the Forest Improvement Company remains controlled by Charles A. Heckscher and other heirs of the original owners; it may make improvements to the land and mines but not actually mine coal; in fact the workings of the mines are conducted by the owners and officers of the Forest Improvement Company as individuals; this arrangement of separate incorporated land companies grows to become the norm in the Southern and Middle Anthracite Fields. (PL, Palladino, or PL 6/12??? verify)
- Jan. 14, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad appoints committee to procure a depot on North Street. (MB)
- Jan. 15, 1839 Democrat David Rittenhouse Porter (1788-1867) inaugurated as Governor of Pennsylvania; the Democrats deny retiring Gov. Joseph Ritner any part in the ceremonies; Porter tries to steer a middle course between the Improvement and Van Buren Democrats but alienates the editors of Van Buren's organ, the *Harrisburg Reporter* and members of the party organizations in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh; a native of Montgomery County, Porter names his old friend and former neighbor Francis R. Shunk of Trappe Secretary of the Commonwealth. (PaArch, Snyder, Nolan/Hocker)
- Jan. 1839 In his first message to the Legislature, N.Y. Gov. William H. Seward calls for quick enlargement of the Erie Canal, completion of the branch canals, aid to railroads and creation of a Board of Internal Improvements; Seward believes that the growth of the West will continue growing to the point where tolls can finance the construction of canals and railroads on borrowed money without the need for taxation. (Shaw)
- Jan. 16, 1839 Delaware & Raritan Canal Company iron steam tug is tested on the Thames River between Southwark and Waterloo Bridge, towing 4 barges. (ARJ)
- Jan. 16, 1839 Cumberland Valley Railroad bridge over Susquehanna River between Bridgeport and Harrisburg opens; 20-span Town lattice truss 4,228 feet long designed by W. Milnor Roberts and built by William Cameron; single railroad track on the upper deck and roadway on the lower; train of opening excursion is triple-headed by locomotives *Cumberland Valley*, *Carlisle* and *Nicholas Biddle*; the roadways do not appear to have been completed until Oct. 1841. (Wilson, HistJuniata/Susq, EngSocPaJrnl1915)
- Jan. 19, 1839 Ohio Railroad drives its first pile at Lower Sandusky (Fremont), Ohio;

begins construction between Lower Sandusky and Toledo; company chooses 7'-0" gauge and construction on piles instead of regular grading; the work is done by a mobile pile driver attached to a portable sawmill and a camp-house for the workers; it employs 8 men and can move 20 rods per day; most of the work takes place between Fremont and Manhattan; the entire work is wasted without any part being finished. (LS&MS AR, Gerstner, Waggoner)

- Jan. 21, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad requests city to permit experiment of operating with locomotives through the streets from Bolton to Saratoga Street.
- Jan. 21, 1839 Susquehanna & Tide Water Canal Companies submit a memorial to the Baltimore City Council requesting that they guarantee bonds to the amount of \$1 million to enable them to finish the canal. (Rept)
- Jan. 22, 1839 Engineer Hother Hagé makes second report on surveys of 1837-38 for all-rail route from Chambersburg to Pittsburgh; state considers too expensive; also reports on survey recommending slackwater navigation up Raystown Branch of Juniata. (CC)
- Jan. 23, 1839 Veteran Democrat James Clarke appointed Canal Commissioner in place of Thaddeus Stevens, resigned. (first meeting attended was 1/23!)
- Jan. 24, 1839 Camden & Amboy Railroad files report with state on completion of road. (NJCorp)
- Jan. 24, 1839 Thaw and heavy rains begin over the Schuylkill watershed and Delaware County; the ice freshet in the Schuylkill River is higher than that of Feb. 1822, damages the Schuylkill Navigation Company's works; repairs completed by Apr. 1. (Ashmead, AR)
- Jan. 25, 1839 Act of Congress limits railroad mail pay to \$300 per mile per year; is to be only 25% over the pay by stagecoach over the same route. (Digest, HistRyMail)
- Jan. 25, 1839 Post Office Dept. authorizes a mail contract with the New York, Providence & Boston Railroad. (HistRyMail)
- Jan. 26, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter issues an address on state finances; notes total debts of \$30.2 million vs. \$31.7 million book value of state assets (which he neglects to mention are carried at far more than their market value); projects \$3.9 million deficit for 1839, with many early canal loans coming due; urges completion of Erie and North Branch Extensions and abandonment of Gettysburg Railroad; also suggests that the western states construct a railroad from Pittsburgh to St. Louis. (PaArch)

- Jan. 26, 1839 Pennsylvania authorizes \$1.2 million permanent loan at 5%. (PL)
- Jan. 26, 1839 Two days of heavy rain followed by a freeze cause a major flood in the Schuylkill River from its headwaters downwards; flood carries away 200' of PW&B's Newkirk Viaduct at Grays Ferry and also old floating bridge; meadows between Grays Ferry and Chester flooded, and northbound mail train forced to return to Wilmington; service interrupted for about two weeks. (AR, PubLdgr, Powers, Montgomery - check if damage to Columbia Bridge)
- Jan. 26, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad agrees to subscribe \$112,000 to Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad by receiving stock for existing debts and to provide rails and operate WY&G after completion. (, AR)
- Jan. 28, 1839 Henry R. Campbell writes to his friend Sen. James Buchanan seeking the job of Principal Engineer of the Main Line of Public Works. (BuchPapers)
- Jan. 28, 1839 Anthony B. Warford (-1873) resigns as Principal Assistant Engineer of the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad as all the work is done; W. Milnor Roberts has already moved to Pittsburgh. (MB)
- Jan. 28, 1839 Eastern Shore Railroad makes its last payment to its contractor, M. Duval. (Rept)
- Jan. 28, 1839 Indiana grants the Northern Cross Railroad of Illinois the authority to extend into Indiana to connect with the Wabash & Erie Canal at Covington. (PL)
- Jan. 29, 1839 Nicholas Biddle signs the agreement whereby the Bank of the United States (Pa.) guarantees the obligation of the Morris Canal & Banking Company for \$3.15 million of the Michigan internal improvement loan, principal and interest to Jan. 1, 1843; the BUS is to assume the entire balance if the Morris Canal Bank should default. (HazReg, Parks)
- Jan. 29, 1839 Blackford County, Indiana, fully organized with county seat at Hartford City. (Long)
- Jan. 30, 1839 Pennsylvania legislative resolution authorizes new \$602,250 temporary loan. (PL)
- Jan. 30, 1839 Indiana act grants the Northern Cross Railroad of Illinois the right to extend into Indiana to Perrysville on the Wabash & Erie Canal and repeals the act of Feb. 17, 1838. (PL)
- Jan. 31, 1839 Camden, N.J., ordinance limits speed of trains within city limits to 4

MPH. (Boyer)

- Jan. 31, 1839 Sunbury & Erie Board authorizes continuation of surveys and final location between Erie and Warren.
- Winter 1839 Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company boats begin using Windmill Island canal under certain conditions. (MB)
- Early 1839 Lt. William H. Emory named Chief Engineer of the Eastern Shore Railroad, but is told must resign by July as required by the law of 1838. (Hill)
- Feb. 1, 1839 New Democratic Board of Canal Commissioners consisting of James Clarke, Edward B. Hubley (1792-1856) (Congressman and relative of Henry A. Muhlenberg), and William F. Packer (publisher of Harrisburg *Keystone*, organ of the Improvement Democrats) takes office; Thomas L. Wilson (1800-1861), Secretary; Clarke had supported ex-Gov. Wolf, Packer and Hubley had supported Muhlenberg. (CC, Snyder)
- Feb. 1, 1839 Operating employees of the Public Works appointed by the Antimasons are terminated by the appointment of the new Board; among officials discharged are Andrew Mehaffey, Superintendent, and John Brandt, Master Mechanic, of Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad; Brandt is replaced by __ Boone, who is only a pattern maker. (HseJrnl)
- Feb. 1, 1839 Through freight and passenger service begins from Chambersburg on Cumberland Valley Railroad to Philadelphia over Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster and Columbia Railroads. (AR)
- Feb. 2, 1839 James D. Harris reports on surveys to bypass Belmont Plane, including via Norristown & Valley Railroad (Downingtown-Norristown) and West Philadelphia Railroad; notes that the West Philadelphia Railroad has been graded for 83% of its length and is cheapest at \$534,902. (CC)
- Feb. 2, 1839 Mohawk & Hudson Railroad asks the state for a loan of \$350,000 in state stock or an endorsement on \$350,000 in First Mortgage bonds; the Legislature refuses. (Pierce/MB)
- Feb. 4, 1839 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania advertises for bids on \$1.2 million loan until Mar. 5. (PubLdgr)
- Feb. 4, 1839 Southwark Railroad leaves connection with PW&B to discretion of Road Committee. (MB)
- Feb. 1839 PW&B makes arrangements for passengers to be carried between Dock Street and Wilmington by Philadelphia ice boat temporarily because of

heavy ice in river; announce have purchased Citizens Union Line by exchange of stock at par and henceforth will control own boats. (PubLdgr - was CU Line part of NC&F? see below)

- Feb. 5, 1839 New Canal Commissioners order the old Democratic engineers to report on supposed deterioration of Public Works under the Anti-Masons; begin purge of all employees appointed by Anti-Masons. (CC)
- Feb. 5, 1839 Charles De Hass makes third report on surveys for railroad or macadam road between Chambersburg and Pittsburgh. (CC)
- Feb. 5, 1839 William P. Beatty appointed Superintendent of Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad. (HseJrnl)
- Feb. 6, 1839 Canal Commissioners appoint James Cameron (1801-1861), brother of Simon Cameron, Superintendent of Motive Power on the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad replacing Andrew Mehaffey. (CC)
- Feb. 6, 1839 Act of Congress grants the PW&B a full rebate on railroad iron imported since the act of July 1 1836. (StatutesatLarge)
- Feb. 6, 1839 Indiana act appropriates \$400,000 for the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad and repeals the fifth section of the act of Feb. 14, 1838. (PL)
- Feb. 7, 1839 New York & Erie Railroad Board and Pres. Eleazar Lord threaten to surrender the charter unless the state increases its subscription to \$3 for every \$1 of private capital. (Mott)
- Feb. 8, 1839 Canal Commissioners appoint John Snodgrass Superintendent of Motive Power on the Allegheny Portage Railroad, replacing ___. (CC)
- Feb. 8, 1839 Indiana act abolishes the old six-man Board of Internal Improvement and replaces it with a new three-man board to be appointed by the Legislature, without representing specific sections, effective Mar. 4; the Chief Engineer is to be appointed by the Legislature for three years; annual expenditure limited to \$1.5 million; they are permitted to cancel contracts and concentrate on the most promising projects; no extras are to be allowed on contracts. (PL, Fatout)
- Feb. 9, 1839 Pennsylvania act authorizes new \$1.28 million permanent loan at 5%; appropriates \$230,000 for Tioga and Tunkhannock Lines of North Branch Extension, \$250,000 for Erie Extension, \$30,000 for Sinnemahoning Line, \$40,000 for Wiconisco Canal, \$380,000 to repay money borrowed for flood repairs on Juniata Division, \$30,000 for line to bypass Columbia Plane, and \$300,000 for ordinary repairs. (PL)

- Feb. 9, 1839 James D. Harris makes report to Legislature on enlargement of Union Canal; estimate is \$1.2 million. (HseJrnl)
- Feb. 11, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board approves issue of \$120,000 in Ferry bonds; \$70,000 to be issued to Associates of the Jersey Company, and the rest for new boats and other improvements; sign lease of ferry rights from Associates of the Jersey Company. (MB)
- Feb. 11, 1839 Forty civil engineers meet at Baltimore at the call of J. Edgar Thomson; include Thomson, Benjamin Wright, Solomon White Roberts, Edward Miller, Isaac Ridgway Trimble, Benjamin H. Latrobe, et al.; dominated by a group from the Middle States; appoints a committee of 17 to meet in Philadelphia in Apr. 1839 to draft a constitution. (Calhoun)
- Feb. 11, 1839 James P. Kirkwood makes final report on Maryland Canal on Brookville route; estimate \$11.7 million; subsequent depression marks end of attempt to build a canal route direct from Baltimore to the West. (Rept)
- Feb. 12, 1839 Indiana joint legislative resolution orders a resurvey of the northern end of the Central Canal; also orders the Chief Engineer to survey a canal, railroad or macadamized road to connect the Central Canal and the Whitewater Canal. (PL)
- Feb. 14, 1839 PW&B Board reports has sent memorial to Legislature for a railroad along the west bank of the Schuylkill River from Grays Ferry to Philadelphia & Reading Railroad at Belmont; rejects agreement with NC&F to avoid collision of boats when running against each other; hears requests of Southwark Railroad to operate pleasure cars from Broad Street to Grays Ferry and of Stockton, Falls & Co. of Baltimore for through ticketing between Philadelphia and Wheeling. (MB)
- Feb. 14, 1839 NC&F Board authorizes removal and sale of last of old track. (MB)
- Feb. 14, 1839 Edwin Jeffries (1815-1899) appointed clerk-manager of Parkesburg Shops of Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad. (PRRMensNews)
- Feb. 14, 1839 New stage route opens between Chambersburg and Pittsburgh connecting from Cumberland Valley Railroad.
- Feb. 14, 1839 N.Y. State Senate committee reports in favor of the state assuming the construction of the New York & Erie Railroad. (Mott)
- Feb. 14, 1839 Indiana act reduces the Board of Fund Commissioners to two members to be appointed by the Gov., effective Mar. 1; a second act sets the salaries of the Board of Internal Improvement at \$1,500 and of the Chief Engineer at \$2,500. (PL)

- Feb. 14, 1839 Indiana act for the protection of the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad sets penalties for injuring the works; the Board of Internal Improvement is to make operating regulations. (PL)
- Feb. 15, 1839 Logan County, Illinois, created from part of Sangamon County with county seat at Postville. (Long)
- Feb. 1839 B&O begins surveys west of Cumberland towards Pittsburgh. (Dilts)
- Feb. 1839 Portion of the Miami & Erie Canal between the head and foot of the Maumee Rapids placed under contract. (Waggoner)
- Feb. 18, 1839 Indiana act orders the Fund Commissioners to satisfy existing mortgages; may sell the property located out of state received in settlements with the Messrs. Cohens in Baltimore and Josephs in New York. (PL)
- 1839?? The failure of the Cohen Brothers left them with a \$312,000 debt to Indiana; in payment of this they gave \$65,000 in personal notes, \$14,715 in cash, \$46,644 in Winchester & Potomac Railroad bonds, 751 shares of B&O, 1,000 shares of American Life & Trust Company, 500 shares of General Insurance Company, 230 shares of Canton Company of Baltimore all valued at \$76,000; mortgages on lots in New York and Brooklyn and other property. (Esarey)
- Feb. 19, 1839 Benjamin Aycrigg makes final report to Legislature on West Branch & Allegheny Canal linking Sinnemahoning Line with Allegheny Feeder; various engineering authorities affirm sufficient water for large canal; project touted as the only viable Pennsylvania response to the Erie Canal enlargement in New York. (CC)
- Feb. 19, 1839 Special resolution of Legislature abandons all work on Gettysburg Railroad effective Mar. 1 after \$682,846 spent, with temporary loan of \$150,000 to pay off contractors; pay of all officers and agents to cease on June 15, 1839. (PaArch)
- Feb. 19, 1839 New Castle & Wilmington Railroad Company incorporated in Delaware; not built until 1852. (Val)
- Feb. 19, 1839 Illinois act authorizes the disposition of state property in the old capital of Vandalia. (PL)
- Feb. 22, 1839 LIRR Board orders contractors to resume work on Hempstead Branch by Mar. 10. (MB)
- Feb. 23, 1839 Canal Commissioners discharge principal engineers on Gettysburg

