

Yesteryears

Vol. 1, No. 45

Tuesday, April 14, 1992

50 Cents

Electric street railways pioneered in Ohio

By Dale E. Shaffer

THE SALEM ELECTRIC Railway was the pioneer electric street railway in Columbiana County, and one of the first in Ohio. It was built in 1890 and continued in operation until 1912.

The firm was incorporated Sept. 28, 1889. On the same date it was granted a franchise to construct and operate a railway in Salem by city council.

Steps toward organization of the railway were taken immediately. Dr. J. M. Hole was named president; J. N. Northrop, vice-president; H. W. Hazard of Cleveland, treasurer; and Edmond Whildey, superintendent of construction and operation.

The main line, when the company first began operating its cars, was one and seven-eighths miles in length. It began at the corner of Aetna Street and South Ellsworth Avenue, and ran north to East State Street, where it extended east to the city limits. About one month later, a branch line extending out North Lincoln Avenue from East State Street to Hope Cemetery was added, increasing the length of the railway to two and eight-tenths miles.

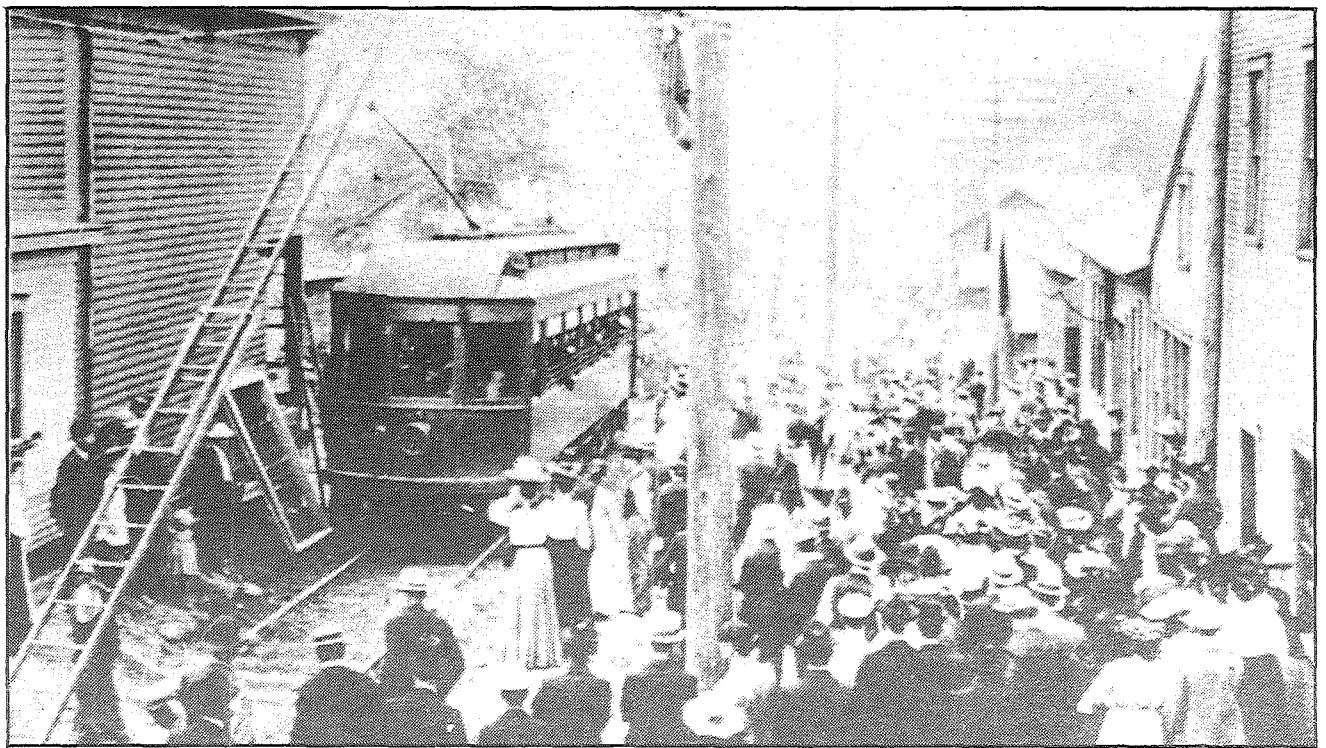
The Davis family, prominent in Salem at the turn of the century, gained control of the railway in 1892. Milton Davis and his sons, Delmar L. and D. W., owned and operated the Salem Electric Light & Power Co., which furnished power for operation of the cars. Milton succeeded Dr. Hole as president, and Delmar Davis became secretary and manager.

Milton Davis continued as head of the railway until his death on March 15, 1910. Delmar had actually been managing the firm, along with Charles Fifer, who served for many years as superintendent of the line.

