

## ST. MARTINS .....

St. Martins is located in the northwest corner of Franklin township, Milwaukee County. When you see the church spire on the crest of the hill, you think of St. Martins. Two Catholic churches within four blocks of each other testify to good faith and also to bad. Originally St. Martins was called Franklin Village, but the founders were Irish first. Father Kundig established Holy Assumption parish on April 13, 1847. A log church was built first in 1848-50. It was struck by lightning and burned down in 1866. In 1867, a cream city brick church was built.

Then the Germans came with a different culture, different skills and values. They wanted to worship God in their own language. They first tried to have a priest stay with Father Kundig that could speak German. That only worked for a short time and dissatisfaction occurred. In 1858-9, land was given to the German speaking people by the Irish so they could build their own church. Sacred Hearts Church was built, creating divisions that were narrowed only by the arrival of a few Dutch and English families. The cemeteries are located behind Sacred Hearts Church, where the Irish and Germans sleep separately.

In 1904, when service began to St. Martins Junction, it was hoped that St. Martins would become a bona-fide town, but that never happened. During the construction of the right-of-way in 1907-8, the tracks went right past Sacred Hearts Church. When permission was given, the church was electrified and they were given free electricity for a period of time.

Just south of St. Martins before Durham Hill, the T.M.E.R.&L. went through a marsh area. A 400 foot stretch of just completed grade sank while men were at work. This brought up hundreds of muskrats and a pond of oozing slime and mud. The work gang chased the muskrats and some of the men nearly drowned. Finally installation of timbers and fill provided enough stability for the laying of tracks. During the construction of the Burlington line nearly 500 men were employed on the electric line between St. Martins and Waterford. On July 2, 1909, the line was opened from St. Martins to Burlington.

During 1912-13, the T.M.E.R.&L. Co. was given permission to haul freight on its lines. At St. Martins, like most other communities, spur tracks were installed to handle freight service. Just south of Sacred Hearts Church, a spur track was laid. Local farmers would load gondola cars of sugar beets to be shipped to Menomonee Falls for processing into sugar.

A small stock pen for 30-40 cattle was built on the west side of the spur. It was used by Ed Griesmer, a local stock dealer. During the teens, the State of Wisconsin forced local farmers to test their herd for TB. Many farmers' livestock tested positive and had to be destroyed. Farmers purchased new livestock from farmers in Watertown and Columbus and were shipped in cattle cars, delivered to St. Martins. Young Walter Barbian would herd the livestock to their new home.

R.A. Mayer Company used freight service as a farm implement dealer for Allis Chalmers. All-Crop Harvester Combines from La Porte, Indiana came in on flat cars, where they were unloaded and assembled for delivery. Schmidt Bros. of Hales Corners used the freight service for feed delivery and Koelsch's farm shipped milk and received fertilizer.

Storage tanks for gasoline were placed south of the stock pen by the Farmers Oil and Supply Co. when they moved from Bluemound Rd. to St. Martins in 1936. The gasoline was transported in tank cars. When the railway was suspended, the company moved to College Ave. and North Cape Rd. and the firm is known as Midland Service Corp. Other freight

would also come to St. Martins. Carloads of lumber, gravel and other bulk shipments came in on the TM.

Baseball was a favorite pastime for local people. Land-O-Lakes teams would play softball at Sacred Hearts diamond south of the church. Teams from Muskego, East Troy, Hales Corners and other towns would travel by interurban car for a Sunday afternoon of baseball.

When Sacred Hearts parish held its annual church Bazaar, over 400 chicken dinners were served at the school hall and people would come out from Milwaukee on the interurban to wait in line for the home cooked feast.

People from the area rode the interurban going to and from school. High school students would travel to Mukwonago or even to Juneau High School in Milwaukee, as did Margaret Godsell in the late 1930's.

People traveling to and from Burlington would have to board the East Troy car to travel to Milwaukee. At the waiting station Katie Haig sold magazines, newspapers and hard candy. The station was often visited by local children to purchase horehound and peppermint candy in purple striped bags. On not so busy days, Katie Haig would deliver small parcels to local merchants or town people that arrived on the TM. Tickets were never sold at the station, but Conductor Zimmerman would sell the tickets. The only celebrity that came through St. Martins was Al Capone in 1928, passing through on his way from Chicago to a family cottage on Big Martha Lake in Mercer.

The business district of St. Martins included four taverns, four general stores, two implement dealers, a doctor's office, a telephone office, Matt Dollinger's dance hall, a blacksmith shop, an Ice Cream parlor, and a Windmill for grinding feed.

