
CHAPTER 7. RAILROADS AND TROLLEY LINES

—UNRAVELING THE MYSTERY OF SHEFFIELD'S RAIL TRANSPORTATION

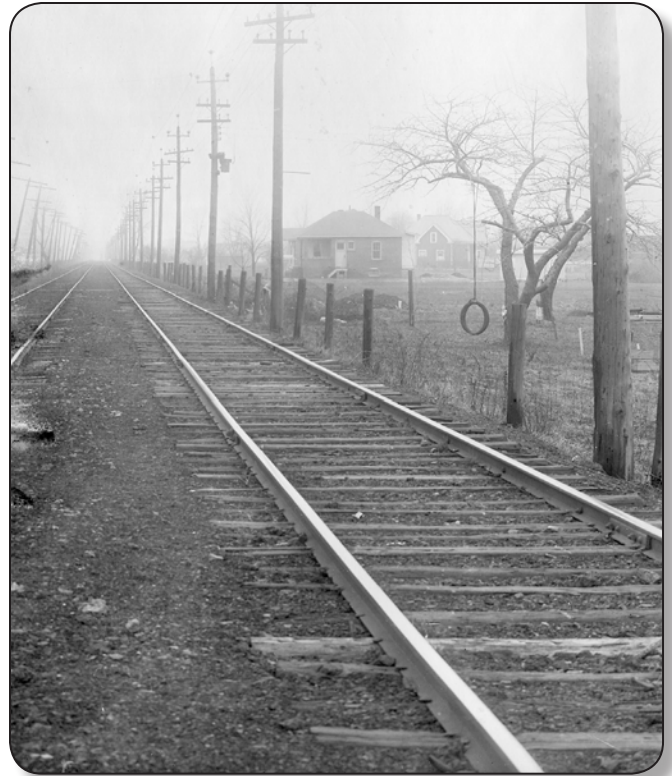
First of all, what is rail transportation? Simply, it is the conveyance of goods and passengers by means of wheeled vehicles running on rails. Secondly, what is the mystery or perhaps puzzle? This is where the answer gets a little more complicated. The history of rail transportation in Sheffield, and more broadly Lorain County, is a somewhat bewildering array of name changes as one rail line company purchased another or several rail lines merged to form a new line, resulting in as many as eight different names for the same set of tracks. Then too, the mode of propulsion varied from horse-drawn cars, to steam locomotives, to electric trolleys, and to diesel engines, adding another degree of complexity. The following is an attempt to chronologically sort all of this out and describe the history of rail transportation in Sheffield and its environs.



Lake Shore Electric Railway interurban trolley loading passengers at Cleveland Public Square en route to Lorain, 1935 (Albert C. Doane).

Some basic definitions may help in this process. Rail service that has taken place in Sheffield can be divided into two types: (1) railroads and (2) interurban electric railways. Both utilized vehicles that were directionally guided by tracks on which they ran. The tracks generally consisted of steel rails installed on rectangular wooden supports [ties] laid perpendicular to the rails. The ties transfer the weight of the vehicles to trackbed [ballast], which was typically composed of durable stone aggregate with good drainage properties. The rails were fastened down with steel baseplates that clamp onto the rails and have holes through which metal spikes were driven into the ties. The baseplates increased the bearing load area and held the rails to a correct gauge [spacing between rails]. In America the standard track gauge is 4 feet 8.5 inches, as measured between the inner faces of the rails.

All of the vehicles that move on tracks are referred to as rolling stock, both powered and unpowered. Each vehicle carries a

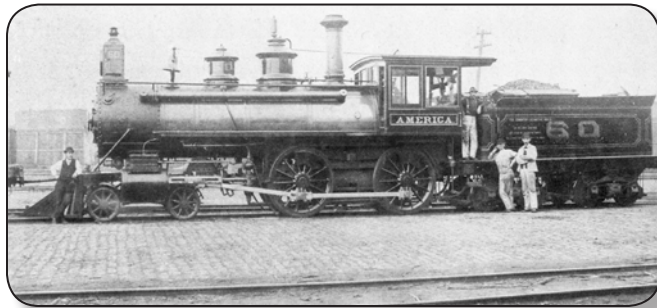


Nickel Plate Road double tracks in Sheffield Lake, Ohio; view toward the west, circa 1950 (Dennis Lamont).

reporting mark. These marks are an alphabetic code of one to five letters used to identify owners or lessees of rolling stock. In North America, the marks are stenciled on each piece of equipment, along with a one- to six-digit number, which together uniquely identify all rail cars and locomotives. This allows rolling stock to be tracked while in transit or at a stationary location. For example, the reporting mark for the Lorain & West Virginia Railroad is L&WV.

What is the difference between railroads and interurban electric railways? A railroad, as used here, refers to primarily wood-fired or coal-fired, steam-powered, freight and passenger trains with multiple cars, which operated on tracks that generally extended long distances, often connecting: (1) large municipal areas with one another, (2) product production facilities with distant markets, and (3) raw materials regions with processing and manufacturing locations. Whereas, an interurban electric railway typically carried passengers in a single car for relatively short distances between adjoining municipal areas. Power was transmitted to the car's engine by way of a trolley wheel attached to a pole, which collected current from an overhead electric wire. The cars were often called streetcars, trolleys, or interurbans.

North American steam locomotives are classified by the arrangement of their wheels, using a system devised by Frederick M. Whyte in 1900. In this classification, wheels are denoted by their location: smaller leading wheels in the front, followed by larger driving wheels, and smaller trailing wheels at the rear of the locomotive. Thus, a numerical designation is constructed for the number of each type of wheel separated by a dash. The absence of wheels in a category is indicated by a zero. Each numerical designation also has a common name. For example, an American-type locomotive is 4-4-0, meaning four leading wheels, four driving wheels, and no trailing wheels, whereas the Pacific-type engine is 4-6-2, with four leading wheels, six driving wheels, and two trailing wheels. The accompanying table depicts the 26 common types of arrangements and their names. In the table “<” represents the front of the locomotive, an “o” represents an axle carrying two non-powered wheels [used at the front for guiding] or at the back for supporting the firebox [where fuel is burned to boil water], and “O” is a pair of driving wheels.



