

IOWA PAST TO PRESENT TEACHERS GUIDE
Revised 3rd Edition

Chapter 6: Rivers, Trails, and Train Tracks

TRANSPORTATION IN THE 1800s

CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Following the completion of the readings and activities for this chapter, students will have acquired the following understandings:

- a. Transportation was very important for Iowa’s early pioneers. Not only was it important for people coming to Iowa, but after arriving, people relied on transportation for their livelihoods.
- b. The major means of commercial transportation—steamboat, stagecoach, and railroad—developed significantly during the 19th century.
- c. Each of these means of transportation had positive and negative aspects, and each helped Iowa develop economically.
- d. The railroad was the most important form of transportation for 19th-century Iowa. It was faster and more dependable than any other form of transportation. It greatly assisted new settlers coming to the state and also aided in the development of new industry.

VOCABULARY TO KNOW

cargo, freight	luxurious
cholera	merchandise
corporation	Old Northwest
crossroads	plattling
deck passage	railroad survey, surveyor
dehydration	Robert Fulton's <i>Clermont</i>
epidemics	transportation

For Further Study

1. Have students explore how Iowa's transportation systems today compare to transportation in pioneer Iowa.
2. Encourage students to explore reasons why other forms of transportation replaced the railroad as the most important form of travel.
3. Between 1850 and 1930 steam locomotives averaged 65 miles per hour; today jet airplanes reach speeds in excess of 600 miles per hour. Ask students to contemplate how this change in travel time affects Iowa's economy. They may want to develop a list of consequences of this decrease in travel time.
4. Have students write letters of inquiry to Chambers of Commerce in several of Iowa's river towns (such as Dubuque or Sioux City) requesting information on how the rivers affect their economy today. Students may also want to study the history of one or more of these cities. This would require extending the time allotted to this topic.

Activity 6-1: THE GREAT BURLINGTON ROUTE

Skills. Reading and interpreting graphic information

Materials. Railroad advertisements in text, student handout 6-1

Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by asking students to identify ways in which commercial transportation companies today publicize their services. Discuss various means of advertising used by these companies.
2. Distribute copies of handout 6-1. Provide time for students to complete the questions.
3. Conclude the lesson by sharing observations about railroad travel in the 19th century and comparing methods of travel then with today.

Handout 6-1

Name _____

Directions. The two advertisements in the text were taken from a travel guide for Iowans traveling on the railroad. After looking closely at these advertisements, answer the following questions.

1. Use a dictionary to find what the following terms mean.

parlor _____

patent _____

porter _____

destination _____

parcel _____

chandeliers _____

2. What is the name of the railroad company for which this ad was made? _____

3. What special features did these railroad cars have? _____

4. How does the railroad help protect passengers' baggage? _____

5. In your own words, describe the inside of a parlor car. _____

Activity 6-2: COMPARING EARLY IOWA TRANSPORTATION

Skills. Skimming written material for specific information

Materials. Student copies of handout 6-2

Procedure

1. Begin the lesson by reviewing pioneer Iowa's major means of commercial travel (steamboat, railroad, and stagecoach). Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each.
2. Distribute copies of handout 6-2. Provide time for students to complete the chart using their textbooks and other resource materials.
3. Conclude the lesson by comparing the various characteristics of each means of travel.

COMPARING EARLY IOWA TRANSPORTATION

Directions. Using your textbook and other resource material, complete this chart

	Steamboat	Stagecoach	Railroad
Advantages			
Disadvantages			
Parts of Iowa where used			
Cargo that could be carried			
Industries / businesses helped by this transportation			

Activity 6-3: TRAVELING WITH WILLIAM BUXTON

Skills. Reading primary source materials

Materials. Journal of William Buxton (in text), student copies of handouts 6-3a, 6-3b, 6-3c, 6-3d, 6-3e

Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by providing background information on William Buxton. The diary reprinted in the text is a selection from a larger journal kept between 1853 and 1860.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Buxton, a native of Derbyshire, England, migrated to the United States in 1851 at the age of twenty-one. He located in Carlisle, Iowa, and acquired a quarter section of land (160 acres). Two years later, his uncle in England died, leaving him \$2,000 in cash. He returned to England to claim his inheritance. On his trip back to the United States, he kept a daily account of his travel experiences. This journal is his record.

Buxton later married Betsy Bramhall. She had moved to Warren County, Iowa, with her parents. The Buxtons had five children, one son and four daughters. For seventeen years, they lived in a log cabin before building a frame house.

Buxton farmed outside of Carlisle for forty years. In 1892 he moved to Indianola, where he assumed management of the Warren County State Bank. He added to his farmland, owning 1400 acres at the time of his death. Simpson College received support from Buxton; he gave it large sums of money and land. He died in Indianola in 1919 at the age of 89.

