

EARLY TRANSPORTATION  
ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY

Early transportation in Normandy was by horse, horse and wagon or by carriage. A trip into St. Louis over the dusty or muddy roads could take the better part of a day.

An interesting phase of early St. Louis transportation was the Narrow Gauge Railroad. This was a steam railroad of narrow gauge--three feet between rails--with small engines and cars. The railroad began at Grand and Olive and ran over the right-of-way later used by the Hodiament streetcar line. This idea was originally promoted by Erastus Wells, who had recently purchased land on St. Charles Rock Road, and James C. Page, a physician, who also owned land nearby. The line started out as St. Louis and Florissant Railroad, and then the West End Narrow Gauge Railroad reached to Florissant on September 1, 1878.

Let us take a trip on this railroad--the rapid transit of the day. If, by chance, the car jumps the track, the gentlemen on board will be expected to lift it back onto the rails. (Early 1890's, the Narrow Gauge was electrified and changed its name to the Suburban Railway.)

But let's go back to the 1870's. All aboard!!

In the Normandy area, the Narrow Gauge Railroad ran to "Wellston Station", so named because it was near property owned by the Erastus Wells family. Next we would travel to Natural Bridge Road and would see the Charles McCune home, called "Pine Lawn". The home of the family of Governor David R. Francis was just west of this. Some distance to the northwest was the residence of David Goodfellow. At this point, the Narrow Gauge Railroad turned to the west to pass the home of Jefferson R. Clark, called "Minoma" (Sweet Water in Indian language). This was built on part of the large holdings of William Clark, of the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

The next station is near Ingleside, home of William H. Glasgow, later sold to William Horgadine; and nearby to the south is George R. Taylor's place. Our next stop is west of the estate of John O'Fallon. We travel through Normandy and see the homes of Thomas D. Turner, then Anne Lucas Hunt's Home "The Shelter". Next are the homes of Henry V. and William Lucas. Passing Carsonville, and the Kent, Henderson and January homes, we enter the domain of the Mullanphy family. The end of the Railroad was Florissant. Most of the families mentioned can be placed on our survey map.

With the arrival of public transportation, our area "opened up" and subdivisions began to spring up along the railroad routes. The Normandy Wedge, the area at the intersection of Natural Bridge and Florissant Road, has been "historic" since Civil War days. A toll house for the plank road was in this area. The Narrow Gauge Railroad also made a station stop at the Wedge. At this time you could travel from Grand Avenue on Olive Street to Florissant. Later, when the Narrow Gauge was electrified, it was believed to be the longest electrified line in the country.

It was also possible to travel by the Wabash Railway and a horse-drawn car that ran out St. Charles Rock Road to Lucas & Hunt. The old "Midland Denky" electric streetcar line ran up Page from Hodiament Avenue to the

Creve Coeur Car line. This line furnished transportation for the Lincoln and Washington Schools community. In 1930, the "Denky" was discontinued and Page Avenue was widened.

The old Creve Coeur Streetcar Line served the area of Harrison School. It traveled from the present-day Delmar Loop to the Creve Coeur Amusement Park, a distance of some 12 miles.