

the **DEPOT**
at BAKER'S BRIDGE

the DEPOT

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BAKER'S BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
Alfred Station, New York
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Preface

By the Erie-Lackawanna tracks that pass through Alfred Station, there sits a building with a striking roofline and boards over its windows. For sixty years it served as the Depot, until all service to that station was finally discontinued. It remains in relatively good condition, but the passage of years brings inevitable small deteriorations. This old friend needs help.

The Baker's Bridge Association has begun efforts to bring about the preservation of the Depot. To that end, a Railroad Day on June 3, 1979 has been proclaimed. The essays in this little revue of local railroad history were written as a first step toward bringing the Depot back to life. It is hoped that each reader will begin to feel fond enough of it to offer help - if only some form of encouragement.

SWG

The Erie Railroad

Russell Allen

In May of 1831, Henry L. Pierson of New Jersey, and his bride, went on their honeymoon to South Carolina. While there, they rode on the newly constructed South Carolinian Railroad for a distance of six miles. On her return home, Mrs. Pierson was so enthusiastic about her trip on the railroad that her excitement helped convince her father-in-law, Jeremiah L. Pierson, to financially back another railroad which only existed on paper. The proposed system was perceived in the 1820's as a route through the valleys of the Southern Tier, by a Yankee harness maker named William Redfield.

The New York and Erie Railroad was incorporated and given its charter by the State of New York on April 4, 1832. It was to run from Piermont, N.Y. on the Hudson River to Dunkirk, N.Y. on Lake Erie, a distance of 446½ miles.

The New York and Erie started off on the "wrong track" when its first president, Eleasar Lord, decided to build the railroad in a 6 foot gauge instead of the standard 4 foot 8½ inch gauge. President Lord and his chief engineer figured the heavy traffic and steep grades would call for exceptionally heavy, as well as powerful locomotives. The New York State charter specified that the N.Y. & E. was not to connect to any out-of-state railroad. This also influenced the decision to build with wider than standard gauge track.

The first track was to be built on oak pilings driven deep into the ground, somewhat like a low trestle. It was believed by Mr. Lord, who had no prior experience with railroads, that this would save on grading and avoid the problem of drifting snow in winter. About 100 miles of pilings were driven before it was realized that they were too unstable to support the weight of a moving train. This effort was then abandoned and track was then laid on stone roadbed, directly on the ground, much as is still done today.

The original track was made of ribbon-like metal plates fastened to the tops of wooden rails. These did not hold up well so with the invention of the steel "I" rail, they were soon replaced.

In 1851, 19 years after its beginning, the New York and Erie Railroad was completed at a cost of more than 20 million dollars. At that time, it was the longest, as well as the widest, railroad in the western hemisphere.

Progress had been slow in the construction of the New York and Erie as several times funds were depleted and more had to be raised before work could continue.

Needless to say, the wide gauge was a burden to the New York and Erie from the beginning, since all of its rolling stock had to be custom built at much greater expense than that of the standard gauge car. It also could not inter-change with any other railroad. Any goods transported which were to be shipped further by other railroads had to be transferred to other cars to be sent on to their destination. It was not until 1878 that the Erie changed to standard gauge at an expenditure of 25 million dollars.

Many problems arose in the local area while the railroad was under construction.

Originally, the track from Hornell was to travel along the valley floor, but it was soon discovered that the grade was too steep for trains to get over Tip Top. Although much of the rock base for the roadbed had been laid to somewhere near Baker's Bridge, it had to be abandoned to start climbing up the hillside from Hornell to Tip Top. This made it impossible to build the yards and shops in Almond as had been planned and they were consequently built in Hornell.

Irish laborers were used locally in the construction of the railroad. There were three different factions of Irishmen, namely the Tipperaries, the Corkonians, and the Far Downers. These groups of men were located in camps at three different points along the route of the right-of-way. One of these camps was on Satterly Hill, one near Tip Top, and the third was somewhere near the area once called Rose's Grove which is just beyond the East Valley turnoff, toward Andover.

The Irishmen were working on the "cut and fill just north of Alfred" according to Edward H. Mott in his book Between The Ocean and the Lakes, The Story of Erie, published in 1899. Mott continues, "The cut and fill were located about 18 miles west of Hornell . . . a mile or more long, the longest and deepest on the entire work". This is more than a mile long and runs from a short distance north-east of the depot to just beyond the Satterly Hill Road (No. 2 Bridge), but is actually about nine miles from Hornell.

In June of 1850, John Pardon (a Far Downer) and his family were passing through Alfred, (Baker's Bridge) from Hornell to Andover, and were attacked by the other groups of Irishmen. Paris Green, a resident of Baker's Bridge, helped the Pardons to get away and a militia was called from Alfred, Almond and Andover to control the Irish workers. Two constable's posses from Alfred and Andover were formed. The posse from Andover escorted the family to its destination while the one from Alfred arrested the workers involved and took them to Alfred Centre for trial. During the trial, other Irishmen approached the Centre to help their companions. At that time, a 6 pound brass cannon was loaded with scraps of metal, chains, nails, etc. and turned on the approaching men. As they came around the bend and saw the cannon, they quickly dropped their picks, firearms, etc. and scattered in all directions.