The office and car barns of the company were first located on E. State Street on the site where the Salem Public Library now stands. When the Davis family gained control of the railway they moved its headquarters to their light and power company office on South Ellsworth Avenue (later site of the Mullins Mfg. Co.). New car-barns were eventually constructed alongside the office.

This railway became a profitable part of the Davis enterprises. However, disputes between the owners and city council over terms of the franchise finally resulted in its death. Council declared the franchise rights forfeited on March 6, 1912 for the company's refusal to further operate cars and repair the roadbed.

It was hoped for some time after the suspension of service that other parties might take over the



Crowds of people waited impatiently on a hot day in August 1904 to ride on the Interurban from Salem to Alliance and Canton on the opening day of the Stark Electric Co. Barely ready for the event, a lineman puts the finishing touches on the overhead.

street railway and resume its operation. Plans were made to form a stock company, but they never materialized. Finally, in the spring 1913, the trolley lines were dismantled.

The Y & O Railroad

The idea for the Youngstown & Ohio River Co. was born in the mind of Max Goodman of Cleveland in 1902. But it was not until late in 1907 that cars began coming into Salem. The company had its inception on Dec. 8, 1905 when the articles of incorporation were filed in the office of the Secretary of State in Columbus.

Capital stock of the company was listed at \$10,000, divided into 100 shares of \$100 each. Incorporators were Goodman, T. W. Hill, Charles S. Thrasher, Warren Bicknell of Cleveland, and Charles H. Howland of Akron.

The company acquired a 90-year lease of the old Salem Railroad from its owner, the Wheeling &

Lake Erie Railroad Co. It declared its intention to extend the road from Washingtonville through Leetonia, Lisbon and to the Ohio River at East Liverpool.

Offices for the Y&O were located in Leetonia. Company officials proceeded to acquire the right-of-way to build a railroad across Columbiana County to provide a much needed passenger and freight service. A syndicate to promote the company was formed in Cleveland, with Will Christy as its manager. He was connected with the Northern Ohio Traction & Light Co.

Difficulties encountered in acquiring the right-of-way took considerable time to settle, so it was nearly three years before the railroad was com-

Turn to next page

Electric railways

Continued from page 1

pleted. Construction of the road between Washingtonville and Leetonia was very expensive and difficult because of the need for two overhead crossings.

The first Y&O car arrived in Salem on Dec. 12, 1907, but even then the road had not been completed to East Liverpool. In recognition of the Y&O company's contribution to the advancement of transportation in Salem, a delegation of 54 local businessmen, manufacturers and city officials made a tour of the railroad on Dec. 2, 1907, visiting the power plant under construction at West Point.

When the Y&O line was finally completed, J. D. Dewees, who came to Salem shortly after the Salem Railroad in 1901, was named general manager. Through his guidance the company prospered. Some years later he was rewarded by being appointed president as successor to Warren Bicknell, the original head of the firm.

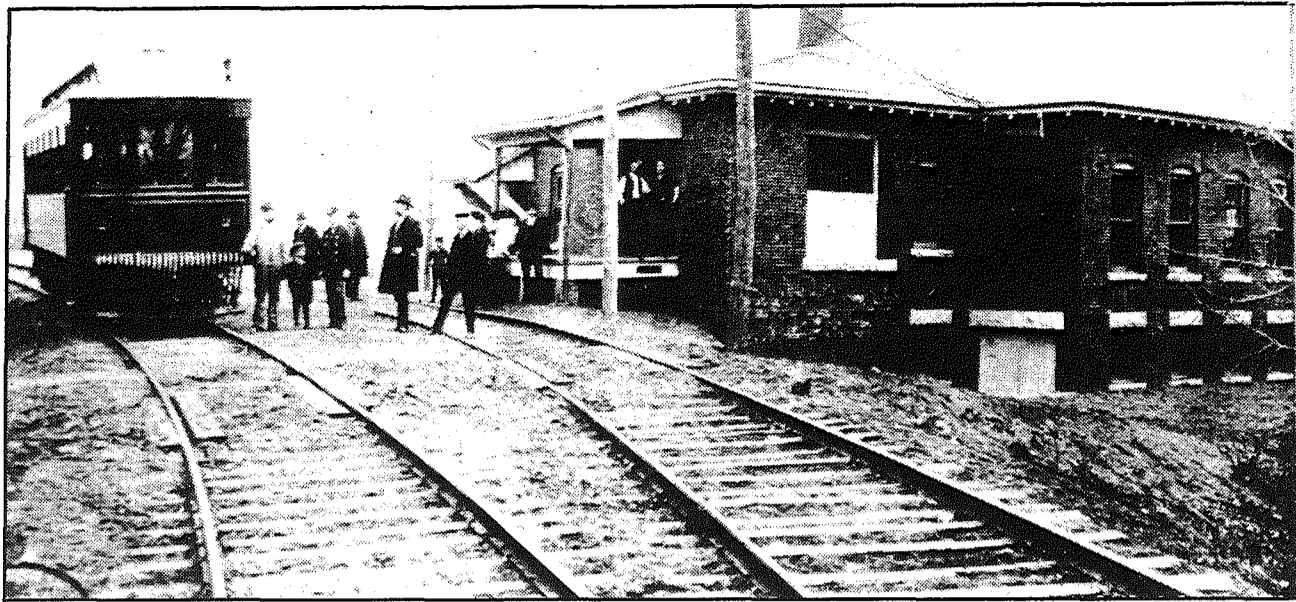
Dewees continued to manage the company until May 22, 1930, when Judge W. F. Lones appointed him as its receiver. Receiver's certificates amounting to \$25,000 were sold in 1930, but these funds were completely exhausted by Feb. 7, 1931. Seventeen days later, on Feb. 24, 1931, the railroad and all its property were sold at public auction to Briggs & Turvis of Blue Island, Ill. for \$125,000. Property which had cost about \$3 million was abandoned when service finally ended on March 9, 1931.

