
Railways in Haverford Township

by

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Haverford Township
Historical Society

April 12, 2022



Railways in Haverford Township

7 Railways in a Township of 10 Square Miles

- A remarkable number and density
- An amazing variety of types
 1. Primitive early railroad
 2. Mainline steam, later a pioneering electrification
 3. Sleepy run-down railroad branch line
 - 4,5 Suburban trolley lines
 6. High-speed interurban railway
 7. Never-built freight train corridor
- From 1832 to the present day (190 years)



Railways in Haverford Township

Haverford Before Railways

- Rural
- Agricultural
- Static





Railways in Haverford Township

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

- Built by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Part of the “Main Line of Public Works” between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, to compete with NY and MD canals
- Early primitive railway technology, mixed with canals and inclines
- The P&CRR portion was between the Schuylkill River and Susquehanna River



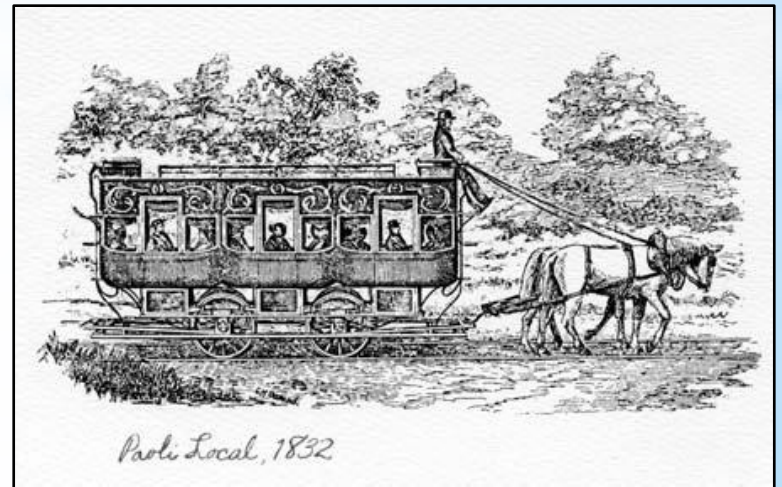
Railways in Haverford Township

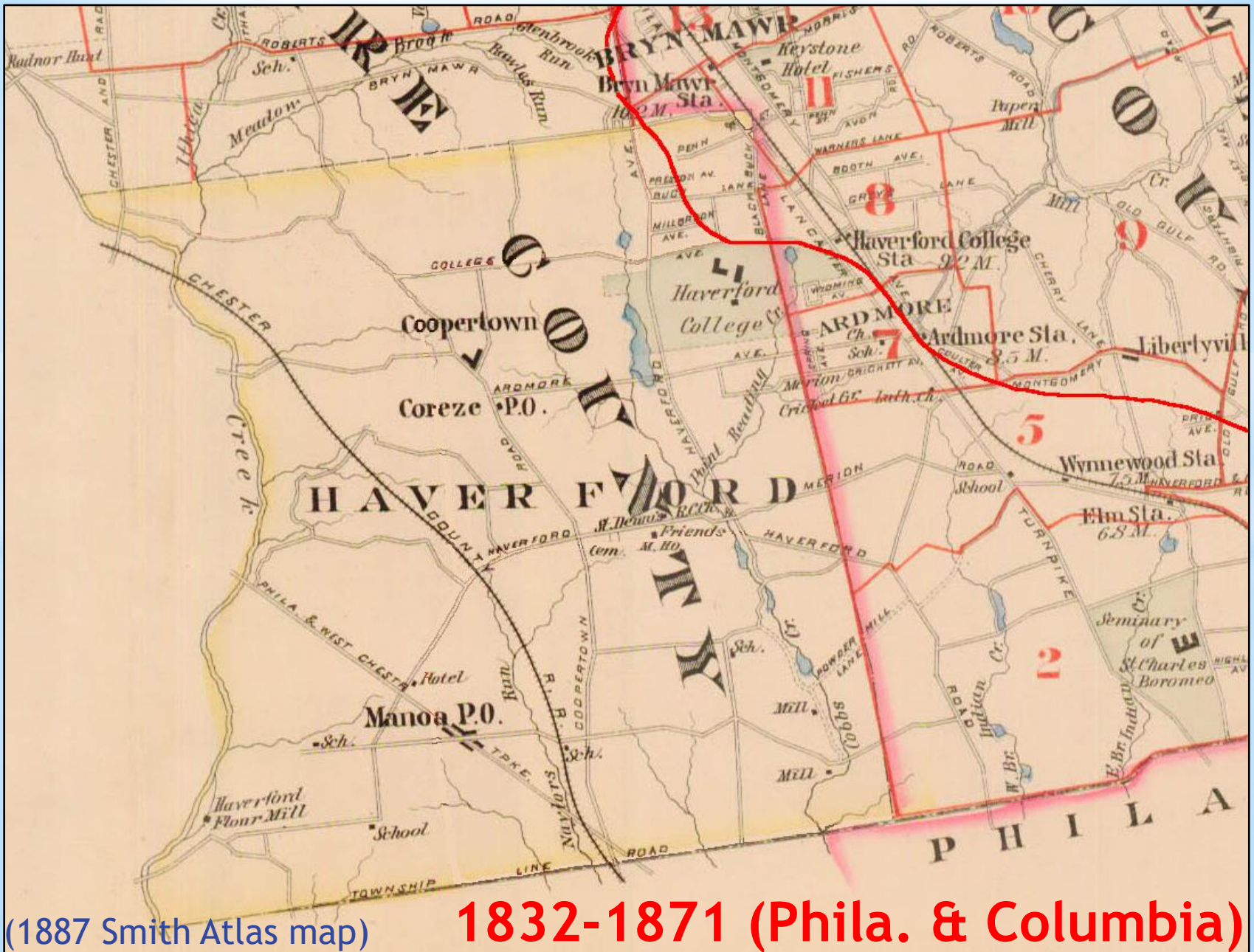
Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

“The beginning of the Paoli Local” - *George Harding*

- 1832: Opened first 20 miles, including in Haverford
- 1834: Railroad completed (2 tracks, 82 miles)





(1887 Smith Atlas map)

1832-1871 (Phila. & Columbia)



Railways in Haverford Township Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

In 1832 No One Knew How to Run a Railroad

- Closest model: a toll road (turnpike)
- Operators provided their own carriages or wagons, horse or mule teams, and drivers
- No one actually controlled the traffic
- Chaos and delays ensued



Railways in Haverford Township Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad



RUINS OF OLD PORTAGE ROADBED.



Haverford Township
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Primitive Railroad Stone "Sleepers"



Railways in Haverford Township Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

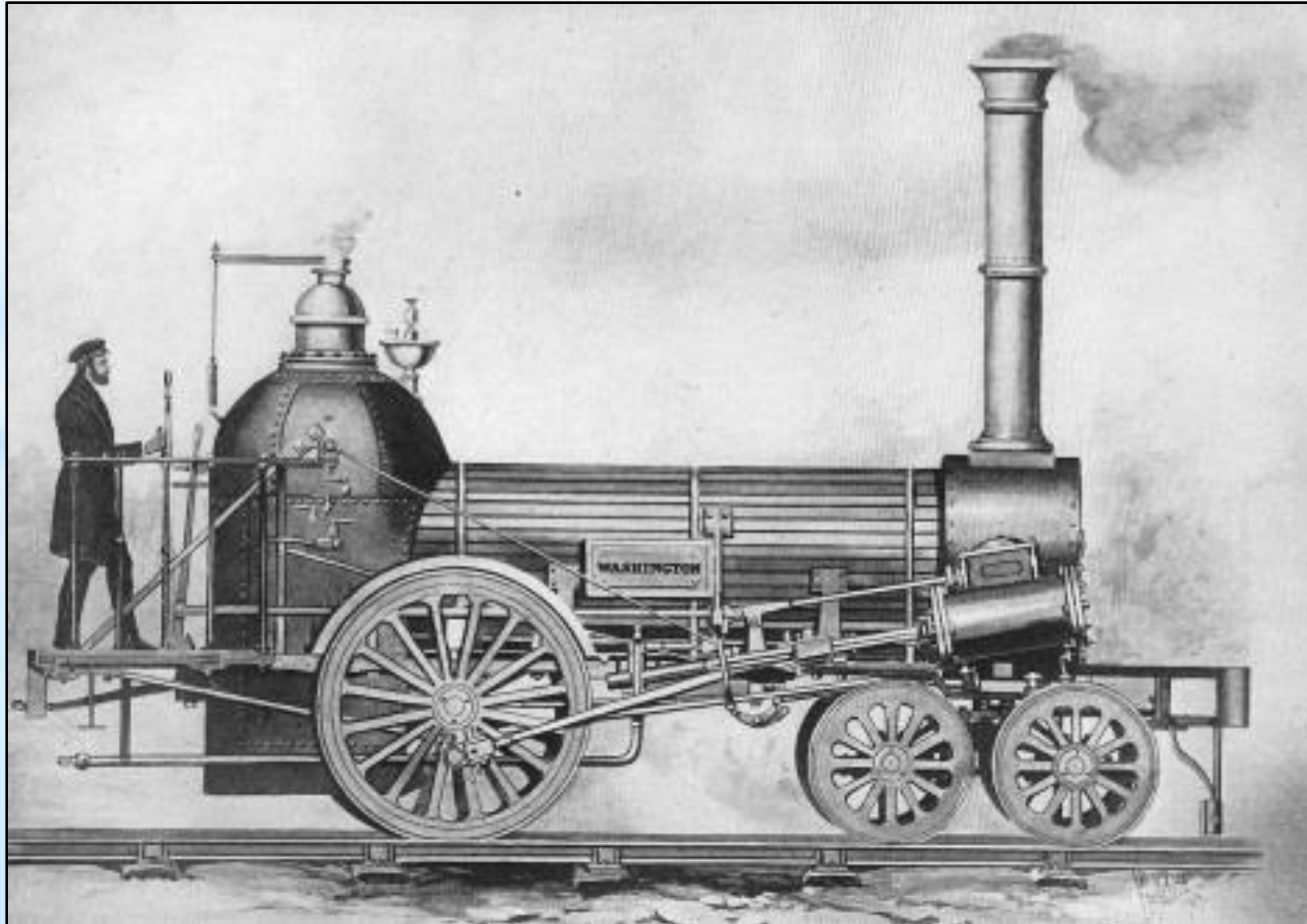
Things Settled into Standard Railroad Practices

- The state itself bought early steam locomotives
- The state itself hauled “trains” of carriages and wagons; users paid a “tariff rate”
- Privately-owned wagons were still allowed (still are!)
- Iron/steel “T”-shaped rail was developed
- Technology gradually evolved; operations simplified



Railways in Haverford Township

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad



William Norris Locomotive Works "Washington" (1836)



Railways in Haverford Township

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad



Norris Brothers locomotive "Tioga" (1848) (RR Museum of Pennsylvania)



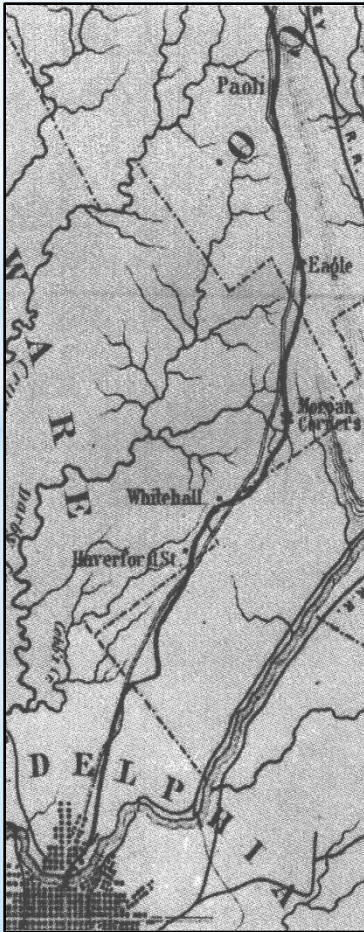
Railways in Haverford Township Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad

Pennsylvania Railroad Bought Line from State

- 1846: Pennsylvania Railroad Co. established
- 1852: PRR built railroad Harrisburg - Pittsburg
- 1857: PRR bought Main Line of Public Works
- PRR completed an all-rail route across Pennsylvania
- Continued to improve line and operations
- By 1855 Haverford College was a “flag stop” station; a rudimentary shelter was built there



Railways in Haverford Township Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad



← 1855 Map showing “Haverford St.”
station by Haverford College

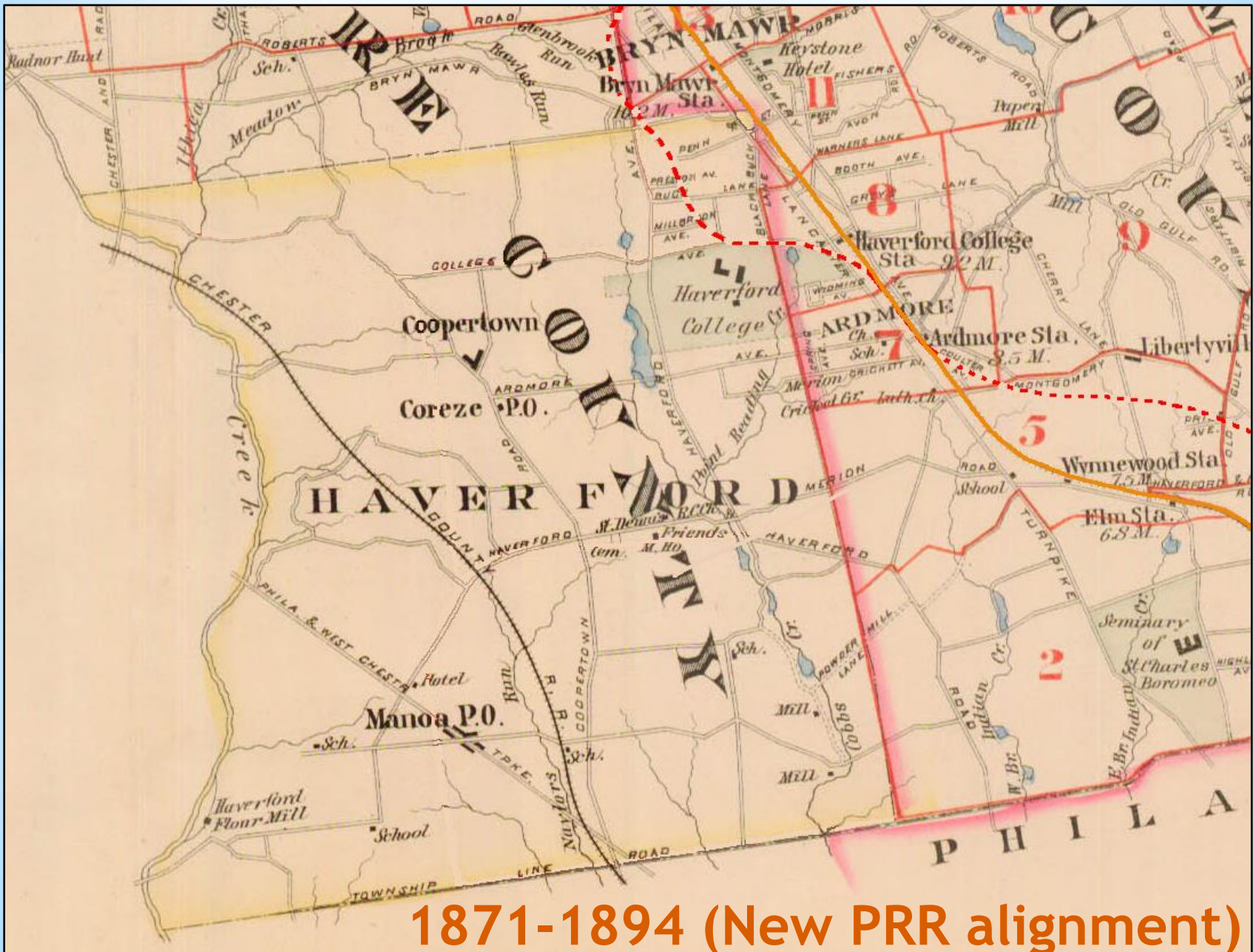


Railways in Haverford Township Pennsylvania Railroad



Pennsylvania Railroad Straightened the Line

- PRR bought entire parcels, then sold excess land
- 1869-1871: PRR built a new alignment in stages
- The new alignment replaced the “Whitehall curve”
- Haverford College, Bryn Mawr, Rosemont stations
- The new alignment touched on Haverford Township
- Both lines were used during the transition; then the old line was abandoned and became Railroad Avenue
- No longer a station within Haverford Township



1871-1894 (New PRR alignment)



Railways in Haverford Township

Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad



Old Meetinghouse Walk footbridge over Railroad Avenue (former railroad line)



Railways in Haverford Township Pennsylvania Railroad

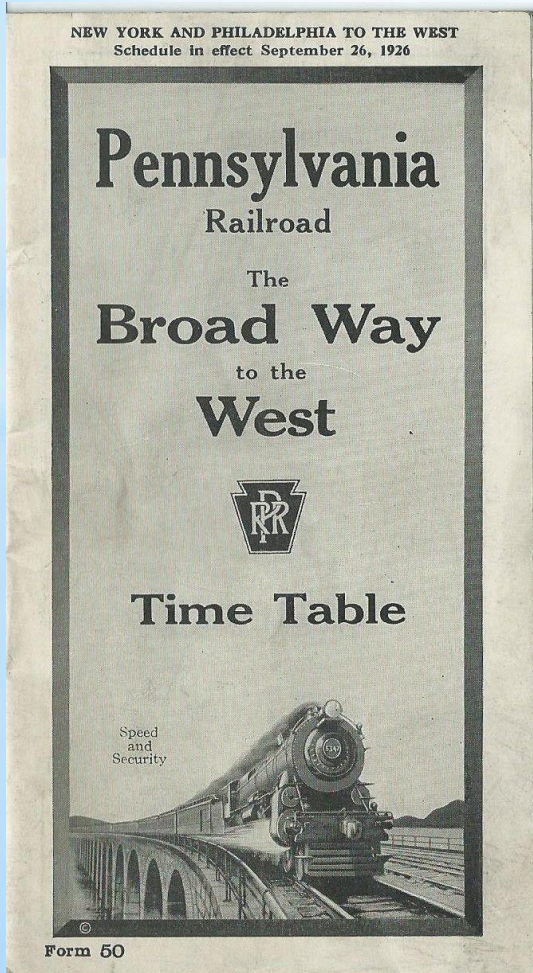


Maturation of the PRR Main Line

- Grew to a 4-track “Broad Way to the West”
- Elimination of grade crossings in our area
- Intense freight and passenger service
- Both long-haul and local passenger services
- 1915: first major line electrification by the PRR
- 1968: Penn Central; 1976 Amtrak to Harrisburg



Railways in Haverford Township Pennsylvania Railroad



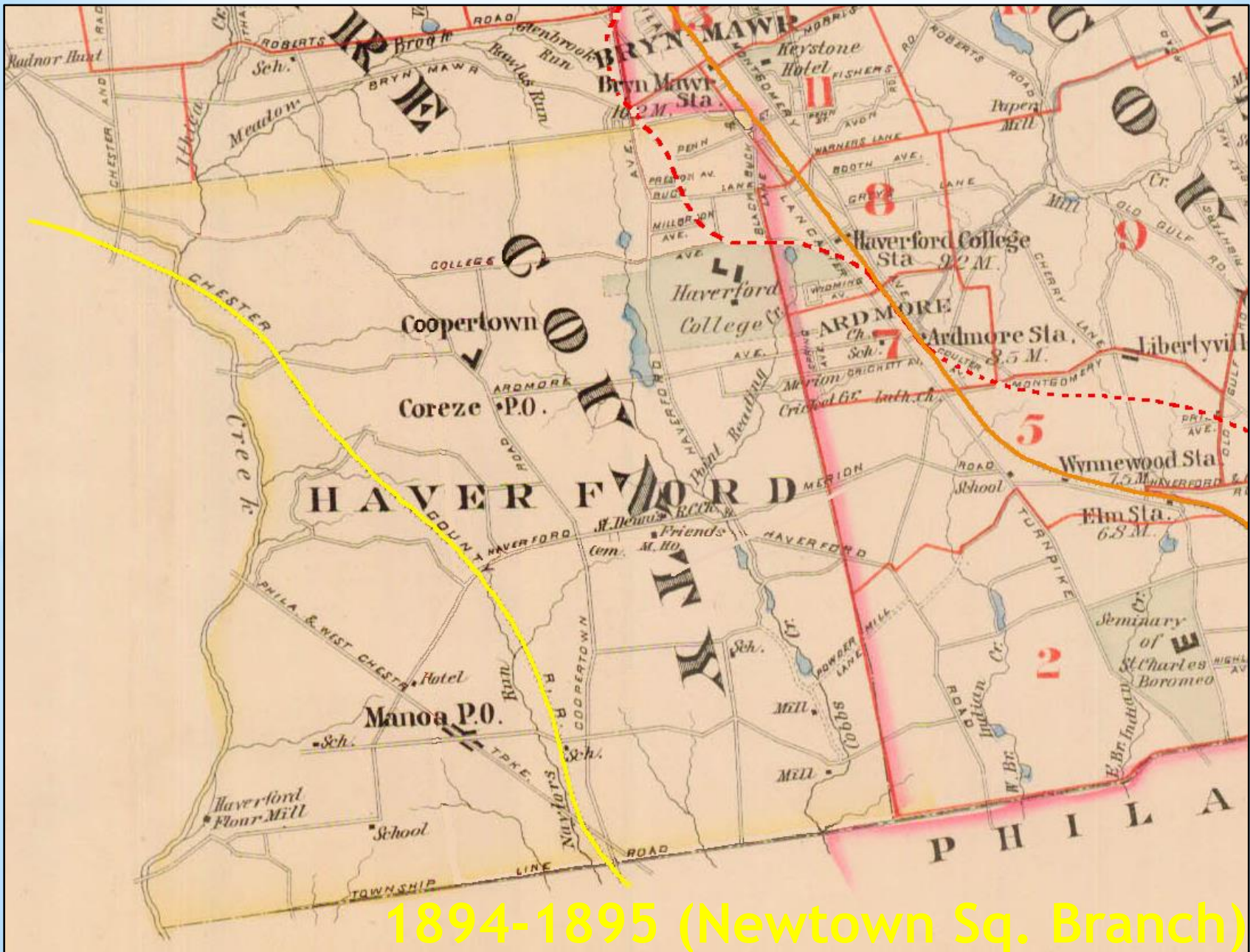
Paoli Local train at Haverford Station (1969)

Cover of 1926 PRR timetable with "Broad Way to the West" slogan



Railways in Haverford Township Pennsylvania Railroad





1894-1895 (Newtown Sq. Branch)



Railways in Haverford Township PRR Newtown Square Branch



Newtown Square Branch

- Opened July 3, 1894
- Fernwood to Newtown Square
- 10 Miles Long
- Single Track with Freight Sidings
- 3 Staffed Stations
- 7 Passenger “Flag Stops”
- Railroad Mileposts 5.5 to 15.6 (from Phila. Broad St. Station)

(Map by Andrew J. Hart for “The High Line”)



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



PHILADELPHIA, WILMINGTON & BALTIMORE RAILROAD. CENTRAL DIVISION. PHILADELPHIA & DELAWARE COUNTY RAILROAD.

SUPPLEMENT No. 3 TO TIME-TABLE No. 14.
FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND INFORMATION OF EMPLOYEES ONLY.

Taking effect at 6 o'clock, A. M., Tuesday, July 3d, 1894.

