

Soldiers' Aid Societies

Many communities, North and South, organized relief or aid societies for their soldiers and also the soldiers' families in need.

The societies were very important, both for the materials they supplied the troops and for the work they did on the home front.

Central Illinois Gazette
November 6, 1861

Central Illinois Gazette
December 4, 1861

The ladies of this vicinity hold a meeting at Bailey's Hall next Thursday at 2 o'clock, P. M., for the purpose of organizing a society for the relief of the soldiers who are sick and wounded. We believe it is their intention to make it a knitting and sewing society. Ladies

"The knitting your grandmothers taught you to do,
With fingers as patient, as yours were unsteady,
The coarse, homely work, long neglected, ignored,
Now rallies your efforts and finds you all ready!

All ready! all forward! come swell the fair ranks;
Dear girls you are knitting the Union together!
There's enough of staunch timber about the old ship;
And you've made up your minds the storm to out
weather."

Soldiers' Relief Society.

Pursuant to notice given, a meeting of the ladies of Champaign was held at Bailey's Hall on Tuesday, the 26th ult., at 2 o'clock p. m., for the purpose of organizing a Soldiers' Relief Society, and the following officers and committees were appointed:

Mrs. A. J. STONE, President;
Mrs. T. A. COSGROVE, Vice President;
Mrs. J. B. MCKINLEY, Secretary;
Mrs. J. S. OLIVER, Treasurer.

COMMITTEE ON SUPPLIES AND WORK.

Mrs. Geo. Hodges, Mrs. L. W. Walker,
Mrs. A. Southwick, Mrs. Bailey, Miss Laura
Crissey, Miss Anna Hashbrouck.

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL BUSINESS.

Mrs. C. W. Angle, Mrs. J. W. Scroggs,
Mrs. D. Gardner, Mrs. L. Hodges, Mrs. Bacon,
Miss S. Vaneoy.

The first regular meeting of this society will be held at Bailey's Hall on Friday the 6th inst., at 6 o'clock p. m.

It is earnestly hoped that all will unite and lend their aid in this worthy effort of our citizens for the relief of our sick and wounded soldiers. The ladies of the society will be pleased to see the gentlemen at 9 o'clock in the evening, and any contributions from them will be thankfully received by the Treasurer.

Champaign, Dec, 3d, 1861.

Urbana Union January 8, 1857

Census of West Urbana.

Census of West Urbana was taken last revealing the fact that there are in the 1202 inhabitants. The last time the Census was taken, in August 1835, about sixteen months since, there were 416 in the town: in sixteen months 786, nearly two hundred per cent. We doubt very much if there is any town in the west that can show as fair a state of things as that. The number of men over four years of age and under twenty is 537.

We are also furnished with the following as a list of the business facilities of the town: Number of houses 234; Dry Goods Stores 6; Clothing Stores 1; Drug Stores 2; Hardware Stores 5; Furniture Stores 2; Shoe Stores 2; Millinery Stores 3; Lumber Yards 6; Saddler Shops 2; Blacksmith shops 2; Warehouses 4; Flouring Mills 1; Saddles 1; Schools 3; Churches 2; Physicians 1; Clergymen 4.

Central Illinois Gazette June 9, 1858

Houses to Rent and Lots for Sale, IN WEST URBANA.

THREE or four houses to rent, suitable for small families. Each house has a handsome Garden Lot fenced, a good well, &c., &c.

For Sale.—Some of the most eligibly situated Lots in the town of West Urbana. Title in fee simple given on ten minutes notice.

For terms apply either to
6 3m

B. F. JOHNSON.
or Dr. C. H. MILLS.

Central Illinois Gazette November 21, 1859

INCREASING POPULATION.—It does not make us feel bad one bit to be compelled to admit that West Urbana is growing but slowly in size and population, for we are able to add "but the prairie is filling up." New farms, that will be in many mines of wealth in the future, are constantly being opened, and old ones being put under a more complete state of cultivation. Our best resources are being developed and our best interests being served. Our young town is growing steadily and surely. Not like too many others, with that spasmodic and feverish rush that is the sure prophet of a future reaction, but with a regular, permanent, and healthy increase. There are, of course no towns in this country that do not keep on hand a full and complete assortment of vacant lots, but so long as our prairie retain their present width this will continue to be the case, and no unfavorable augury can be drawn therefrom. One of these days, we fancy, the nearest vacant lot will only be found by a somewhat lengthened stroll towards the "rural prairie."

Butchering and most farm work was a community activity. As each family helped another accomplish their work, each had enough to eat.

"We butchered in the wintertime. The neighbors helped. There was a big butchering kettle. You would dip the hog, loosen the bristles, scrape the hog. Then you'd wash the kettle out. Cut up the hog, and put the cracklings in the kettle. Boiled the lard out of the cracklings and ate the cracklings. Drained the lard off. Dad would salt the meat down. He used to smoke the meat with hickory. Force the intestines and used casing for the sausage. EWWW Nasty. We forced that meat into the casings."

...Cletus McFadden

People with even the smallest plot of land had a garden during the Depression. Nothing was wasted; canning was essential to preserve food for later use.

Beets, several kinds of lettuce, carrots, celery, strawberries, spinach, red potatoes, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, radishes. You could go through a garden catalogue and we probably had one of everything in there.

...Laura Jordan

We had a rootcellar dugout in the old house. In the new house there was a room in basement for keeping root vegetables. One room held all the canned things.

...Laura Jordan

Here an Illinois woman proudly admires her cellar full of home-canned foods.

"Ralph went to the railroad yard to pick up coal. All trains were coal fired and there were pieces of coal along the tracks. It was heavy to carry home. Folks didn't like it as it was soft coal and smoked a lot. Didn't do for too long. The railroads employed detectives and they would try to stop kids or get run off.

...Maryan Staske

Furnaces and kitchen stoves were fueled with coal in industry and on trains as well as in homes. People frequently searched for scraps of fuel wherever they could.

This boy is gathering coal in a burlap sack at the train yard.

"Storkline made baby furniture. They used to sell cut-off ends of wood to people and it was used as fuel. Ralph would go with his wagon and stand close to where the wood was handed out. When pieces fell off, he would pick it up and put it in his wagon to take home for fuel. Ralph's mother used to use wood to cook with on the stove. One time after he filled his wagon up and was pulling out, a man grabbed his wood and put it in his truck."

...Maryan Staske

**A young man, probably a hobo,
prepares a turtle he has caught in this photo.**

"Those guys would get underneath the boxcars. The stones would fly up and hit them. Mr. Reynolds, he lived down the street here (Gifford), he just left his family and started hitchhiking."

...Cletus McFadden

**Many young men, those
who came of age during
the Great Depression and
did not previously have a
job, left home so
as not to be a burden
to their families.**

"An uncle had come from Southern Illinois had come to visit. He brought a tie bar with a picture of a dog on it for my birthday and he explained to my mother and I, how he had come. He had rode under the boxcars... He was ahold of some bars under the car and held on to them and rode along that way."

...Howard Little

**They traveled by
railroad illegally
and went from town
to town looking for
work.**