

= Cincinnati , Lebanon and Northern Railway =

The Cincinnati , Lebanon and Northern Railway (CL & N) was a local passenger and freight @-@ carrying railroad in the southwestern part of the U.S. state of Ohio , connecting Cincinnati to Dayton via Lebanon . It was built in the late 19th century to give the town of Lebanon and Warren County better transportation facilities . The railroad was locally known as the " Highland Route " , since it followed the ridge between the Little and Great Miami rivers , and was the only line not affected by floods such as the Great Dayton Flood of 1913 .

The company went through multiple bankruptcies , both before and after its 1881 completion , until the Pennsylvania Railroad gained control in 1896 and leased it in 1921 . Except for several years in the mid @-@ 1880s , when the line was under control of the 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge Toledo , Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad , it was not a major line , in part due to its steep approach to downtown Cincinnati . For this reason , portions of the line have been abandoned , beginning in 1952 with a segment north of Lebanon .

Passenger service was eliminated entirely in 1934 . Conrail , the Pennsylvania Railroad 's successor , sold the remaining trackage in the 1980s to the Indiana and Ohio Railway , a short line now owned by RailAmerica . That company continues to provide local freight service on the ex @-@ CL & N , and the Lebanon Mason Monroe Railroad operates tourist trains on a portion of the line near Lebanon .

= = History = =

= = = Planning and grading , 1850 ? 1876 = = =

The town of Lebanon , Ohio , laid out in 1802 , was bypassed by the Miami and Erie Canal in 1830 ; the branch Warren County Canal to Lebanon was wrecked by flooding in 1848 . The Little Miami Railroad (1846 , later a Pennsylvania line) and Cincinnati , Hamilton and Dayton Railroad (1851 , later a B & O line) followed the valleys of the Little and Great Miami rivers (the M & E Canal had used the latter) , also bypassing the highlands on which Lebanon lay . Residents of the town obtained a legislative charter in March 1850 for the Cincinnati , Lebanon and Xenia Railroad (CL & X) , which would extend from Cincinnati northeast through Lebanon to Xenia . At the latter town , the incorporators decided the most likely connection would be the New York and Erie Railroad , which was planning on extending into Ohio . Thus the line was planned to use the Erie 's 6 ft (1 @, @ 829 mm) broad gauge .

To enter the city of Cincinnati , the CL & X would join the Dayton and Cincinnati Railroad (D & C) , which was planning the 10 @, @ 011 @-@ foot (3 @, @ 051 m) double @-@ track Deer Creek Tunnel through the Walnut Hills , at Sharonville (then known as Sharon) . Tunnel construction began in late 1852 , and the CL & X was finally organized under the charter in November . The CL & X located right @-@ of @-@ way , and began construction in about April 1853 , but was forced to stop work by the end of 1855 due to lack of funds . Only grading between Sharon and Lebanon , mostly north of Mason , had been completed . (The tunnel project also failed , and was eventually acquired by the CL & N.) In July 1861 , the courts appointed a receiver for the CL & X , who in March 1869 sold the unfinished railroad , which had cost \$ 83 @, @ 885 , to 40 area residents for \$ 4 @, @ 000 . Five trustees would ensure that the property was not sold without a majority of its owners consenting . Twenty years after its canal connection was destroyed , Lebanon was still without a modern connection to the outside world , and its economy continued to stagnate .

The 1870s fad of the narrow gauge railway , which was cheaper than broader gauges to build and operate (for low volumes of traffic) , presented a new possibility . The Dayton and South Eastern Railroad (D & SE , later a B & O line) was planning a 3 ft narrow gauge line from the Jackson County mines through Xenia to Dayton , and a branch from Xenia through Lebanon would connect to the markets at Cincinnati . The editors of the local newspaper , The Western Star , encouraged citizens to support the project , but by taking a more active role and organizing a locally owned

railroad company to ensure its completion . Editorials likened the situation to Aesop 's fable of Hercules and the Carter , where Hercules tells a stuck carter that he will not assist unless the carter himself is willing to help . In November 1874 , residents of Lebanon and the surrounding area organized the 3 ft narrow gauge Miami Valley Narrow Gauge Railway (renamed Miami Valley Railway in October 1876) , which would complete the unfinished CL & X as a branch of the D & SE .