2. Briefly discuss what Iowa was like in 1853 to provide the setting for the journal. Divide the class into five groups and provide each group with one of the activity sheets. Allow time for the groups to complete the activities.
3. Discuss the responses by having a student from each group describe the activity of his/her group and summarize the group's conclusions for the class.
4. Conclude this lesson by having students discuss which form of transportation was best for Buxton, substantiating their views using information from the journal.

HANDOUT 6-3a

Names _____

Directions. Use the journal of William Buxton to answer these questions.

1. What age was Buxton when he made this trip? _____

2. For what reason did he make the trip? _____

3. What was the name of the ocean steamship on which Buxton took passage?

4. List the kinds of transportation used by Buxton on his trip. _____

5. Which river steamboats were used by Buxton? _____

6. From which English city did he begin his return trip to Iowa? _____

7. What was the date Buxton left England and when did he arrive in Carlisle, Iowa? How long did the journey take?

FIGURING DISTANCE AND TIME FOR BUXTON'S TRAVELS

Directions: Complete the table by finding the number of miles between the pairs of cities and the time spent in traveling between each pair of cities.

Entry in Journal	From	To	Type of Transportation	Number of Miles	Time—Days	Time--Hours
Fri. Nov. 25	Liverpool, England	Philadelphia, PA				
Tues. Nov. 29	Philadelphia PA	Wheeling VA				
Wed. Dec. 13	Cincinnati OH	St. Louis MO				
Mon. Dec. 19	St. Louis MO	Keokuk IA				
Thurs. Dec. 22	Keokuk IA	Ft. Des Moines				
Sun. Dec 25	Ft. Des Moines	Carlisle IA				

LEISURE ACTIVITIES WHILE TRAVELING IN 1853

Directions. Check the leisure-time activities reported by William Buxton in his journal.

Leisure Activity	Reported by Buxton	Leisure Activity	Reported By Buxton
Concerts		Bridge	
Dances		Chess/Checkers	
Fireworks Display		Croquet	
Games		Poker	
Reading		Shuffleboard	
Singing		Theatre	

COMPARING BUXTON'S TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Directions. Complete the chart by using the letter P to describe a pleasant experience of Buxton's, the letter B to describe one of his bad travel experiences.

Experience	Kind of experience: P or B
Seasickness	
Meals on the <i>City of Glasgow</i>	
Meals on the <i>Latrobe</i>	
Buffenden Island	
Louisville, Kentucky	
Supper at Oskaloosa, Iowa	
Entertainment on City of Glasgow	
Near collision at sea	

Handout 6-3e

Name _____

WILLIAM BUXTON'S TRAVEL PROBLEMS

Directions. Place a check mark before the hazards reported by William Buxton in his journal.

- _____ Seasickness
- _____ Possible collision with another vessel
- _____ Steamboat stuck on sandbar
- _____ River too low for steamboats
- _____ Train derailed
- _____ Charged fare twice for steamboat trip
- _____ Poor quality food on steamboat
- _____ Danger of ice in the river
- _____ Cholera epidemic along Mississippi River

PRIMARY MATERIAL: Journal of William Buxton, An Account of His Travels From Nottingham, England, to Carlisle, Iowa, November 7 to December 25, 1853 (unabridged).

[Note: The uncut version of Buxton's journal may help answer some of the questions on the worksheets.]

1853

- Nov. 7- Monday.* Left Nottingham early, on my return voyage to the land of the West bidding adieu to the scene of many happy hours spent in the company of those who will ever retain a place in my best affections and thoughts. Went over to Disbury where I spent the night and accompanied by Mrs. Hobbs and Miss Lack returned to Manchester where after making several bargains I received the last well wishes of the many friends I have learned to value as well as many other things with which old England abounds above all other lands.
- Nov. 8 -Tuesday.* Tuesday arrived in Liverpool and took passage in the screw steamship "City of Glasgow" for Philadelphia, Captain Whylie.
- Nov. 9- Wednesday.* Went on board the steamer then lying in the river which being all tight started on her trip about half past one o'clock p.m. favored by the tide and clear sky.
- Nov. 10 -Thursday.* Steaming down channel with head wind run 160 mls to 12 p.m. *Nov. 11- Friday.* Irish coast in view head wind and clear sky pretty rough sea nearly all sick, myself among [the] lot dreadfully sick and good for nothing vowed never to cross again except on my return. Course N.W. run 192.
- Nov. 12 -Saturday.* Feeling rather curious but after eating a good dinner was as fresh and content as ever. Course West run 188. Wednesday midnight we had a most hairbreath escape of being run down by a large [vessel] in full sail which came so close as to carry away part of our rigging; a few feet nearer we should have met with certain destruction to many if not all of us, but as it is we are proceeding prosperously on the voyage and I hope thankful for our safety.
- Nov. 13 -Sunday.* Fine and pleasant service at 1/2 past ten conducted by the Captain according to the Church of Scotland. Course WNW run 210.
- Nov. 15 -Tuesday.* Fine, getting quite jolly and friendly now on board spending the day in reading and games, the evenings in concerts. Course N.W. Run 199.
- Nov. 16 -Wednesday.* with strong breeze which increased during the day and the sea running pretty high knocking us about in all directions, and causing us no little inconvenience and a good many cases of sickness appeared again. Run 100 mls.
- Nov. 17 -Thursday.* All quiet again today very glad to see it so and now begin to relish the meals which are served up as follows. breakfast at 8 & 9 dinner 1 & 3 supper 6 & 7 o'clock provided on a very liberal scale. C. West run 146 mls.
- Nov. 18- Friday.* Past a very rough night, the sea now running what is term'd mountains high, the finest I have ever seen, hope it may not last long, too cold to be on deck. the ship Sam Barker to Liverpool running before the wind with main & top sails a beautiful sight as seen from our ship. Run 190 mls. This was the day fixed for the grand concert and dress ball on quarter deck (weather permitting)

