

A Brief History of Retail in the US

19th Century

- US predominately rural, very sparsely populated compared with Europe
- Transportation difficult, dangerous, expensive
- Railroads made transportation much easier and cheaper, *especially* for goods
- Innovations in efficient transportation of people lagged (automobiles, paved roads, etc.)

Railroads in 19th Century and beyond

A HISTORY OF RAIL EXPANSION



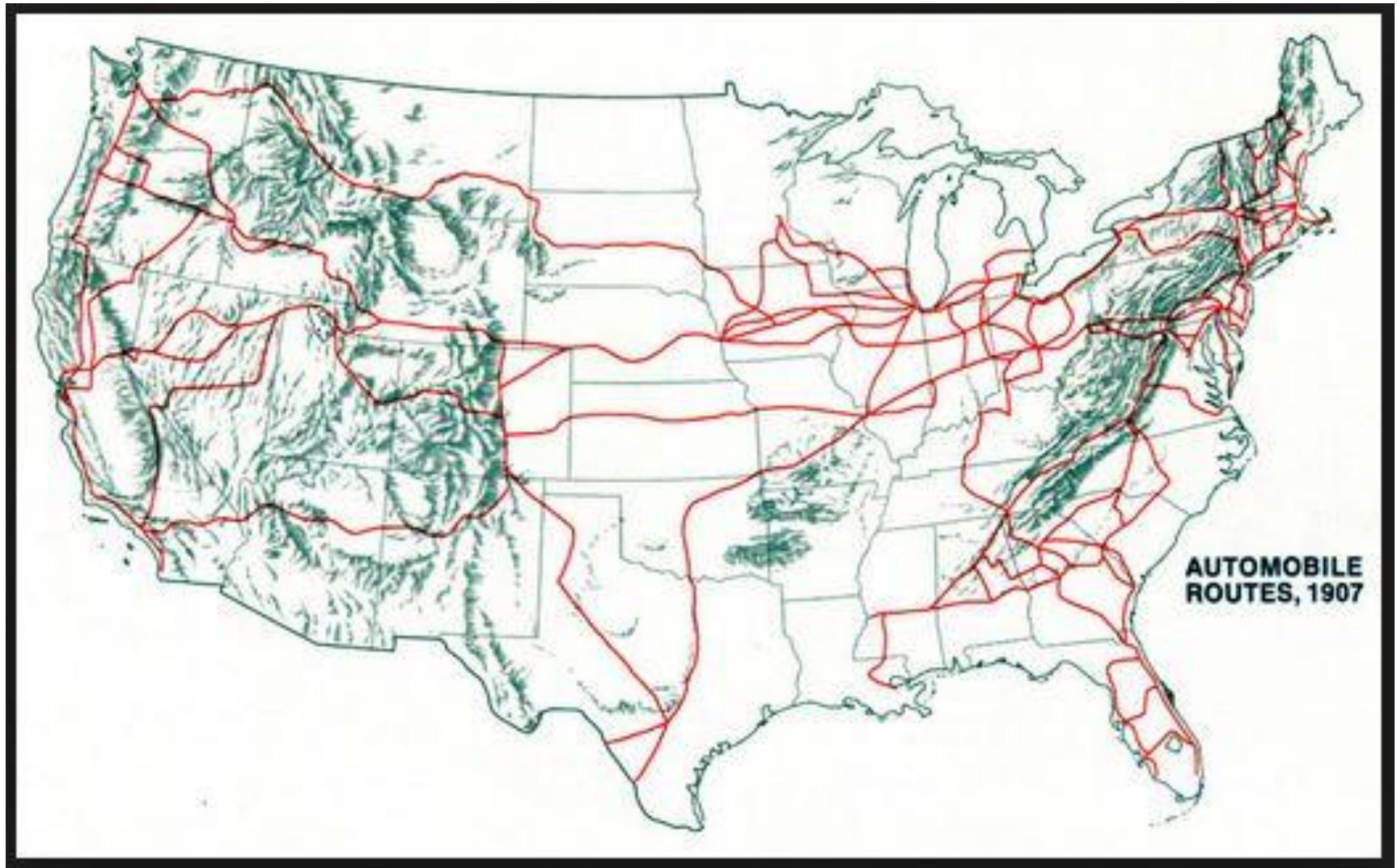
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HISTORICAL MAPS AND INFORMATION COURTESY CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY MUSEUM FROM THE 1951 PAMPHLET "AMERICAN RAILROADS: THEIR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT," THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS; TODAY MAP SOURCE KARL MUSSER