The Irishmen would fight at the slightest excuse. As Mott said in his book, "The Irish love of the insidious poteen was indulged in overmuch". In late October of 1850, a row between the Irish factions was investigated by the contractor, Henry A. Fonda, and his foreman. The following article found in the December 12, 1850 Sabbath Recorder tells the story in gruesome detail:

A terrible tragedy occurred on the line of the New York and Erie Railroad, near Baker's Bridge, Allegany Co., N.Y., on Sunday evening, the 24th ult. It is stated that there had been a strike among the workmen not long previous to the affair, and that they at length submitted to the chagrin of returning to work without an increase of wages. For this, or some other cause, they had imbibed a

serious dislike to one of the contractors. On the evening mentioned, a show of disorder was made among the workmen, at a shanty where liquor is kept, and the contractor mentioned was requested, by a person from the scene of the disturbance, to go and use his influence to have it stopped. He went, followed or accompanied by a man employed as a clerk. As he entered, the door was forcibly closed and fastened behind him, and the lights extinguished. The scene that followed was terrible. There was a bustling, pitching, firing of revolvers, groaning, and gushing of blood. The door was broken in by the clerk, and he became an actor in the defense. When lights were brought to disclose the result, two men were found dead or dying, another with one or two shots through the hand. The contractor was found in a state of partial unconsciousness, with marks of violent treatment upon his person, which rendered his recovery at least doubtful. A coroner's inquest was held, and a verdict was rendered of justifiable homicide on the part of those who acted in the defense. It is thought to have been a plot laid to take the contractor's life.

It is also stated, that the body of an Irishman was found in a mill-pond, near Almond, some two or three miles from the scene of the above tragedy, on the morning of Monday, the 2d. inst., with marks of violence upon it.

The Railroad, for some distance, in that vicinity, involved considerable labor, and consequently accumulated many hands, who were principally Irish, and the result has

been to make the spot a scene of almost constant disturbance, subjecting the county to an onerous burden of expense. T.E.B.

An interesting tale has been passed down through the years from section gang to section gang: The story of "Dead Man's Fill". According to this, at least three Irishmen were buried in the fill mentioned above, after having been killed in fights. This same story also is found in Mott's book where he says "The big fill just below the station at Alfred, so tradition insists, contains the bodies of many missing natives of the Emerald Isle who fell in these affrays and were secretly buried to prevent unpleasant official investigation".

The first attempted train wreck recorded in the United States took place near Andover. On Friday, November 26, 1862, on a curve near Andover, some activity was seen on the track about 9 p.m. Since an express train was soon due, some local citizens went to investigate the activity. Two men were seen fastening a wrecked gravel car which they had pulled onto the track, to some nearby trees, with a log chain. The two men, Samuel Allen, age 21, who was a blacksmith, and George Palmer, age 24, a cabinet maker, were arrested and taken to Phillippsville (now Belmont) where they were tried and sentenced to four years in the State Penitentiary at Auburn.

Everything was not all bad for the Erie, however. It was built through country which no other railroad wanted, so it had little competition. Also, the company was almost always bankrupt, so new equipment could not always be purchased when necessary. Because of this, the locomotives were kept in perfect working order much longer than the normal life span of those on other railroads. One prime example of this was the Light Pacific

type passenger locomotives which were built in the early 1900's and were still in use as commuter train locomotives in the New York City and New Jersey area in the early 1950's, more than 45 years later.

The first train to make the entire trip from Piermont to Dunkirk was an excursion train. It left Piermont early the morning of May 14, 1851. This passenger train carried many railroad officials, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pierson (who took the train ride in South Carolina while on their honeymoon), the President of the United States, Millard Fillmore and Secretary of State, Daniel Webster. Webster had a rocking chair strapped to the bed of a flat car so he could ride outside and truly enjoy the virgin forests of the southern tier.

The train left Hornell the morning of May 15 and according to the first through ERIE timetable, was to arrive at Baker's Bridge at 8:37 a.m. Pusher engines had to be used to help the heavy passenger train from Hornell over Tip Top, which was, and still is, the highest point on the Erie Railroad, with an elevation of 1,176 feet.

There was a wooden fence along the right-of-way near the depot at Baker's Bridge, so tradition tells us. This fence was used as a hitching post for all who came to greet the first train and its dignitaries. Nearly all of the local area's residents were there.

The train puffed and chugged noisily up the grade past the station and out of sight beyond No. 4 bridge. By the time the train had gone, so had the horses, carriages and the wooden fence.

In 1851, a passenger could travel from New York to Dunkirk for \$8.00. Advertised rates in January of 1852 were 3¢ per passenger mile. According to this, one could travel from Baker's Bridge to Hornell for about 30¢. At this time, some timetables listed the local stop as Baker's Bridge, while others listed it as Alfred.

Accidents occurred frequently during the first few decades of the Erie's existence, and the Alfred/Baker's Bridge area had more than its share. Due to mechanical failure, human error, and just plain carelessness, accidents of little consequence to those of some magnitude occurred. Some of these had a note of humour, but more often ended in tragedy.

The Alfred Sun gives us some interesting accounts of a few of these accidents, as well as some humorous items of interest about the depot, its agents and section gangs. The following are some of such items which appeared in the Sun over a five year period from January, 1884 through November, 1889. Spelling and grammar appear just as they were in the Sun.

January 3, 1884

Our station agent, M.A. Green, is suffering from his old complaint brought on by overwork and unless he is careful he will have to lay off and recruit up.

January 31, 1884

Jerry had a collision, and was caught on the cow catcher and landed in a snowbank. No bones broken.

February 21, 1884

On the 13th a brakeman fell from the top of a car and broke his arm badly. He was

taken to Hornellsville for surgical attendance. The next day another brakeman had his finger badly lacerated while coupling cars. Dr. Green attended him.

March 13, 1884

Among other employees on the railroad, D. F. Whitford, the helper at the Depot, got his discharge last week, and had gone to work for G. H. Sherman in his machine shop. The operators do not take very kindly to handling the freight and baggage.

