UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HAROLD L. ICKES, Secretary

> GENERAL LAND OFFICE FRED W. JOHNSON, Commissioner

TRANSPORTATION

INFORMATION CONCERNING LAND GRANTS FOR ROADS, CANALS, RIVER IMPROVEMENTS AND RAILROADS



Information Bulletin, 1939 Series

No. 5

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELES

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE WASHINGTON : 1940





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PREFACE

Development of transportation facilities across its broad expanse of territory was recognized as one of the primary needs of the United States in the earliest days of its history.

This development followed the adoption of a new policy in a new world; grants of public land for the purpose of providing transportation by road, water, or rail were made for the first time on a large scale in this country.

Seemingly founded upon prophetic vision, a series of laws enacted by Congress more than a century ago led to the establishment of travel routes aiding first, the intrepid solitary explorer, then the covered-wagon pioneers, and, today, the speeding streamliner passengers in their journeys across a continent.

Incidentally, the series of transportation grant statutes significantly registered the progress in methods of travel in the Nation, dealing first with wagon-road development, followed by canal and river improvement, and, lastly, with railroad construction.

Authentic information concerning this important factor in national advancement is contained in this bulletin, prepared by the General Land Office.

Ined W. Johnson Commissioner.

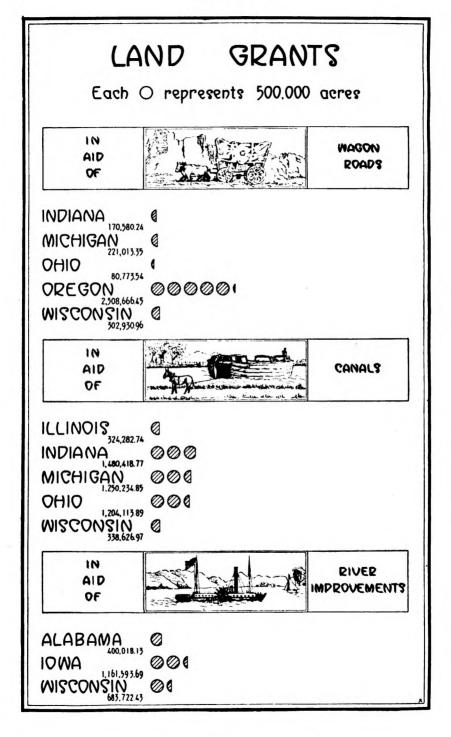
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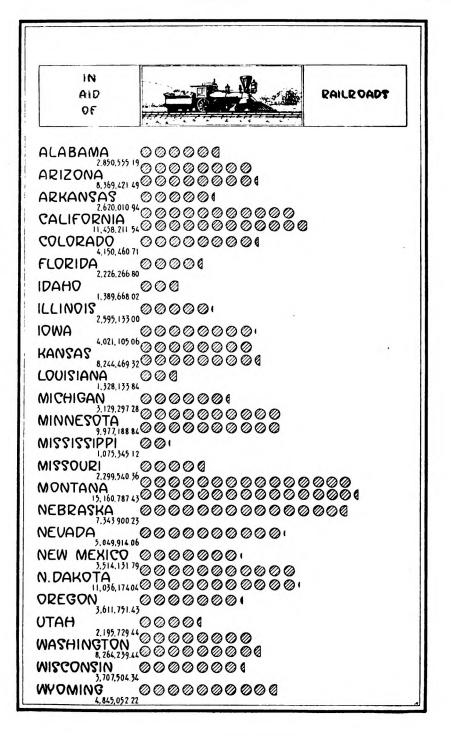
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PREFACE



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TRANSPORTATION

WAGON ROAD LAND GRANTS

The policy of land grants in aid of transportation was inaugurated by Congress 116 years ago in the act of February 28, 1823, which awarded land to the State of Ohio for the construction of a wagon road from "the lower rapids of the Miami of Lake Erie to the western boundary of the Connecticut Western Reserve." Calling for the building of a road 120 feet wide, the law granted land for "one mile on each side" to aid the State in defraying the cost of construction.