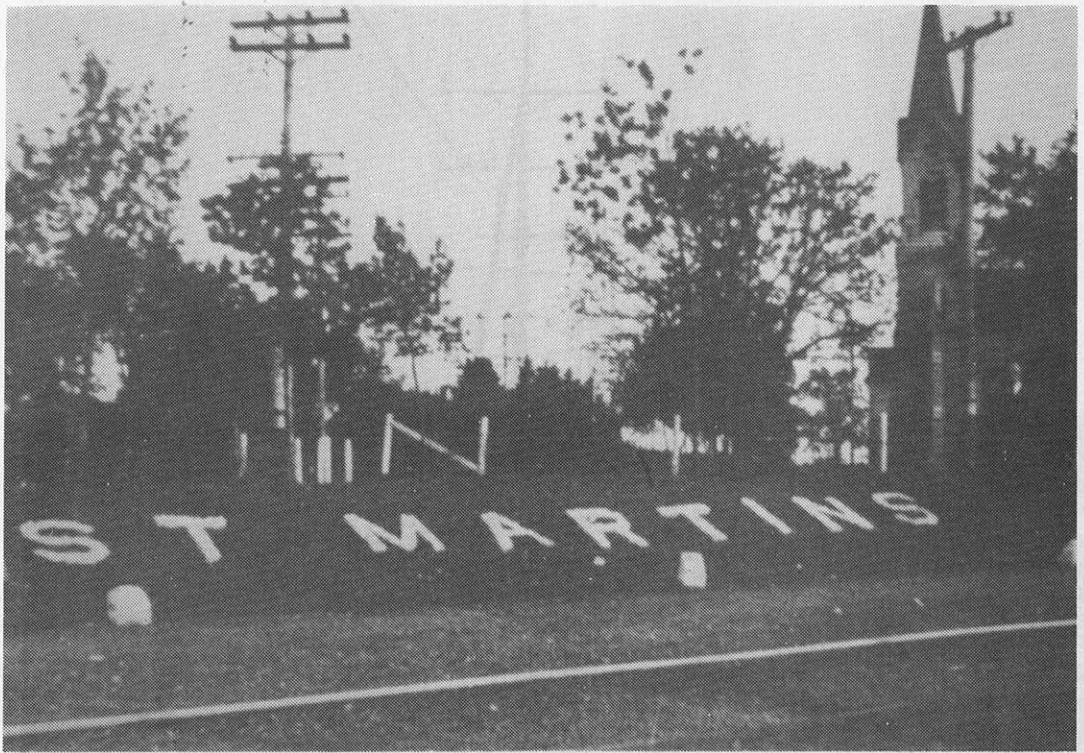
When the telephone lines needed servicing in the rural area, workmen would come out on the interurban car and rent a horse and buggy from the local blacksmith and go out to repair the problem. The telephone company was located on Swiss Street and operators included Nellie Wall, Mary Godsell, and Mamie Wolf.

In October of 1937, the company was considering abandonment of rail service on the Burlington line. Passenger revenue for 1910 amounted to \$34,774.00, in 1920 it increased to \$73,591.00, in 1930 it decreased to \$26,167.00 and for 1937 to \$13,203.00. As for freight service, it was disclosed that slightly over 300 carloads were either shipped out or received over the line.

