

Kourtnei Gray
Rockford History Aurora University Lesson Plan

Course/Grade Level: Immigration Unit/ US History 11th Grade

Lesson Title: Immigration and the Railroad

1. Set Induction/Bell Ringer: As students walk into the classroom they will receive a map of Northern Illinois and Wisconsin. On the board will be a list of places that the student has to label on their map. (Chicago, Harvard, Kenosha, Lake Michigan, and Rockford) After a couple of minutes go over it with the students to make sure they have labeled it correctly. Ask some questions about how people would travel to the various places in the 1800s. Ask questions about where people would most likely settle down, what businesses or land features might be in those areas.

2. Aims/Objectives and Standards: District 205 History High School Standards
HISTORY

- Apply methods of historical inquiry (pose questions, collect and analyze primary and secondary sources, make and support arguments with evidence, and report findings). USH-04
- Analyze historic events within their context and evaluate how interpretations of those events changed over time. USH-05

SOCIAL SYSTEMS

- Examine the evolution of the American identity through the eyes of different cultural groups (e.g., African American, immigrants, Native Americans, religious groups, role of women in society). USH-08

3. Procedures, Assessments and Materials Required: Once we are done discussing the map, I will ask the students to just listen while I read aloud the book "Ellis Island" from the traveling trunk. This will allow students to start thinking about Immigration to the United States and the process it took at Ellis Island. After reading the story I will follow up with some questions for the students. -How did people then come to Rockford? What was happening in cities such as New York? (overcrowding) How were businesses built in Rockford? Where did the business and even people get all of their supplies? I will then have students pair up and pass out the reading packets and the work packets for Rockford Railroads. Students will use class time to read through the documents and answer the questions that go along with them in the work packet. I will be walking around listening to questions that the students are having and asking them questions to help understand the documents. Students will also need a writing utensil and markers/highlighters at least 3 different colors for the map.

4. Resources and Scholarship:

Combined Atlases of Winnebago County, Illinois 1871-1892-1905 and Atlas of Boone and Winnebago Counties Illinois 1886.

Campbell, Craig G. *History of Loves Park, Illinois*. Loves Park, IL: C.G. Campbell, 1998.