Altogether, 12 wagon-road land grants, described in detail in the accompanying table, were authorized by Congress, the last being made on March 3, 1869.

CANAL AND RIVER IMPROVEMENTS

On March 2, 1827, grants of land to Indiana and Ohio, for the construction of a canal on the Wabash River to Lake Erie, set under way this phase of transportation development.

Subsequently, nine other grants, outlined in the tables, were made to various States for the same purpose, the last being awarded on July 3, 1866.

Four grants for river improvements also were made, Alabama being awarded land on May 22, 1828, Wisconsin on August 8, 1846, and Iowa on August 8, 1846, and July 12, 1862.

RAILROADS AIDED NATION'S GROWTH

The effect of gleaming lines of railroads constructed through grants of public land upon economic and sociological conditions in the United States constitutes an interesting chapter in the westward development of the Nation. Not only did the far-flung transcontinental routes play their part in the advancement of civilization, but the network of land-grant construction around the Great Lakes proved an important factor in the development of the Middle West, particularly in Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

Voluminous records, including reports of the Interstate Commerce Commission, tell the fascinating story of the railroads' place in the Nation's scheme of development. Summarized, they show that while historians agree these roads probably would have been constructed, sooner or later, without Federal aid, they also are of the opinion that, on the average, the land-grant lines were extended into or through undeveloped sections of the country at least 10 and possibly as much as 15 years earlier than otherwise would have been the case.

Viewed from its broad national aspect, the principal indirect benefits from the construction of these lines may be summarized to include (1) the acceleration of the settlement of the country and the development of its natural resources; (2) safer and more expeditious and comfortable travel: (3) the enhancement in value of adjacent Government and private lands, and the increase of taxable wealth generally, and (4) the strengthening of the national defense.

The population of the United States in 1830 was to be found very largely along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, the rivers, and the Great Lakes. Sections distant from navigation facilities were very thinly populated, especially in the great prairie areas, which were without timber for the construction of homes. Wagon roads were provided to some extent into the areas inaccessible by water, but the transportation of freight over these primitive roads was economically feasible for only very short distances.

The advent of the railroad relieved this transportation handicap and enabled the settlement of sections inaccessible by water. Moreover, in Illinois and the sections west of the Mississippi River the impetus to settlement resulting from the construction of railroads was not confined to the ordinary flow of immigration consequent upon the establishment of transportation facilities.

Increased tonnage was necessary to make the rail ventures profitable, and increased tonnage could come only with increase of population. Furthermore, the railroads which had received land grants desired to convert them into cash. Consequently, the early railroads in these sections fostered immigration as much as possible. in many instances through the dissemination of information at home and abroad. As a result of these efforts there was a large immigration to these sections from foreign countries as well as from the eastern portion of the United States. Moreover, many of those who came to these sections as laborers in connection with the construction of the railroads later became settlers.

Some idea of the influence of the construction of the early railroads in Illinois and the portion of the United States west of the Mississippi may be gathered from the increase in the population of Illinois which followed the construction of the original lines of the Illinois Central. Construction of these lines began in 1851, and they were all in operation in 1856. The population of Illinois increased from 851,470 in 1850 to 1,711,951 in 1860. In 1850, there were only 10 towns in the vicinity of the Illinois Central's route, as compared with 47 in 1860 and 81 in 1870. At the close of 1857, a total of 1,321 homes had been built on grant lands between Richton and Mattoon, Ill., a distance of approximately 150 miles.

Large quantities of timber and minerals were to be found in many of the sections inaccessible by water, but they were of little or no value for want of transportation facilities; here again the construction of the railroads made an important contribution to the development of the country, although there is also a dark side here, as was revealed later in efforts to overcome the effects of a wasteful exploitation of our natural resources.

Reduction in travel costs between sections of the country was another benefit derived from the construction of the land grant railroads. For example, in the days of stagecoach transportation, it cost \$20 to travel from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, a distance of 297 miles, while the slow progress of the trip brought added expenses of food and lodging en route; today the journey costs only \$8.69 by railroad.