Extension Railroad (William Hasell Wilson), Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad, Portage Railroad, Delaware Division, Eastern Division, Juniata Division, Western Division, Wiconisco Division and West Branch Division; William Hasell Wilson moves to Philadelphia and spends the next two years unemployed (CC, Wilson - all antimasons, new democratic engineers appointed later)

- Feb. 23, 1839 Canal Commissioners again deny petition of John Dougherty of Reliance Transportation Company to build boat plane at Hollidaysburg. (CC)
- Feb. 23, 1839 Illinois authorizes new \$4 million 6% loan for Illinois & Michigan Canal; is unable to sell at par. (Putnam, McGrane)
- Feb. 23, 1839 American Atlantic Steam Navigation Company incorporated in New York by Moses Taylor, James De Peyster Ogden, Archibald Gracie, James Boorman, et al. (Stokes)
- Feb. 25, 1839 Joint Companies and New Jersey Railroad sign supplemental contract covering different services to be offered on each route between New York and Philadelphia; to run two "lines" (trips) via New Brunswick at \$4, of which C&A gets \$3, and one line via South Amboy at \$3; crew and engine change point to be New Brunswick station, even though NJRR owns track as far as "COUNTY". (C&A, MB)
- Feb. 25, 1839 Ohio Legislature passes John Hough's bill to establish a permanent commission of three state bank examiners controlled by the Legislature with powers of interrogation and punishment. (Smiths)
- Feb. 25, 1839 Michigan State Bank suspends payments.
- Feb. 26, 1839 John M. Metheany (1839-1889), future Superintendent of the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad, born on a farm in Auglaize County, Ohio. (ancestry.com)
- Feb. 27, 1839 Pa Legislature passes a resolution allowing the contractors on the Gettysburg Railroad to continue working until May 1, 1839, unless paid off. (PaArch)
- Feb. 27, 1839 Pa. act permits Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad to own stock in Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (Digest)
- Feb. 1839 Work begins on Little Miami Railroad; Robert M. Shoemaker Engineer; 17 miles of disconnected work are to be done in Greene County as condition of local subscription.
- Feb. 28, 1839 New Jersey Steam Navigation Company incorporated in N.J. to operate on

Long Island Sound; capital of \$500,000; replaces the old Boston & New York Transportation Company and brings in new New York City investors; provides the capital to complete the purchase of the *Lexington* from Cornelius Vanderbilt; directors include Elihu Townsend, Moses H. Grinnell, M.O. Handy, M.B. Ives and R.S. Williams. (PL, Dunbaugh, Morrison)

- Feb. 28, 1839 Illinois act authorizes the extension of the Northern Cross Railroad from Danville towards Lafayette, Ind., with the consent of Indiana. (PL)
- Mar. 1, 1839 Charter supplement to Camden & Woodbury Railroad & Transportation Company authorizes extension to Delaware Bay between Stow Creek and Cape May, with a branch to Cape Island. (PL)
- Mar. 1, 1839 Nicholas Monsarrat (1839-1910) future official and receiver of many Ohio railroads, including some that become part of the PRR system, born at London, Ont. (Miller)
- Mar. 1, 1839 Property of the New York, Providence & Boston Railroad conveyed to Trustees of the Second & Third Mortgages. (NHCorp)
- Mar. 1, 1839 Illinois amends its Internal Improvement Law; adds a branch railroad from the Alton, Hillsborough & Shelbyville Railroad to Carlinville; the Alton, Hillsborough & Shelbyville and Central Railroads are to be combined west of Shelbyville; \$150,000 is appropriated for improving the Little Wabash River and \$50,000 additional for the Rock River; the improvement of the Illinois River is to be extended to Ottawa; a new railroad is to be built from Rushville to Erie on the Illinois River. (PL)
- Mar. 1, 1839 De Witt County, Illinois, created from parts of Macon and McLean Counties; not fully organized. (Long)
- Mar. 2, 1839 Pennsylvania House (Democratic) appoints committee to investigate the actions of the Ritner Board of Canal Commissioners. (HseJrnl)
- Mar. 2, 1839 New Canal Commissioner offer the post of Principal Engineer of the North Branch Extension Canal to William B. Foster, Jr., replacing his old friend and mentor James D. Harris, who has been fired for holding office under the Anti-Masons; Foster has been anxious to return from Kentucky for a long time; relations between the two men become cooler; Harris retires to Bellefonte and work as an ordinary surveyor. (Cummings)
- Mar. 2, 1839 Illinois act authorizes \$35,000 for a turnpike from Charleston through Marshall to Darwin, to have the same toll as the Great Western Mail route between Vincennes and St. Louis. (PL)

- Mar. 2, 1839 Illinois act authorizes \$5,000 for improving the navigation of the Spoon River. (PL)
- Mar. 3, 1839 Act of Congress turns the Long Bridge at Washington over to the Washington City government. (StatutesatLarge)
- Mar. 4, 1839 William F. Harnden (1812-1845), formerly a conductor and ticket agent on the Boston & Worcester Railroad, begins the world's first railroad express service over the Boston & Providence Railroad and its connecting Boston & New York Transportation Company steamboats between Boston and New York; operates four times a week; New York agent is James W. Hale whose office is in the old Tontine Coffee House; starting with trips made by Harnden with a carpetbag, Harnden & Co. grows into a large organization and is the first true long-distance express and parcel delivery service. (Stimson, Harlow)
- Mar. 5, 1839 New Democratic legislature in Ohio abolishes Whig Canal Commission of 1838 and restores the Board of Public Works, but with five full-time members and no sectional representation. (, Trevorrow - see below)
- Mar. 6, 1839 Gov. Porter vetoes resolution passed on Feb. 27 for continuing work on Gettysburg Extension Railroad until May 1 or until the contractors are paid off on grounds that the contractors have been working at their own risk, and further payments would be a waste of money. (PaArch)
- Mar. 6, 1839 Elizabethport & New York Ferry Company incorporated in N.J. as successor to an unincorporated joint stock company; runs in connection with the Elizabethport land development and the Elizabethtown & Somerville Railroad. (PL)
- Mar. 7, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter notifies Legislature that no proposals have been received for the \$1.2 million loan of 1839; notes that the Philadelphia Bank, Farmers & Mechanics Bank and Bank of Pennsylvania have all refused to take loan even though state is a major stockholder; urges the state to sell all its bank stocks; behind the scenes, Porter engages Daniel M. Brodhead, a former bank lobbyist, as a go-between to continue bargaining for the loan. (PaArch, PubLdgr)
- Mar. 7, 1839 Cornelius Vanderbilt begins running the *Lexington* to Providence with the tacit understanding of the railroads to drive the Atlantic Steamboat Company and their *John W. Richmond* out of business; charges \$1 for a cabin and 50 cents on deck, meals extra. (Dunbaugh)
- Mar. 7, 1839 Canal meeting held at Rochester, N.Y., to protest Democratic plans to reduce the size of the Erie Canal enlargement from 70 x 7 feet to 60 x 6 feet; the Democratic bill is defeated, but so is the Whig appropriation bill.

(Shaw)

- Mar. 8 1839 Nicholas Biddle writes to Samuel Jaudon instructing him to close up his London agency for the United States Bank of Pennsylvania and engage a British agent. (Govan)
- Mar. 8, 1839 Boundary of Jersey City extended west from Warren Street to Grove Street. (Shaw)
- Mar. 9, 1839 New Jersey act respecting grade crossing safety requires all locomotives to ring a bell when crossing a road, and all grade crossings are to be equipped with signs reading "Look out for the Locomotive." (PL)
- Mar. 10, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu arrives in Canton to suppress the opium trade. (Haddad)
- Mar. 11, 1839 Pennsylvania Canal Commissioners report that \$1.7 million is needed for urgent repairs to existing works; is essential to meet competition from New York, Maryland and Virginia; also discharge all assistant engineers and rodmen appointed by Antimasons. (CC)
- Mar. 1839 Democrats purge Canal Commission of all holding appointments under Governor Ritner; engineers fired include William Hasell Wilson, Hother Hagé, Herman Haupt, John P. Baily, James D. Harris, Benjamin Aycrigg, and Charles T. Whippo (who else); all never work for the State again. (possibly Jan. or very early Mar.?)
- Mar.? 1839 John P. Baily (1805-1874) works for about a year on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad, then leaves civil engineering in 1840, studies law, and becomes a lawyer in West Chester in 1843; he is elected judge of the Chester County Court, 1858-1868. (Futhey)
- Mar. 11, 1839 Clarion County, Pa., created from parts of Armstrong and Venango Counties with county seat at Clarion. (Beitel, Long)
- Mar. 12, 1839 PW&B Board reports bill for link to Reading at Belmont has passed Senate but House is doubtful; declines proposal of stagecoach operators Stockton, Falls & Co. for through fare to Wheeling and to remove road toll from Grays Ferry Bridge. (MB)
- Mar. 12, 1839 Ohio act orders the Canal Commissioners to build a canal from the Walhonding Canal up Killbuck Creek to Millersburg. (PL)
- Mar. 13, 1839 Pennsylvania legislative resolution authorizes survey of Lackawanna River from mouth to Ragged Island below Carbondale; surveyed by William B. Foster, Jr. (PL)

- Mar. 13, 1839 Two passenger cars destroyed on Belmont Plane by breaking of rope; no injuries. (PubLdgr)
- Mar. 13, 1839 Morris Canal & Banking Company gives Michigan two obligations, one for \$1,048,562 and one for \$3,145,687. (McGrane)
- Mar. 14, 1839 Pennsylvania authorizes \$75,000 temporary loan. (PL)
- Mar. 14, 1839 NC&F Board authorizes moving from Chestnut Street to Dock Street wharf in Philadelphia; discontinues Sunday operation; authorizes ordering new locomotives and selling all old locomotives except *Pennsylvania* and *Virginia*. (MB)
- Mar. 14, 1839 Little Miami Railroad authorizes placing road under contract between Cincinnati city line and Columbia; authorizes borrowing \$10,000; appoints committee to fix terminus in Cincinnati. (MB)
- Mar. 15, 1839 PW&B purchases controlling interest in New Castle & Frenchtown by an exchange of stock. (AR)
- Mar. 15, 1839 Ohio act abolishes the Canal Commissioners and restores the old Board of Public Works. (PL)
- Mar. 1839 Supt. Cameron is obliged to operate freight trains over Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad on Sundays because of heavy spring business. (PubLdgr)
- Mar. 1839 The Bank of England has lost £1.25 million in specie to Europe since Jan. 1839. (Govan)
- Mar. 16, 1839 Nicholas Biddle writes to Gov. Porter that the United States Bank of Pennsylvania is actually willing to take the \$1.2 million state loan and even fund new improvements, as long as it is not called upon to lend additional amounts as required by its charter. (Snyder)
- Mar. 16, 1839 Pa. act authorizes the construction of free bridges over the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia; done to pressure the Schuylkill Permanent Bridge Company into selling out to the City. (Scharf)
- Mar. 16, 1839 Pa. act authorizes new \$100,000 permanent loan for subscription to stock of Franklin Railroad. (PL)
- Mar. 16, 1839 Samuel Thomas makes first trial trip with the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad's first steam locomotive *Madison*. (RyW, rivertorail)

- Mar. 17, 1839 John Hough James gets Ohio Senate to pass amendment to the new banking bill making Banking Commissioners liable for damages for negligence in matter of dealing with seized banks. (Smiths)
- Mar. 18, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board authorizes engineer to prepare estimate of branch from Hudson Street, Jersey City, to Hoboken. (MB)
- Mar. 18, 1839 Gov. Porter replies that if the United States Bank of Pennsylvania will take the two loans now pending, and the Legislature approves the sale of the State's bank stock, he will make no further demand on the Bank this year. (Snyder)
- Mar. 18, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu summons 12 members of the Cohong, the merchant guild at Canton that acts as the intermediary for all foreign trade; the leader of the Cohong, Wu Bingjian (-), known as "Howqua" (II) in the West, is particularly close to the Boston China merchants John Murray Forbes and Robert Bennet Forbes, who are investing some of his fortune in the West; although Howqua is probably the richest man in the world, merchants have no status in China and hold their property at the whim of the Emperor and his mandarin officials; Lin order the Cohong to stop the trade in three days or he will execute Howqua and Lu Wenwei ("Mowqua") and confiscate their wealth; Howqua personally delivers the edict to the British merchants Lancelot Dent (1799-1853), James Matheson (1796-1878), and ___ Daniell, and the Americans John C. Green (1800-1875) and William S. Wetmore (1801-1862); William Jardine (1784-1843), the leading British opium trader, has already fled the country. (Hanes)
- Mar. 19, 1839 Virginia act authorizes the B&O to build in Virginia west of Harpers Ferry; must offer a connection with the Winchester & Potomac Railroad. (PL)
- Mar. 20, 1839 Henry R. Campbell resigns as Chief Engineer of Philadelphia, Germantown & Norristown Railroad. (PWSchopp)
- Mar. 21, 1839 Edwin A. Stevens reports to Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad Board on negotiations with Commissioners of Northern Liberties on extension to Willow Street; agree to rent of \$2,000 a year for use of street under an agreement signed the same day. (MB, 6 Wharton 25)
- Mar. 21, 1839 Democratic engineer William B. Foster, Jr., then in Kentucky, appointed Principal Engineer on North Branch Canal. (HseJrnl - Wilson has 3/7 - reports for duty 3/20)
- Mar. 21, 1839 Allegheny Portage Railroad opens for the season; the press of freight is so great in the first part of the year, that it operates 18 hours a day, the first

instance of night running. (CC)

- Mar. 21, 1839 Forty members of the Chamber of Commerce in Canton meet to consider Commissioner Lin's ultimatum; they take the position that they are middlemen and cannot destroy what is the property of the growers in India; Samuel W. Russell (1789-1862) of Russell & Co., the leading American house, announces that he owns no opium, although there are 1,400 chests on his ship; after Howqua returns with a message that Lin is implacable, the merchants agree to turn over a small amount of opium. (Hanes)
- Mar. 22, 1839 Panic on New York money markets in response to premature resumption of the banks in the South and West; stocks fall and food prices increase. (Hone)
- Mar. 22, 1839 Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company Board appoints Edwin A. Stevens and Benjamin Fish a committee to negotiate with Jacob Ridgway for the purchase of his ferry property at Market Street, Philadelphia, and at Federal Street, Camden. (MB)
- Mar. 22, 1839 Norristown & Valley Railroad (Norristown-Downingtown) informs Gov. Porter that the price for selling its road to the state to avoid the Belmont Plane will be the actual amount expended in 4% state bonds; if the state purchases, the work is sufficiently advanced to be completed this year. (HseJrnl)
- Mar. 22, 1839 Commissioner Lin attempts to arrest and execute British opium merchant Lancelot Dent and demands no foreigners leave Canton. (Hanes)
- Mar. 23, 1839 Supplement to Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad charter authorizes extension of track down Frankford Road and Maiden Street to Front & Willow Streets; is to be for one year until it can build a permanent line on another route, which is to interfere with local businesses as little as possible; the route can be approved by the Court of Quarter Sessions upon the report of a committee of 6 persons to view and assess damages. (PL, Digest, Scharf)
- Mar. 23, 1839 Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad agrees to grant the Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad trackage rights on Willow Street from Front Street to 3rd Street to reach the P&T depot at 3rd & Willow, in return for \$500 per year. (6 Wharton 25)
- Mar. 23, 1839 Resolution introduced and passed in Pa. House for \$250,000 state subscription to enlarge Union Canal; to which is attached \$50,000 for Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal and \$30,000 to Danville & Pottsville Railroad to allow it to complete its Sunbury basin. (HseJrnl)

