

## Summary Information:

**Collection Title:** Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Collection, 1895-1988, 2015

**Collection Number:** MSS.04

**Date Range:** 1895-1988, 2015

**Size:** 4 Linear Feet

**Location:** RR.7.4, CO.OS.01, CO.OS.07

**Creator:** Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway

**Abstract:** The Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Collection contains materials relating to the history and operation of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway. The collection contains printed materials, photographs, correspondence, publications, and management records.

**Acquisition Information:** This collection has been composed from various accessions relating to the history of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway. There was no reasonable original order to these materials, so an order has been created for research purposes. All materials are appropriately labeled with their accession numbers, and more information regarding acquisition can be provided if requested.

**Separated Materials:** Bound copies of The J-Milepost publications, housed with our library holdings in the curator's office.

**Citation:** Item Description. MSS.04 Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Collection, Joliet Area Historical Museum. Box #, Folder #. Date Accessed.

**Restrictions:** None

**Processed by:** Kailee Lowry

## Background Information:

### History:

The Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway, also known as the "J" or the "EJ&E" operated as a Class I railroad operating between Waukegan, Illinois and Gary, Indiana. The railroad served as a link between railroads traveling to and from Chicago, but it operated almost entirely within the city's suburbs. Like many other early railways, the early development of EJ&E can be found in a series of take overs. The EJ&E can trace its history primarily back to an early predecessor, the Joliet, Aurora and Northern Railway (JA&N) which began business in 1886. The JA&N conducted both freight and passenger service from Joliet to Aurora, running through Plainfield. In 1888 two new railways were incorporated, one known as the EJ&E of Illinois and the EJ&E of Indiana. By October of 1888 the two EJ&E lines acquired the JA&N, and by December of that year the two lines consolidated to form a new company known simply as the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway. Over the next several years EJ&E continued developing its Chicago Outer Belt Line by laying new track as well as acquiring smaller railroads such as the Gardner, Coal City and

Northern Railway; the Waukegan and Southwestern Railway; and the Chicago, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway.

When the EJ&E overtook the JA&N the company acquired the latter's passenger business between Joliet and Aurora. In 1892 an EJ&E depot was constructed on Clinton Street in Joliet, but its commitment to passenger service was short lived. By 1907 EJ&E discontinued scheduled passenger service to Aurora, in large part due to competition from the interurban electric line operated by the Joliet, Plainfield, and Aurora Electric Railway Company. Thereafter, EJ&E operated only as freight service.

Beginning in the late 1890s, the EJ&E railway enjoyed a long and close relationship with the steel industry. EJ&E was purchased by Illinois Steel and by 1898 both organizations came under the control of the Federal Steel Company. In 1901 J.P. Morgan acquired Andrew Carnegie's steel holdings and combined them with the Federal Steel Company to create the United States Steel Corporation. Although the EJ&E serviced numerous industrial customers over the years, its fortunes as a railroad were most closely linked to the rise and fall of regional steel production.

The Joliet Division of the EJ&E railway included the East Joliet Yard with its vast complex of building and switching facilities. The yard began to take shape in the late 1880s when a roundhouse, machine shop, and a water tank were built on the Henry farm on the east side of Joliet. Before long the facility housed a blacksmith shop, wood car shop, steel car shop, locomotive shop, cinder pits and more. The East Joliet Yard became a space where locomotives were demolished, repaired, and new freight cars were constructed. For many years, the EJ&E acted as one of Joliet's largest employers. Countless immigrant families were attracted to the area by the prospect of finding jobs on the railroad or at the steel mill.

The EJ&E railway operated for almost 124 years before it was purchased in December of 2012 by Canadian National, merging the railway into Wisconsin Central LTD.

#### **Scope and Content Arrangement:**

The Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Collection contains management records, financial documents, publications, photographs, and correspondence relating to the history and operation of the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway (EJ&E). The collection has been arranged into 4 series by the function of the records. The materials within each series have been arranged chronologically.

There are several oversized materials in the collection. They have been listed in Series 4 of the collection are listed in the finding aid with their original series number as well. All oversized materials for this collection are in oversize storage drawer 7 located in the Curator's Office.