Slow stock subscriptions delayed surveying until June 1875 , when a line was located between Xenia and the Marietta and Cincinnati Railroad (M & C , later a B & O line) west of Norwood . Property owners in the villages of Norwood and Pleasant Ridge , wishing to develop their land as suburbs , put forward a proposition to relocate the line to the east through their land in exchange for free right @-@ of @-@ way , and to build a steam dummy line between Norwood and the horse car lines in Walnut Hills , which would provide Miami Valley passengers with a more direct entrance to downtown Cincinnati than the circuitous M & C. However , in August , an even more direct route south of Norwood , through the rugged Deer Creek Valley , was suggested , by which the Miami Valley could obtain its own access to Cincinnati . After imposing heavy restrictions , which would require the construction of several trestles and a tunnel , the Cincinnati City Council granted the right @-@ of @-@ way through the valley , including Eden Park , to the railroad company . The owners of the old CL & X grade sold it in April 1876 for \$ 8 @,@ 000 in stock of the new company , and most of the land outside Cincinnati had been bought by that summer . The Miami Valley resolved in May 1876 to build only north to Waynesville , a village southwest of Xenia , where the projected Waynesville , Port William and Jeffersonville Railroad and Jeffersonville , Mt . Sterling and Columbus Railroad would extend to Columbus , crossing the D & SE at Octa . (The former completed most of its line , but abandoned it in 1887 ; the latter was only able to grade a portion .)

= = = Construction and early operations , 1876 ? 1885 = = =

President Seth S. Haines of Waynesville broke ground in Eden Park on September 1 , 1876 , although most early work was done outside Cincinnati . The company continued to be plagued by lack of funds , and , despite completion of the grade between Norwood and Waynesville within a year , work soon slowed and eventually stopped in late 1878 . Contractor John B. Benedict brought a suit in December for breach of contract , alleging that he was not properly paid . During the trial , two embarrassing facts came to light : Haines and Benedict had signed a " secret contract " giving Haines a portion of the bonds paid to Benedict , and the price of the line south of Norwood had been artificially inflated so that the connecting Cincinnati and Eastern Railway (C & E , later a N & W line) would have to pay more for trackage rights into Cincinnati . However , it was nonpayment of interest on bonds that forced the Miami Valley into receivership in January and foreclosure in March 1880 . Another decade had passed and Lebanon still lacked a railroad .

The Toledo , Delphos and Burlington Railroad (TD & B) , a growing 3 ft narrow gauge system with roots in the town of Delphos , would finally give Lebanon its rail line . Together with a group of suburban Cincinnati investors , the TD & B bought the unfinished grade at the foreclosure sale for \$ 61 @,@ 000 and incorporated the 3 ft narrow gauge Cincinnati Northern Railway as its successor on June 8 , 1880 . (The TD & B would also acquire the Dayton and South Eastern in February 1881 .) At first the TD & B and Cincinnati @-@ area residents shared stock and management equally , but soon this was changed so that the former party would control all the stock for ease in future consolidation , and the latter would locally manage the road . As the TD & B was in the process of building into Dayton from the north , it was decided that the new company would not use the grade all the way to Waynesville . Instead , the TD & B would construct a connection from the D & SE at a point they called Lebanon Junction , now inside Dayton near the intersection of Woodman and Rainier Drives , to the small village of Dodds . There the Cincinnati Northern would begin , following the Miami Valley 's route through Lebanon to Cincinnati . Construction resumed in late 1880 , and proceeded rapidly thanks to funding from Ohio and Northeastern capitalists . Mixed train operations between Lebanon and Norwood , where connections could be made with the M & C , began on May 30 , 1881 , and on September 5 the line was opened south to a streetcar connection at Oak Street ,

just north of the tunnel . Service was extended through the tunnel to the Eden Park entrance on January 12 , 1882 , and on February 13 a temporary Cincinnati depot opened just north of Court Street . With the completion of the TD & B 's branch from Lebanon Junction to Dodds in December 1881 , the Cincinnati @-@ Dayton line was finally complete ; Jackson County coal was first shipped over it in February 1882 . Two short branches to the suburbs of Montgomery and Avondale ? the latter built separately as the Spring Grove , Avondale and Cincinnati Railway (SGA & C) ? opened on November 14 , 1881 and July 1 , 1882 , respectively . C & E operations to Court Street began by April 1882 , using the Cincinnati Northern south of a junction at Idlewild , and in October the Cincinnati Northern laid tracks across that street into its permanent depot at the southeast corner of the Broadway Street intersection .