Like other electric railroads, the Y&O felt the sting of the depression, and suffered from the increased use of highways for private automobile and bus transportation. In the later years of its existence it was hard pressed to meet expenses. When Dewees was appointed receiver on May 22, 1930, the company was several years in default of its bond interest, and owed wages to its workmen.

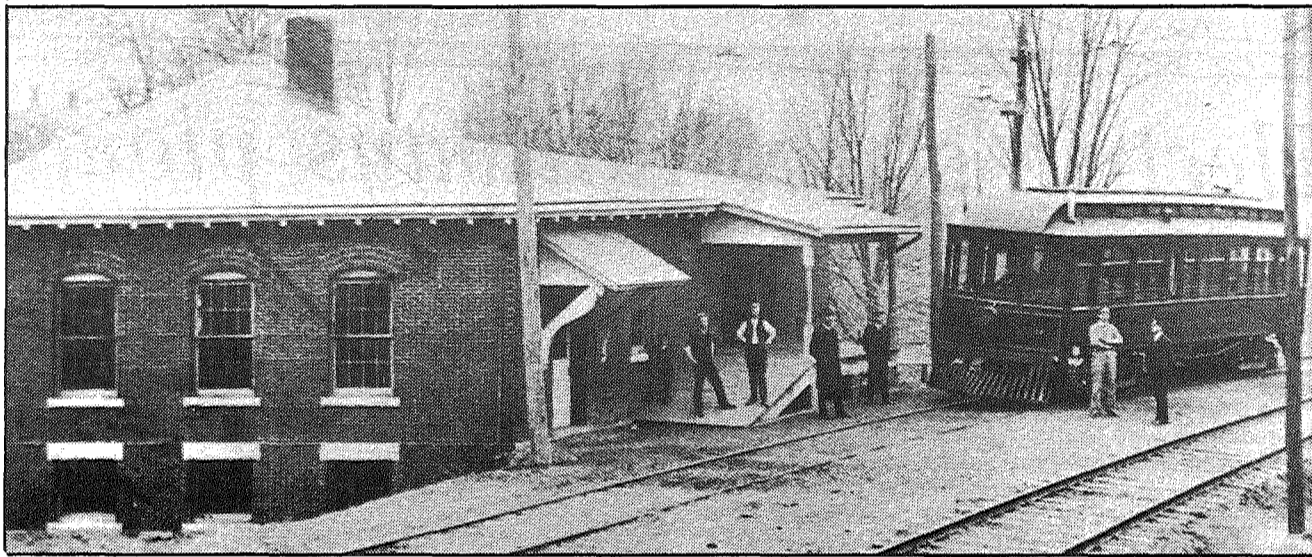
The railroad was offered for sale five times, but on each occasion no bids were received. Three years before it went into receivership, the company considered discontinuing a part of its service. A document dated June 30, 1927 stated that the business given the Y&O in Salem did not warrant operating cars west of Washingtonville.

The Stark Electric Railway Co.

A crowd of nearly 2,000 people greeted the first



The Damascus substation, one of the largest of Stark's buildings, is shown in these photos in the early 1900s.



Stark Electric car on its arrival in Salem a few minutes after 9 a.m. on Aug. 19, 1904. As early as 7:30 a.m. on this eventful day, local residents began congregating around the terminal station to await the coming of the electrically-propelled car that marked the opening of another transportation line for Salem.

Two days later, on a Sunday, the company put into effect a regular running schedule, and encountered difficulty in handling all the passengers. The station resembled a street fair scene, with a large crowd gathering every time a car arrived.

