

CHICAGOPEX 2022 Set for November 18-20

The Chicago Philatelic Society (CPS) will present its annual philatelic exhibition, CHICAGOPEX, November 18, 19 and 20, 2022, at the Westin Chicago Northwest, 400 Park Boulevard, Itasca, Ill.

For the second time, this year's show is hosting AmeriStamp Expo in partnership with the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors. This event includes the Single Frame Champion of Champions competition, which highlights the top single frame exhibits from World Series of Philately shows around the United States held during the prior year. AmeriStamp Expo also features the annual AAPE Single Frame Team competition.

Sponsored by AAPE and Women Exhibitors, philatelic exhibiting expert Liz Hisey is presenting a free two-day activity entitled "You Be the Judge," where participants learn about philatelic judging. On Friday, the hour-long session will go over judging fundamentals, including treatment and importance as well as the scoresheet. Participants will have an opportunity to judge actual exhibits, and on Saturday, there will be a two-hour session where they get to compare their findings with those of the show's jury. The activity is open to exhibitors and non-exhibitors alike, and there is a limit of 10 participants. Those interested should email Liz at lizhisey@gmail.com.

CPS expects more than 280 frames of philatelic material to be on display at this World Series of Philately event—the largest in the Midwest. 2022 marks the 56th anniversary of the show's philatelic literature competition, with books and other materials on display. The competition also accepts digital entries.

In addition, three specialty societies plan to convene at CHICAGOPEX: Mexico-Elmhurst Philatelic Society International, Rossica Society for Russian Philately and the Bermuda Collectors Society.

The show bourse is expected to feature at least 70 dealers from the United States and Europe, offering a vast array of material to interest everyone from the beginning collector to the advanced collector and exhibitor. The U.S. Postal Service and the U.N. Postal Administration will also attend.

The show includes a youth / beginners' booth, as well as club meetings for the Chicago Philatelic Society, Germany Philatelic Society Chapter #5, the Illinois Postal History Society and the convening societies. All meetings and talks during the show are free and open to the public. The schedule will

be posted to the website ahead of the show.

Saturday night will feature a catered awards banquet. Tickets must be purchased in advance; dress is business casual. Please see the CHICAGOPEX website for details.

Admission and parking are free. Show hours are: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees are asked to contact the hotel (phone: 630-773-4000) to make reservations and to mention CHICAGOPEX for the special room rate.

About the Chicago Philatelic Society (CPS)

The Chicago Philatelic Society was organized October 8, 1886 as a continuation of the Chicago Stamp Collectors Union, which was organized in December 1884. CPS is chapter No. 1 of the American Philatelic Society and one of two organizations with the longest uninterrupted service to philately in the United States.

For more information, contact Melanie Rogers, Publicity Chair, CPS, chicagopex@gmail.com, 312-593-7909, or go to www.chicagopex.org.

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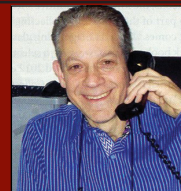
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60 Years Ago in Stamps

Tails of the Mail Trails: Before the Rails in Chicago

by W. Lee Fergus (*From Mekeel's Weekly, October 9, 1948*)

The end of 1848, the year that Chicago's first railroad was built, the stage coach lines were well organized and were carrying a heavy traffic everywhere in the middle-west. Emigrants from the eastern states and the northern European nations were pouring into the west from lake steamers and eastern stages, and by immigrant trains. Excited adventurers were leaving for the California gold fields. Even commercial and pleasure travel was at such a peak that reservations had to be made in advance for accommodations on the stages.

The development of the stage lines and the roads to carry them had been by a herculean effort. Fifteen years before, Chicago had been bound in by mud—even wallowed in it! The site of the city was low and unhealthy, especially until its grade line was raised. The surrounding land was low, wet prairie with impassable sloughs and ravines. Beyond the wet lands, near the lake, lay the heavily wooded sections, impeding all traffic, until the open prairies were reached beyond the Fox River valley.

Far to the west lay the Mississippi River and a fabulous country rich in lead ores. The river town of Galena, at the northwest corner of the state of Illinois, had long been established, and although in the center of this rich mining district, it could not be reached by any direct roads from Chicago. The intervening land had only recently been surrendered by the Pottawatomini.