American-type locomotive (4-4-0 wheel arrangement) was the most common type in use in North America in the second half of the nineteenth century and continued to be used well into the twentieth century (Brian Solomon).

WHEEL ARRANGEMENT	CLASSIFICATION	WHYTE NAME
<ooOO	4-4-0	American
<oOOo	2-4-2	Columbia
<ooOOo	4-4-2	Atlantic
<oOOO	2-6-0	Mogul
<oOOOo	2-6-2	Prairie
<ooOOO	4-6-0	Ten Wheeler
<ooOOOo	4-6-2	Pacific
<ooOOOoo	4-6-4	Hudson
<oOOOO	2-8-0	Consolidation
<oOOOOo	2-8-2	Mikado
<oOOOOoo	2-8-4	Berkshire
<ooOOOO	4-8-0	Mastodon or Twelve Wheeler
<ooOOOOo	4-8-2	Mountain
<ooOOOOoo	4-8-4	Northern
<oOOOOO	2-10-0	Decapod
<oOOOOOo	2-10-2	Santa Fe
<oOOOOOoo	2-10-4	Texas
<ooOOOOOo	4-10-2	Southern Pacific
<ooOOOOOOo	4-12-2	Union Pacific
<OOO OOO	0-6-6-0	Mallet
<oOOO OOOo	2-6-6-2	Mallet
<oOOO OOOooo	2-6-6-6	Allegheny
<oOOOO OOOOoo	2-8-8-4	Yellowstone
<ooOO OOOo	4-4-4-4	Duplex
<ooOOO OOOoo	4-6-6-4	Challenger
<ooOOOO OOOOoo	4-8-8-4	Big Boy

Whyte wheel arrangement classification system for steam locomotives (Frederick Whyte).



Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway (W&LE) freight train in northeastern Ohio; Mikado-type locomotive (2-8-2 wheel arrangement), circa 1945 (official W&LE photograph).

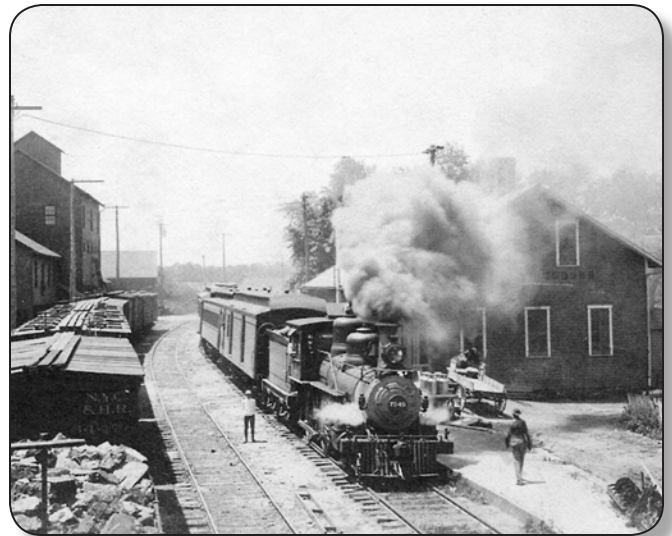
SHEFFIELD'S RAILROADS

The importance of rail transportation to the development of Lorain County, including Sheffield, can hardly be overemphasized. In the mid- to late-1800s, rail transport of agricultural and dairy products—particularly cheese—gave rise to towns, especially those in the southern part of the county. Service to the mouth of the Black River allowed the port to expand, awakening Lorain commerce. At the end of 19th century railroads provided a conduit for bringing coal and other resources to the newly built steel mills. Likewise, rail service enabled finished products to be delivered to distant markets or intermediate products to distant manufacturers. The interurbans soon came into their own as swift and economical transportation was made available to factory workers from burgeoning residential communities. The interurbans were short-lived—less and four decades—as automobiles and busses came on the scene. Rail transportation continues to be important to northern Ohio as container shipping expands, but not the glory days of the old steam locomotive.

From the mid-1850s to 1917, eight major steam rail lines were constructed through Lorain County, seven of which passed through Sheffield Township. Only the first line in the county, the Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad, did not reach Sheffield, being built through the southern townships.

1851—Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad

The Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad (CCC), the first rail line in Lorain County, traversed the county in a northeast-southwest direction passing through Columbia Station, LaGrange, Wellington, and Rochester. Chartered in 1835, construction began in 1840 at Cleveland. Regular rail service between Cleveland and Columbus on this line was initiated in April 1851. In 1868 the CCC was merged with the Bellefontaine Railroad to form the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway. In 1889, the CCC&I merged with lines in Indiana and Illinois to form the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago



Big Four Limited at Mechanicsburg, Ohio station; American Standard Engine (4-4-0 wheels), circa 1900 (Robert Chilcote).

