

tourists who had frequented the Coast towns in the antebellum era had come from New Orleans or Mobile. Now they could come from Chicago or New York by rail. Gulf seafood on ice could travel throughout the United States by the same means.

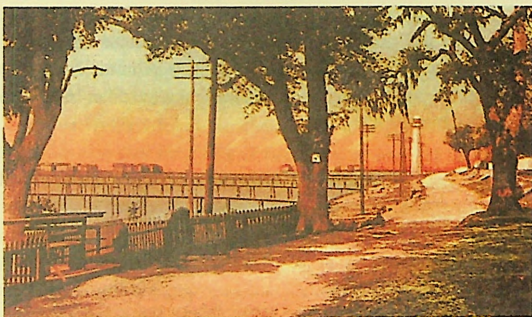
Steamboats had replaced sail in the antebellum era. In the early post-Civil War world, locomotives replaced the steamboats, and roads remained as unimportant as they had in Spanish times.

In 1876, Harrison County Supervisor Roderick Seal of Mississippi City began the movement to construct a 20-foot-wide beach road across the littoral of the county from Henderson Point on the Bay of St. Louis to Point Cadet on Biloxi Bay. The labor was to be provided under a Mississippi road law requiring all able bodied men to work ten days per

year on the roads. One observer described this roadworking system as "no system at all" and furthermore stated that "the meeting of the road hands, in most instances, is an occasion for merry making with no recognized or capable authority to intelligently direct the little work that is done." Another put it more succinctly as "holes to holes and home for dinner." (Dinner in the Southern parlance of the time referred to the noon meal.) By that he meant those pressed into service dug a hole on the side of the road, threw the dirt into a hole on the road, and then went home for lunch and stayed there.



*A Louisville and Nashville train crosses the Biloxi Bay railroad bridge between Biloxi and Ocean Springs, circa 1901. The railroad between Mobile and New Orleans began operations in November 1870. Railroad builders were the first to conquer the swamps and bridge the bays of the Gulf Coast's indented coastline. To the extent possible, the highway builders built parallel to the railroads. Photo courtesy of the Jon Richard Lewis Postcard Collection.*



*Looking west on the shell road toward the Biloxi Lighthouse, circa 1901. The wharves and their attached bathouses at left in Mississippi Sound, together with the shell road, fell victim to six hurricanes from 1893 to 1916. The Old Spanish Trail (U.S. Highway 90) later followed this stretch of road. Photo courtesy of the Jon Richard Lewis Postcard Collection.*