Stark Electric was already a firmly established concern when it extended its lines from Sebring to Salem. Known as the "bachelor railroad" in its early days, because the majority of its directors were bachelors, the company was founded by four

Cleveland capitalists — C. R. Morley, David Morrison, Edward Wiebenson and Henry W. S. Woods.

These men met with W. W. Hazzard, owner of the Alliance city trolley lines, in May of 1901. They projected and chartered the Stark Electric Railroad Co. with lines extending from Alliance to Canton by way of Maximo and Louisville. Car-barns and a power house were constructed on the old J. B. Watson estate of 134 acres, later known as Lake Park.

Not until a year after the inception of service between Alliance and Canton did the Stark Electric Co. take actual steps toward extending its lines to Salem. In the spring of 1903, B. M. French, city engineer in Salem, was hired as civil engineer for

Turn to next page



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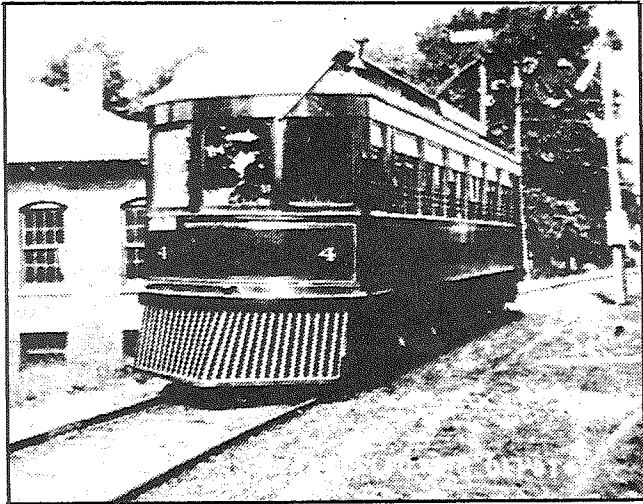
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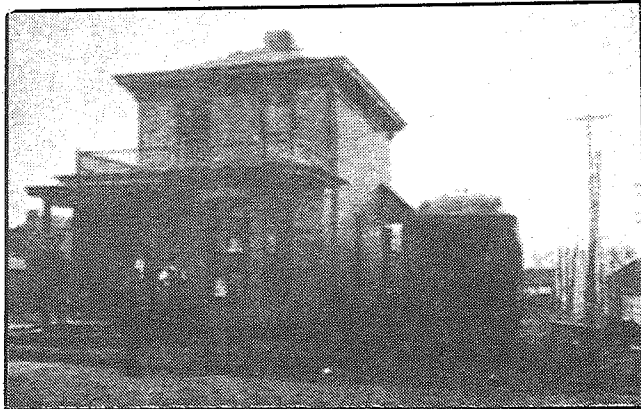


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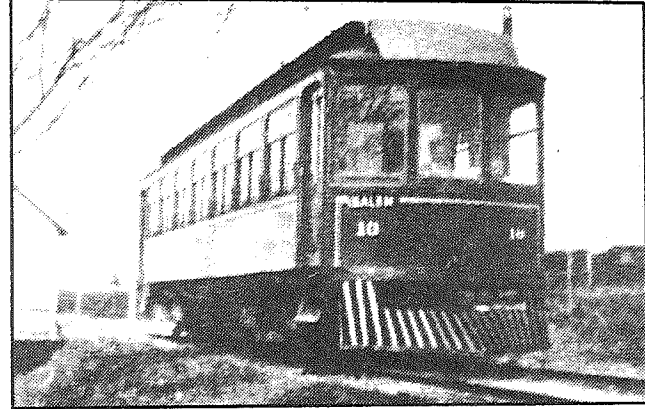




The Damascus Depot is in the background as car 4 travels through the village.



Stark Electric employees pose for the camera man in this photo taken at the Salem station.



The car above is among the first two groups of interurban cars scheduled by the Stark Electric.

Electric railways

Continued from page 2

the company and ordered to make a survey for a line from Sebring to Salem. The line had been surveyed 50 years before by the Fort Wayne Railroad, but the route was abandoned because of the enormous cost of the cut and fills.

French laid out a line which met with the approval of Stark Electric officials. Civil engineers greatly admired his work. Shortly thereafter, work on constructing the road was started. Construction of the line between Damascus and Salem over what was known as the "great divide" was one of the most difficult and expensive parts of the job.

Turn to ELECTRIC RAILWAYS on page 6

Albert Cameron designed station

By Dale E. Shaffer

IN NOVEMBER OF 1903, architect Albert Cameron (father of Holland Cameron of Salem) was at work on plans for a handsome brick and stone building that would serve as the Stark Electric Railroad station in Damascus.

Cameron had been the architect for numerous other buildings, including the Willow Vale one-room brick schoolhouse (1890) at the intersection of Slater and Hartley Roads, and Vernal Grove School (1896) in Salem. But the Stark Electric structure in Damascus was to be one of the largest stations on the line. It still stands today.