Series 1: EJ&E Records, 1895-1988, 2015

Series 2: The J-Milepost Publication, 1949-1981

Series 3: Photographs, 1886-1978

Series 4: Oversized Materials

#### **Related Materials:**

Objects:

2003.02.69 – EJ&E First Aid Kit

2022.02.02 – EJ&E replica Caboose Train Car

2022.02.01 – Ceramic Safety "J"

2022.02.03 – EJ&E Replica Train Car  
 2003.02.65 – EJ&E train car pin  
 2021.05.01 – EJ&E pass card for J.E. Tomczak  
 2008.21.02-03 – EJ&E Service pins  
 2003.107.26 – Set of two railway nails  
 2003.02.71 – EJ&E keychain  
 2003.02.64 – Chicago Outer Belt Keychain  
 2003.03.35 – Set of 2 EJ&E playing card decks  
 2008.24 – EJ&E Railway lock and chain

**Collections:**

MSS.05 – The Ridings Collection  
 MSS.09 – EJ&E Milepost Photographs Collection

**Content Listing:**

**Series 1:** EJ&E Records, 1895-1988, 2015

**Location:** RR.7.4

**Scope:** The materials contained in this series include correspondence, financial records, employee management materials, train time tables, blueprints, annual reports, and newspaper clippings. The materials have been organized chronologically.

<b>Folder Title:</b>	<b>Folder #:</b>	<b>Box #:</b>
Correspondence, 1895-1917, 1958-1988	1	1
EJ&E Stock Certificates, 1898, 1909, 1938	2	1
Financial Receipts, 1909, 1945, 1958, 1964	3	1
EJ&E Company Governing Rules for Employees, 1917, 1941, 1950-1955	4	1
Enginemen’s Time Book, 1937-1939, 1947-1955	5	1
EJ&E Rules of the Operating Department, 1942 and 1976	6	1
EJ&E Management Papers, 1943, 1949, 1970	7	1
Time Tables, 1945-1949, 1956, 1965, 1978, 1984	8	1
Employee Check Stubs, 1947-1956	1	2
Handbook “What’s What on the J” 1949 and 1952	2	2
EJ&E Misc. Records, 1949-1960	3	2
Newspaper Clippings, 1950, 1992, 2004, 2015	4	2
EJ&E Safety Rules for Employees, 1953, 1959 and 1969	5	2
Misc. Railway Publications, 1953, 1964, 1989	6	2
Annual Report, 1955, 1960-1967	7	2
EJ&E Manual of Investigation Procedure, 1959	8	2

A History of the EJ&E Railway Company, 1988	9	2
EJ&E Railway Blueprint, 1991	10	2
Historical Background on the Standard Code of Operating Rules, Undated	11	2
EJ&E Bridge Construction Ledger, Undated	12	2
J-Cookbook, Undated	13	2

**Series 2:** The J-Milepost Publication, 1949-1981

**Location:** RR.7.4

**Scope:** This series contains copies of the J-Milepost, a publication created by and for the employees of the EJ&E railway. The magazines in this series have been arranged chronologically. In addition to the copies housed in the collection, there are bound volumes of the J-Milepost housed in our library holdings covering the years 1957 through 1976.

<b>Folder Title:</b>	<b>Folder #:</b>	<b>Box #:</b>
The J-Milepost, Feb. 1949-Sept. 1951	1	3
The J-Milepost, July 1952-Nov. 1953	2	3
The J-Milepost, March 1954-Dec. 1955	3	3
The J-Milepost, Jan. 1956-Dec. 1956	4	3
The J-Milepost, 1960, June 1970-June 1981	5	3

**Series 3:** Photographs, 1886-1978

**Location:** RR.7.4

**Scope:** This series contains photographs of the East Joliet Yard, EJ&E train cars, employees, and rail lines. The photos are organized chronologically. Of note is a picture of the train car President Theodore Roosevelt rode in on the EJ&E when he visited Joliet in 1903. Included in this series is also a scrapbook of photographs and articles from the J-Milepost in relation to EJ&E President Fred W. Okie. The materials in the scrapbook were originally housed in plastic sheets in a 1" binder. For preservation purposes the materials have been transferred to a folder but kept in the original order.

<b>Folder Title:</b>	<b>Folder #:</b>	<b>Box #:</b>
EJ&E Photographs, 1886, 1901-1909	1	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1910-1913, 1919	2	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1920-1928	3	4
EJ&E Photo Album, 1927-1967	4	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1930-1936	5	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1940-1949	6	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1950-1959	7	4
EJ&E Photographs, 1960-1969	8	4
Fred W. Okie Scrapbook, 1964-1972	9	4

EJ&E Photographs, 1970-1973	10	4
EJ&E Train Car Photographs, Undated	11	4
EJ&E Photographs, Undated	12	4

**Series 4: Oversized Materials**

**Location:** CO.OS.01, CO.OS.02

<b>Folder Title:</b>	<b>Series #:</b>	<b>Box #:</b>
EJ&E Blueprints	Series 1	OS.02
EJ&E Train Line Map	Series 1	OS.01
EJ&E Photographs	Series 3	OS.01