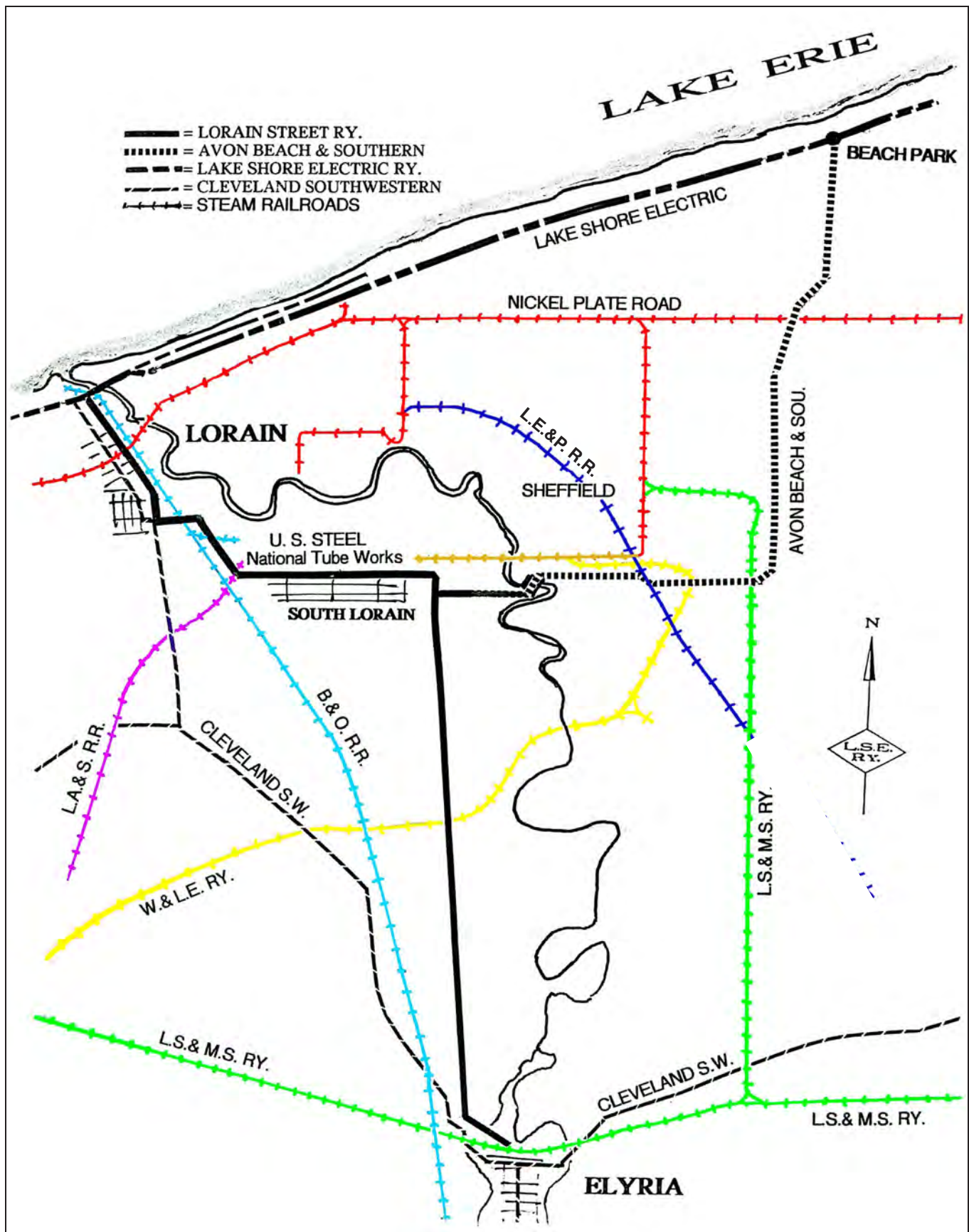
& St. Louis Railroad (CCC&StL), known as the *Big Four Route*. The line became a part of the New York Central Railroad (NYC) in 1930. In 1968 the NYC merged with former rival Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) to form the Penn Central (PC), which went bankrupt by 1970. The line is now part of CSX Transportation.

1853—Junction Railroad

The Junction Railroad (JR) was founded in 1850 to construct a rail line linking Cleveland and Sandusky through Elyria. William O. Cahoon of Elyria was engaged to build a railroad bridge over the Black River, which was completed in September 1851. The first two locomotives to be put in service, *The Vermilion* and *The Jenny Lind*, were delivered by boat from Buffalo, unloaded, and pulled to the track site by oxen. The line was completed from Cleveland to Amherst in September 1853, becoming the second rail service to be initiated in Lorain County.



Railroad shanties on the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad at The Hump near Wellington, circa 1900 (Ralph Delap).



Map of steam railroads operating in the vicinity of Sheffield at some period from 1853-1925. Steam railroads are indicated in the color corresponding to the table at right. Interurban lines are indicated in black (modified from a drawing by Harwood and Korach, 2000).

TIMELINE AND NAME CHANGES FOR RAILROADS OPERATING IN THE VICINITY OF SHEFFIELD

- 1851**—Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad→ 1868—Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway→1889—Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad→ 1930—New York Central Railroad→ 1968—Penn Central Railroad→ 1970—bankrupt→ 1976—Conrail→ 1999—CSX Transportation [constructed for general north-south service between Cleveland and Columbus via southern Lorain County—not shown on map to the left]
- 1853**—Junction Railroad→ 1854—Cleveland Toledo Railroad→ 1869—Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway→1913—New York & Hudson River Railroad→ 1914—New York Central Railroad→ 1968—Penn Central Railroad→1976—Norfolk & Western Railroad→ 1999—Norfolk Southern Railway [constructed for general east-west service between Cleveland and Sandusky via Elyria, and later between Buffalo and Chicago]
- 1872**—Lake Shore & Tuscarawas Valley Railway→ 1875—Cleveland, Tuscarawas Valley & Wheeling Railway → 1893—Cleveland, Lorain & Wheeling Railroad→ 1915—Baltimore & Ohio Railroad→ 1999—CSX Transportation [constructed to service lake port at mouth of Black River]
- 1881**—New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad [Nickel Plate Road]→ 1964—Norfolk & Western Railroad→ 1982—Norfolk Southern Railway [constructed for general east-west service across northern Sheffield Township]
- 1895**—Lake Terminal Railroad [constructed for service within steel mill and over Black River to Sheffield marshaling yard]
- 1906**—Lorain & West Virginia Railway→Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway→ 1969—abandoned [constructed to service U.S. Steel plant from southwest via Sheffield marshaling yard]
- 1914**—Lorain, Ashland & Southern Railroad→ 1916—Pennsylvania Railroad→ 1925—abandoned [constructed to service U.S. Steel plant from southwest]
- 1917**—Lake Erie & Pittsburgh Railroad→ 1928—abandoned [constructed to service Cromwell steel plant from southeast]