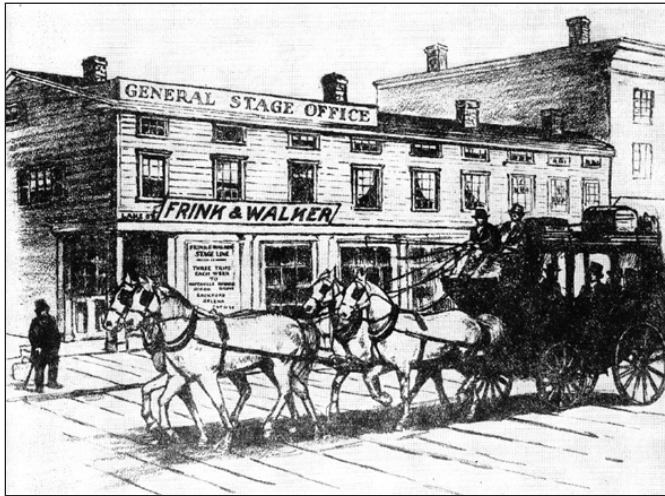
The first roads were two county roads established in 1831, one of which was to run to the house of James Walker on the DuPage River (one of the first county commissioners) and the other (Archer Ave.) "to the house of the widow Brown on Hickory creek".

Father Jesse Walker, a Methodist missionary among the Indians and a circuit rider, described the roads of Illinois as "narrow, winding horse-paths, sometimes scarcely perceptible, and frequently for miles no path at all, amid tangled brushwood, rocky glens, mountainous precipices; through swamps and low ground, overflowed and saturated for miles together with water. The streams in spring, some of them large and rapid, swollen to overflowing, we had to swim our horses, carrying our saddle-bags on our shoulders. To be drenched at the end of the day's ride was nothing."

Such also was the plight of the pioneer postman who also had a gospel, though unwritten then—"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

Father Walker lent his hand in 1845 to help the travel situation. He bought land on both sides of the Aux Plaines and constructed a ferry by building a platform across two Indian canoes. Later he built a 200-foot bridge and when the road from Chicago to Galena was finally built, it passed through his lands.

The first road to Galena came up from Peoria to the south. Peoria



The Transportation Terminal of the 1840s. The first stage-coach line, running west from Chicago, was inaugurated in 1837. At the height of the stage business Chicago was the terminus for more than 2,000 miles of stage lines.

was reached overland from Terre Haute by the old Ft. Clark and Wabash Trail and from Springfield by a newly opened post road. Oliver Kellogg broke the first road north to Galena in 1825 crossing the Rock River at a place called Ogee's Ferry, near the present city of Dixon, named for Father John Dixon the pioneer of those parts. Father Dixon carried the mail and moved the ferry to the site of the present city of Dixon.

Father Dixon used the Kellogg Trail to Galena which Kellogg had opened by driving three ox-drawn wagons and a drove of cattle to blaze the 160 mile trail from Peoria to Galena. This was an attempt to shorten the long boat haul from Galena by way of Grafton and thence to Peoria by way of the Illinois River. The road was due north from Peoria to Dixon and then northwesterly to Galena. At first

Father Dixon made the trip once a week on horseback. In the winter he used what was called a "jumper". He received 8¢ a mile for his services. When the road was improved he used the stage coach.

While Father Dixon carried the mail from Springfield to Galena in 1828 the Rock River was unbridged, the roads not even corduroyed; the swamps were undrained, the route almost impassable. Houses were few and far between. In the winter of 1830-31 (the winter of the deep snow) the snow averaged three-feet deep from New Year's Day to the 15th of March. No track was open from one settlement to another, and it was with great difficulty that roads were kept open in the densely settled districts. Fifteen to twenty miles separated homes along the way. On one of the longer routes during this memorable winter, Father Dixon and some of the stage passengers were so benumbed with cold, and so nearly frozen, as to be unable to get out of the conveyance. After hot coffee at the friendly tavern they were all able to resume their journey.

Within two years the mail was made tri-weekly. By the close of the Blackhawk War a branch line was established from Dixon to Chicago to the northeast. When Chicago became more important this became the Chicago-Galena route, with many connecting mail lines. In establishing the Chicago-Galena road, the legislature specified it as making Meacham's 'Grove' in Cook County and the residence of John Phelps (one of the commissioners) on Rock River. The route of travel was very sketchily described, but it still swung far to the south and did not attempt to make a direct line from Chicago to Galena as the intervening territory was still very sparsely settled.

