

Section Four Commentary, Mileposts Akron Branch, Hudson to Columbus

To reach the Cleveland area from Columbus, the PRR used its Akron Branch Columbus-Mount Vernon-Orrville-Akron to the wye at Hudson, and went the rest of the way on PRR's Cleveland & Pittsburgh. The C&P was a well-engineered double track artery, but the Akron Branch was single track and wandered over and around the hills of eastern Ohio. Historically the Akron line had been the Cleveland Akron & Columbus, and then the Cleveland Akron & Cincinnati, so it's often labeled the "CA&C".

A number of Cleveland railroads once ran their passenger service out of Cleveland Union Depot, situated north of downtown and downhill near the lake shore. However, the NYC and others left this antique facility when the modern Cleveland Union Terminal (also called the Terminal Tower) opened on property that WAS downtown. But PRR passenger trains (to Columbus, to Akron, or to Pittsburgh) continued to use the ancient Union Depot on the lakefront until the 1950's. Finally, PRR quit running passengers up and down the hill above the lakefront, and after abandoning downtown passenger service, "Cleveland" in a PRR public timetable meant Euclid Avenue (also referred to as 55th Street Station). Euclid Avenue was in the midst of a better neighborhood (and was a long way east from the attractions of the Terminal Tower). It was also much closer to the roundhouse forces at Kinsman Road. So from the Fifties on, milepost historians must remember that this is a different "Cleveland" at a different milepost.

Operationally, the C&P's mileposts were numbered from Pittsburgh, so we are basically interested in the mileposts running "west" from a zero at Hudson, mileposts on the Akron Branch.

We present three tables:

- 1. MP CA&C Cleveland to Columbus inputs.** This shows that most ETT Station Lists start at Hudson as 0.0, and go upward to MP 144.0 at Columbus. However, some inputs start at Cleveland instead of Hudson. Two even go the other way -- the 1920 and 1922 Akron Division ETTs) list mileposts from a Columbus 0.0, and the 1922 ETT even continues beyond Hudson to Cleveland Union Depot at 168.9. You'll notice that since in later years the Akron line was typically split between two divisions, I do not have one end or the other for some years.
- 2. MP CA&C Cleveland to Hudson and Orrville (selected dates).** Crossing the Fort Wayne at Orrville, the Akron line's once- heavily industrialized north end eventually became part of the Cleveland Division, later Lake Region and (after 1964)Lake Division. Since employee timetables placed MP 0.0 at Hudson, all the different inputs have been compared to that standard. I'm not sure how significant it is, but notice that Orrville's yard is about 37 miles from Hudson, or 62 rail miles from Cleveland Union Depot.
- 3. MP CA&C Orrville to Columbus (selected dates).** South and west of Orrville, the Akron line was mostly out in the country; some of the neighbors were Amish. The area around Badow Pass was actually hard mountain railroading, with pushers, tunnels, bridges, wrecks, and a high cost of operation. The roughly 100 miles from Orrville to Columbus became part of Columbus Division/Buckeye Region/Buckeye Division (at one time, about 100 miles was considered a days' work for freight train crews).