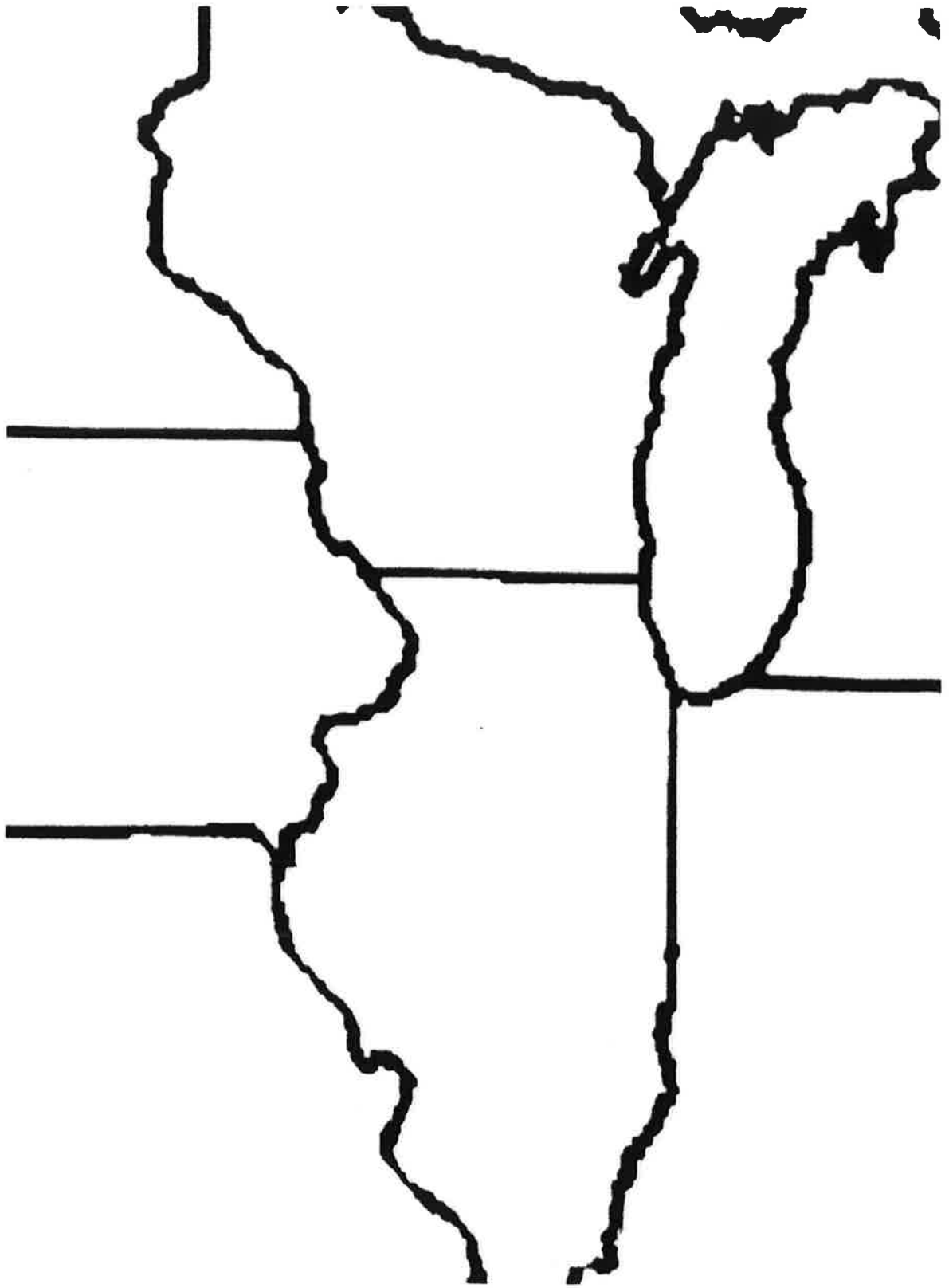
Church, Charles A. *History of Rockford and Winnebago County, Illinois*. Rockford, IL: The New England Society, 1900.

M.B. *A Short History of Harlem Township: being a collection of fact and fantasy*, In local History Room at Rockford Public Library, 1967.

Schafer, Mike. *Rockford Area Railroads*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.

5. Conclusion/Lesson Wrap-up: Once students are starting to work on the map you can start some class discussion. Asking students what they learned from the documents. Why did they want to build a railroad? What would/did the railroad do for Rockford? Also mention that In *History of Harlem Township*, it states that this railroad put Harlem on the map and when the residents found out about the railroad they moved buildings by the tracks. Showing that businesses were affected by the railroad. This should also be the time to pull in the map from the beginning of the class period. Where was this railroad going to and from. Why did it want to go this way? Exit slip. Before the students leave they are to list three ways that the Rockford Railroad impacted Immigrants to the Rockford Area in the mid-1800s. Students will turn in their exit slip which requires them to use information from the readings and discussion to answer the questions. Students will also turn in their work packets as an assignment grade.

6. Follow up Activity: With the readings and sources the students have looked at, the students will make a newspaper article about the new railroad that will be coming through the Rockford area and how it will change the area. Will need to include a headline, a picture, and two paragraphs.



Name:

Hour:

Student Packet:

I. *History of Rockford and Winnebago County Illinois* by Charles A. Church

A. In 1856 where was the railroad projected to go to from Rockford?

Now on the map

B. How many men were involved in starting the railroad company?

C. Where was money coming from to build the railroad?

D. Why was the railroad built?

E. Who became the President?

F. Why would the company need a President?

G. Who purchased most of the stocks?

H. Who helped the company when they were low on money?

I. Is there any evidence from this reading that there was an impact on immigrants in Rockford? Explain.

sheriff staggered a few paces and fell. His only words were: "I'm shot; catch him."

