

# FIRST TRIP ON THE COLUMBUS AND HOCKING VALLEY RAILROAD

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## Road Open to near Canal Winchester.

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Bless me, this is pleasant,  
Riding on a rail!

**Ohio State Journal (July 17, 1868)** – Yesterday, upon invitation of M.M. Greene, President, a very pleasant little party of gentlemen had the satisfaction of making a trial trip as far as the track is laid.

The rails are down to within sight of Canal Winchester – near 14 miles. The road is not ballasted, but is as smooth as most of the older roads that are. The grade is almost nothing. The heaviest grade on the whole road through to Athens is a short piece of road this side of Big Belly, or Walnut creek. It is only twenty-six feet to the mile, and is almost imperceptible.

The most difficult piece of work so far has been the filling of a peat bog just beyond Big Belly. The earthwork has sunk several times, lifting the surrounding earth at some distance. It is now perfectly solid. Specimens of peat from this bog may be seen at the Company's office in Columbus.

A bridge for the stream at Canal Winchester is already framed, at the yards in this city, and will be ready for erection by the time the track is laid to the point where it is needed.

The work is going ahead rapidly, and by the first of September the cars will be running through to Lancaster. The President says no passenger car shall be run on the road until after it is ballasted.

There is an immense amount of freight waiting shipment over the road. There are three-quarters of a million bushels of grain at Groveport, and other points up to Winchester, inclusive. In addition to this there are quantities of livestock. The shippers are very urgent for cars to be furnished immediately.

The work on the road is being done swiftly and economically, under the consummate management of Mr. Greene, backed by the energetic contractors, Dodge, Case & Co. It will pierce the coal region the coming fall.

Our trip was made comfortably - time to Groveport, 30 minutes. After each gentleman of the party had been required to drive a spike with the most unapproachable awkwardness, to the intense amusement of the workmen, we were re-shipped for Columbus, arriving safely, and very much impressed with the importance of this road to the business interest of the city. It opens up a region hitherto sealed from modern enterprise almost, by lack of facilities for transportation. It is a region rich beyond comparison in agricultural and mineral wealth, and it is of incalculable importance to Columbus that her business men lay hold of the cords – the two slender bars of iron – which are to bind all this region in community of interest with Columbus. It requires only

energy and enterprise, judiciously applied and Columbus may take her place among the richest inland cities of the continent.

Among the party on the trial trip, were B.E. Smith, President of the C., C. & I. C. Railway; Col. Manypenny, one of the lessees of the Ohio Canals; Barker Brooks, Theodore Comstock, John Graham, John J. Janney, Major W.C. Faxon, &c.