

Ogle County Historical Society



DON'T FORGET!

OUR ANNUAL ALL-MEMBERS POTLUCK DINNER IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, AT 5 PM. BRING A DISH TO PASS AND YOUR OWN TABLE SERVICE. BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED. IF YOU WISH, YOU MAY ALSO BRING AN ITEM OF FAMILY OR LOCAL HISTORY TO SHARE DURING OUR SHOW-AND-TELL TIME.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Books and other publications have predominated in our acquisitions over the last three months. The first of these was A Just Cause: The Impeachment and Removal of Governor Rod Blagojevich by Bernard Sieracki. The author donated it to us during a visit to the Historical Society. Paula Hayward donated a song book published by the Cable Piano Co. in 1925 which she found among the possessions of her mother, Pearl Beebe of Forreton. Also included were two black and white postcards, one of the Soldier's and Sailor's Monument on the courthouse lawn, the other of the "Black Hawk" Monument, Eagles Nest bluff.

Later in May we received three copies of a booklet entitled "Railroads in Miniature", which describes an exhibit formerly maintained by the Creston Industrial Model Co. One copy has been passed on to the Oregon Depot Museum.

Oregon City Hall passed on to us an interesting photo which a lady in Connecticut had sent to them. It shows a dozen 1920's era autos parked in front of a courthouse (not ours; possibly the DeKalb County courthouse in Sycamore) with signs on the backs of them. The few signs that can be read advertise businesses and organizations in the Oregon area. Margaret Holmes of Springfield, who grew up in Stillman Valley, sent us two framed photos, one of the Blackhawk statue, and one of the beautiful elm trees arching over Highway 72 through Stillman Valley before Dutch Elm disease struck. Both are color photos from the early 1950's. Margaret said they hung in her parent's home.

Lou Vanderwyst of Conover Square rescued a 1920 Rochelle High School yearbook from a dumpster; it now has a place on our yearbook shelves. Kathy (Loan) Clark, OHS Class of 1965, brought in an advertising yardstick from Lace Motor Sales in Oregon which she found at a garage sale a couple years ago. It's probably from the 1960's or 70's.

We received a set of blueprints of the Lyons Building at Third and Washington Streets, Oregon's first movie theatre. Jack and Jeff Basler obtained them in the 1970's when they bought the building to use as a Gambles store (later Ace Hardware) and Jeff gave them to the Village of Progress when it purchased the building to convert it into The Village Bakery. The plans now have a home here.

Our last two acquisitions of the quarter were both books. Robert Storozuk, President of The Milwaukee Road Historical Association, stopped in on a Sunday afternoon and left us a copy of The Milwaukee Road—Diesel Power; the association is donating copies of the book to historical societies in every town that was served by the Milwaukee Road. We also received a copy of the 1903 issue of The Philorhetorian, the journal of the Philorhetorian Literary Society of Mount Morris College. The Stephenson County Historical Society found it in a group of items donated to them and passed it along to us.

As you see, we continue to receive items pertaining to Ogle County history. Now we just need more willing volunteers to help us interpret and display them. Please consider joining us if you haven't already done so.



BACK IN THE “OLDEN DAYS”, BEFORE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY, EMAIL, AND CAMERA PHONES, ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR WAYS TO SEND PHOTOS TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY WAS TO HAVE THEM MADE INTO POSTCARDS AND MAIL THEM. THIS ONE WHICH WE RECENTLY RECEIVED IS ONE OF MANY WHICH WE HAVE, BUT THEY NEED TO BE SORTED, ORGANIZED, AND, IN MANY CASES, SCANNED. ANY VOLUNTEERS?

OGLE COUNTY IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Bill Bailey

#28—The Cartwrights

Barton H. Cartwright, born in New York State, came to Illinois in 1833. He soon established himself as a “prairie breaker”, using a heavy breaking plow pulled by eight oxen to cut through the deep roots of the prairie grass, and spent his Sundays traveling and preaching. In the spring of 1834 he was appointed a missionary in northern Illinois and eastern Iowa by the well-known minister Peter Cartwright, a cousin of Barton’s father, and spent the next 29 years establishing churches in the State of Illinois and Iowa Territory (a state after 1848). In 1839, during his first tenure in Ogle County, he married Chloe Benedict, who had spent three years teaching in the first purpose-built school building in the county. After several years in Iowa and other parts of northwest Illinois, the Cartwrights returned to Ogle County in 1850 and Reverend Cartwright served at various churches in the area, including Byron, where he used his own team to haul the stone for the church building and did some of the masonry work.

In the spring of 1863, Gov. Richard Yates appointed Barton Cartwright as Chaplain of the 92nd Illinois Volunteer Infantry, which has been covered in several previous columns, and he served until the regiment was mustered out after the war. Chaplain Cartwright, who received the pay of a Captain, was quite popular with the men in the regiment. It is reported that on his first Sunday in camp he told the men that if they came to listen to him preach for half an hour he would spend two hours helping them build entrenchments the next day. He fully understood that his duties were much more than spiritual. Cpl. Charles E. Cort of Co. H wrote home about the regiment’s new chaplain: “He appears to be very earnest in his work but has got the regular shouting style.”

One of a Civil War chaplain’s non-spiritual unofficial duties took place every payday. As the most trusted man in the regiment, he would ride from camp to the nearest express office carrying thousands of dollars in cash to be sent home, each man’s contribution wrapped in a piece of paper with his family’s name and address on it. As far as is known, no chaplain was ever robbed while performing this duty, and none of them ever absconded with the money themselves.