Countryman ran to the woods north of Kent's creek, with hundreds of infuriated citizens in pursuit. John Platt was the first to overtake him. He took his pistol from him, and, with assistance, secured his arrest. Amid threats of lynching, the prisoner was placed in jail and securely ironed. Samuel I. Church, the sheriff-elect, briefly addressed the crowd and assured them that the prisoner was secure.

Sheriff Taylor was thirty-one years of age, and left a wife, and a son a year and a half old. He was an excellent officer, and was held in high respect by the community. The funeral was held Thursday on the public square adjoining the jail, under the charge of the Masonic fraternity. The board of supervisors were in attendance in a body. The discourse was preached by Rev. W. F. Stewart.

EXECUTION OF COUNTRYMAN.

Countryman was indicted and tried for the murder of Sheriff Taylor at the February term of the circuit court in 1857. The prosecution was conducted by U. D. Meacham, the state's attorney, assisted by William Brown. The counsel for the defense was Orrin Miller and T. J. Turner. The following gentlemen constituted the jury: Levi Tunks, Philo C. Watson, Anthony M. Felmlly, Silas G. Tyler, Jacob B. Place, G. R. Ames, Allen Rice, Charles Works, J. W. Jenks, Edward Peppers, J. W. Knapp, S. P. Collier. The trial began on Monday, February 23d. The case was given to the jury on Thursday, and Friday morning they returned a verdict of guilty. Judge Sheldon pronounced the sentence of death upon Countryman. One of his counsel, Mr. Miller, tried to obtain a stay of proceedings, so as to bring the case before the supreme court. But Judge Caton refused to grant a writ of error.

On Friday, March 27th, Countryman was executed on the farm of Sheriff Church, a short distance from the city. The execution was witnessed by eight thousand people. In the absence of a military company, the two fire companies, armed with sabres and carbines, formed a hollow square at the jail, into the center of which the carriages which were to form the procession, were driven, and as the procession moved to the place of execution the fire companies formed a strong guard. Upon arriving at the scaffold, Rev. Hooper Crews offered an earnest prayer. The prisoner made a short speech and professed repentance and forgiveness for his crime. At seventeen minutes past two the bolt was withdrawn, and Countryman was swung into eternity. His father, sister and one brother witnessed the execution. Before the body was

taken down, Sheriff Church addressed the crowd as follows: "These painful proceedings being now concluded, and the sword of justice about to be returned to its sheath, I hope never again to be drawn into so much severity. I would thank you all for the good order you have maintained. Your conduct does credit to the city, and I hope you will observe the same decorum in retiring."

KENOSHA AND ROCKFORD RAILROAD.

In 1856 was projected a railroad to connect Kenosha on Lake Michigan with Rockford. It was a part of the original plan that this line should extend from Rockford to Rock Island. January 20, 1857, a charter was granted John M. Capron, Egbert Ayer, Thomas Paul, John Cornell, W. B. Ogden, John Bradley, Jason Marsh, George Haskell, David S. Penfield, Robert P. Lane, C. C. Briggs, C. H. Spafford, A. S. Miller, Jesse Blinn, and Seely Perry. The company was to have a capital stock of eight hundred thousand dollars, to be divided into shares of one hundred dollars each, and was authorized to construct a road from a point near the state line in McHenry county to Rockford. This road was built as a means of relieving Rockford from burdens imposed by the high freight and passenger rates of the Galena & Chicago Union.

Books for subscriptions to the stock of the road were opened early in November, 1856, and on the 25th of the same month the company was organized by the election of the following officers: President, C. H. Spafford; vice-president, R. P. Lane; secretary, E. H. Baker; treasurer, A. C. Spafford; executive committee, J. Bond, J. M. Capron, R. P. Lane, D. S. Penfield and Seely Perry. The subscriptions were made largely by farmers along the line, who gave mortgages on their real estate to secure their payments. The company negotiated these mortgages in payment for iron, labor and other expenses in the building of the road. When these obligations matured many of the subscribers could not redeem them, and the holders of the mortgages foreclosed them.

