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THE  
GREAT  
**FRUIT**  
**SECTION**  
OF THE  
**SOUTH**  
—  
VIEWS ALONG THE  
**CENTRAL OF GEORGIA**  
RAILWAY





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THE GREAT FRUIT SECTIONS OF THE SOUTH.



“BEAUTIES OF THE SOUTH.”—Peaches grown on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway. From photograph, natural size.

THE  
GREAT FRUIT SECTIONS  
OF THE  
SOUTH.

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J. C. HAILE,  
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VIEWS . . .  
ALONG THE LINES OF THE  
CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILWAY.



THE CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILWAY traverses the States of Alabama and Georgia, and forms the most reliable through-car route between the West and Florida. The most comfortable and at the same time the cheapest route between the South and the East is via the Central of Georgia Railway to Savannah, thence upon the elegant steamers of the Ocean Steamship Company, plying between Savannah and New York and Savannah and Boston. The fleet consists of the finest vessels in the coastwise service flying the American flag. Tickets include meals and berths aboard ship.

The finest Fruit, Timber and Agricultural Lands of the country, as well as limitless water-power and unsurpassed factory sites, are to be found along the lines of the Central of Georgia Railway.



## ❁ ❁ THE SOUTH. ❁ ❁

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**I**T USED TO BE CONSIDERED in the South and in Georgia that cotton was king. Since the Civil War all this has been changed. Planting interests have become diversified, large farms have been cut up, and among other things the fruit interest has been steadily growing. In middle and southwest Georgia, where extensive cotton plantations once abounded, choice orchards have been planted, and packing houses, canning factories and crate factories have been multiplying. There is a section of Georgia traversed by the Central of Georgia Railway which is full of the new-found riches brought on by the development of the fruit crop. This part of the State is singularly productive, and during the former dull summer months, when cotton and grain crops are laid by, there are busy scenes among the peach pickers and peach packers. Thousands of acres are luxuriant with new and improved varieties of fruit, and the views presented in this sketch serve to show something of the activity of this industry. These few views are typical of the scenes in the fruit belt and yet no mere pictures can give an idea of the extent of this great business. The gathering time is carnival season in Georgia. Men, women and children turn out to honor the ripening of Georgia's newly found wealth, and the "Elberta," the largest and finest peach in the world, is absolutely queen of this midsummer harvest. There is a great deal of poetry in all of this, but a great deal of practical wealth. Think of one man in Marshallville alone having 120,000 peach trees. Possibly this is one of the largest peach orchards in Georgia. Think of one combination in Fort Valley with 300,000 peach trees. In the neighborhood of Fort Valley there are 700,000 peach trees in full fruitage this year. All of this is a source of untold wealth to the people of Georgia. The whole section of the State, from Griffin to Smithville, thence to Albany, Cuthbert and Fort Gaines, is one unbroken stretch of fruiting trees and perfect bearing species. Mention has been made of the Elberta. What sea island cotton is to the fleecy staple the Elberta certainly is to the fruit industry. It is the peerless product of the orchard, the most beautiful and most luscious peach in the world. The refinement of years of cultivation, the Elberta has given Georgia a reputation for peaches all over the continent. Incomparably finer than any California fruit, it has proven itself a favorite for shipment and canning purposes. The Elberta has put all of its rivals to blush, and Georgia is the home of the Elberta.

And yet the peach industry is in its infancy here. In spite of the tons of fruit shipped each year to the eastern and western markets this business has just marked its beginning. The Central of Georgia Railway Company has handled during the season of 1898 1,786 cars, all refrigerator cars, iced at the point of shipment and all arranged for keeping the peaches in perfect condition. The Central of Georgia has built miles of spur tracks on its lines. It has given shippers every possible facility and has enlarged the fruit-bearing section and increased the supply in middle and southwestern Georgia.

There are a great number of pear and plum orchards on these lines, and this fruit is receiving every attention from the growers. It is probable that these will increase every year. To give some idea of the extent of this fruit-growing industry in this section it may be stated in round numbers that in the neighborhood of Albany there are 55,000 peach trees ; that Barnesville has nearly as many ; that the little town of Buena Vista has 12,000, that Cuthbert has over 40,000, that Eatonton has between 12,000 and 15,000, that Fort Valley has 700,000 trees, that Forsyth has 25,000, that Griffin has 80,000, that Marshallville has 500,000, and Smithville 50,000. And this number is growing every year. With the extension of the orchard, of course, has come the accompanying industry of crating, packing, canning and shipping, and the fruit belt of Georgia is far and away the most active section of the State. This interest brings hundreds of thousands of dollars into Georgia, for the peach farms find ready sale for their output in the markets in the United States.