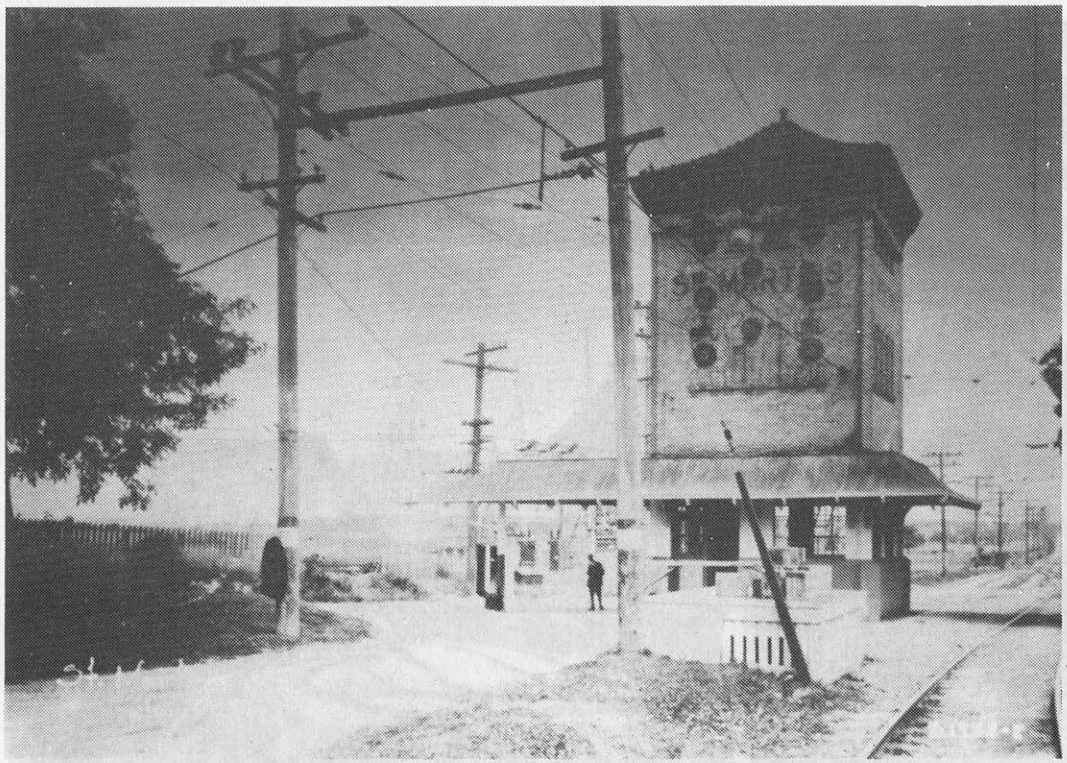
When it was finally decided to abandon service, it came on May 2, 1938. With only a short stub track remaining past the station, the station stood until the fall of 1943, when it was demolished by a steel ball mounted on a crane and hauled away.

**THE INFORMATION FROM THE NEWSPAPERS IS TRANSCRIBED FROM ACTUAL COLUMNS "AS WRITTEN" IN THE WATERFORD POST, THE BURLINGTON FREE PRESS, THE STANDARD DEMOCRAT AND THE TRI-TOWN NEWS.**

