



Appendix

General Dean Suspension Bridge (Pictured Above)

This bridge was built in 1859 at a cost of \$40,000 and used for nearly seventy years. Previously, travelers at Carlyle crossed the Kaskaskia River by ferry or on a mud bridge supported by logs. The Historic American Buildings Survey recognized the architectural significance of this bridge in 1950 and recommended its preservation. In 1951 the State Legislature appropriated \$20,000 for restoration work. The bridge was named in honor of Major General William F. Dean, a Korean War hero and Carlyle native, in 1953. As of 1976 this was the only suspension bridge in Illinois.

Clinton County Historical Museum

Built in the late 1800s as a private home, the museum holds many artifacts from the area, including genealogical material, books and periodicals on the history of the county. 1091 Franklin St. 618-594-4015

Veterans Memorial

The Veterans Memorial located at the southeast corner of the Clinton County Courthouse Square, stands in honor of the Clinton County veterans who served over time, securing freedom for this country.

A. Brief History of Carlyle¹

The Beginning

It appears that Carlyle owes its creation to the existence of the Goshen Trail, a road stretching from Alton, Illinois to Shawneetown on the Ohio River. The Goshen Trail was a worn path that bisected Carlyle as it currently exists, and it made use of a ford that spanned the Kaskaskia River.

¹The history of Carlyle detailed in this Plan is taken from the following works:

The Annals of Carlyle, Illinois: 1809-1956. (1956). The History Committee of the Carlyle Community Development Program. Dr. J.Q. Roane, Chairman & Dr. Mima Maxey, Editor.

History of Marion and Clinton Counties, Illinois. (1881). Brink, McDonough & Co., Philadelphia.

A Bridge to the Past. (1994). Heritage House Publishing, Marceline, MO.

Carlyle Lake History, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

www.mvs.usace.army.mil/carlyle/history/history_splash.htm.

In 1811 or 1812 a man named John Hill built one of several “block” houses along the Goshen Trail, located at what is currently 201 Fairfax Street. The houses were reportedly built to serve as a line of defense against Native Americans. John Hill built what became the first house to be located in what Carlyle has become. He also established what could be considered Carlyle’s first business: a ferry to carry traffic across the Kaskaskia River, including a small shelter at the River which served as a toll house.

In 1816 Charles Slade and two of his brothers reached the John Hill settlement and bought him out. Charles farmed the land, took over the ferry, and within a year partnered with a man named Hubbard to start the first store, a mercantile business located at what is now 301 Fairfax Street. In 1818, a man named Calvin Barnes laid out town lots. On March 10, 1819 a post office was first established under the name Carlisle, Illinois. This spelling might have been a clerical error.

Settlement of this land predated statehood for Illinois, however, Illinois had already been created as a territory by act of U.S. Congress (1809). Illinois did not officially become a state until 1818, six to seven years after John Hill had already built his establishment. Illinois’ first state capitol was located in Kaskaskia, but in 1820 the State decided that it should be moved. Carlisle lost to Vandalia by one vote which was cast by a man named Andrew Bankson, a citizen of the jurisdiction that would become Clinton County. In 1824, the State of Illinois created Clinton County by carving it out of Washington, Bond, and Fayette Counties. Carlisle was to be the county seat should land be donated for this purpose. Charles Slade donated 20 acres of property so that the county seat would be located in Carlisle.

In 1828 the spelling of our City was changed from Carlisle to its present spelling, presumably, by Charles Slade who was postmaster at this time. By January 1837, 167 people were found to be living in the Carlyle settlement.

Incorporation of the City of Carlyle

Either on January 10 or 11, 1837 Carlyle was incorporated as a town and John M. Webster, Esq. was unanimously chosen as town president. J. Bradley was chosen clerk. The public notice which announced the schedule and purpose of the incorporation meeting stated that, “the town of Carlyle has been troubled with diverse nuisances, such as hogs, dogs, etc.” The town’s first council was elected on January 17, 1837. The leading vote-getter was Franklin Hervey, who received 16 votes and was elected. Four other councilmen were elected to join Hervey, and they were John M. Webster, John Scott, Zophar Case, and William Collins.