May 15, 1884

There were \$180 in Railroad checks left on Jerry's show case a few days ago. Do they belong to Jerry or the other man?

August 14, 1884

Warren Roby, a railroad man, jumped from a moving train to the platform yesterday, missed his footing and fell between the cars and platform, but escaped with some severe bruises.

September 18, 1884

Train 31, going west, ran onto some calves, last Saturday, killing one and injuring another, throwing the trucks of the engine off the rails.

A train running east Saturday morning broke in two, and the rear cars running down, came together with such force as to completely wreck two cars, throwing them off the track and interfering with the passage of trains. The wrecking train and crew were soon on hand, and

had the battered cars loaded up and taken away in a few hours.

October 2, 1884

Train 36 running west and a wildcat running east, came in collision at Tip Top early Saturday morning, damaging both of the engines considerably and wrecking a number of cars loaded with flour and merchandise. A brakeman named Tallman, had his foot crushed between two cars, and not recovering from the shock, lived but a few hours, He was the only man injured of any accord on the trains. The engineer on Train 35 had orders to pass the other train at Tip Top but through mistake or carelessness he failed to do so. The wrecker and crew were soon there, and with the assistance of men from two sections, got the track cleared in a few hours, and the wreck cleared away Monday.

November 24, 1884

The train being held here until the track was cleared of the wreck Saturday gave the hotel a good run of custom.

February 12, 1885

A freight train running east, last Sunday, had two cars off the track, caused by a broken wheel. The wrecking train and crew soon cleared the track, so that the regular trains were delayed but a few hours.

February 26, 1885

There is considerable freight business being done at the station in cheese, grain, coal, lumber and shingles.

July 9, 1885

Green Champlin had a horse get onto the railroad and undertake to cross No. 4 bridge ahead of a train. He missed his footing and was struck by the engine, which shoved the rest of the way across, when the train came to a stop. They got the horse down the embankment into the road, but he was so badly hurt he lived but a few minutes.

August 27, 1885

A tree fell on the telegraph wires a short distance above No. 4 bridge Sunday which mixed up telegraphing considerably until the men came on and repaired the wires.

October 13, 1887

F. J. Hickey of Elmira, one of the railroad officials, was at the station Friday looking over agent Green's books. He found them ballanced to half a cent. A pretty good showing.

December 15, 1887

Changes in the track hands and sections of the western division of the Erie. The new section here extends from one mile west of the depot to the Almond depot while the track hands are cut down to four in number.

March 15, 1888

The coaches that were wrecked at Scio Sunday morning were taken east Monday just at night, they looked badly demoralized. The latest news, one killed, five fatally injured, and fifteen injured more or less severely.

February 28, 1889

The water tank caught fire, last Saturday and was damaged somewhat before the fire was extinguished.

March 7, 1889

FREIGHT TRAIN OFF THE TRACK AT ALFRED
Eighteen cars burned, considerable damage done, but no loss of life.

Sunday morning before daylight a freight train was wrecked at Alfred near bridge No. 2 burning eighteen cars, those of which were oil tanks, and scattering flour, iron, coal and grain in all directions. It seems the train had become divided, probably just before reaching the down-grade, so that the rear train lagging considerably behind the front train, did not have time to stop still before reaching the down grade, where not being checked by the brakes, it increased in speed and momentum, continually gaining upon the front train until it crashed into it. It was a very dark and foggy night so that the disconnection was not noticed by the trainmen. The burning oil flowed in streams down the embankment and into the creek where it burned all day, causing considerable excitement. A great many people visited the scene of the wreck during the day. W. H. Keller running a free carriage back and forth. We did not learn the estimated damage.

May 16, 1889

One of the track hands jumped off train 1 last Saturday between here and Tip Top; consequences, a bruised head and face.

March 22, 1888

A. C. Rogers left the employ of the railroad company last Thursday by order leaving agent Green to do all the work and carry and hang the mail and I presume he will work on the track besides.

March 29, 1888

The work was accumulating so much at the depot and his arm getting worse all the time so M. A. Green asked leave of absence which was granted. Mr. Castigan from Friendship now has charge of the depot.

April 19, 1888

The section gang has been enlarged and more men are wanted to clear out rock cut about a mile below the depot.

May 10, 1888

Another operator was sent to relieve C. E. Chase at the depot last week.

June 7, 1888

It is reported that M. A. Green has a helper at the depot in the person of T. B. Titsworth from the Centre.

A stranger in attempting to get on a moving train near the depot last Tuesday got his foot badly crushed. He was taken to the depot and from there to the hotel where Dr. Saunders fixed his foot up for him. He was a member of the Cigar Makers Union . . .

November 8, 1888

There were a number of carloads with potatoes at the station last week at 30 cents per bushel.

June 6, 1889

No trains Saturday and only construction trains Sunday, and no mail. There was a good many to see the work done by the flood Saturday.

M. A. Green went to the depot Saturday morning by way of Alfred Centre and then took the overland route - a trip of four miles to get one quarter of a mile. But he likes a morning walk the first of June.

August 15, 1889

Abe Penny, one of the section hands, by some blunder got under the truck Friday, and got both legs bruised. He was back at work Monday.

August 29, 1889

The car containing the new iron bridge switched at the station Friday and the commissioner had it unloaded and hauled to the place Sunday, and is now waiting for the engineer to come and put it in place.

September 12, 1889

Wm. Marvel is a railroad man; he is foreman of the fence gang.

November 28, 1889

A brakeman by the name of Manahan got his foot crushed by the cars near the station last Thursday morning. He was taken to Hornellsville for surgical treatment.

Mr. Green, the station agent, did have his problems. Not only his "old complaint", but the constant changing of his help. And Jerry? Probably a good friend of the Sun correspondent. He was definitely involved in some manner from time to time.