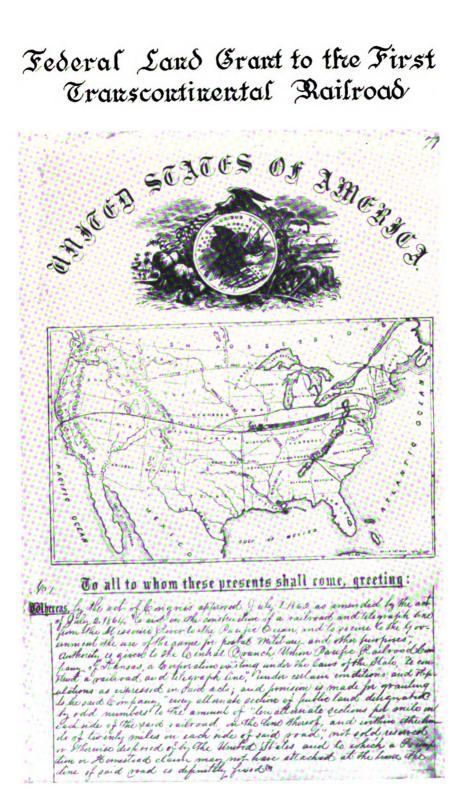
The time consumed in travel also was materially reduced by the construction of the railroads. In 1812, it took 6 days to go from

First Conveyance of Lands Inder a Railroad Grant

(Selinois Central Railroad)



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Philadelphia to Pittsburgh by stagecoach, a journey which today requires only 8 hours by rail. In 1837, it took 46 hours to travel the 128 miles from Pittsburgh to Erie which now can be traversed by rail in 4½ hours. The stagecoach trip from Omaha, Nebr., to Virginia City, Nev., required continuous travel for 17 days and nights, in 1865; today it can be made in 41 hours, or less than 2 days and nights.

Finally, the construction of the railroads enabled safer and more expeditious and comfortable travel at an earlier date than would otherwise have been possible. Travelers by stagecoach and by private conveyance were preyed upon by bandits and in the West by Indians also. Travelers by rail, owing to the greater speed of the trains and the larger number of persons carried at one time, were much less susceptible to bandit or Indian attack.

RAILROAD LAND GRANTS

Development of railroads through grants of public domain was begun on September 20, 1850, when the Illinois Central, the Mobile & Ohio in Mississippi, and the same railroad in Alabama were granted tracts of land for construction purposes.

Extending through March 3, 1871, this period of transportation development activities resulted in the issuance of 89 such grants, 17 of which later were forfeited by Congress for failure to carry on the construction work.

Although varying in some details in each of the grants, the basic policy for the allotment of Federal public land for the development of railroads in the Nation forms an interesting chapter in the history of the United States.

Briefly, this basic policy was this:

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Grant was given for the right-of-way of the railroad, and on either side of this strip of territory alternate sections of land were awarded to defray the cost of construction. It was discovered that many of these construction sections—designated primary grants—already had been disposed of to settlers, or reserved for specific purposes under other land laws, or were mineral in character. As a consequence, other tracts of land beyond the primary grants were made available to the roads in what were known as indemnity grants, designed to compensate for lands already taken or found to be mineral in character. Later, it was found necessary to enact remedial legislation to adjust controversies between the grantees and settlers, generally permitting the grantees to take other land in lieu of settlement claims, and in some instances allowing the settlers to transfer their claims elsewhere.

Of the 72 unforfeited grants, the area of which was 152,961,568 acres, 65 have been adjusted and closed, the grantees having received all the land to which they were entitled, or as much thereof as it was possible to give them. There still remain seven open grants, final figures on which obviously cannot be given in the accompanying tables.

