

**Stephen Leland Dows;** the public recognized the worth of his labors as indicated by the fact that the **town of Dows, in Wright County, was named in his honor.** Many miles of railroad were built by him and his labors therefore contributed in substantial measure to opening up the territory of this state. He was one of the men instrumental in building the **Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad,** and was involved in bringing the **Illinois Central** into Cedar Rapids. He also constructed the **Iowa Central from Mason City to Oskaloosa** and the road from Marquette through western Iowa which became part of the **Milwaukee Road** system. Mr. Dows also built the first Northwestern railway bridge over the Des Moines River west of Boone to Moingona.

The *Iowa Railway and Light Company* was the business venture of **Isaac Smith and Stephen Dows**

The entrepreneurs soon changed the name of the company to the **Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway Company** to recognize the communities it served. Originally known as the “Interurban”, construction on the **CRANDIC** began in 1903, making their inaugural trip August 1904.

*June 15, 1859 marked the entrance of the railroad into the city of Cedar Rapids. **F. J. Upton** of the Star Wagon Works received a carload of freight on this first freight train.*

**DeWitt Clinton Rowley** located here in 1860, coming from H. Waukegan, IL and at once became an important factor in the business circles of this city. *With Judge and William Greene and Dr. John Ely he built a portion of the main line of the B. C. R. & N.* In the year 1865, the *Cedar Rapids & St. Paul Railway Company* was organized in this city, and in the fall of that year D. W. C. Rowley had the contract on the first nine miles of the line from here to Vinton. Later he engaged in extensive railroad construction work, being associated with S. L. Dows in the building of a division of the *Iowa Central*. In 1876, with many others, Mr. Rowley suffered heavy financial losses, but soon had formed a partnership with T. M. Sinclair in the manufacture of barbed wire, which business was carried on quite successfully for several years until owners of the patents absorbed the trade.

**James L. Bever**, the eldest son of Sampson Bever devoted a few years to improving his property and in 1855 opened a general merchandise store in Cedar Rapids, which he successfully conducted for about five years. He then sold his store and began his career as a builder of railroads, which was in every way successful. He was a director and largely interested in the building of the *Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska Railway*, since merged into the *Chicago & Northwestern*. **Sampson Bever** owned stock in two different railroads, also stock in the street railway

**Allan McDuff** learned the machinist trade in Scotland before he immigrated to America in 1868. He arrived in Cedar Rapids about 1871 and was employed as a stationary engineer for 3 months before he was employed by the *B. C. R. & N.* railroad as general machinist. He remained with the railroad when it was absorbed into the *Rock Island* system.

**John Weare, was among the first involved in the building of the first railroad from the Mississippi River to Cedar Rapids.** (*passage taken from In Memoriam by W. W. Walker*) In 1856-7 the question of a railroad from the Mississippi to Cedar Rapids began to be agitated. Mr. Weare gave his hearty support to the enterprise. In time, money, social and political influence, he gave all he could give. His own home was freely opened to all persons interested in bringing the railroad to Cedar Rapids. At his table were welcomed such well-known capitalists and railroad builders as Oakes Ames and his brother, Oliver Ames, of Boston; L. C. Crocker, Captain Bertram, Thomas Davis, of Syracuse; Mr. Lambert, the Nickerson Brothers, of Boston, and John Blair, the New Jersey millionaire. These capitalists knew that if every other man failed in loyalty to the railroad, Mr. Weare could be relied upon. He provided the money that paid for the first labor done on the contract for the road.

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**Robert Safely** saw the first engine to run with steam in the state of New York. The family was financially deflated by the depression of the 1870's and came west to start over when the Safely Woolen Mill went out of business. For many years Mr. Safely was master mechanic for the **B. C. R. & N.** system, and was a familiar figure on the streets of Cedar Rapids. He was first cousin of **W. G. Dows** who was head of the *Iowa Railway and Light Company*, Mr. Safely was a director for many years.