As for the train wrecks, railroads had just begun using safety devices such as air brakes around this time. Apparently, they had not been perfected well enough to avoid such mishaps as are mentioned above. These events happened when a train would separate just before Tip Top, the beginning of the down grade. The rear section had enough momentum to ride over the top and start down the other side toward Alfred. Since the front section had moved steadily on, held at an even speed by the engine, it was not difficult for the runaway to gain speed and eventually crash into it several miles down grade. This was often in the area between No. 4 bridge (near the Alfred Atlas) and the No. 2 bridge (over the Satterly Hill Road).

One more interesting account of a freak accident appeared in the Alfred Sun on June 29, 1898.

Last Friday afternoon as the engine of train 96 was taking a car of bricks away from the brick works. The engineer lost control of it and the engine and car went back into the end of the building smashing a pile of tile and wrecking the building quite badly. The damage was \$400.00.

It is surprising this did not happen more often since the siding which went down to the brick works dropped more than 12 feet in a distance of about 250 to 300 feet. Any engineer would need excellent control to pull a loaded car up such a grade without mishap.

The Erie Railroad was a very important factor in the economic growth local area. Many new businesses began nearby, since they were able to ship and receive goods via the Erie. These businesses included the W.C. Burdick and Co. warehouse which shipped cheese, grains and other dairy products produced locally while selling feed, coal and other items needed by area farmers. This building later was owned by the Dairymens League Corp.

The Gridley Building, later to become part of the C.D. Reynolds Co., was used in the late 1800's as a warehouse for shipping hay, and a manufactory for the Young American Corn and Potatoe Planter.

The Rock Cut Clay Company (Alfred Clay Co.) which was built in 1892, shipped tiles and bricks made from local shale.

The F.S. Champlin and Sons feed store was built in 1913. Called the Alfred Farmers Co-operative, it later was purchased by the G. L. F. Corporation.

The Hornell Sand and Gravel and the Alfred Atlas Gravel and Sand also benefited from the Erie, since for many years both shipped sand and gravel by railroad.

A stage line also ran for many years between Alfred and Alfred Station to accomodate travelers arriving and leaving by the Erie.

The Depot

Russell Allen

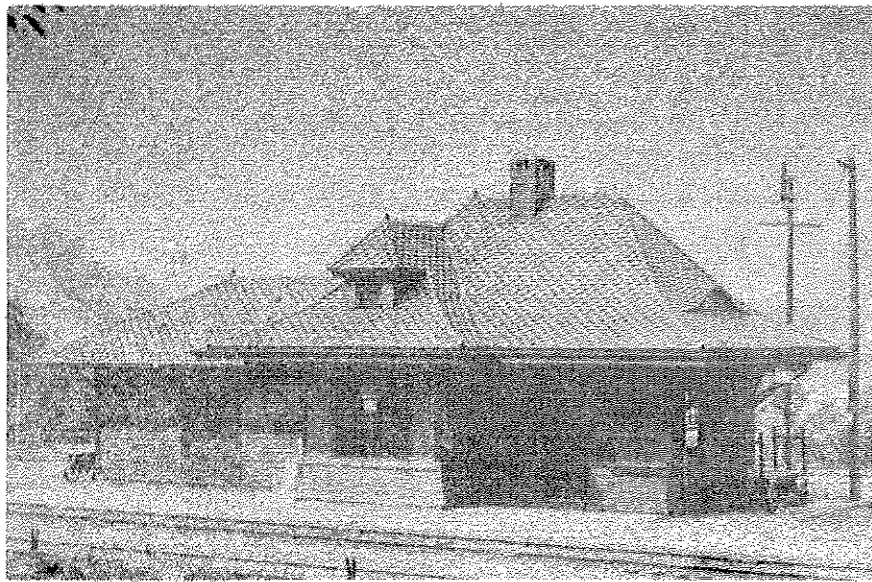
The original depot, which was built at the time of the Erie's construction, burned on April 24, 1895. The following article which appeared in the Alfred Sun on April 25, 1895, tells the story:

FIRE AT ALFRED - THE DEPOT BURNED! The Town Threatened! Barns Burn

Just as were going to press Wed. afternoon an alarm of fire was given which proved to be the depot at Alfred Station. The fire company responded immediately and in less time than it takes to write this, the hook and ladder truck, the engine and the hose cart were on the way to the scene of disaster. By the time, however, they arrived the depot was in ashes and the coal sheds of Wm. C. Burdick in flame. The warehouse had been saved by use of salt and water.

The fire was caused by sparks of a passing freight running under the platform to the depot proper and before the agent was aware of it, the building was briskly burning. Scarcely anything was saved, so dense was the smoke inside the building. Besides the depot and coal sheds, a barn and 2 shops belonging to Abial Thomas were also consumed.