Historical references available for this narrative do not provide much information regarding the dealings of the Carlyle government between 1837 and 1884, a period of approximately 47 years. However, the town’s charter was apparently amended in 1853 and again in 1865 because State law changed to increase the powers of Carlyle’s municipal government. A town hall was built in 1879.

The current form of the Carlyle municipal government was authorized by referendum held on April 18, 1884. At this time, three wards were created to be represented by two aldermen each. An office of the mayor was created, including offices of the clerk, treasurer, city attorney, and street superintendent. Darius Kingsbury was elected the first mayor of Carlyle.

In 1885 and 1886, the Carlyle government undertook an expansion of the sewer system and the creation of a water work's system respectively. In 1878, Carlyle began financing the construction of boardwalk and brick sidewalks. In 1880, Carlyle purchased its first fire engine at a cost of \$100. In 1882, the position of lamplighter was created paying a salary of \$9.70 per month. In 1884, a new fire engine was purchased at the price of \$1,099 and a fire department was formed. In 1885, Mayor Kingsbury made an annual report to the Carlyle Council in which he recommended that individuals be required to break rock for use in constructing streets if they refused to pay fines levied them. By 1892, electric lights were being constructed in Carlyle, and by 1894, Carlyle obtained ownership of the water work's system. J.G. Taylor was made superintendent of the water plant, and he was paid \$60 per month. In 1898, the town authorized three telephone companies to operate within Carlyle's corporate limits.

By 1900, Carlyle began contemplating the establishment of its own power plant. George Schilling was employed as the first superintendent of the Power House. He worked from 6:00 in the morning to 6:00 in the evening, and he made \$45 per month. Carlyle residents who received power were initially charged a minimum rate of \$1.00 per month with the actual rate depending on the number of lights installed in each home (\$0.17 cents for each of the first ten lights, for example).

By 1909, the brick and wooden sidewalks were being replaced by concrete, "granitoid" sidewalks. In 1914, an ordinance was passed allowing women to vote in Carlyle elections; they cast their first municipal votes in 1918.

The Suspension/Swinging/General Dean Bridge

Noted as the crowning event of the era, Clinton County commissioned the construction of what was then called the Suspension Bridge. The Bridge was meant to replace use of the ford, a ferry, and wooden bridge that had already been put to use for crossing the Kaskaskia River but which was supposedly broken by a circus troupe. The original cost of the Bridge was \$45,000 and was constructed by Griffith D. Smith of Pennsylvania. Clinton County called for the construction of the Bridge to be 280 feet from tower to tower, which would be 35 feet in height and be used as anchors for the cables to hold up the bridge. The bridge was built in 1859 and was opened for traffic in 1860. Use of the bridge was free to residents of Clinton County, but non-residents were required to pay a toll.

A sign was affixed to the Bridge which read, word for word, as follows:

“Warning: this bridge is unsafe for anyone crossing with heavy loads does so at his own risk. Anyone driving horses faster than a walk or an automobile faster than 10 miles an hour will be prosecuted. Ben Kiffmeyer, Highway Comm.”

Despite this warning, the Bridge is said to have experienced several “weight tests.” The wooden floor of the bridge was seen to cave into the shape of a half moon and the cables were squeaking during the stampede of seventy head of cattle across the bridge. During the 1911 oil boom (discussed below), the bridge was further stressed as heavy drilling equipment was brought to town for drilling. The floor of the Suspension Bridge finally broke in 1913 when the driver of a heavy truck heading westbound stopped in the middle of the bridge when it started to give way. An attempt was made to pull the truck across the bridge to safety, but this could not be done before it eventually fell to the shores of the Kaskaskia. A man was in the truck trying to drag it across when it collapsed. He fell with the truck to the shores, but was not killed, only badly injured.

The Suspension Bridge floor was reconstructed allowing the bridge to reopen. However, available text on the matter mentions the bridge ultimately “broke” in October of 1920. The State of Illinois financed the reconstruction of the bridge but at a new location about three hundred feet south of the Suspension Bridge, in the location of the current Bridge. It was opened for traffic in 1925 over the ford of the Kaskaskia River, part of the Goshen Trail, which brought travelers to what has become Carlyle.