**Charles J. Ives was President and General Superintendent of the B. C. R. & N. R. R.** Mr. Ives was seen as a “practical” railroad man, having commenced at the lowest round of the ladder and worked his way up, step by step, until he attained the highest position on the road. In 1862, Mr. Ives entered the railway service and was engaged on the *Burlington & Missouri River road* in various capacities. As a clerk at Mt. Pleasant, later serving in that capacity at Ottumwa. He was then clerk at the local freight office at Burlington, Iowa, until early 1867, and then clerk in the general freight office until mid 1870. *Since that time he has been connected with the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota, and its successor, the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad.* Until 1871, he was General Freight Agent of the first division of the road from Burlington to Cedar Rapids. He was then, until Oct. 5, 1874, General Passenger and Ticket Agent. From Oct. 15, 1874, to Oct. 28, 1875, he was General Freight, Passenger and Ticket Agent. From 1875, he was acting Superintendent and General Freight, Passenger and Ticket Agent. From Nov. 1875, until Nov. 1879, he was Superintendent and General Freight, Passenger and Ticket Agent. He was General Superintendent in 1879, and in 1884, was elected President and General Superintendent.

About 1865, the ***Cedar Valley Construction Company*** took the contract to build the Cedar Rapids & St. Paul Road from this city to Waterloo. This Construction Company was a home institution, **Dr. John F. Ely**, being the President. He was a director and prominent in the construction of the ***Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska railway*** from Clinton to Cedar Rapids. He was the bearer of \$2,700, subscribed by himself and townsmen to Clinton, which sum paid for the first grading at Clinton on this line. He was also a director in and actively engaged in building the ***Cedar Rapids & Missouri River railroad*** from Cedar Rapids to Council Bluffs. He was also largely identified with the construction of the ***Iowa Falls & Sioux City railway***, and of a line from Hannibal to St. Charles, Missouri. In 1869, with his associates in Cedar Rapids and Burlington, he commenced the construction of the ***Cedar Rapids, Burlington & Minnesota railway***, the main line of which extended from Burlington to Plymouth Junction. This with its branches from Cedar Rapids to Postville, from Muscatine to Riverside and from Vinton to Traer, in all 369 miles, was completed in 1874.

**P. E. Hall**, an associate of John Blair, is listed as an officer of the company for the ***Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad Company, Iowa Falls & Sioux City Railroad Company; and the Sioux City & Pacific Railroad Co.*** The Blair Building in downtown Cedar Rapids was the headquarters for many of the area railroad and land companies. Mr. Hall also served as president of the Moingona Coal Company. The mines of the company were in the Des Moines Valley, near the station of Moingona, west of the river, on the ***Northwestern*** Road. The coal deposits were very extensive, and all the coal used in the central and western part of the state by the Northwestern Road, came from these mines.

A story from July 1903 details the head-end collision between two *Milwaukee freight trains* near Amana, which killed Fireman Joseph Dusek of this city, **Brakeman George Haynes** of Marion. The first news of the wreck received here indicated merely that Brakeman Haynes was missing. Later in the night his body was located under the debris, but at 11 o'clock the following morning the wrecking crew had not been able to recover it.

The father **Harry H. Haynes** was a passenger on an early morning work train for the scene of the wreck. If you look closely, this marker has the letters BRT on it. We believe this stands for one of two organizations, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen or the Brotherhood of Railroad Telegraphers.

4 After the death of Edward Winslow, **Marvin Wright** was named the Vice President of the **CRANDIC Railroad** and a purchasing agent for the Iowa Electric Light and Power Company

**R. W. Bushnell,**  
*Master Mechanic*  
*B. C. R. & N. R R*

4 **Garrett Yonkers** was a native of Holland, born in May, 1850. Crossing the Atlantic he first located in Michigan and about 1870 came to Cedar Rapids, where he was connected with the construction of the *Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad, acting as paymaster*. Later he was connected with the *Santa Fe* line in Kansas and subsequently embarked in the hardware and lumber business, in which he was very successful. In 1891 he returned to Cedar Rapids and became associated as manager with the Eaton Hardware store.

→ A special stock train on the **B. C. R. & N.** coming south was derailed at the north end of the switch at Northwood, resulting in the death of a highly respected engineer **Mr. M. L. Rice** and a brakeman Mr. C. Connors, and ditching and smashing more or less, nine cars and the engine. Rice has been an engineer with the Burlington road for some years and also served his time as fireman. The funeral of the late M. L. Rice was conducted *under the supervision of the Orders of Brotherhood of Firemen and Brotherhood of Engineers*. As on the engine, the firemen took the left side of the coffin and the engineers the right side, and in the procession they followed immediately after the hearse, and were followed in turn by sixty-five of the representatives of the two orders to which the deceased belonged. *The remains were buried in a lot in the cemetery purchased by the Burlington Company.*

**Robert Hazlett**, son of *Express Agent Hazlett*, of the American company, was wheeling a truck loaded with express matter for the Iowa City train, standing at the depot, the truck was caught by a train passing on the main track, and lifting young Hazlett in the air it in some manner turned the truck about and threw the boy under the train bound for Iowa City. Young Robert was an exemplary boy in every respect. He had been employed by his father as assistant around the office and warehouse, and intended to go to Iowa City on the train.