The contract for the construction of the road to Harvard was made in March, 1857, and the work was begun shortly afterwards. The eastern division of the road was under the control of another company, organized under a charter from the Wisconsin legislature. The progress of construction was impeded by financial embarrassments, arising from the great depression which spread over the country in 1857, and the enterprise languished. In August, 1858, the company applied to the council of Rockford for a loan of the city credit to the amount of \$50,000 to aid in the completion of the road. An election was held September 2, and the measure was carried by

a majority of more than five hundred. This is the only instance in the history of Rockford of the loan of the credit of the corporation to a railroad.

November 21, 1859, the road was completed between Rockford and Harvard, and the event was celebrated by a banquet at the Holland House the same evening. In 1864 the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad Company was absorbed by the Chicago & Northwestern, and the Kenosha & Rockford road, as a matter of course, soon came under the same control.

AN EARLY ROCKFORD MANSION.

The most beautiful home in early Rockford was that of Mrs. J. H. Manny, on South Main street. The "Manny mansion" was built in 1854, by John A. Holland. The grounds had a frontage of three hundred and twenty-five feet, and extended from the northern limit of G. N. Safford & Company's lumber yard to a point below Kent's creek, and were fronted by a stone fence. The beauty of these grounds was due, in large measure, to John Blair, a Scottish landscape gardener who came from Canada at Mr. Holland's solicitation. He laid out the grounds, and set the standard for landscape gardening in Rockford, and in this way he left his impress on the city. Mr. Blair subsequently laid out the grounds of the Elgin insane asylum. After the death of Mr. Holland, in 1855, financial reverses overtook his family, and about 1860 this splendid estate passed into the ownership of Mrs. J. H. Manny.

WINNEBAGO SUPPORTS FREMONT.

At the presidential election in November, 1856, Winnebago county gave John C. Fremont a magnificent vote. Every town in the county was carried for the Pathfinder. The total vote of the county was 4,154. The county gave a majority of 3,179 for Fremont over Buchanan. The First Congressional district gave majorities for Fremont and Washburne of more than twelve thousand. William Lathrop was elected representative; Samuel I. Church, sheriff; H. T. Mesler, coroner; Morris B. Derwent, circuit clerk. Mr. Church was a brother of Judge Church, and came to Rockford in 1848. He purchased a quarter of the school section; later he made it his home, where he died in 1886.

ROCKFORD CITY GREYS.

In 1856 a military company was organized, under the name of the Rockford City Greys, which enkindled the enthusiasm of a large number of the young men of the city. In the summer of 1858 Colonel E. E. Ellsworth was en-

gaged as drillmaster, and under his instruction the company attained a high degree of proficiency. In September, 1858, an encampment was held on the fairgrounds, which continued four days. Companies from Freeport, Elgin and Chicago were in attendance. This company continued in excellent condition until the outbreak of the Civil war, when under the name of Rockford Zouaves, many of the company volunteered in the three months' service, under the call of the president for seventy-five thousand men; and as a part of the Eleventh Illinois Volunteers, were detailed to garrison duty at Cairo and at Bird's Point.

IN HONOR OF ATLANTIC CABLE.

August 17, 1858, the completion of the Atlantic cable was celebrated by the citizens of Rockford with great demonstrations of enthusiasm. On that day the queen of England and the president of the United States exchanged messages. The event was celebrated in Rockford by a salute of fifty guns, fired by the City Greys, and the church bells were rung. Public exercises were held in the evening at the courthouse. Addresses were made by James L. Loop, Judge Miller, E. W. Blaisdell, Judge Church, William Hulin, and Dr. Lyman. The speech of Mr. Loop was exceptionally brilliant, and replete with noble thought. One paragraph from this address is quoted: "Great Britain and the United States—the two great maritime nations of the globe, have met in mortal combat upon that briny deep; they have fought for the sea's supremacy, they have maintained on either side with all their prowess and power their respective country's glory, and well and gloriously have their names resounded through the world—but no victory ever won by either upon the ocean can compare with this joint victory we have met to celebrate."