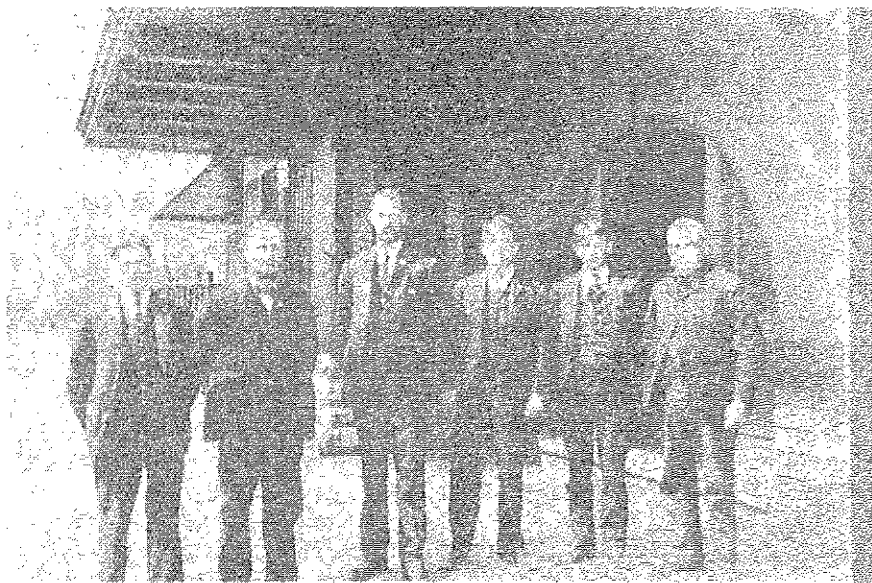
The fire company worked assiduously and no doubt saved much valuable property. The loss cannot at this writing be estimated.



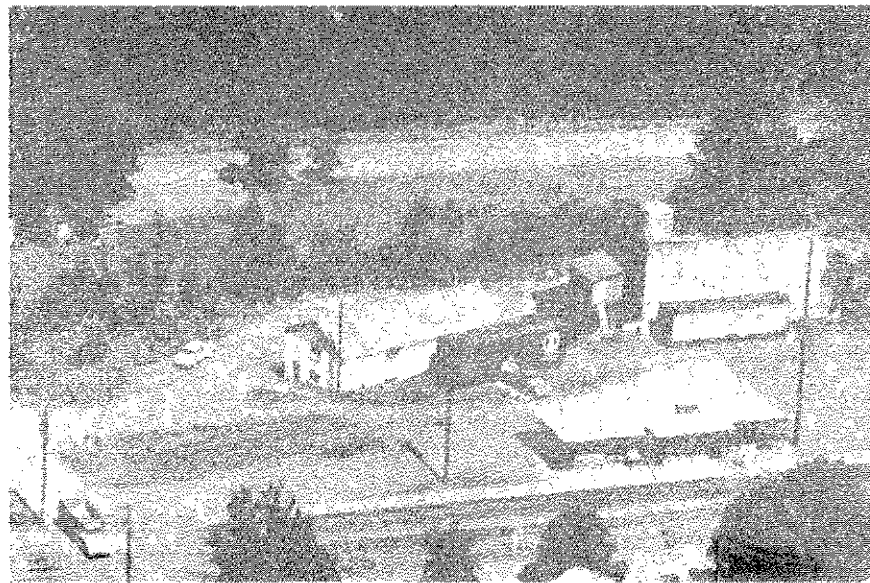
*Alfred Depot, built 1896: southeast facade.
Photo taken around 1939*



*Alfred Depot, built 1896: southeast facade.
Photo taken in 1939*



*At the Alfred Depot, built 1896.
Left to right: Unidentified, Claude Vincent, Fred Pettibone, Unidentified,
Jesse Shaw, Unidentified (M.A. Green?)
Photo taken around 1900*



*Alfred Depot area: aerial view looking northwest.
Photo taken around 1955.*

The spectacular fire could be seen for a good distance and those living on the hills nearby thought the whole village was burning.

Various other items which appeared in the Alfred Sun give a good accounting of the progress of the construction and completion of a new depot, the one which stands today.

May 23, 1895

A new freight house on the site of the old depot has been erected.

August 6, 1896

Work has commenced on the new depot here Tuesday morning. Everyone is glad that we are to have something besides an old car for a waiting room.

It can only be assumed that this "old car" was an old passenger car which had been placed on a switch near the temporary freight house.

Another article appeared on August 6, 1896 which gives the following description of the new building:

The building will be 58' long by 26'10" wide. Around this there will be a 5 foot platform. It will be a wooden structure, the sides being covered artistically with cut shingles and clap boards. It is to have 5 terra cotta finials manufactured by Charles T. Harris, Lessee, of the Celadon Terra Cotta works.

There will be a general waiting room 16 X 17 feet in one end of the building. A ladies waiting room 12 X 12 feet and a ticket office the same size in the center. In the opposite end is the freight room 16 X 25 feet in size. The waiting rooms and ticket

office will be raised from the ground while the freight room is level with the tracks. A large arched door 13 feet in diameter opens from the general waiting room upon the platform next to the tracks. We hope to give a cut of the building in the future. (It is expected to be finished before winter)

The above description is quite informative, but has some misinformation in it, as anyone familiar with the depot will easily see. The waiting rooms and ticket office are not raised but at ground level while the freight room is raised to make the transfer of freight to and from car and depot much easier.

November 12, 1896

The New Depot is Ready for Occupancy

The depot presents a very neat appearance since the new walks were completed and the grading commenced, now if the Erie would put in a nice lawn and flower beds, north of the station, no town in western New York could beat it for beauty.

August 29, 1900

The Erie has finished painting the depot and now we can boast of the nicest station on the Allegany Division.

The flower beds never did appear, but it is quite obvious the people of Alfred Station were very proud of their new depot. They had good reason to be.

Shipping on the Erie

Evelyn Thomas

With the arrival of the railroad in 1851, the handling of shipments in and out of this area became heavy. However, prior to the publication of The Alfred SUN which was established in 1883, people were not aware of the produce, stock and locally manufactured items that were shipped from the Erie station.

The SUN had a news correspondent who wrote Alfred Station items and usually there was a full column.

In the March 27, 1884 issue was this item:

4 tons of freight at the depot for Barber to haul to the Centre today.

February 26, 1885

Considerable freight business of coal, grain, cheese and lumber.

