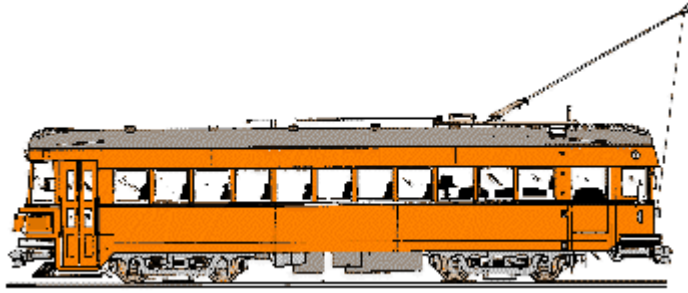
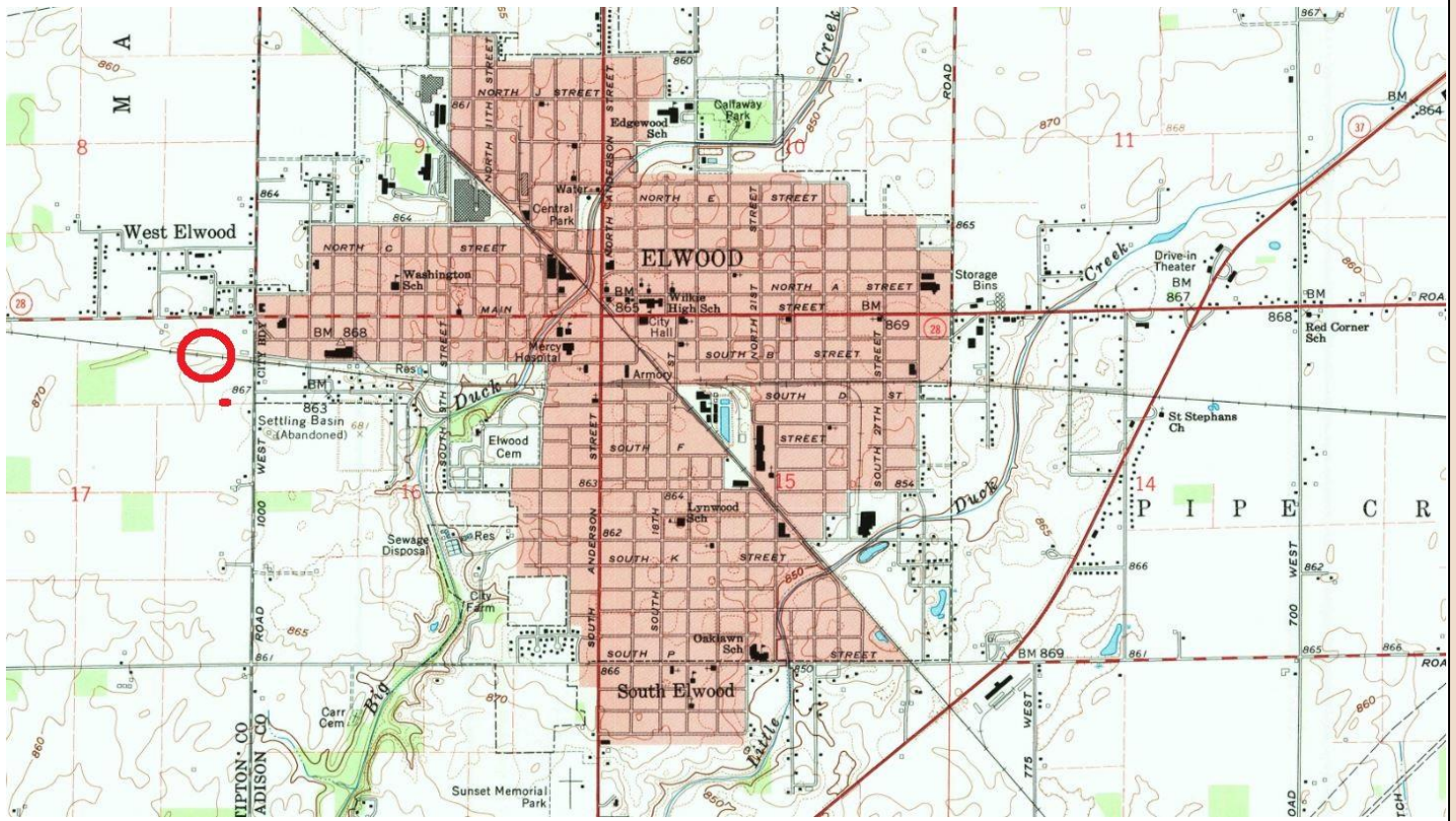


The Rail History of Elwood, Indiana



The West Elwood Flyover (Viaduct)



Built to carry the interurban rail line over the LE&W tracks in West Elwood.