Over the more important routes the government established a weekly mail service and on the less important ones a bi-weekly mail service.

When Chicago was made a distributing point for the U.S. Mails destined for the middle west, its strategic position in transportation was discovered by the stage coaches long before the railroads arrived. In 1848 its stageroads ran out north, south and west to every populated point in the west.

When the Illinois-Michigan Canal was completed that year, there were daily stage lines to Iowa, via Joliet, Peru and Peoria. Service was

three times a week to Galena via Naperville, Aurora and Dixon or more directly by way of Elgin, Rockford and Freeport. Three times a week service was had to Milwaukee, with connecting coaches between Milwaukee and Madison, Madison and Galena, Galena and Peoria, Galena and Prairie-du-Chien, Galena and Peru via Freeport and Dixon.

The first of the stage mail contracts from Chicago was obtained by Dr. John Temple, an estimable gentleman from Virginia, who opened service from Chicago to Ottawa on a route via Naperville, Aurora and Dixon, on Jan. 1, 1834, with elegant thorobred post coaches brought from Detroit by lake boat.

The story goes that Oswego, on the Fox River southwest of Chicago, was older and more important than Aurora, and was on the Naperville Road which Gen. Scott's Army had made to Dixon in 1832. However, the founder of Aurora offered free lodging and feed for the horses if the stage contractor would go by way of Aurora instead of Oswego. The acceptance of this offer has made Aurora a great city while Oswego is still a very small town.

The second stage line from Chicago to Galena was established in 1838 by John Frink. This is the direct line by way of Elgin, Rockford, and Freeport which strikes the line of the old Kellogg Trail at Gratiot's Grove. This is the present day U.S. Route 20, a great motor road. It was used as a stage line for some fifteen years until the building of the first railroad west from Chicago, following practically the same course.

The mail stage routes varied somewhat from time to time. In 1847 the "St. Charles Road" was the stage road from Chicago to Galena and the eastern portion of it was also the stage road from Chicago for Dixon and Rock Island.

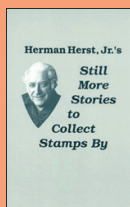
In 1837 Dr. Temple sold his lines to the Illinois Stage & Steamboat Co., which was opened by John Frink and Sam'l. Trowbridge, who completed the route through to St. Louis by the Illinois River. This line was succeeded by Frink, Walker & Co. Frink & Walker stages operated over these lines until forced off the road by the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad [G. & C.U.R.R.], the first railroad out of Chicago, which was started in operation one hundred years ago.

The first train that ran on October 25, 1848 will be commemorated by a cacheted envelope to be sponsored by the Chicago Philatelic Society on the one hundredth anniversary of the event next October 25th.

When the railroads began to fan out across northern Illinois from Chicago and make it the great rail transportation center of the country a hundred years ago, the stage lines were used for connections beyond the rails, for inland communities and interlacing back and forth between the rail lines. In March 1852 the G. & C.U.R.R. Time Table showed stage connections—"For Galena and points west, at Cherry Valley. For Beloit, Janesville and Madison, at Belvidere. For Ottawa, LaSalle, St. Louis, Dixon, Rock Island, etc., at Aurora."

Crude as these stage lines and meager rail connections were, yet they were a great advance over what obtained less than twenty years before, when, for instance Rock Island, Illinois had "only an occasional mail which was got by sending two soldiers on foot to Galena." J.W. Spencer, an early settler, recounted that, "once, having business in Galena and the officers of the garrison, being anxious to hear who had been elected president in November, it now being the 20th of December, it was arranged that I should carry the mail to Galena, and bring one in return, for which I was to receive five dollars...had to go on foot but could skate on the river—met a large party of Winnebagos who wanted bread—when camped made a fire with gunpowder in hat—reached Galena safely, exchanged the mails, transacted other business and at noon on Christmas Day started the return—stayed with the Davidson family on the site of Savannah and was charged 25¢ for lodging and breakfast—camped at Meredosia—the next day I reached the Fort at Rock Island, delivered the mail and the news that Gen. Jackson had been elected."

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