

## ***Cleveland, Akron & Columbus Railroad***

Incorporated as the Akron branch of the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad Company, March 17, 1851. The initial authorization was for construction from Hudson to Wooster or another point on the Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroad. Construction began in June 1851 and a portion of the line finally opened in 1854.

It was operated as the Akron branch until 1853, when the name was changed to Cleveland, Zanesville and Cincinnati Railroad Company. It operated from Hudson to Millersburg, 61 miles. The railroad was planned to extend south to Coshocton and Zanesville.

In August, 1861, suit was brought to foreclose the mortgage and a receiver was appointed, who operated the road until November 2, 1864, when the entire property was sold to Geo. W. Cass and John J. Marvin. On July 1, 1865, these parties conveyed the property to the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Railway Company, which company owned and operated the road until June 27, 1869, when it was leased in perpetuity to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

On November 4, 1869, the entire line from Hudson to coal mines south of Millersburg (65 miles) was sold to the Pittsburgh, Mt. Vernon, Columbus and London Railroad along with the assignment of the lease of the Cleveland and Massillon (12.5 miles from Clinton to Massillon). The P. Mt.V., C. & L. had already purchased the portion of the Springfield, Mt. Vernon and Pittsburgh Railroad (partially graded) extending east from Delaware through Mt. Vernon toward Millersburg on August 31, 1867. Some maps of the period show this line completed between Mt. Liberty and Delaware with a branch extending south to Columbus. Whether the main line to Delaware was ever really completed is unclear. It was no longer on maps published in the 1880's.

On December 20, 1869 the name of the company was changed to the Cleveland, Mt. Vernon & Delaware Railroad.

On December 17, 1872, a supplemental certificate was filed to build the Dresden Branch from the main line in Holmes County to Dresden in Coshocton County.

The main line (originally referred to as a branch from Mt. Liberty to Columbus) was completed between Millersburg and Columbus and trains began running to Columbus on September 1, 1873. The Dresden branch was completed in 1888 including a 1,500' tunnel near Tunnel Hill. The branch extended from Killbuck to Trinway with trackage rights to Dresden and Zanesville.

An 1874 stockholders investigating committee expressed the opinion that it would have been better to build into the coal fields south of Millersburg than build to Columbus and complete another connection between Cincinnati and Cleveland.

On September 28, 1881 the C.,Mt.V.&D. went into the hands of a receiver. On the 9th of June,

1882, the road was sold to the Cleveland, Akron and Columbus Railroad Company.

The road was purchased by Calvin S. Brice and his associates, and upon his death, the stock passed into the hands of the Pennsylvania Company, but no transfer of the property was made and the road operated independently. The Pennsylvania Company took control of the property in May 1899.

The C.,A.&C. was operated as the Akron Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad until it was incorporated into the Cleveland and Columbus Divisions in the 1930's.

The Apple Creek Branch of 9.42 miles (Kramore Junction to West Lebanon) was constructed in 1902, partly by the Ashland and Western Railway Company. The Howard Branch (Howard to Millwood White Sand Quarry) of 4.22 miles was constructed in 1906. Also in operation in 1906 was the Turkey Foot Coal Branch from the main line to coal mines, 2.81 miles.

On July 1, 1911, the Cleveland, Akron & Columbus and the Cincinnati & Muskingum Valley (connecting with C.,A.&C. Dresden Branch at Trinway) were consolidated to form the Cleveland, Akron & Cincinnati Railway Company.

On June 7, 1924 The C.,A.&C was consolidated with other railroads into the Pennsylvania, Ohio and Detroit Railroad Company, approved by the ICC on December 12, 1924. As under the previous ownership, the road was leased to the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Passenger service on the Dresden branch was discontinued in 1931. The southern part of the branch from the tunnel (south of Warsaw) to Trinway was approved for abandonment in 1936 after August 1935 flooding damaged the right-of-way. The 1,500' tunnel near Tunnel Hill had already been closed for a couple of years due to unsafe conditions. The caved in tunnel remains can be found near the campground in the Woodbury Wildlife Area.

The last scheduled passenger train ran from Cleveland to Columbus in December 1950.

The line became part of the Penn Central after the Pennsylvania - New York Central Merger in 1968. Abandonment of the main line began when 1969 floods cut the line near Orrville. The section of line northeast from Columbus to Howard was still operated into the Conrail era.

Now most of the line from Mount Vernon to Holmesville is part of the Kokosing Gap, Mohican Valley and Holmes County rail-trails open to hikers, bikers and Amish buggies. Much of the Cleveland & Massillon line (Warwick to Massillon) is now the Old Muskingum rail-trail. The only C.,A.&C. trackage still in place is a short section serving an industry north of Orrville and the section from Akron to Hudson (which is not currently used).