WESTWARD.										EASTWARD.									
1st CLASS.										1st CLASS.									
SUNDAYS.					WEEK-DAYS.					WEEK-DAYS.					SUNDAYS.				
2d Class.	SUNDAYS.				WEEK-DAYS.				WEEK-DAYS.					SUNDAYS.					2d Class.
207	147	145	143	141	93	89	85	81	STATIONS.	82	86	90	94	140	142	144	146	208	
P. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.		A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	A. M.	
12:00	5:45	2:30	10:45	8:15	6:05	3:52	9:06	7:10	Fernwood	7:03	8:43	3:04	5:53	10:00	8:30	4:00	8:23	11:00	
	5:49	2:34	10:49	8:19	6:08	3:55	9:08	7:13	Punbroke	6:56	8:38	2:59	5:48	9:55	8:25	4:05	8:19		
	5:51	2:36	10:51	8:21	6:10	3:57	9:10	7:15	Wrentham	6:56	8:36	2:57	5:46	9:52	8:22	4:02	8:16		
	5:54	2:39	10:54	8:24	6:12	3:59	9:12	7:17	Gardner Road	6:54	8:34	2:55	5:44	9:50	8:20	4:00	8:14		
12:25	5:58	2:43	10:58	8:28	6:16	3:43	9:16	7:21	West Chester Turnpike	6:50	8:30	2:51	5:40	9:46	8:16	3:56	8:10	10:35	
	6:01	2:46	11:01	8:31	6:19	3:46	9:19	7:24	Graveland	6:46	8:27	2:48	5:37	9:43	8:13	3:53	8:07		
	6:04	2:49	11:04	8:34	6:22	3:49	9:22	7:27	Coopers Run Road	6:44	8:24	2:45	5:34	9:39	8:09	3:49	8:04		
	6:07	2:52	11:07	8:37	6:25	3:52	9:25	7:30	Fox Craft	6:41	8:21	2:42	5:31	9:36	8:06	3:46	8:01		
	6:10	2:55	11:10	8:40	6:27	3:54	9:27	7:32	The Hunt	6:39	8:19	2:40	5:29	9:34	8:04	3:44	7:59		
1:00	6:14	2:59	11:14	8:44	6:31	3:58	9:31	7:36	Newtown Square	6:36	8:15	2:35	5:25	9:30	8:00	3:40	7:55	10:00	

SPECIAL NOTICE.

West-bound trains will run regardless of east-bound trains that are run by the same engine and crew.
Philadelphia & Delaware County Railroad trains may use the main track of the Central Division to Fernwood Station to receive and discharge passengers and freight in accordance with the Book of Rules.

S. M. PREVOST,
General Manager

J. B. HUTCHINSON,
General Supt. Transportation.

H. F. KENNEY,
General Superintendent.

C. J. BECHDOLT,
Superintendent.

July 3, 1894 Schedule



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



Passenger Stations and Freight Houses

West Chester Turnpike (Llanerch)

Grassland (Eagle Road)

Newtown Square (PA 252)



Llanerch Station and Freight House in 1938 (Collection of Harry P. Albrecht)

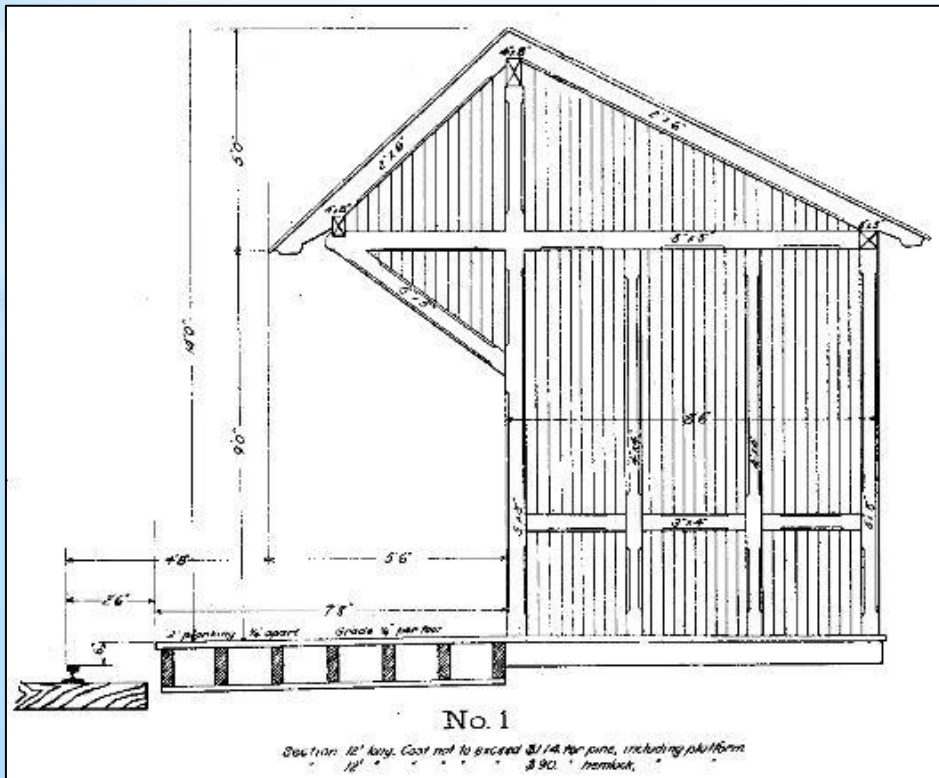


Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



Passenger Stations (Including “Flag Stops”)



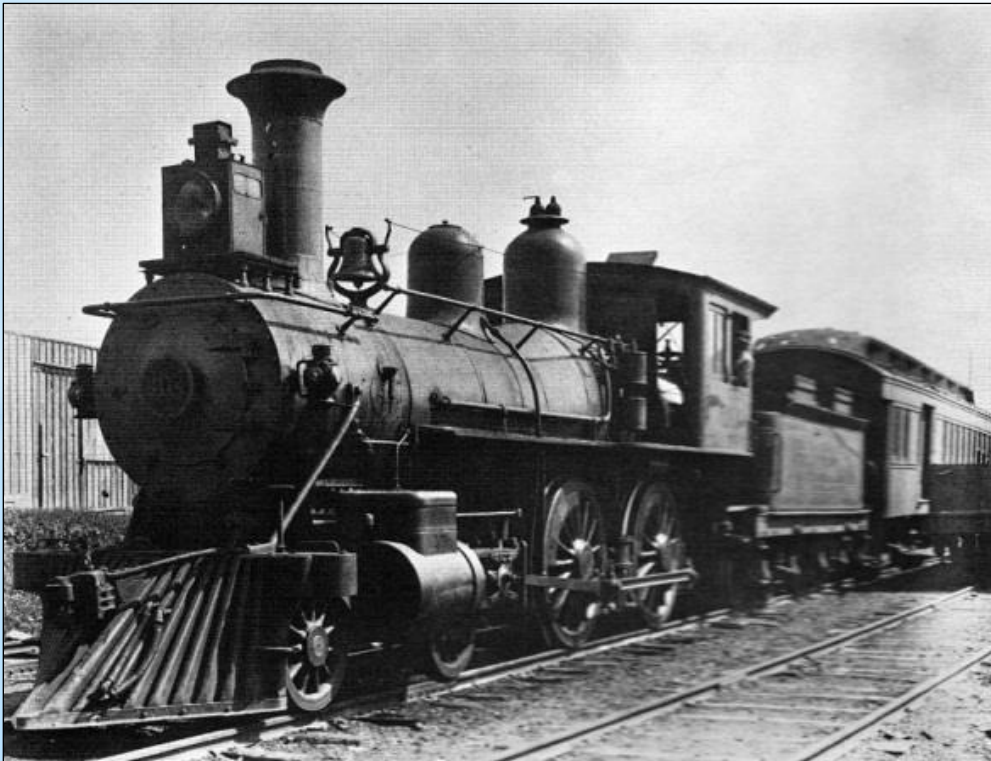
- Fernwood (MP 5.5)
 - Pembroke (MP 6.1)
 - Wycombe (MP 6.8)
 - Garrett Road (MP 7.3)
 - Arlington (MP 8.0)
- Llanerch (MP 8.9)
- Grassland (MP 10.3)
 - Brookthorpe (MP 11.9)
 - Foxcroft (MP 12.7)
 - The Hunt (MP 13.4)
- Newtown Square (MP 15.4)

PRR Standard Passenger Shelter for Branch Roads, ca. 1890



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



*PRR Class F1 No. 5114 with Combine, Newtown Square, Pa., 1904
(Paul Warner photo, collection of Phil Klaus)*

14 Years of Passenger Train Service (1894-1908)

- 1894 - 5 trains each way daily
- 1895 - 7 each way daily; 5 on Sundays
- 1896 - 3 trains each way weekdays
- 1905 - 1 train each way weekdays
- 1908 - Passenger service discontinued

Factors: Sparse rural population, Philadelphia & West Chester trolley competition



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



87 Years of Freight Service - PRR, Penn Central and Conrail (1894-1981)



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*PRR freight train crossing Lansdowne Ave. / Township Line Rd. intersection, 1948
(Don Kehl photo)*

- By 1913 - PRR Newtown Sq. Br.
- 1951 - Last use of a steam loco
- 1963 - Last train beyond Oakmont
(tracks removed late 1960s;
bridges removed early '70s)
- 1968 - Penn Central merger
- 1976 - Conrail created
- 1981 - Last train on Branch
- 1982 - Formal abandonment
(tracks removed in 1985;
Manoa Rd. bridge in 1986)



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



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Grassland, March 24, 1948 (Don Kehl photo)



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



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PRR Newtown Square Branch trestle over Ellis Road (David H. Cope photo)



Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



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PRR Newtown Square Branch trestle over Marple Rd. (457 ft. long, 48 ft. high). (David H. Cope photo)

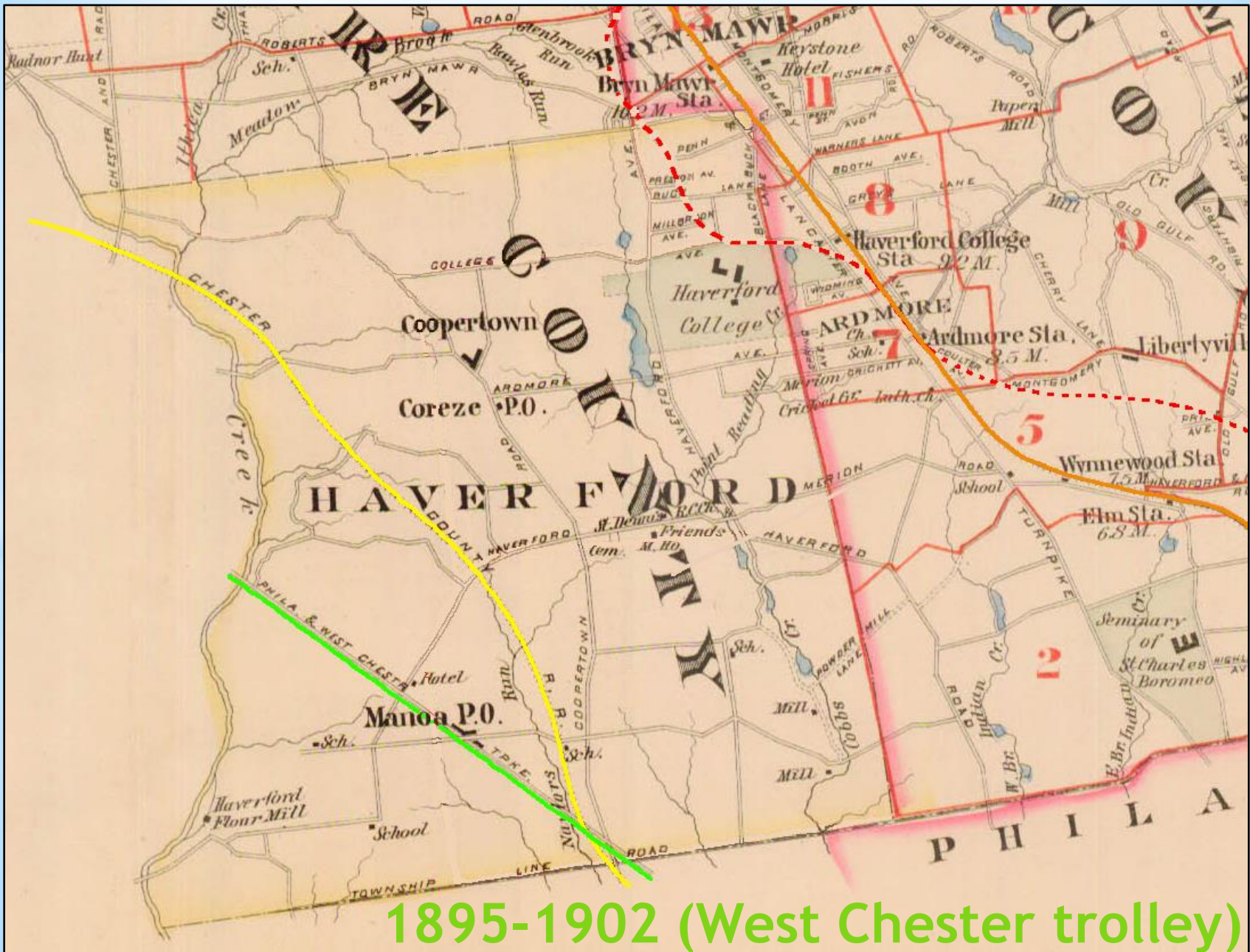


Railways in Haverford Township

PRR Newtown Square Branch



*A 1939 PRR special railfan excursion train crossing Darby Creek bridge (view looks east)
(David H. Cope photo)*



