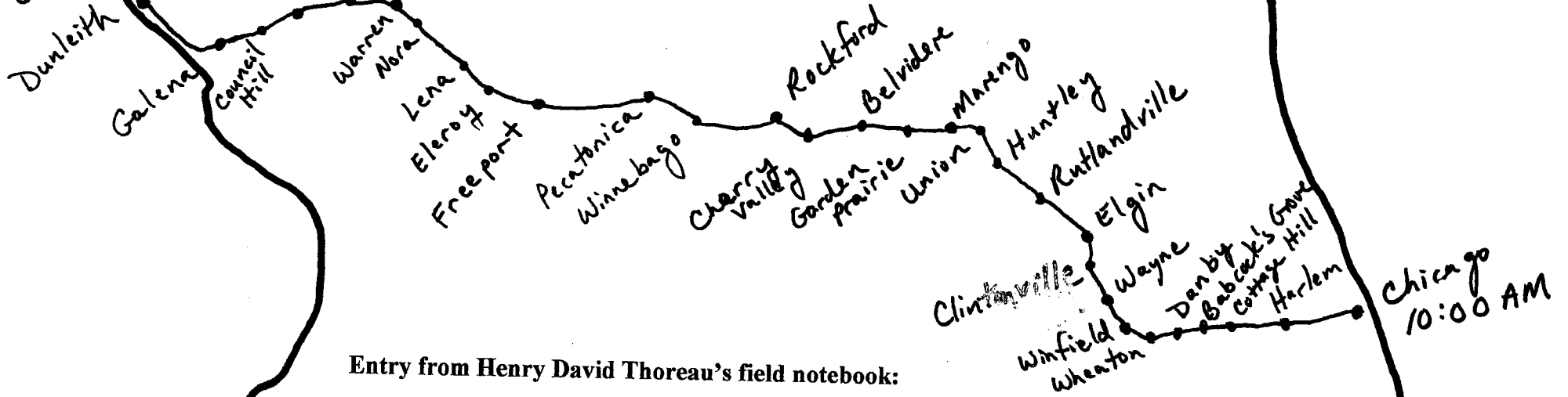


# THOREAU'S TRIP BY RAIL, MAY 23, 1861

6:20 PM



Entry from Henry David Thoreau's field notebook:

[May 23, 1861, on the train from Chicago to East Dubuque]

Chicago to Dunleith --

Very level 1<sup>st</sup> 20 miles -- then considerably more undulating. Greatest rolling prairie without trees just beyond Winnebago. Last 40 miles in NW of Ill. quite hilly. Mississippi backwater in Galena River 8 miles back. Water high now -- flooded thin woods with more open water behind.

like tree (thorn like) thru Illinois which may be the *Pyrus coronaria*.

Distances on prairie deceptive -- a stack of wheat straw looks like a hill in the horizon  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile off -- it stands out so bold & high. Only one boat up daily from Dunleith by this line -- in no case allowed to stop on the way. Small houses -- with out barns surrounded & overshadowed by great stacks of wheat straw -- it being threshed on the ground. Some wood always visible -- but generally not large. The inhabitants remind you of mice nesting in a wheat stack -- midst their wealth. Women working in fields quite commonly. Fences of narrow boards. Towns are as it were stations on a RR. *Staphylea trifolia* [American bladdernut] out at Dunleith

~ Assembled by Corinne H. Smith. Classroom use permitted. ~ [www.thoreausjourneywest.com](http://www.thoreausjourneywest.com) ~  
Westward I Go Free: Tracing Thoreau's Last Journey

## NAME CHANGES

Dunleith = East Dubuque  
 Rutlandville = Gilberts  
 Clintonville = South Elgin  
 Danby = Glen Ellyn  
 Babcock's Grove = Lombard  
 Cottage Hill = Elmhurst  
 Harlem = Oak Park