

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER January, 2013

We appreciate the three upholstered chairs on wheels for our office area that the C. V. Library has donated to us.

There will only be one more newsletter after this one and that will be in April. I'm retiring from the historical society in the spring. I have been volunteering for fourteen years, including eight years as the treasurer, and eight years as your newsletter reporter.

We need someone to take over the newsletter, plus other jobs on the computer. Would any of you who live close by be willing to help us? Please call our Historical Society 815-332-5200, or e mail us at [cv.historical86@frontier.com](mailto:cv.historical86@frontier.com) Also, you can e-mail me at [pioneer.30@live.com](mailto:pioneer.30@live.com)

Since our last newsletter these folks have passed away:

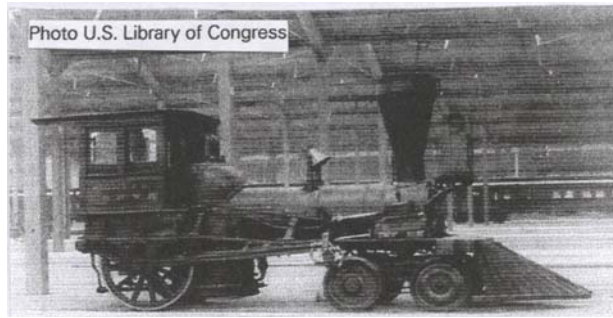
Dagmar V. Nelson	98	Nov. 7, 2012
David Doig	58	Nov. 2, 1012.

#### TRANSPORTATION IN CHERRY VALLEY

**STAGE COACH TRAVEL:** Frink, Walker, & Company first ran its' stage lines only from Chicago to Rockford. The coaches were always drawn by four horses. In 1840 the schedule time from Chicago to Rockford was advertised to be twenty-four hours. Horses were changed at intervals of fifteen miles at stations built for this purpose. Coaches left the main office in Chicago every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday and returned on alternate days. The fare was \$5.00

They carried mail, passengers, and light parcels. By January 1, 1838 the stage coach was making regular trips. These three homes in our village were used as stage stops: 301 West State Street, 809 Elgin Street, and on the southwest corner of West State and Mill Road.

**FIRST LOCOMOTIVE:** A boat called The Buffalo left Michigan City, Ind., and reached Chicago on Oct. 10, 1848. The cargo on the schooner was Chicago's first locomotive - The Pioneer. The little wood-burning engine was purchased secondhand and hauled by animal teams to the tracks. The Pioneer made its' first movement out of Chicago in late October of 1848. The early rolling stock of the line was built by Scoville's Chicago Car and Locomotive Works. This information was found in the Northwest Quarterly Fall, 2012.



The impact of the coming of the railroad was felt for miles around. Towns along the right of way flourished, and towns away from the railroad died. On March 10, 1852, amid cannon and the ringing of church bells, the Pioneer proudly steamed into Cherry Valley. For that summer, Cherry Valley was the end of the line. Stage coach connections were made there to continue travel west. No provision to turn the locomotive was made, so on return trips to Chicago, the locomotive ran in reverse. On August 20, 1852, the completion of the railroad bridge was an event for more celebration. The Pioneer was capable of pulling one or two coaches at the treacherous speed of 25 miles per hour.

August, 1930 was probably the busiest month of railroading ever through Cherry Valley. Possibly some of us will remember the day the line was thoroughly saturated with troop trains handling the Illinois National Guard on their annual maneuvers to Camp Grant. There were 89 to 90 train orders issued that day, so traffic must have been like continuous trains in both directions.

In 1930 there were three scheduled passenger trains each way, the way freight that made a round trip daily, plus two night time freight trains. The first permanent station was built in 1866, measuring 10' x 20'. This station was completely rebuilt and enlarged into the structure that was used until passenger service stopped on the railroad. Then it was rented out for living quarters until it was torn down in circa 1953.

The fare to Rockford was thirty-two cents. Fares to other towns and cities are listed on page 169 of O. M. A. W. book.