The TD & B absorbed its subsidiary , the Toledo , Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad (TC & StL) , in March 1882 , and took its name as more descriptive of the growing system , which hoped to become part of a nationwide narrow gauge network stretching southwest to Mexico City . One year later , in May 1883 , the Cincinnati Northern and the SGA & C were consolidated into the TC & StL . However , the TC & StL was constructed cheaply , with poor drainage and little ballast . While the Cincinnati Northern had been built to better standards , the connecting line between Lebanon Junction and Dodds was just as bad . The inadequate facilities and equipment , as well as difficulties in interchanging equipment with 4 ft 8 1/2 in (1 @, @ 435 mm) standard gauge lines , contributed to its entering receivership in August 1883 . The TC & StL had six divisions at this time . Four of the five TC & StL divisions south of Delphos were sold to their bondholders at auction in June 1884 , and separate companies were soon organized for three of those : the Dayton and Toledo Railroad , Dayton and Ironton Railroad , and Iron Railway (named Iron Railroad prior to TC & StL receivership) . The Toledo @-@ St. Louis line was sold in December 1885 and reorganized as the Toledo , St. Louis and Kansas City Railroad , commonly known as the Clover Leaf Route . In July , George Hafer of Avondale replaced William J. Craig of Toledo as receiver of the Cincinnati Northern Division , allowing it to recover from Craig 's deferred maintenance . Hafer obtained a short @-@ term lease from the trustees of the Dodds @-@ Lebanon Junction line (officially the Cincinnati Division) , allowing continued access to Dayton . Finally , on June 27 , 1885 , the Cincinnati Northern Division was sold for \$ 200 @, @ 000 to its bondholders , who incorporated the Cincinnati , Lebanon and Northern Railway , with Hafer as president , on July 14 and transferred operations on August 1 , 1885 . The narrow gauge movement of the 1870s had failed , and all of the ex @-@ TC & StL lines were converted to standard gauge within the next ten years .

== CL & N , 1885 ? 1926 ==

The newly organized CL & N initially operated a main line from Court Street in Cincinnati to Dayton , leasing the track from Dodds to Lebanon Junction from the Cincinnati Division trustees , and trackage rights over the Dayton and Ironton Railroad (the old 3 ft narrow gauge D & SE line) into Dayton . But the latter was converted to 4 ft 8 1/2 in (1 @, @ 435 mm) standard gauge in April 1887 , and CL & N service was cut back to Dodds , since the operations north of there were unprofitable even when it was able to reach Dayton . (The line from Lebanon to Dodds was leased in 1892 to the company organized to operate north of Dodds .) Avondale Branch operations were discontinued in August 1889 , due to competition from the cheaper Mt . Auburn Cable Railway . Under Hafer 's leadership , new passenger and freight depots opened on the north side of Court Street in December 1885 . In preparation for conversion to standard gauge , the CL & N relaid rail and replaced bridges , including a straight trestle in the Deer Creek Valley , completed in January 1889 , in place of a curving old narrow gauge structure . The first standard gauge rails were laid by August 1889 as part of a dual gauge setup south of Idlewild , when the Ohio and North Western Railroad (O & NW , successor to the C & E) , which had converted its line to standard gauge , moved its trains from the Little Miami Railroad (Pennsylvania Railroad system) back to the CL & N. Several months later , a third rail was laid north to East Norwood , allowing the O & NW to connect with the Baltimore and Ohio Southwestern Railroad (successor to the M & C) . After undertaking more improvements to the alignment , the company completed the conversion of the main line to

Lebanon to standard gauge on September 16 , 1894 , although , until it acquired a full set of standard gauge equipment , much of the commuter service to Blue Ash continued to use the narrow gauge tracks .