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Automobile routes in 1907



- 1872: Aaron Montgomery Ward founded first mail-order house to use catalogs as its primary promotional tool
 - Located in railroad hub of Chicago
- 1875: US Postal Service introduced favorable rate for bulk mailings
- 1885: Bulk mailing rate lowered again
- 1893: Rival Richard Sears began offering a general merchandise catalog
 - Operations also in Chicago
 - Soon as large as 786 pages

1908 SEARS, ROEBUCK CATALOGUE
A Treasured Replica from the Archives of History

'167

CATALOGUE No 117

THE GREAT PRICE MAKER

SEE THE GREATLY REDUCED PRICES SHOWN IN THIS CATALOGUE

THIS BOOK WILL BE FREE SENT **FREE**

to any address. Write us a letter or postal card and say "Send me your large Catalogue" and we will send it FREE.
(Offer expires December 31, 1908)

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO.

CAPITAL STOCK
FORTY MILLION
DOLLARS

CHICAGO

REFERENCE BY PERMISSION
FIRST NATIONAL BANK
CORN EXCHANGE NATIONAL BANK
CHASE NATIONAL BANK
NATIONAL SHAWMUT BANK

PLEASE SHOW THIS CATALOGUE
TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

DESIGNED BY JOSEPH J. SCHROEDER, JR.

UNABRIDGED FACSIMILE
CATALOGUE No 57

MONTGOMERY WARD & Co.

LARGEST
MAIL ORDER
BUSINESS
IN THE U.S.



SUPPLIES FOR
EVERY TRADE
AND CALLING
ON EARTH

and Buyers' Guide
Catalogue
Spring & Summer
1895

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BORIS EMMET

CATALOGUE, No. 15,
Winter and Spring, 1876.

Montgomery Ward & Co.,

ORIGINAL
WHOLESALE GRANGE SUPPLY HOUSE,

227 & 229 Wabash Ave., opp. Matteson House,
CHICAGO, ILL.,

Dry Goods, Clothing

HATS, CAPS, NOTIONS, BOOTS, SHOES, ETC.,
AT WHOLESALE PRICES.

Olney & Gilbert, Printers, 147 and 149 Fifth Ave., Chicago.

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., Cheapest Supply House on Earth, Chicago. CATALOGUE No. III. 809

MEMORIAL DEPARTMENT.

THE WORLD'S BEST ROYAL BLUE VERMONT MARBLE. IS IT EVERYWHERE CONCEDED TO BE THE FINEST IN THE WORLD. A FINE GRAY GRANITE MARBLE. SEND US ANY LETTERING YOU MAY DESIRE CARVED IN THE MARBLE and we will design you but a cent per letter for ordinary work. Engravings, designs, and all other work done with care and accuracy. We do not have our own quarries, but we employ the best workmen and we employ the best marble. We have a large stock of marble and granite, and on larger quantities where reduced prices are required, we will charge you less. We have a large stock of granite and marble, and we will charge you less. We have a large stock of granite and marble, and we will charge you less.

FOR OTHER DESIGNS AT LOWEST PRICES WRITE UNHEARD OF VALUE AT \$15.15 AND UPWARDS.

OUR HARDSONE \$5.10 MARKER.

OUR RICH \$7.00 MARKER.

OUR FINE \$6.99 MARKER.

OUR SUPERIOR \$7.65 TOMSTONE.

LETTERS. Engraving on marble and granite. Each letter costs 1 cent. Engraving on stone. Each letter costs 1 cent.

LIKE EVERY ONE of our higher grade marble monuments, this memorial is made in the same famous quarry, and by means of the same machinery, and is guaranteed a quality of workmanship and durability equal to that of the most famous monuments of the world. The measurements of the smaller size of this monument are as follows: Height, 3 feet 6 inches; by 1 foot 6 inches by 1 foot 6 inches. Base, 1 foot 6 inches by 1 foot 6 inches. Engraving on the front and back of the monument. The price of this monument is \$15.15. For other designs at lowest prices write unheared of value at \$15.15 and upwards.

No. 2281400 Our \$5.10 Fine Marble the hardstone, but without any lettering on the front or back. The price is based on the front and back of the monument. The price of this monument is \$5.10. For other designs at lowest prices write unheared of value at \$15.15 and upwards.