The new Suspension Bridge was constructed in a manner which allowed the ends of the Bridge to swing along the stone abutments at either end. The ability to swing the Bridge in such a manner caused Carlyle residents to call it the “Swinging Bridge.” Residents who were fortunate to live during this time tell stories of causing the bridge to swing unexpectedly for people who happened to be strolling across it.

Only 21 years later in 1946, the Carlyle Suspension Bridge Restoration Bridge Association was formed to help raise money for its restoration because of its rapid disintegration. In 1951, Illinois Representatives Edwin Haag, “a former Carlyle boy,” and Robert Branson sponsored legislation to appropriate \$20,000 towards restoration of the Bridge. Governor Adlai Stevenson approved the appropriation. By November 1953, restoration of the Bridge was substantially complete, and it was decided to name the structure the General Dean Memorial Bridge in honor of William Frisch Dean, a former Carlyle resident and World War II and Korean War hero. Approximately 30,000 people are said to have attended the November 1953 dedication of the Bridge, which General Dean also attended.

Today, the General Dean Memorial Bridge is still called the “Swinging Bridge” by some. It still stands overlooking fishermen on the banks of the Kaskaskia and greeting drivers as they leave or enter Carlyle on Old U.S. Route 50 near Carlyle’s eastern corporate limits. The General Dean Bridge is listed on the National Historic Registry and is the only suspension bridge of its kind in Illinois.

[A History of Business in Carlyle \(1811-1900\)](#)

Earlier, this narrative discusses that the first business established in what has become Carlyle may be considered the ferry and toll house built by John Hill in 1811 or 1812. Charles Slade and his partner Hubbard established the land's first store, a mercantile business, in 1816 or 1817.

After these first businesses, Charles Slade built the Water Flouring Mill in 1829 and rebuilt it in 1831 after it was destroyed by fire. The Mill was reportedly one of the best in the area, and it was located on the Kaskaskia. In 1833, a brick house was built at 250 Fairfax Street by John Scott. It housed Scott's Tavern and a hotel, or stage stand, and it had the reputation of being the best place to stay between St. Louis and Vincennes, Indiana.

Clinton County's first newspaper was published in Carlyle on November 14, 1843 under the name "The Carlyle Beacon." Newspapers in Carlyle were printed under various names, including the "Carlyle Truth-teller," "The Prairie Flower," and "Age of Progress." A Carlyle newspaper was not known as the "Union Banner" until 1863.

In 1855, the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad was built through Clinton County, but it was not opened for business until 1857. In 1866, the Carlyle City Flouring Mills opened its doors on the O&M Railroad. The flour it manufactured was valued at \$200,000 annually in 1881, and the mill employed 30 men. Mineral Water Manufactory was established in 1869 on 11th Street between Fairfax and Franklin where it bottled mineral water. John Koch & Co. was a furniture manufacturer established in 1874, which gave employment to three men.

The Blacksmith and Wagon Manufacturer was started in the summer of 1878 to manufacture wagons and plows. The Cigar Manufactory was established in 1877 on the corner of 12th & Franklin Streets. It had the capacity to make 200,000 cigars a year, valued at \$5,000 made by six men. Another cigar manufacturer is said to have been located in Carlyle, the Kueper Cigar Factory, although this one is said to have started in 1890. The Kueper Factory manufactured cigars named "La Caroline," "Katy Lee," "Cinch," and "Snow Flake." The Factory reportedly produced 15,000 cigars in a month's time by employing four workers. The Lumber Mill was established in 1880, and it employed eight men producing lumber valued at \$9,000 annually. A grain elevator was also constructed in 1880 with the capacity of storing 50,000 bushels of grain valued at \$10,000.