In January 1854 the Junction Railroad merged with the Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland Railroad (TN&C) under the new name Cleveland Toledo Railroad (CT). In 1869 the line was consolidated with the Buffalo & Erie Railroad (B&E), the Lake Shore Railroad (LS), the Michigan Southern Railroad (MS), and the Northern Indiana Railroad (NI) to become the Lakeshore & Michigan Southern Railroad (LS&MS). By 1874 the Lakeshore & Michigan Southern Railroad provided east-west service via Northern and Southern Divisions. The Northern Division entered Lorain County at Brownhelm from Sandusky and progressed eastward to Elyria through Amherst.

The Southern Division entered at Kipton (Camden Township) and progressed northeasterly through Oberlin to Elyria where it joined the Northern Division. From Elyria, a single line advanced through Ridgeville toward Cleveland. The Southern Division was abandoned in 1976 and the right-of-way has since been developed as a Lorain County Metro Parks bikeway, while the Northern Division still serves as a mainline for the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS).

About 1905, Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway (LS&MS) constructed a spur line along the eastern edge of Sheffield Township from the New York Central mainline west of Elyria. The line extended north from the Elyria Township border for 2.4 miles, then turned abruptly west for nearly a mile

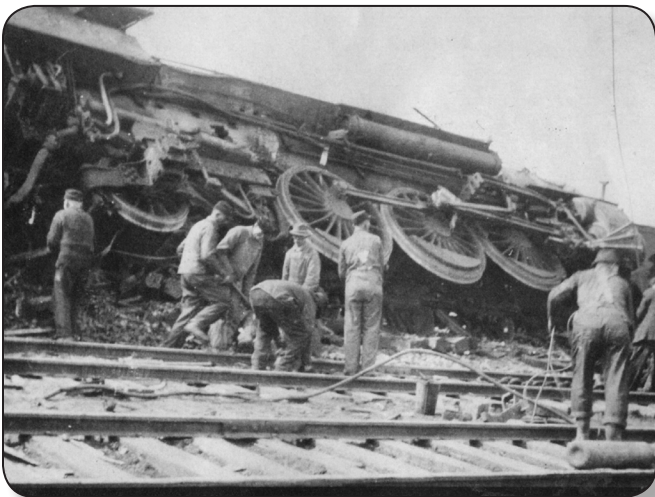
joining a north-south track that connected to the Nickel Plate Road mainline (about 1.5 miles to the north). The spur continued to a marshaling yard for the United States Steel Company plant about half a mile south of the junction. This spur, as well as the old Nickel Plate Road and New York Central mainlines are now operated by the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS).



Former Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad track, now operated by Norfolk Southern Railroad, that forms the boundary between Avon and Sheffield Village (Thomas Hoerrle, 2003).



Washington Avenue wooden bridge at Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad crossing, Elyria, 1870s (Lorain County Historical Society).



Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad train wreck, Elyria, February 21, 1908 (Lorain County Historical Society).



Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad station at Norwalk, Ohio, circa 1910 (Willis Leiter).

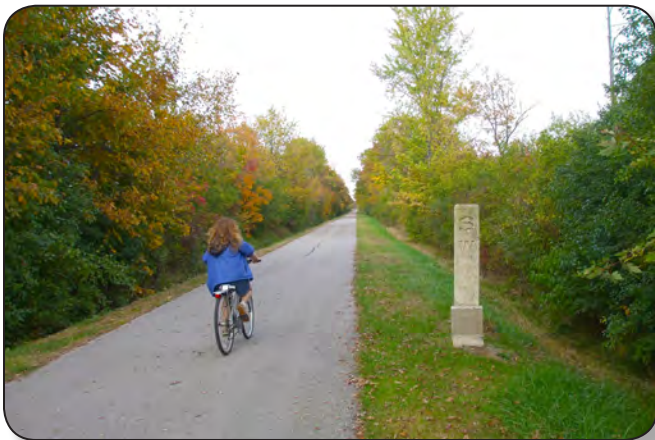
The name of the line was again changed in 1913 to the New York & Hudson River Railroad (NY&HR) and in 1914 to the New York Central Railroad (NYC). The original Lakeshore & Michigan Southern Railway segment, referred to as the *Lake Shore*, was a major part of the New York Central Railroad's Water Level Route from Buffalo to Chicago, primarily along the south shore of Lake Erie (in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio) and across northern Indiana. Further amalgamation with the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) resulted in the Penn Central Railroad (PC) being created in February 1968. In 1976 the line again changed hands when it became part of the Norfolk & Western Railway. The line's trackage is still used as a major rail transportation corridor and hosts Amtrak passenger trains. In 1998 ownership of the tracks became shared by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Railway (NS).



New York Central train wreck at Amherst on March 29, 1916, killed 27 people and injured 45 others (Lorain County Historical Society).



New York Central Railroad passenger train passing Shawville, Ohio [Ridgeville Twp, Lorain County], July 23, 1915 (Robert Chilcote).



Lorain County Metro Park's bike trail along the old right-of-way of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad (Southern Division) between Elyria and Kipton; note the SW directional marker on left view (2011).