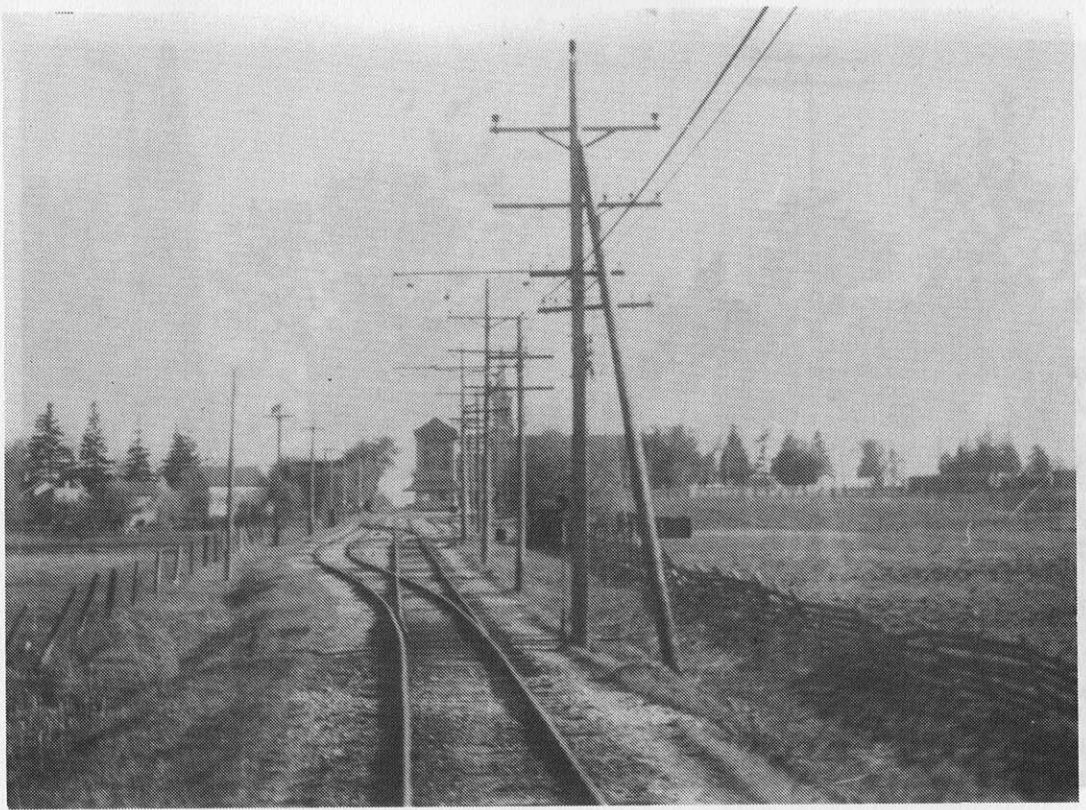




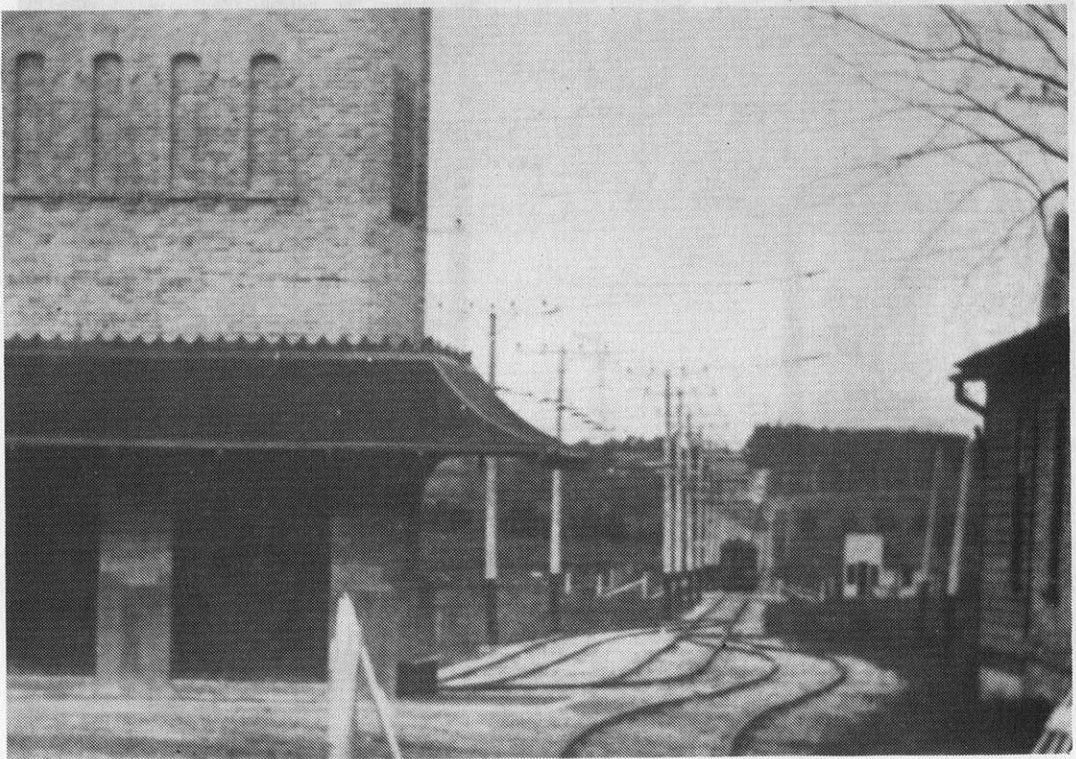
ST. MARTINS LOOKING SOUTHWEST OF STATION 1921



ST. MARTINS STATION LOOKING NORTH 1927