From May, 1888 through November, 1890, these newspaper items give us some idea of the flow of freight. Some items brief and to the point!

May 24, 1888

Stillman and Shannon got a carload of coal last Friday for their shop.

May 31, 1888

W. C. Burdick and Company received another carload of corn.

August 2, 1888 (This issue had more than one item)

W. C. Burdick receiving coal by carloads.

O. W. Roby unloaded car of corn.

W. C. Burdick and Company had one carload of corn, one of oats and two or three of coal to unload besides loading a car with cheese.

August 9, 1888

Two carloads of cattle shipped from the station.

W. C. Burdick had a carload of lumber unloaded and hauled to Alfred Centre.

October 23, 1890

Two carloads of apples were shipped from here last week. Mr. Miller shipped a carload of selected apples in barrels this week the others were shipped in bulk.

November 27, 1890

Cheese by carloads are arriving and being stored in W.C. Burdick and Company warehouse.

Mr. Miller shipped a carload of potatoes and apples last week.

As we read on into 1893 from time to time, we find interesting items such as these:

May 25, 1893

W. C. Burdick was unloading a carload of wood ashes from Canada last Thursday.

August 10, 1893

Henry Jones unloaded a new traction engine Monday got up steam and started off toward the Centre.

November 16, 1893

C. W. Lewis received by express a pair of Chester White pigs for breeders on his farm.

The next items will cover the period from late 1893 to the beginning of the 20th Century.

December, 1896

Halsey and Beach shipped a carload of sheep Monday.

January 20, 1897

Mel Gridley loading a car with hay.

February 10, 1897

Mark Sylvester of Arkport is shipping apples from here at 25¢ per 100 pounds to the New York and New Jersey Produce Company of New York.

December 29, 1897

Potatoes being shipped for 60¢ a bushel.

April 13, 1898

Nearly \$900 was charged on freight shipped from this station during March (a dull month, a good showing)

During March there were shipped from here by express 125 crates of eggs or 3750 dozen. Allowing an average of 10¢ per dozen it makes \$375 which is estimated at not more than half the egg production of the town.

July 20, 1898

Shipped from the station 3 carloads of cheese.

August 3, 1898

The brick works shipped 22 carloads of brick during the month of July.

August 24, 1898

A car of brick is being loaded today for Galeton, Pennsylvania.

September 14, 1898

Cinders for the cinder path were unloaded today.

NOTE: There was a cinder path and permits for its use were issued at 75¢.

November 2, 1898

Keller and Willard last week loaded 2500 bushel of buckwheat. They are paying 80¢ per 100 pounds.

November 16, 1898

Potatoes and apples are being loaded in cars at a lively rate this week.

December 14, 1898

Busy week at the station. W.H. Keller was loading buckwheat, T.M. Davis apples, Clair of Andover potatoes and Ed Shaw hay.

January 4, 1889

Keller and Willard were paying 35½ per bushel for potatoes last week.

Here is some good news for the potato grower. The price of potatoes seem to go up and down like a Yo-Yo.

April 5, 1899

Potatoes 60¢ a bushel this week.
T. M. Davis shipped 900 bushel.

The following item made the Sun, even though it had nothing to do with produce from this area. It is interesting.

April 19, 1899

Last week a train of 25 cars loaded with bananas passed over the Erie for Chicago. (A lot of bananas)

April 12, 1899

The brick works are doing a rushing business these days shipping a carload nearly every day. They need more ground for storage purposes but cannot get it.

A year later in the 20th Century during the month of April, the price of potatoes plummeted again.

April 18, 1900

Keller and Willard carrying potatoes last week. Paid 38¢. Farmers who refused 40¢ holding for 50¢ were forced to take present price.

April 25, 1900

W. H. Keller shipped spring broilers to New York City last week.

On May 2, 1900 the correspondent put in this item that apparently escaped his attention previously:

Last summer Erie unloaded a number of cars of cut stone being used to rebuild culverts between here and Tip Top.

July 18, 1900

J. L. Beach shipped a carload of calves, sheep and hogs again Monday. M.J. Gridley brought a nice 300 lb. hog but the weather was so warm and sultry that it died soon after they got it in the car. (Imagine the disappointment felt by Mr. Gridley)

August 8, 1900

L. Colegrove shipped a nice Jersey cow by express Monday to his son in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

August 8, 1900

A recent Chicago dispatch says "The Erie carried nearly twice as much grain last week as any other eastern line and is rapidly making up for its losses since the Joint Traffic Association was declared illegal." As was predicted a few weeks ago the Erie is making a fight for more of the western business and we are glad to see that it is able to be successful.

August 29, 1900

J. L. Beach loaded a car of calves, sheep and cattle Monday.

As I read the Alfred SUN through the next year, I found J. L. Beach, Keller and Willard were mentioned often as shipping livestock and potatoes respectively. We leave them in our minds as regularly using the facilities of the railroad and mention other people who made use of the cars on the siding. One item in regard to Keller and Willard said they were doing a rushing business and had averaged a car a day containing 550 bushel of potatoes.

September 12, 1900

A. P. Saunders, Byron Clair and Ed Shaw are shipping hay this week. They pay from \$11 to \$12 per ton.

September 26, 1900

A large quantity of hay was shipped last week by the various buyers. We noticed 7 loads at the station to be unloaded at one time.

October 10, 1900

Very near 500 tons of hay were shipped from the station in the past 2 weeks.

October 24, 1900 this item about freight business in general

The Erie is doing an enormous freight business. Supt. Dowe said that last Friday, more cars passed over the Allegany Division than any day since the road was built.

