

Introduction

See Below For Mile Marker Information

The Little Miami Scenic Trail extends for over 70 miles but averages only 66 feet in width. It is built mostly on an abandoned railroad right-of-way that was converted for public use. The purpose of this guide is to provide a brief glimpse of some of the history of the people, places, and events that are associated with a large portion of this trail. For the most part, larger towns, such as Xenia, Morrow, Loveland, and Milford, are given only brief histories since there is ample and easily accessible information on these towns available in libraries and on the internet. Instead, this guide will provide a little more detail on smaller, and occasionally abandoned, villages. Only the segment from Xenia to Newtown is discussed here since, at the time of this writing, the mile marks along the trail begin at the Depot in Xenia and continue to Newtown.

The first time I rode on the Little Miami Scenic Trail, I had no idea of what this marvelous trail entailed. I arrived in Cincinnati in 1992 and my knowledge of the city and surrounding area was limited. Sometime in the summer of 1993 I threw my bike in the back of my truck to look for a place to ride. After driving towards Milford, I decided to turn up Highway 126 - a road I had never taken before. I drove into Miamiville, without realizing where I was, and saw a bike trail going across the road!!! My first ride took me about a mile or so north of Loveland. Subsequent trips took me south and farther north of Loveland. However, I still did not realize just how long this trail was (nor that it was still undergoing its finishing touches much farther to the north and later to the south). Visits to the trail were rather limited in 1994 and 1995.

It wasn't until the summer following my marriage in the fall of 1995 that I really started to appreciate the trail. It seemed like every weekend, my wife and I would load up our bikes and drive to Loveland to go for a ride. As I mentioned, I had only been living in Cincinnati for a few years. So when we came across some massive buildings along the trail with a big "P" on the stacks, I kept wondering what this could have been (see Mile Mark 35.8). Every time we would go past them, I would wonder why there wasn't a plaque to explain what these buildings were. Or better still, why hadn't someone written a trail guide explaining the many unknowns along the trail. And then on August 11, 1996, we were riding back into Loveland when the little light bulb lit up over my head - Why not write the guide book yourself? Well, after researching it through the winter of 1997/1998, it mostly came together. A few years later, when I realized I probably wouldn't get around to putting out the guide by myself, I decided to put a text version on the internet. I pulled it from the internet when I was offered an opportunity to publish the guide. However, that fell through. After a few more rides on the trail and a little more background research, the guide is now "complete" and it is once again time to put the guide on the internet. The guide is something that can never truly be completed since there is always some bit of history or other information lurking out there waiting to be added to future versions of this guide.

It has been highly enjoyable learning and writing about this part of southwestern Ohio's past. I hope all who read this guide book will find an equal joy in reading and experiencing this history.

Be sure to patronize businesses located along the trail, whether you buy an ice cream cone or stay overnight at a bed and breakfast. By purchasing their goods or using their services, you help to keep the trail a vital part of these communities. And remember, most of this trail is a state park so please observe the rules and regulations posted at various locations along the trail.

Acknowledgements

The following lists the resources that were utilized for the background research for this project. My thanks go to people who work at these institutions for their assistance.

Cincinnati Historical Society
Greene County District Library, Xenia Branch
Lebanon Public Library

Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
Salem Township Public Library
Warren County Historical Society Museum
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Transportation

In addition, I have taken advantage of Dallas Bogan's numerous writings on the history of Warren County and surrounding area, much of which is available on the internet.

This guide is dedicated to my riding partner and partner through life - Barbara.

Little Miami Scenic Trail Guide

This guide is set up for traveling along the Little Miami Scenic Trail from north to south (Xenia to Cincinnati). Mile marks correspond to the markings painted along the paved trail at half-mile intervals. Some of the mile marks referred to in this guide are more precise than others. Many are simply "guesstimates." Along the way, you will notice remnants of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, such as telephone poles, railroad crossing signs, and train signals. The location of many, but certainly not all, of these are noted by mile mark.

Mile Mark 0.0 - Xenia

The trail begins near the intersection of Miami Avenue and South Detroit Street south of downtown Xenia at the recently constructed "depot." In the late 1800s, this area was the site of a railroad depot, roundhouse, and freight house. At the depot, Abraham Lincoln made a short speech on February 13, 1861, on his way from Springfield, Illinois, to Washington, D.C., where he was to be sworn in as president.

Xenia, Greek for hospitality, was laid out in the fall of 1803 at which time there was a population of 150 people. The first store opened in 1805, and by 1809 there were two stores, a singing school, and a court house. After a failed attempt at incorporation in 1813, Xenia became incorporated as a village in 1817 and as a city in 1834.

Following the arrival of the Little Miami Railroad in 1845, the city grew rapidly with increased industrial production. Besides the Little Miami Railroad, two other early rail lines that serviced Xenia were the Columbus & Xenia Railroad that was chartered in 1844 and the Dayton & Western Railroad which opened a line between Dayton and Xenia in 1853.

Over an 18 hour period on April 3 and 4, 1974, a group of 148 tornadoes swept across 13 states and one Canadian province. In all, more than 300 people died, 6,000 were injured, and there was more than half a billion dollars in damage. However, the hardest hit community was Xenia where, on April 3, three tightly bunched tornadoes with a swath of 1100 yards and 16 miles long killed 33 people and injured 1500. In addition to 12 churches and six schools that were either destroyed or extensively damaged, 180 businesses were destroyed. Damage to Xenia totaled more than \$100,000,000.

Shortly after leaving the depot (Mile Mark 0.0) you will notice a large smoke stack on the south side of the trail. "Hooven & Allison Co" is marked vertically on each side of the smoke stack. This company began by producing cordage products from natural fibers such as hemp, sisal, and jute. It started at this location in 1869 and closed in 2003.

Between Xenia and the village of Spring Valley, the trail and original rail line runs along Glady Run. In the 1800s, at least eight mills obtained their power to operate from this creek. These included two saw mills, one powder keg factory, one oil mill, two flour mills, one tow mill, and one woolen factory.