- Mar. 23, 1839 Massachusetts makes a further grant of \$1.2 million in state scrip to the Western Railroad Corporation. (Bliss)
- Mar. 24, 1839 Charles Elliot, the new British Chief Superintendent of Trade, arrives in Canton and convenes a meeting of foreign and Hong merchants; all Chinese servants flee the foreign factory compound. (Hanes)
- Mar. 24, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu blockades the foreign factories (trading posts) at Canton, China, and forces them to turn over and destroy 20,000 chests of opium in the first serious Chinese effort to suppress the opium trade conducted by British, and to a lesser extent, American merchants;. (wrong date)
- Mar. 25, 1839 Pa. legislative resolution orders Canal Commissioners to fit locomotive with anthracite burning boiler invented by Lewis Teese; also to contract with Philip Garrett to alter some of the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad locomotives to burn anthracite. (PL)
- Mar. 25, 1839 Williams Valley Railroad & Mining Company incorporated in Pa.; may hold 2,500 acres of coal land and build a railroad from the head of Williams Valley to the Susquehanna River. (PL)
- Mar. 26, 1839 Pa. Senate amends resolution to aid the Union Canal of Pennsylvania and the Danville & Pottsville Railroad by adding \$300,000 each for Erie Extension Canal and North Branch Extension Canal and a state loan of \$1.03 million to pay for railroad surveys from the Cumberland Valley Railroad to Pittsburgh and arrearages due on Hagé survey. (SenJrnl)
- Mar. 26, 1839 (First) Old Colony Railroad Corporation renamed New Bedford & Taunton Railroad. (NHCorp)
- Mar. 26, 1839 Chinese soldiers complete the encirclement of the foreign factory compound in Canton, cutting off food, and banging large gongs to keep the foreigners unnerved and awake. (Hanes)
- Mar. 27, 1839 Pennsylvania authorizes new \$470,000 permanent loan to pay loans coming due on May 1. (PL)
- Mar. 27, 1839 Great Western Iron Company incorporated under the general laws of Pa. by Philander C. Raymond, an ironmaster from Geauga County, Ohio, backed by New York capitalists; capitalized at \$500,000; to manufacture iron with coke at Brady's Bend, Pa.; Knowles Taylor of New York, Pres.; Jonathan Little, Treasurer; and Raymond as Superintendent. (PaStDept, Fell)

- Mar. 27, 1839 Charles Elliot gets British merchants to surrender their opium at Canton to Commissioner Lin, promising the merchants that the British government will reimburse them; Lin keeps the foreigners trapped in their factories, hoping to force the other foreign nationals to comply also, although they have very much less opium than Lin thinks; the British turn over 20,283 chests by May 21. (Hanes)
- Mar. 29, 1839 Nicholas Biddle resigns as Pres. of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania and replaced by Cashier Thomas Dunlap (1793-1864); Dunlap is married to Anne Wilkinson Biddle (1791-), the sister of Thomas Biddle; the diarist Sidney George Fisher describes him as “a fat, dull man, not fit to sit in Biddle’s seat”; at this time, one-third of the bank’s income-generating assets consist of stock in other banks, canals, railroads, and mines, and internal improvement bonds; the bank’s loans and discounts are secured by similar stock and bonds, all of which are very volatile. (Wood, Govan, Hammond, WBSmith, FisherDiary)
- Spring 1839 Thomas J. Power, Principal Assistant Engineer, goes over the survey of the southernmost line for the Sunbury & Erie Railroad. (Rept)
- Apr. 1, 1839 New Jersey Railroad ends free passes for stockholders. (MB)
- Apr. 1, 1839 PW&B discharges Superintendent Charles Lombaert, father of future PRR VP Herman J. Lombaert, as economy measure. (MB)
- Apr. 1, 1839 Virginia act orders that the state’s subscription of \$302,100 is to be made by the Board of Public Works when the B&O is completed between Harpers Ferry and Cumberland and between Brownsville and Wheeling. (PL)
- Apr. 1, 1839 Virginia act orders Claudius Crozet of the Board of Public Works to survey for a railroad from the Louisa Railroad at Gordonsville across the Blue Ridge Mountains to Staunton in the Valley; Crozet’s survey is somewhat similar to his later one for the Blue Ridge Railroad and to the later Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad main line, but uses switchbacks and a 4,475-foot tunnel to cross the Blue Ridge. (PL, VaBPW)
- Apr. 1, 1839 Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad reopens. (Gerstner)
- Apr. 1, 1839 Madison & Indianapolis Railroad leased by State of Indiana to Branhams & Co. (Robert Branham, David C. Branham, William H. Branham and Elias Stopp) for 60% of gross revenues; first 4-2-0 locomotive *Madison* (BLW c/n __) placed in revenue service making one round trip between North Madison and Vernon; regular operations with locomotive and freight cars begun; formerly just horse-drawn passenger cars. (Church, C&C, Anderson, RyRegister)

- Apr. 2, 1839 The State Bank of Michigan incorporated with the power to operate seven branches and with a capital of \$2 million; patterned on the State Bank of Indiana; it lasts less than a year. (PL, Dunbar)
- Apr. 3, 1839 James O'Connor & Co. of Philadelphia inaugurates Baltimore-Pittsburgh line of portable car bodies over Baltimore & Susquehanna and Main Line of Public Works; each car body carries 2-3 tons; are carried between York and Wrightsville on wagons pending completion of Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (AR, 1st ad in BaltAm 4/27)
- Apr. 3, 1839 Jay Cooke returns to Philadelphia to join the firm of E.W. Clark & Co. as a clerk at the invitation of Enoch W. Clark. (Oberholtzer, Larson)
- Apr. 4, 1839 Silas Moore of Pennsylvania Packet Boat Company writes to PW&B requesting through ticketing for Baltimore-Pittsburgh via Philadelphia. (MB)
- Apr. 4, 1839 Alarmed by the fact that steamboats and railroads provide quick and superior escape routes for runaway slaves, Maryland Legislature passes an act prohibiting any slave from traveling on a steamboat or train unless in company of a master or with a signed pass; captains and railroads to be fined \$500 for each violation; owners of runaway slaves may recover full value from any railroad or boat line involved in an escape. (PL)
- Apr. 5, 1839 William B. Foster, Jr., arrives at Towanda and organizes new engineer corps for North Branch Extension Canal. (HseJrnl)
- Apr. 5, 1839 Future PRR historian William Bender Wilson (1839-1919) born at Harrisburg; son of Thomas Low Wilson (1800-1861), Secretary to the Board of Canal Commissioners, and Juliana Margarett Wilson. (Wilson)
- Apr. 5, 1839 Maryland act authorizes further state loan of \$750,000 to Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad to complete to Wrightsville; new loan to be first lien superior to prior liens given to City of Baltimore; because of the depression, the money is not received before the end of 1840. (Digest, AR - also has provision for B&O - need PL or B&O digest)
- Apr. 5, 1839 Hartford & Springfield Railroad incorporated in Mass. (NHCorp)
- Apr. 5, 1839 Williamson County, Illinois, created from part of Franklin County with county seat at Marion. (Long)
- Apr. 6, 1839 Joint Companies Board discusses New Jersey Railroad contract; appoints committee to meet with New Jersey Railroad. (MB)

- Apr. 6, 1839 P. Lucianna, passenger contractor on Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad, complains of people stealing rides on freight cars rather than ride his pleasure cars. (MB)
- Apr. 6, 1839 Maryland act loans \$1 million to Susquehanna & Tide Water Canals. (PL)
- Apr. 6, 1839 Maryland legislative resolution authorizes Treasurer of the Western Shore to pay \$200,000 on the state's \$1 million subscription to the Eastern Shore Railroad; this is later revoked. (PL)
- Apr. 6, 1839 Eastern Shore Railroad contractor M. Duval gives a note for \$8,000 for supposedly due for construction work between Elkton and the Bohemia River; the contract is abandoned, and payment goes to arbitration. (Rept)
- Apr. 6, 1839 Franklin Railroad Board offers to extend to Williamsport, if the citizens will raise \$10,000 in subscriptions, or to Hagerstown, if it raises \$20,000; Hagerstown wins. (Westhaeffer)
- Apr. 7, 1839 Maryland act authorizes town of Hagerstown to subscribe \$20,000 to Franklin Railroad in return for its passing through center of town. (Digest)
- Apr. 8, 1839 Spring flood washes out North Branch Canal feeder dam at Old Forge on Lackawanna River; replaced by "temporary" brush dam, while Canal Commissioners consider appeals to extend canal further up Lackawanna; flood also heavily damages Delaware Division Canal. (CC)
- Apr. 9, 1839 Eastern Shore Railroad contractor M. Duval ceases operations for non-payment; however, he keeps his men and horses in readiness in case the payments should be resumed. (Rept)
- Apr. 9, 1839 Michigan Legislative Committee reports on irregularities in accounting and expenditures by the Board of Internal Improvements, discrediting regular Democratic leaders David McKinstry and James B. Hunt. (Parks)
- Apr. 10, 1839 Michigan act authorizes a settlement with the Michigan State Bank, withdrawing all the state's deposits. (PL)
- Apr. 11, 1839 Delaware & Raritan steam tug *Robert F. Stockton*, a 71' x 10' vessel with an iron hull and Ericsson screw propeller built at Liverpool, leaves London under sail.
- Apr. 11, 1839 PW&B Board authorizes depositing 13,000 with United States Bank of Pennsylvania as collateral for a loan of \$900,000 as originally promised by Wilmington & Susquehanna Railroad in 1837. (MB)
- Apr. 11, 1839 NC&F Board authorizes sale of old strap rail to PW&B. (MB)

- Apr. 11, 1839 Heavy rains and flooding in the Lehigh and Delaware watersheds damage the Delaware Division Canal. (MChCourier)
- Apr. 12, 1839 Village of Astoria, N.Y., now part of Queens, laid out in the Town of Newtown. (Munsell/Queens)
- Apr. 15, 1839 House committee to investigate Gettysburg Railroad begins hearings and examination of route. (HseJrnl)
- Apr. 15, 1839 Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad Board resolves to take control of the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad Banking Company. (Waggoner)
- Apr. 1839 Robert M. Shoemaker completes the survey for the Little Miami Railroad. (Shell)
- Apr. 1839 United States Bank of Pennsylvania begins selling bills of exchange on Samuel Jaudon and Hottinguer & Co. in an attempt to prevent the export of specie. (Govan)
- Apr. 1839 Only 6 member of the committee of 17 appointed in Feb. 1839 convene at Philadelphia to write a constitution for a civil engineering society; Edward Miller is Secretary and apparently writes the constitution with the assistance of other Pennsylvania engineers not members of the committee; the proposed society it to share facilities and officers with the Franklin Institute; of the 17 members, only 7 vote in favor, so the plan fails; it appears that pressure for forming a society came particularly from those engineers purged by the Democrats from the Pennsylvania Public Works, which divides them from engineers who are Democrats or employed by Democratic administrations. (Calhoun)
- Apr. 1839 Etna Iron Works goes into operation at New Castle, Pa., by James D. White (-1840), a rolling mill and nail works; uses blooms from Juniata County and coal from mines north of New Castle. (Durant)
- Apr. 16, 1839 Meeting in support of the New York & Erie Railroad held at the Merchants Exchange. (ARJ)
- Apr. 16, 1839 Michigan act penalizes false bank notes; Chancellor is to appoint a receiver for the Farmers & Merchants Bank; no more banks are to be formed under the General Banking Law of 1837. (PL)
- Apr. 18, 1839 Michigan act provides for laying out 19 state roads and altering others, including, Kalamazoo-Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids-Muskego Lake. (PL)

- Apr. 19, 1839 Samuel Jaudon writes to PW&B that no bonds have been sold. (MB)
- Apr. 19, 1839 Baltimore ordinance fixes location of Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad from Canal & Wilk(es?) Streets, down Wilk Street to Exeter Street, and down Exeter to the City Block. (Digest)
- Apr. 19, 1839 Former N.J. Gov. and steamboat entrepreneur Aaron Ogden (1756-1839) dies at Jersey City, having lost his fortune as a result of the adverse decision in *Gibbons v. Ogden*. (Sobel)
- Apr. 19, 1839 Michigan act authorizes changing the location of the Southern Railroad between Centerville and Niles. (PL)
- Apr. 20, 1839 Michigan cuts Board of Commissioners for Internal Improvement from seven to three members. (PL)
- Apr. 20, 1839 Michigan Gov. Stevens T. Mason refuses to sign a joint resolution for leasing the Central Railroad to a private operator. (Marsh)
- Apr. 20, 1839 Michigan act fixes the branches of the State Bank of Michigan at Detroit, Monroe, Adrian, Ann Arbor, Niles, Jackson, Pontiac, Marshall and Mount Clemens. (PL)
- Apr. 22, 1839 Rope of Belmont Plane on the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad breaks just as four freight cars of the Despatch Line reach the summit; they run away down the plane; five cars are destroyed. (PubLdgr)
- Apr. 23, 1839 New York act permits any railroad company to contract for the use of another. (PL)
- Apr. 23, 1839 Lehigh Crane Iron Company formally incorporated in Pa. with a capital of \$100,000 under the 1836 general law for forming iron companies; to build an anthracite iron works at Craneville, now Catasauqua. (Mathews/Hngrfrd)
- Apr. 23, 1839 Rawlings & Reynolds, agents of the Illinois & Michigan Canal, contract with John Delafield, Pres. of the Phenix Bank of New York, to take \$300,000 of canal bonds, to be paid for in installments of \$50,000 starting Aug. 1, 1839, but drawing interest from June 10. (McGrane)
- Apr. 25, 1839 Southwark Railroad has contracted with PW&B, which pays one third of gross receipts in lieu of toll. (MB)
- Apr. 26, 1839 N.Y. act authorizes the Brooklyn & Jamaica Railroad to further straighten the Brooklyn, Jamaica & Flatbush Turnpike from the land of A. Selover eastward to Cripplebush Road. (PL)