Replaced a grade crossing at Seeley's Crossing west of Elwood.

Track was laid from Hobbs in both directions.

*Indiana was second only to Ohio in miles of interurban track.

The Elwood-Alexandria electrified traction line was built by the Elwood & Alexandria Railway Company (\$225,000) which was incorporated May 4, 1898. The following year, the Union Traction company of Indiana sought franchises and right-of-ways for a continuation of the line to Tipton. Although it was April of 1902 before construction started, the line was ready for operation that fall. The opening was delayed several weeks because of a dispute with the Lake Erie & Western Railroad, which paralleled the electric line, over Seeley Crossing three miles west of Elwood. The steam road demanded that the traction company provide a watchman; the long negotiations caused the Union Traction Company some difficulty in securing an extension of the time limit clause in their Elwood franchise. Finally, an agreement was reached between the two companies and on the evening of Wednesday, December 31, 1902, a car made the trip from Elwood to Tipton. Service between Elwood-Tipton opened the next day, Thursday, January 1, 1903.

31 December 1902 Wednesday

FIRST CAR TO TIPTON

WILL LEAVE ELWOOD OVER INTERURBAN TONIGHT

Regular Service Will Be Established and Cars Run All Day Tomorrow

The new line of the Union Traction company between Elwood and Tipton will be opened for public use tonight. The first car will leave Elwood for Tipton soon after 6 o'clock, and a regular service maintained until midnight.

On Thursday morning, two cars will be put into service, make the run in forty minutes and leaving each end of the line every forty-five minutes. Within the next few days, a complete schedule will be ready for announcement.

The Record realizes that this bit of news will come as lightning from a clear sky to most people, and there are those who may be inclined not to give it credence. It is absolutely reliable, however, and it will take a mighty important and altogether unforeseen happening to prevent it.

It come about this way. The franchise which the company holds for the completion of its line between Elwood and Tipton, expires on the Tipton end tonight, after having been extended until the city council there had about lost patience at the delay.

The only thing standing in the way of the operation of the line was the placing of the crossing over the Lake Erie tracks in the east part of Tipton. That matter was satisfactorily arranged with the railway people, and this morning shortly before 8 o'clock, a special car loaded with trackmen went to Tipton to put in the crossing and word received from there this afternoon is to the effect that it will be in place and ready for us by 6 o'clock this evening, barring accident.

An interesting announcement in connection with this story is the fact that the Traction company is springing a slight increase in fare on the new line, and for the present the fare between Elwood and Tipton will be fifteen cents. The fare from Hobbs to either Elwood or Tipton will be a dime. Cars will run between Elwood and Tipton until further notice, it being necessary to change here to the regular cars going on to Alexandria and Anderson, but through cars will be put on within a few weeks.

There will doubtless be a big crowd up town tonight to witness the departure of the first car for the western end of the line, a thing which has been delayed about six months beyond what was expected when the line was started. However, it's better late than never, and here's congratulations to the company, and the people along the line.

1 January 1903 Thursday

LINE IS OPENED

AND CARS ARE NOW RUNNING TO TIPTON

First Car for the Western End of the Route Left Elwood at 8 Last Night

After six long months of patient waiting, the people of Elwood and Tipton are now able to go back and forth on electric cars. As was announced in the local papers yesterday, the first car out of Elwood for Tipton on the new line left the station here at 8 o'clock last night, making the run to Tipton in forty minutes. It returned to Elwood shortly after 1, and went back to Tipton for the night.

This morning at 5 o'clock, a regular service between the two cities was established, and since 9 o'clock this morning, cars have been starting from each end of the line every forty-five minutes, accommodating a large number of people. There is little room for doubting that the branch will prove a profitable done form a financial standpoint.

On Tuesday, February 10, 1903, the Union Traction company of Indiana, who had purchased the Elwood-Alexandria line, inaugurated through service between Alexandria and Tipton. The line furnished a convenient link between the Anderson and Peru divisions of the Union Traction company.

In later years, the viaduct was painted bright orange. I doubt they even bothered to paint **UNION TRACTION** on it. But the **West Elwood Flyover**, a viaduct only a short distance west of County Line Road, served its purpose. It's all but been forgotten over time.

Marvin Crim

WLWHS 1957

Reference:

Elwood Call Leader