It is no wonder that this part of Georgia is being rapidly built up and settled, for there is room for thousands more, and the markets of the country have not begun to be supplied. Where the old pine barrens of Georgia grew up in waste and the rugged clay hills seemed to be given over to desolation the most beautiful rows of fruit trees now abound, either in full-bearing or speedily approaching fruition. The sight of one of these orchards is very inspiring. Placed in regular rows like the soldiers of a well-trained army, or like the tents of a well-regulated camp, the trees are lined up and the broad roadways are filled with covered wagons bearing the rich yield to the packing houses, where thousands of busy fingers place them temptingly in baskets and bind them into crates. Then they are sent off in prime condition to the consumers. A large number of northern men have moved down to Georgia to engage in fruit growing and yet the orchards have not been exhausted nor has a tithe of the waste places been planted. Years ago northern people came to Georgia to visit battlefields and study campaigns. Hundreds went further south to seek their health in Georgia and Florida. Now thousands of people come South to engage in her industries and to share in the riches of the fruit belt of this State. When we view the product of this section and think of the possibility of this God-favored zone we realize that the surface of the earth has only been irritated, not fathomed, and that Georgians have not begun to reap the harvest which awaits them. Of the fruit industry we may truthfully say that "there's millions in it," and that the men who are now embarking in it are inviting riches of which they do not dream.





View of Fruit in Orchard, near Fort Valley, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



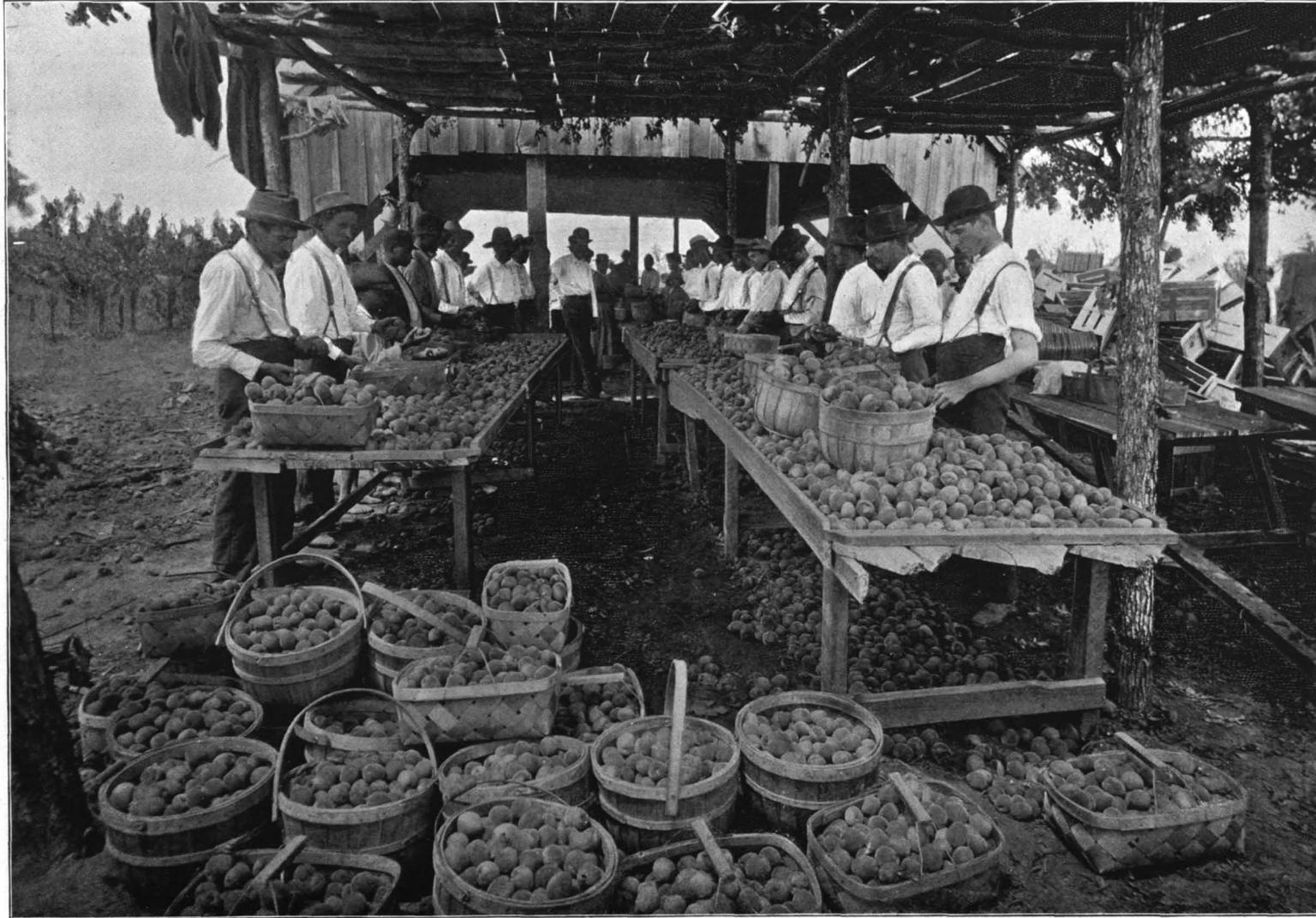
Bird's-eye View of Peach Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