TRANSPORTATION GRANT STATISTICS

Details of the grants of Federal public domain for the development of wagon roads, canals, rivers, and railroads in the United States are shown in the following tables:

TRANSPORTATION

| Wag | on | roads |
|-----|----|-------|
| | | |

| Route of road | Date of grant | Grantee | Area of grant in acres | Number of acres cer- tified or patented |
|---|---|--------------------|------------------------------|--|
| From Lake Erie to Connecti- cut Western Reserve. | Feb. 28, 1823 (3 Stat. 727); Mar. 2, 1827 (4 Stat. 242). | State of Ohio | 80, 773. 54 | 80, 773. 54 |
| From Lake Michigan to Ohio River. | Mar. 2, 1827 (4 Stat. 234) | State of Indiana | 170, 580. 24 | 170, 580. 24 |
| From Fort Wilkins, Copper Harbor, Mich., to Green Bay, Wis. | Mar. 3, 1863 (12 Stat. 797) | State of Wisconsin | 302, 930. 96 | 302, 930. 96 |
| From Fort Wilkins, Copper Harbor, Mich., to Wiscon- sin State line. | do | State of Michigan. | 221 , 013. 35 | 221, 013. 3 |
| From Saginaw to the Straits of Mackinaw. | June 20, 1864 (13 Stat. 140) | do | (1) | |
| From Grand Rapids to the Straits of Mackinaw. | do | do | (1) | |
| From Wausaw to Lake Su- perior. | June 25, 1864 (13 Stat. 183) | State of Wisconsin | (1) | |
| From Eugene City, Oreg., to eastern boundary of State. | July 2, 1864 (13 Stat. 355) | State of Oregon. | 859, 585, 52 | 859, 585. 52 |
| From Corvallis to Yaquina Bay. | July 4 1866 (14 Stat. 86) | do | 90, 240. 00 | 83, 716. 76 |
| From Albany, Oreg., to east- ern boundary of State. | July 5, 1866 (14 Stat. 89) | | 861, 504.00 | 861, 511. 86 |
| From Dalles City to Fort Boise. | Feb. 25, 1876 (14 Stat. 409) | do | 591, 608. 75 | 591, 612, 20 |
| From Coos Bay to Roseburg. | Mar. 3, 1869 (15 Stat. 340) | do | 99, 819. 35 | 105, 240, 11 |
| Total | | | 3, 278, 055. 71 | 3, 276, 964. 54 |

¹ State never availed itself of benefit of this grant.

Canal grants

| Name of canal | Date of grant | Grantee | Number of acres certi- fled in satis- faction of the grant |
|--|---|---|--|
| Illinois and Lake Michigan Miami and Dayton | Mar. 2, 1827 (4 Stat. 234) May 24, 1828 (4 Stat. 305) | | 438, 301, 32 |
| Milwaukee and Rock River St. Mary's Portage Lake and Lake Superior | do. June 18, 1838 (5 stat. 245) Aug 26, 1852 (10 Stat. 35) Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 519) | State of Wisconsiv State of Michigan do | 750, 143. 03 400, 081. 15 |
| Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Lac La Belle | Apr. 10, 1°66 (14 Stat. 30) July 3, 1866 (14 Stat. 80) | State of Wisconsin. State of Michigan. | 199, 630, 98 100, 011, 67 4, 597, 678, 22 |

River-improvement grants

| Object of grant | Date of grant | Grantee | Number of acres cer- tified or patented in satisfac- tion of grant |
|--|---|--------------------|--|
| To aid in the improvement of the Ten- nessee, Coosa, Cahawba, and Black Warrior Rivers | May 23, 1828 (4 Stat. 290) | State of Alabama. | 400, 018. 13 |
| To aid in improving the navigation of Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. | Aug. 8, 1846 (9 Stat. 83) | State of Wisconsin | 683, 722. 43 |
| The improvement of the navigation of the Des Moines River. | Aug. 8, 1846 (9 Stat. 77); July 12, 1862 (12 Stat. 543). | State of Iowa | 1, 161, 593. 69 |
| Total | | | 2, 245, 334. 25 |