Throughout the CL & N 's independence , various larger companies were looking to acquire it , mainly for the valuable Court Street terminal property . The most persistent rumor was that the Cincinnati , Jackson and Mackinaw Railroad (CJ & M , later a NYC line) would buy the CL & N as an entrance to Cincinnati . The CJ & M had built south from Michigan to Carlisle , Ohio in 1887 , and initially acquired trackage rights over the CH & D to reach Cincinnati . Negotiations between the CL & N and CJ & M convinced the CH & D that the latter was capable of becoming a strong competitor , despite its poor financial state , and the CH & D attempted to acquire the CJ & M in 1892 . But the CL & N stopped the consolidation based on Ohio 's laws prohibiting such anti @-@ competitive practices , and the CJ & M continued to look at the CL & N as a possible part of its line . After the CL & N 's conversion to standard gauge was completed in 1894 , the CJ & M secured trackage rights over the CL & N into Court Street , beginning service on January 27 , 1896 via an extension from Carlisle to Franklin , the Cleveland , Cincinnati , Chicago and St. Louis Railway (Big Four , later a NYC line) to Middletown , and the recently opened Middletown and Cincinnati Railroad to the CL & N at Hageman . The CJ & M also acquired the long @-@ dormant Deer Creek Tunnel project in an attempt to construct its own route into the city , tired of dealing with Hafer and the CL & N. The Pennsylvania Railroad , owner of the Little Miami Railroad that had been constructed east of Lebanon in the 1840s , entered the negotiations in 1896 to protect its Cincinnati @-@ area interests , and in March it (through the Pennsylvania Company) acquired a majority of the CL & N 's stock . Pennsylvania officials took over management in May , and in 1902 the CL & N acquired the tunnel property and some terminal property near Court Street from the Cincinnati Northern Railroad , successor to the CJ & M , which had become part of the Big Four and terminated its use of the CL & N in 1901 .

As a part of the Pennsylvania system , the CL & N continued to operate its own property (which included the line north of Dodds after 1914) until January 1 , 1921 , when it was leased to the Pennsylvania . Starting at the end of 1918 , the Interstate Commerce Commission classified the CL & N as a Class I railroad , meaning that it made at least \$ 1 million per year in operating revenue . (This designation was dropped in 1921 when the CL & N was leased .) However , net operating income , revenue minus costs , which had steadily climbed from the 1890s , began falling in 1916 , becoming a deficit in 1920 . Subsequently , effective January 1 , 1926 , the Pennsylvania merged the CL & N with several other small companies ? the Cleveland , Akron and Cincinnati Railway , Manufacturers Railway , Pennsylvania @-@ Detroit Railroad , and Toledo , Columbus and Ohio River Railroad ? to create the Pennsylvania , Ohio and Detroit Railroad , a non @-@ operating subsidiary . That company was merged into the Connecting Railway , previously a short link in Philadelphia , in 1956 , and its lessee merged with the New York Central Railroad in 1968 to form Penn Central Transportation .

= = = Other lines , 1889 ? 1915 = = =

The 16 @. @ 96 @-@ mile (27 @. @ 29 km) line north of Dodds , built by the TD & B to connect the Cincinnati Northern to the D & SE at Lebanon Junction , was sold separately at the June 1884 foreclosure sale , to its first @-@ mortgage bondholders for \$ 20 @, @ 000 . Initially operated under lease by the CL & N , service was discontinued in April 1887 when the ex @-@ D & SE was converted from 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge to 4 ft 8 1 ? 2 in (1 @, @ 435 mm) standard gauge . With its northern connection gone , and no on @-@ line sources of revenue , there was no profit in operating the line . However , one such source would soon be created , when local businessman Henry Lewis decided to purchase nearby " Dayton limestone " quarries at Centerville . He bought the abandoned rail line from the bondholders ' trustees for \$ 40 @, @ 000 in December 1888 , and in January 1889 organized the Dayton , Lebanon and Cincinnati Railroad (DL & C) . Extensions on both ends were planned , north into downtown Dayton and south to a standard gauge connection . Lewis finished converting the 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge line to standard gauge in January 1891 ,

