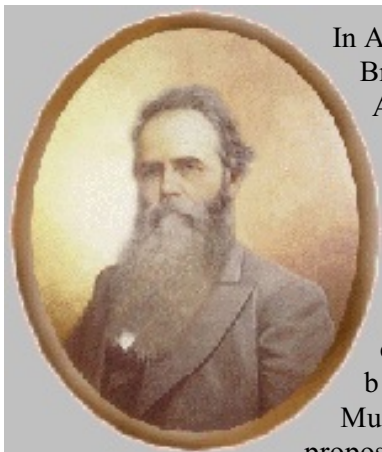


## A SHORT HISTORY OF CARBONDALE



In August 1852, Daniel Harmon Brush, pictured left, John Asgill Conner and Dr. William Richart bought 360 acres of land along the right-of-way for the Illinois Central Railroad with the intention of founding a new town. The site chosen was conveniently located between Marion and Murphysboro and between proposed railroad stations at

Makanda and DeSoto. The town was platted on November 27, 1852. Not only was the railroad the determining factor in the location of Carbondale, it was to be of great importance in the development of the town and of Southern Illinois. The first train through the town on the main line north from Cairo, on Independence Day, 1854, was the occasion for a community celebration.

By the Civil War, Carbondale had been incorporated as a village and had a population of about 1,150, most of whom were Union sympathizers. Brush, Conner and John A. Logan were among prominent Carbondale citizens who fought for the north. In all, 250 Carbondale men went to war and 55 died. On April 29, 1866, the first Memorial Day was celebrated at Woodlawn Cemetery.

After the war, Carbondale continued to develop as a mercantile and transport center. The railroad made possible the shipping of Southern Illinois coal and fruit. By this time, Carbondale had also become an education center with the founding of Carbondale College, which later became Southern Illinois College (1866). The City was incorporated on August 23, 1873. Carbondale won the bid for the new teacher training school for the region and Southern Illinois Normal University (SINU) opened here in 1874. This gave the town a new industry, new citizens and a model school to supplement the public grade schools.

In the 1890's, SINU continued operations adding additional buildings. The Illinois Central Railroad was thriving and the town's population and commercial ventures grew. Modern conveniences contributed to the town's growth. The Carbondale Electric Company was established in 1891; in 1900, Public Water Works was built; the Carbondale Telephone Company was operating in 1903. By 1906, the town was an established commercial, industrial and education center for the region.

By 1947, the college had obtained full university status and the name was changed to Southern Illinois University. It has since become the prime motivating force in the City's economy and, in fact, is the center of higher education and culture in all of Southern Illinois. Student enrollment increased from 2,711 in 1947 to 23,000 in 1980.

The University and other educational services have become the main supporting factor of the City, employing about 40 percent of the total labor force, roughly equivalent to more than 6,000 people. Being the home of SIUC has given the community cultural activities usually available only in larger cities.