

Lake County Railroad Potpourri / Fast Facts

With apologies to all railroad historians and enthusiasts, today's entry is a thoroughly incomplete history of Lake County Railroad lore and snippets uncovered while working on other fact-checking histories. It gave me a newfound appreciation for the hidden railroad histories of Ohio's smallest county.

Fast Facts:

1. Horses pulled the first railroad cars.
2. Narrow gauge is 3 feet
3. Standard gauge is 4'8.5"
4. The Painesville & Youngstown Railroad is believed to be the second narrow gauge railroad built in the U.S.
5. Distance from Painesville to Youngstown is 64.4 miles.
6. The track was changed from narrow to standard gauge in 1886.
7. 1981 tracks abandoned by Chess (B&O)
8. Jack Casement, Painesville, The Casement House and Railroad History all intersect in Lake County circa 1850-70s.



Railroads:

In 1836 a railroad was started from **Fairport to Maumee**. To save money normally spent on fill, it was to be built on stilts. Only a few stilts were ever constructed, and the project was never finished.

Painesville & Fairport Railroad

Opened in 1837 from Fairport to Painesville (second railroad in operation in Ohio). First equipment included one wooden passenger car, one crude freight car and two horses.

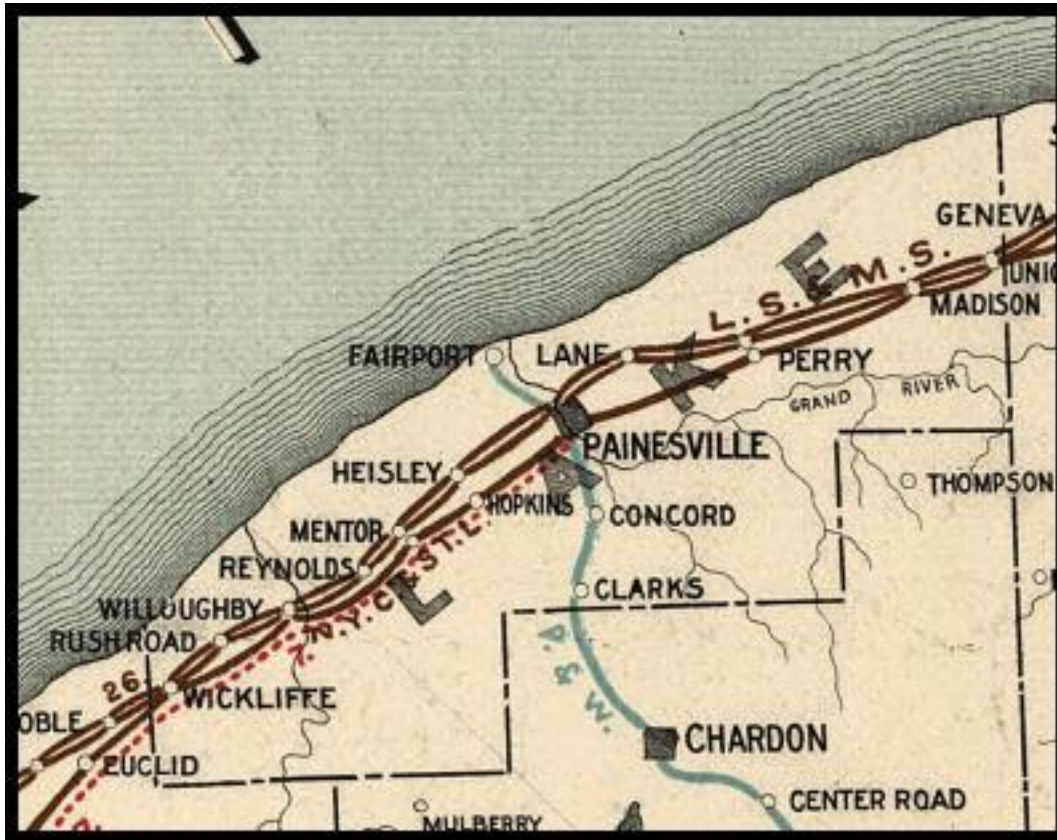
Completed in 1874, the **Painesville & Youngstown** narrow gauge line used strap rails-oak rails with a long thin strap of iron affixed. **Fairport to Youngstown** covered 64.4 miles at an average build cost of \$19,000 per mile. Began with 6 locomotives, 4 passenger cars, 2 baggage cars, mail car, express car, 73 freight cars of all classes. Changed to standard gauge in 1886.

Fairport Harbor to Warren, Ohio

This abandoned railway in 1870 as a narrow gauge-line connecting **Farmington to Fairport**, named the Painesville-Youngstown Line. Renamed in 1873 to the **Painesville, Youngstown and Pittsburgh Railroad**, it

was leased to the **Pittsburgh and Western Railroad** till 1890. That year saw the line acquired by the **Baltimore & Ohio** line which standardized all lines by 1900. Now known as the Fairport Branch or the **B&O's Lake Branch**, it did eventually extend to Warren. The line remained in operation thru 1982. Purchased by Lake Metroparks in 1990 it was dedicated as the Greenway Corridor in October 2001.

Notes About Existing Stations...Map from 1898



Concord (B&O) - Moved a few hundred feet from original location. According to the Lake County Auditor's website, the depot was built in 1900.

Mentor (LS&MS) - On National Register of Historic Places. The building is currently a restaurant and has housed several different ones over the years.

Mentor (NYC) - Original LS&MS freight station was damaged by derailment and replaced. On National Register of Historic Places.

Painesville (LS&MS) - This station replaced the original wood frame LS&MS station. Design is of Richardsonian

Romanesque style and came from the firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge of Boston. The depot is now called the "Painesville Railroad Museum" and is operated by the Western Reserve Railroad Association. Learn more at <http://painesvillerrailroadmuseum.org/>

Willoughby (LS&MS) - Moved from its original location which was on Depot Street closer to Erie Street. The building was moved prior to 1952.

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