

Section One Commentary, Mileposts Pittsburgh to Columbus

Since the "Panhandle" was built from Pittsburgh west, it is not surprising that all historic lists of mileposts and mileages run from Pittsburgh Union Station west. The zero milepost was on the south side of the station, near "PH" tower.

In the distant past (i.e., 1850's to 1880's), it is almost certain that Columbus was more than 190.7 (or 190.9) miles from Pittsburgh; the famous "ten tunnels" of the Panhandle were artifacts of a late 19th Century building program creating (at that time) double-track bores. From an earlier time, I've seen mention on a map of an earlier "Tunnel 13" somewhere in the middle of the hilly part of Ohio. Additionally, there is good evidence that before Tunnel Five at Gould's Hollow was built, the line (single track?) wound tortuously around the outside of that hill following a creek. But 19th-Century ETT's are lacking to demonstrate the resetting of the line's mileposts. At least PRR's 1968 track chart shows us where the 10 tunnels were located.

Prior to system consolidation, Lines West operated its Pittsburgh-Columbus segment as its "Pittsburgh Division, PCC&StL Ry". However, once these lines came under direct PRR operation, there could not be two Pittsburgh Divisions, and so the line to Columbus was renamed the Panhandle Division, formally using its longtime nickname.

The tables below for this trackage start in 1901, and from that time "mileage creep" between Pittsburgh and Newark is very modest.

Because of the large number of employee timetables used, we present three tables :

1. **MP PH Pittsburgh-Newark 1901-1942.** All data is from PRR Employee Timetables except 1923 CT1000 and a retyped list of 1923 "block stations and Towers". Note that Newark (the PRR station there to be exact) is 157.8 "miles" from Pittsburgh from at least 1920 to 1942.
2. **MP PH Pittsburgh-Newark 1942-1967.** All data from PRR Employee Timetables . Again, Newark Ohio's Penn station remains at milepost 157.8 from Pittsburgh throughout.
3. **MP PH on C&N_ Newark to Columbus (selected dates).** These 33 miles combine data from PRR Employee Timetables with B&O timetables of their "Columbus & Newark Division" from 1920, 1939, 1942, 1951, 1954, 1962, 1967, and 1968. Since the B&O numbers start with Newark as zero, the "calc" numbers are restated to compare with the PRR mileposts from Pittsburgh. Mileposts from the different sources, though normalized, do not line up perfectly for us -- and I do not at this time have a good explanation of this. There were probably small line relocations over time on the C&N, especially at the approaches to Columbus Union Station.