CENSUS OF 1860.

In 1860 the census of the city of Rockford, taken by Thos. Boyd, showed a population of 7,046, and 8,117 in the township. In 1836 there were 350 white inhabitants in the county, which included Boone, and the eastern half of Stephenson. In June, 1837, after Winnebago had been reduced to its present size, the county had a population of 1,086. In 1839 the village of Rockford had 235 inhabitants, and in December, 1845, there were 1,278. In 1840 there were 2,563 in Rockford township, and in 1855 there were 6,620.

TRIAL OF GOVERNOR BEBB.

On Tuesday evening, May 19, 1857, a charivari resulted in the instant death of one of the party. Hon. William Bebb, Ex-Governor of



first female postmaster in the area, and a stagecoach stop on the run between Rockford and Janesville, Wisconsin.

The Rockford & Kenosha Railroad

James Haven purchased the southwest quarter of Section 28 on October 29, 1839. Part of Haven's original claim became the second site for Harlem, Illinois, when the Rockford & Kenosha Railroad (R&K RR) was purchased by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad in 1864.

In 1852 the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad completed a rail line to Belvidere, Illinois. Local investors, including Charles Spafford from Rockford, organized the Rockford & Kenosha Railroad in 1857 in a failed attempt to compete with the larger Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. Their speculative reasoning rested on the assumption that a second Great Lakes rail access at Kenosha, Wisconsin, would compete with Chicago.

Spafford, president of the R&K RR, issued five-year bonds to construct the rail line and financed the bonds by selling stock to farmers along the proposed route to Kenosha. He told the farmers that projected earnings from the railroad would pay for the bonds before they were due in five years. Several farmers bought stock in the line, some even using their farms as collateral for the notes. Unfortunately the R&K RR never had a chance and went bankrupt. It was sold as a feeder line to the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad in 1864, forcing the farmers to sell their useless stock to the Chicago company. The R&K line was renamed the Kenosha Division (KD) of the C&NW Railroad and was completed in 1864 using Irish laborers from Wisconsin who constructed a shantytown in Section 23, one mile west of Argyle. The temporary labor camp was called "Dogtown" by local residents for the strays that accompanied the camp. Dogtown was dismantled after the railroad was completed.

Harlem Station: Section 28

The placement of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad line along Willow Creek in Section 28 forced the relocation of Harlem Village from its first site in Section 29 to its present location at the northeast corner of Harlem and Forest Hills Roads in Section 28. The Kenosha Division of the C&NW RR ran between Rockford and Harvard, Illinois, stopping at the Harlem Station with 12 daily trains providing mail, freight and passenger service. Lewis A. Fabrick, son of Lewis Andrew Fabrique, served as the railroad agent for the KD at the Harlem Station and also managed the village grain elevator. The elevator was later bought by J.H. Patterson & Company, which operated a lumber yard in Love's Park.

Bear's (1871) *Atlas of Winnebago County* shows the Methodist Church and cemetery in Section 29 and the post office and railroad station in Section 28. Ogle's (1905) *Standard Atlas of Winnebago County* shows a detail of the village platted out with Church Street (Harlem Road) on the south and Bluff Street (Forest Hills Road) on the west. Henry Street divided the village in half and connected East Street with the village's eastern boundary, the Northwestern Railroad. The village store and post office were located in Lot 1 at the corner of Church and East Street and the town hall was directly north of the school. A wagon and blacksmith shop was located in lot 12. The Fabrick Stockyards and grain elevator were on East Street alongside the railroad.