1895-1902 (West Chester trolley)



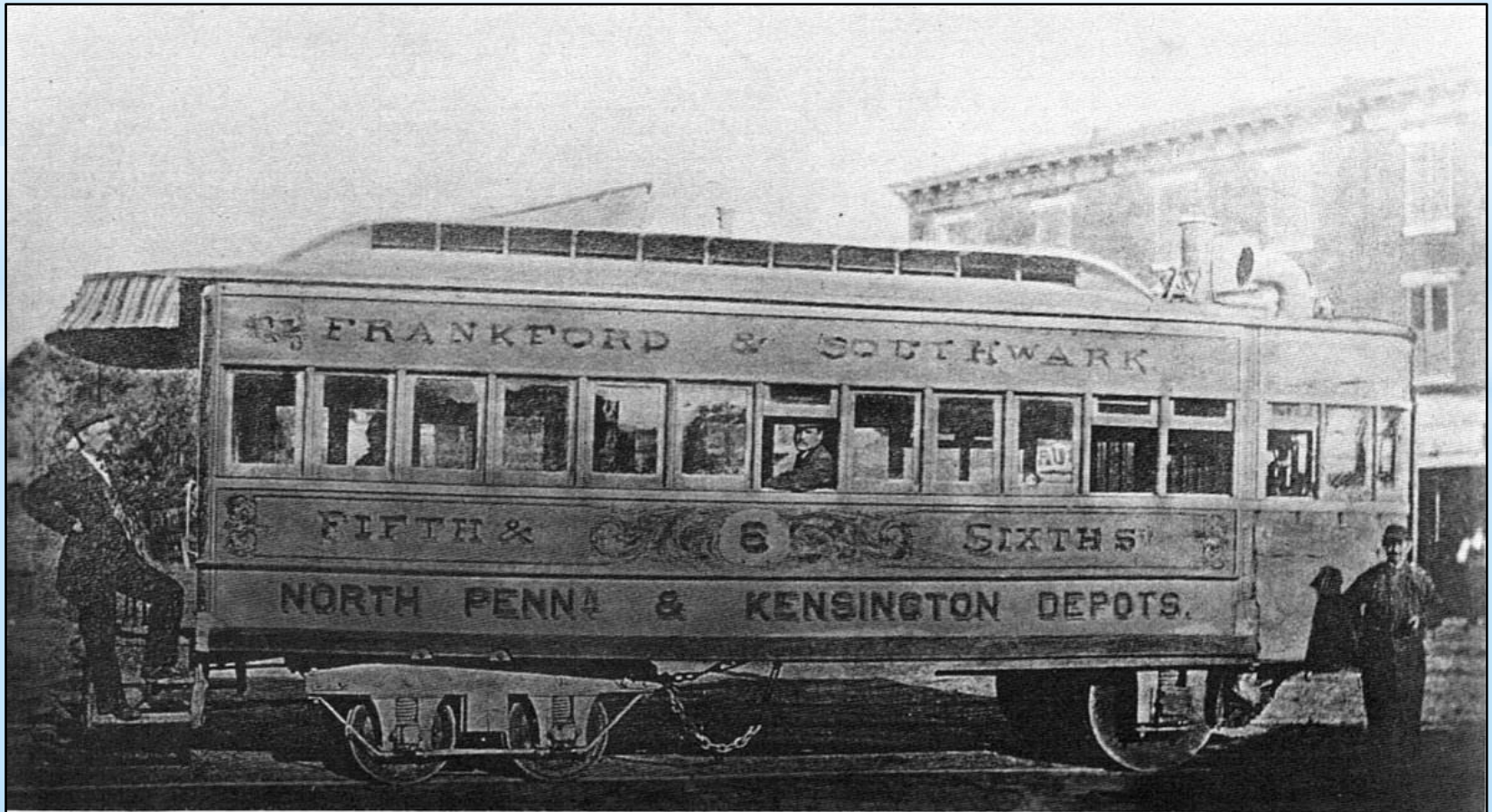
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.

Beginnings of the West Chester Trolley Line

- 1848-1853: the West Chester road was converted to a turnpike as far west as Newtown Square
- 1880s: John Shimer bought up turnpike stock with a plan to put a railway along it
- 1895: line opened with second-hand “steam dummies”
- 1896: entirely electric trolley operation began
- 1898: line completed to West Chester



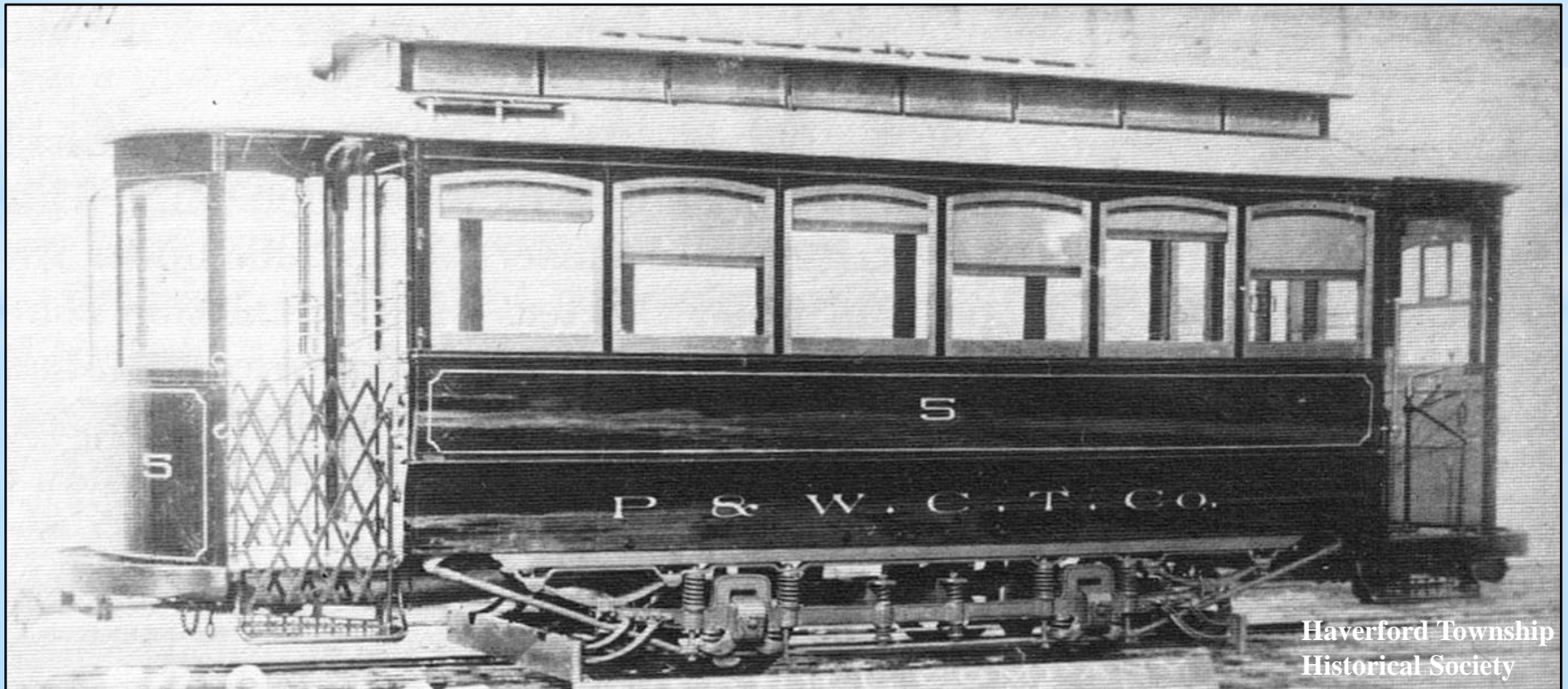
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



Second-hand steam dummy used to open service



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



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Early 4-wheel electric trolley (1896)



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.

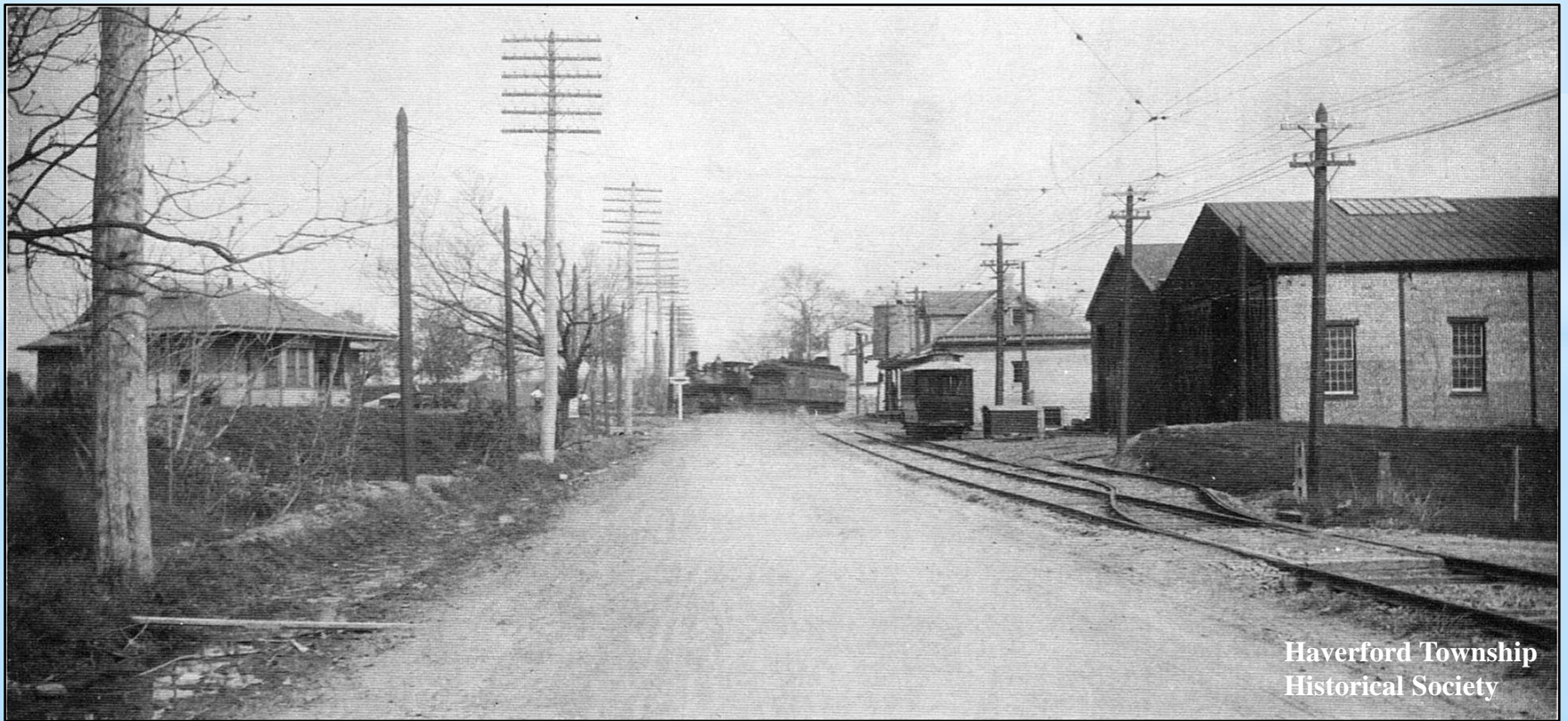


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First double-truck trolleys on line (1898)



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



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Llanerch Crossing looking east in the early days



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



Llanerch Crossing looking southeast along Newtown Square Branch



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.