Mile Mark 3.1 - Hedges Road

From Hedges Road for about two miles to the south, you will see numerous old telephone poles along the west side of the trail that were associated with the rail line.

Mile Mark 6.5 - Spring Valley

Spring Valley actually has its roots on the west side of the Little Miami River. There a community called Transylvania was established about 1820. However, when the Little Miami Railroad came through on the east side of the river, that resulted in the rapid abandonment of Transylvania. Many of the residents dismantled their houses and moved them to Spring Valley. Somewhat surprisingly, at the same location on the west side of the river ten lots were surveyed and recorded in 1850 as the town of Transylvania. However, the lots were never settled and the community existed on paper only.

Although the town site of Spring Valley was surveyed in January 1842, it was not recorded until February 16, 1844. The name of the village is derived from the numerous springs in the area. The original 40 lots were added to through the mid 1800s and into the 1900s. Its continued growth was in large part because of its advantageous location at the intersection of the Little Miami River, the railroad, and the Columbus-Cincinnati Pike. By 1874, a local newspaper recorded the population of Spring Valley as 550. Businesses at that time included two groceries, one dry-goods store, one shoe shop, one drug store, two blacksmith shops, one woolen factory, one hotel, one tin-shop, one cooper shop, one livery stable, a flax seed oil mill, a flour mill, a pork-packing establishment, and a bagging mill which prepared flax for making into bags for packing cotton. In addition, there were three physicians, a lawyer, four churches, and a school.

The large mound on the north side of town is a drumlin (formed by glacial deposits), but was further built up by the early Native Americans. One of the early residents of Spring Valley, State Senator I.M. Barrett wanted to have oil brought into his house for heat, cooking, and light. His solution was to remove part of the top of the mound and install two metal tanks on it. The oil was then piped down to his house. However, this produced a large amount of smoke and the idea was subsequently abandoned. Eventually, the tanks were removed and the peak of the mound rebuilt.

The two-story white building with the second-story iron balcony located at the northwest corner of Main Street and the trail was built in the early 1850s to serve as a hotel. It operated as such until about 1918. During the 1920s, part of it was used as a doctor's office and residence.

Between Spring Valley and Roxanna, you will see old telephone poles and a railroad signal on the west side of the trail that were associated with the old Penn Railroad.

Geologic History:

Something to notice here is that the Little Miami River valley is about one mile wide. Farther downstream, the valley width varies considerably until you travel south of Miamiville after the trail crosses the Little Miami River (Mile Marker 48.5) where once again the valley is about one mile wide. This is all related to the geologic history of Southwestern Ohio. Over two million years ago, prior to the Pleistocene glaciation of the area, the drainage patterns were noticeably different from today. The major drainage system in Ohio was the Teays River which drained from West Virginia, entered Ohio near Portsmouth, and continued in a northwesterly direction through the Fort Wayne, Indiana, area. Numerous north-flowing rivers drained southwestern Ohio at that time, as compared to today when most rivers generally flow to the south. When the first glacier entered Ohio, the Kansan or pre-Kansan, it blocked part of the Teays River and changed the drainage patterns. This caused major episodes of downcutting and is referred to as the Deep Stage.

About 300,000 years ago, a second glacial period occurred in Ohio. During this period, the Illinoian, the ice sheet covered all of the Little Miami River valley and deposited gravel and rocks that are found throughout the southern part of the valley and surrounding area.

During the Pleistocene period, this was followed by the Wisconsin ice sheet which, about 16,000 to 17,000 years ago, came as far south as Kings Mills. This glacier again blocked numerous rivers and, as a result, left us with the present drainage patterns we have today. When the Wisconsin glacier blocked the ancient streams, the water flowed along the ice margin and cut through the bedrock in two areas along the Little Miami Trail. The first of these narrowings occurs between north of Fort Ancient near the I-71 bridge (Mile Mark 22.3) to slightly east of Morrow (Mile Mark 27.5). The second begins at about the State Route 48 bridge near South Lebanon (Mile Mark 33.5) and continues to Loveland (Mile Mark 41.8).

Approximately Mile Mark 7.5 - Greenwood Springs

In this general vicinity, the site for the community of Greenwood Springs was surveyed and recorded in March 1854. The property, owned by W.H. Moseley, was laid out as fourteen lots between the river and railroad with another 26 lots on the east side of the railroad tracks. However, like several other railroad towns, this one never made it beyond the paper stage.

Mile Mark 8.5 - Roxanna

Originally named Claysville, this community was established on April 29, 1845 when the Little Miami Railroad came through the area. When a post office was to be established here, a new name was required since there was already a Claysville post office in Ohio. The village was renamed after the postmistress Roxanna Clark. The main business was a grain elevator built adjacent to the railroad, but it was not heavily used. In 1918, seven people lived here.

Mile Mark 9.5 - Spring Valley Wildlife Area

The Spring Valley Wildlife Area, approximately 850 acres in size, is maintained by the Division of Wildlife, Ohio Department of Natural Resources. In addition to being a prime bird watching location in Ohio (over 230 species have been observed here), it is also a public hunting and fishing area. Following initial purchases of the property in 1953, the dike for the lake was built in 1954. The land formerly was used as a fur farm.

Please note, bicycles and horses are not allowed off the Little Miami Scenic Trail in this area.

Mile Mark 10.4 - Sandy Run

Mile Mark 12.9 - Shaffers Run

Mile Mark 13.0 - Start of Mill Run and old dam site

If you look at the Little Miami River you will see the remains of an old dam that diverted the river to flow through Mill Run. This powered several mills located in Waynesville.

Mile Mark 14.0 - Corwin

Corwin, named after Governor Thomas Corwin, was laid out in 1845 as 13 lots. The Corwin post office operated from February 1893 to October 1918. Prior to 1893, the mail was delivered by the Little Miami Railroad to the depot at Corwin and transferred to the Waynesville post office. If the river was flooding, the mail would sit at the depot, some of which would be for Corwin residents, until it could be delivered to Waynesville. The 1915 Waynesville 15-minute topographic quadrangle refers to this location as both "Corwin" and "Waynesville Station."

