

# Long Grove Times

Long Grove Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

September 2010

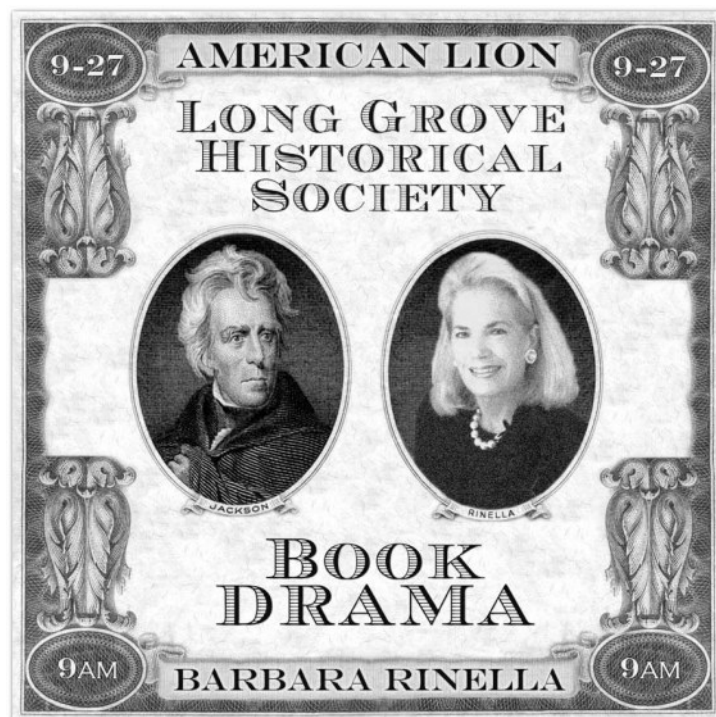
## Trivially Speaking...

If you live in Long Grove and you've noticed what seems to be a lot of space between you and your neighbor - you're right. At just over 12 square miles in size, Long Grove is the 52nd largest town in Illinois (area wise), and the 5th largest in Lake County (only Waukegan, Lake Forrest, Gurnee, and Highland Park are bigger). Actually, according to the 2000 census, Long Grove has the lowest population density of any developed mid-size town (over 6000 people) in Illinois. Other contenders for the Illinois low density title would be Godfrey (lower density, but it's a new town that isn't developed yet) and Barrington Hills (lower density, but at 3915 people doesn't meet my definition of mid-size :-). It will be interesting to see how this changes with the new 2010 census data when it comes out.

## BREAKFAST & A BOOK

The Long Grove Historical Society's Annual Book Dramatization and Breakfast will be held on September 27th, at 9:00am at the Arboretum Club (401 South Half Day Road in Buffalo Grove).

This year's event will again be performed by Barbara Rinella. Her performance will be based on the book - "American Lion, Andrew Jackson in the White House", by author Jon Meacham. Tickets are \$30 per person and include Barbara's performance and a buffet breakfast.



Tickets may be purchased by contacting Marie Borg at 847-438-7656.

As the son of impoverished Irish immigrants with no formal education, Andrew Jackson was the first "common man" to be elected President. His predecessor, John Quincy Adams, described him as "a barbarian who could not write a sentence of grammar, and hardly could spell his own name." This may have inspired one of Jackson's more famous quotes: "It is a poor mind indeed which can't think of at least two ways to spell a word". In addition to being featured on our current \$20 bill, his image has previously been used on the \$5, \$10 and \$50 bills over the years.

## Mark Your Calendars

- **Wednesday, Sept. 22 at 7pm,** September Program—Interest Groups Kickoff at Reed Turner Woodlands
- **Monday, Sept. 27 at 9am,** Barbara Rinella Book Dramatization and Breakfast
- **Friday, Oct. 22, at 1pm,** Long Grove Lurid Legends repeat performance at Ela Library



## All About Us...



The Long Grove Historical Society is a 501C3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and disseminate the history of the Long Grove area. Annual membership is available for a donation of \$30 (individual), \$50 (family), or \$100 (sustaining). Members receive our quarterly newsletter as well as access to a variety of events held throughout the year. To become a member, send your donation to Georgia Cawley, LGHS Membership, 4509 RFD, Long Grove, IL 60047, along with your name, address, telephone number, email. If you have any special interests, skills, or things you'd be interested in volunteering to help out with, be sure to let us know that as well.