APPROACHING ST. MARTINS LOOKING SOUTHWEST T2



ST. MARTINS LOOKING NORTHEAST 1908 T2





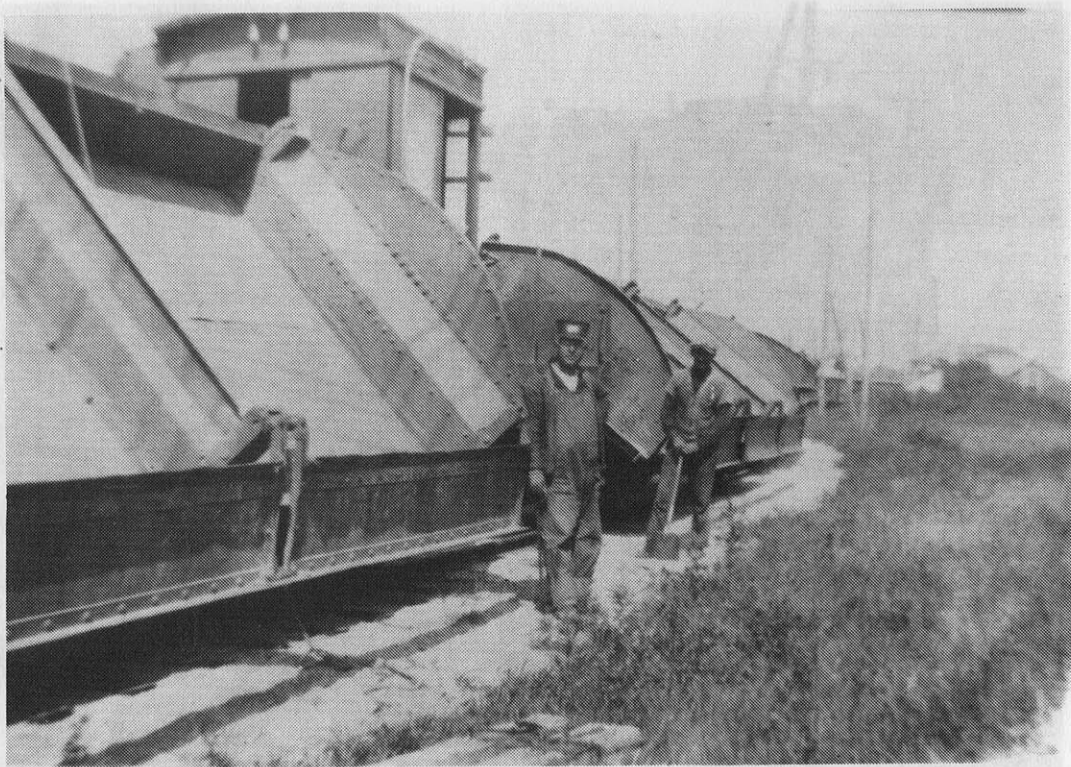
ST. MARTINS LOOKING EAST-NORTHEAST FEB. 19, 1936