Besides the depot, other businesses in Corwin included the Panhandle Hotel, the Waynesville Canning Company which specialized in canning sweet corn, a general store and grocery, a coal yard, a lumber yard, two grain elevators, a blacksmith, and stock yard.

Mile Mark 14.2 - Old train mile mark

As you leave Corwin, you will see another railroad relic - the old train mile mark "69" on the west side of the trail.

Mile Mark 14.4 - Highway 73 to Waynesville

Mile Mark 16.5 - Covered bridge

If you look down the side road towards the Little Miami, you will notice the Corwin M. Nixon Covered Bridge. It was erected in June 1982.

Mile Mark 16.7 - Caesar Creek

Caesar Creek is named after a black slave named "Cizar" who was captured by the Shawnee during an attack on a flatboat on the Ohio River in 1776. He was adopted by the tribe and spent much of his time fishing on the creek that he named after himself.

Here's a little side trip to take. On the south side of Caesar Creek is a parking lot for the Caesar Creek Gorge State Nature Preserve. You can take a two-mile hike up Caesar's Trace. The trail begins by following an old road, but then turns north onto the creek's floodplain. After following the creek for a while, the trail then loops back up to the old road and back to the parking lot. Bikes and horses are not allowed on this trail and, unfortunately, at this time there are no bike racks in the parking lot.

Mile Mark 19.2 - Old railroad bridges

You can still see parts of the old Pennsylvania Railroad bridges that were used for this trail as you cross two of the creeks in this area.

Mile Mark 19.8 - Oregonia

Oregonia has undergone a number of changes through its history, both in its name and prosperity. About 1802 or 1803, Nebo Gaunt built a mill at this location which he eventually sold to Judge Ignatius Brown and David Brown. During this period, the area was referred to as Gaunt's Mill or Brown's Mill. Shortly after the transfer of ownership to the Browns, a paint mill was built followed in 1816 by a carding mill and cotton mill (which burned down in 1818). By 1820, a blacksmith shop, auger factory, and pottery were added to the community. It was also about this time that the village was named Freeport. In 1844 a large structure was built originally to serve as a paper mill, but later converted to a barrel factory.

On February 5, 1846, a post office was established. Since another village in Ohio was already called Freeport, it was renamed Oregon. However, the Little Miami Railroad refused to accept this name for their station, so for a period of time there was the Oregon Post Office and the Freeport Station. In December 1882, the post office and railroad agreed on the name of Oregonia.

By the 1880s, Oregonia had a flour mill, a saw mill, two general stores, two blacksmith shops, a wagon shop, the railroad station, a post office, church, school, two physicians, and twenty families. In 1888, one of the blacksmith shops, Bradbury & Spencer, turned to bridge making and in 1896 changed the company name to the Oregonia Bridge Company. By the turn of the century, the company was building bridges throughout Ohio and in several other states. Prosperity continued for the village as it continued to grow and add new businesses. These included a third general store, a second church, and the

addition of the French Brothers creamery station which had a capacity of processing 5,000 to 20,000 pounds of milk per day. The turn of the century was a time of civic pride when many communities boasted having a small band. Such was the case for Oregonia. The Oregonia Cornet Band was organized on January 12, 1901 with 12 members. The number was increased to 14 in 1902.

Unfortunately, an early sign of trouble came in 1903 when the Oregonia Bridge Company had outgrown its factory. In order to grow, the company moved to Lebanon. In March 1904, the machinery was removed from the Oregonia plant. A further blow to the village occurred on December 23, 1909, when the Spencer & Monroe Mill was destroyed by fire. The mill was built in 1854 on the site of Gaunt's Mill which was also destroyed by fire. That mill was built in 1802 and burned to the ground on Christmas night of 1852.

Near the Little River Café, which was once known as the Freeport Inn, a lenticular truss bridge once crossed Little Miami River. However, at about 7:15 a.m. on Monday, March 12, 2001, the east end of the bridge collapsed. The bridge, which was closed to traffic in 1990, was constructed in 1883 by the Berlin Iron Bridge Co. of East Berlin, Connecticut. It was one of five such bridges that were built in the U.S. with one other one in Warren County and the other three in Connecticut.

Mile Mark 20.8 - Olive Branch (creek)

Mile Mark 21.4 - Mathers Mills

This area was settled by David Van Schoyck and Lewis Rees. In 1807, Rees built a mill here which he later sold to Richard Mather, after whom the settlement was named. To service the mill, a dam was built nearby. In addition to the two millers that were hired, the village also had a shopkeeper and a blacksmith.

On January 20, 1890, a new bridge was being built across the Little Miami at this location. However, the high water from recent rains undercut the temporary trestle. This resulted in the bridge falling into the river and taking with it about a dozen workmen, one of whom was pinned in the bridge works and died. Others suffered minor injuries.

Mile Mark 21.5 - Wilmington Road

Mile Mark 22.3 - Interstate-71 bridge and the settlement of Lockport

The Jeremiah Morrow Bridge, named for the Governor of Ohio from 1822 to 1826, is the highest interstate bridge in Ohio. It is 239 feet above the Little Miami River and is 2,230 feet long. Built in 1963 and 1964 at a cost of \$5,000,000, it was opened to traffic in 1965. An average of 23,800 vehicles use the twin structures every day (or almost 9,000,000 per year).

Also at this location was the settlement of Lockport which consisted primarily of the Union Mill and a few houses. The paper mill, which was built in 1810, supplied paper for the Lebanon *Western Star* and the Cincinnati *Gazette*. By 1830, eight men were employed at the mill.

As mentioned in the Geologic History entry at Spring Valley (Mile Mark 6.5), the Little Miami Valley narrows at this point and continues as a narrow valley until slightly east of Morrow (Mile Mark 27.5).