This item after election in November, 1900, showed business was booming on all hands:

November 14, 1900

The Brick Works are running overtime. The track men are working Sundays and the teams with hay, potatoes or farm produce at 8 o'clock at night waiting for a chance to get to their car is the condition after election.

Now, who could resist taking time to read an item like that? If items were written up like these, enough copies couldn't be printed to meet the demand.

November 21, 1900

Our produce buyers were very busy last week shipping potatoes and hay which came to market quite freely.

W. H. Langworthy having raised a nice crop of apples this season is now shipping them to the eastern markets.

This item tells us that getting produce to the railroad station wasn't always easy. Maybe he got there alright, but it was getting home that bothered him.

November 28, 1900

Simon Reisman of Railroad Valley went to the Station Wednesday evening with a load of potatoes and on returning home the night being very dark, he ran off the bank near #4 bridge tipping over and mixing things up generally.

December 5, 1900

Sunday morning there were 9 cars containing nearly 2000 boxes of cheese in the yard here for W.C. Burdick and Company.

In this issue, mention is made of Keller, Willard and Perry buying potatoes at 40¢ per bushel and the fact they had shipped 18 cars. Apparently, another partner had been acquired.

Also, this item:

The monthly statement of freight forwarded from this place for the month of November shows an increase of \$1200 over November last year.

January 30, 1901

W. W. Langworthy shipped a carload of hay to eastern markets last week.

Ed Shaw is doing a rushing business buying hay. He is loading this week at Gould and Newfield, Pennsylvania also at Mapes and Alfred Station. He loaded 2 cars with hay and 1 with straw at the Station Sunday.

Through March of 1901, J. L. Beach and Keller, Willard and Company were the most active shippers with Beach shipping 100 veal calves twice, and Keller, Willard and Company paying 33¢ for potatoes "which makes the farmers look rather blue".

April 3, 1901

With a snow fall of 12 inches the Alfred Clay Company shipped a carload of brick to Wellsville the first of the week.

An item in the April 17 issue under items from Hartsville Hill, informs us that "A.A. Burdick will commence drawing his pressed hay to the car at Alfred Station Monday".

April 17, 1901

Ira B. Crandall was unloading a car of shingles at the Station Sunday. The car contained 170,000.

Stillman and Shaanon, our old established carriage manufacturers have shipped 2 new stove sales wagons to Drake Hardware Company of Friendship and are making 2 more for the firm. This is the second order for special wagons that Stillman and Shaanon have filled for the Friendship firm which speaks well for Stillman and Shaanon and is a guarantee that they make goods that stand up against competition.

An item of May 8, 1901 is a tear jerker:

J. L. Beach will load calves again Monday. Will pay 4¢ per pound for good veals weighing 125# and up. Will not taking anything lighter at any price.

May 15, 1901

The Alfred Clay Company has shipped 500,000 bricks this week to parties at Westons, Dalton and Hornellsville.

2 carloads of apple tree lumber were shipped to Philadelphia from the saw mill here last week. During the hurry of the work the mill was run nights. The job was finished Thursday.

June 19, 1901

The load sidings at the station are full of cars being either loaded or emptied and more room is very much needed for this work.

In that item, I like the choice of words such as "emptied versus unloaded"!

During the past 10 years there has been quite a remarkable increase in freight

and passenger traffic at this station. The total amount of revenue and tonnage in 1900 was more than double that of 7 years previous and each month of the present year shows a decided increase when compared with the corresponding month of last year.

June 26, 1901 - This item indicates another active business.

Rogers and Hemphill shipped 2 loads of machinery last week. Mr. Rogers says they have orders enough for their boring and turning mills to keep their full force of men busy for a year.

W. C. Burdick and Company shipped over 60 consignments of cheese Sunday requiring over 600 boxes to fill the orders.

January 28, 1903

J. F. Perry has quit loading potatoes for the present and gone to cutting wood. Olin Houghtaling is helping him.

It appears that Mr. Perry is all that is left of Keller, Willard and Perry Company.

At this point, I hit a period during which little or no mention was made of handling of freight at the depot. The last item I found was:

April 8, 1903

George Cook is shipping sand to Andover for the new silk mill building there.

We have covered parts of 20 years and learned that the depot was a place of great activity. One can sense the hustle and bustle of the place with teams of horses waiting to have their load, whatever it might be, put aboard the cars. I remember going with my Mother to ship eggs by the crate, but where they went, I have no idea.

Apparently, about 1903 there was a change of correspondent or change of interest, for at this point, I failed to find items concerning my subject; the part the Erie played in carrying produce, stock and machinery to the buyer, whether he be east or west, north or south of Alfred.

The Brick Works

Thelma Palmiter

Today it is hard to visualize the once progressive little Alfred Clay Company or as we know it, the "Brick Works".

Built close to the Erie Railroad, not far from the depot, this business was started in 1892 and at one time provided employment for 20 people. The main production was that of brick - the dry pressed brick of which many thousands were produced. In 1897, a roofing tile was added to the production - a shingle tile made by the dry press process. Both brick and tile were a plain type used mainly for business buildings. The local parsonage, the Madge VanHorn house and the Richard Pierce home are examples of local buildings made of bricks from the Brick Works. Shale was obtained from a spur on the hill located on the opposite side of the valley, next to the creek.

Surely, this business could not have existed without the Erie Railroad for transportation of its products. A switch was built leading to the shipment area so that bricks could be easily loaded onto cars. In the summer of 1898 and in the spring of 1899, nearly a carload of brick per day was being shipped out.

One can't help but wonder what it would be like today at "Baker's Bridge" if the "Brick Works" and the Erie were still in business.