*Oak Hill Cemetery is non-profit lot owner association dedicated to preserving the heritage of Linn County, Iowa.*



**John Bissell Turner**, of the John B. Turner & Son Funeral Home arrived in Cedar Rapids about 1872. He was appointed to the *railroad mail service*, making the run between Clinton and Council Bluffs for seven years. *When the Cedar Rapids division was established he was put upon that run and there remained for five years, making the trips between Cedar Rapids and Chicago*. He was afterward appointed money order clerk at the Cedar Rapids post office, which position he continued to fill until in 1887 he resigned and entered into partnership with Herbert McDougall in the furniture and undertaking business.

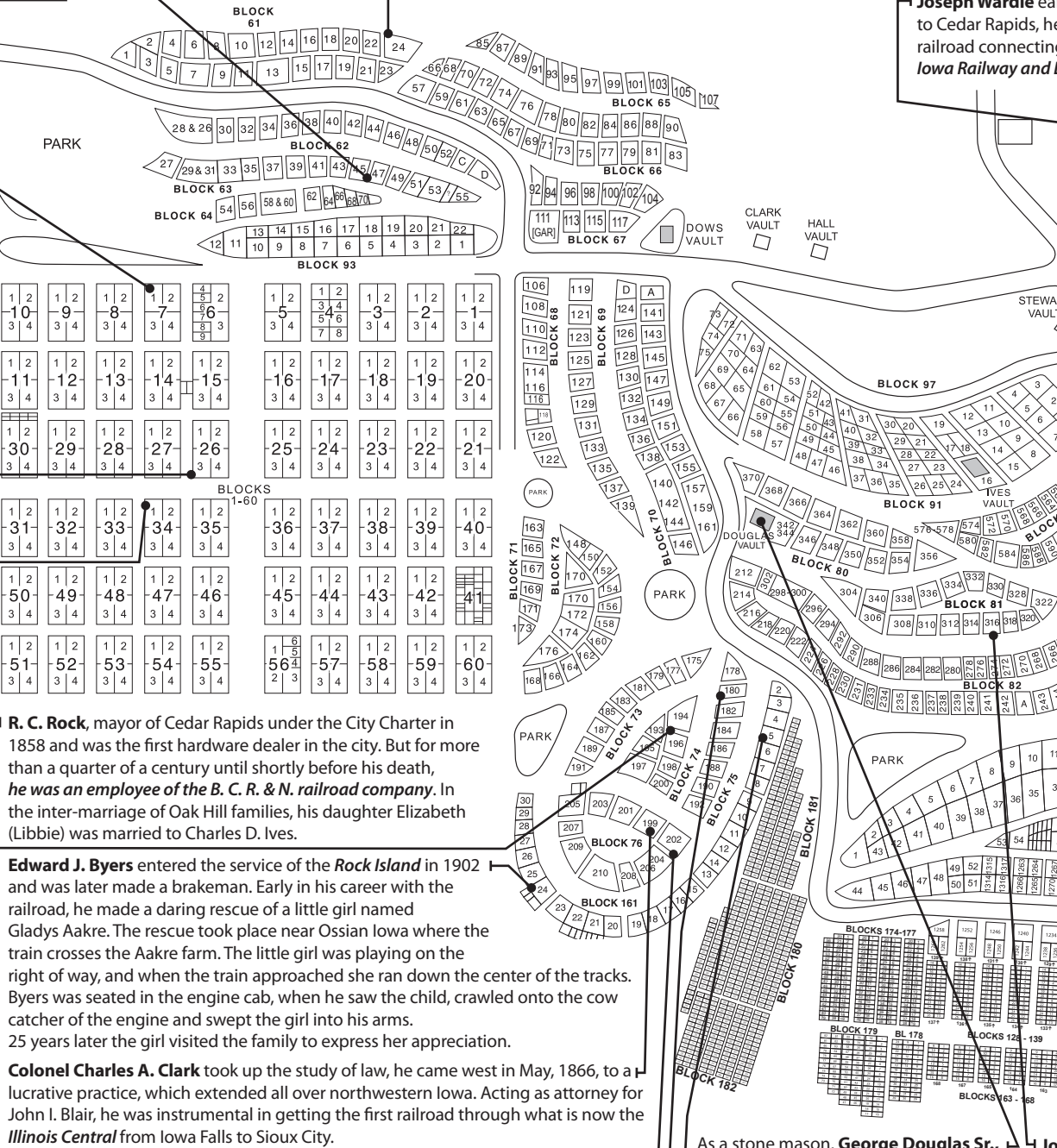
During the years of 1856 to 1872, **William Williams Walker** surveyed and built hundreds of miles of road in Iowa and hundreds more in other states. Early identified with the Blair and Ames projects, he personally supervised every mile of that portion of the present *Northwestern* system included in the state of Iowa. He once remarked that he had “walked over every foot of land traversed by the Northwestern from the Mississippi to the Missouri, and that, too many times over.” In 1853 he entered the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of Troy, New York, he graduated in 1856. He at once entered upon his life work as a civil engineer. Not waiting for something to turn up, he started for that mecca of engineers in the 1850s — the country beyond the Mississippi. Learning of a construction camp at Mount Vernon, Iowa, he made that his objective point. He was at once employed as a rodman. Serious differences arose between the superintendent of construction and the officers of the road, the result of which was the superintendent and his assistants “pulled out.” The officers, not satisfied with the construction from Clinton westward, directed the young engineer, fresh from “Tech.,” to return to Clinton and take charge of the work of reconstruction to Mount Vernon. In the later stages of the *Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad* construction from Clinton to Cedar Rapids he was made Superintendent of Construction and was in charge when the road was built into Cedar Rapids. *Had his advice been followed there would be no Fourth Street railroad problem in Cedar Rapids today. The “short cut-off” now used by the Chicago and Northwestern was in his original survey and it was in his judgment that this line should be used instead of running trains through the city.* John I. Blair placed Mr. Walker in direct line of promotion. In 1860, at the age of twenty-six, he was made chief engineer of the *Cedar Rapids & Missouri River Railroad*.