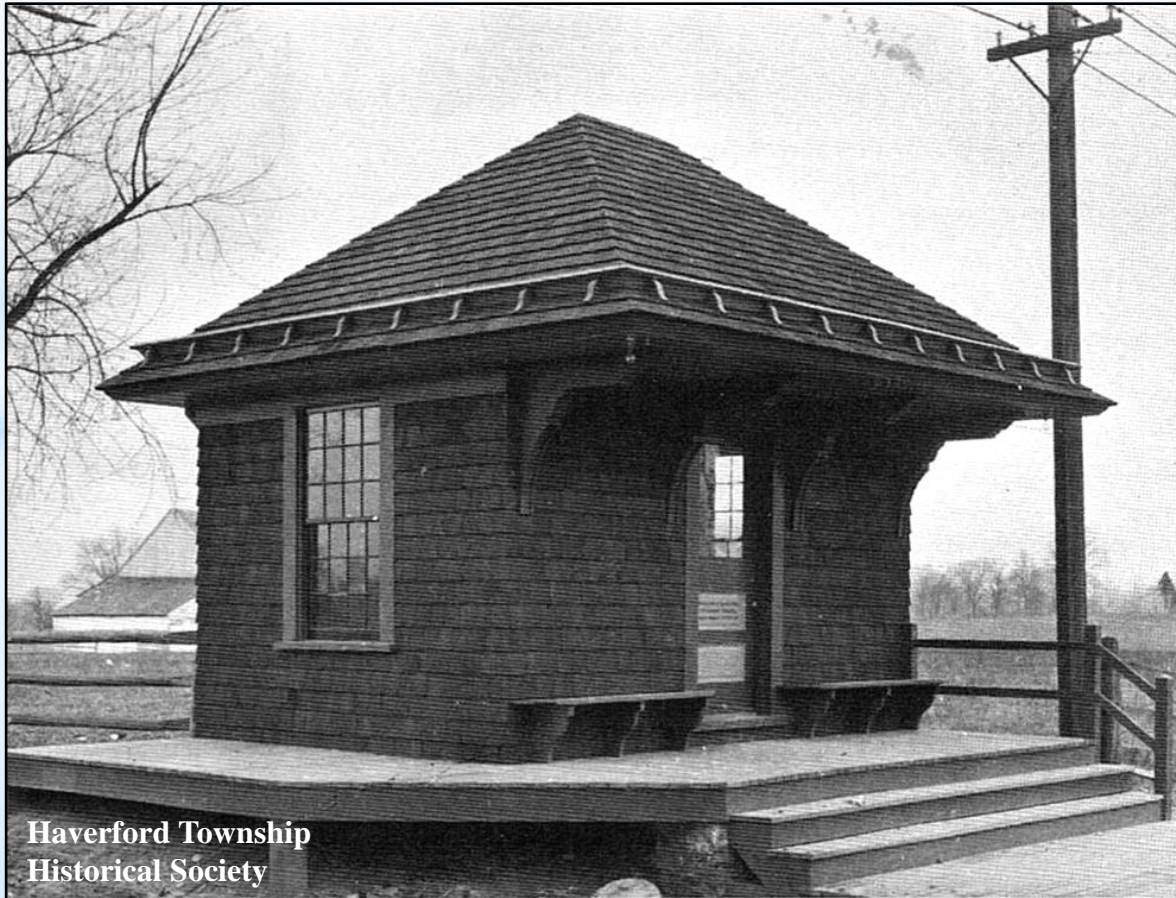


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Turnpike Toll House #4 in Manoa



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



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Typical early station on West Chester line, at Eagle Road



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.

Known Stations on the West Chester Line (1939)

- Township Line Road
- Llanerch Junction
- Gilmore Road (later)
- Naylor's Run
- Upland Road
- Country Club Lane
- Manoa Road
- Manoa Hall
- Eagle Road
- Glendale Rd. (later)
- Westgate Hills
(was Savage's Farm)
- Glen Gary Dr. (later)
- Robinson Ave. (later)
- Lawrence Road North
(was Darby Creek)

Later: Westgate Hills relocated west in 1954 cut-back



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



**Haverford Township
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Train and trolley at Llanerch Crossing in 1948 (David H. Cope photo)

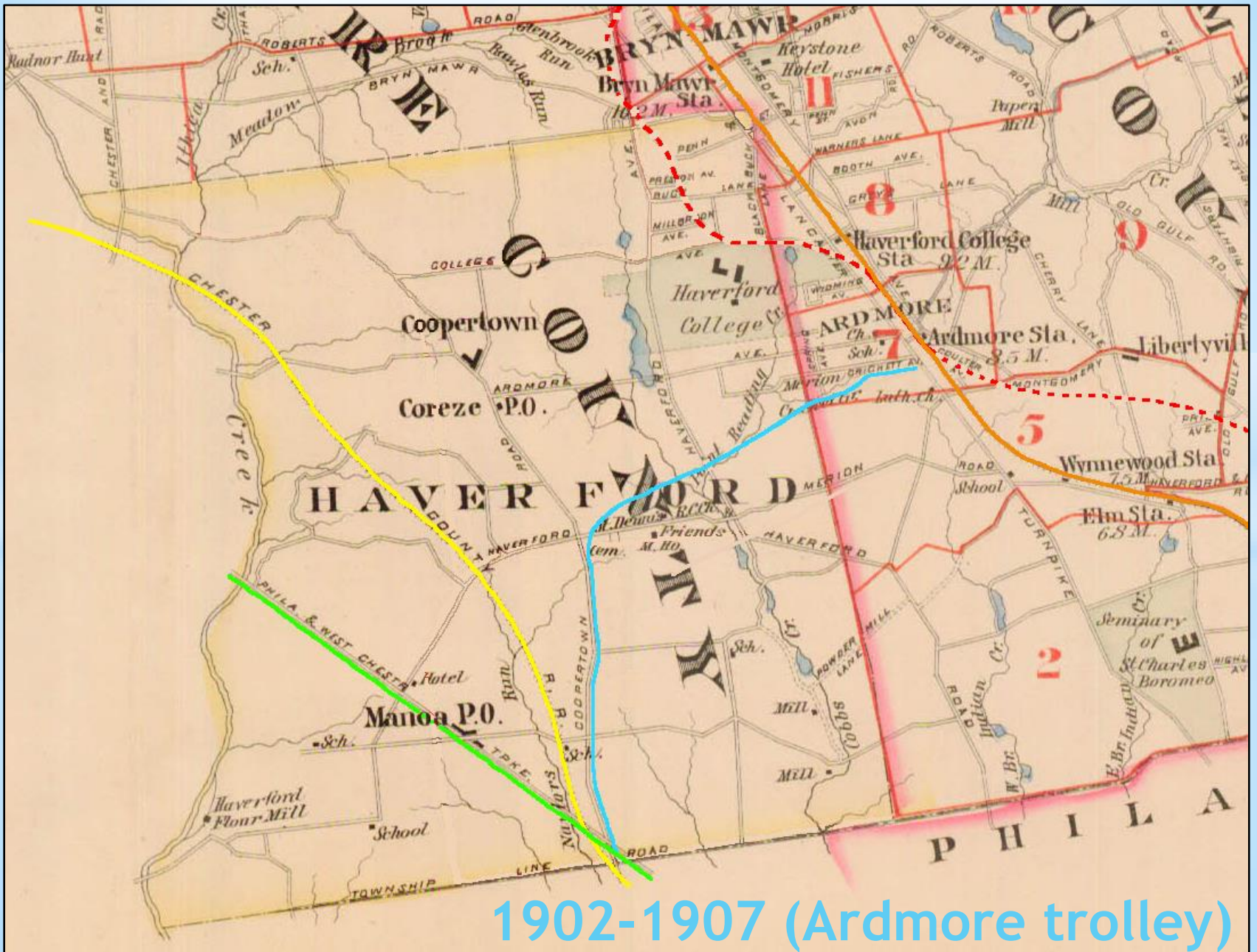


Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and West Chester Traction Co.



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Westgate Hills station on its last day of service, August 23, 1958



1902-1907 (Ardmore trolley)



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line

No. 146 CAPITAL \$100,000 _____ Shares

Ardmore and Llanerch Street Railway Company

INTERIM RECEIPT

This is to Certify, that _____

has paid \$ _____

for _____ shares of the Capital Stock of the Ardmore and Llanerch Street Railway Company, and that a certificate for _____ shares of the full-paid Capital Stock of the par value of Fifty Dollars per share will be issued in _____ name and delivered to _____ upon surrender of this interim receipt as soon as the Certificates of Stock are engraved.

November _____, 1901.

*Treasurer of
Ardmore and Llanerch Street Railway Company*

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Ardmore and Llanerch Street Railway Co. incorporated in 1901



Railways in Haverford Township P&WCT Ardmore Line

The Ardmore Line

- Branched off the West Chester line at present-day Darby Road, creating “Llanerch Junction”
- Ended near Lancaster Avenue in Ardmore, within walking distance of PRR Main Line station
- Service started May 30, 1902
- Substantial stone trolley stations were then built



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmere Line



Ceremonial first Ardmere Line trolley at Llanerch Junction on May 29, 1902

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Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



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*A more ordinary view of
early Llanerch Junction,
with Toll House #3*



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



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View north from Llanerch, with cattle guard; present-day Darby Road on left