Ashtabula River's Horror—the name given to the Ashtabula River railroad disaster, which was the worst train disaster in American history when it occurred in northeastern Ohio in the early evening of December 29, 1876. Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway Train No. 5, *The Pacific Express*, left a snowy Erie, Pennsylvania that afternoon. As *The Pacific Express* plowed through the snow and crossed a bridge over the Ashtabula River, about 100 yards from the railroad station at Ashtabula, Ohio, the passengers heard a terrible cracking sound. In just seconds, the bridge fractured and the train plunged 70 feet into a watery abyss.

The lead locomotive, *The Socrates*, made it across the bridge, while the second locomotive, *The Columbia*, and 11 railcars including two express cars, two baggage cars, one smoking car, two passenger cars, three sleeping cars, and a caboose fell into the ravine below, igniting a raging fire. The wooden cars were set aflame by kerosene-heating stoves and lamps. Soon the cars became an inferno, which melted the ice on the river plunging the wreckage into freezing water.

The nearby train station was ill prepared to respond to such a disaster. Of the 159 passengers and crew on board that night, 64 people were injured and 92 were killed or died later from injuries sustained in the crash—48 of the fatalities were unrecognizable or totally consumed in the flames. Noted hymn writer, Philip Bliss, and his wife lost their lives in the disaster.

In 1896 a monument was erected in Ashtabula's Chestnut Grove to all those "unidentified" who perished in the Ashtabula River railroad disaster.

Mr. Charles Carter of Brooklyn, New York was one of the lucky survivors. After having his dinner he retired to the palace car and was engaged in a game of cards with three other men when the disaster struck. Carter heard the sound of window glass breaking and before he could turn to look, he had the sensation of falling. The whole train was dropping through the air. Gripping the sides of his chair and sitting as calmly as he could, he fell and fell. The train landed with incredible impact in the middle of the frozen river. Miraculously, Carter was still intact. He realized at once that two of his fellow card players were dead and the third had a broken leg. The front of the palace car was ablaze and the flames were spreading rapidly to the back. Dragging his companion along as best he could, Carter made his way out of the car. Then he heard a woman scream for help and went back and pulled her out. There was no time for more.

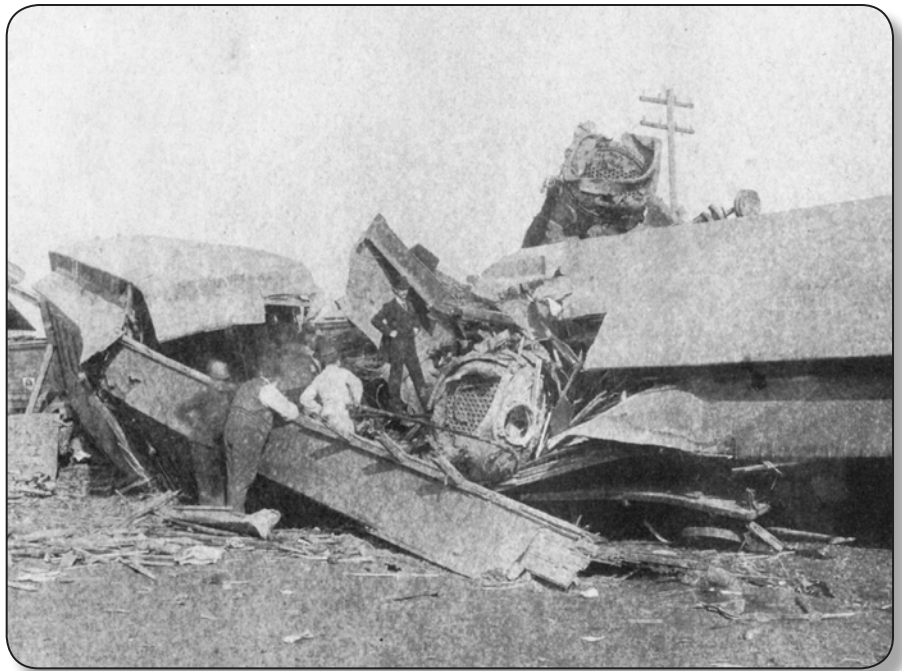
The disaster focused efforts to establish standards for bridges, including adequate testing and inspection. The bridge, designed jointly by Charles Collins and Amasa Stone, was an experimental wrought-iron truss bridge. Collins was reluctant to build the bridge because of inadequate testing, but bowed to pressure from the railroad to approve construction. Both of the bridge designers later committed suicide.



Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway's Ashtabula River train disaster; December 29, 1876 (*Harper's Weekly*, January 20, 1877).

Get on the Ball—this expression has its origin in the watch standards established by Webb C. Ball, owner of the Ball Watch Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in response to a train wreck. On April 19, 1891 there was a disastrous head-on collision between two trains of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Company at Kipton, Ohio, in which eight people lost their lives and the Kipton depot was heavily damaged. The Toledo Express Train was to take the siding at Kipton to allow the fast mail express to pass. The trains collided near the Kipton station in a crash that killed both engineers and six postal clerks. The site of the crash was a curve, thus the engineers did not see one another until it was too late. The Express was running on “short time” attempting to reach the siding at Kipton from Oberlin, with only a few minutes to spare. The subsequent investigation also found that an engineer’s watch was four minutes off.

Realizing the need to have train watches synchronized, railroad officials commissioned Ball as their Chief Time Inspector, in order to establish precision standards and a reliable timepiece inspection system for railroad chronometers. Ball established strict guidelines for the manufacturing of sturdy, reliable precision timepieces, including resistance to magnetism and an adequate power reserve. He instituted the railroad industry’s timekeeping and watch inspection program which is still in use. At a meeting of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in Cleveland, Ohio on May 31, 1921, Webb C. Ball introduced his plan. In admiration for his work to improve railroad safety, a resolution was passed unanimously making him an Honorary Member of the Brotherhood. His were the first wristwatches permitted for railroad timekeeping. At the end of his career, Webb C. Ball was in charge of timekeeping for over 125,000 miles of rail tracks in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. His attention to accuracy and promptness led to the well-known saying, *Get on the Ball*. In 2003 the Ohio Historical Society placed a historical marker commemorating the wreck and Ball’s contribution to railroad safety at the site of the old LS&MS depot in Kipton.



