

The Lawrence and Carbondale, during its many named existence, served many a varied interest along its 30 odd mile right of way. In Carbon Hill, it served the Kansas Carbon Co. and at one time was the shipper of some thirty carloads of coal per day. Since the railroad's disappearance, the depot has served a variety of functions and is now a barn for hay on the Garcia farm. The railroad also created new communities as in the case of Glenwood to which the Ridgeway Post Office and later name were moved. A similar happening occurred in Belvoir when the Belvoir Post Office was moved to a junction with the rail line, creating an Old and a New Belvoir. The railroad connected the larger town of Lawrence with the Wakarusa Valley inhabitants and allowed people to attend the Sigel-Harvest Home picnic who lived in Lawrence. Richland became a large grain shipping point partly due to the presence of the Lawrence and Carbondale Railroad and later the Missouri Pacific. After the L&C was torn out, the depot was still used as a barber shop and court house. So, despite its relatively short lived history, the "Jerkwater" provides these small communities with a much needed connection to the outside world over the old stage coach run to Emporia.

In closing, I feel that it's appropriate to relate in a brief fashion how the "Jerkwater" received its name. The winter after the Lawrence to Carbondale branch was completed in 1872 was the time and the railroad tank at Camp creek, near Richland, was the place. Before a windmill was erected over the creek, the water was forced up by a two-man pump. Through varied circumstances, the tank was out of water and the pump had frozen solid. When the engine approached the tank for filling, there was no water to fill it with. The maintainers of the tank, the train crew and the passengers then used buckets and hats to fill the engine's tank with water. Afterwards, the engineer laughingly declared that his engineer could be called "jerkwater" after the fashion of people jerking the water out of the creek to fill the engine. "Jerkwater" was born...