- Apr. 28, 1839 Petroleum pipeline pioneer Henry Harley (1839-1889) born at Canton, Ohio. (ancestry.com)
- Apr. 29, 1839 Supplement to LIRR charter authorizes additional \$750,000 in stock and issue of bonds equal to total capital stock; may build branches to any points on Long Island outside of Kings County. (Digest)
- Apr. 29, 1839 Joint Board of Joint Companies hears report that they have contracted with Jacob Ridgway to buy his ferry house at the foot of Market Street, Camden, and boats *Hornet*, *William Wray* and *Philadelphia* for \$44,000, to be paid for partly in stock of Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company, plus \$240,000 for real estate; Edwin A. Stevens is to buy the ferry company by subscribing to its stock, and Camden & Amboy Railroad is to deed ferry company its boats *State Rights* and *John Fitch*; deal is not closed until Aug. 1840. (MB)
- Apr. 29, 1839 Hartford & New Haven Railroad opens between Hartford and New Haven; later extended to docks at New Haven. (Dunbaugh - verify Poor?)
- Apr. 29, 1839 Illinois Internal Improvement Fund sells the Bank of the United States (Pa.) £225,000 bonds payable in London at 4s6d on the dollar; because of 10% exchange rate advantage in favor of London, the state loses \$285,500; the bonds are taken by Pres. Thomas Dunlap in his individual capacity but soon transferred to the Bank. (McGrane, WBSmith)
- Apr. 30, 1839 New York Legislature defeats a second bill to have the state take over the New York & Erie Railroad as a state project by vote of 17 to 14. (Mott)
- Apr. 30, 1839 E. S. Dodd of Toledo is elected Pres. of the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad, replacing Richard Mott. (Waggoner)
- May 1, 1839 B&O Board adopts the “northern line” from Cumberland through Pennsylvania near Connellsville to Wheeling. (Munroe)
- May 1, 1839 Allegany Slack-Water Navigation Company incorporated in N.Y. to improve the Allegheny River above Olean. (Ellis/Cattaraugus)
- May 2, 1839 Steamboat *Wave* begins regular trips between New York and Keyport, N.J. (Ellis)
- May 3, 1839 Philadelphia County Commissioners request PW&B to remove road toll from Grays Ferry Bridge. (MB)
- May 3, 1839 N.Y. act authorizes a survey for a canal from Buffalo to the Allegheny River near Warren, Pa. (Ellis/Cattaraugus)

- May 4, 1839 New York & Harlem Railroad opens southern extension from Walker Street to City Hall (Tryon Row, site of Municipal Building) in New York City. (Poor, GrnBk, Grogan)
- May 6, 1839 Canal Commissioners purchase an anthracite-burning locomotive designed by Ross Winans now being tested; an 0-4-0 with a vertical boiler; and order one additional locomotive of the same type. (CC)
- May 6, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board dismisses the committee on the Hoboken Branch as unable to reach agreement with the Stevens family; accepts proposal of Mr. Edge to build hotel on south side of Montgomery Street opposite Jersey City Terminal. (MB)
- May 6, 1839 Little Miami Railroad reports that Cincinnati has issued \$60,000 in bonds on subscription; have placed Cincinnati-Columbia segment under contract. (MB)
- May 6, 1839 Pulaski County, Indiana, fully organized with county seat at Winamac. (Long)
- May 6, 1839 De Witt County, Illinois, fully organized with county seat at Clinton. (Long)
- May 7, 1839 Illinois Fund Commissioners deliver \$283,000 in bonds to John Delafield; draw interest from this date but first \$50,000 installment for payment is not due until Dec. 1. (McGrane)
- May 8, 1839 Thaddeus Stevens belatedly claims his seat in the Pennsylvania Legislature. (Palmer)
- May 8, 1839 James River & Kanawha Company Board abolishes the post of Consulting Engineer, held by Benjamin Wright; Wright is appointed Chief Engineer in place of Charles Ellet, Jr.; Ellet's dismissal is the result of conflict with Wright and Pres. Joseph C. Cabell and his own prickly personality; Edward H. Gill is named Principal Assistant Engineer for the section above Lynchburg. (Lewis, Minor/EaglesByte)
- May 9, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter vetoes an act making subscriptions to a large number of turnpikes, bridges and road projects, a reversion to spreading public works spending beyond the lines of the canals and state railroads. (PaArch)
- May 10, 1839 Post Office Dept. authorizes the contractor on the Old York Road route between New York and Philadelphia to transfer the Plainfield, N.J.-New York leg to the Elizabethtown & Somerville Railroad. (HistRyMail)

- May 11, 1839 Seat of Lake County, Indiana, changed from Lake Court House to Liverpool. (Long)
- May 13, 1839 William D. Lewis resigns as PW&B director. (MB)
- May 13, 1839 Michigan workers trying to build Michigan's St. Mary's Falls Canal are driven off by the Army near Fort Brady for encroaching on federal property; the canal would destroy the mill race supplying the fort's sawmill. (Dickinson)
- May 14, 1839 PW&B Board reports that the company has bought a plot for the Newkirk Monument at Grays Ferry; have negotiated with B&O to continue the use of its depot in Pratt Street; authorizes Southwark Railroad to operate "pleasure cars" to Grays Ferry; Southwark Railroad to charge 12.5 cents, of which PW&B is to get one-third; authorizes construction of wharf on Delaware River three miles north of Wilmington. (MB)
- May 15, 1839 Pennsylvania House fails to concur with Senate amendments to bill to aid the Union Canal by 46-45 vote; Democrats then try to amend bill to grant aid to a long list of turnpike companies all around the state, which fails 52-39. (HseJrnl)
- May 15, 1839 Legislative committee begins hearings on the corruption of the Ritner Board of Canal Commissioners and Thaddeus Stevens. (HseJrnl)
- May 1839 New Jersey Steam Navigation Company takes the *Lexington* off of Vanderbilt's People's Line to Providence for rebuilding. (Dunbaugh)
- May 1839 Chesapeake & Ohio Canal opens to Dam No. 6 ten miles above Hancock. (Dilts)
- May 1839 City Point Railroad extended a quarter-mile from Blandford into the town of Petersburg, Va. (Cnls&RRs)
- May 16, 1839 Lehigh Crane Iron Company incorporated under the Pennsylvania general law of 1836 with the backing of the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Company to smelt iron with anthracite coal. (PaStDept - see 4/23?)
- May 16, 1839 Bank of England raises its rediscount rate to 5%, making it impossible for Samuel Jaudon to sell American securities and May Humphreys to sell American cotton. (Govan, Francis)
- May 17, 1839 Georges Creek Coal & Iron Company draws the first run of iron from the coke-fuel Lonaconing Furnace in the Cumberland (Md.) Coal Field; the company has imported skilled iron-workers from Wales; however, it

remains accessible only by wagon until 1847; for the moment, the nearest railhead is Winchester, Va. (MdHMag 70, Harvey, Knowles)

- May 17, 1839 Monongahela Navigation Company places Dam No. 2 at Braddock's Upper Ripple under contract. (Crumrine)
- May 19, 1839 George Nowlan abandons the Prospect Hall on the New York & Harlem Railroad at Yorkville and opens the Pavilion Hotel at its Harlem River terminus. (Stokes, Greene)
- May 20, 1839 Senate Committee on Roads, Bridges & Inland Navigation, with majority of Whigs and Anti-Masons, orders Canal Commissioners to investigate delays in location and paying estimates on North Branch and West Branch Extensions, particularly setting aside of old measurements and contracts made by Anti-Masons; House concurs. (SenJrnl, HseJrnl)
- May 20, 1839 Delaware Division Canal reopens after flood repairs. (MChCourier)
- May 20, 1839 Portion of Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal opens between New Castle, Pa., and Warren, Ohio. (PittsGaz)
- May 20, 1839 Presbyterian missionaries establish a mission at Grand Traverse Bay in Michigan, the first permanent settlement in the area. (Wakefield)
- May 21, 1839 Canal boat *Ontario* arrives at Warren, Ohio, on the Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal to a public celebration. (PittsGaz)
- May 23, 1839 Pennsylvania authorizes Philadelphia & Trenton to extend from Kensington to 3rd & Willow Streets via track in Frankford Road to link up with other railroads entering the city and secure a depot closer to Center City.
- May 23, 1839 Packet boat *Ontario* is the first to arrive at Warren, Pa., from Beaver, with a large public celebration; operated by Clarke & Co., which will operate a regular line with the *Ontario*, *Huron* and *Hudson*. (Trumbull/Mahoning)
- May 24, 1839 Legislative committee begins hearings on conduct of present Canal Commissioners on North and West Branches; on same day, a group of Rinter contractors issues a protest against Canal Commissioners, saying they have been cheated, and calling for popular election of Canal Commissioners; however, accusers fail to appear before committee until subpoenaed. (HseJrnl)
- May 24, 1839 The Democrat-controlled Pennsylvania House votes to exclude Thaddeus Stevens. (Palmer)

- May 24, 1839 Mohawk & Hudson Railroad Board reports that the Utica & Schenectady Railroad has again turned down its appeal for financial aid. (Pierce/MB)
- May 24, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu orders all opium traders to leave China; by June, only 15 Americans and 6 Britishers remain at Canton; the Americans begin secret sales of modern weapons to Lin; the British simply move their base of operations to the Portuguese colony of Macao, 60 miles downstream from Canton at the mouth of the Pearl River; the American firm of Russell & Co. surrenders its opium and temporarily ends its participation in the opium trade; this enables them to resume trading, while the British are embargoed. (Hanes, Haddad)
- May 28, 1839 *Robert F. Stockton* arrives in New York; first iron steamboat to cross the Atlantic, albeit under sail; crossed in 45 days; is 71 feet long with an engine in the rear working an Ericsson screw propeller. (NYPost/Stokes, ARJ) at about 8 MPH; machinery installed at New York; four other tugs are delivered by 1842 but soon sold as the wash damages the canal banks.
- May 28, 1839 Cincinnati banks begin receiving only city bank notes and appoint an agent to buy and sell the notes of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois country banks at 1.5% discount. (Smiths)
- May 27, 1839 Canal Commissioners refuse to comply with Senate demands on grounds is tantamount to impeachment, and impeachment must originate in the House. (CC)
- May 28, 1839 On recommendation of Engineer William K. Huffnagle, Canal Commissioners order end to laying U.S.-made cast iron rail on road to avoid Columbia Plane; to be confined to sidings only. (CC)
- May 28, 1839 Tide Water Canal Company issues \$1 million mortgage to State of Maryland. (Rdg)
- June 1, 1839 B&O opens new alignment of old main line eliminating inclined planes at Parris Spring Ridge; cuts 48 hours off the running time for freight from Winchester, Va., to Baltimore; a train can now make a round trip between Baltimore and Harpers Ferry in 24:00; cost of shipping flour falls to 6 cents per ton-mile. (Dilts, AR, VaBPW)
- June 1, 1839 British steamship *Great Western* arrives in New York with the word that money is tight in England and that the Bank of England has raised its discount rate to 5%; the news causes stocks on the New York Exchange to tumble. (Hone)
- June 1, 1839 Owners of the 30 most important boats operating on the upper Great Lakes form an association to pool profits and establish regular lines between

Buffalo and Chicago with service equal to actual demand.

- June 1, 1839 Northern Cross Railroad opens between Meredosia and Morgan City (12 mi.); first railroad in the State of Illinois.
- June 1, 1839 Liverpool banking house of W. & J. Brown & Co. renamed Brown, Shipley & Co.; John A. Brown (1788-1872) of Philadelphia retires from all the Brown houses, and the Philadelphia dry goods business is continued by his partner as Johnston McLanahan & Co., and the Philadelphia banking business by his brothers George Brown (1787-1859) and James Brown (1791-1877) as Browns & Bowen. (Brown)
- June 4, 1839 Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad authorizes purchase of 18 miles of T-rail. (MB)
- June 4, 1839 Auburn & Syracuse Railroad opens over its full length between Auburn and Syracuse after bridging the mill pond at Geddes, west of Syracuse; steam locomotive *Syracuse* replaces horse-drawn cars operated by J.M. Sherwood; trains run into the station of the Utica & Syracuse Railroad at Syracuse. (Cnls&RRs, Harlow, RRCntNY)
- June 4, 1839 Future anthracite coal operator Eckley Brinton Coxe (1839-1895) born at Philadelphia, the third son of Charles Sidney Coxe (1793-1850) and Ann Maria Brinton Coxe (1801-1876) and grandson of land speculator Tench Coxe. (HSP/Coxe Pprs)
- June 5, 1839 Welsh ironmaster David Thomas (1794-1882) and his family arrive at New York on the *Roscius*; the castings for the blowing machinery and hot blast stoves have been contracted for in Britain, but the blowing cylinders are too large for the hatches of the ship; Thomas finally persuades Samuel Vaughan Merrick and John H. Towne to enlarge the boring machinery of their Southwark Foundry to bore the 5-foot cylinders. (Mathews/Hngrfrd)
- June 6, 1839 Pa. Senate directs a resolution to Gov. Porter asking why the delay in paying off the contractors on the Gettysburg Railroad. (PaArch)
- June 6, 1839 Madison & Indianapolis Railroad opens from Grahams Ford to Vernon, Ind. (Anderson, C&C)
- June 7, 1839 Pennsylvania authorizes new \$50,000 permanent loan. (PL)
- June 8, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter declines to answer the Senate's request on why the contractors on the Gettysburg Railroad have not been paid. (PaArch)
- June 8, 1839 Whitewater Canal opens between Lawrenceburgh and Brookville, Ind.; work is suspended in Aug. 1839 and not resumed until 1842; the canal is

located in a steep and narrow valley, which renders it extremely susceptible to flood damage. (wiki, Fatout)

- June 10, 1839 Arbitration of the surrendered contract for grading the northern part of the Eastern Shore Railroad is postponed at the request of the contractor M. Duval. (Rept)
- June 10, 1839 New York & Harlem Railroad begins running a separate line of horse cars every 10 minutes from City Hall to 15th Street from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM with a 6-cent fare. (Stokes, Greene)
- June 10, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter urges emergency appropriation for repairs to Public Works; by law all toll receipts are pledged to pay interest and cannot be applied to repairs. (PaArch)
- June 10, 1839 Clarke & Co. of Beaver, Pa., begins operating line of three canal packets between Beaver and Warren, Ohio, on Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal; boats were formerly used on Baltimore & Pittsburgh Line. (PittsGaz)
- June 11, 1839 PW&B authorizes John Connell to go to England to help sell bonds. (MB)
- June 11, 1839 Short strike of construction workers on the Reading between Reading and Hamburg, Pa., for an increase from \$1.00 to \$1.12½ a day and an increase of the whiskey ration from 1½ pints a day. (CmssrLabor AR)
- June 11, 1839 West Stockbridge Railroad opens between New York state line and West Stockbridge, Mass. (NHCorp)
- June 11, 1839 Ohio state report notes that state canal system as a whole does not earn enough to cover maintenance and is a drain on the treasury; state debt can only be paid by borrowing.
- June 12, 1839 Bear Valley Coal Company incorporated in Pa. by Calvin Blythe, James McCormack, Benjamin Parke, Joseph B. Smith, et al.; may hold 2,000 acres of anthracite coal land in Lower Mahontongo Township and build a railroad to the Wiconisco Canal. (PL)
- June 12, 1839 Union Railroad & Mining Company incorporated in Pa. with a capital of \$300,000; may hold 2,000 acres of anthracite coal land in Schuylkill and Dauphin Counties and build a railroad to the Wiconisco Canal or to other railroads; planned to mine coal in the Bear Valley basin, but built no railroad. (PL, Heydinger/RRH 105)
- June 12, 1839 Allegheny & Bald Eagle Railroad, Coal & Iron Company incorporated in Pa.; may hold 2,000 acres in Centre County and build a railroad across Allegheny Mountain to Bald Eagle Creek; not organized until 1857; later