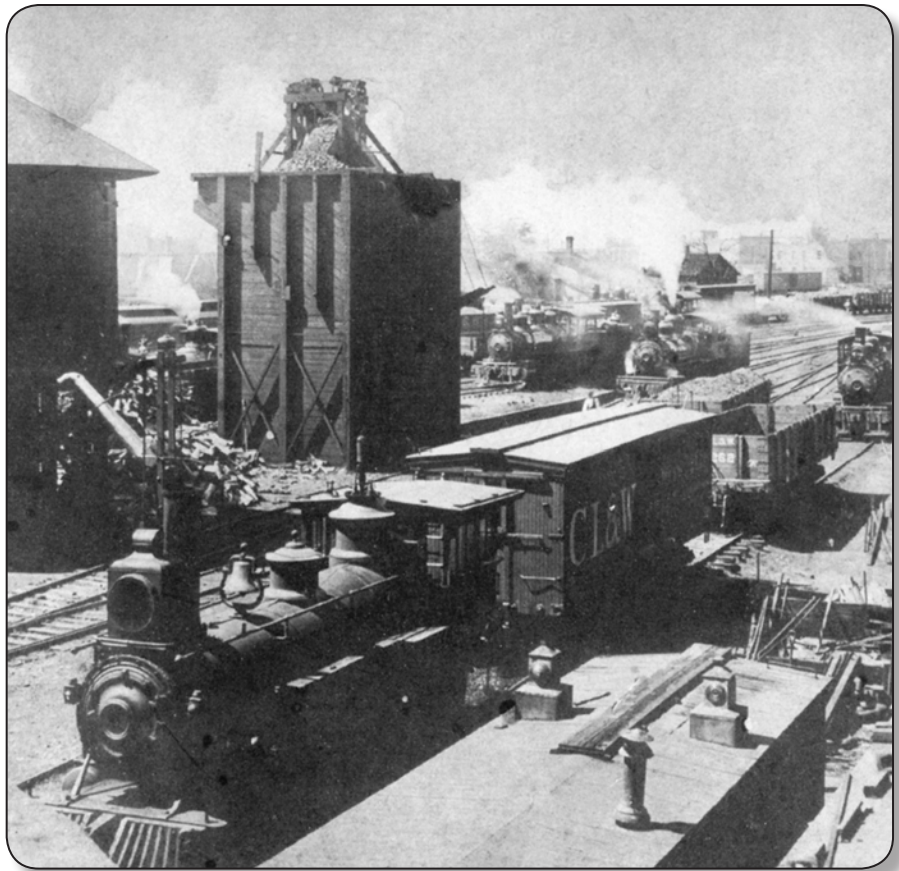
Train wreck at Kipton, Ohio, on the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad on April 19, 1891 (Lorain County Historical Society).



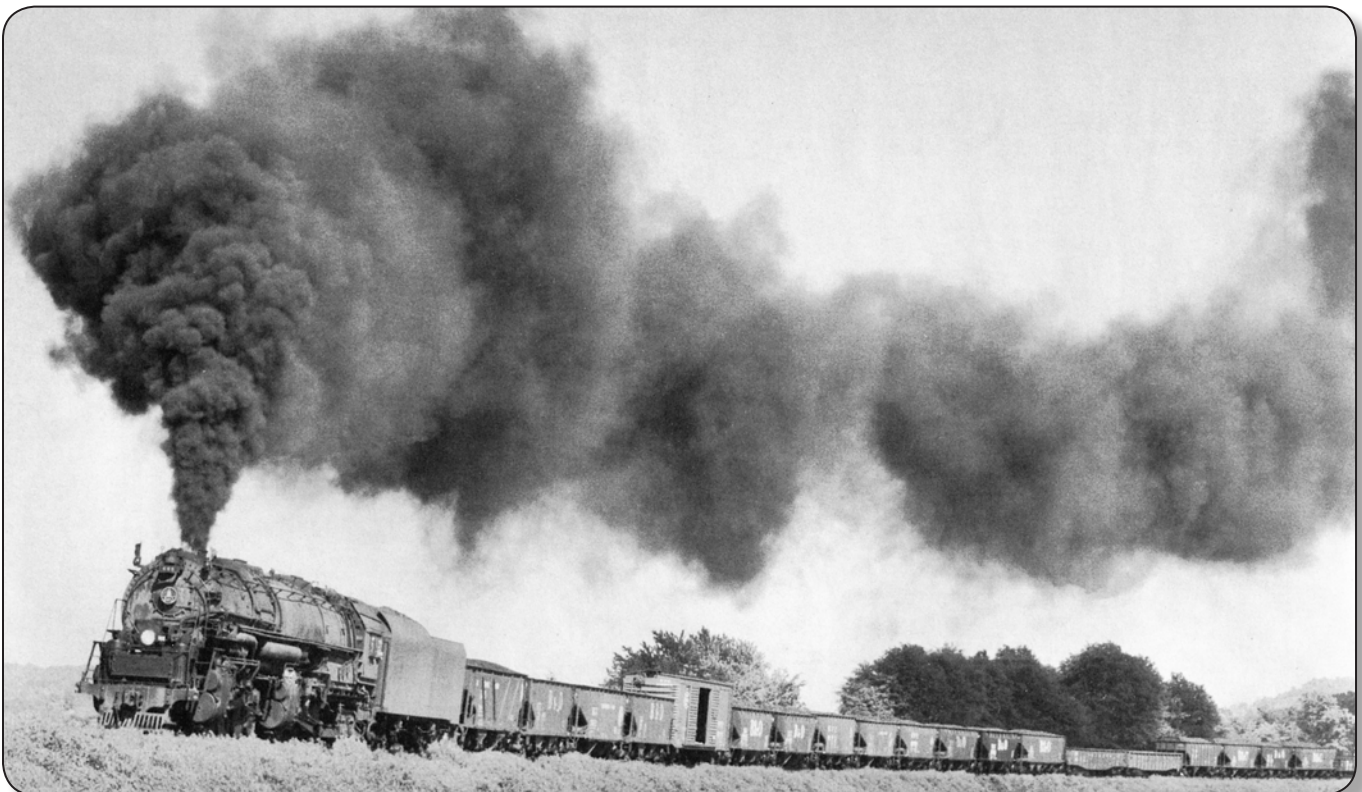
Ohio Historical Marker commemorating the Great Kipton Train Wreck and the contributions of Webb C. Ball to railroad safety—Get on the Ball.