### 2009 2011 Board

Angie Underwood, President  
Laurie Borawski, Vice President  
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Ann Dickson, Past President  
Aaron Underwood, Communications  
Bob Borg, Buildings & Maintenance  
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Tina Mall, Curator  
Marie Borg, Ways & Means  
Lori Lyman, Landscaping  
Lee Bassett, Village Board Liaison

The Society was formed in March, 1974, to accept the Drexler Tavern building as a gift. A joint project with the Village Board made possible the relocation of the tavern to a site behind the current Kildeer Country-side School. Today we know the building not as Drexler Tavern, but simply as Village Hall. Two additional structures have also been relocated to this area—one of the area's one room schoolhouses, Archer School, and a mid-1800's barn, Ruth Barn. The school and the barn form the core of the program we run each year for our local schools, so that our children can experience first hand what life used to be like in Long Grove. Last, but not least, a mid-1800's farm house was relocated to an area bordering the southwest corner of the Stemple Parking lot. "The Farm-house", as we refer to it, houses our archives, a meeting room, and several restored "period" rooms that we open occasionally for tours. In addition to maintaining the above properties and our educational programs, we actively acquire items of local historic interest for our archives and conduct a variety of historical programs for current residents. We receive no tax dollars and exist solely from your contributions and our own fundraising efforts.

*Thank you for your support!*

**Historical Society News...** Pictorial highlights of this past quarter include hosting a stop on the Long Grove Garden Club's Garden Walk and a trek to the remote Gridley Cemetery.



# From the President's Desk

Comments from Society President Angie Underwood

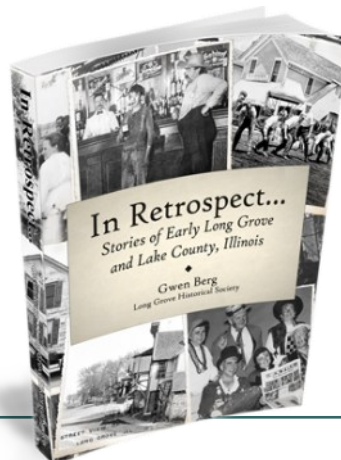
## *A Love of History and a Sense of Community.*

These are two of the reasons why I became involved with the Long Grove Historical Society over a decade ago. Our group was founded back in the 1970's to help preserve the buildings, artifacts, and stories of a rural farming community that was rapidly changing. The current board has continued these goals, with an eye towards education and programming that has helped bring our heritage alive in the past year. Perhaps you were among the 200-plus community members en-



tertained (or scared!) at our *Long Grove Lurid Legends* presentation last October? Or did you enjoy listening to your neighbors recount stories of growing up and times-gone-by at one of our Fireside Chats? I hope you have found time this summer to read several

chapters courtesy of Gwen Berg from our new book, *In Retrospect: Stories of Early Long Grove and Lake County, Illinois*.



If you have enjoyed our activities this past year, rest assured that we have much more in store for the year ahead! But we can't do it without your support. The Long Grove Historical Society is a volunteer organization, and our funding comes entirely from donations by community members. If you have time and talents that you would like to contribute to the society—we welcome your involvement. If you



can only support us monetarily at this time, we thank you for that as well.

Our newsletter, the *Long Grove Times* features many articles and tidbits to indulge your love of history. A strong sense of community can be found in our Historical Society, and I invite you to become a part of it this year.