Mile Mark 22.8 - Ferris Run

Mile Mark 23.1 - Fort Ancient River Crossing

Although it is uncertain when this bottom land was first settled, it is known that Isaac Wickersham had a tannery here possibly before 1800. The tannery and land subsequently were purchased by Robert Jack in 1813. Several others became proprietors of the land before the Little Miami Railroad came

through in 1844. By that time, Francis B. Howell was the owner. He built a warehouse and storerooms which he rented out or were used by his agents. He also built a hotel large enough to accommodate 100 people making it a popular resort during the summer months. By the 1880s, in addition to the hotel the village also had the railroad station, a general store, a school, a blacksmith shop, a church, a saloon, and twelve families. The station grew with importance as a shipping point for grain and hogs, as well as peaches and blackberries.

The first bridge over the river at this point was built in 1841 or 1842. It was destroyed by a flood in the spring of 1881, but was replaced that same season by an iron bridge that cost \$6,275. The flood of 1913 destroyed that bridge.

Here is an easy side trip. About one quarter of a mile west of the trail and across the bridge is a two-story stone house that was built in 1802. From 1809 to 1820 it operated as The Cross Keys Tavern.

Mile Mark 23.2 - Train whistle sign

On the east side of the trail, you will see an old whistle sign for trains as they approached the road crossing.

Mile Mark 23.6 - Trail to Fort Ancient

If you are riding a bike, you can lock it to the wooden railing and walk the quarter-mile trail up to Fort Ancient. At the top of the trail is the north overlook which provides a view of the valley facing towards the I-71 bridge.

Fort Ancient is located on a bluff about 240 feet above the Little Miami River. The almost four miles of earth and stone walls surrounding the site enclose about 100 acres. The site is divided into the North, Middle, and South Forts. Originally considered a defensive fort, subsequent research suggests that the site actually served as a social and ceremonial center. The embankments and associated mounds were created by the Hopewell Indians between about 100 B.C. and A.D. 500. The Hopewell culture is often considered one of the most advanced prehistoric cultures in North America as suggested by their elaborate earthworks, the finely crafted grave goods associated with their burials, and the extensive trade network they developed. Items traded into the Ohio Valley in exchange for chert from Flint Ridge and Ohio pipestone included copper from Lake Superior, mica from the southern Appalachians, obsidian from Wyoming, and ocean shells from the Gulf Coast.

The Hopewell created hilltop and geometric enclosures throughout the Ohio Valley and surrounding area. Besides Fort Ancient, other significant earthworks created by these people include Shawnee Lookout in Cincinnati, Fort Hill in Highland County, Serpent Mound in Adams County, Mound City Group National Monument north of Chillicothe, the Seip Earthworks west of Chillicothe, the Newark Earthworks in Newark, and the Portsmouth Earthworks in Portsmouth. The Seip, Newark, and Portsmouth Earthworks have been heavily affected by modern agricultural and/or urban activities.

The South Fort of Fort Ancient was also the site of a village that was inhabited about A.D. 1500 by the Fort Ancient Indians. This culture lived in southern Ohio and surrounding areas from approximately A.D. 900 to 1500. Archaeologists originally thought that Fort Ancient culture created the mounds and embankments, thus associating this name with them.

Anyone interested in the prehistory of the area is encouraged to visit the museum within the North Fort walls and to walk the earthworks trail. The earthworks trail is about one mile in length.

Mile Mark 24.4 - Cowen Run

Mile Mark 24.7 - Stony Run

Mile Mark 24.9 - Senior

In 1904, a mill was built here which produced powder for miners and construction, and later for the military during World War I. At least one serious accident occurred in which eight men were killed. The settlement consisted of the mill, a hotel, a schoolhouse, and houses for the workers. The 1914 Morrow 15-minute quadrangle depicts a cluster of structures north of present-day Senior at about Mile Mark 24.5. Several abandoned brick buildings are still visible from the trail at this location. Although it is unknown for certain, it is possible that this was the location of the powder mill.

Mile Mark 25.4 - Strout Road and Hammel

At this intersection was one of the many small communities that was established in the 1800s, but eventually disappeared with little evidence of it ever having existed and only limited historic documentation. Prior to the arrival of the railroad, there was a paper mill at this location, although little is known of when it began or ceased operation. With the arrival of the railroad in 1845, seventeen lots were laid out by Enoch Hammel in an attempt to start a village. In addition to the few families that settled here, a schoolhouse was also established. Also at this location, a railroad siding was built for loading grain and livestock. The community is depicted on several old maps.

Across the river was another small community named Mill Grove that has also disappeared and about which there is little information. It was apparently founded in 1810 and at one time had a grist mill, saw mill, a paper mill, distillery, and a general store. Following construction of the Miami Canal in the mid 1840s, the paper mill was shut down since it could not compete with paper mills along the canal. This rapidly led to the demise of the community. An 1854 county map that is on display in the Warren County Museum in Lebanon, Ohio shows the location of Mill Grove. Millgrove (spelled as one word) is shown across from Hammel on an 1856 map of Warren County. However, on the 1914 Morrow 15-minute quadrangle, Millgrove (again, spelled as one word) is depicted at the location of Senior. There is still a reference to this now nonexistent town - Mill Grove Road that runs from Morrow to that area on the north and west side of Little Miami River. The bridge spanning the river at this location was destroyed in the flood of 1913.

Mile Mark 25.8 - Harpers Run

Mile Mark 27.2 - Bedrock exposures

In this area there are two small creeks where you can see exposures of bedrock. The bedrock throughout much of southwestern Ohio dates to the Ordovician Period, which was about 450 million years ago. During this period of time, the area was covered by a warm, tropical sea with abundant life forms of sea weeds, trilobites, clams, sponges, snails, and corals. Even more surprising is that this area was located 25° south of the equator! If you are interested in how the surface of the Earth has changed over time, check out geologic books with discussions on plate tectonics. One excellent book on this subject is "This Dynamic Earth, the Story of Plate Tectonics" by W.J. Kious and R.I. Tilling, published in 1996 by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Mile Mark 28.2 - Todd Fork

Mile Mark 28.3 - Morrow

At the west end of Morrow, there are restroom facilities.