1872—*Lake Shore & Tuscarawas Valley Railway*

The third rail line in Lorain County, Lake Shore & Tuscarawas Valley Railway (LS&TV), was the first railroad to pass through Sheffield Township—its route cutting across the southwestern corner of the township. This line provided north-south service from Charleston's [later Lorain] Lake Erie docks at the mouth of the Black River to southeastern Ohio and West Virginia via Elyria and Grafton. In October 1872, LS&TV purchased the Elyria & Black River Railroad (E&BR) giving it access to Lake Erie. Following foreclosure of LS&TV in July 1874, a new company was formed in February 1875, the Cleveland, Tuscarawas Valley & Wheeling Railway (CTV&W), which operated until 1882, when it too fell into receivership. In 1893 the line was sold to the Cleveland, Lorain & Wheeling Railroad (CL&W), which changed its name to Railway in 1893 and operated under that name until 1915 when the line was sold to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (B&O). Today the trackage in Lorain County is operated by CSX Transportation.



Cleveland, Lorain & Wheeling roundhouse, water tank, and coal dock, Lorain, circa 1895 (Lorain County Historical Society).



Baltimore & Ohio Railroad coal train in northeastern Ohio; Yellowstone-type locomotive (2-8-8-4 wheels), circa 1945 (Brian Solomon).



B&O Railroad depot at Monroeville, Ohio, circa 1910 (Willis Leiter).

Railroads in 1874

The 1874 *Atlas of Lorain County, Ohio* shows three railroad lines traversing Lorain County: (1) Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway (CCC&I)—east-west through Wellington, (2) Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway (LL&MS)—east-west through Elyria, and (3) Lake Shore & Tuscarawas Valley Railway (LS&TV)—north-south from Charleston [Lorain] through Sheffield Township and Grafton.

1881—New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad

Construction of Lorain's second railroad, the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad (NYC&StL), was started in the fall of 1881. The project included a turn bridge over the Black River between 11th and 12th Streets. East of the river, the line headed northeast to Root Road, then due east across Sheffield and Avon Townships. Just east of Root Road a short spur was constructed north to the Lorain Street Railway's car barns and power plant. This spur was used to deliver coal to the power plant, which generated trolley electricity.

The NYC&StL was better known as the *Nickel Plate Road*—a name coined by the *Norwalk Chronicle* (March 10, 1881) in a failed attempt to encourage engineers to build their "bright" railroad through Norwalk rather than their competitor town of Bellevue. The primary objective in constructing the line was to connect Buffalo and Chicago in competition with the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway that ran through Elyria.

When the Nickel Plate Road (NKP) opened in 1882 there were two trains, each way, daily through Lorain. One ran between Buffalo and Bellevue, Ohio and the other between Cleveland and Chicago. They traveled at a speed of 25 to 30 mph. Passengers rode in open platform coaches. By the 1930s, NKP operated four trains daily in each direction. The average speed was 50 to 60 mph and passengers enjoyed comfortable coaches, as well as air-conditioned sleeping, lounge, and dining cars. In 1964 the Nickel Plate Road and several other mid-western carriers were merged into the larger Norfolk and Western Railway (N&W). The goal of the N&W expansion was to form a more competitive and successful system to serve 14 states and the Canadian province of Ontario on more than 7,000 miles of rails. The profitable N&W was itself combined with the Southern Railway, another profitable carrier, to form Norfolk Southern Railway in 1982.



Nickel Plate Road's No. 750 Berkshire-type locomotive (2-8-4 wheel arrangement) at Continental, Ohio, circa 1954 (Don Krofta).



Nickel Plate Road's Berkshire-type locomotive (2-8-4 wheel arrangement) at Conneaut, Ohio, 1968 (Mike Schafer).



Sheffield line shack on Harris Road, Sheffield, Ohio at Nickel Plate Road tracks (original painting by Timothy O'Connor).

1895—Lake Terminal Railroad

The Lake Terminal Railroad (LT) was incorporated in September 1895 by a consortium of businessmen and the Johnson Steel Company. The Lake Terminal Railroad was constructed as a plant switching and interchange railroad within the steel mill and to connect with: (1) the Cleveland, Lorain, & Wheeling Railroad [subsequently merged with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad], (2) the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway, (3) the New York, Chicago, & St. Louis Railroad [Nickel Plate Road], and later with the (4) Lorain & West Virginia Railroad [renamed Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad], and (5) the Lorain, Ashland & Southern Railroad. Connection with CL&W/B&O and LA&S lines was in Lorain on the western side of the steel mill, while interchange with LS&MS, NYC&StL, and L&WV/W&LE lines was across the Black River at a marshaling yard in Sheffield.