# "22 LOOP" CHICAGO AND VICINITY

## Treasure Maps

In 1931, if you used the term "the LOOP" to refer to a part of Chicagoland, it would likely have been

assumed you were referring to the "22 Loop" - a state highway that was planned to be an outer loop of the greater Chicago area. The 1931 & 1932 official Illinois

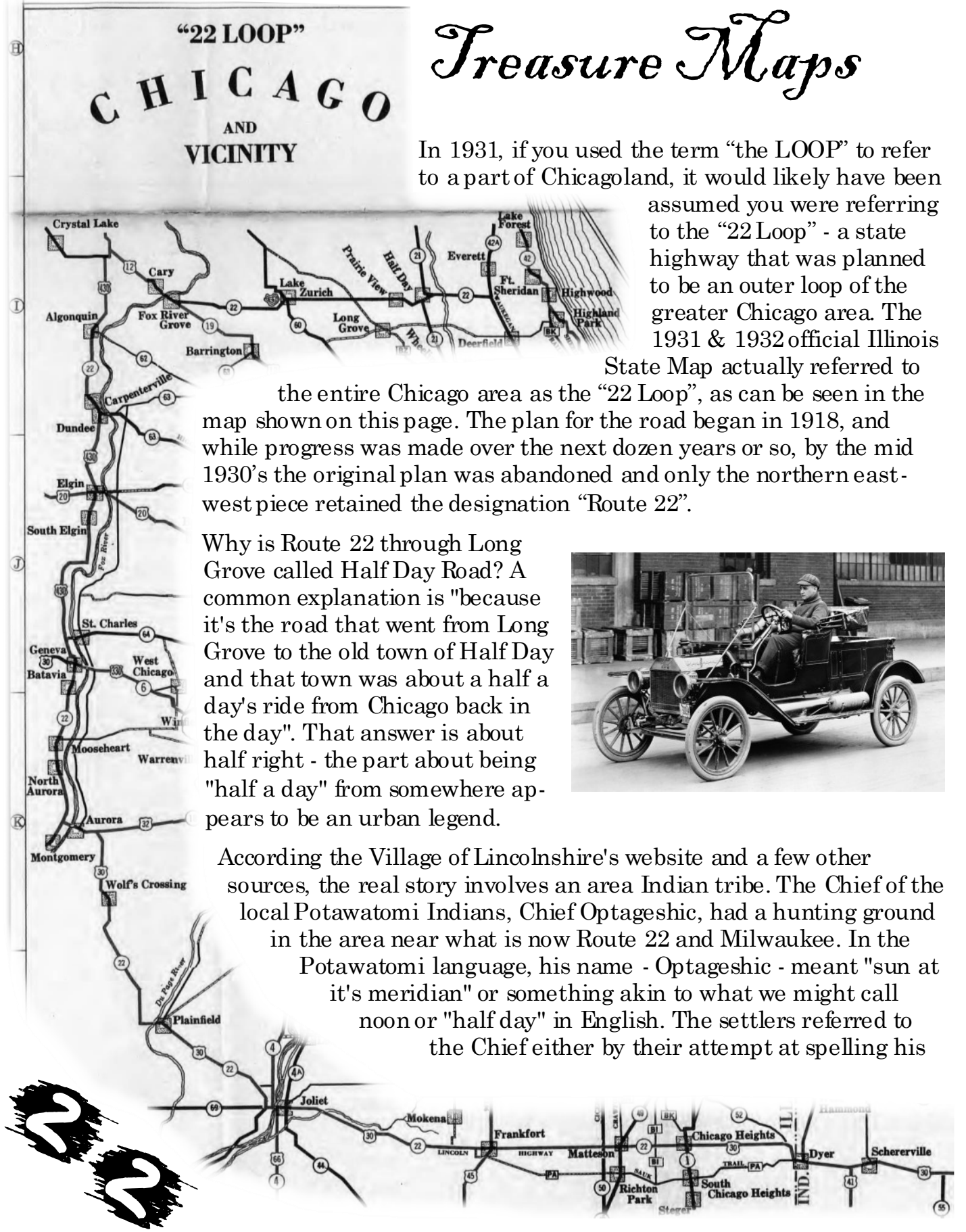
State Map actually referred to

the entire Chicago area as the "22 Loop", as can be seen in the map shown on this page. The plan for the road began in 1918, and while progress was made over the next dozen years or so, by the mid 1930's the original plan was abandoned and only the northern east-west piece retained the designation "Route 22".

Why is Route 22 through Long Grove called Half Day Road? A common explanation is "because it's the road that went from Long Grove to the old town of Half Day and that town was about a half a day's ride from Chicago back in the day". That answer is about half right - the part about being "half a day" from somewhere appears to be an urban legend.