- renamed the Bellefonte & Snow Shoe Railroad. (Val)
- June 13, 1839 NC&F Board reports that it has sold stock in Western Bank of Philadelphia and Schuylkill Bank of Philadelphia. (MB)
- June 14, 1839 Thaddeus Stevens is reelected to the Pennsylvania House by his constituents; remains in the House until July 26, 1843. (Palmer)
- June 15, 1839 Majority of committee of Democrat-controlled legislature issues report on alleged corruption of the Ritner Board of Canal Commission under Thaddeus Stevens; finds had relet many allegedly abandoned contracts in the summer of 1838 at high prices to political supporters; required kickbacks to the "missionary fund" (election war chest) and election bets to force contractors and officers to get men to vote for Ritner. (HseJrnl)
- June 15, 1839 House committee on Gettysburg Railroad reports with map of the line showing many curves and rough topography; condemns entire project, including reletting of contracts, electioneering and election bets; finds \$618,958 spent and \$4.27 million needed to complete; one member refuses to support fraud charges but agrees project should be abandoned. (HseJrnl)
- June 15, 1839 Pa. Senate withdraws pork barrel amendments to bill to aid enlargement of Union Canal and aid Danville & Pottsville Railroad. (SenJrnl, HseJrnl)
- June 1839 State of Michigan agrees to pay interest on \$1.3 million Morris Canal & Banking Company notes credited to Gov. between May 1, 1838, and Jan. 1, 1839, and on the whole \$5 million from Jan. 1, 1839; banks are to pay money in installments. (McGrane)
- June 1839 Pennsylvania subscribes \$50,000 to the stock of the Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal Company to enable its completion. (HistPrtgCo - verify PL or Beitel)
- June 1839 Panic begins among the cotton dealers in New Orleans. (Govan)
- June 1839 United States Bank of Pennsylvania falters in its policy of selling bills of exchange, as Samuel Jaudon's position becomes more exposed and Hottinguer & Co. threatens to reject the bills if the Bank becomes overdrawn. (Govan)
- June 1839 Lycoming Coal Company finally fires Daniel Tyler as their manager at Farrandville and replaces him with George W. Lyman; Charles Russell Lowell (-) is demoted from Treasurer to clerk. (Knowles)
- June 1839 Rhode Island establishes the first state railroad commission to investigate

and suppress railroads making preferential contracts with connecting steamboat lines. (PL, Kirkland)

- June 1839 Strickland Kneass (1821-1884) graduates from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with high honors; he had previously served under his older brother Samuel Honeyman Kneass (1806-1858) on the PW&B; he then becomes Assistant Engineer & Topographer on the Schlatter surveys between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. (Scharf)
- June 1839 John Eliot Thayer (-1857), who has run a one-man private banking business in Boston since the 1820s, forms a new firm, John E. Thayer & Brother, with his younger brother Nathaniel Thayer (1808-1883); it becomes a principal American correspondent of McCalmont & Co. of London, considered a strong, second-rate house. (Carosso)
- June 1839 Boston investors in the Lycoming Coal Company finally fire their on-site manager Daniel Tyler (1799-1882); as a fellow New Englander, they have trusted him too much; the West Point-trained Tyler's military-martinet management style, his complete ignorance of iron manufacture, and inability to learn from his skilled workers, have cost his employers a small fortune; Tyler subsequently works as a railroad civil engineer, contractor and coal operator in Pennsylvania until volunteering his services at the start of the Civil War. (Knowles)
- June 17, 1839 Pa. Senate tables resolution to aid Union Canal rather than send it to Gov. Porter for signature; after being defeated two years in a row, company ends attempt at state funding. (SenJrnl, AR)
- June 17, 1839 Robert Schuyler (1798-1855), an early railroad manipulator and grandson of Revolutionary War Gen. Philip Schuyler, elected a director of New Jersey Railroad. (MB)
- June 17, 1839 D. Leech & Co. begin operating their Emigrant Line to the West from Baltimore via Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad instead of via PW&B to Philadelphia.
- June 17, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu stages the destruction of 20,000 chests of British opium and 1,400 from Russell & Co. at Chinkow by mixing the opium with salt and lime and dumping it in the river. (Haddad)
- June 19, 1839 First pile driven for Ohio Railroad at Fremont; company decides to begin with the isolated section between Fremont and the Maumee River; rails are to be supported on piles 10 feet apart instead of conventional grading; the work is done by a contraption that is a combination of pile driver and mobile sawmill. (Leland, NYT 1880 - see above??!)

- June 19, 1839 Kentucky Court of Appeals reverses the ban on the Lexington & Ohio Railroad operating steam locomotives in Main Street, Louisville. (ARJ)
- June 20, 1839 Pennsylvania act extends time for completion of B&O to Feb. 27, 1847, providing it allow connection with Pennsylvania railroads, including Franklin Railroad, and make no discrimination between Philadelphia and Baltimore; B&O refuses to accept terms. (PL, Dilts)
- June 20, 1839 Pennsylvania legislative resolution authorizes Canal Commissioners to settle accounts with West Chester Railroad and remit tolls annually until \$25,000 in tolls are refunded as per act of 1838. (PL)
- June 20, 1839 Pennsylvania act authorizes Williamsport & Elmira Railroad to increase stock to \$400,000 and raise money by mortgage. (Digest)
- June 20, 1839 Bank of England raises the discount rate to 5½%. (Francis)
- June 21, 1839 Clinton County created from parts of Centre and Lycoming Counties with county seat at Lock Haven. (Long)
- June 22, 1839 Eastern Shore Railroad contractor M. Duval finally disbands his forces; he has had to secure the release of several subcontractors from Elkton, where they had been jailed for debt and to sell stocks and notes that represent his life savings; Duval complains to the Legislature, which holds an investigation of the company. (Rept)
- June 24, 1839 Business is near a standstill at New York; overproduction has led cotton prices to fall and flour to fall to \$3 a barrel. (Hone)
- June 24, 1839 Committee to investigate conduct of present Canal Commissioners reports, finding refusal of Superintendents on North and West Branches to pay on contracts made under Anti-Masons is sometimes justified and no evidence of wrongdoing. (HseJrnl)
- June 24, 1839 Minority of committee appointed to investigate corruption of Ritner Board of Canal Commissioners reports; finds testimony of majority witnesses not credible. (HseJrnl)
- June 24, 1839 House fails to pass amendment to annual Improvement Bill calling for state to contract for a railroad between Columbia and Portsmouth or seeking to purchase Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad. (HseJrnl)
- June 24, 1839 "West Branch" Franklin Railroad incorporated in Pa. to build from a point on the Franklin Railroad to the B&O on the Potomac River. (PL)

- June 24, 1839 Charter supplement to the Monongahela Navigation Company permits dams up to 8 feet in height instead of 4.5 feet in response to W. Milnor Roberts's survey of 1838. (Crumrine)
- June 24, 1839 Future meatpacker and refrigerator car pioneer Gustavus Franklin Swift (1839-1903) born at West Sandwich, Mass., on Cape Cod, son of William Swift and Sally Crowell Swift; he begins working in his brother's butcher shop at 14. (DAB, wiki)
- June 25, 1839 Reliance Transportation Company dissolved, probably because small 6-ton boats were unprofitable; John Dougherty leaves the company to develop his own line using four-section boats; Dr. Shoenberger and other partners continue operation as Reliance Portable Boat Company; James M. Davis at Philadelphia and James McFaden at Pittsburgh appointed to close out affairs of old company. (PittsGaz, Hartman)
- June 26, 1839 George Weems opens a hotel and resort adjoining his home at Fair Haven, Md., served by stops of this steamboat *Patuxent* from Baltimore. (Holly)
- June 26, 1839 Two-day Ohio bank convention begins at Columbus at the call of the Cleveland banks. (Smiths)
- June 27, 1839 Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad Board authorizes lobbying against having a survey for a Columbia-Harrisburg extension of Columbia Railroad included in improvement bill; settles with James Cameron, late Superintendent. (MB)
- June 27, 1839 Pennsylvania Legislature at special session passes act authorizing new \$1,150,000 permanent loan and \$220,000 temporary loan to fund \$1,050,000 in loans falling due before Jan. 1. (PL)
- July 1, 1839 Board of Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad, including Simon Cameron, declares 4% dividend, even though there is no money in treasury and company has a \$150,000 floating debt; \$16,500 is borrowed from Pioneer Line for 6 months at 12% interest; Pioneer Line has option to have loan repaid by withholding tolls. (MB)
- July 1, 1839 United States Bank of Pennsylvania has lost over \$1 million in specie since June; the Bank continues to sell bills of exchange on Samuel Jaudon in London. (Govan)
- July 2, 1839 Pennsylvania Legislature passes resolution calling for Treasurer, Secretary and Auditor General to investigate whether state interest payments in Aug. 1837, Feb. 1838 and July 1839 were paid in specie, and if paid in notes, state is to make up the difference; no payment is to be made to any bank that does not redeem its notes in specie. (Worthington)

- July 2, 1839 Pa. legislative resolution repeals provision of act of Feb. 9, 1839 calling for joint committee of Legislature to examine accounts for repairing the breach above Huntingdon in 1838; to be examined and paid by Auditor General. (PL)
- July 1839 Improved type of pleasure car built by Richard Imlay noted at Philadelphia; seats 45-50 people with seats running along the sides. (PubLdgr)
- July 3, 1839 Syracuse & Utica Railroad opens for revenue service, creating a continuous line from Albany to Auburn; special opening excursion run on July 10. (Stevens, Wager, Gerstner)
- July 4, 1839 Explosion of a derailed New York & Harlem Railroad locomotive *New York* near Union Square kills 5 and injures 16; locomotive runs below 32nd Street only on July 4 because the crowds are too great for the company's horses. (Stokes, Greene, Shaw)
- July 4, 1839 Hempstead Branch of LIRR opens between Mineola and Hempstead. (RRH, Val)
- July 4, 1839 *Taglione*, a 2-2-0 and the only locomotive built by the Poughkeepsie Locomotive Company (1838), placed in service on LIRR; apparently not purchased until 1842, when it is renamed *John A. King*; this locomotive may have come from the stillborn Dutchess Railroad at Poughkeepsie. (RRH, MB, Smith)
- July 4, 1839 Canal Commissioners order halt to all work on Sinnemahoning Line, as there has been no new appropriation; \$130,000 spent. (CC)
- July 4, 1839 New Albany, Ind., incorporated as a city. (HistFloydCo)
- July 5, 1839 New Jersey Railroad makes new contract with Morris & Essex Railroad, superseding contract of Oct. 21, 1836; NJRR will carry M&E passenger cars from Passaic River Bridge to Jersey City; NJRR can run its Newark cars to M&E station on Broad Street and is to have all Jersey City-Newark business. (MB)
- July 6, 1839 John R. Thompson of Joint Companies writes to New Jersey Railroad complaining of Cumming's mail line using stages south of New Brunswick; this qualifies as an opposition line under their agreement and must be discontinued or will not renew NJRR contract. (MB)
- July 7, 1839 Commissioner Lin Zexu begins demolishing the foreign factories (trading stations) at Canton. (Hanes)

- July 8, 1839 Canal Commissioners order halt to all work on Allegheny Feeder. (CC)
- July 8, 1839 John Davison Rockefeller, Sr. (1839-1937), founder of the Standard Oil Company and creator of America's first billion-dollar fortune, born at Richford in Tioga County, N.Y. (Nevins)
- July 9, 1839 George B. Fisk elected Pres. of LIRR, replacing Waldron B. Post, resigned. (MB)
- July 9, 1839 David Thomas and family arrive in Allentown, Pa., to take charge of the Lehigh Crane Iron Company project; although Thomas claims in his memoirs that he was the technical expert and George Crane a mere capitalist, his private letters show that Crane walked him through the entire process of building the furnace. (Yates, DTPapers)
- July 11, 1839 Sandy & Beaver Canal Company stockholders and loanholders meet in Philadelphia; hear report of new Chief Engineer Edward Miller on state of work. (PittsGaz - might be Edward Gill - no mention in any Miller bio)
- July 1839 New Brunswick Steam Boat & Canal Transportation Company places new steamboat *Raritan* on New York-New Brunswick run, replacing the *Napoleon*. (Thompson)
- July 12, 1839 House of Commons rejects the first Chartist petition for political reforms. (wiki)
- July 13, 1839 Canal Commissioners order all supervisors to reduce number of workers to a minimum to save money. (CC)
- July 15, 1839 Canal Commissioners appoint Charles Lyon Schlatter (1808-1886) Principal Engineer to run surveys for all-rail line between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh on northern (West Branch-Clearfield), middle (Juniata) and southern (Chambersburg-Laughlintown) routes; appointment effective Aug. 1.; Schlatter has been working as a civil engineer for the American Cannel Coal Company in Kentucky. (CC, Le Roy Barnett)
- July 1839 New York & Erie Railroad contracts 35 miles from Goshen to Middletown, N.Y., with money raised from local subscriptions. (ARJ)
- July 1839 Ohio Board of Public Works suspends work on all projects under construction and halts lettings of new construction contracts. (Mould)
- July 1839 N. Kuykendall and J. Lewis & Co. operate a line of stages three times a week between Winchester, Va., and Parkersburg, Va., over the Northwestern Turnpike. (Andrews)

- July 1839 Central Canal opens between Indianapolis and Broad Ripple, Ind. (Dunn)
- July 18, 1839 As of this date, there have been no offers to take state loan of \$150,000 authorized in Feb. to pay off contractors on Gettysburg Railroad. (PittsGaz)
- July 18, 1839 New Jersey Steam Navigation Company returns the *Lexington* to the Stonington line. (Dunbaugh)
- July 19, 1839 On the last day of the session, Pennsylvania Legislature authorizes a permanent loan of \$2.054 million for repair and extension of the Public Works; loan may be issued in \$5 bills to be issued to contractors, providing banks will redeem them in specie; includes: \$70,000 for Allegheny Mountain reservoirs for Juniata and Western Divisions, surveys for a railroad from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, negotiations to purchase the Norristown & Valley Railroad or Chester & Delaware (?) Railroad as route to bypass Belmont Plane, \$300,000 for Shenango Line, \$250,000 for Conneaut Line, \$200,000 for Tunkhannock Line, \$200,000 for Tioga Line, \$150,000 for Wiconisco Canal, and extension of North Branch Canal feeder two miles up Lackawanna River; no appropriations made for Sinnemahoning Line or Kittanning Feeder, killing those projects after an expenditure of \$164,100 and \$31,100 respectively; authorizes James D. Harris and William B. Foster to remeasure and re-estimate work on North Branch Extension, William E. Morris and Benjamin Aycrigg on Sinnemahoning Extension and John P. Baily and A.B. Warford on Wiconisco Canal (i.e, one new Democratic and one former Coalition engineer per line); Gov. Porter holds the bill for one month before signing and delays taking loan from the hated United States Bank until he can make it appear that all other possibilities are exhausted. (PL, Snyder)
- July 20, 1839 Edwin A. Stevens reports to Executive Committee of Joint Companies that it is necessary to borrow \$27,123 from New Brunswick Steamboat & Canal Transportation Company to meet expenses. (MB)
- July 20, 1839 Canal Commissioners rescind workforce cuts of July 13 after new appropriation passed. (CC)
- July 1839 Bank of England saved from suspension only by loans from banks in Paris and Amsterdam; Baring Brothers and other European banks join to carry Samuel Jaudon's London agency of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania. (Govan)
- July 27, 1839 Canal Commissioners appoint John A. Roebling (1806-1869) as Principal Assistant Engineer on the southern route of the Harrisburg-Pittsburgh railroad surveys. (CC)