On April 12, 1839, M.M. Whitacre laid out the plans for a community of 144 lots at this location. The name he proposed for the town was Depositville. However, this town never became a reality. Instead, the area remained relatively dormant with only a farm occupying the land. When the railroad came through, Morrow was laid out as 49 lots in August 1844 by three men associated with building the railroad. The town is named after Jeremiah Morrow who served as Governor of Ohio from 1822 to

1826. Additional lots continued to be added through the 1840s and into the 1870s. By the 1880s, the population had grown to about 1,000 people. The first building constructed served as the freight depot, warehouse, and a general store. This was followed in 1844 by Morrow House.

Across the river, the village of Fredericksburg was established in 1818 by Nathaniel Harrell. Originally it consisted of 14 lots, but is now a part of Morrow

The Cincinnati, Wilmington & Zanesville Railroad also came into Morrow where it connected with the Little Miami Railroad line. This railroad, which later became the Cincinnati & Muskingum Valley, was begun in Morrow in December 1851, but took until 1856 to reach Zanesville. It went into receivership and was leased in 1873 by the Pennsylvania Company.

In the late 1800s, Stephen Bangs from Mount Lookout, Cincinnati, searched along the banks of the Little Miami River for mussels containing pearls. In 1894, about a mile and a half downstream from Morrow he found a mussel that contained two pearls. One pearl weighed over 100 grains and the other about 300 grains. At the time, he put a value of \$10,000 on the larger pearl.

Between Morrow and north of Fort Ancient is the second narrowing of the valley as discussed in the Geologic History at Mile Mark 1.3. At some locations, the valley is only about 200 feet wide as compared to about 4,000 feet near Morrow.

Many years ago, a poem was written about Morrow which was later set to music. It goes as follows:

I WANT TO GO TO MORROW

I started on a journey just about a week ago,
For the little town of Morrow, in the state of Ohio.
I never was a traveler, and really didn't know
That Morrow had been ridiculed a century or so,
I went down to the depot for my ticket and applied
For the tips regarding Morrow not expecting to be guyed.
Said I, "My friend, I want to go to Morrow and return
Not later than tomorrow, for I haven't time to burn."

Said he to me, "Now let me see if I have heard you right.
You want to go to Morrow and back tomorrow night.
You should have gone to Morrow yesterday and back today,
For if you started yesterday to Morrow, don't you see,
You could have got to Morrow and return today at three.
The train that started yesterday - now understand me right -
Today it gets to Morrow and returns tomorrow night."

Said I, "My boy, it seems to me talking through your hat,
Is there a town named Morrow on your line? Now tell me that."
"There is," said he, "and take from me a quiet little tip -
To go from here to Morrow is a fourteen-hour trip.
The train that goes to Morrow leaves today eight-thirty-five;
Half after ten tomorrow is the time it should arrive,
Now if from here to Morrow is a fourteen-hour jump,
Can you go to Morrow and come back today, you chump?"

Said I, "I want to go to Morrow, can I go today
And get to Morrow by tonight, if there is no delay?"
"Well, well," said he, "explain to me and I've no more to say;
Can you go anywhere tomorrow and come back today?"

For if you'd get to Morrow, surely you agree
You should have started not today, but yesterday, you see.
So if you start to Morrow, leaving here today, you're flat,
You won't get to Morrow till the day that follows that."

"Now if you start today to Morrow, it's a cinch you'll land
Tomorrow into Morrow, not today you understand.
For the train today to Morrow, if the schedule is right,
Will get you into Morrow by about tomorrow night."
Said I, "I guess you know it all, but kindly let me say,
How can I go to Morrow if I leave the town today?"
Said he, "You cannot go to Morrow any more today,
For the train that goes to Morrow is a mile upon its way."

I was so disappointed I was mad enough to swear;
The train had gone to Morrow and had left me standing there.
The man was right in telling me I was a howling jay;
I didn't go to Morrow, so I guess I'll go today.

Mile Mark 30.4 - Bigfoot Run and the Warren County Serpent Mound

Although there is now a gravel pit operating in this vicinity, back in 1909 *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, Vol. XVIII, reported a serpent mound was located here. At the time of that report, the head was eroded away by Bigfoot Run (then called Baker's Creek). The mound was described as about 3 feet high and 10 to 15 feet wide. Total length was about 1300 feet. Since then, the gravel operation has totally eradicated any evidence of this mound.

Mile Mark 30.7 - Stubbs Mill Road

The first mill built in this area was constructed by Jabish Phillips in 1802. Eventually, Isaac Stubbs became owner of the mill. He and his descendants became important landowners and businessmen in Warren County. In addition to several businesses (mills and a distillery) at this location, he also had mills at Freeport (later known as Oregonia) and Gainesboro (later Kings Mills). His son became a part owner of the Golden Lamb Inn in Lebanon, Ohio.

In 1818, William Crosson took a load of produce on a flat boat from Stubbs Mill to New Orleans. After he sold the produce, Crosson **walked** back to Cincinnati. The return trip took him 21 days! He continued this venture for several more years.

Mile Mark 33.2 - South Lebanon

Originally the settlement on the north side of the Little Miami River was named Deerfield. This is one of the oldest settlements in Warren County. However, note that while that portion of town was still referred to as Deerfield in 1875, the portion of town on the south side of the river was called South Lebanon. The town was probably laid out in 1795 as 144 lots and settled in 1796. However, it was not placed on record in Cincinnati until April 23, 1802.

Following three days of heavy rainfall in March of 1913, severe flooding struck most of the rivers throughout Ohio. South Lebanon was particularly hard hit. Many of the houses were completely destroyed and carried away by the floodwaters. One story houses were totally under water.