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Statement showing area of the grant and the amount of land certified and patented under grants made by acts of Congress to aid in the construction of railroads

| GRANTS | ADJUSTED | AND | CLOSED |
|--------|----------|-----|--------|
| | | | |

| Name of railroad | Date of grant | Area of grants in acres | Acres patented | Deficiency |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Illinois Central R. R. Co | Sept. 20, 1850 (9 Stat. 466) | 2, 595, 133. 00 | 2, 595, 133. 00 | |
| Mobile & Ohio (Mississippi) | do | 737, 130. 29 | 737, 130, 29 | |
| Mobile & Ohio (Alabama) Hannibal & St. Joseph R. R. Co | do | 419, 528, 44 | 419, 528. 44 | 107 000 00 |
| Pacific Railroad Co. now St. Louis | June 10, 1852 (10 Stat. 8) do | 778, 550, 04 1, 159, 080, 33 | 611, 323. 35 1, 161, 284. 51 | 167, 226. 69 |
| & San Francisco Ry. Co. Little Rock & Fort Smith Ry. Co St. Louis, Iron Mountain & | Feb. 9, 1853 (10 Stat. 155) | 1, 057, 024, 00 574, 400, 00 | 1, 052, 082, 51 41, 652, 47 | 4, 941. 49 532, 747, 53 |
| Southern R. R. Co. (Missouri). | do | 1, 946, 112. 00 | 1, 356, 298. 00 | 589, 814. 00 |
| St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern R. R. Co. (Arkansas). Memphis & Little Rock R. R. Co | do | 838, 400. 00 | 188, 380, 49 | 650, 019. 51 |
| Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R. Co. Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific | May 15, 1856 (11 Stat. 9) do | 1, 046, 062. 73 1, 228, 526. 96 | 389, 990. 11 644, 747, 17 | 656, 072, 62 |
| Ry. Co. Cedar Rapids & Missouri River | do | 1, 024, 895. 66 | 1, 023, 755. 08 | 583, 779. 79 1, 140. 58 |
| R. R. Co. Dubuque & Sioux City R. R. Co | 5 | | | 1, 140. 00 |
| Iowa Falls & Sioux City R. R. Co Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central | }do | 1 | 1, 239, 464. 08 | ••••••• |
| R. R. Co. Pensacola & Georgia R. R. Co | May 17, 1856 (11 Stat. 15). | | 1, 308, 620. 88 | 6, 875. 34 |
| Florida Central & Peninsula R. R. Co. Florida & Alabama R. R. Co. | do | 1, 049, 744. 69 147, 942. 81 | 750, 958. 84 166, 691. 08 | 298, 785. 85 |
| Alabama & Florida R. R. Co | do | 439, 972. 58 | 399, 022, 84 | 40, 949. 74 |
| Tennessee & Coosa R. R. Co | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 17) | 88, 935, 81 | 84, 545. 01 | 4, 390. 80 |
| Alabama & Chattanooga R. R. Co. Wills Valley R. R. Co | do | 662, 349. 00 | 463. 253. 35 | 199, 095. 65 |
| Mobile & Girard R. R. Co | do | 168, 572.03 302, 181.16 | 240, 106. 45 302, 181. 16 | |
| South & North Alabama R. R. Co | do | 595, 874. 38 | 522, 218. 75 | 73, 655. 63 |
| Selma, Rome & Dalton R. R. Co Bay de Noquet & Marquette R. R. Co. | | 507, 313, 07 128, 000, 00 | 419, 699, 19 128, 301, 05 | 87, 613. 88 |