An Avenue in a Peach Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Picking Peaches from Heavily Loaded Trees in an Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Assorting and Packing Peaches, near Barnesville, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Loading from Wagons into Cars, at Griffin, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Preparing to Ice Cars, at Marshallville, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Plum and Pear Orchard, near Marshallville, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Plum Tree, near Fort Valley, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



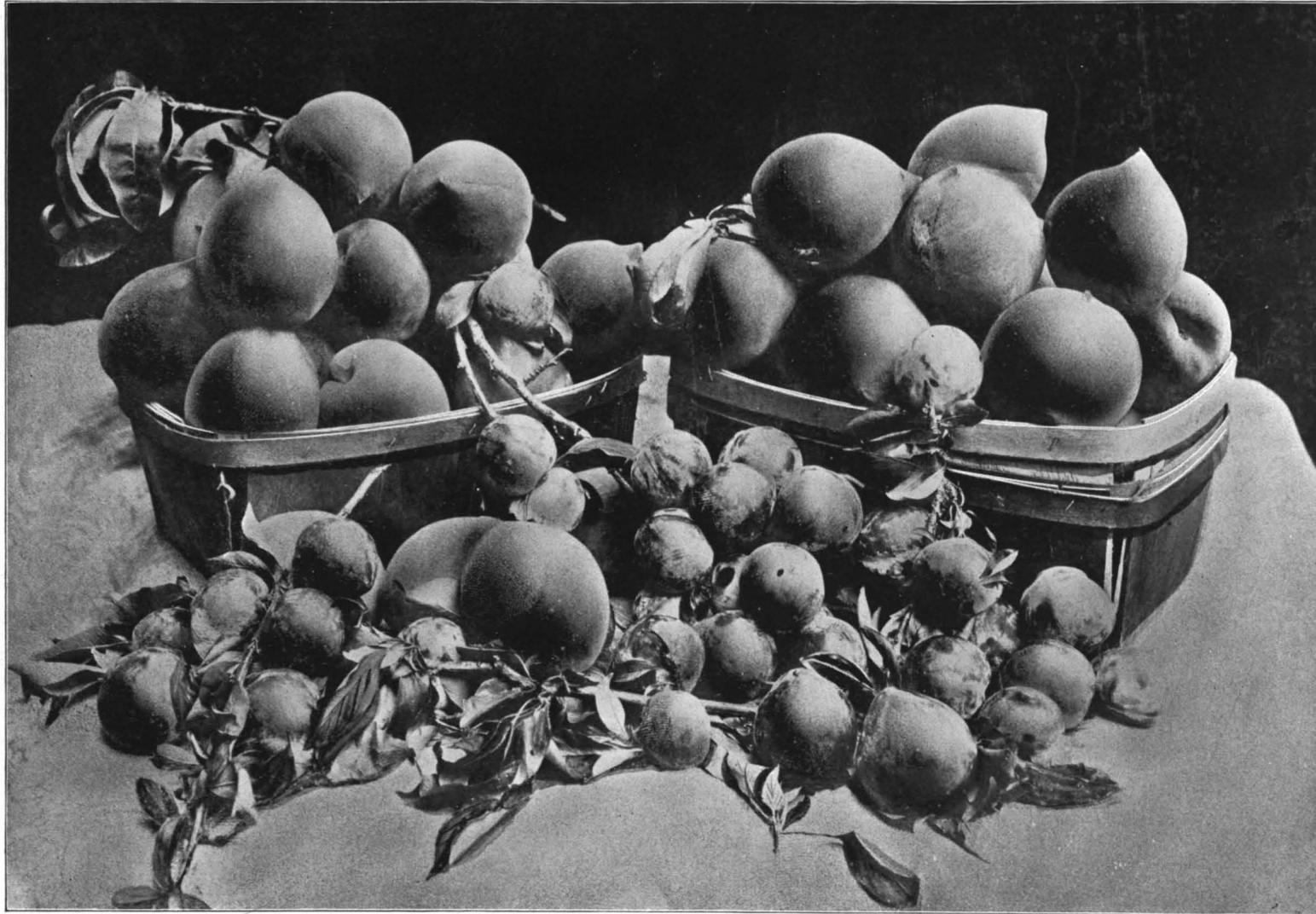
Picking Peaches in Young Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