There is a telephone available beside the trail, but no other public facilities.

Mile Mark 33.5 - State Route 48

As mentioned in the Geologic History entry at Spring Valley (Mile Mark 6.5), the valley again narrows at this point. It continues as a relatively narrow valley to Loveland (Mile Mark 41.8).

Mile Mark 34.2 - Middletown Junction

Here the Penn Central line branched out - east along the Little Miami River or northeast to Middletown in Butler County. The name of "Middletown Junction" refers to how the Middletown & Cincinnati Railroad joined with the Little Miami Railroad at this location. The 1914 Morrow 15-minute topographic quadrangle shows in addition to the triangular-shaped junction of rail lines, there were two sidings, several buildings, and another spur that ran to the south across the Little Miami River into the village of Kings Mills. The more recent 1979 South Lebanon 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle shows two buildings at the junction, the foundations of which are still visible at Mile Mark 34.4. This map also depicts the rail line as an active Penn Central line.

The north branch of the junction is now used for the five-mile long "Lebanon Countryside Trail" to the City of Lebanon. If you like old bridges, it's only 0.2 miles to the center of the old railroad bridge across the Little Miami. Or you can continue to Lebanon and visit the Golden Lamb Inn where the old store counter from Jonathan Sherwood's General Store in Oregonia is still put to good use.

Mile Mark 35.8 - Kings Mills

This area has witnessed a history of successes and failures. The first mill in Warren County was built at this location by William Wood about 1799. It remained in service, exchanging ownership, until it closed in 1877.

The village of Gainesboro was laid out on the west side of the river on June 26, 1815, and consisted of 134 lots. The population grew to about 150, but rapidly declined and eventually ceased to exist as a town. The Gainesboro post office operated from January 1822 to August 1825. An 1856 map shows the village, but spells it as "Gainsborough."

In 1878, King's Great Western Powder Company, was incorporated. Joseph King and his nephew Ahimaaz King, two of the founders of the company, built a small powder mill on the Little Miami River. At the mill, gunpowder purchased from the government was reworked and sold. During the first year of operation, 12,768 kegs of sporting powder and 28,067 kegs of blasting powder were produced. When Joseph died in 1885, his son-in-law Gershon M. Peters became president while Ahimaaz remained as manager.

Two years later, Peters incorporated The Peters Cartridge Company. The company quickly succeeded when it developed a round-table loading machine for mechanically loading shotgun shells. These were the first machine-loaded shotgun shells. Although it operated separately from King's Great Western Powder Company, there was a close relationship between the two. Originally, Peters rented space from King's before it eventually purchased some of the land and buildings. In 1889 King's Great Western Powder Company was changed to The King Powder Company and the town of King's Mills (note apostrophe at that time) was started. This was primarily a company owned town with only a few privately owned homes with most of the town established on the west side of the Little Miami River.

Following is a description of one of the worst accidents that occurred at the plant:

On July 15, 1890, the company suffered a serious explosion, caused by the negligence of the crew of a freight train, which threw a cut of cars into a siding on which two cars of powder were standing ready to be taken out, with such force that the end of the car was crushed in and the powder exploded. The fire communicated to the other buildings of the plant, one of which was the "soda" store house. The force of the explosion had broken all the water pipes, and the escaping water and the molten nitrate of soda ran together into the crater that had been formed through the first explosion, with the result that a series of explosions occurred

lasting four or five hours. The fire spread up the hollow in which the plant was situated, to one of the magazines which exploded in turn and the disaster destroyed the storage warehouse, main office buildings, a number of dwellings occupied by workmen of the company, and also resulted in the death of eight persons (from *History of the Explosive Industry in America* by A.P. Van Gelder and J. Schlatter, Columbia University Press, New York, 1927).

Because the accident was caused by the negligence of the railroad company, Peters and Kings companies were reimbursed for their losses and were able to quickly rebuild. By the early 1900s, "nearly 1,000 men, boys and girls [were] making, loading and packing [cartridges]." The plant became a major provider of cartridges for the U.S., Great Britain, and other Allied countries. During World War I, Peters produced an average of 1,500,000 cartridges per day. However, after the war parts of the plant were closed and torn down or abandoned.

In 1934, Peters Cartridge Company was taken over by Remington Arms, which closed the Little Miami plant in 1944. The plant was then used until 1948 by Columbia Records for making records. They in turn sold it in 1950 to Seagram's Distillery which used it for storage, but finally sold it into private hands in 1960.

The flood stage of the Little Miami River at Kings Mill is 17.0 feet. On March 26, 1913, the major flood that followed three days of rainfall resulted in the river cresting at a height of 33.70 feet - over 16 feet above the flood stage. This resulted in an estimated \$150,000 in damage to The King Powder Company and The Peters Cartridge Company. The bridge across the Little Miami River was also destroyed.

Mile Mark 37.8 - Foster

Named after the Foster family that settled here, the main residential development of this community was on the west side of the Little Miami River. However, an 1867 map of Warren County shows that there were two stores, the post office, a distillery, a hotel, and the train depot on the east side of the river. Earlier there was a mill on the east side. The post office underwent three name changes - Foster's Crossings (in October 1859), Fosters (January 1884), and finally Foster (June 1893).

Jeremiah Morrow, Governor of Ohio from 1822 - 1826, had a mill about one mile downstream from this location.

The flood of 1913 essentially removed all buildings on the east side of the river, as well as destroying the bridge.

Mile Mark 38.6 - Butterworth Station or Butterworth's

A flag station for the Little Miami Railroad was set up at this location in the 1800s. It was named after Henry Thomas Butterworth who owned the property at that time.