| R. R. Co. Marquette, Houghton & Onton- agon R. R. Co. | Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 520) | 304, 367. 64 | 310. 023. 67 | |
| Ontonagon & Brule R. R. Co | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 21) | 35, 679. 79 | 34, 227. 08 | 1, 452. 71 |
| Chicago & Northwestern Ry. Co | Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 520) | 702, 608, 75 | 518. 014. 51 | 184, 594, 24 |
| Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw R. R. Co. | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 21) | 746, 378, 35 | 740, 299, 41 | 6, 078, 94 |
| Northern Central Michigan R. R. Co. | . do | 220, 924, 37 | 1, 132. 30 | 219, 792, 07 |
| Grand Rapids & Indiana R. R. Co. | do | 947, 699. 92 | 846, 679, 45 | 101, 020. 47 |
| Port Huron & Lake Michigan R. R. Co. | do | 37, 467, 44 | 37, 467, 44 | |
| Flint & Pere Marquette R. R. Co. Madison & Portage R. R. Co | | 590, 811, 79 | 513, 152, 37 | 77, 659. 42 |
| Wisconsin Railroad Farm Mort- gage Co. | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 20) | 120, 765, 88 240, 649, 03 | 915. 38 243: 288. 77 | 119, 850, 50 |
| Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha R. R. Co, successor | May 5, 1864 (13 Stat. 66) | 922, 834. 10 | 773, 874. 00 | 148, 960, 10 |
| to West Wisconsin Ry. Co. Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis | do | 1, 288, 208, 90 | 1, 288, 208, 90 | |
| Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha R. R. Co., successor to St. Croix & Lake Superior R. R. Co. | | 1 | | |
| Chicago & Northwestern R. R., successor to Chicago, St. Paul & Fon du Lac R. R. Co. | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 20) | 561, 937. 93 | 555, 140. 15 | 6, 797. 78 |
| Vicksburg, Shreveport & Pacific R. R. Co. | June 3, 1856 (11 Stat. 18) | 702, 137. 68 | 373, 175. 95 | 328, 961. 73 |
| Vicksburg & Meridian R. R. Co | Aug. 11, 1856 (11 Stat. 30) . | 409, 499. 81 | 199, 101. 51 | 201, 398. 30 |
| Gulf & Ship Island R. R. Co | do Mar. 3, 1857 (11 Stat. 195); | 146, 222, 67 1, 126, 578, 55 | 139, 113, 22 1, 126, 618, 55 | 7, 109. 45 |
| Minnesota Central R. R. Co | May 12, 1864 (13 Stat. 72). Mar. 3, 1857 (11 Stat. 195); Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 526). | 599, 065. 72 | 176, 289. 78 | 422, 775. 94 |
| Winona & St. Peter R. R. Co Southern Minnesota R. R. Co | Mar. 3, 1857 (11 Stat. 195) Mar. 3, 1857 (11 Stat. 195); | 1, 680, 143. 09 91, 241. 32 | 1, 749, 209. 16 56, 843. 92 | 34, 397, 40 |
| Leavenworth, Pawnee & Western R. R. Co., now Union Pacific R. R. Co. | Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 526). July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489): | | 7, 091, 674. 37 | |
| Union Pacific R. R. Co | July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489); | NO 444 A 1997 | A | |