No. 2281417 This \$7.00 Marble is the same as the above, but with a different style of carving. The price is based on the front and back of the monument. The price of this monument is \$7.00. For other designs at lowest prices write unheared of value at \$15.15 and upwards.

No. 2281418 This \$6.99 Marble is the same as the above, but with a different style of carving. The price is based on the front and back of the monument. The price of this monument is \$6.99. For other designs at lowest prices write unheared of value at \$15.15 and upwards.

No. 2281419 This \$7.65 Marble is the same as the above, but with a different style of carving. The price is based on the front and back of the monument. The price of this monument is \$7.65. For other designs at lowest prices write unheared of value at \$15.15 and upwards.

Double Buggy Harness.

FOR TWO SEAT.

37198 Pads, without plates, fancy bowlinks; bridle, 4 inch reins, leather with ears. Set of double harness, traces 1/2 inch doubled and stitched, clipped to harness, 7 lb. iron harness, 110 lbs. 4x4 inch straps, 3 inch bands; belted harness; double collar straps and breast straps, 1 inch, turn-backs; 1/2 inch straps, folded croppers, with buggy collars, all white (A.C.) mountings. Per set, with harness, with hook collars, 22 lbs. When ordering Double Buggy Harness, state size of collar's wanted. \$12.00

Anthony Wayne Washer.

Size reduced price.

37193 The Anthony Wayne Washer, with corrugated ears and rollers. This is the best round washer made. Some prefer the round washer. In the square we have ordered the Anthony Wayne as being the best on the market, and we offer it at a price which places it within reach of all. Price, 37 lbs. \$5.75 Weight, 50 lbs.

OUR GUARANTEE IS AS GOOD AS GOLD.

44008 The Perfect Windsor Range, with high and low doors and reservoir. Size of Range. Fire box. Shipping weight. Price.

8-10	8 in.	18x10	555 lbs.	19x19x17	\$14.70
8-12	8 in.	17x10	547		
8-13	8 in.	16x7	400 lbs.	16x14x17	\$8.44
8-21	8 in.	16x7	400 lbs.	16x14x17	\$8.99

We can furnish wood stoves for the above Range (any size), which include front and bottom grates, at an extra charge of \$1.00.

Indiana Sawing Machine.

70410 This machine is sold at a low price, and is an efficient and easy running implement. Furnished with the very best Dixon's Hand-saw. Has all the advantages of any hand power cross cut saw made. The smoothest and best position when sawing in the usual way, is overcome, and a natural upright position secured, making the full force and weight of the body to be drawn on the saw. Weight, 44 lbs. Price, with saw 3 feet saw \$7.50

Light All-Steel Plows.

70451 Designed for either wooden or light wood, digging both kinds of work in the most perfect manner. Very light draft, works in any soil. It is also adapted to the cultivation of corn, clover, and fruit orchards. This plow does decidedly more work than the width of cut would indicate. Has a curved steel standard and deep, an extra steel share furnished with every one of these plows.

Price	3.50
8 in. 10 inch share, 11 inch board, 47 lbs.	3.75
10 in. 12 inch share, 13 inch board, 50 lbs.	4.25
12 in. 14 inch share, 14 inch board, 60 lbs.	5.00
14 in. 16 inch share, 15 1/2 inch board, 63 lbs.	5.50

- 1890's: USPS began rural free delivery, parcel post system (previously handled by private express companies)
 - Postmaster general was department store magnate
- 1907: United Parcel Service founded, focused on package delivery for stores
- Circa 1925: Golden age of mail order
 - Sears + MW sold over \$400 m of goods annually
 - Sears' sales alone accounted for over 2% of total farm cash income

- 1925: Sears opened first physical store
- 1931: Sears store sales eclipse catalog sales
- 1933: Sears had 400 stores
- 1900-1950: Two changes
 - Demographic shift towards urban living
 - Transportation costs for people falling relative to that for goods
- 1973: Federal Express began air shipments
- 1975: ICC granted UPS authority to ship to every address in contiguous 48 states

- 1993: Sears discontinued publishing big-book catalog
- Late 1990's: Mail-order dominated by specialty retailers, not general merchandisers
- 1992: US Supreme Court decision solidifying the right of mail-order businesses to *not* collect and pay sales tax for out-of-state customers

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