- July 28, 1839 The 1,862-ton steamship *British Queen* of the British & American Steam Navigation Company arrives in New York on its maiden voyage. (Stokes)
- July 29, 1839 John S. Darcy of New Jersey Railroad replies to Joint Companies; through railroad service of Jan. 1 has destroyed the business of Cumming's line, which now only carries mail in a covered wagon; complains that the substitution of heavy rail on Trenton Delaware Bridge to permit locomotive operation, which was promised in Feb. 1839, is not done yet, causing delays. (MB)
- July 30, 1839 Bank of Kentucky resolves to change its Philadelphia agency from the Schuylkill Bank in the City of Philadelphia to the Bank of the United States (Pa.). (Duke)
- July 31, 1839 Future PRR VP John Pugh Green (1839-1924) born at Philadelphia. (Wilson - verify parents)
- Summer 1839 Work begins on macadamizing the Western Reserve & Maumee Road through the Black Swamp between Lower Sandusky and Perrysburg. (Waggoner)
- Aug. 1, 1839 The widow of William Renshaw, proprietor of the old Wardell House, the oldest boarding house in Long Branch, N.J., fails; the house is then purchased by James Green who reopens it as the Bath Hotel. (Ellis)
- Aug. 5, 1839 Joint Companies cancel deed of Camden ferry property to Edwin A. Stevens and deed directly to Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company in return for ferry company stock; includes boats *State Rights* and *John Fitch*; Abraham Brown reports to Joint Board that Schuylkill County coal operator John C. Offerman will be unable to fulfill his contract to take the Phoenix Park coal lands. (MB)
- Aug. 6, 1839 Camden & Amboy Railroad replies to New Jersey Railroad that it will lay a heavy rail for locomotive operation over Delaware River Bridge as soon as iron arrives from Britain and will be done in a short time; however, is apparently not done until 1841. (MB)
- Aug. 1839 Morris Canal & Banking Company announces it is no longer able to honor accounts with State of Indiana, now amounting to \$2.54 million; the total debts of the bank are over \$9 million; it has taken an additional \$4,702,000 in Indiana bonds at 90 in 1838-39, on which \$2,385,383 is still due in 1842. (Fatout, McGrane, Esarey)
- Aug. 13, 1839 PW&B Board resolves it will carry only one mail daily, timed to regular passenger trains. (MB)

- Aug. 13, 1839 Baltimore ordinance grants Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad one half block bounded by Alice Anna, Exeter, Lancaster and Albemarle Streets for depot. (Digest)
- Aug. 1839 United States Bank of Pennsylvania Pres. Thomas Dunlap breaks with Nicholas Biddle and begins selling post notes in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore at 12-20% discount and bills of exchange on Hottinguer & Co. without any money to back it up, in an attempt to force the New York banks to suspend specie payments. (Govan)
- Aug. 1839 Gold reserves of the Bank of England have fallen to only £1,174,000; it avoids suspension by borrowing from the Bank of France; poor harvests and foreign wars and threats of war hobble the British economy for years; as Britain is forced to redirect capital and credit away from the U.S., the American economy relapses into depression and deflation. (Parks)
- Aug. 1839 Lehigh Crane Iron Company breaks ground for its first furnace at Craneville (later Catasauqua), Pa. north of Allentown. (Mathews/Hngfrd)
- Aug. 1839 David Thomas of the Lehigh Crane Iron Company visits William Lyman, who is building an anthracite furnace at Pottsville and provides him with plans and advice until later in the year, when Lyman secures the services of Benjamin Perry as founder. (Thomas/Mathews/Hngfrd)
- Aug. 17, 1839 Lonaconing Furnace blown out because of poor economic conditions and the prospect that the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal won't be finished to Cumberland soon; the whole operation is virtually abandoned by the end of the year; it limps along into 1844 by selling small amounts of lumber and pig iron made in a cupola. (Harvey)
- Aug. 1839 Lacking a decent transportation outlet, the Georges Creek Coal & Iron Company begins a retrenchment of its operations at Lonaconing, including blowing out the main furnace. (MdHMag 70)
- Aug. 18, 1839 Ex-Gov. Noah Noble, now a member of the Indiana Board of Internal Improvement, announces that the state is unable to borrow further and stops all payments to contractors; over \$1 million owed to contractors and state debt at over \$13 million. (Fatout)
- Aug. 19. 1839 Franklin Railroad begins construction from the Maryland state line to Hagerstown.
- Aug. 1839 B&O contracts for construction, Harpers Ferry to Cumberland. (AR, Dilts)
- Summer 1839 Work on Little Miami Railroad slows to a halt.

- Aug. 22, 1839 The 23 largest transporting companies on the Erie Canal sign agreement pooling earnings and creating a general fund though Jan. 1, 1841.
- Aug. 22, 1839 Illinois Board of Public Works suspends all construction that is not directly linked with a navigable river and all work let in 1839 because of failure of loans.
- Aug. 22, 1839 Illinois Fund Commissioners agree to deposit \$1.5 million in bonds with John Wright & Co. of London, who are designated the state's fiscal agents. (McGrane)
- Aug. 23, 1839 Baltimore ordinance authorizes city to issue \$250,000 in city bonds to Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad in return for state stock. (Digest)
- Aug. 23, 1839 Baring Brothers & Co. cancel their contract to assume the London agency of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania and stop supporting Samuel Jaudon and the London office; they do arrange to purchase jointly with Hope & Co. of Amsterdam £200,000 of state bonds from Jaudon at a 50% discount. (Govan)
- Aug. 24, 1839 B&O Pres. Louis McLane leaves for England to market \$3.2 million of Maryland State bonds issued to finance B&O. (Dilts)
- Aug. 28, 1839 Teams under Principal Assistant Engineer John A. Roebling begin surveying the Southern Route for the Harrisburg-Pittsburgh Railroad from Laughlintown via Greensburg and Turtle Creek. (CC)
- Aug. 25, 1839 Under Chinese and Portuguese pressure, the British traders evacuate Macao and moor their ships off the sparsely-populated Kowloon Peninsula in what is now Hong Kong on the northeast side of the Pearl River estuary. (Hanes)
- Aug. 29, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board appoints committee to prepare new contract with Joint Companies to take effect when existing one expires. (MB)
- Aug. 29, 1839 Teams under Principal Assistant Engineer S. Moylan Fox begin surveying the Middle Route for the Harrisburg-Pittsburgh railroad, following the valleys of the Juniata and Kiskiminetas. (CC)
- Aug. 29, 1839 Canal Commissioners contract for replacement of all wooden locks on the North Branch Division Canal.
- Aug. 1839 Indiana suspends work on all projects except Madison & Indianapolis Railroad and the Wabash & Erie Canal between Lafayette and the state line. (Fatout,)

- Aug. 30, 1839 Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company Board authorizes E.A. Stevens to use his plan to stop silting in the Windmill Island canal. (MB)
- Aug. 30, 1839 The New York banks have now paid over to the United States Bank of Pennsylvania \$1.25 million in gold; additional specie has been withdrawn from Boston and Baltimore and all shipped to Europe to meet previously drawn bills of exchange; the United States Bank of Pennsylvania now informs the New York banks that no more specie will be drawn. (Govan)
- Sep. 1, 1839 Charles L. Schlatter begins work on Harrisburg-Pittsburgh rail surveys. (CC)
- Sep. 1839 British begin the First Opium War (1839-1842) when they open fire on Chinese ships in Hong Kong harbor in the inconclusive Battle of Kowloon. (Hanes)
- Sep. 4, 1839 Royal Navy bombards Canton in reprisal for the Chinese seizures of opium, beginning the First Opium War (1839-1842). (Mercer - NO not Canton)
- Sep. 5, 1839 Belmont Plane tie rope on middle section of a section boat breaks, causing it to roll down plane; two boat sections and two freight cars destroyed. (PubLdgr)
- Sep. 7, 1839 New Board elected by Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad; A.L. Hodgdon replaces Augustus James Pleasonton (1808-1894) as Pres. (HseJrnl say Pleasonton elected this date!!; NCAB says AJP pres 1839-40)
- Sep. 9, 1839 Illinois Gov. Thomas Carlin convenes a special session of the Legislature at Springfield, even though a new Capitol has not been finished and they are obliged to meet in the town's churches; Carlin attacks the ruinous policy of beginning all projects at once and suggests concentrating on completing those that hold the best hope of generating income for the state. (Smith)
- Sep. 9, 1839 *Valley Forge*, first iron-hulled steamboat on the western rivers, launched at Pittsburgh. (Swank)
- Sep. 10, 1839 Franklin Railroad opens between Chambersburg and Greencastle, Pa., with horse power. (Brks&SchlklJrnl, Wilson)
- Sep. 10, 1839 Clark Williams returns to post of Little Miami Railroad Secretary and Alexander H. Ewing named Treasurer. (MB)

- Sep. 12, 1839 New Jersey Railroad agrees with Paterson & Hudson River Railroad to sell it 32 lots in Block 9 at Jersey City at cost; is then filled in for terminal. (MB)
- Sep. 12, 1839 Runaway cars collide with steamboat on Camden & Amboy at South Amboy. (Shaw - verify)
- Sep. 12, 1839 Post Office Dept. contracts with the Auburn & Syracuse and Syracuse & Utica Railroads to operate the mail twice daily and once in winter. (HistRyMail)
- Sep. 14, 1839 A company headed by Sir Thomas Brancher of Liverpool buys land at Ystalyfera, Wales, and erects what for a time will be the largest iron and tinplate works in the world. (tytwp.plus.com)
- Sep. 1839 United States Bank of Pennsylvania takes \$2.054 million state loan in return for the long-sought privilege of issuing \$5 notes, which it may now do to the amount of the new loan, as per its prior, behind-the-scenes negotiations with Gov. Porter; Porter can thus claim saving the credit of the state, but at the cost of more borrowing. (Snyder - see Niles 9/28)
- Sep. 1839 John Dougherty contracts with George R. McFarlane, a Hollidaysburg foundryman, for several trucks capable of carrying four-section boats. (Hartman)
- Sep. 1839 Illinois Canal Commissioners, through ex-Gov. John Reynolds, place a \$300,000 loan with the Phenix Bank in New York and a \$1 million loan with the Bank of the United States (Pa.). (Putnam)
- Sep. 16, 1839 Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company Board authorizes E.A. Stevens to sell Walnut Street, Philadelphia, property now leased to Camden & Amboy Railroad. (MB)
- Sep. 16, 1839 Louisville, Cincinnati & Charleston Railroad resolves to suspend all work beyond Columbia, S.C., and to stop there until it gets more state aid. (ARJ)
- Sep. 17, 1839 Group of Market Street merchants, backed by the carters and draymen, petition the Philadelphia City Councils to remove the City Railroad on Market Street. (Schwartz)
- Sep. 23, 1839 The Paris branch of the Rothschilds agree to accept 5.5 million francs of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania on drawn Hottinguer & Co., which had refused to accept them. (Hammond, Hidy)

- Sep. 24, 1839 Former Sen. Robert Y. Hayne (1791-1839), Pres. of Louisville, Cincinnati & Charleston Railroad, dies at Asheville, N.C.; his death combines with financial and geographical obstacles to kill the project for a direct rail connection between the Ohio Valley and the South Atlantic Coast, even as connections with Northern cities increase; Southern influence in the southern part of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois is gradually overwhelmed by the Yankee diaspora moving west into the northern parts of those states along the Great Lakes. (CongBio,)
- Sep. 25, 1839 James Gore King resigns as Pres. of the New York & Erie Railroad; Elihu Townsend becomes Pres. pro-tem. (Mott)
- Sep. 26, 1839 Samuel Jaudon applies to the Bank of England for a loan of £300,000 because of the refusal of Hottinguer & Co. to accept drafts of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania; the Bank of England declines but offers to advance £300,000 in Consols for one month to be secured by the guarantee of commercial houses, which Jaudon declines. (BHammond)
- Sep. 30, 1839 Last run of PW&B local between Baltimore and Havre-de-Grace; last use of steamboat *Telegraph* between Philadelphia and Wilmington. (BaltAm)
- Oct. 1, 1839 Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad agrees with Columbia Bank & Bridge Company that its locomotives will approach no closer than 200 feet of western end of bridge because of fire hazard. (Digest)
- Oct. 1, 1839 __ Davis, a friend of Nicholas Biddle, writes to Joshua Bates of Baring Brothers on the need to maintain capital for American public works; cannot be raised on the security of the states, but the states and their transportation and banking interests can pressure Congress to guarantee the state debts. (McGrane)
- Oct. 1, 1839 Western Railroad Corporation (Mass.) opens for passenger service between Worcester and Springfield, Mass. (Bliss, NHCorp)
- c. Oct. 1, 1839 Seat of Whitley County, Indiana, fixed at Columbia; renamed Columbia City in 1853. (Long)
- Oct. 2, 1839 Dinner held at Nowlan's Tavern to celebrate the completion of the New York & Harlem Railroad as a double-track line from Walker Street to the Harlem River. (Hone, Gerstner - verify - Stokes implies whole line open in 1838 - Hone says open from City Hall - revenue service 10/3?)
- Oct. 3, 1839 Steamships *Great Western* and *British Queen* have left New York with nearly \$1 million in specie each. (Wood)
- Oct. 4, 1839 Fire at Chestnut Street and Delaware River in Philadelphia destroys a

number of buildings, including Union Line office and Steamboat Hotel.
(Scharf)

- Oct. 4, 1839 Eleazar Lord reelected Pres. of the New York & Erie Railroad, replacing Elihu Townsend; he is paid \$3,600 per annum, the first time the Pres. has received a salary. (Mott, Rept)
- Oct. 7, 1839 New York & Harlem Railroad holds excursion to mark the completion of a double track all the way from City Hall to the Harlem River. (Stokes - see 10/2)
- Oct. 8, 1839 Philadelphia banks vote 9 to 5 to continue specie payments. (Wood)
- Oct. 8, 1839 Elihu Townsend resigns as a director and Treasurer of the New York & Erie Railroad. (Mott)
- Oct. 8, 1839 George W. Dole and Oliver Newberry ship the first large cargo of 1,678 bushels of wheat from Chicago to Black Rock in the brigantine *Osceola*, inaugurating grain trade from the further Midwest to the Erie Canal. (CHTaylor)
- Oct. 8, 1839 Ohio Democrats secure larger majorities in both houses; Indiana Democrats capture House from Whigs. (NB Indiana election is first Mon. in Aug!!)
- Oct. 9, 1839 Bank of the United States (Pa.) suspends specie payment after failure of a program to prop up the price of U.S. export cotton; leaves Commonwealth without a fiscal agent and halting or damaging most improvement projects dependent on the Bank; the other Philadelphia banks, except the Commercial Bank of Pennsylvania, are forced to suspend the same day; depression begins lasting through 1843; the banks of New York and New England do not suspend, but do so by tightening credit and aiding deflation. (Wood, Hone, Govan)
- Oct. 9, 1839 John Connell reports to PW&B Board that it is impossible to sell bonds in England, but that he left some with a banking house in Amsterdam. (MB)
- Oct. 10, 1839 Liverpool steamer arrives in New York with word that Hottinguer & Co. has refused the drafts of the United States Bank of Pennsylvania drawn on it and of the Rothschilds' offer of aid. (Hammond)
- Oct. 10, 1839 Baltimore banks meet to make plans to ward off drafts from out of state banks and suspend. (StdHistPitts)
- Oct. 12, 1839 B&O Pres. Louis McLane succeeds in depositing entire \$3.2 million issue of Maryland State bonds with Baring Brothers & Co.; B&O is to draw