Statement showing area of the grant and the amount of land certified and patented under grants made by acts of Congress to aid in the construction of railroads—Con.

| Name of railroad | Date of grant | Area of grants in acres | Acres patented | Deficiency |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Union Pacific R. R. Co. (central branch). | July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489); July 2, 1864 (13 Stat. 356). | 222, 639. 57 | 223, 034. 53 | •••••• |
| Sioux City & Pacific R. R. Co | July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489) | 45, 413, 50 | 41, 313, 83 | 4, 099, 67 |
| Leavenworth, Lawrence & Gal- veston R. R. Co. | Mar. 3, 1863 (12 Stat. 772) | 658, 857. 76 | 73, 893, 93 | 614, 963. 83 |
| Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe R. R. Co. | do | 2, 878, 020. 39 | 2, 929, 348. 08 | |
| Missouri, Kansas & Texas R. R. Co. | Mar. 3, 1863 (12 Stat. 772); July 1, 1864 (13 Stat. 339); July 26, 1866 (14 Stat. 289). | 889, 757, 94 | 609. 057. 63 | 280, 700. 31 |
| Wisconsin Central R. R. Co | May 5, 1864 (13 Stat. 66) | | 835, 635, 34 | 441, 550, 22 |
| St. Paul & Duluth R. R. Co | May 5, 1864 (13 Stat. 64) | 870, 376, 71 | 822, 657, 41 | 47, 719, 30 |
| Sioux City & St. Paul R. R. Co. | May 12, 1864 (13 Stat. 72) | 279, 437. 16 | 322, 412, 81 | |
| Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul R. R. Co., successor to Mc- Gregor & Missouri River R. R. Co. | do | 1, 284, 492, 15 | 396, 392, 70 | 888, 099. 45 |
| Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R. Co., successor to Burling- ton & Missouri River R. R. Co. | July 2, 1864 (13 Stat. 356) | 2, 361, 984.00 | 2, 374, 090. 77 | |
| Southern Minnesota Railway Extension Co. | July 4, 1866 (14 Stat. 87) | 1, 602, 931, 34 | 451, 626, 21 | 1, 151, 305, 13 |
| Hastings & Dakota R. R. Co | do | 1, 229, 064, 41 | 374. 522. 55 | 854. 541. 8 |
| St. Joseph & Denver City R. R. Co. | July 23, 1866 (14 Stat. 210) | 1, 238, 087, 80 | 486, 808, 87 | 751, 278, 9 |
| Atlantic & Pacific R. R. Co. (Missouri Division). | July 27, 1866 (14 Stat. 292) | 630, 793, 91 | 508, 529. 97 | 122, 263. 9 |
| New Orleans Pacific R. R. Co | Mar. 3, 1871 (16 Stat. 573) | 2, 750, 053, 52 | 954, 957. 89. | 1, 795, 095, 6 |
| Total | ······ | 68, 213, 231, 18 | 55, 826, 276, 02 | |
| Grants revested by act of June 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 218): | | | | |
| Oregon & California R. R. Co. Do | July 25, 1866 (14 Stat. 239) May 4, 1870 (16 Stat. 94) | | 2, 777, 631, 96 128, 618, 13 | |
| Total | | | 2, 906, 250, 09 | |
| Grand total | | 72, 432, 735, 14 | | |

GRANTS ADJUSTED AND CLOSED-Continued

Statement showing area of the grant and the amount of land certified and patented under grants made by acts of Congress to aid in the construction of railroads as of June 30, 1938

| GRANTS | PRACTICALLY | ADJUSTED, | BUT NOT | CLOSED | |
|--------|-------------|-----------|---------|--------|---|
| | | | | | _ |

| Name of railroad | Date of grant | Area of grants in acres | Acres patented | Amount due |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| St. Paul & Pacific R. R. Co | Mar. 3, 1857 (11 Stat. 195); Mar. 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 526). | 3, 851, 691. 25 | 3, 256, 846, 21 | 594, 845. 04 |
| Central Pacific R. R. Co | July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489); July 2, 1864 (13 Stat. 356). | 8, 056, 581. 46 | 7, 920, 255. 69 | 136, 325, 77 |
| Northern Pacific Ry. Co | | 43, 150, 330. 39 | 38, 591, 614. 78 | 4, 558, 715, 61 |
| California & Oregon R. R. Co | July 25, 1866 (14 Stat. 239) | 3 268 564 63 | 3, 240, 608, 85 | 27, 955, 78 |
| Atlantic & Pacific R. R. Co. (Western Division). | | 13, 423, 237. 02 | | |
| Southern Pacific R. R. Co. (main line). | do | 4, 714, 055. 71 | 4, 664, 355, 65 | 49, 700, 06 |
| Southern Pacific R. R. Co. (branch line). | Mar. 3, 1871 (15 Stat. 573) | 4, 064, 373. 25 | 2, 140, 474. 81 | 1, 923, 898, 44 |
| Total | | 80, 528, 833. 71 | 71, 731, 465, 82 | 8, 797, 367. 89 |

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LAND GRANTS MADE BY CONGRESS TO AID IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF RAILROADS