D-23 LINE CAR WITH PLOW SOUTH OF ST. MARTINS FEB 19, 1936

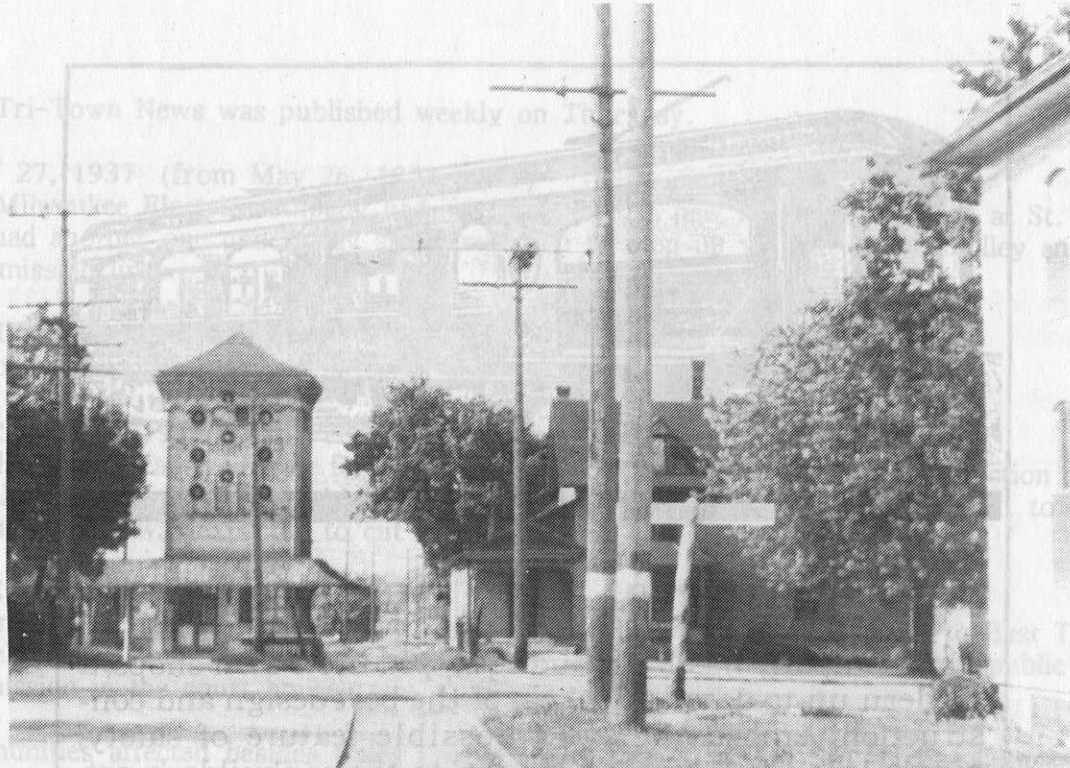


8 CAR 1110 AT ST. MARTINS ON BURLINGTON DIVISION

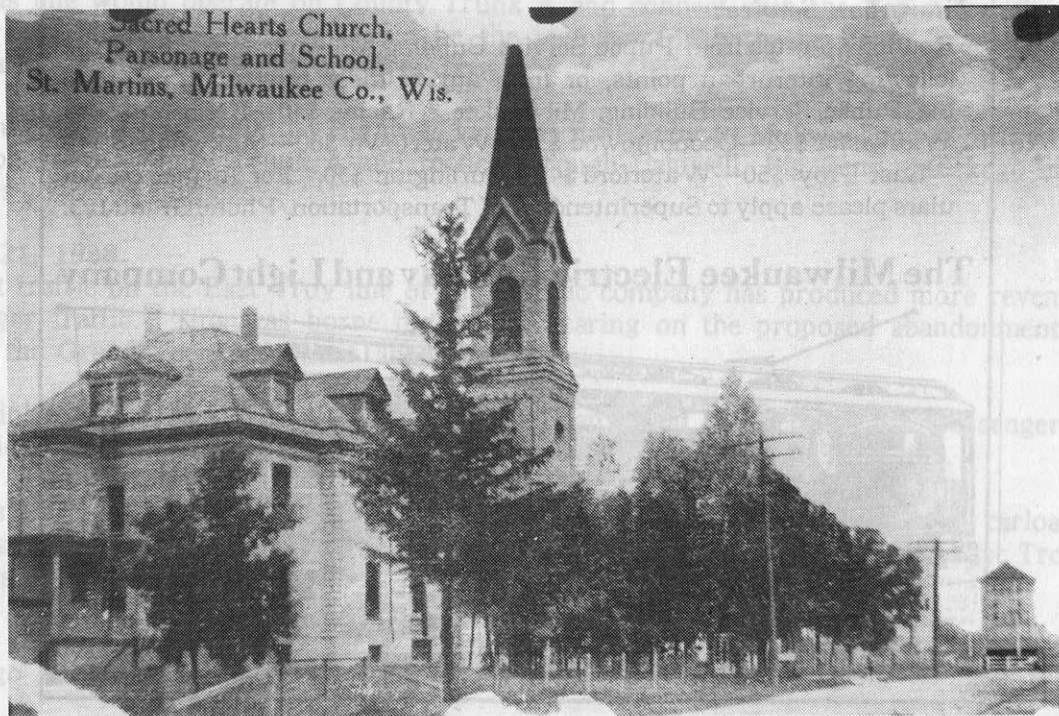


D-13 AT ST. MARTINS DUMPING GRAVEL, BOB KLOES, MOTORMAN

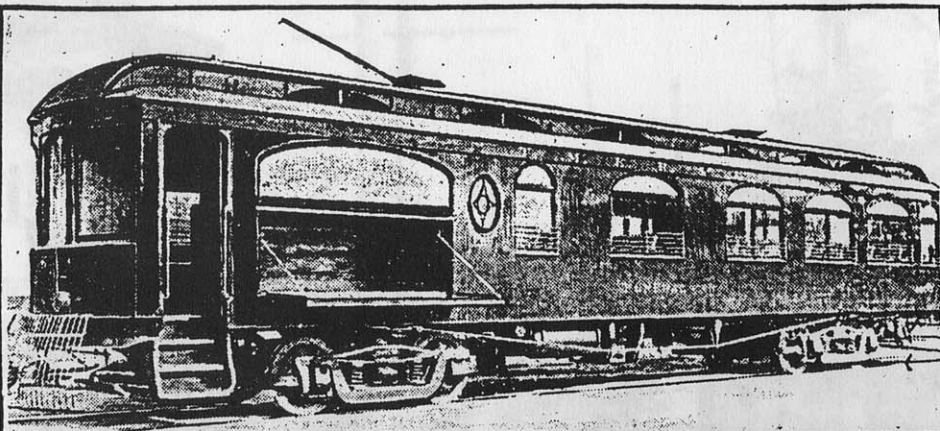




LOOKING NORTH AT ST. MARTINS ON 116TH ST.



LOOKING NORTH ON 116TH ST., ST. MARTINS



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### *City Service:*

\$15 for 3 hours or less; \$5 for each additional hour.

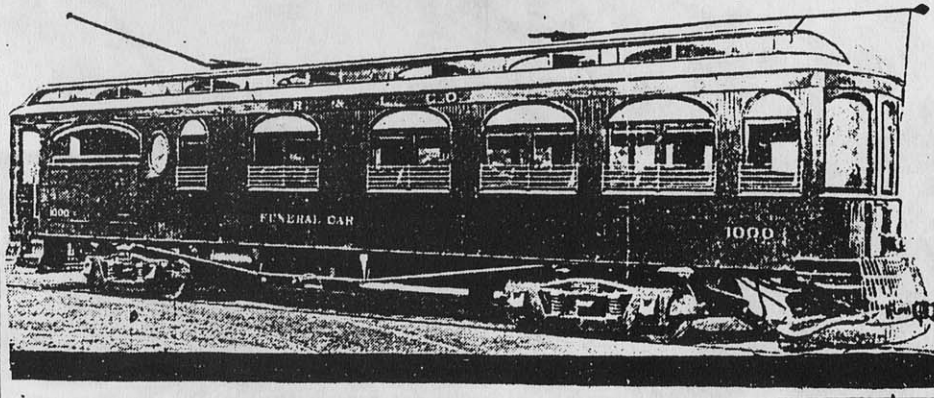
### *Suburban Service:*

\$20 for 3 hours or less; \$5 for each additional hour.