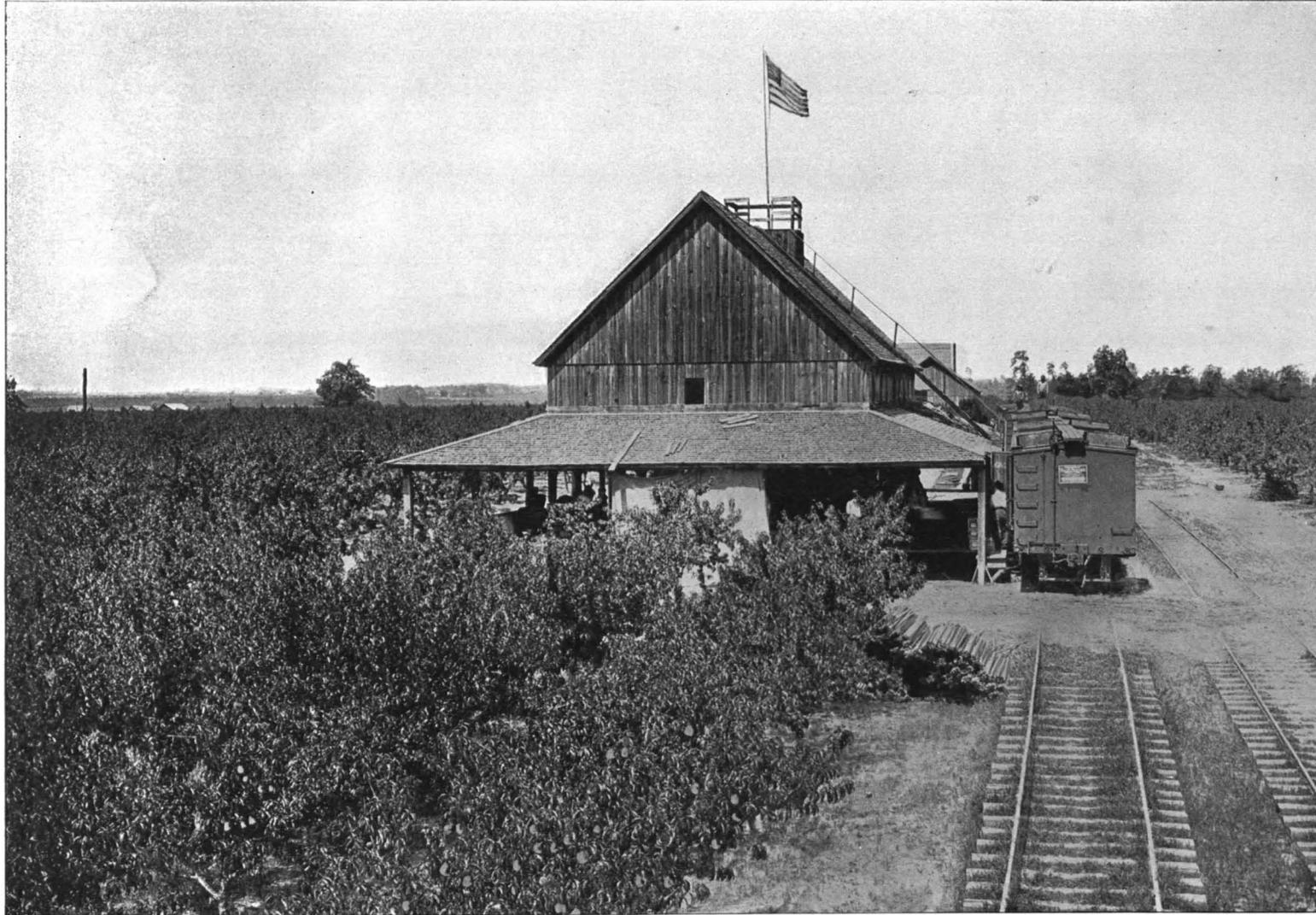
Packing Peaches, at Deitzens, Ga., near the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Loading Peaches from Packing House into Cars on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Plums and Peaches from an Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