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



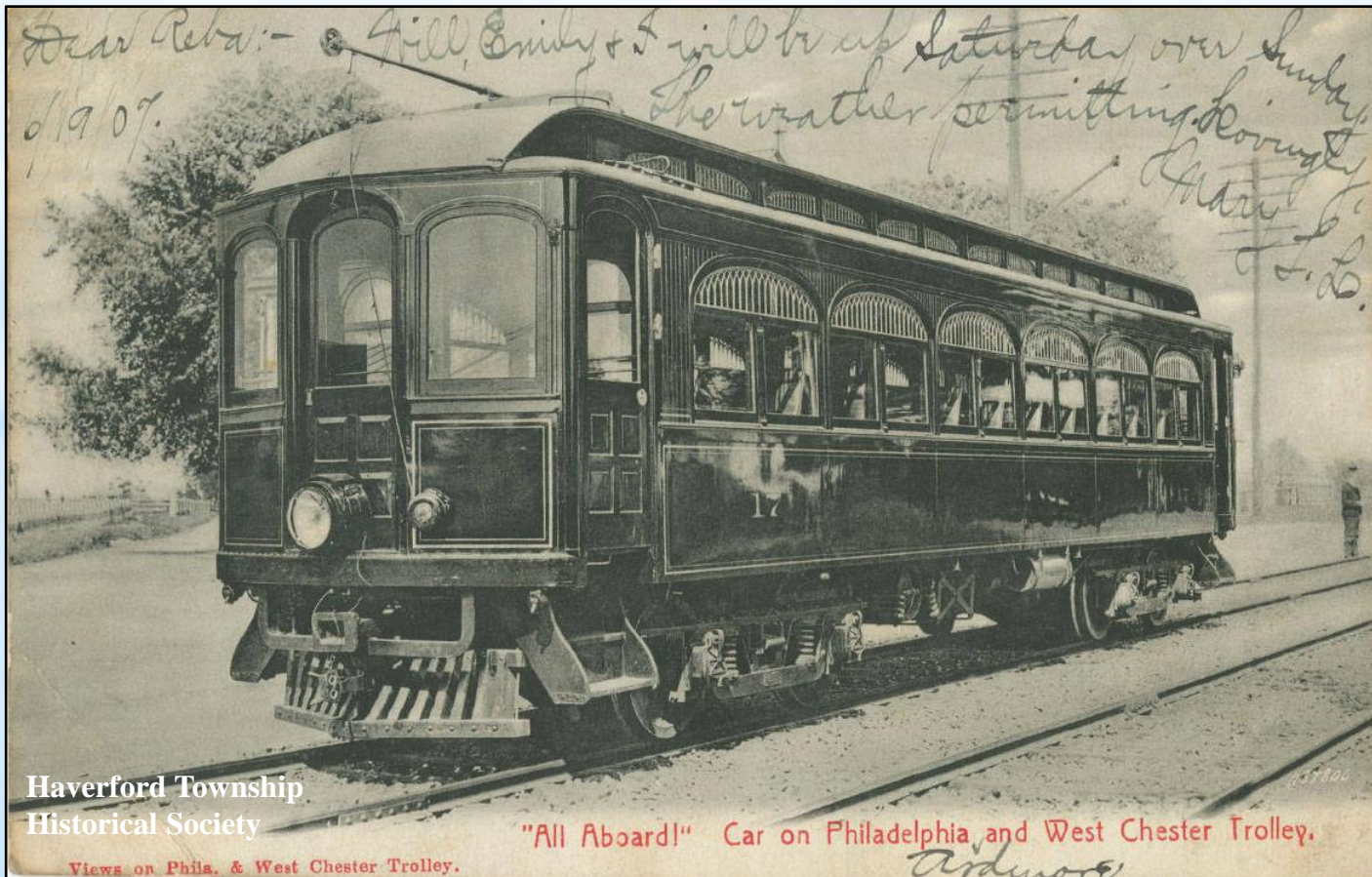
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Grassland (Oakmont) station on Eagle Road, looking eastward



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmere Line



Interurban-style trolley (1906)



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



Haverford Township
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Two-car train southbound at newly-built Brookline Station, ca. 1906



Railways in Haverford Township P&WCT Ardmore Line

Stations / Stops on the Ardmore Line (1939)

- Township Line Road
- Llanerch Junction
- Park Road
- Llandillo Road
- Mercer Avenue
- Manoa Road
- Brookline
- Mill Road
- High School
- South Ardmore
- Oakmont(Grassland)
- Merwood
- Ardmore Junction
- Belmont Avenue
- County Line Road



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



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Trolley at South Ardmore stop, at Darby Road and Benedict Avenue



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



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Two trolleys meet at Ardmore Junction during a railfan excursion in 1949



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



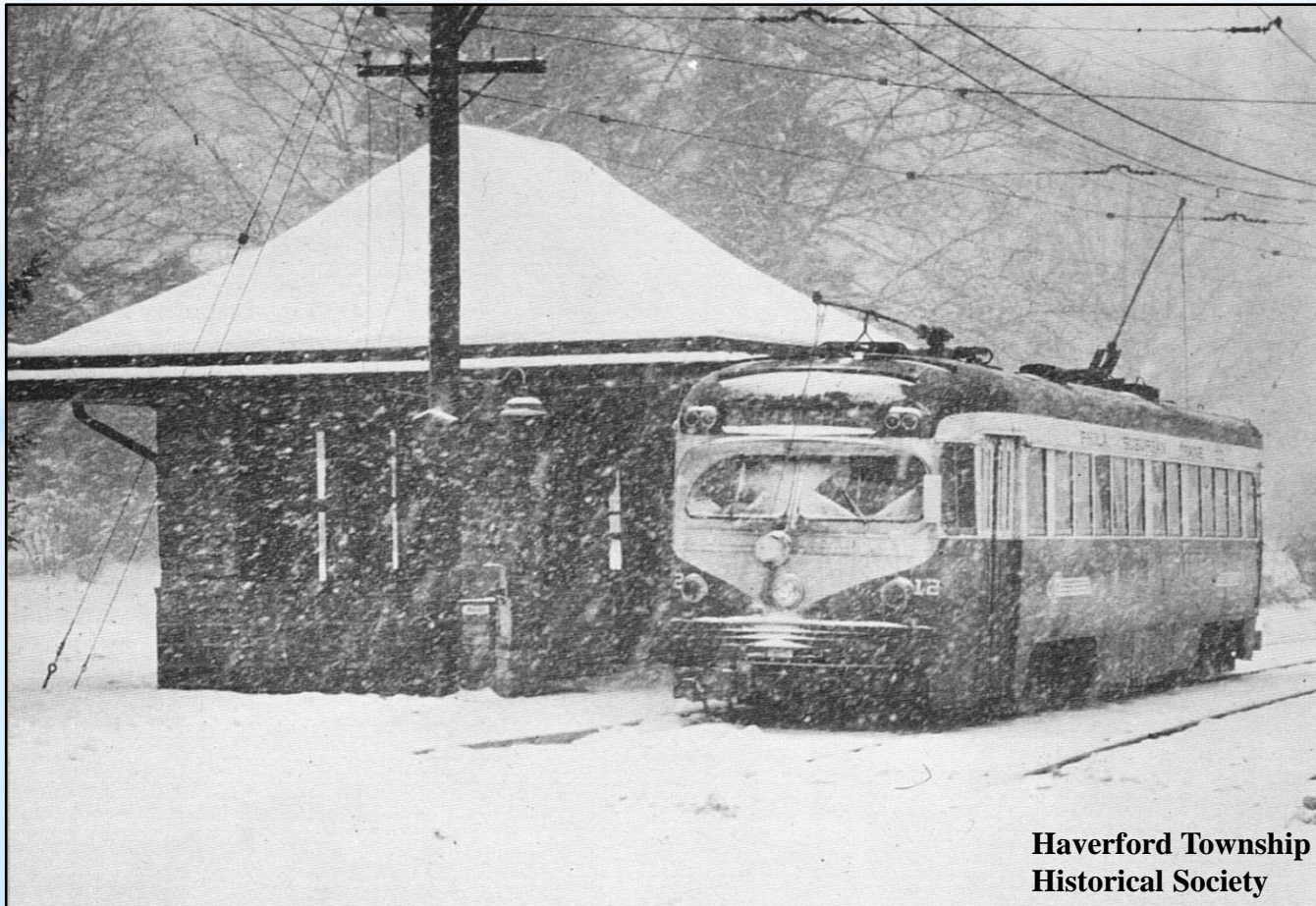
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Snow sweeper trolley at County Line Road Station, 1960s (Robert Coolidge photo)



Railways in Haverford Township

P&WCT Ardmore Line



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Merwood Station during the final days of service, December 1966



Railways in Haverford Township PSTC (Red Arrow Lines) Views



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Widening of West Chester Pike in 1953 (David H. Cope photo)



Railways in Haverford Township PSTC (Red Arrow Lines) Views



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Llanerch Shops showing stored cars, 1954



Railways in Haverford Township PSTC (Red Arrow Lines) Views



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Car 83 outside Llanerch car barn, 1950s

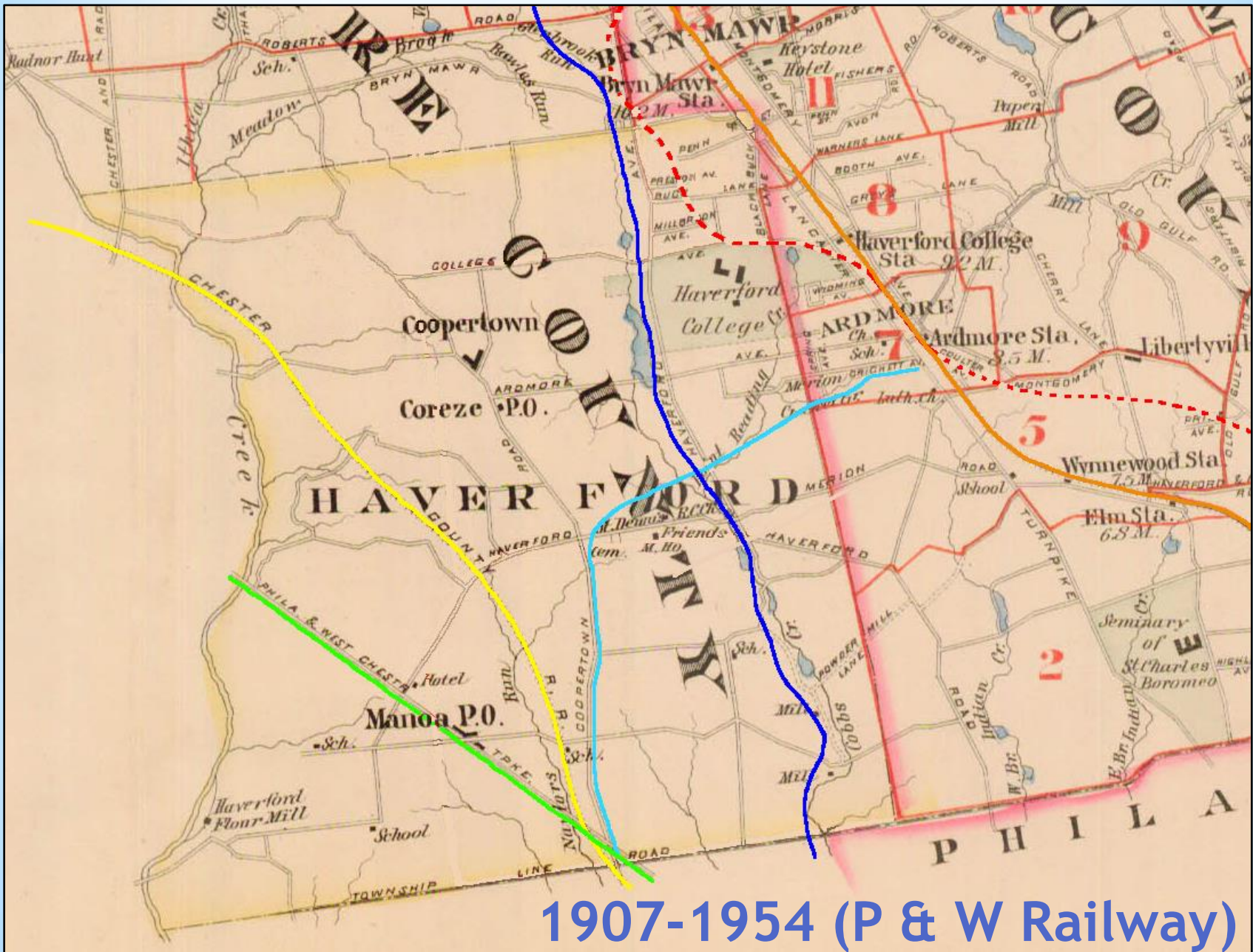


Railways in Haverford Township PSTC (Red Arrow Lines) Views



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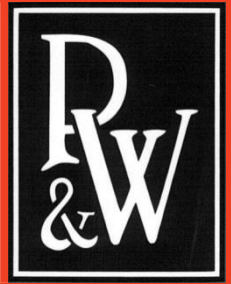
Car 5 inside Llanerch carbarn shop area, 1970 "Ardmore / Express to Oakmont"



1907-1954 (P & W Railway)



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



The Philadelphia and Western Railway Co.