and initially leased it to the Dayton , Fort Wayne and Chicago Railway , successor to the D & SE . He leased in 1890 and later bought land in Dayton for the proposed terminal , and in early 1892 he acquired the quarries at Centerville , giving the line its source of traffic . The DL & C bought the line from Lewis in March 1892 for \$ 189 @, @ 000 in stock , and in June it acquired a lease on the CL & N 's 5 @. @ 52 @- @ mile (8 @. @ 88 km) line between Dodds and Lebanon . After converting the track to standard gauge , the DL & C began operations into Lebanon in late December 1892 . However , it was unable to negotiate trackage rights with the Cincinnati , Dayton and Ironton Railroad (the latest name for the ex @- @ D & SE) , and only operated north to Lebanon Junction , where passengers could transfer to that company 's trains into Dayton . Throughout its life , the DL & C competed with the CL & N wherever possible ; for example , the CL & N advertised (along with the Middletown and Cincinnati Railroad and Big Four) a faster route between Lebanon and Dayton via Hageman and Middletown .

Lewis died in 1893 , and in the next decade the DL & C built no new lines . However , a group of investors bought the company , including the Dayton terminal property , in 1901 for \$ 250 @, @ 000 from Lewis 's heirs . The first segment of the line into downtown Dayton was completed in late 1902 , branching off the main line at Hempstead and ending at Lambeth , site of the Dayton State Hospital . Unable to obtain a franchise from Dayton , and still unprofitable , the DL & C entered receivership in January 1905 , and was sold at foreclosure in April 1907 and reorganized in May as the Dayton , Lebanon and Cincinnati Railroad and Terminal Company . The bondholders who had organized the new company succeeded in obtaining the franchise , and sold the stock to a new group of investors in January 1909 . Construction was restarted in April , and in November the branch reached the intersection of Brown and Caldwell Streets and the National Cash Register plant . Finally , after completing the cuts and fills required along the east bank of the Great Miami River , the DL & C opened its new main line in 1912 , to a passenger depot on the north side of Washington Street , several blocks south and west of the city 's main Union Station . A freight depot was located just to the north , at Eaker Street , and just beyond was an interchange track (not part of the original line) connecting to the Cincinnati , Hamilton and Dayton Railway (B & O system) and , via that line , the Pittsburgh , Cincinnati , Chicago and St. Louis Railway (Panhandle Route , part of the Pennsylvania system) .

The other line eventually acquired by the CL & N was the Middletown and Cincinnati Railway (M & C , not to be confused with the Marietta and Cincinnati Railroad discussed earlier) . Paul J. Sorg , owner of a tobacco plant east of Middletown , was unhappy with the service provided by the Cincinnati , Hamilton and Dayton Railroad (then independent) and Cincinnati and Springfield Railway (Big Four system) , both of which bypassed the center of town . Sorg and associates incorporated the M & C in early 1890 , and surveyed a 14 @. @ 23 miles (22 @. @ 90 km) line from Middletown , which lay in the Great Miami River valley , southeast to a point that would be known as Middletown Junction on the Little Miami Railroad (Pennsylvania system) . Construction on the majority of the route , which crossed the CL & N at Hageman , was complete by September 1891 , and a 365 @- @ foot (111 m) truss bridge over the Little Miami River opened in early 1892 , linking the line to the Pennsylvania . Access into central Middletown was delayed until December , when it was finally able to cross the CH & D to its depot . As opposed to the CL & N and DL & C , the M & C was straight and flat , giving a smooth ride , and turned a reasonable profit . The revenue was not enough , however , to pay off the bonds , and the M & C entered receivership in July 1894 . The holders of liens against the property bought the line at foreclosure in October for \$ 335 @, @ 000 , incorporated the Middletown and Cincinnati Railroad in December , and elected Sorg president .