Mile Mark 39.8 - Salt Run

Mile Mark 40.2 - The narrow valley - geologic history

You will notice how the valley has become much narrower than it was at Loveland. Here, it is about 600 feet wide compared to up to 3,000 feet wide at Loveland. This change in valley width relates to the Geologic History discussed at Mile Mark 6.5. From near South Lebanon (Mile Mark 16.7) to this area, the Little Miami River cut through bedrock during the Pleistocene since the previous drainage channel was blocked at South Lebanon by the Wisconsin glacier.

Mile Mark 41.0 - Ertel Run

Mile Mark 41.7 - O'Bannon Creek

This creek is named after John O'Bannon who made the initial survey of this area in 1792. Part of the old Pennsylvania Railroad bridge and ties are visible on the east side of this bridge.

Mile Mark 41.8 - Loveland

The first settler to move into this area was Colonel Thomas Paxton in 1795 who established a homestead in the Clermont County portion of what was to become Loveland. His was the first house erected between the Little Miami and Scioto Rivers. The settlement continued to grow as other families moved into the area. By the late 1840s, the area was serviced by the Little Miami Railroad and the Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad (which was eventually taken over by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad). On November 23, 1848, William Ramsey, a grandson of Thomas Paxton, surveyed and recorded the town of Paxton on land extending from the Little Miami River to the Little Miami Railroad. This was followed by his laying out the town of Loveland on March 19, 1850, which extended east of the railroad tracks. Loveland was named after James Loveland who operated a store and the post office. Eventually, Paxton ceased to exist as it became part of Loveland. Official naming of the town occurred in September 1863 when the town was resurveyed and new boundaries established. It applied for corporation as the Village of Loveland on February 12, 1876.

Crossing the Little Miami River was problematic for several years after the town was established. Ferry service began in 1865 and it was not until 1868 that the Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad built a bridge across the river. The first wagon bridge that finally provided easier access between East and West Loveland was built in 1872.

For a more thorough discussion on the history of Loveland, be sure to read *Loveland: Passages Through Time* by J.B. Beller and M.E. Nason which was published by the Greater Loveland Historical Society in 1992.

At the north end of town beside the trail, there is a park with a restroom and water fountain. If you're not in a hurry, buy an ice cream cone, have a seat, and listen to the carillon which plays on the hour.

Mile Mark 44.4 - Branch Hill

Branch Hill was laid out on January 3, 1873 by Colonel John H. Branch. The community became a popular residential suburb for a number of prominent citizens who commuted daily to Cincinnati on the Little Miami Railroad. One of these individuals was the editor of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, George Manor Davis Bloss, who met with a tragic death when he was struck by a Little Miami Railroad train near his house on May 28, 1876. On February 28, 1877, Colonel Branch met with a similar fate.

In the late 1800s, a suspension bridge measuring 315 feet long crossed the Little Miami River here. At a cost of \$70,000, it was described as one of the finest bridges in southern Ohio. It was dedicated on July 4, 1872 after great fanfare and speeches, including one by Governor Noyes.

Mile Mark 44.5 - Pennsylvania Railroad remnants

Just before you enter the village of Branch Hill, you will notice two remnants of the old Pennsylvania Railroad. On the east side of the trail is an old train signal and on the west is an old telephone pole.

Mile Mark 44.9 - Interstate-275 Bridge

The twin Continuous Steel Girder bridges at this location were built in 1971. They are almost 760 feet in length and over 150 feet above the Little Miami River.

Somewhere around Mile Mark 46.0 - Morgan's Raid on the Little Miami Railroad

On July 8, 1863, General John Morgan and his troops of the Confederate Army crossed the Ohio River at Rising Sun, Indiana, and within six days made his way to the Little Miami River. At a location about midway between Miamiville and Branch Hill, his troops attacked one of the military trains of the Little Miami Railroad. The train, which was carrying new recruits traveling from Columbus to Camp Dennison, was overturned and burned. The State paid the railroad \$13,700 to cover the cost of the locomotive and the three cars that were destroyed.

Morgan was eventually captured on July 26 near Salineville in northeastern Ohio and sent to the Ohio Penitentiary. On the night of November 27, 1863, he escaped with six of his men by digging through the cement floor of their cell with knives taken from the prison kitchen. This led to an air-chamber where they then tunneled under the walls of the building into the outer yard. They then climbed the wall that surrounded the prison with ropes made from their bed sheets. Morgan took the Little Miami Railroad train for Cincinnati that evening, jumped off before it arrived in the city, crossed the Ohio River, and was helped back to the Confederate lines by friends in Kentucky.

Mile Mark 47.5 - Miamiville

Miamiville was laid out on September 29, 1849, by Moses F. Robinson with additional lots added through the years. This locality was selected because of the nearby Buckingham mills discussed at Mile Mark 47.9. Within a few years, a mechanics shop, several stores, and a hotel had opened. The train depot was located on the south side of the tracks on the east side of Second Street. One of the old railroad crossing signs is still in place (although turned so as not to face road traffic) at the northeast corner of Second Street.

A sign along the trail indicates that parking, a restroom, and emergency telephone are set up at the Miamiville Fire Station courtesy of Miami Township.

About half a mile west of Miamiville is Evergreen Cemetery. Several years ago, a black monolith tombstone towering about seven feet high of Charles Rich (July 28, 1859 to July 7, 1929). There also was an historic plaque at the cemetery entrance which noted:

Charles Henry Rich, buried in this cemetery, was a close friend of James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok. On August 2, 1876, Hickok was killed while playing poker at the No. 10 Saloon, Deadwood, Dakota Territory. Charlie Rich had just dealt Hickok two black Aces and two black Eights, the "Dead Man's Hand" to all future poker players. Rich, a native Ohioan, was a quiet man who occasionally told stories of the Old West.

Both the monolith tombstone and the plaque were removed.

Mile Mark 47.9 - Little Miami River crossing

Upstream from this bridge, a small dam was built to power a variety of mills that were built over the years near this location. The first was a small mill on the Clermont County (north) side of river built by Enoch Buckingham around 1810. The Buckinghams also built a saw mill on the opposite side of the river. About 1830, grandsons John and Mark Buckingham built a larger mill which produced up to 130 barrels of flour per day. In 1880, the stone dam built to divert the waterflow for the flour and saw mill was described as "about six hundred feet long, and having a four-foot breast." In addition to the mills, the Buckinghams also built a distillery about 1835. It was destroyed by fire in 1858.