According the Village of Lincolnshire's website and a few other sources, the real story involves an area Indian tribe. The Chief of the local Potawatomi Indians, Chief Optageshic, had a hunting ground in the area near what is now Route 22 and Milwaukee. In the Potawatomi language, his name - Optageshic - meant "sun at it's meridian" or something akin to what we might call noon or "half day" in English. The settlers referred to the Chief either by their attempt at spelling his



# Treasure Maps

name (say it a few times - see if you can guess what other local place is named for the Chief) or by using the words that equated to its meaning -

"Chief Half Day". Over time, as it got passed around between the settlers, "Chief Half Day" was apparently shortened to "Chief Halfda" or "Chief Hafda".

When local officials filed for the county's first post office, to be located near modern day Route 22 & Milwaukee Road, they requested the name Hafda. When the request was received by the government, it was assumed the name was a spelling mistake and the name was changed to the proper English words "Half Day". Perhaps because there was some truth to the spelling issue, the local applicants did not protest and simply adopted the name Half Day for the post office and the town.

Why would Chief Half Day's parents have given him that name? One theory is that Potawatami parents would often choose something relating to a remarkable event or happening observed on the day of birth. You could speculate that calling him Half Day referred to his birth having occurred at exactly noon.

Whatever happened to Chief Half Day? In the 1830's as settlement increased in Indiana and Illinois, settlers became increasingly nervous about living in such close proximity to native Americans. They lobbied the government to do something to control and prevent possible uprisings. A series of treaties, some signed by Chief Half Day, led to the Potawatomi being forcibly relocated further west. Locals here were sad to see Chief Half Day leave—he was very well liked and respected in this area. After a brief relocation to near Kansas City, the chief ended up near Elmont, Kansas (just north of Topeka). A bit further north, near Mayetta, Kansas, exists today the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Reservation, which is home to about 5000 tribal members.

Apparently, the Chief was as memorable and as well liked in Kansas as he was here. A creek there is named in his honor (Half Day Creek), as is the cemetery where he is buried—Half Day Cemetery. The funny thing is, if you Google the origins of this creek and cemetery, you'll find a story that involves their location "being a half a day away" from that Potawatomi Reservation in Mayetta.





# ARTIFACT EXPLORED



**Fifty Six Years Ago...** A photo of William Umbdenstock taken in July of 1954, when the forty foot tall "Long Grove Flag Pole" was dedicated. William couldn't stand in that same spot on Towner Green today—the flag pole is surrounded by a shrub and a bench/sculpture. Note what appears to be a cornfield and trees in the background where today exists a road and shops.

An interesting local artifact that's always on display in downtown Long Grove is the flag pole on Towner Green. From the Gossweiler Family History compiled by Emma Gossweiler—"When communism overran Northern Viet Nam in 1954, William Umbdenstock wanted to erect a flag pole in memory of his father, Mathias Umbdenstock, who was a Civil War Veteran. The flag pole was erected on July 4th, 1954 in the center of town."

Here's the local "lore" about the flag pole. It wasn't just any old flag pole... it was the flag pole from Norma Sales' farmhouse, which was located near the intersection of Long Grove Road and Middleton Road. Norma was the long time owner of the Village Tavern, across the street from where the flag pole now stands. At one time it was closer to 100 feet in height. A lighting strike on Norma's farm is said to have damaged it and caused it to be reduced to its more modest size. Norma acquired her farm and its gigantic flag pole from "Terrible Terry" Drugan, who ran the Irish "Valley Gang" in Chicago during prohibition times. Why such a big flagpole? It was visible from Rand Road (a mile away) and was used as a signal to alert Terry if someone was looking for him—flag at the top meant it was ok to come home, flag at half mast meant stay away.



The 1931 James Cagney movie, "The Public Enemy" is based on "Terrible Terry" Drugan.

# Pay Your Dues

It's that time of year—time to join up again for another year of membership. The Long Grove Historical Society is a 501C3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and disseminate the history of the Long Grove area. If you have any special interests, skills, or talents, be sure to let us know that as well.