The first bank that is reported to be established in Carlyle was the Bank of Rufus N. Ramsay (1871), situated on the corner of 8th and Franklin Streets. It contained a fire-proof vault and a burglar-proof safe, and in 1881 it estimated its capital stock to be valued between \$75,000 and \$125,000. Another bank was established in 1879, the Schlafly Bros. Bank, and located on the corner of 9th & Fairfax Streets. The capital stock of the bank in 1881 was estimated to be \$100,000.

Started in the late 1890s, the Carlyle Paper Mill was making paper made from straw that was purchased from local farms. Carlyle Mayor J.W. Means was one of the several town residents who helped to raise cash to ensure that the plant opened. Initially, it employed

60 people. The Alton Boxboard Company bought out the Mill and made paper from wood pulp.

(1900-1949)

As early as 1909, the first automobile garage was opened by Lawrence Schilling. The second was opened by August Beckemeyer at 18th and Fairfax Streets. In April of 1911, the first oil well of the area was drilled northwest of Carlyle. This created a “boom” for the Carlyle economy causing streets, hotels, restaurants, and the telephone office located at 8th and Fairfax to be filled with people. The boom was over by 1913, but wells still operated.

Around 1925, U.S. Route 50 was paved through Carlyle. The State of Illinois paved the streets as they passed through the town, and Carlyle paved it from the curb to where the State pavement ended. Pavement of State Route 127, also known as the Black Diamond Trail, was completed north of Carlyle by the summer of 1928. Around 1956, a traffic study conducted showed that an average of 1,350 vehicles traveled east on Route 50 at the intersection with State Route 127 (12th Street) every 24 hours, and 690 cars traveled along Route 127 at the same intersection over a 24 hour period.

In 1922 E.J. Moran and sons established the Moran Shoe Factory. Their expanded facility was located at the intersection of 9th and Methodist Streets. The company manufactured the popular Wee Walker children’s shoes in a 26,000 square foot facility which employed 300 people at one time.

In 1946, Kemco Incorporated located at 17th and Jefferson Streets and made electrical switches. In 1949, the Prairie Farms Creamery, Inc. was built at 19th and Franklin Streets. Milk was brought to this location and sent onto Carlinville where it was bottled.

Construction of Carlyle Lake

Because of frequent flooding of the area adjacent to the Kaskaskia River, a group of Clinton County citizens formed the Kaskaskia River Valley Project in 1933 to discuss solutions to the flooding problems. Their work led them to the idea for construction of what has become Carlyle Lake. The Flood Control Act of 1938 was enacted by the federal government which authorized the construction of a lake at Carlyle. However, commencement of World War II temporarily halted construction of the reservoir.

Interest was revived in the 1950s, in part, by an attorney, Eldon E. Hazlet. His interest to reopen the possibility for a lake at Carlyle caused him to form the Kaskaskia Valley Association for the purpose of convincing the public of the need for the lake. He got his support.

In 1957, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed a comprehensive plan for the Kaskaskia River Project. The Carlyle project, including one at Shelbyville, was again authorized by the federal government through the Flood Control Act of 1958. Construction began in October of that year. The U.S. government proceeded to purchase 26,000 acres of property for the lake itself, in addition to property for flowage easement

(an area which the Corps has the right to flood when controlling water that passes through the Carlyle Lake Dam). The Carlyle Lake Project was completed in April of 1967 and the Dam was dedicated in June of the same year.

At normal pool, Carlyle Lake is 15 miles long and 3.5 miles wide, covering 26,000 acres. It is Illinois' largest man-made lake. Although the Lake was built for flood control, today, it is widely known as a place for outdoor recreation. Carlyle Lake is recognized as one of the United States' top-ten inland sailing lakes. Today, the Lake is home to the Carlyle Sailing Association which holds several regattas throughout any given year. The Lake has also been the site for important, national regattas sponsored by the U.S. Yacht Racing Union (Championship of Champions in 1976 and 1993) and the U.S. Olympic Sailing Teams (U.S. Olympic Festival in 1994). There are not too many places in the Midwest, outside of the Great Lakes, where so many sail boats can be seen enjoying the prevailing winds at Carlyle.

The Lake is also quite popular for campers, fishermen, hunters, and boaters. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports that Lake facilities receive 3 million visits in any given year.