

Walworth Station – A Look Back in Time: Part II

By Dorothy French

Editor's Note: Our March 2015 newsletter focused on the area on the north side of the railroad tracks. This issue describes the south side.

Three and a half miles south of Walworth's four corners is an area divided by two railroad tracks that cross Walworth-Palmyra Road. There is no signage to indicate its history but, as early as the late 1800's, this area was a busy place that included four main railroad tracks with two switch lines, a post office, passenger and freight stations, and various buildings – all in an area of a settlement of homes. Although this area is located in the Town of Macedon, much of this activity involved Walworth residents who were able to ride the passenger trains, send or receive produce and household goods via rail, or purchase supplies.

***** South Side of the Tracks *****



(Left photo above) Passenger station on left, freight station on right. Info written on back of photo: "Camera standing in center of highway 76 feet south of south rail of track No. 1 looking north. Photo taken June 15, 1917, by Felix Guyette, Buffalo, NY."

(Right photo above) Winter scene. Walworth Station sign appears on passenger station. Undated photo courtesy of Gordon Youngman.

Train Station

Charles Pembroke: *Going to the south side of the tracks, on the west side of the highway, was a small green hexagon-shaped building, with a man sitting in a chair who would wave at all the passersby. That man was Frank (Butch) Dumond. At least 200 feet west of the flagman's shanty was the N.Y.C. passenger station. There you could buy your ticket to Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse or one of the smaller towns down the line.*



Lucy Franke: *Passengers could travel to and from Rochester daily and some trains were flagged to stop at Walworth Station to pick up passengers.*

Charles Pembroke: *On the west side of the ticket office was a stub track with a platform built on wheels of the rail cars, where farmers would load their milk cans full of milk onto, to be transported to Rochester by train. Each farmer would have his cans initialed with his name or a number on them to identify them. Each morning the farmers would have to purchase from the ticket agent a ticket for each can of milk they sent to Rochester.*

(Left photo) Harry Howse, flagman, standing next to shanty. Undated photo from Charles Pembroke booklet.

Stagecoach and Buggies

Town Historian John Traas' 1990 booklet Walworth....from Douglas Corners to Gananda: Travelers to Walworth would get off the train and were met there by a horse-drawn stage, provided by the Pacific Hotel, for the rest of their journey to the hotel. It carried passengers to and from Walworth, as well as mail, parcel post, and freight.

Lucy Franke: *The stage was an open conveyance – drawn by a team of horses by Charley Davey, who lived on the bend of Church Street, opposite the recently-dedicated Walworth Fire Hall. I recall riding on this stage one dark night on my papa's lap. In fact, there were so many of us returning on that late P.M. train that Charley gave up his driver's seat to passengers and he sat on the dashboard with his feet on the whiffletrees below to drive the team. Nobody got left behind that cold night. Everybody had to dress for their own protection against wind, rain, sleet, or for whatever weather came along. This famous stage route – so important to us all in those days – could tell many a tale of colorful history. Like that hot summer day when former President Grover Cleveland came to a Yeomans' home on High Street in Walworth village to attend the wedding of his nieces.*

John Traas: *He (Uncle Grover) arrived by train at Walworth Station on the morning of June 10, 1891. Lucien Yeomans was on hand with his best buggy and finest road horse to drive his brother-in-law to the scene of his daughters' nuptials. (Editor's Note: See July 2012 WHS newsletter for wedding story.)*

Charles Pembroke: *Back in 1901-1902 my father (Jake Pembroke) ran the stage coach for Charles Ashdown and the famous spot for the patrons on the stage coach to stop was in the Huddle at the hotel for a drink of hop soda before arriving in Walworth, as it was the only place any refreshments were sold enroute.*



(Left photo) Cheese Factory, south of Walworth Station east side of road. Undated photo courtesy of Gordon Youngman

Cheese Factory



(Right photo) Cheese factory looking south towards railroad tracks. Undated file photo.

Gordon Youngman, whose knowledge of the Walworth area is endless, recently discovered a close-up photograph of the cheese factory which was located south of the railroad tracks on the east side of Walworth-Palmyra Road. Town of Macedon Historian June Hamell verified that an 1874 Wayne County Atlas showed a Union Cheese Factory on the site. In the 1904 Century Atlas of Wayne County the location was listed as an un-named cheese factory adjacent to property owned by P. Greene. Several homes now occupy this site.



Walworth Station: October 2014. Looking west across Walworth-Palmyra Road

Certifying the beginning and end of Walworth Station has been difficult. The earliest date on record is 1891 (Yeomans wedding), but it was apparently well established before then. The last receipts at the museum from the coal yard are dated 1948. Gordon Youngman and Mrs. Claire (Joyce) VanHaneghem, long-time Walworth residents, agree that the Griswold coal yard was the last business in the early 1950's on this once-bustling site.

Now, in 2015, the peacefulness of these surroundings is shattered only by the CSX and Amtrak trains as they pass through to their destinations, leaving history in their tracks.