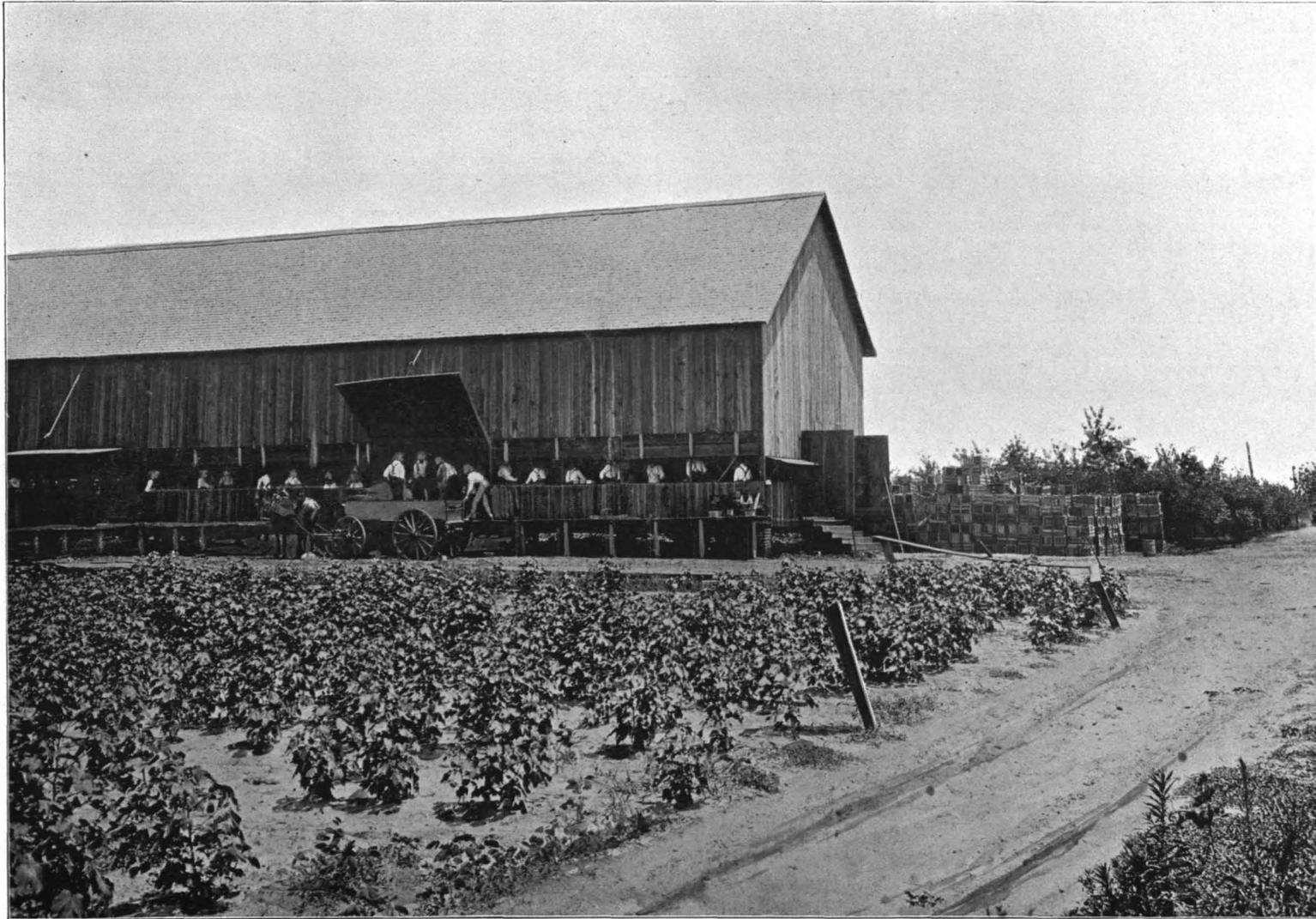
Hale's Packing House, near Fort Valley, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Icing Cars, at Marshville, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