- funds at the rate of £10,000 per month to buy rail for the extension to Cumberland. (Dilts, McGrane, Hidy)
- Oct. 12, 1839 Farmers Bank of Virginia and Bank of the Valley of Virginia suspend. (Starnes)
- Oct. 13, 1839 Pittsburgh banks suspend with the exception of the Bank of Pittsburgh, which continues to pay coin on a reduced scale. (StdHistPitts)
- Oct. 14, 1839 Bank of Virginia suspends. (Starnes)
- Oct. 15, 1839 Bank of Kentucky votes to suspend. (Duke)
- Oct. 1839 Federal Street ferry boats begin using Windmill Island Canal between Philadelphia and Camden, although it is incomplete. (Boyer)
- Oct. 1839 New Jersey Railroad inaugurates first regular freight train with rider coach; all freight previously carried on regular passenger trains.
- Oct. 1839 Principal Main Line transporting companies sign a joint action calling for lower tolls. (Hunter/Ohio)
- Oct. 1839 Southern part of the Genesee Valley Canal between Cuba and Olean placed under contract. (Ellis/Cattaraugus)
- Oct. 1839 Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad enters receivership on the suit of Charles Butler and other creditors. (Waggoner)
- Oct. 1839 Reserves of the Bank of England have fallen to £2,522,000, down from £7,073,000 in Apr. 1839. (Francis)
- Oct. 16, 1839 Exchange Bank of Virginia suspends. (Starnes)
- Oct. 17, 1839 Gov. David R. Porter in public letter urges that banks be treated with "forbearance and moderation," initiating a rift with hard-money Democrats and the national party organization. (Snyder)
- Oct. 17, 1839 Central Railroad of Michigan opens between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. (GrnBk)
- Oct. 18, 1839 Anti-bank meeting held in Pittsburgh calls for the forfeiture of the charters of all banks in suspension. (StdHistPitts)
- Oct. 19, 1839 Pioneer Furnace, built by William Lyman of Boston for Burd Patterson (1788-1867) placed in blast near Pottsville, Pa., by Welsh (?) ironmaster Benjamin Perry (1797-1870); the first to smelt iron with anthracite coal on

a sustained basis, although it is poorly designed. (Swank, Yates)

- Oct. 21, 1839 James O'Connor & Co., proprietors of Portable Car Body Line, begin operating winter service by wagon from Baltimore to Wheeling and Pittsburgh. (BaltAm)
- Oct. 21, 1839 State Bank of Illinois suspends on word of bank suspensions in the East; although Samuel Wiggins of Cincinnati is a large stockholder, as a non-resident, he cannot serve as a director; the dominant directors have been Godfrey, Gilman & Co., commission merchants of Alton, who have been using their position to move Alton ahead of St. Louis as the regional center; they have also been speculating in the Galena lead mines with bank funds; their speculations have cost the bank about \$1 million. (Dowrie, Smith)
- Oct. 21, 1839 Capt. G. Dutton of the U.S. Engineers reports to Chief Engineer Joseph G. Totten that the National Road is completed to the 43rd mile west of Columbus, Ohio, and is graded beyond to the 48th milepost; \$638,166 will be required to complete the road in Ohio. (Rept)
- Oct. 23, 1839 Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad agrees with the District of Kensington to extend its tracks south on Front Street to a junction with the Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad on Willow Street using edge rails for the free interchange of cars. (Schwartz)
- Oct. 23, 1839 B&O suspends surveying west of Cumberland. (Dilts)
- Oct. 23, 1839 Western Railroad begins freight service to Springfield, Mass. (Bliss)
- Oct. 24, 1839 Mohawk & Hudson Railroad Board resolves to abandon freight service unless it can be made profitable; fear the competition of the enlarged Erie Canal. (Pierce/MB)
- Oct. 28, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board approves connection with Morris & Essex Railroad at Centre Street, Newark, but cars must be turned over by M&E at foot of Market Street. (MB)
- Oct. 28, 1839 Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad places section from Bellevue to Scipio under contract. (Smiths)
- Oct. 30, 1839 Illinois Fund Commissioners deliver £225,000 bonds to fiscal agent John Wright & Co. in London; to be sold at no less than 91; only the first installment of \$145,188 is paid to the state, and John Wright & Co. soon fails, leaving the state a creditor with little hope of payment. (McGrane, Smith)

- Nov. 1, 1839 New Bedford & Taunton Railroad and Taunton Branch Railroad contract for joint operation of the line between New Bedford and Mansfield and over the Boston & Providence Railroad to Boston, effective July 1, 1840. (NHCorp)
- Nov. 2, 1839 Brooklyn ordinance authorizes Brooklyn & Jamaica Railroad to use steam power in Atlantic Avenue. (NYState)
- Nov. 2, 1839 Joseph Baughman, Julius Guiteau, Henry High and Francis C. Lowthorp (1810-1890) conclude several runs of hot-blast anthracite smelting at their experimental furnace at Mauch Chunk, Pa.; Baughman, Guiteau & Co. is dissolved. (Mathews/Hngrfrd, Swank)
- Nov. 3, 1839 B&O Pres. Louis McLane returns to U.S., having deposited bonds with Baring Brothers & Co. (Dilts)
- Nov. 3, 1839 In the Battle of Chuanbi, two small British cruisers destroy and scatter a fleet of 26 Chinese ships, clearing the approach to Canton; the Chinese fight with weapons and tactics of the 16th century against those of the 19th. (Hanes)
- Nov. 4, 1839 Whigs capture the New York Senate, ending 20 years of Democratic control and giving them the entire control of the state government, partly on the issue of small bills but mostly on the canal issue; the Whigs are now permanently identified as the Canal Party. (Pencak, Shaw, Hone)
- Nov. 4, 1839 Whigs sweep Michigan ending a decade of Democratic rule and electing William Woodbridge (1780-1861) Governor with the support of some Democrats; they are opposed to the extravagance of the state's internal improvement program and want it terminated, scaled back, or the projects sold to private investors; however Whigs along the line are pressing for the completion of the Central Railroad. (Sobel, Parks, Shade)
- Nov. 4, 1839 Gen. Simon Bernard (1779-1839), former U.S. Army Engineer and French General, dies at Paris. (WwasW)
- Nov. 4, 1839 Between 1,000 and 5,000 Chartists and their sympathizers attempting to free arrested comrades march from Nant-y-Glo and attack the Westgate Hotel in Newport, Monmouthshire, Wales, in the Newport Rising, the last armed uprising against the government on British soil; after a pitched battle that leaves about 22 attackers dead and over 50 injured, the few soldiers and constables defending the hotel succeed in breaking the uprising; the attack leads the Establishment to consider the Chartists violent revolutionaries; the ringleaders are transported to Australia; by some accounts, Allan Pinkerton (1819-1884), whose name will later become synonymous with the suppression of organized labor, is among

the Chartist attackers. (wiki, nantyglo.com)

- Nov. 1839 Bank of Illinois suspends. (Dowrie)
- Nov. 6, 1839 Canal Commissioners contract for construction of large reservoir on South Fork to supply upper Western Division Canal and end numerous delays caused by low water; earth dam 72 feet high designed by William E. Morris (1812-1875); failure of this earth dam in 1889 causes the Johnstown Flood. (CC)
- Nov. 7, 1839 Trenton Delaware Bridge Company appoints Edwin A. Stevens and John R. Thomson a committee to oppose efforts to charter a rival bridge crossing the Delaware at Kirkbride's Ferry. (MB)
- Nov. 9, 1839 Canal Commissioners contract for construction of similar reservoir on the east side of the Allegheny Mountain to feed the Juniata Division Canal. (CC)
- Nov. 9, 1839 Camden & Philadelphia Steam Boat Ferry Company Board authorizes paying Camden & Amboy Railroad \$29,220 for its ferry house property, \$16,252 for the ferry *State Rights* and \$18,000 for the *John Fitch*. (MB)
- Nov. 9, 1839 Anna Dike Riddle (1839-1901), the second wife of future PRR Pres. Tom Scott, is born at (Pittsburgh?), the daughter of Robert M. Riddle (-) and Mary Johnston Riddle (1819-1890); her grandmother is Mary Kelso Johnston, through whom she shares a pedigree with the Cassatt family. (WoodlandsCmtry)
- Nov. 5??, 1839 Anna Dike Riddle (1839-1901), future second wife of Tom Scott, born at Pittsburgh; daughter of Robert M. Riddle (1812-1858), newspaper publisher and future Mayor of Pittsburgh, and Mary Johnston Dickenson Riddle (1819-1890); through their common descent from Alexander Johnston, she is the second cousin of A. J. Cassatt. (rootsweb)
- Nov. 11, 1839 Canal Commissioners rescind authorization of Nov. 8, 1838, to substitute wood for stone in locks of Erie Extension. (CC)
- Nov. 11, 1839 Simon Cameron sells out his interest in the Foundryville works near Berwick to Thomas McNair; it continues to make chairs for the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad until Aug. 1841. (McNair)
- Nov. 12, 1839 Future architect Frank Furness (1839-1912), designer of the second Broad Street Station and other PRR buildings, is born at Philadelphia; son of William Henry Furness (1802-1896) and Annie Pullen Jenks Furness (1802-1885); his father is a friend of Ralph Waldo Emerson and has come to Philadelphia as its first regular Unitarian minister in 1820.

(BioPhilArch, Baltzell)

- Nov. 12, 1839 Bank of the State of Missouri resolves to refuse to accept anything but specie or its own notes in settlement of debts to it. (Scharf)
- Nov. 1839 Nicholas Biddle resumes his operations in cotton. (Govan)
- Nov. 1839 Baring Brothers buys £300,000 bonds of Chesapeake & Ohio Canal at 68-70 with option to buy an additional £300,000; is able to resell at 75-82½. (McGrane)
- Nov. 1839 New Jersey Steam Navigation Company ends the operation of the People's Line to Providence. (Dunbaugh)
- Nov. 19, 1839 Shamokin Iron Company incorporated under the Pa. general law for encouraging the manufacture of anthracite iron. (Bell)
- Nov. 19, 1839 Second State Bank of Indiana suspends specie payments. (Esarey)
- Nov. 19, 1839 Caleb Clark Wheeler (1839-1899), future captain and founder of the Wheeler Line on Maryland's Eastern Shore, born at Hillsboro, Md. (findagrave)
- Nov. 1839 Baring Brothers issues a circular calling on the federal government to assume the state debts to shore up credit with European investors; few state bonds are sold abroad after this time. (McGrane)
- Nov. 23, 1839 Indiana Board of Internal Improvement orders suspension of work on Madison & Indianapolis Railroad; some contractors continue to work on own account, including finishing the inclined plane at Madison; all other state projects stopped except extension of Wabash & Erie Canal; completed projects includes Wabash & Erie (90 miles), Whitewater Canal (30 miles), Central Canal (9 miles), Madison & Indianaapolis Railroad (28 miles), and 41 miles of turnpike between New Albany and Paoli; 290 miles of works left incomplete; \$8 million spent. (Blank, Fatout)
- Nov. 25, 1839 Little Miami Railroad reports that it has been unable to negotiate a loan from Greene County on security of the Cincinnati bonds, but was able to get loan on individual pledges of directors for \$12,000 at 6%; to apply for state loan. (MB)
- Nov. 26, 1839 Columbia City, Ind., platted on land owned by Elihu Chauncey of Philadelphia. (Goodspeed)
- Nov. 27, 1839 Baring Brothers & Co. agrees to buy £300,000 of Maryland bonds issued to the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Company from George Peabody at 70;

- then later buy an additional £340,000. (Hidy)
- Nov. 27, 1839 Samuel Ward 1786-1839), senior partner of the merchant banking house of Prime, Ward & King, dies at New York. (Hone)
- Nov. 30, 1839 Public meeting held at Marietta, Ohio, resolves to send delegates to the B&O at Baltimore to persuade them to set their Ohio River terminus opposite Marietta. (Andrews)
- Fall 1839 Water admitted to Susquehanna & Tide Water Canal. (verify)
- Fall 1839 Whitewater & Cincinnati Canal Company suspends work because of failure to collect installments on stock.
- Late 1839 Philadelphia & Trenton Railroad begins condemnation proceedings to build its track in Front Street to connect with the Northern Liberties & Penn Township Railroad; the assessment jury rejects the claims of property owners to own the land to the center of the street and rules that the railroad is taking only a public street. (Schwartz)
- Dec. 3, 1839 Future PRR General Solicitor James Addison Logan (1839-1902) born in Westmoreland County, Pa. (MB)
- Dec. 4, 1839 B&O Board authorizes the issue of \$100,000 in \$5 and \$10 certificates, called "City Stock Orders," payable in Baltimore City 6% bonds at par; the certificates are to be used to pay contractors. (Munroe, AR)
- Dec. 6, 1839 First locomotive runs over the line to bypass the Columbia inclined plane; not fully used until next spring. (PubLdgr)
- Dec. 8, 1839 Alexander Johnston Cassatt (1839-1906), seventh PRR President, born at Pittsburgh; son of Robert Simpson Cassatt (1806-1891), a banker and later Mayor of Allegheny City, and Katherine Kelso Johnston Cassatt (1816-1895); family name was Dutch-Huguenot; originally "Cossart" and later "Cassat"; Cassatt is predominantly Scots-Irish on his mother's and grandmother's side; excepting Walter S. Franklin, Cassatt is the only PRR Pres. to be born to real wealth; he also enjoys the benefits of a typical Scots-Irish extended kinship network, including ties to the wealthy Coleman dynasty of ironmasters. (PDavis, NCAB, B&K, Mathews)
- Dec. 9, 1839 Philadelphia & Reading Railroad ("the Reading") opens for revenue service between Reading and the foot of Belmont Plane; runs over the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad and City Railroad to a depot at the southeast corner of Broad & Cherry Streets; first test run with a mixed train of 100 cars drawn by locomotive *Gowan & Marx* was Dec. 5. (Hare, Brks&SchlklJrnl)

- Dec. 9, 1839 A.G. Ralston & Co., the U.S. agents of Welsh ironmaster George Crane, advertise to grant licenses to use Crane's patent for anthracite smelting at a royalty of 25 cents a ton; warn against patent infringement. (Swank)
- Dec. 10, 1839 Edward Shotwell reports on a survey for the LIRR on the northern route from Hicksville via Huntington to Smithtown, where it joins the southern route surveyed previously. (ARJ)
- Dec. 10, 1839 Gov. Thomas Carlin (1789-1852) of Illinois, an anti-bank Democrat, in message to a special session of the Legislature, notes that the state debt is \$13,1 million; if all public works are completed would be \$21.8 million; Legislature then votes to abandon all construction.
- Dec. 11, 1839 Meeting held at Philadelphia Board of Trade to oppose removal of City Railroad from Market Street. (PubLdgr)
- Dec. 12, 1839 New Jersey Railroad Board reports that it has purchased the steamboat *Stonington* for a ferry for \$9,000. (MB)
- Dec. 14, 1839 Hartford & New Haven Railroad opens between Belle Dock and Tomlinson's Bridge in New Haven and Hartford, Conn.; although built mostly with New York capital, James Brewster, a New Haven carriage manufacturer has emerged as the leading figure; the road has been completed with short-term loans from Hartford banks at 9-10½% interest. (NHCorp, Kirkland)
- Dec. 15, 1839 Pioneer Line begins recovering \$16,500 loan to Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mountjoy & Lancaster Railroad by withholding tolls.
- Dec. 1839 District of Northern Liberties restricts the speed of animal-drawn railroad cars through the streets to a normal walk. (Schwartz)
- Dec. 1839 New York & Erie Railroad receives the fourth installment on the state's \$100,000 subscription. (ARJ)
- Dec. 1839 Whig Party holds its first national convention at Harrisburg and nominates William Henry Harrison for Pres. over longtime standard bearer Henry Clay; Clay rejects being Harrison's running mate (which in fact will cost him the presidency he has so long craved), and for sectional and factional balance the second spot goes to John Tyler (1790-1862), a renegade anti-Jackson Democrat and states-rights Clay supporter from Virginia. (Howe)
- Dec. 1839 John Knisell and Isaac Reeves place *Hornet* in service as a winter boat on the Federal Street-Market Street ferry at Camden that they lease from Jacob Ridgway. (Boyer)