Sorg died on May 28 , 1902 , and six days later the CL & N , owned by the Pennsylvania since 1896 , bought its property for \$ 400 @, @ 000 and began operating it as a branch . The DL & C would be acquired twelve years later , after the Great Dayton Flood of 1913 . The CL & N and DL & C , built on the highlands between the river valleys , combined to provide the only access into Dayton during the disaster . The Pennsylvania realized that the DL & C would make a good acquisition in the event of future flooding , and had the CL & N buy and begin operating the DL & C for about \$ 700 @, @ 000 in December 1914 . (Through service between Cincinnati and Dayton had begun that summer .) The DL & C built a short connection from Lebanon Junction to the Panhandle

Route at Clement in early 1915 , and on July 1 its property became that of the CL & N.

= = = Abandonments and sales , 1917 ? present = = =

Competition from interurbans , specifically the Cincinnati @-@ Lebanon Interurban Railway and Terminal Company , took away passengers from the CL & N beginning in 1903 . But the interurban began to decline , going out of business in 1922 , and it was motor vehicles that would kill the CL & N 's passenger service . The first line to go was the Middletown Branch , discontinued in 1917 ; the short branch to Montgomery became freight @-@ only in 1926 . All service north of Lebanon ended in 1928 , and in 1931 only one mixed train between Court Street and Lebanon was left on the schedule . The less @-@ convenient Cincinnati Union Terminal replaced Court Street in 1933 , as agreed upon by all railroads participating in its construction . CL & N trains reached the station via trackage rights on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (ex @-@ M & C) south of East Norwood . This was never popular among CL & N riders , and the last scheduled passenger train on the former CL & N ran on January 31 , 1934 . With passenger service gone , and several cross @-@ connections to other Pennsylvania lines , the CL & N was no longer needed as a through route . Several years after the Montgomery Branch was fully abandoned in 1933 , the Pennsylvania discontinued freight service between Blue Ash and Mason and between Lebanon and Lytle ; trains continued to reach Lebanon via the Little Miami Railroad and Middletown Branch . Service was resumed on the entire line during World War II , but the Lebanon @-@ Lytle segment was torn up in 1952 . After the Pennsylvania merged into Penn Central in 1968 , a 3 @-@ mile (4 @-@ 8 km) piece north from Brecon was again abandoned , as was the short piece of the Middletown Branch east of the main line at Hageman , with Lebanon service now coming from the ex @-@ New York Central at Middletown . The line through the Deer Creek Valley into Court Street was also abandoned , and the old freight depot was torn down in 1975 .

When the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) acquired the assets of the bankrupt Penn Central in 1976 , it was allowed to choose which lines to keep and which to abandon . The line between Avondale and Brecon still saw heavy freight traffic , and there would still be a reasonable amount of traffic to Mason and Hempstead . Thus Conrail bought about half of the ex @-@ CL & N , including the main line from Cincinnati to Brecon (Blue Ash Secondary Track) , Mason to Hageman (Mason Secondary Track) , Hempstead to Pasadena (Kettering Running Track) , and Patterson Road to Dayton (DP & L Industrial Track) , as well as Middletown to Hageman (Middletown Secondary) and Hempstead to Clement (Clement Running Track) . Ownership of the remaining lines ? Brecon to Mason , Hageman to Lebanon , Lytle to Hempstead , Pasadena to Patterson Road , and Hageman to Middletown Junction ? remained with the Penn Central trustees , although , with local funding , Conrail operated the two segments from Hageman to Lebanon and Centerville to Hempstead as " light density lines " . Tracks between Lytle and Centerville were torn up in 1979 . Since then , several more segments have been abandoned , including Avondale to McCullough and Centerville to Kettering . Short line Indiana and Ohio Railway (IORY) acquired most of the remainder in the 1980s , beginning operations from Monroe (near Middletown) to Mason and Lebanon in March 1985 , and McCullough to Brecon in December 1986 . The city of Lebanon has bought the Hageman @-@ Lebanon segment , initially owned by the Penn Central trustees , and the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority acquired the property between McCullough and Brecon in 1997 for a proposed public transit line . (IORY continues to operate freight on both of these segments .) The IORY began running tourist trains on the Lebanon segment in 1985 . The passenger operations were split in 1996 , going through several renamings to Turtle Creek Valley Railway , Turtle Creek and Lebanon Railway , and finally Lebanon Mason Monroe Railroad . Three short segments of line at Middletown and Dayton remained with Conrail until its 1999 breakup , when the Norfolk Southern Railway acquired Conrail 's assets in southwestern Ohio .