An Early Start, near Cuthbert, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Albaugh's Packing House, near Fort Valley, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Section of a Peach Orchard on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Dinner Hour at a Packing House on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Trees Loaded with Peaches on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



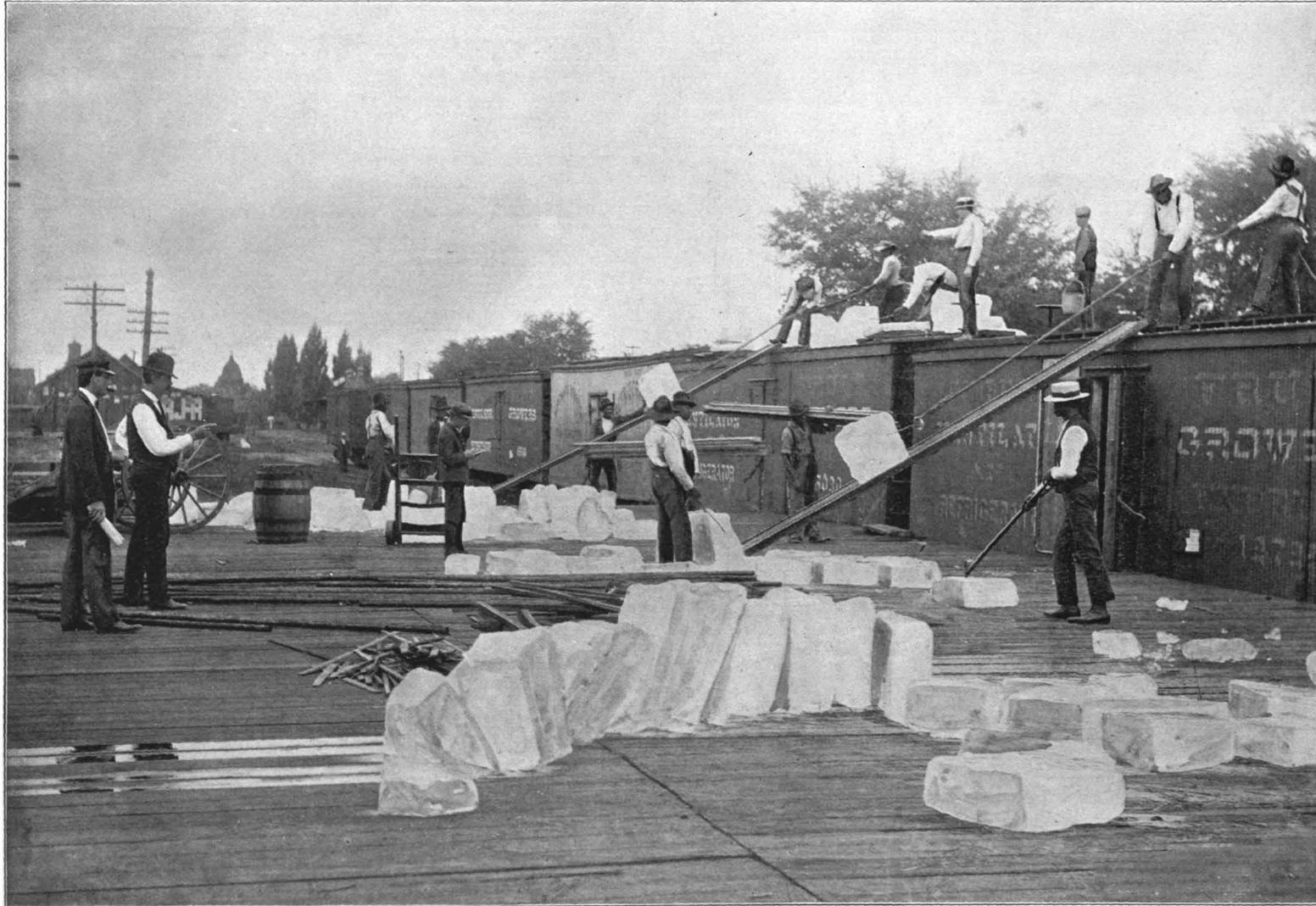
Section of a Packing House, near Marshallville, on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