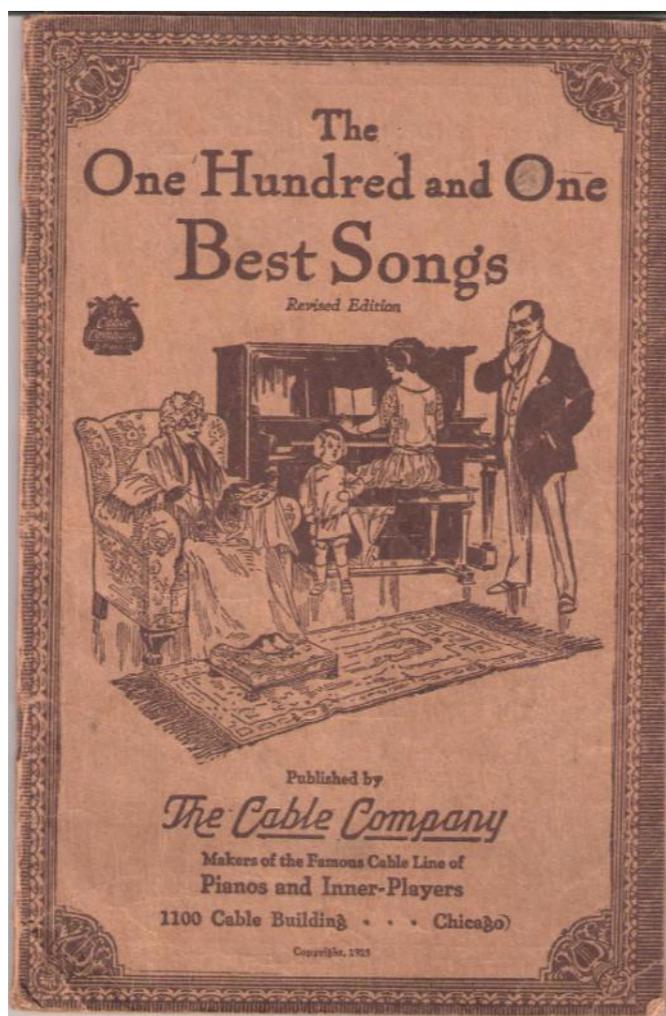
Chaplain Cartwright served with the 92nd during their conversion to mounted infantry, at the horrific battle of Chickamauga in northern Georgia, and through the incident at Nickajack Gap, when 31 men of a 64 man picket were killed, wounded, or captured. He also was with them during the Atlanta Campaign, Sherman's March to the Sea, and the 1865 campaign from Savannah GA to the surrender of Gen. Johnston's army in North Carolina. In spite of everything he had accomplished in his first 53 years, Barton Cartwright considered his service during the Civil War as the greatest and most important in his life. During the lengthy illness that led to his death in 1895, he was visited by many of his former comrades.

James Cartwright, Barton and Chloe's second child and oldest son, served twice in the war, the first time prior to his father's service. After briefly emulating his mother as a school teacher, James enlisted at the age of 19 as a private in the 69th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. This regiment, enlisted for 90 days, was mustered in, trained, and served its entire time at Camp Douglas in Chicago, guarding Confederate prisoners. Although it did not come within several hundred miles of a combat area, the regiment lost 13 men to disease in its 3 months.

In June of 1864, a year after his father joined the 92nd, James Cartwright enlisted in another short-term unit. The 140th Illinois was one of several regiments called up for 100 days after the high casualties of the spring campaigns. Perhaps because of his previous service, James was elected Captain of Co. I, most of whose members were from Ogle County. The regiment was organized at Camp Butler in Springfield and left by train on June 18 for Cairo, then by boat to Memphis TN. They marched 30 miles east to Wolf River, where they were divided up into detachments to guard the railroad between there and Holly Springs MS. They fought off a couple of raids by Confederates during this time and then returned to Memphis in August, where they helped repulse an attack by Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's troops on the 21st. While mustering out at Camp Fry in Chicago in early September, the regiment was asked by Illinois Adjutant General Allen Fuller to reorganize temporarily due to Confederate General Sterling Price's invasion of Missouri. They spent about 6 weeks in the Show-Me State before finally being mustered out on October 29, having served nearly 5 months instead of 100 days. The 140th lost five men in battle and 24 to disease. The men in Capt. Cartwright's company who didn't make it home were Charles Frothingham of Leaf River and Delanzon Holmes and Joseph Sanford of Oregon.

After the war James Cartwright, who had been educated in the Mt. Morris public schools and at Rock River Academy, attended law school at the University of Michigan, graduating in 1867. He practiced law in Oregon, was general counsel for the Chicago and Iowa Railroad Co., a company which folded after several years with no lines built, was elected Circuit Judge in 1888, and also owned a farm adjacent to the fairgrounds where he bred and trained trotting horses. In 1895 Judge Cartwright was elected to fill an unexpired term on the Illinois Supreme Court and was subsequently elected to three 9-year terms. At the time of his death he had been nominated for a fourth term. James Cartwright was also well-known locally as the founder of the OWLS, the Oregon Bachelor Club.

The Civil War was an important part of the lives of so many of Ogle County's citizens that this column will have to keep going for a while longer.



SONGBOOK PUBLISHED BY
CABLE PIANO COMPANY
IN 1925 (SEE RECENT
ACQUISITIONS COLUMN)

The Ogle County Historical Society
PO Box 183
Oregon, Il. 61061

Application for Membership

_____ \$35 per household per year

___ \$5 per year for hard copy of Gazette

Renewals due in November for following year

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The Gazette is published quarterly, by **The Ogle County Historical Society**, PO Box 183, Oregon, Il. 61061.
oglecohistory@frontier.com

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