= = Route description = =

Lying on the highlands between the Little and Great Miami Rivers , the CL & N was commonly

known as the " Highland Route " . While it normally received only local traffic , its location was a distinct advantage during floods . This was first demonstrated during the Flood of 1884 , when the rising Ohio River cut off all other railroads from downtown Cincinnati . But the load was too much for the 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge TC & StL , and several companies switched to Miami and Erie Canal boats to make the connections until the waters subsided . Similar Cincinnati floods happened in 1883 , 1897 , 1898 , 1907 , and 1937 , but in 1913 the Great Dayton Flood inundated that city , then lying at the north end of the independent DL & C. That company had just completed its line into downtown Dayton , when , less than a year later , the Loramie Reservoir broke through its levees and sent a swell of water through down the Great Miami River and into the city . As with the Cincinnati floods , only the CL & N and DL & C were unaffected , and relief supplies were sent north from Cincinnati via Lebanon to the National Cash Register plant .

The line began on the east side of downtown Cincinnati , at the corner of Eggleston Avenue and Court Street . The site of the brick freight depot , closed in 1969 and demolished in 1975 , is now owned by Greyhound Lines , which uses it as an intercity bus terminal . A track built in 1887 crossed Court Street , connecting with the Little Miami Railroad 's Eggleston Avenue Connection for freight transfer . The line began by climbing the Deer Creek Valley , the only feasible rail entrance to downtown Cincinnati that did not follow a river valley . When the railroad was built in the late 1870s , the valley was used by the city as a dump . An 1852 city ordinance provided for raising the ground level , beginning with the raising of Court Street by as much as 50 feet (15 m) . To follow the eventual surface level and avoid the steep hillsides , the railroad was built on trestles for much of its ascent , with a maximum grade of 3 @. 5 % . After leaving the depot , the line traversed an S @-@ shaped trestle to the east side of the valley , before crossing Elsinore Place and Eden Park Drive at grade , with a second trestle between these streets . (The former was replaced in January 1889 with a straighter single @-@ track trestle .) A bridge took the line over Florence Avenue , and it then passed through the neighborhood of Mount Auburn before passing under the summit through the cut @-@ and @-@ cover Oak Street Tunnel north of McMillan Street . The line started its gradual descent as it left the tunnel , generally following the existing ground level and crossing streets at grade .

Double tracks initially stretched from Court Street to near Fredonia Avenue , where the 1 @. 25 @-@ mile (2 @. 01 km) Avondale Branch split for the Cincinnati Zoo . When the line was converted to 4 ft 8 1/2 in (1 @. 435 mm) standard gauge in 1894 , the tunnel and McMillan Street underpass were not wide enough for a double @-@ track line , yet two standard gauge tracks were laid side @-@ by @-@ side . After an accident in 1916 , the tracks were relaid as a gauntlet track . The trestles were rebuilt as single @-@ track in 1888 and 1889 , after which double track only extended from Eden Park Drive to Avondale . Due to increased passenger traffic , the line was re @-@ widened not only south to Court Street but also north to Norwood from 1902 to 1904 , once the valley had been filled in . Beyond Avondale , the CL & N descended through Idlewild , where two Norfolk and Western Railway lines diverged ? the Cincinnati and Eastern Railway east to Portsmouth and the Cincinnati Connecting Belt Railroad northwest to a junction near Elmwood Place . The railway began to climb again at East Norwood , where it crossed the Marietta and Cincinnati Railroad (Baltimore and Ohio Railroad) , reaching the flat highlands at Deer Park . In the late 1880s , the CL & N , with its frequent commuter service , contributed to the development of suburbs along its line including Idlewild , East Norwood , Silverton , Deer Park , and Hazelwood . At Hopkins Avenue in Norwood , commuters unsatisfied with the bare platform built by the railroad company raised \$ 1500 to build a station building , which opened on August 1 , 1888 , and was owned by the Hopkins Avenue Depot Company until service ended in the 1930s . It was later used as a gas station , and now houses a chiropractor . As part of its bicentennial celebration , the city of Silverton built a replica of its former CL & N station with a museum inside .