Passenger service was terminated in 1952. The last passenger train to run between Chicago and Freeport was pulled by a big diesel. Since the beginning, the railroad has served the community with thousands of freight and passenger trains, carried the mail, moved livestock, provided jobs, paid taxes, and transported loved ones. The era of the railroads is rapidly dimming, but its' memories live brightly with us. When the railroads die, a piece of America will die. All the above was found in Our Memories Are Warm book which was printed in 1976.

The last time the Pioneer saw action was in 1949 at the Railroad Fair in Chicago. Today she stands stately, reminiscent of her part in history, at a museum in Chicago.

On June 2, 1864, the Chicago and Galena Union Railroad was consolidated with the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. There were many different kinds of engines that ran through Cherry Valley. The small standards (4-4-0), larger 10 wheelers (4-6-0), used mainly as freight engines, and the Atlantics (4-4-2) used for passenger service.

## ROCKFORD and INTERURBAN RAILWAY COMPANY

The Rockford and interurban railway company began in 1902. Running time between terminals seemed to vary with the seasons. The spring thaws and April rains often slowed operations to a snail's pace. For the most part service was of a local nature, with stops at every cross road and farm stations were designated by the name of the landowner living closest to that point.

In 1907 the first limited trains were in operation. One train went in each direction. The morning train was eastbound and the evening train was westbound. Total running time from Chicago to Rockford on these limited trains was three hours and fifteen minutes.

The interurban was widely used to haul freight as well as passengers. Probably the most unusual freight carried on the line was the laundry from Camp Grant. A deadly flu epidemic had plagued the camp and was claiming many lives. In an effort to prevent the spread of the disease, the camp was ordered washed down completely, especially all clothing and bedding. The Post Laundry wasn't able to handle this excessive load of laundry, nor were the cleaning establishments in Rockford. So the government ordered the laundry shipped to Elgin. This was done twice a week. There the car would be un-loaded, washed down, and filled with clean clothing and linen for the return trip to Camp Grant.

On the evening of March 8, 1930, the president of the rail company posted notice of the closing of the operation. At that time there were less than three trips a day from Rockford to Elgin.

We have this original window from the railroad depot in our museum.



E. O. Kehoe, station agent at Cherry Valley, left his post August 16, after many years of faithful service.

Tim Kehoe, former Cherry Valley freight and ticket agent for the Chicago and North Western Railroad company, was honored last week at a banquet in Belvidere for his service record of 60 years. He has served in Belvidere for 25 years and in Cherry Valley for 18 years. He also has been stationed in Marengo, Freeport and Rockford.

Surrounded by a group of 48 business associates from the Galena division, Mr. Kehoe was awarded a 60-year pin by Carl Scanlon of the Chicago and North Western Veterans association. He also received a gift from his friends. Mr. Kehoe is scheduled to retire January 1.

**TIM KEHOE, TICKET  
AGENT 60 YEARS  
RETIRES**

**Cherry Valley News  
December 29, 1950**

This story was found in a stenographer's notepad: Kit Drummond's mother's first husband drove a stagecoach from Rockford to Chicago around the time the railroad was being built through Cherry Valley.

They lived in and operated a hotel on the location of the Johnston farm. One day he brought a person that had smallpox on the coach to Cherry Valley, and upon discovering this, made him stay in the barn. The hired girl took food to the victim and contacted smallpox herself. Both died. Mr. Drummond died shortly afterwards, probably of small-pox also.

Another note from the same stenographer's pad told that the limestone was taken out of the local quarry for the piers of the new railroad bridge and the passenger bridge. Copper nuggets were found in a crack in the rocks.

The following was written by John Larson -- Depot Memories 1947

The railroad depot had three rooms on the west end of the waiting room with a long, wooden seat divided by arm rests. The west outside door had a large lock with a key in it that was hinged in the middle. The ticket window was on the east wall.

The telegraph table was located in the center room. This room was heated with a coal stove with a round, tin radiator on the top. On the east wall were several levers connected to a cable. These were to operate the semaphore arms on the tower outside to signal the trains to stop. There was an angled mirror on the south window to see the trains coming.

The east room was the freight room with a scale built into the floor. I can remember flat crates filled with chicks waiting to be picked up.