### *Interurban Service:*

Round trip rates from Public Service Building, Milwaukee, to any of the following interurban points, or from any of these interurban points to the Public Service Building, Milwaukee. Racine \$40—Kenosha \$50—Waukesha \$30—Oconomowoc \$50—Watertown \$60—Mukwonago \$40—East Troy \$50—Waterford \$40—Burlington \$50. For further particulars please apply to Superintendent of Transportation. Phone Grand 123.

## The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company





The Tri-Town News was published weekly on Thursday.

**MAY 27, 1937** (from May 26, 1927 paper)

The Milwaukee Electric company had just completed a new railway substation at St. Martins and had another one under way at Chamberlain to step up voltage of the trolley and power transmission lines.

**AUGUST 12, 1937** (from Aug. 11, 1927)

Railroad fares during State Fair week were cut to one cent a mile.

**FEBRUARY 3, 1938** (from Feb. 2, 1928)

Speedier rapid transit service for Hales Corners was promised with the construction of a new line along the north bluff of Menomonee valley from 8th St., and St. Paul Ave., to 40th St. The new route was expected to cut six minutes off the car schedules.

**JUNE 16, 1938**

Hearing on the plan to abandon the Rapid Transit line from Hales Corners to East Troy will be held at 10 a.m. Thursday of next week at Waukesha before the state public service commission in the court house.

Communities affected besides Hales Corners, and East Troy are St. Martins, Muskego, Big Bend, and Mukwonago. Residents of East Troy are reported to working actively to have the service retained. Several in Big Bend and Muskego are also interested.

The route includes 22.8 miles of track. The Electric company suggested that the line from Mukwonago to East Troy could be leased for freight purposes and that bus service from East Troy to Hales Corners could take care of the passenger service.

The bus line would operate on County Trunk A and connect with the Rapid Transit at Hales Corners. Thus Hales Corners would be the terminal for both the Rapid Transit line from Milwaukee and the bus line from East Troy.

The route of the bus would be Highway 15 from East Troy to Mukwonago, Highway 83 from Mukwonago to County Trunk A and thence through Caldwell, Big Bend, Muskego and Tess Corners to Hales Corners.

**JULY 21, 1938**

Freight traffic on the East Troy line of the electric company has produced more revenue than passenger traffic. This was borne out at the hearing on the proposed abandonment of the line in the Grand Theater in East Troy Monday.

R.H. Pinkley, vice-president of the Electric company, had testified that the passenger traffic had paid the best although it had declined 70 per cent on the East Troy line.

Figures on freight traffic for March 1937 showed that Muskego received 63 carloads, St. Martins, 67 carloads, Big Bend, 52 carloads, Mukwonago, 26 carloads, and East Troy, 503 carloads.

During this same period there were 273 outgoing cars from East Troy and one each from Muskego and St. Martins. This made a total of 986 cars of freight handled in March 1937.

The state public service commission held the hearing open for further testimony as East Troy has more evidence to present in favor of retaining the line. No definite time for the next

hearing was set.

George Clark of Big Bend testified that property values in Big Bend had increased since the line started. He said abandonment of the line would increase Big Bend village taxes 18 per cent.

That portion of the line between East Troy and Mukwonago would not be self-sustaining under present conditions according to Mr. Pinkley.

The proposed bus service from East Troy to Hales Corners calls for three round trips daily leaving East Troy at 9:35 a.m., 3:10 and 6:05 p.m. Atty James Drought said the schedule was not satisfactory. He represents the Hales Corners-East Troy Defense association.

Ed Goodman of Mukwonago, a member of the Waukesha county highway commission, said abandonment of the line would add 4,000 truckloads of freight per year to Highway 15 and would "create additional hazards on a road already overcrowded."

Citizens of East Troy were most concerned over the effect on the United Milk Products plant which has shipped 282 carloads of evaporated milk during the first six months of 1938. The plant is one of the best in the state and has been growing steadily.

Pinkley told how much money had been spent improving the line but said the revenue had declined steadily.