An Orchard, near Tennille, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



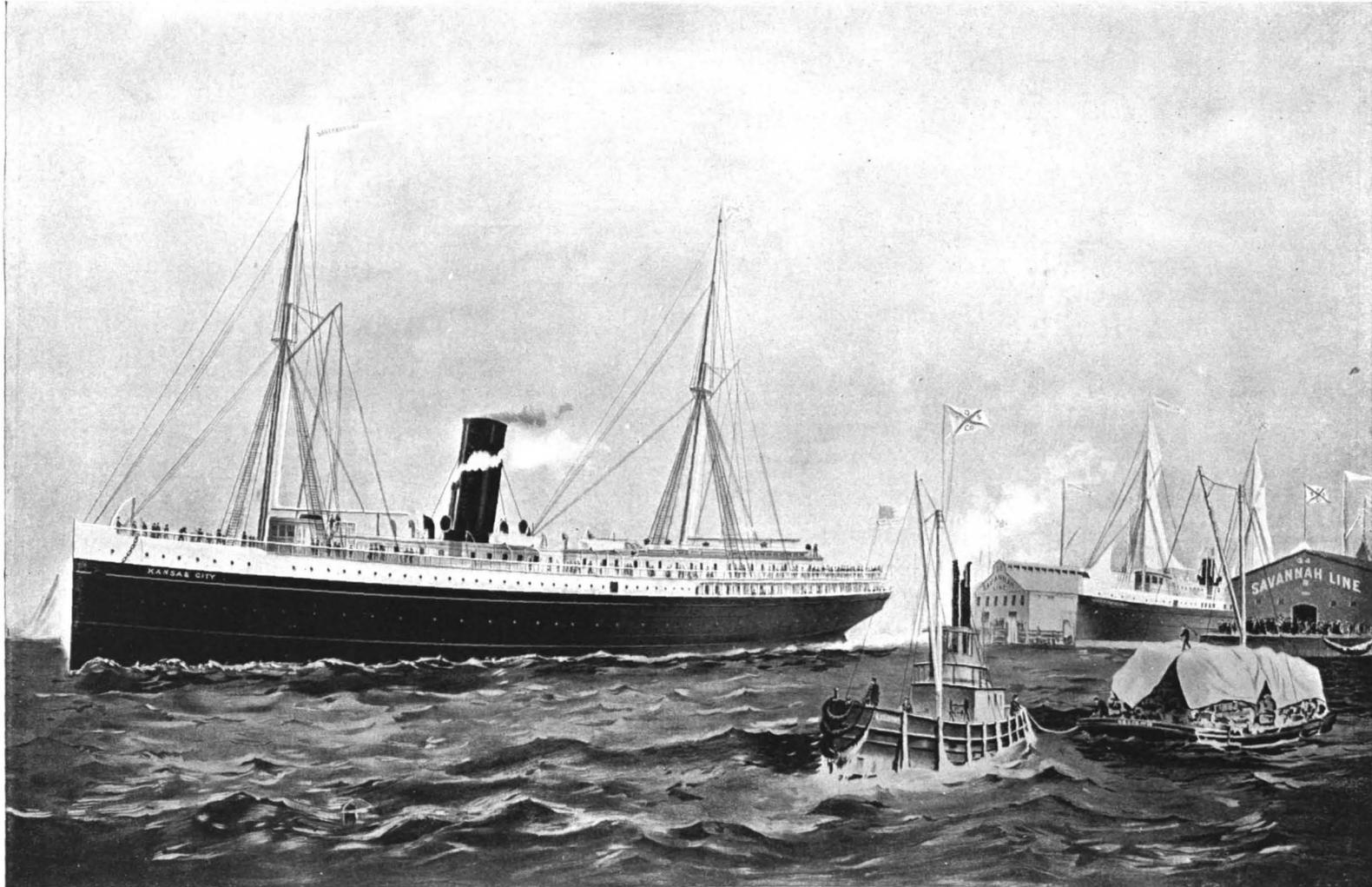
Packing Peaches, near Griffin, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



Icing Cars, at Griffin, on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



A Packing House in Orchard of S. H. Rumph, near Marshallville, Ga., on the line of the Central of Georgia Railway.



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