Please complete the form below, cut along the dotted line, enclose a check made payable to Long Grove Historical Society, and mail back to:

Long Grove Historical Society  
C/O Georgia Cawley  
4509 RFD  
Long Grove, IL 60047

- ☐ \$30 Individual Membership  
☐ \$100 Sustaining Membership  
☐ \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other Membership

- ☐ \$50 Family Membership  
☐ \$500 Patron Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Thank You For Your Support!



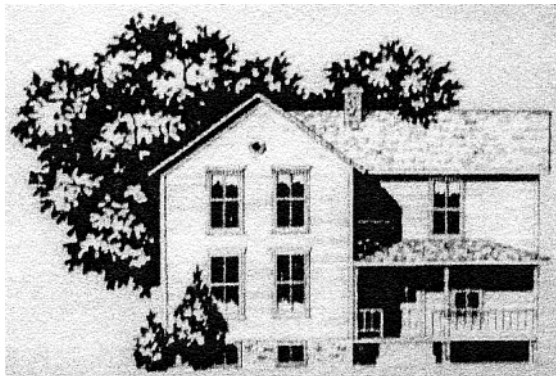
## INTEREST GROUPS FORMED!

Our September program will be an "Interest Group Kick-off Night" on Wednesday evening, September 22nd, from 7:00-8:30 pm at Reed-Turner Nature Center. Due to positive response, we will be starting two new groups this year, one to focus on Genealogy, and the other to be a Historical Book Discussion Group. We decided to

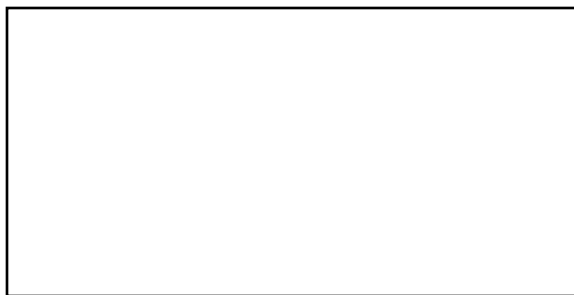
move the planned daytime program (after the board meeting) to the evening, in an effort to draw more participation from members and residents. The first half-hour will feature a short discussion of the book "American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House" by Jon Meacham. We will decide future titles to be discussed, and how we want the book group to be organized going forward.

Following this, the Genealogy interest group will be launched with a short talk given by Aaron Underwood on "DNA and Your Family History." Those members interested in participating can meet after the presentation to organize future meetings of the interest group. Participation in either of these groups will be casual and optional. Regardless of your plans to join one or both of these groups going forward, I hope you will come to the kick-off night to hear and see what they have to offer. Refreshments will be served!





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## OLDE PHRASES...

There are many old phrases and idioms that just didn't survive the test of time—phrases that you just don't hear much anymore. A few examples I came across recently:

“bone orchard” - a graveyard  
 “bend an elbow” - to have a drink  
 “crowbait” - an old horse

“fight like Kilkenny cats” - to have a vicious fight

Hmm... I get all of those except that last one—why are cats from Kilkenny, Ireland so ferocious? Turns out there are a few ideas on where this expression came from. Most involve a fable about two cats fighting each other such that when they were done, only two tails were left. An elaboration on this story involves soldiers stationed in Kilkenny in the late 1700's. To relieve boredom they liked to stage and wager on cat fights. The fighting involved tying the cat's tails together and hanging the cats over a line. This practice was frowned upon, not only by the cats, but by the military as well. Apparently, during one such gambling session, the soldiers and their illicit activity were discovered by a wandering officer. The soldiers, in a mad rush to conceal their activities, “released” the cats from the

*There once were two cats of Kilkenny  
 Each thought there was one cat too many  
 So they fought and they fit  
 And they scratched and they bit  
 'Til (excepting their nails  
 And the tips of their tails)  
 Instead of two cats there weren't any!*

line by quickly slicing their tails off with a sword. Sensing what had been going on and seeing the cat tails, the officer demanded an accounting. The soldiers explained that the two cats had fought so hard that they had eaten each other—leaving only their tails. Modern day evidence of this tale includes the Kilkenny hurling and football teams who are named “the Cats” - a commemorative stamp in their honor is shown at right. There's even an old limerick dedicated to this phrase—shown to the left.