- Originally part of Gould family secret scheme for a transcontinental railroad
- 1907: Line opened 69th Street to Strafford
- High-speed interurban service
 - Electrified outside third rail
 - No grade crossings
 - Super-elevated (banked) curves
 - High-platform stations for faster boarding, safety
 - Cars skipped many stations unless a stop was requested
- 1912: 6 mile Norristown Branch built

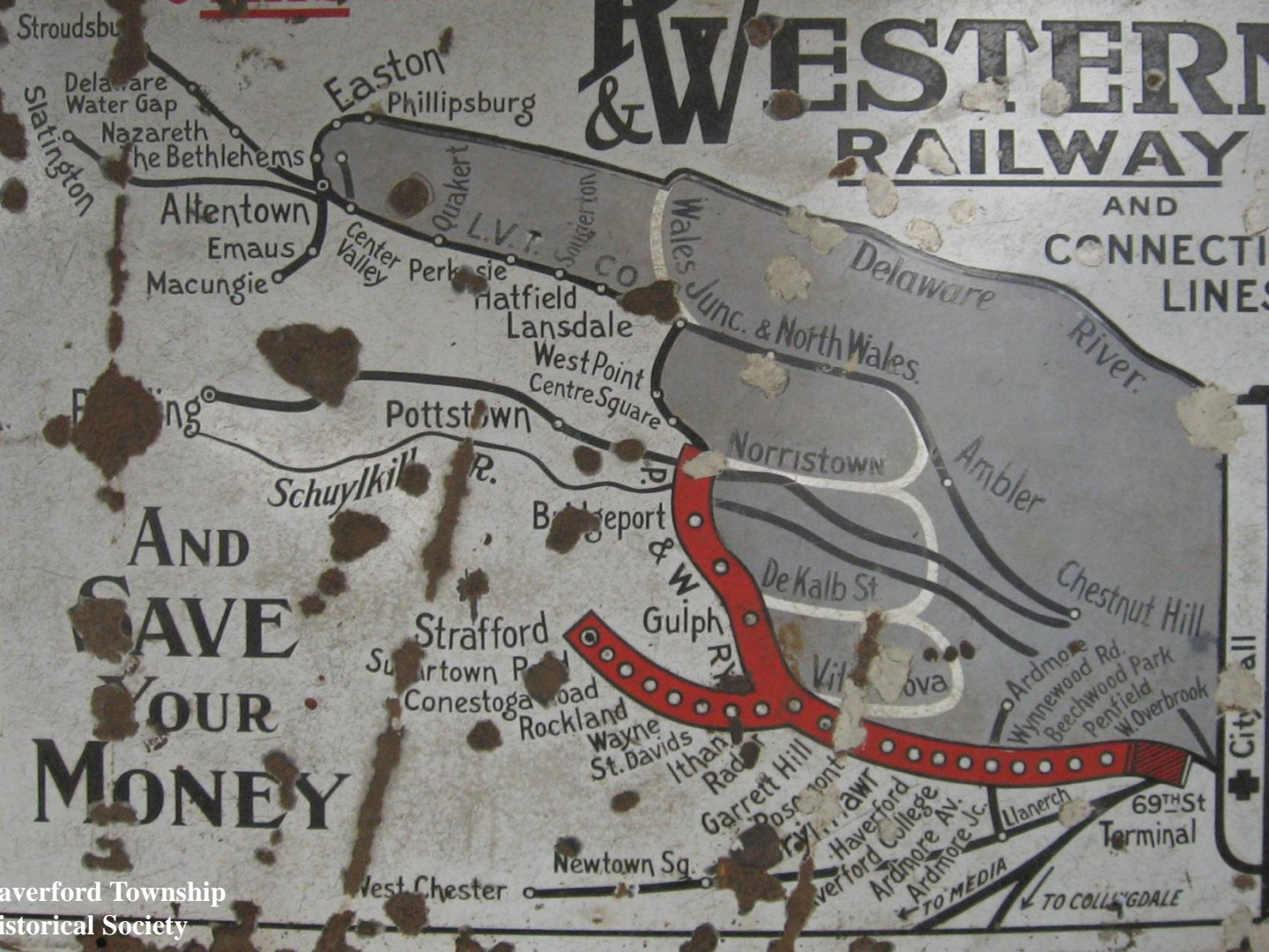
GO THIS WAY

PHILADELPHIA & WESTERN RAILWAY

AND
CONNECTING
LINES

AND
SAVE
YOUR
MONEY

PHILADELPHIA





Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



Stations in Haverford Township on the P & W

- West Overbrook (at Township Line Road)
- Penfield (at Manoa Road)
- Beechwood Park (later Beechwood-Brookline, at Mill Road)
- Wynnewood Road
- Ardmore Junction (at Hathaway Lane)
- Ardmore Avenue
- Haverford College* (at College Avenue)
- Haverford* (Buck Lane)

* "Haverford College" and "Haverford" later replaced by a midway "Haverford" station



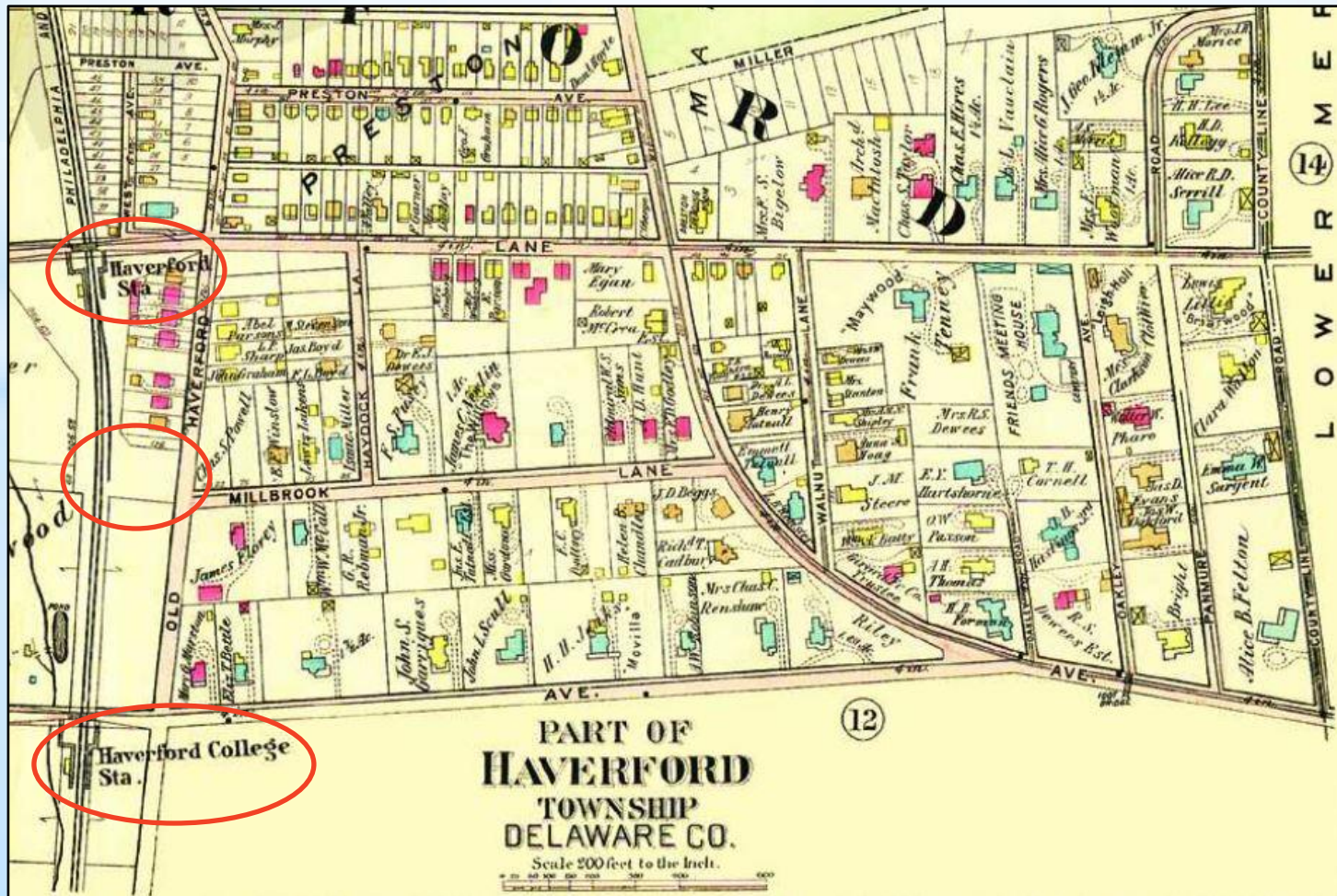
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



Beechwood Park Station, about 1907, with stairway to Brookline (DeGraw book)



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.





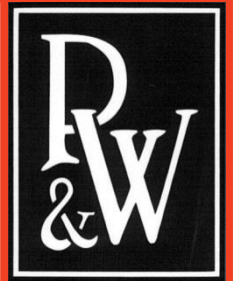
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



Rare view of original Haverford Station, with construction loco, 1908 (DeGraw Collection)



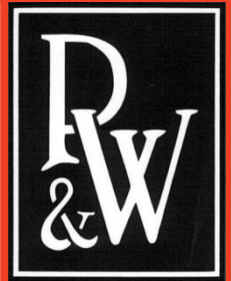
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



Early postcard view east from Ardmore Junction showing original P&W cars



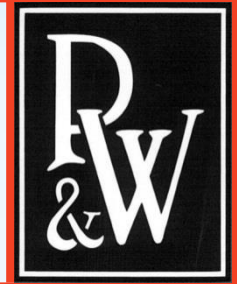
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



Same general view in 1958, with cars 205 and 164



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.

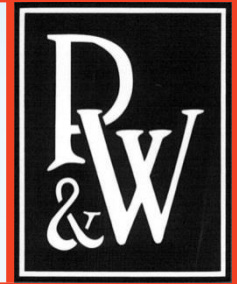


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Car 164 in railfan train at Wynnewood Road Station, 1964 (Richard Lukin photo)



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.

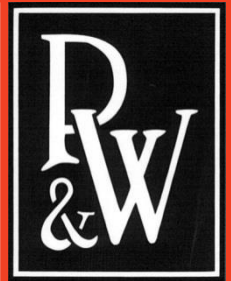


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1931 P&W "Bullet" car at Ardmore Junction in 1955



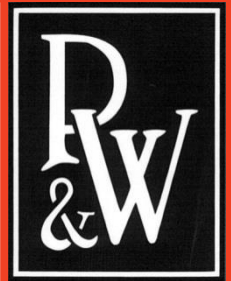
Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



"Bullet" car 203 at Ardmore Junction in 1959



Railways in Haverford Township Phila. and Western Railway Co.