Thomas Lake

Thomas Lake, uncle of John Lake (Sec. 26), secured 80 acres in Section 33 on October 4, 1846. Lake was born in Selworthy, Somersetshire, England, on July 4, 1806. He and his wife, Lavina Atkins, left England in 1832 and arrived in New York City during a cholera epidemic. They immediately left for the "West"

reaching Winnebago County in 1836. Lake worked with another newcomer, Sidney Twogood, as a carpenter. Twogood and Lake were the first skilled carpenters and joiners in northern Illinois. They built the first wooden-framed storefront on the southwest corner of East State and Madison Streets in Rockford, Illinois. They also constructed Daniel S. Haight's house on the northeast corner of State and Madison Streets.

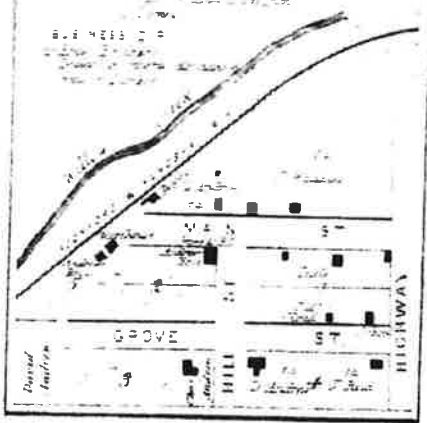
Winnebago County's First Astronomer

Jonas Tofflemire purchased 160 acres of Section 36 on October 29, 1839. Tofflemire was the son of Henry and Judith Fox (Fuchs) Tofflemire and was born in Gosfield Township, Essex County, Ontario, Canada, on September 14, 1796.

Jonas' father, Henry, fought with Kentucky settlers during the Revolutionary War against the British on the western frontier. In 1780 Henry was captured at Riddle's Station in Kentucky by Captain Henry Bird, who was leading a British expeditionary force from Fort Detroit. On June 20 the American frontiersmen surrendered to Bird, the first "Kentucky Station" to surrender to British or Indian fighters during the Revolutionary War.⁶⁹ Henry and his family were forced to march on foot to Detroit, where he worked to pay the ransom for some of his younger brothers. He was granted a land grant at Grosse Isle, Canada, by King George III. He never returned to Kentucky and died at the age of 34 leaving his wife and two sons, Jonas and John.