- Dec. 1839 Work on the last section of the Hocking Valley Canal between Nelsonville and Athens, Ohio, suspended temporarily. (Mould)
- Dec. 1839 Michigan Gov. Woodbridge suggests classifying internal improvement projects and proceeding with only those that are almost finished and can earn a return. (McGrane)
- Dec. 1839 Michigan's Southern Railroad reaches Adrian. (michiganrailroads - verify)
- Dec. 16, 1839 Rumors in Philadelphia that Hosea J. Levis, cashier of the Schuylkill Bank in the City of Philadelphia, has issued \$900,000 in fraudulent stock of the Kentucky Bank; the fraud is discovered when the transfer books are delivered to the new transfer agent, the Bank of the United States (Pa.). (Wood, Duke)
- Dec. 17, 1839 PW&B Board reports it has erected the Newkirk Column commemorating the completion of the railroad, at the west end of the Grays Ferry Bridge (Newkirk Viaduct); authorizes purchase of lot adjacent to depot at southeast corner of 11th & Market Streets. (MB)
- Dec. 17, 1839 The Bank of Kentucky files a bill against the Schuylkill Bank in the City of Philadelphia and gets an injunction against disposing of any fund from the issue of fraudulent Kentucky Bank stock; the Schuylkill Bank of the City of Philadelphia fails after revelation of a large embezzlement and diversion of funds by its cashier, Hosea J. Levis; Levis has fraudulently issued \$1.08 million in stock of the Bank of Kentucky, of which the Schuylkill Bank was agent and for which it is later found liable; Levis sells the bogus shares to brokers in New York and Philadelphia and uses the money to cover the Schuylkill Bank's losses; Levis flees to Europe, is returned, but never punished; the Bank of Kentucky eventually ends up with about \$600,000 in assets from the Schuylkill Bank, including title to a large tract of Schuylkill coal land; holders of the fraudulent Schuylkill Bank shares receive \$40 per share, but there is nothing left for the legitimate stockholders. (PubLdgr, Scharf, Holdsworth, Duke, FisherDiary)
- Dec. 17, 1839 Monongahela Navigation Company begins construction of slackwater locks and dams on the Monongahela River, previously navigable only in high water. (Poor)
- Dec. 19, 1839 Committee on Public Highways of the Philadelphia City Councils reports that it is inexpedient to remove the City Railroad from Market Street after protests from the Board of Trade. (Schwartz)
- Dec. 19, 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad ceases operation of Owings Mills

Branch in winter from mid-Dec. through end of March because of poor track, difficulty in clearing of snow, and light traffic; remains closed in winter throughout 1840s. (BaltAm)

- Dec. 21, 1839 Indiana legislative resolution orders the Board of Internal Improvement to settle with contractors. (PL)
- Dec. 22, 1839 Heavy snow hits eastern Pennsylvania; no attempt made to clear Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad until after Christmas. (HseJrnl)
- Dec. 27, 1839 Britton M. Evans of Downingtown, a section foreman on the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad, patents an improved rail chair that dispenses with wooden wedges; he furnishes them only to the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad for a 0.5 cents per pound royalty. (HseJrnl)
- Dec. 27, 1839 Franklin Railroad agrees with the Post Office Dept. to carry the mail between Chambersburg and Hagerstown by a combination of railroad and four-horse post coaches as the railroad progresses; stages to run at 7MPH and the railroad at 14 MPH. (HistRyMail)
- Dec. 27, 1839 Herman Haupt receives patent No. 1,445 for a plan for a lattice truss bridge. (PtntIndx)
- Dec. 28, 1839 Maj. C. A. Ogden reports to Chief Engineer Joseph G. Totten on the National Road in Indiana, Illinois and Missouri; will require \$1,232,195 from the Ohio line to Indianapolis, \$1,912,054 from Indianapolis to the Illinois line, \$1,432,138 to Vandalia, \$1,016,700 to the Mississippi, and \$1,664,790 in Missouri or a total of \$7,257,879. (Rept)
- 1839 Liverpool market is glutted with cotton from increased American production; the world price of cotton falls until it is half its 1836 level; this breaks the speculative bubble in southwestern cotton lands and the internal trade in slaves and leaving cotton speculators like the state Bank of the United States with cotton now worth a fraction of what they paid for it. (Howe)
- 1839 From its peak in 1839 to its trough in 1844, canal construction falls 90%. (Werner)
- 1839 Erie Canal's eastbound traffic from the Trans-Allegheny West now exceeds all other northern routes combined; the share of Western goods arriving at Tidewater by the Erie Canal is about 25% and by the Main Line about 20%; the Main Line has about 25% of westbound merchandise. (Ransom)
- 1839 New Jersey Railroad relocates its track and terminus from the south side

of Montgomery Street in Jersey City to the north side, necessitating the removal of Isaac Edge's landmark windmill. (Winfield)

- 1839 New Jersey Railroad adopts a system of commutation tickets; there are only three commuters who pay \$120 a year in advance for railroad tickets and \$15 additional for the ferry. (AR)
- 1839 Beaver Meadow Railroad & Coal Company issues a \$250,000 mortgage to pay advances by the stockholders; the mortgage trustee is the Girard Life Insurance, Annuity & Trust Company of Philadelphia, the first time a trust company becomes the trustee of a corporate mortgage. (GrdTrst)
- 1839 Mad River & Lake Erie Railroad opens to Republic, Ohio. (HistSenecaCo - verify)
- 1839 Indiana places \$20,000 in bonds with the Binghamton Bank of New York at 88, \$200,000 with the Merchants Exchange Bank at 96, \$35,000 from the Bank of Commerce at 96, and \$294,000 from the Indiana State Bank at 100. (Esarey)
- 1839 State debt of Indiana stands at \$10.1 million, with annual interest of \$479,000; of the internal improvement program, only 90 miles of the Wabash & Erie Canal, 30 miles of the Whitewater Canal, 9 miles of the Central Canal, 28 miles of the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad and 41 miles of turnpike between New Albany and Paoli have been completed. (Fatout)
- Late? 1839 Michigan State Bank fails. (Shade)
- Dec. 1839 Only three chartered and four general-law banks left in Michigan.
- 1839 New York & Harlem Railroad purchases two locomotives from Norris Bros. and places them in service between 32nd Street and the Harlem River; an engine house is constructed on the northeast corner of 4th Avenue & 32nd Street. (NYC/Stokes)
- 1839 Samuel Swartwout (1783-1856), Collector of the Port of New York and sometimes entrepreneur and speculator, flees to England after embezzling over \$1 million in public funds. (Trager)
- 1839 Coal operator John C. Offerman opens Phoenix Park Colliery No. 2 in Cass Township. (Munsell)
- 1839 Asa Packer and his brother Robert W. Packer of Reading contract with Robert F. Stockton and Edwin A. Stevens to build decked boats and carry anthracite coal from Pottsville to New York and other points via the

Schuylkill and Delaware & Raritan Canals without transshipment; although starting late in the season, they have 55 boats of 50-60 tons in service by the end of the year; carry 25,000 ton of coal to New York and return with New York merchandise which finds a ready market along the canal; travel time, Pottsville to New York, is 7 days; the horses are taken aboard the boats as they are towed by steam tugs between Fairmount and Bordentown; the elimination of transshipment saves 70 cents a ton. (SN AR, RRGaz, CLJones)

- 1839 Anthracite-burning "Crab" type locomotive built by Ross Winans of Baltimore placed on Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad; by end of 1839, Philadelphia & Columbia has four anthracite and five bituminous coal-burning locomotives in service.
- 1839 William E. Morris, Engineer of Allegheny Portage Railroad, recommends building roofs over the inclined planes to stop rapid deterioration of the hemp ropes. (CC)
- 1839 Canal Commissioners order removal of Dam & Lock No. 1 of Franklin Line at Sugar Creek on complaint of landowners. (CC)
- 1839 John Bingham (1804-1870) of the Despatch Line establishes his own freight line on the Main Line of Public Works.
- 1839 Charles L. Schlatter makes first report to Canal Commissioners on surveys for a Harrisburg-Pittsburgh railroad; finds no direct route possible between Chambersburg and Laughlintown with grades under 45 feet per mile. (CC rept of 1/21/40)
- 1839 Union Canal and Schuylkill Canal carry 9,564 tons of bituminous coal from the West Branch of the Susquehanna River to Philadelphia. (AR)
- 1839 Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad relaid with T-rail between Washington Factory and Timonium. (AR)
- 1839 Herman Haupt appointed Principal Assistant Engineer on Wrightsville, York & Gettysburg Railroad. (Wilson)
- 1839 Lycoming Coal Company abandons their coke-smelting experiments at Farrandsville because the coking process employed does not drive off enough impurities from the local coal; have made about 3,500 tons but at prohibitive cost; the Boston capitalists have lost about \$500,000. (explorepahistory, Swank)
- 1839 William Lyman and Robert Bennet Forbes (1804-1889) abandon their Franklin Nail Works adjacent to the Farrandsville Furnace for the failure

to obtain good iron, having wasted \$50,000. (Knowles)

- 1839 John Grove and John Peter Grove build Columbia Furnace, the first in present Montour County. (Paskoff ed)
- 1839 William Firmstone adds a hot-blast for coke smelting to the Karthaus Furnace of the Clearfield Coal & Iron Company, consisting of Burd Patterson, Henry C. Carey, John White, and others; the project is abandoned at the close of the year. (Swank - claims furnace built by Ritner & Say in 1836)
- 1839 Peter Ritner and John Say abandon their coke blast furnace at Karthaus, having spent \$80,000 and made only 400 tons of pig iron; in part because of failure to extend the West Branch Canal and partly because of the poor quality of the ore. (EEBrown, explorepahistory)
- 1839 First rolling mill in Lawrence County, Pa., built at New Castle by James D. White, Shubal Wilder of Massachusetts, Joseph H. Brown, et al., to make cut nails using Juniata blooms. (Swank)
- 1839 Daniel Drew (1797-1879) establishes the People's Line of steamboats on the Hudson River between New York and Albany. (Mott)
- 1839 B&O Board adopts location to Connellsville, Pa., whence it can go to either Wheeling or Pittsburgh. (Dilts)
- 1839 Maryland is unable to sell its state bonds in Europe; \$3 million each in bonds given to B&O and C&O Canal, who sell them for whatever they can get.
- 1839 James J. Kennedy (1793-1863), great-grandson of immigrant William Kennedy (1695-1777?) and cousin of James Kennedy Moorhead and the other Moorhead brothers, moves from Warren County, N.J., to the Dunlop Farm on Conococheague Creek below Chambersburg, where his descendants will become involved with the Cumberland Valley Railroad and other local industries. (BioAnnalsofFrnklnCo)
- 1839 James Kennedy Moorhead (1806-1884) settles in Pittsburgh, where he takes a contract to build the Monongahela Navigation. (RRGaz obit)
- 1839 Claudius Crozet for the Virginia Board of Public Works surveys the Monongahela River and West Fork for a slackwater navigation to Weston. (VaBPW)
- 1839 James Reeside sells the Good Intent Line to Thomas Shriver; operated as T. Shriver & Co. (Jordan)

- 1839 Northwestern Turnpike (later U.S. 50) completed between Winchester and Parkersburg, Va., becoming a main route from northern Virginia to the West. (Hunter/Dooley)
- 1839 Ohio floats \$2.42 million canal loan; \$1,030,000 taken by the North American Bank & Trust Company, with small amounts by the Bank of the Manhattan Company and Chelsea Bank, all at New York, and \$665,000 by the Ohio Life Insurance & Trust Company, \$210,000 by the Lancaster Bank, \$200,000 by the Columbus Insurance Company, and \$100,000 by the Urbana Banking Company, plus three other banks and individuals in Ohio; to evade Ohio's strict Democratic banking law, Ohio banks that take Ohio Canal bonds, issue small post notes to the contractors that circulate as money; the state receives only \$2 million, and has to extend a large credit to the North American Bank & Trust Company, which is over-extended in speculations, but it keeps working through the worst of 1839, but the state debt is now \$10 million. (Scheiber - verify CC)
- 1839 Salineville, Ohio, laid out by John Farmer and James Farmer. (McCord)
- 1839 William Neil opens the Neil House opposite Capitol in Columbus, Ohio, as the largest hotel in town. (Lee/Columbus)
- 1839 Ohio lets contracts on the 12-mile deep cut on the summit of the Miami & Erie Canal north of St. Mary's. (Scheiber - verify CC)
- 1839 Hocking Valley Canal opens from Lancaster, Ohio, to Bowner's Lock (16.5 miles). (Mould)
- 1839 Congress abandons the portion of the National Road to the state of Indiana. (Esarey)
- 1839 Capital of Illinois moved from Vandalia to Springfield. (or 1840??)
- 1839 The round trip for correspondence and reply between Philadelphia and Lexington, Ky., is now only 8 days, down from 16 days in 1810 and 32 days in 1789. (John)
- 1839 Leonard White, Calen Guard & Co. build the Illinois Furnace, a small charcoal furnace near Elizabethtown in Hardin County that is the first documented furnace in Illinois. (Swank)
- 1839 American Fur Company builds a horse-operated portage railroad around the falls of the St. Mary's River at Sault Ste. Marie; it is the first railroad on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and lasts until the locks are built in 1855. (michiganrailroads)

- 1839 Georgia Railroad & Banking Company opens to Greensboro. (Hanson - verify)
- 1839 George Brown (1787-1859) resigns from the New York, Philadelphia and Liverpool firms headed by his brothers and continues Alexander Brown & Sons in Baltimore as an independent merchant bank. (Brown)
- 1839 Future Lines West figure Joseph K. Edgerton (1881-1893), a Vermont native of Connecticut Yankee ancestry, forms a partnership with George B. Kissam for the practice of law in New York City. (VllyUpprMaumee)
- ca. 1839 Samuel M. Kier (-), a transporter on the Pennsylvania Main Line, and his father Thomas Kier of Tarentum, Pa., engage Kanawha Valley driller Joseph Doty, Sr., to drill a salt well on land leased from Lewis Peterson at Tarentum; they also get small amounts of petroleum, which they dump in the Pennsylvania Canal. (Williamson/Daum -implies that oil was not pumped until 1848)
- 1839 George Smith, a young Scotsman who has arrived in Chicago in 1833 and made money in land speculation, with his associates Strachan and Scott, secures a charter for the Wisconsin Marine & Fire Insurance Company from the Wisconsin Territorial Legislature; it issues “certificates” of deposit, which circulate as money and form the only sound circulating medium in Chicago during the depression. (CHTaylor - verify PL)