but that not being the case it is deferred sine die to our great disappointment. At dinner there was a perfect commotion among the crockery, ducks fowls beef & soup all alive occasionally some unfortunate dish would come sliding majestically on to the floor, and requiring some effort to keep one's seat at the table.

- Nov. 19- Saturday.* Fine & Pleasant but head wind C.N.W. run 104 mls. Saw the first porpoises this voyage
- Nov. 20 -Sunday.* Dry and cold moderate & favorable wind as we are passed at 8 p.m. a mail steamer which left N. Fork last Wednesday signals were given & returned rockets were first thrown up from our ship and answered by the same number from the other. The night was clear and the effect of the scene was very startling and pleasing. Run 200 mls.
- Nov. 21 -Monday.* Fine & pleasant & fair wind 12 p.m. run 209 mls. This evening we had our celebrated concert commencing at 7 1/2 o'clock embracing most of the celebrated pieces of (Music) both vocal and instrumental piano concertina and accordian. The Mid amused us with some very original singing, the old Batchelor. What are little girls made of & Father Stevens made an attempt but was sadly deficient in voice. Molly (Coover) was very amusing. After the concert the company adjourned to the quarter deck to witness the fireworks which were very imposing. Then came the dance, concluding with supper in saloon. Appropriate songs and toasts, altogether the evening was spent very pleasantly. The captain did everything to entertain the company and fully deserved the good name he has [won] already.
- Nov. 22 -Tuesday.* Fine and steady winds run 233 mls. *Nov. 23 -Wednesday.* 12 p.m. Last night we had the first theatrical performance on board the comic farce of Box & Box & Mrs. Bouncer the lodging housekeeper, Messrs Mienty-Gibbons & Kendall were the performers the whole scene was very laughable and went off with great eclat. There was a concert going on at the same time in the forward cabin. We have had beautiful weather the last few days, time passed very pleasantly and not at all monotonous as is generally the case. Wednesday run 200 mls.
- Nov. 24- Thursday.* Still very calm & fine too vessels astern expect to be in Philadelphia by Saturday. Run 213 steam only.
- Nov. 25 -Friday.* Last night the wind got up blowing strong, the sea changing in a few hours from a perfect calm to the opposite extreme but settled down considerably this morning. passed a beautiful clipper built ship hoisted American colors. Looking out for pilot boat. Run 233 mls. Course W .S. W .1/2 W. about 2 o'clock today we took on the pilot and in a few hours more the land appeared ahead Cape May on our right. The shore all along is low and sandy. Philadelphia lies about 100 miles up the Delaware a fine broad stream with a fine country on both sides. We anchored in the river at night and came along side the pier about 1 o'clock Saturday making a passage of seventeen days 3275 miles.
- Nov. 26- Saturday.* Myself and four others took up our quarters at Bloodwood corner of Walnut St. Took a [tour] through the City, which is one of the finest in The States. Chestnut St. the principal thoroughfare contained some splendid

buildings. Hotels and besides being the great promenade for the fashionable. I think the ladies of Philadelphia surpass anything I ever saw in any other city for beauty and dress.

