



ALONG THE MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD TRACKS

The depot shown in the 1886 view above was built in 1845. The arrival of the first train from Detroit on October 17, 1839, assured Ann Arbor's future as a center for commerce and education. A grand celebration began at the original depot and ended at the county courthouse. By 1841 the first students at the University of Michigan could arrive by train from Detroit or Jackson. The Michigan

Central Railroad reached Chicago in 1852.

Trains brought coal for the gas works, shown on the left across Depot Street, as well as lumber for Selleck Wood's business (later Casey's Tavern), and supplies for other industries. The freight cars are parked next to Depot Street on "team tracks" where a farmer or merchant could unload goods directly onto a wagon pulled by a team of horses. A large

crane next to the tracks unloaded heavy cargo. A restaurant and saloon across from the station provided refreshment for travelers. The round tower supplied water for coal-fired steam locomotives. The curved tracks (far right) crossed the river to serve Sinclair's flour mill and the Agricultural Works. The tall portion of this old depot was later moved to Beakes and Fifth and made into a house.

The first bridge over the railroad had been built by the time the new passenger depot, behind where you are standing, opened in 1887. As seen in the photo above, traffic heading east on Depot Street had to cross Broadway and descend Carey Street to reach the depot. The large building (far right above) was a hotel and saloon.