

In 1872, the St. Louis, Lawrence and Denver Railroad operated a stretch of track that extended just east of Pleasant Hill, Missouri to Lawrence, Kansas where it had a connection with the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Gulf Railroad at what is now 10th and Pennsylvania Streets. In the spring of that year, the directors of the St. Louis, Lawrence and Denver, sought to realize their ambitions of laying track westward as the railroad's name implied and decided to build a line between Lawrence and Carbondale, where new found coal deposits were located. The directors included Judge S.O. Thacher, who owned several quarter sections of land in Sigel, Peter D. Ridenhour, Lathrop Bullene, Brinton W. Woodward, and R.W. Ludington. The fifty-foot right of way was purchased for \$10,523 which was paid in gold to the county treasurer on July 2, 1872. The work was largely funded through bonds which had been approved some two years earlier. Much of this work can be attributed to a resident of Carbondale, Kansas, Dr. C.C. Moore. He was instrumental in securing bonds from the county and Ridgeway Township. He later became the first president of the Lawrence and Carbondale. Construction work was begun on April 13, 1872 and was completed late that same year at the cost of some \$17,000 per mile.

The train ran from Eleventh and New York Streets past the ticket office at Nineteenth and Massachusettes, southwest to Sigel, through Judge Thacher's property. On the Wakarusa-Clinton township line it stopped at Washington Creek Station, continued west along the ridge north of the Wakarusa to Sigel Station, then paralleled the river through Barber Bottoms to Ray's Grove where it crossed the Wakarusa on a trestle bridge and proceeded to Clinton Station (N. Clinton). After Clinton Station, it went to Belvoir, Richland, Ridgeway, Kinney, Cooper's, and Carbon Hill, where it turned around on a "Y". The total trackage distance from Lawrence to Carbon Hill was 29.9 miles. The majority of the right of way was fenced off with a flat galvanized barbed wire to help keep the livestock off the tracks.