Just beyond East Norwood , the Pennsylvania built McCullough Yard in 1927 , improving switching operations for the growing industrial base in Norwood . A connection was included to the Pennsylvania 's Chicago @-@ bound Richmond Branch , which the CL & N crossed over north of the yard . In Butler County , north of Brecon , the CL & N curved abruptly northeast onto the original line , partially graded in the 1850s between Sharonville and Lebanon . Just beyond , it began to

descend slowly through Mason to Hageman , where it crossed the Middletown Branch , and then rose slightly , alongside Turtle Creek , to Lebanon . The Pennsylvania tore down the original Lebanon passenger station in 1960 , replacing it (for freight purposes) with a smaller building from Kings Mills on the Little Miami Railroad . The Lebanon Council of Garden Clubs acquired the land in 1972 , tore down the freight depot , and erected a replica of the old passenger depot in its place , with a gift shop inside .

Leaving Lebanon , the line ascended a small gully and then headed north @-@ northeasterly across the highlands to Dodds . The never @-@ used grade from Dodds to Waynesville descended into the Little Miami River valley via Newman Run before turning north and ending at the latter village . Portions of the right @-@ of @-@ way and stone abutments for several never @-@ built bridges remain on what is now farmland . The line as completed turned north at Dodds , and required several cuts and fills to traverse the rolling terrain . At Hempstead , just north of Hempstead Road , the line split . The original route continued north , parallel to Woodman Drive , to the old Dayton and South Eastern Railroad (now the Iron Horse Trail) at Lebanon Junction . A 1915 extension was built parallel to the ex @-@ D & SE , and ended at the Panhandle Route (now the Creekside Trail to the east) at Clement . Part of this line is still operated by the Norfolk Southern Railway , and to the south the right @-@ of @-@ way is being used for an extension of the Iron Horse Trail . The other branch headed northwesterly into downtown Dayton , steadily descending as it passed south of the University of Dayton and alongside the Great Miami River . The main passenger and freight depots were at Washington Street , which the CL & N passed over on the first such grade separation in Dayton . The first freight depot opened with the line in 1912 , and was replaced in 1930 by a larger structure , itself torn down in 1966 .

= = Presidents = =

J. P. Gilchrist (1852 ? 1861)

Seth Silver Haines (1874 ? 1879)

Nathan Keever (receiver , 1879 ? 1880)

John M. Corse of the TD & B (1880 ? 1882)

Elijah B. Phillips of the TC & StL (1883)

William J. Craig (receiver , 1883 ? 1884)

George Hafer (receiver , 1884 ? 1885 ; president , 1885 ? 1896)

Joseph Wood was the first of at least two Pennsylvania Railroad men elected president after that company gained control in 1896 .

= = Equipment = =

When the CL & N converted to 4 ft 8 1 ? 2 in (1 @,@ 435 mm) standard gauge in 1894 , it initially mounted its 3 ft (914 mm) narrow gauge passenger cars on standard gauge trucks . These were replaced with standard gauge cars after the Pennsylvania acquisition in 1896 .

The first locomotive on the line , a Baldwin 4 @-@ 4 @-@ 0 named " Warren County No. 1 " , was bought in 1877 by the Miami Valley Railway . In all , the CL & N and predecessors had nine narrow gauge locomotives , bought from four different manufacturers . Two were disposed of in the 1880s , and , of the seven remaining into the 1890s , six provided main line service and one was used as a switching and helper locomotive .

Standard gauge operations began in 1894 with five locomotives , and the narrow gauge equipment was kept temporarily for commuter runs to Blue Ash . Later acquisitions , as well as consolidations with other companies , raised the number to 23 in 1920 , its final year of independent operation .

= = Station list = =