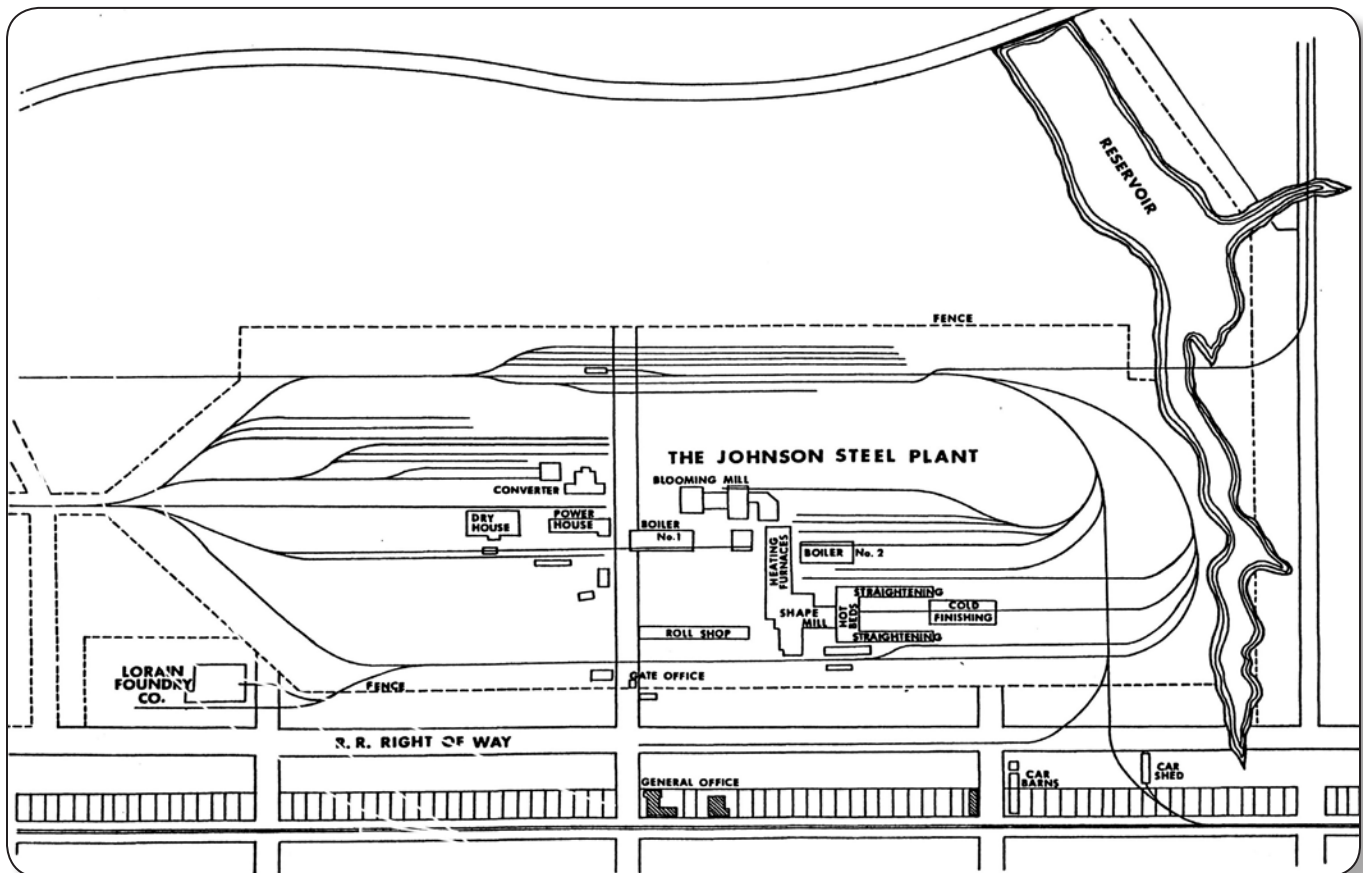
By 1897 the equipment roster of Lake Terminal Railroad included four switching locomotives, nine gondolas, 14 flat cars, two rail cars, and 13 other cars. Employees totaled 44, including seven engineers, three firemen, five conductors, and four trainmen. In 1898 the Johnson Steel Company was sold to Federated Steel Company [operated as the Lorain Steel Company]. In 1899 the plant was expanded with the construction of two additional blast furnaces and docks with ore unloaders on the Black River. Two years later the steel plant became a subsidiary of the newly formed United States Steel Company, operating as the National Tube Company. The Lake Terminal

Railroad was leased to the various owners of the steel plant until 1904 when it became a self-operating company, under the jurisdiction of the National Tube Company.

Along with the steel plant, the Lake Terminal Railroad grew rapidly in its early years. By 1905, nine locomotives, 87 flat cars, 33 gondolas, and 102 sixty-two foot long wooden gondolas designed to carry rail too long for ordinary cars, as well as over 50 cars of other types were on the property. Equipment holdings in 1919 had grown to 20 locomotives, 101 flat cars, 235 gondolas (including 193 hoppers), and several specialty cars. The total trackage at that time exceeded 40 miles.

Coal, coke, and flux limestone were brought to the National Tube Company plant by railroad and exchanged via the Lake Terminal Railroad, with finished steel products being shipped out over the same lines. Iron ore was brought to the plant by ship and unloaded by cranes and later by McMyler hoists and Hulett unloaders located at the plant's 2,490-foot-long dock along the Black River. Hulett's were able to load ore directly into railroad cars for transport to the ore classification yards adjacent to the plant.

Beginning in 1947, the Lake Terminal Railroad converted its locomotives from steam to diesel power by purchasing 20 diesel-electric switch engines. The last LT steamer was scrapped in 1952. In 1955, Lake Terminal Railroad reported over 800,000 car movements, handled by 22 diesels and some 500 cars. At that time the railroad employed 55 engineers and 86 firemen.



Johnson Steel Company plant in Lorain, showing track plan for Lake Terminal Railroad, circa 1897 (Interstate Commerce Commission).