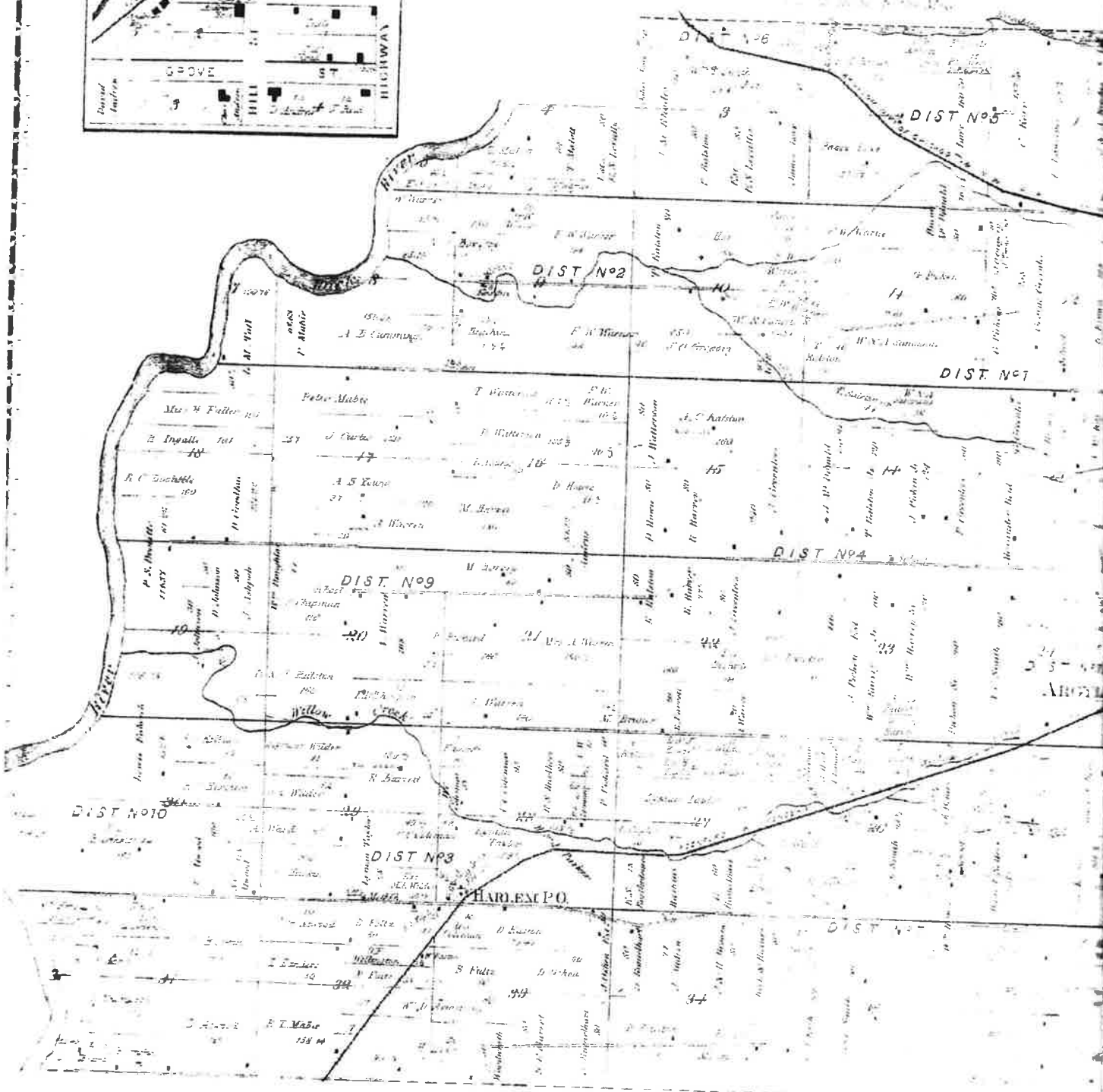
Jonas and John Tofflemire came to Winnebago County in 1839 and purchased land in Section 36. Jonas was a very talented settler with many interests and avocations. He was a blacksmith by trade but also made caskets, ax helms (handles), and furniture for friends and relatives. He was Winnebago County's first amateur astronomer and was so intrigued with the heavens that he constructed a model of the solar system showing the planets in their orbits.⁷⁰ According to family records, several professors visited Jonas to review his astronomical work and interests. Jonas died on March 24, 1879, at the age of 82.