- Nov. 27 -Sunday.* Attended St. Stephens Episcopal Church the sermon more political than religious thorough Whig. Left with a friend for New York by rail.
- Nov. 28 -Monday.* Arranging business matters, went to the Exhibition which quite met my anticipation there were a great many things worthy of attention and was only sorry I had not more time to examine its contents. The [statuary] was the most attractive and next the agricultural department returned to Philadelphia at night (per) Camden and Amboy.
- Nov. 29 -Tuesday.* Took ticket for Cincinnati via Baltimore and Ohio rail to Wheeling then a boat on the river. Left Phil. at 2 p.m. arriving at Wheeling 2 1/2 p.m. Wednesday 490 miles. The railroad runs direct over the Allegany mountains almost impassable, winding round the hills and overlooking some precipices truly fearful and certain death in case of any mishap one journey is quite sufficient to satisfy any traveller especially when he knows that the works are anything but substantial.
- Nov. 30 -Wednesday.* Left Wheeling at 4 p.m. by the Latrobe, should be in Cincinnati early on Friday but am afraid I shall be disappointed. The river being low the regular packets run there are twice the number of passengers on board there ought to be one half without berths a western traveller has plenty of exercise for a good stock of patience as well as a little *smaltiness* .
- Dec. 1 -Thursday.* Going along at a snail gallop. The banks all along are high and steep dotted over with many little towns. Just had dinner, a few scraps of all sorts, goes bad after having such good fare so long on board the "City of Glasgow."
- Dec. 2 -Friday.* Moving slowly down the river expecting every minute to come to a stand, several other boats being fast and stopping the navigation. In the evening most of the passengers were prevailed upon to go ashore in order to lighten a little and a good part of the freight put ashore but notwithstanding every endeavor the boat stuck fast alongside four others near Buffenden Island. We passengers were now in a fix having no means of getting aboard again until a yawl was got taking four passengers at a time with considerable danger .
- Dec. 3 -Saturday.* Still fast and with every prospect of a famine on board. hearing of a boat, being below, for Cincinnati we all left the "Latrobe" sending our baggage and the ladies down in canoes. The gents walked down to the boat. The "Crystal Palace" a splendid boat, good fare, which they took care to get paid for many of the passengers having to pay a second full fare however I was glad to get off on any terms.
- Dec. 4 -Sunday.* Arrived late in evening at Cincinnati. *Dec. 5 -Monday.* Took boat for Lawrenceburg 20 mls where I had to remain until morning for the cars to Flatrock.
- Dec. 6 -Tuesday.* Landed at Ben's just in time for a good dinner and found them all well things improving fast. Looking round and visiting the rest of the week.
- Dec. 11 -Sunday.* Went to meeting in the new Court House heard a pretty good sermon in the evening took tea at the Avery's , one of the nicest families at flatrock.

- Dec. 12 -Monday.* Took the cars for Lawrenceburg & boat to Cincinnati went to see the pork slaughter yards which is carried on here on a large scale, a thousand hogs being a day's work for one set of hands to kill & pack, but rather roughly done.
- Dec. 13 -Tuesday.* Got on the Ben Franklin for Louisville and St. Louis, which left at 12 p.m. reaching Louisville in twelve hours 15 mls.
- Dec. 14 -Wednesday.* Took the bus down to Portland since round the falls the water being too low to allow the boats to pass over, and got aboard the "Fashion" for St. Louis 700 mls from Cincinnati entered the Mississippi Friday noon. Took on a lot of Californians at Cairo bound home, some with a good "pile" others with disappointed hopes only.
- Dec. 18 -Sunday.* Arrived early this morning at St. Louis winter having set in hard pretty near closed navigation on the upper river however determined to risk a day or two longer in town taking up quarters at the City Hotel until Monday. Attended service in morning at the Episcopal Church. Here I met with several of my ship mates and an English gentleman, Rutherford, who was well acquainted with Derbyshire.
- Dec. 19 -Monday.* Got my drafts exchanged after a good deal of trouble. Then started off at 6 p.m. for Keokuk 215 mls on the "Dubuque", probably the last boat to ascend the Mississippi this season--it being both difficult & dangerous on account of the ice which is fast choking up the river and very thick in some places. The upper Mississippi is far more interesting than the lower (so far as I have been) beautifully studded with islands and fine high bluffs. The water above the Missouri is perfectly clear and transparent.
- Dec. 20 -Tuesday.* The river rather more open this morning but making very slow progress. Passed some flourishing towns on the Miss. side.
- Dec. 21 -Wednesday.* Morning arrived safe at Keokuk the end of my river travelling and very glad of it. In time of high water it is very pleasant but miserable at low stages. Most of the captains & inferior officers are generally nothing but a lot of sharpers!
- Dec. 22 -Thursday.* Had to lie over until Thursday morning for the stage which left at 4 a.m. for Fort D'Moines 180 mls.
- Dec. 24 -Saturday.* The roads being good we got on pretty fast, travelling it in three days, first night at Fairfield, 2nd, Oskaloosa where we just came in right for a bear meat supper and ball the first was excellent, the latter very commonplace. Arrived at the Fort about seven Saturday evening, pretty well tired of the stage.
- Dec. 25 -Sunday.* Xmas day walked over to Carlisle 12 mls, which is to be my future home, where I found all things about as when I left after an absence of about nine months during which time I had traveled 12000 miles without any misfortune.