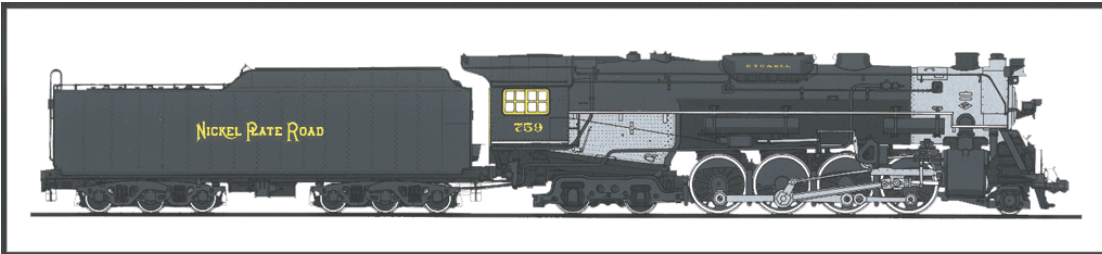


The Rail History of Elwood, Indiana



NICKEL PLATE ROAD Elwood's Second Rail Line

La Fayette, Muncie & Bloomington RR

Updated: 01 August 2010

Revised: 01 May 2022

1876 –

La Fayette, Muncie & Bloomington RR

Muncie & State Line Ry

La Fayette, Bloomington & Muncie RR

Lake Erie & Western*

*LE&W – The **New York Central** years – **1900-1922**

NYC&StL RR (Nickel Plate Road)

Norfolk & Western

Norfolk Southern

The **La Fayette, Muncie & Bloomington** (Illinois) **Rail Road** was organized on July 13, 1869. Its initial charter was to build the final 37 miles of a rail line from Illinois to Lafayette, Indiana. Less than two years later, it was chartered to build an 84.6-mile extension from Lafayette to Muncie.

Work started in June of 1871 and by late 1872, the entire grade had been completed, bridges were in place and ties were on the ground. But the arrival of rails was delayed by cash shortages and legal complications. It was May 28, 1874, before the railroad authorized completion of the line.

By mid-October of 1875, 35 miles of track had been completed between Tipton and Muncie and a month later another 25 miles of track was added from Tipton to Frankfort. The railroad ran a six-car stockholders' special from **Muncie to Lafayette** on **February 1, 1876**, and on **February 10, 1876**, daily trains were scheduled between Muncie and Tipton and between Tipton and Alexandria (see timetable **No. 1** below).

Lafayette Muncie and Bloomington Rail Road
— Time Table No 1 —
To take effect Thursday Feb'y 10th 1876—at 6 O'clock a.m.

<i>Eastward</i>		<i>Stations</i>	<i>Westward</i>	
<i>No 3</i>	<i>No 1</i>		<i>No 2</i>	<i>No 4</i>
<i>Gravel</i>	<i>Freight</i>		<i>Freight</i>	<i>Gravel</i>
	9 20 a.m.	Muncie	2 50 p.m.	
	8 50	Reids	3 25	
	8 25	Tennessee	3 50	
5 50 p.m.	7 50	Alexandria	4 20	7 00 a.m.
4 45 { <i>max</i> no 2	7 30 { <i>max</i> no 4	Mill Switch	4 45 { <i>max</i> no 3	7 30 { <i>max</i> no 1
4 25	6 55	Elwood	5 10	7 50
4 05	6 20	Knobbs	5 30	8 10
3 45 p.m.	6 00 a.m.	Tipton	6 00 p.m.	8 30 a.m.

Trains Nos 1. and 2. will have the right to the Road until they become fifteen (15) minutes late and up to this time all Gravel Trains will keep entirely out of the way

When Trains no 1 and 2. become more than fifteen minutes late they will keep entirely out of the way of all Gravel trains

The Clock in the Office of the D.P. & C RR at Tipton will be the Standard time during the existence of this Time Table

D. F. Collins
Supr

On February 24, 1876, the schedules were extended to Frankfort. The entire 201 mile mainline from Muncie to Bloomington, Illinois, was opened on July 1, 1876. Eventually, the LM&B put on a through daily express train in each direction and the 201 miles were often covered in 7 1/2 hours.

On April 3, 1879, the **La Fayette, Muncie & Bloomington RR** was sold under foreclosure. It emerged as the **Muncie & State Line Railroad**. On April 30, 1879, the property was consolidated into a new company known as the **La Fayette, Bloomington & Muncie Railway**. Finally, on December 11, 1879, the **Lake Erie & Western**, established August 4, 1879, formally absorbed the La Fayette, Bloomington & Muncie Ry. The LE&W extended 718 miles from Sandusky, Ohio to Peoria, Illinois.

LE&W – THE NEW YORK CENTRAL YEARS

The last line to become part of the Lake Erie & Western was the Lafayette, Muncie & Bloomington. This line built from Lafayette, with the line toward Bloomington, Illinois, completed in 1872, and the line to Muncie completed in 1876. This company would change its name to **Lake Erie & Western Railway**, the first of three companies with the exact same name. It was this company that completed the line from Muncie to Celina, Ohio, in 1879.

Around 1877, **Cornelius Vanderbilt** and his **New York Central and Hudson River Railroad** gained a majority of stock of the **Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway**. The **Lake Shore & Michigan Southern** quickly realized the value of the LE&W as a competitor and purchased the road in 1900. The LS&MS held controlling interest in the LE&W until On December 22, 1914, when the **New York Central and Hudson River Railroad** merged with the **Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway** to form a new **New York Central Railroad**.

The **NYC** operated the LE&W as part of their Big Four Lines although it did not merge it into the NYC System. After operating it as a separate entity for two decades, the New York Central sold the Lake Erie and Western to the **Nickel Plate Road** in 1922. The LE&W was merged into the Nickel Plate Road and became the Lake Erie and Western District.

It then became part of the **Norfolk & Western** in 1964 and **Norfolk Southern** in 1982. **NS** currently operates the line through Elwood.

Marvin Crim
WLWHS 1957