Cameron designed a building of irregular shape, fronting 56 feet towards the track, 73 feet on a side street, and 47 feet deep on the east side. It was located on the Roberts property immediately east and across the street from the Damascus Academy.

The building was to be used for a waiting room, baggage storage, and for a power sub-station. In

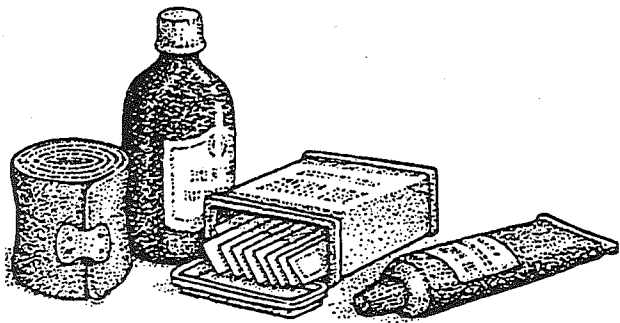
the basement would be machinery for converting heavy current from the power house to a current that could be used on the line between Salem and Damascus. Also located in the basement would be a heater and the coal room.

On the ground floor was a ticket office, waiting room, baggage room, toilets, and a bedroom for the man in charge of the station. There was an entrance porch to the south, and long covered platforms on the west and north sides. The station was constructed of brick and trimmed with stone with a fireproof floor of steel beam construction. Plans called for the roof to be tile.

Construction began in the early spring of 1904, and was completed by the time the line went into operation on Aug. 19, 1904. The building turned out to be a handsome addition to Damascus. Old-time passengers of the Stark Electric remember it well.

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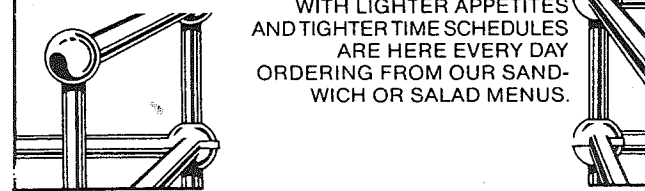
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Electric railways

Continued from page 3

Workmen spent considerable time on the Blackburn Hill, west of Salem, making a cut 20 ft. wide, 1,450 ft. long and 27 ft. deep.

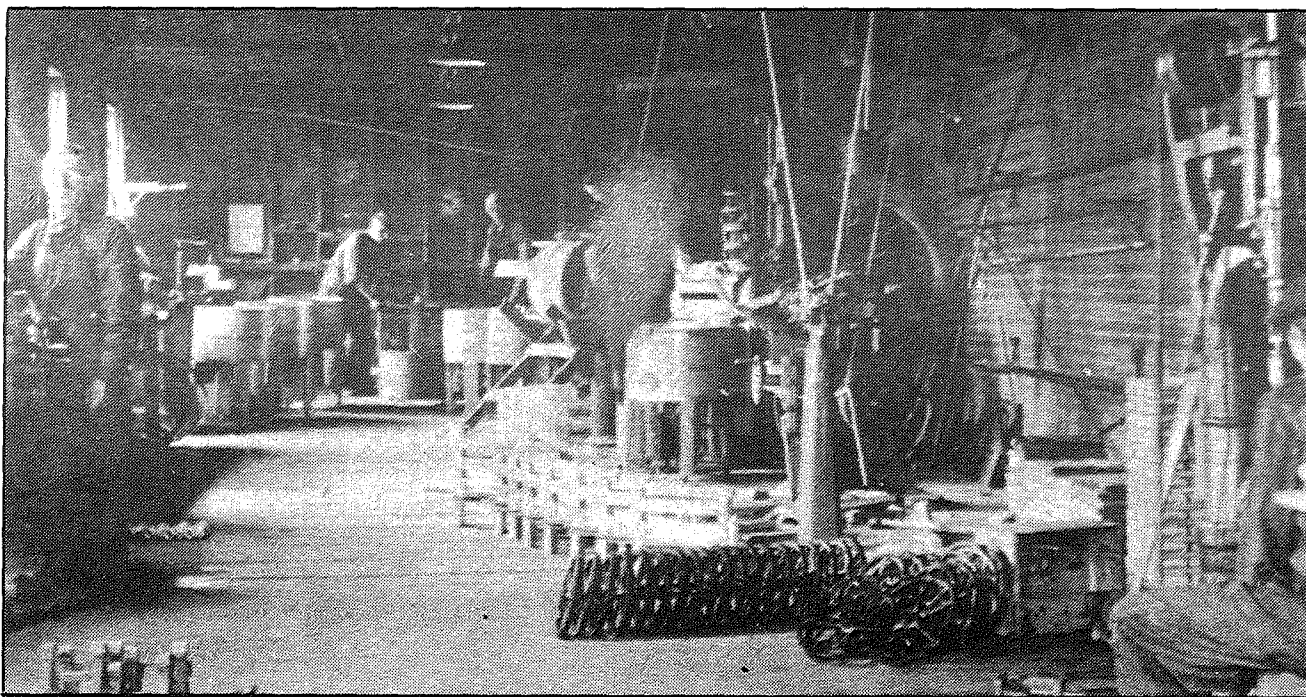
Completion of the line in August of 1904 was hailed as a great benefit to Salem, and caused a significant increase in the value of property through which the railroad passed. Dedication of the McKinley Monument in Canton on Sept. 30, 1907 gave the Stark Electric its biggest day of business. Cars transported about half the population of Alliance, Sebring and Salem to and from Canton. Four times the normal number of tickets were sold.