ARGYLE



HARLEM

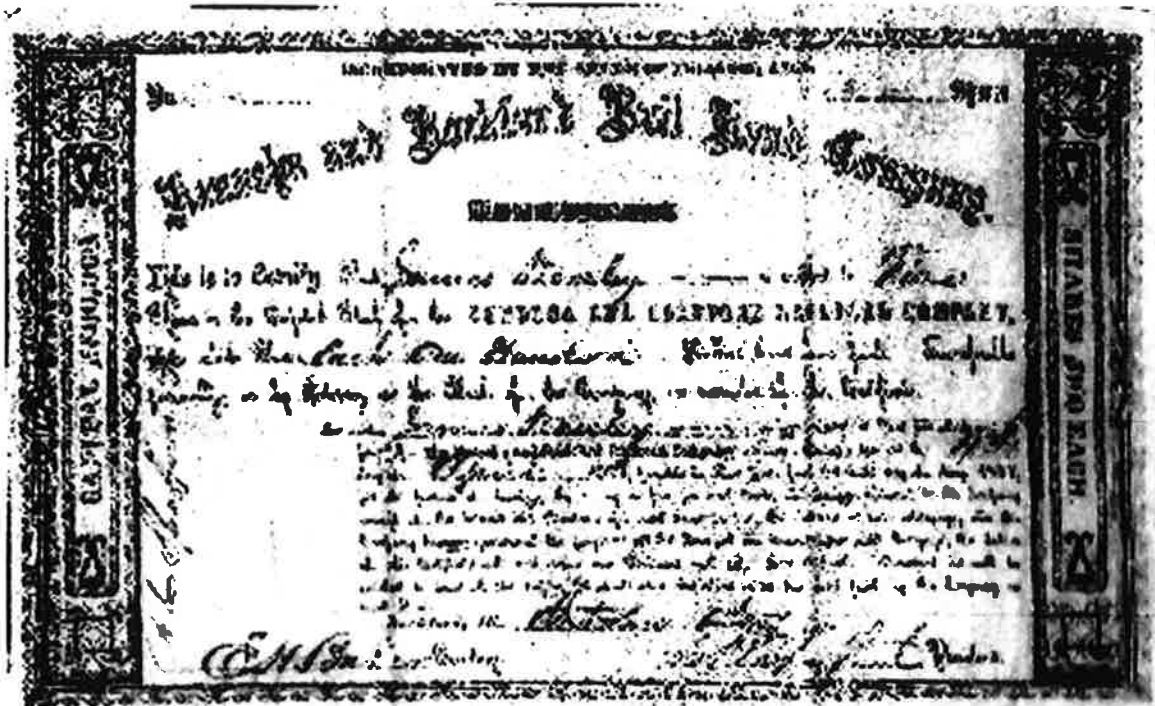
Harlem Town



HARLEM P.O.

ARGYLE

II. Example of Stock



The Bank of Montreal, 100 Shares of the Capital of the Bank of Montreal, as per the following receipt of the Bank of Montreal, dated the 1st day of January 1821.



WRITTEN DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. **Type of document (check one)**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Report to Congress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Map |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Political cartoon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech or public address | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement |

Other (describe) _____

2. **Date(s) of document** _____

3. **Author** _____

4. **For what audience was the document written?** _____

5. **Document information**

A. **List important pieces of information presented in the document.**

B. **Why was the document written?**

C. **What evidence in the document helps you to determine why it was written?
Quote from the document.**

D. **What historical event(s) does this document refer or pertain to?**

E. **Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.**

II. *History of Loves Park, Illinois* by Craig G. Campbell- “The Rockford and Kenosha Railroad”

- A. Why did the Rockford Kenosha Railroad fail?**
- B. Who were the primary buyers of the railroad stock?**
- C. What was the Rockford Kenosha line renamed?**
- D. When it was completed in 1864, who were the workers?**
- E. Where did these workers live?**
- F. Is there any evidence from this reading that there was an impact on immigrants in Rockford? Explain.**

III. On the following page is a map, highlight/color the following:

- A. Blue- Rock River**
- B. Green- Rockford and Kenosha Railroad**
- C. Orange- Irish laborers shantytown**

Teacher packet:

I. *History of Rockford and Winnebago County Illinois* by Charles A. Church

- A. In 1856 where was the railroad projected to go to from Rockford?**
Kenosha on Lake Michigan
- B. How many men were involved in starting the railroad company?**
15
- C. Do any of those last names sound familiar?**
Most common one to sound familiar- Capron (today a township), Marsh (Marsh school), Haskell (Haskell Road and Haskell School), Briggs (Briggs Mansion), Spafford (road and historical home)
- D. Where was money coming from to build the railroad?**
selling shares of the company in forms of bonds
- E. Why was the railroad built?**
“of relieving Rockford from burdens imposed by the high freight and passenger rates of the Galena and Chicago Union”
- F. Who became the President of the company?**
C.H. Spafford- might be worth mentioning that he was also in the banking business
- G. Why would the company need a President?**
to oversee the company and maintain order
- H. Who purchased most of the stocks?**
farmers along the line
- I. Who helped the company when they were low on money?**
The council of Rockford
- J. What does this loan tell us about the city of Rockford wanting the railroad?**
They must have thought it would be important for the future of Rockford.
- K. Is there any evidence from this reading that there was an impact on immigrants in Rockford? Explain.**
Not really, besides the mention of using the railroad for passenger use and make the rates cheaper than the current railroad company.

II. Example of Stock