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P&W "Libertyliner" above, trolley 63 below at Ardmore Junction, 1964



Railways in Haverford Township Consolidation and Decline

- 1871: Original Phila. & Columbia roadbed abandoned
- 1954: Philadelphia and Western Ry. taken over by Phila. Suburban Transp. Co. “Red Arrow Lines”
- 1954: West Chester trolley cut back to Westgate Hills
- 1956: P&W Strafford Branch abandoned
- 1958: Westgate Hills trolley service abandoned
- 1963: Newtown Sq. Branch cut back to Oakmont
- 1966: Ardmore trolley service ended; 1st busway
- 1970: SEPTA buys out private “Red Arrow Lines”
- 1971: Llanerch trolley maintenance facility closed
- 1981: Last Newtown Square Branch train ran



Railways in Haverford Township Darby Creek Low Grade Line



The PRR Freight Corridor That Never Happened

- Part of PRR's "Improvement Programs" (1905)
- 4-track "Broad Way to the West" was not big enough
- Clogged with freight and passenger trains
- Proposed "relief line" for freight in two parts:
 - Western - between Susquehanna River and Parkesburg
 - Eastern - between Thorndale and 56th Street in Philadelphia
- Main Line Paoli-Philadelphia to be "6-tracked"



Railways in Haverford Township Darby Creek Low Grade Line



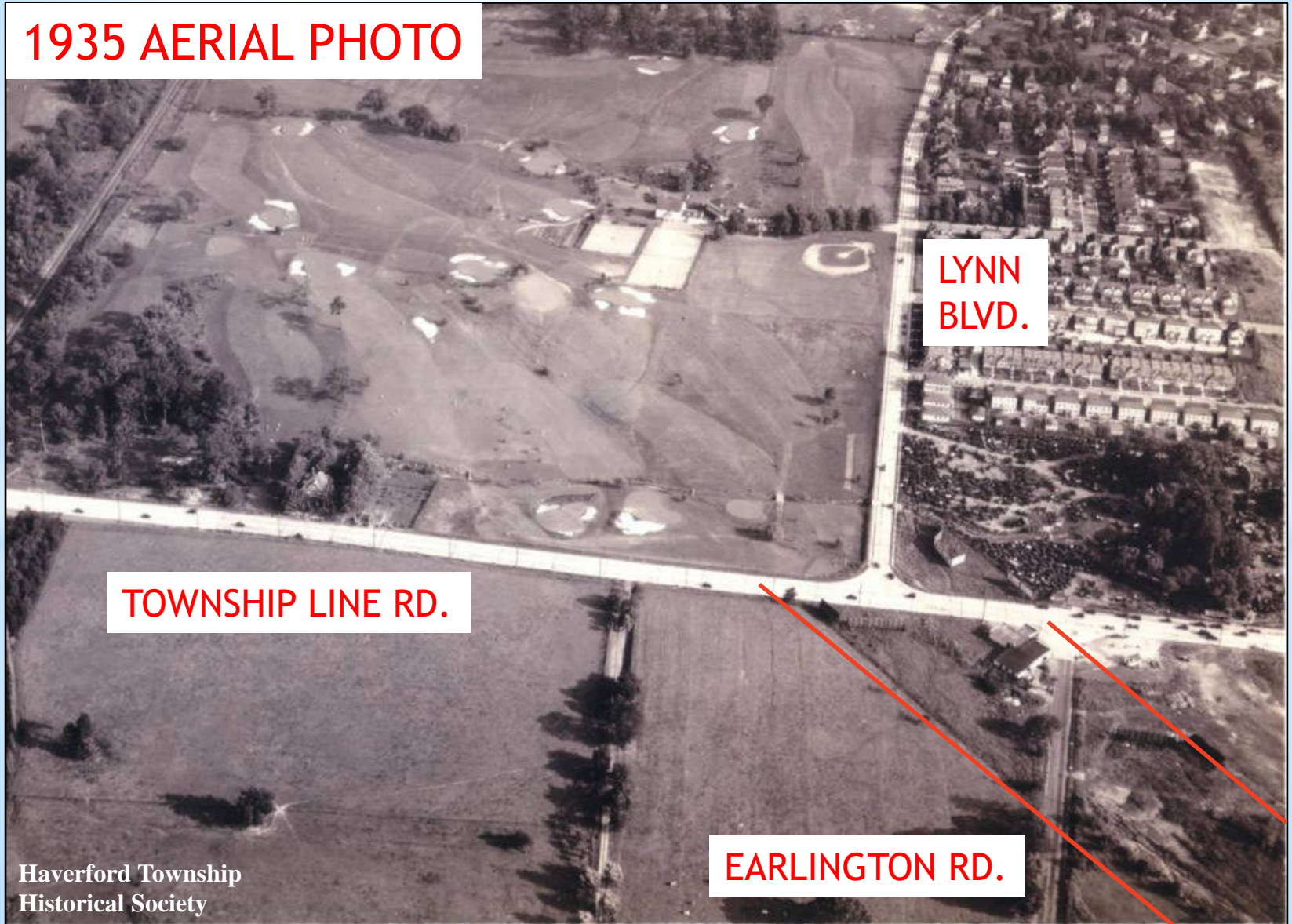
The PRR Freight Corridor That Never Happened

- Western portion was largely built to plan
- Eastern portion & 6-tracking went unbuilt, as electrification largely solved the congestion

However,

- PRR's Manor Real Estate Co. had bought 3/4 of the land needed for the eastern portion
- This greatly affected development patterns in Haverford Township and elsewhere

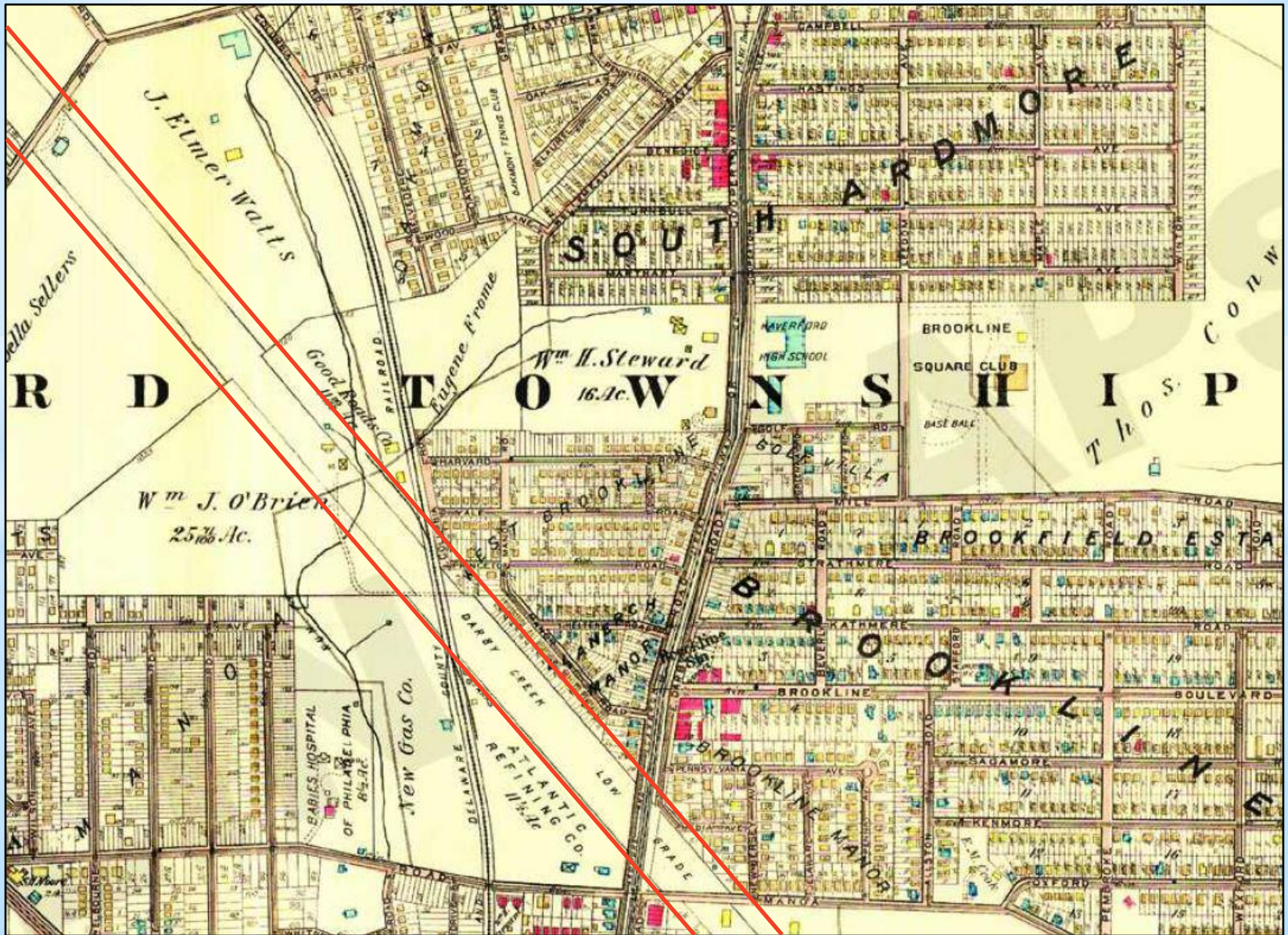
1935 AERIAL PHOTO



**LYNN
BLVD.**

TOWNSHIP LINE RD.

EARLINGTON RD.

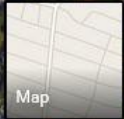




Haverford Township
School District...

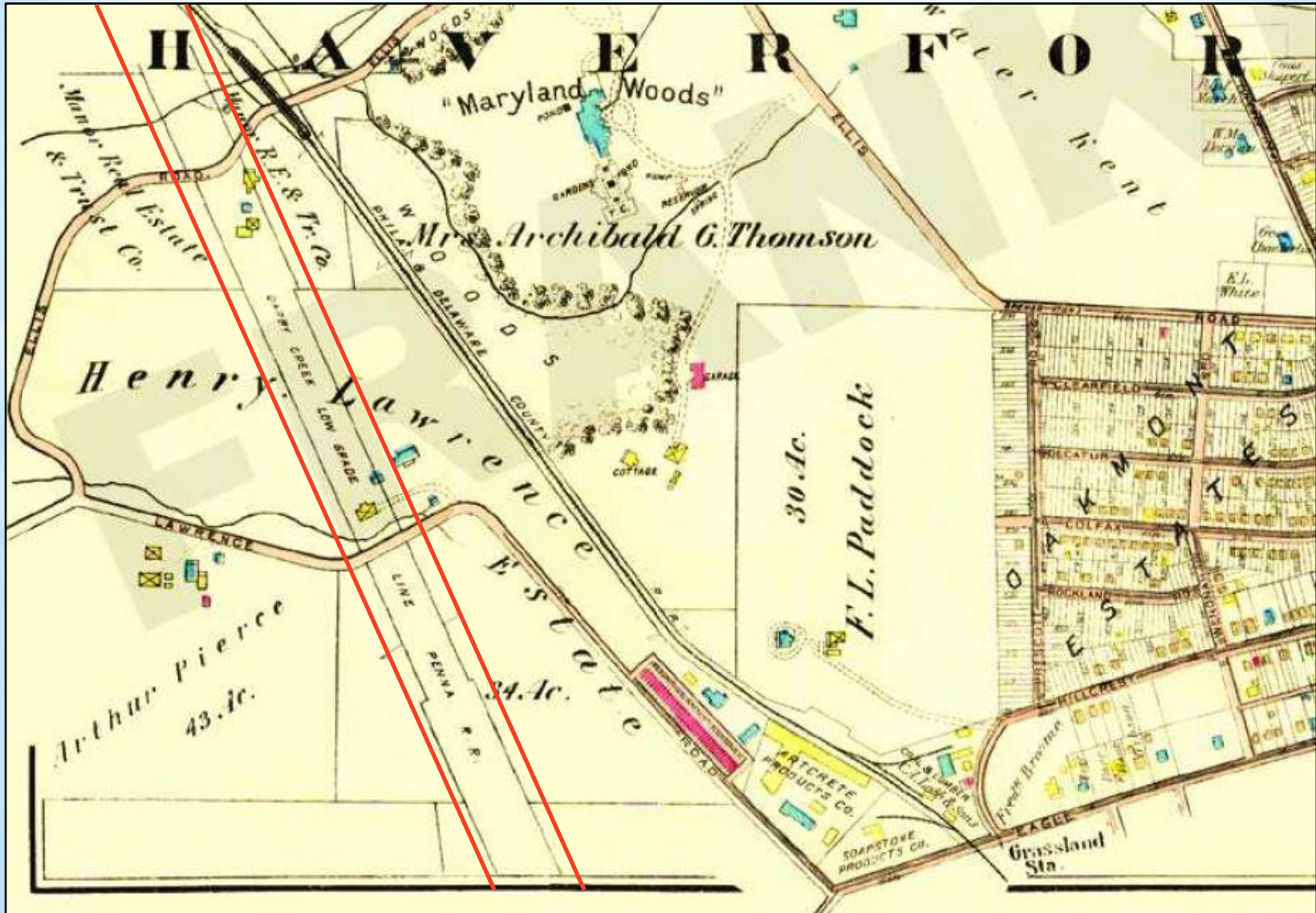
← LYNNEWOOD SCHOOL

HARRINGTON RD.



Map

Google



The End



Haverford Township
Historical Society