The line prospered and made fortunes for its owners. During the best of times, four million passengers rode the line annually. Then, in 1929 a sharp drop in business occurred. The downward trend continued until August of 1932 when it reached an all-time low, forcing the company into receivership.

Business increased after a receiver was appointed, reaching a peak in 1936. But the high that year was in no way comparable to the peak of 1929. A constant decline continued the last three years, from 1936 to 1939.

Control of the Stark Electric was in the hands of Cleveland and New York capital except for three-and-a-half years, from April 6, 1922 to Aug. 31, 1925, when it was held by Alliance interests. The original officers were Cleveland men, their successors were Alliance men, and then control passed to a New York group, although Alliance men retained their offices.

C. R. Morley, one of the founders, was the first president of the company and continued in this positions until 1917. He was succeeded by W. H.



Harry Hendricks, an employee, is at the far left in the background (and the only man identified in this photograph) in this scene of the interior of the Justis Washing Machine Factory along Penn Street in Salem. The photo was taken in 1928.

Purcell, who was followed as president by W. E. Davis, M. S. Milbourn and C. M. Shelter, all of Alliance.

The active head of the company for many years was Fred L. Mowry, who followed W. J. Beery as general manager. Beery was in charge of the first car to run into Salem. O. K. Ayers was appointed receiver in 1932. He had served the company for nearly 31 years, filling various positions from ticket agent to assistant general manager.

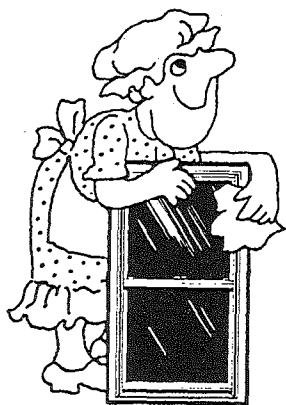
On June 30, 1939 the railway was sold for \$70,100 at a sheriff's sale at the Stark County Courthouse in Canton. The railroad was first offered in its entirety but the minimum price was

not met. It was then offered for sale in three parcels.

L. P. Kalka of the Kulka Iron & Steel Metal Co. of Alliance bid \$68,375 for Parcel No. 1, which included all property except stores and supplies, tracks in Salem and two bridges, one here and the other at Louisville. Kulka also bought the stores and supplies, Parcel No. 3, for \$1,650. Parcel No. 2, which included the two bridges and the Salem tracks, went to E. F. Sever of Piqua for \$75.

The last Stark Electric trolley left Salem in June of 1939, after 35 years of service to the community. Car No. 42 made its last run from Canton to the car-barns at Lake Park on July 16, 1939.

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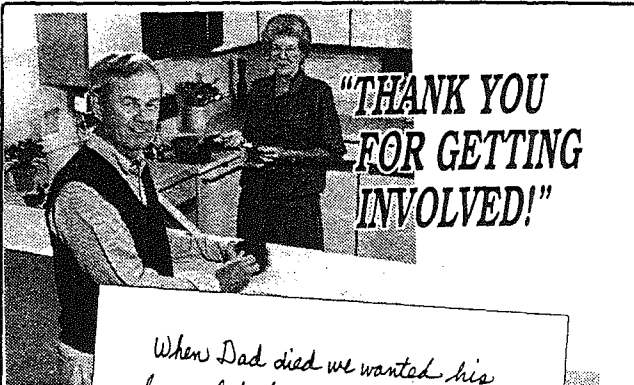


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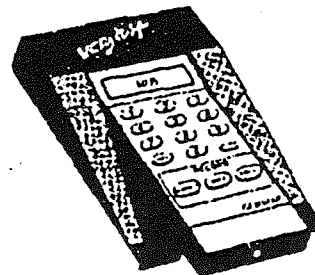
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An American visits the Orient — and stays

By Lois Firestone

THE AMERICANS' FASCINATION with the doings of Europe's capricious barons and kings, an absorption which stemmed from their awe of things royal, was, by the late 1890s, dwindling. Attention was shifting instead toward the mysterious Orient and its counts and emperors. Missionaries had brought back stories about their experiences with the Asian "heathens" for years, and now many people wanted to get to know the Chinese and Japanese peoples firsthand, to live among and work with them.