In 1863, **Judge George Greene** withdrew from the legal profession and devoted his energies to railroad enterprises. *With his brother William Greene, he built the McGregor Western Road to Conover and was also engaged in the construction of the Rockford, Rock Island & St. Louis Road.* It was during this time Judge Greene lived for a time at McGregor, and on his return to Cedar Rapids formed a partnership with his son-in-law, Mr. A. S. Belt, and Judge Dudley. They were at the time solicitors for the *Northwestern Road*. It was largely *through his influence that the first railroad from the Mississippi westward was brought through Cedar Rapids*, and which now forms a part of the *Chicago & Northwestern*. He was also *engaged in building the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota Road, and was for some time President of the same*. The Cedar Rapids & Minnesota Roads were *merged into the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern*, and of this he was President for many years. He was prominently connected in railroad enterprises in Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Kansas. *His last railroad enterprise was the Cedar Rapids & Marion Street Railway, which after many failures was brought into successful operation. For his funeral, all the railroads ran free special trains from different points, and there was a large gathering of people from all parts of the State.*

**George Minor** began his railroad career as a call boy, and in 1905 became a fireman. In 1912 he advanced to **Rock Island Engineer**, a position he held at the time of his death, due to complications of an arm injury while on duty. *Had his career continued he would have taken the first Rocket train from Cedar Rapids to Burlington.*

During his railroad career, **John T. Merritt** held almost every position connected with moving a train. He entered the service of the *B. C. R. & N.* in 1873, as brakeman, later became a train baggage man, worked as switchman, was promoted to conductor, and finally to yardmaster at Clinton. When his health failed, he returned to Cedar Rapids to serve as a crossing flagman.