Reminiscences

Lillian Cornelius

My fondest memories of childhood are days - hours and years spent growing up with the Erie Railroad. My father, Jesse C. Shaw, an Alfred native, started his railroad days at Tip Top and Alfred. He also worked in the tower in Hornell, where he contracted TB. He then spent a year in Arizona, came home and worked from then on as helper, telegrapher and Agent, until his retirement after 51 years with the Railroad.

He (my father) was one of the best telegrapher operators on the Allegheny Division. His fingers flew and he seldom missed a word. He also handled for many years all the Western Union from the Alfred Depot. This amounted to quite some telegrams, especially from Alfred University and others in Alfred and surrounding communities. The one thing he wanted one of his three children to learn was the Morse Code; we didn't. My younger brother, Lavern, also worked for the Erie. The men I have the best recollection of working here with Dad are Earl Howe of Wellsville, N.Y., Lavern Stillman (lived where Duane Dennison now lives) and Claude Vincent. Claude Vincent, my father's uncle, lived down town (where the Greenes now live) and Dad lived with them until marrying. We lived in several places like Belvidere, Markhams, Salamanca and Dayton, New York before landing back in Alfred permanently. Working rights counted in those days and thus the reason for moving from time to time. We then lived and worked here, Dad from the 1920's until his retirement in 1954.

Alfred Railroad Station did a flourishing business. Shipments of about anything you care to name. Many the case of eggs and chickens I have billed out. Boring Machines from Rogers Machine Works; cheese, milk, cattle, potatoes, feed, sand and gravel are just a few of the many items I remember passing thru this station. Leonard Claire had a thriving potato and Sand and Gravel business. Then came Trucks! Oh yes, the mail was also handled via rail in those days. Carried from the depot in Alfred Station via horses and then trucks to Alfred. The first mail carrier I really remember was Emmett Witter. Remember the Old Mail Catcher that would hold the mail bag until the train came along and snatched it. Not many misses made.

Passenger service was about six trains stopping here daily. Many students went to and from Alfred University via rail, home on Friday nights and back on Sundays. Usually, they left by Train 1 or 8, came back by Train 26 or 6. Some trains stopped on signal only. Many a time we three children would start for our Grandmother's house with a tag on us reading "these three children are going to Dayton, New York - look after them". We even had to change trains in Salamanca, always made it and loved every minute of it.

I remember one night a very nice lady staying in the wrong coach in Hornell, New York. She wanted to go to Buffalo, N.Y., but she was on the Allegany Division. She got off at Alfred, told Dad her plight; Dad hitched up the old car, (a Buick), and we started for Buffalo, not too much time to spare as she had to make a connection in Buffalo - we made it in fine shape. He received a pair of socks from the lady in due time. This and many more are memories of the Railroad Days at Alfred - Beautiful Memories.

Lillian Shaw Cornelius

Early Memories of the Erie

Helen Conderman

I was born at the turn of the century in the horse and buggy era, when the mode of travel was limited. But the Erie Railroad opened a broader vista of scenery and places of interest.

In those days, there were many excursions to Buffalo, Elmira and New York City. My folks would get the horse driven Alfred Stage to the "Baker's Bridge" depot and take the early morning train to Hornell, then change to the Buffalo division and go to Niagara Falls.

There were many excursion trips to Elmira to visit Aunt Jennie and Uncle Charlie Palmiter. Usually, we kids stayed home with Grandpa and Grandma Bardeen. Alas, to be left behind!

My first ride on the Erie was when I was about 4 months old. Father and Mother went on an excursion to Buffalo to the Pan American Exposition in 1901. They engaged a room in a private home for the weekend, then to the exposition, my Dad carrying me all the while. It amazes me now to think of all the paraphernalia they had to take for the three of us, especially me (they didn't have "Pampers" then!) I have a glass pitcher that is etched with a picture of President McKinley, "Pan American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y., 1901" which has somehow survived the 78 years. That also added to the "stuff" to be carried home. This was just after President McKinley was killed by an assassin while he was visiting the Exposition.

In the early 1900's, my father bought, repaired and sold barrels to glass and brick works. He made a wide rack for the wagon that held a lot of barrels. He would spend 2 days in Hornell, going from store to store buying them, then take them home and repair them. Everything was shipped in barrels in those years. He got orders from glass and brick works, and would order a car from the Railroad agent, fill it and ship it to the T. G. Hawkes Co. in Corning, the forerunner of the Corning Glass Co., or a brick company in Urbana, Ohio, or to a brick company in Ridgway, Pa.

Sometimes a barrel would yield something of interest. There was one from Woolworth's that had several amber and deep blue dishes that sold for 10¢ a piece. Now these dishes are called "Carnival" glass and are much sought after.

In the early 1900's, the hotel in Baker's Bridge did a thriving business. There was a livery stable in the rear of the hotel. "Drummers" came by Railroad and stopped at the hotel for one or more nights, hired a horse and rig and went around the country selling their wares.

For a time, my aunt and uncle, Harrison and Tracy Keller, and Jo and Nell Willard ran the hotel. That was when Clyde was a young boy. My mother stayed with them and went to Alfred Academy.

When I met my husband-to-be, he was working for the Erie Accounting Bureau in Hornell. One weekend he and a fellow worker used their passes to go to New York to the World Series. They went to breakfast in one of the chain of Childs Restaurants. The third day they went into a restaurant for dinner, not knowing it

was the same one. Paul was amazed when the waitress put the coffee on the left side. He looked at her and said, "How did you know I was left handed?" She replied, "You were in here two days ago, and I saw you change the coffee to your left". What a memory for details!

There's a feeling of nostalgia when I realize that our grandchildren will never have the joys of taking trips on the Erie, as we did.

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