Lewis Grimmesey was one of them. For years he had pored over photos, drawings and stories about Japan and Asia, hoping to someday visit them. Lewis lived a placid small town childhood along 52 Penn Street with his parents, Robert and Lydia, and his sister Minnie, roaming the streets of Salem with his pals. Lewis' predecessors, the Grimmesey and Painters, were of solid Salem stock which had been joined when Robert Grimmesey and Lydia Painter were married on Aug. 18, 1887 — families from both side attended the nuptials because the couple scheduled them for the day of the annual Webb-Painter family reunion at J. J. Brooks' picnic grove.

Lewis graduated from Salem High School and took a job as a salesman. He was 20 when he got the chance to enter a profession which would take him to Asia. The Bagnall & Hillis Co. hired him to install electric plants and engines in Japan and other parts of the Orient. Other than the three trips he made back home over 24 years, Lewis never returned to his hometown. Eventually he married a girl from New York City and they settled in Yokohama, Japan.

One such visit to Salem — a journey which took 22 days traveling on bus, ship, train and car — took place on April 4, 1902 when Lewis was 44. He hadn't seen his parents and his sister Minnie and her family for four years. Accompanied by a Japanese friend, the family traveled across the Pacific on the steamer Kagamaura. On board, they became acquainted with one of Japan's leading statesmen, Count Matsukata, his son and two Japanese officials who were scheduled to tour America on an inspection trip.

Lewis' party arrived at Vancouver in Puget Sound, then journeyed to Seattle. There they caught the Great Northern Railway headed for St. Paul. Close to the mountain line near North Dakota the train was caught in a heavy blizzard and the passengers were snow bound for four days. They nearly perished from the frigid temperatures because the coal was soon burned up. Provisions ran short and the passengers were down to their last gallon of drinking water — they'd been forced to "wash up" in the snow outside — when they were rescued by well-meaning people from the nearby town of Raymond.

In an interview with a reporter from *The Salem Daily Herald*, Lewis talked about the Filipinos who inhabited the Phillipines where he often worked. He predicted that guerilla fighting would continue in that country for years — he called it "bushwhacking and savage modes of warfare" — and that "it will be necessary to kill them off in large numbers in order to have them see the wisdom of American rule."

War was on many minds in the Asian countries and that concerned him, Lewis said, although he believed that peace would win out in the end. He was repulsed by an unnecessary tragedy that had happened recently within the Japanese Army. The Japanese War Department was running experiments to find out how much soldiers physical hardship soldiers could endure. They bivouacked hundreds of soldiers in an uninhabited mountain area and ordered them to march around the base. Halfway there they were caught in a blinding

snowstorm and, before they could be rescued, froze to death.

Unaccustomed to the hustle and bustle of America, Lewis commented on "the people in the cities of this country who are too swift and in too much of a hurry. No person in Japan is ever in a hurry. All workmen are in the habit of smoking at any time or place."

Earthquakes rippled through the country every

day, although most of them were barely noticeable. The last major quake had occurred six years before, in 1896, he said.

People were paid well in Japan for their work, he said, especially good stenographers who are in demand. They receive from \$50 to \$125 a month in gold, he added. Streams of young women migrated every year from New York and San Francisco "but the girls don't work long at their profession because they are soon married."



Lewis Grimmesey relaxes in an outdoor swing in front of his home in Yokohama, Japan in 1902. The Salem native made Japan his permanent home although his work took him throughout the Orient.



Mrs. Lewis Grimmesey (third from left) stands with her friends in the backyard of her home in Yokohama, Japan. Lewis Grimmesey and his sister, Minnie were the children of Robert and Lydia Grimmesey of 52 Penn St. Minnie and her husband, Robert Dunn were Bob Hinton's grandparents.

Cavanaugh remembers growing up days

By Dick Cavanaugh

THINGS I REMEMBER FROM my growing up years in Salem: there are many things too numerous to mention. Everyone has them, but here are a few of mine.

Playing in the bins of sand used for moldings across the street and near Deming Pump Co. on lower Broadway. This was on my way to swimming in Tolerton's Pond off South Ellsworth. In the summer, blackberries and elderberries and swinging out on a rope from the side of the pond. There was a girl, I think her name was Rosie DeFavero. She used to wave as I went by up the lane to the swimming hole.

Since my family lived in the quarters above our restaurant at 510 South Broadway I was one of the first kids to mingle with the carnival people when they came to town and occupied the huge Bliss lot at the corner of Franklin and Broadway. I remember the wrestlers, especially Ed "Strangler" Lewis. And selling pop from my little street stand to people going to the carnival.