Mile Mark 48.9 - Camp Dennison (Alim)

In 1843, Nimrod Price attempted to start up a small town called Alim near the southern portion of his property. Although a few cottages were built along the streets, the village never became established. Instead it eventually became part of Camp Dennison. By 1890, the town of Camp Dennison had a school house, a dry goods store, a post office, the train depot, two taverns, two churches, and was home to the Granite Improvement Company. The former train depot was located on the west side of the trail on the north side of Lincoln Road (the last street you cross leaving Camp Dennison from the north).

Mile Mark 49.3 - The Original Camp Dennison

This area, referred to as the Big Bottom between 1794 and 1814, consists of land originally settled in 1796 by Christian Waldschmidt (also spelled "Waldsmith") who led 20 Pietist families from Germany. Waldsmith diverted the Little Miami River through a mill race and built a saw mill to produce lumber for the construction of new homes in the area. In 1797 he added a gristmill and two distilling vats for making whiskey. These were later supplemented by a cloth finishing mill and a paper mill. By the early 1800s, Waldschmidt mills were producing goods shipped through Miami Exporting Company (of which he was a director) to various markets through Cincinnati. When Waldschmidt died in 1814 of influenza, his son-in-law, Matthias Kugler and his son, John, took over parts of the business.

In the late 1830s when the Little Miami Railroad came through here, this part of the valley had been renamed Germany. However, instead of bringing greater wealth to the community, the railroad brought greater competition from other towns and villages upstream. When several of the mills in this settlement burned in 1840, they were not rebuilt.

With the coming of the Civil War, Camp Dennison was established in May 1861 and the town of Germany ceased to exist. The camp served as a depot for the Volunteer Recruiting Service where troops were trained prior to being sent to war. During the first year of operation, the camp was used primarily for drill purposes. However, following the battle of Pittsburgh Landing in 1862, a hospital consisting of 70 barracks was added. The Little Miami Railroad divided the camp with the hospital on the west side and the Cavalry quarters on the east side. The post was discontinued in September 1865.

A monument, flag, and cannon are located at the intersection of Kugler Mill Road and Highway 126 to commemorate Camp Dennison during the Civil War. The monument was unveiled on October 2, 1932. Waldschmidt's home can be found by going north on Highway 126 about a quarter mile from the monument. If you take this side trip, please be careful. The road is narrow and heavily traveled. The Waldschmidt house is open on Sundays from 1 to 5 PM, May through October.

Mile Mark 50.5 - Milford

The first mill in what was to become Milford was built in 1803 by John Hageman. Eventually, he laid out a town site on the east side of the river that consisted of 46 lots on January 17, 1806. The community became known as Hageman's Mills. Later additions were made throughout the 1800s. The first frame house was built in 1809, followed by the first brick house in 1811. In 1818, a wooden bridge was built across the Little Miami River to serve Milford. Early businesses during this period included several mills, distilleries, general stores, hotels, and cooperages. Milford was incorporated on January 23, 1836. However, the land on the west side of the Miami River did not become part of Milford until a later date.

A Milford citizen of note, who at one time served as a physician here, was Dr. Charles D. Gatch. He was the first doctor to reach Abraham Lincoln when he was assassinated at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865.

In 1840 when the Little Miami Railroad was being constructed through this area, the village of Montauk was laid out in this vicinity by several local residents. Two of these individuals were R.M. Shoemaker and Joseph Longworth. Shoemaker became mayor of Glendale in 1869 and Longworth was instrumental in the formation of the Art Academy of Cincinnati. The village had a flour mill, a

woodworking mill, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, church, and a school, as well as other minor businesses. Most of the town was eradicated by the flood of 1913. Montauk was eventually incorporated with Milford.

Mile Mark 51.5 - Terrace Park

Even though you can't see much of it since the railroad bed was entrenched along this stretch of the former line, you are passing through the community of Terrace Park. In 1850, William Winters laid out Camden City at this location. However, that town never materialized. In 1886, G.W. Corey laid out Terrace Park at the same location. It was incorporated as a village in 1893 and by the year 1894, Terrace Park had grown to a population of 268 residents.

For over 30 years beginning in the late 1800s, Terrace Park was the winter home of the John Robinson's Circus. During that period, it wasn't unusual to see an elephant pulling a plow in the Robinson garden or a herd of elephants parading down the streets. The Robinson's Circus became so large that it required a train of sometimes over 35 cars to go from town to town. In 1916, Robinson sold everything except for four elephants which he kept basically as pets in Terrace Park. The circus continued using his name, but he was no longer associated with it.

Mile Mark 54.0 - Avoca Park

At Avoca Park there is a shelter with picnic tables, a fountain, and a restroom.

Mile Mark 54.7 - Little Miami Railroad bed

As you go under the overpass for Newtown Road and make a sharp turn, you will notice that the former bed of the Little Miami Railroad continues heading west along the Little Miami River. The remainder of the trail no longer follows any former railroad beds.

Mile Mark 55.4 - Newtown

The trail currently ends at the northern portion of Newtown at the Little Miami Golf Course. When it was first laid out in 1792, the village was named Mercersburg after Captain Aaron Mercer who was one of the early settlers. The town was renamed to Newtown after the fort was burned down following a fight with the local Indians. The village became incorporated in 1901.

At the time this guide was written, the trail was recently completed to the Little Miami Golf Course in Newtown. Future plans are for the trail to continue to Clear Creek, on to the existing Lunken Bike Trail around Lunken Field, and eventually follow the Ohio River to downtown Cincinnati. It will most likely take several years before these extensions are completed. In the meantime, enjoy what we already have on one of the greatest trails right here in Ohio.