Mayor Clancy of East Troy suggested that part of the utility taxes could be refunded to the company to induce it to keep the line running. East Troy and Big Bend have agreed to this plan.

### **AUGUST 3, 1939**

Interurban railway passenger service between East Troy and Hales Corners will be discontinued with the close of business Aug. 12, and freight and express service will be discontinued with the close of business Sept. 5 according to H.G. Monger, traffic manager for the Milwaukee Electric Railway & Transport Co.

Carload freight service, however, will be continued after Sept. 5, only between East Troy and Mukwonago, in accordance with an agreement between the Transport Co. and the village of East Troy.

Abandonment of the railway line was authorized by the Public Service commission of Wisconsin July 18, subject to the continuation of a carload freight service between East Troy and Mukwonago, connecting at that point with the Soo Line.

In another order the commission authorized the Midland Coach Lines to alter its route between Beloit and Milwaukee so as to service East Troy, Mukwonago, Big Bend, and Muskego. This operation will pass through Hales Corners on County Trunk A, but no local passengers are to be carried between Hales Corners and Milwaukee.

Star route mail service for Greendale, Hales Corners, Muskego, Big Bend, Mukwonago, East Troy and Troy Center will start Monday, Aug. 14.

Bids on the service will be opened Friday morning of this week. The bids will be on a per annum basis. The postal department recommends a 3/4 ton to 1 1/2 ton truck for the purpose as the average load will be about 100 sacks of mail.



The route will make two round trips a day, each of 85.2 miles. Some of the boys have been busy with their pencils and figure that the job should pay from \$ 3,000 to \$3,500 a year at least. The hours will be long as the first trip starts about 5 o'clock in the morning and the last one finishes about 7 o'clock in the evening. For the first few months the driver will be on trial and temporary contract. After this trial period a contract will be let for four or five years. The route will make connection with the Lake Geneva and Waterford star route at Mukwonago. According to the schedule the driver will have a lay over of an hour or two between trips.

#### **AUGUST 10, 1939**

Bus service between East Troy and Milwaukee through Tri-Town area will start Sunday morning. The first bus will leave East Troy at 6:30 a.m. and arrive in Milwaukee one hour and seven minutes later at 7:37. The schedule will be Mukwonago at 6:40, Caldwell at 6:47, Big Bend at 6:55, Muskego at 7:03, Tess Corners at 7:07 and Hales Corners at 7:12. The complete schedule for the five trips each way daily appears elsewhere in this issue. The bus will stop anywhere along the route to pick up passengers but will not pick up Hales Corners passengers bound for Milwaukee. Bus tickets will be on sale at Getz Drug store in Hales Corners.

The last passenger street car will run Saturday night on the Rapid Transit line. Hales Corners will continue to have street car service as usual. Carload freight service will continue on the East Troy line until Sept. 5 between Hales Corners, St. Martins, Muskego and Big Bend.

Rapid Transit cars will do a loop turn at Hales Corners when this village becomes the terminal of the line starting Sunday. Maintenance of way men laid the tracks of the turn opposite the Merlin Schmidt home on North Cape road not far from the Electric company garage.

Additional track to 12th St., on the belt line in town of Lake has been assigned to the Hales Corners maintenance of way crew to make up for track that will be eliminated with the discontinuance of service to St. Martins, Muskego and Big Bend.

#### **SEPTEMBER 28, 1939**

Hales Corners Lions heard about the motor transport freight service for Tri-Town area at the regular luncheon at Schubring's triangle Monday. H.J. Coerper, traffic representative of the Motor Transport company, explained how there is less loss and damage by motor trucking, less packing costs and faster service. He said motor transport pays a larger tax bill than rails and employs more workers.

"These are facts and not propaganda. I'll leave the propaganda to someone else. Most of us already have our opinions, anyway, and propaganda doesn't change our views one way or the other", said Coerper.

Several present declared that truck service to Hales Corners was an improvement over rail service because the merchandise is brought right to the door. Mr. Coerper was asked if freight service would not be better than express service to Hales Corners because material shipped by express must be called for at West Allis.

He explained that the express company operates a large fleet of trucks for certain deliveries and added it is best for local persons to make their own choice as to which service they prefer. Express companies are more in competition with parcel post than with motor transport.

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STANDARD DEMOCRAT  
DEC. 13, 1923

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WM. TROST, Agent. Burlington

STANDARD DEMOCRAT  
SEPT. 2, 1921



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N-23 **TICKET-OFFICE—BADGER HOTEL**



STANDARD DEMOCRAT  
MARCH 16, 1923

BURLINGTON FREE PRESS  
OCT. 23, 1924

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