Kaufman brothers' grocery was close by. They had a garbage dump at the end of the alley and this was a great source of ammunition for every kid in the neighborhood. I learned all the four-letter words in Roumanian by the time I was ten; that probably stimulated me in acquiring some fluency in Italian and Spanish in later years. Bobsled rides down Franklin in the winter. Thank God we never ran into a car at the Broadway and Franklin intersection.

My father was a salesman — he used to sell insurance to the farmers who had little money and who paid for the insurance with ducks, chickens and livestock. These were then used in the restaurant. Some times they never made it to the restaurant customers because the car my father used had

a carbon monoxide leak and sometimes the chickens or ducks died on the way.

Then there were times when I would ask my mother for money to go to a movie and she would say "take it out of the cash register." Then I would be off. Little did she realize that I would go uptown, get on the red car and go to Canton to watch a movie like Jimmy Cagney in one of his great gangster roles, or Paul Muni. After seeing "Phantom of the Opera," though, and coming back late one night with all the street lights out on South Broadway, I walked down the center of the street for three blocks to get home. I was really scared that night; it cured me for awhile.

I remember a few years later how Bruce Krepps who could imitate Donald Duck would get thrown out of the movie houses. And years later someone urinated in the gas tank of George Chappell's car.

When Prohibition was repealed, I was 13 years old but I went in a bar and the bartender served me a beer. The building next to our restaurant on

Broadway must have sold whiskey because I used to collect the empty bottles in the alley, wash them and then sell them back to the proprietors. Then there was the time about 1936 or 1938 in Kelly's ballroom on North Broadway when someone had a bottle of wine. Someone asked Bruce Whitcomb if he preferred drinking out of the bottle or out of an old dirty rust-stained glass that had probably been sitting around for years. Bruce replied that he would use the glass as the people who owned the dance hall were probably taking as much of a chance as he was. Then Nick Tatu who was standing there excused himself, saying he was going to the bathroom and would be back in two minutes. Twenty three years later I ran across Nick in Los Angeles. I never did ask him why it took him so long in the bathroom.

My very best wishes to all my old friends. I only wish I could live back in Salem, as I miss them all.

Dick Cavanaugh is a 1938 graduate of Salem High School and is living in Las Vegas.

Hanoverton post office was founded in 1827

The history of the Hanoverton post office dates back to Jan. 27, 1827. Its first postmaster was William Williams. Mail for the office came by carrier from Newgarden, three miles to the north, at which point connection was made with the stage mail service running the state road between Lisbon and Canton.

At first, mail was received only once a week, but later routes were established between Salem and Bolivar, and Lisbon and Carrollton. They passed through Hanover.

But when the C & P Railway was built in 1852, the south ends of these routes were discontinued

and a route was established between Hanover and the station. Rural delivery from the Hanover office began in 1904.

When the post office for the village was first established, its people wanted it named Hanover in accord with the name of the township and the village. However, a town by the name of Hanover in Licking County already had established a post office in 1815, so the "ton" was added to the office for the purpose of distinction.

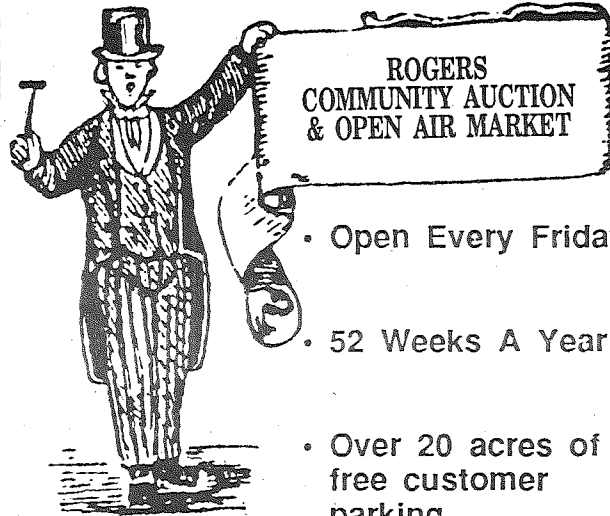
Efforts were made later to have the "ton" removed, but they were without success.

—Dale Shaffer

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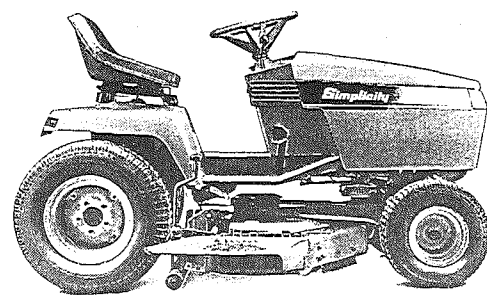


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