In 1871 **Fred Faulkes** came to Cedar Rapids in the capacity of telegraph operator, of the *B. C. R. & N. R R*, filling that position at various points on the road for the following 2 years. During this period, however, he kept in touch with newspaper work by acting as special correspondent for various St. Louis, Chicago and other metropolitan daily papers. In 1877 he returned actively to the newspaper field, accepting a position as reporter on the Cedar Rapids Republican until 1884, when with his brother-in-law, Clarence L. Miller, he purchased the Gazette



**R. C. Rock**, mayor of Cedar Rapids under the City Charter in 1858 and was the first hardware dealer in the city. But for more than a quarter of a century until shortly before his death, *he was an employee of the B. C. R. & N. railroad company*. In the inter-marriage of Oak Hill families, his daughter Elizabeth (Libbie) was married to Charles D. Ives.

**Edward J. Byers** entered the service of the *Rock Island* in 1902 and was later made a brakeman. Early in his career with the railroad, he made a daring rescue of a little girl named Gladys Aakre. The rescue took place near Ossian Iowa where the train crosses the Aakre farm. The little girl was playing on the right of way, and when the train approached she ran down the center of the tracks. Byers was seated in the engine cab, when he saw the child, crawled onto the cow catcher of the engine and swept the girl into his arms. 25 years later the girl visited the family to express her appreciation.

**Colonel Charles A. Clark** took up the study of law, he came west in May, 1866, to a lucrative practice, which extended all over northwestern Iowa. Acting as attorney for John I. Blair, he was instrumental in getting the first railroad through what is now the *Illinois Central* from Iowa Falls to Sioux City.

At age 16, **John P. Messer** left the farm and went to work as a locomotive fireman on the *Concord Railroad*. At 18 he was promoted to locomotive engineer, and at that time was the youngest man who had ever been entrusted with an engine on that road. He resigned to enter the service of his country as assistant engineer in the navy, and was ordered to the United States steam frigate Colorado, on which he served for nearly three years. After an honorable discharge from the United States Navy he was employed by the *Minnesota Valley Railroad* as a locomotive engineer. *He was the first regular engineer and master mechanic at Cedar Rapids in the service of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Minnesota (now Northern) Railroad*. After about 20 years of railway service, Mr. Messer entered the real-estate business in Cedar Rapids in 1881. His home stood on the site of what is now the History Center.

As a stone mason, **George Douglas Sr.**, found a demand for his craftsmanship, the *building of stone arch bridges and railroad trestle works*, as railroad construction was sweeping across North America. *Mr. Douglas was associated with John Blair in his projection of the various railway lines in western Iowa*. In a quarter of a century of intense activity with the railroad, George Douglas acquired the capital to use for the investments and business ventures.

In 1874 he associated with Mr. Robert Stuart, under the name of North Star Oatmeal Mills Douglas & Stuart, (which eventually merged into Quaker Oats) & engaged in the manufacture of oatmeal & other cereal products at Cedar Rapids.

## Oak Hill Cemetery and the area Railroad Connections

It will be impossible to identify every family touched by the development of the many railroad companies in Iowa. From the builders, financiers, lawyers, engineers, mechanics, yard men, mail room and telegraph workers, we have compiled a small group to feature at this time.

**Joseph Wardle** earned his degree at Cornell College, Mt. Vernon in civil engineering in the late 1800's. On coming to Cedar Rapids, he became the civil engineer and construction foreman for *S. L. Dows* who was constructing the railroad connecting Manchester with Cedar Rapids. His association with Col. Dows, lead to the organization of the *Iowa Railway and Light Corporation*.



**John Cornelius Broeksmit** was born in Zierikzee, Holland, 1825. His father was a merchant, dealing in grain and madder, the latter a commodity which has now fallen into disuse, owing to the introduction of chemical dyestuffs, but in the 1800's was in great demand all over the world. Afforded early educational privileges, he subsequently entered the French Institute, where he studied engineering, algebra, the higher mathematics and the French language. His business training was received in his father's counting room. In 1847 he sailed for New York, but he was unfamiliar with the English language. Failing to obtain employment in New York he went to Boston working in the office of Thomas H. Dixon & Son, importers and ship-owners. The senior member of this firm was Consul General of the Netherlands for the States of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Maine. During the two years that he was with that firm the young man gained the mastery of mercantile methods in America, and also learned to speak, read and write the English language. *Making his way to New Orleans, Mr. Broeksmit became chief clerk for Samuel Van Loon, master mechanic of the New Orleans, Jackson & Great Northern Railroad in Louisiana*. He occupied that position until the breaking out of the civil war in 1861. It happened that at that time a vessel of his own country was in port the only ship of that nation that had entered the harbor of New Orleans for twenty-three years. It was ready to