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A HISTORY OF
PORTSMOUTH'S STREETCARS



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SCIOTO VALLEY CHAPTER

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This booklet, A History of Portsmouth Street Cars, has been published by the Scioto Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the last run of street cars in the City of Portsmouth on January 12, 1939.

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Other sources of information for this text include property deeds on file at the Scioto County Recorder's Office, Portsmouth City Clerk's office and Portsmouth City Engineer's Office, local newspapers (*The Morning Sun*, *The Valley Sentinel*, *The Portsmouth Blade* and *The Portsmouth Times*), The Wagner Car Co. book Curved Side Cars, and to the *Brill Company Magazine* 1912, 1916 and 1918 issues.

The Scioto Valley Chapter NRHS is incorporated as a non-profit organization in the State of Ohio, and is recognized as tax-exempt and charitable under provisions of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Additionally, the Scioto Valley Chapter is one of the over 140 local chapters of the National Railway Historical Society and is dedicated to the preservation of historical subjects and matter pertaining to the railroad industry of the Southern Ohio/Northern Kentucky areas. Membership is open to all interested persons; for further information contact the Scioto Valley Chapter at the above address.

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ON THE COVER: Portsmouth Public Service Co. curved-side car No. 500, built by the Cincinnati Car Co. in 1922, rests on a siding behind the Second Street car barn, in the mid-1930s.

THOMAS D. DRESSLER COLLECTION

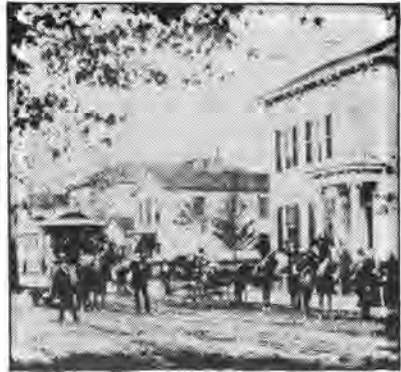
THE 'G.O.P.' LINE

On March 24, 1873, in the office of Thomas Dugan & Co., leading industrialists and businessmen — Col. Sampson E. Varner, J.D. Clare, Levi D. York, Enos Reed and A.T. Holcomb, among them — created the city's first street railway system. A total of \$60,000 in stock was taken, and committees appointed to secure rights of way, present their petition to City Council, and to solicit public subscriptions. Capital stock was revised to \$25,000 in 1876.

Varner (1824-1877), prime mover of the project to help solve the ever-expanding city's transportation needs, served in the 56th Ohio Regiment of 1861; was a bricklayer by profession; and a member of the Board of Trade and a leading proponent of early railroads. Other early backers of the project were George Davis, banker; Harry S. Grimes, a merchant and auctioneer; and Floyd L. Smith of McCole and Smith Insurance.

Articles of incorporation signed by Varner, W.Q. Adams, B.J. Coates, H.E. Jones and A.B. Cole were filed at the Scioto County Courthouse Sept. 29, 1875, with Adams as president and McCole as secretary-treasurer. By 1878, however, L. M. Reed was listed as secretary, and Enos Reed as treasurer. Construction of the Portsmouth Street Railroad Co. then began, with operation initiated in 1877 under Varner's son, William, as the first superintendent.

Often called the "G.O.P. Line" for "Get Off and Push," it operated horse-drawn carriages for about 14 years.



Horse-drawn street car on Second Street in the late 1880s.

CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION



Street car tracks on Market Street between Front and Second Streets, now Olde Market Square, during the 1880s served Chesapeake & Ohio ferry passengers.

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Starting at the Ohio River public landing at Market and West Front streets in front of the old Legler Hotel, the tracks ran north to Second Street, east to Chillicothe Street, north to Ninth Street, east to Offnere Street, and north to the foot of what then was called Bell's Hill, at Offnere Street and Robinson Avenue. Company offices first were located at No. 1 Biggs Block, and in the late 1880s at 9 South West Second St.

The earliest spurs ran west on Front Street to Jefferson Street to serve Chesapeake & Ohio ferry passengers; and east on Second Street to Union Street, north on Market Street to West Sixth Street,



Portsmouth residents turn out in their "Sunday best" for dedication of the electric street railway Nov. 16, 1894 on Second Street, and proclaimed "It's like a little bit of Chicago here now!" PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Council granted this request Oct. 19, and Brushart assigned the rights to the Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co., of which he was president, on Dec. 7

The company then entered into a contract May 6, 1893, with a New York firm, Lindsey & Wilgus, for construction of about five miles of electric railway and an electric light and power plant. Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. formally was organized June 13, 1893, and on July 1 took over property of the former company for 1,250 shares at \$100 each.

An agreement with Frank Whitley, contractor, was signed June 14, and construction of the electrical system commenced July 20. Two crews initially were employed—one to remove the old horse tracks, the other to prepare rights of way for the new system. Construction began on Ninth Street eastward from Chillicothe Street, with enough ties (furnished by Cuppett & Webb) and rails for two miles stockpiled.

The electrical system's first extension, deeded June 12, 1893, was routed from Offnere Street east on 11th Street, with dirt from a 7th Ward sewer excavation used as fill, to Lawson Street, where the line was diverted south to Gallia Street. This line soon was lengthened to New Boston, a total distance of five miles.

In August, Scioto County Commissioners claimed the company, which was laying track from New Boston to Portsmouth, had infringed upon the south boundary of the Haverhill Turnpike, endangering travelers. The Commission, in granting a right-of-way in July, mandated a 20-foot minimum distance between rail and roadway, and many property owners objected to company plans. Meanwhile, the company announced its telephone number was 182 (the city had 184 phone subscribers)

Amid public rejoicing, dedication was held and operation begun Nov 16, 1893, with four small cars, each bearing a name. Those crude cars, each of which seated 24 people two to a seat, had arrived the day before, and steam was raised for an 11 p.m. test run the day before dedication. A banquet was given for managers of the system Nov 27 in appreciation of their efforts to complete the line in spite of economic hard times. That same day, the first trip to New Boston was made.



Thirteen employees of Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. pose alongside one of the first four electric streetcars. The cars were named Lowell, Kanawha, Edna and Pauline.

COURTESY OF BLANCHE BROWN AND CARL BONZO

The first cars were painted a deep glossy blue with silver penciling, had interiors of cherry and white woods, and had an ornamental electric heater and incandescent lighting. They were named the Lowell, after Smith's infant son, Kanawha, after Kanawha Lumber Co., the Edna, after Davis' daughter; and the Pauline, after the daughter of Harry Grimes, a vice president.

The cars, manufactured in St. Louis, Mo., were called "Bob-Tail" cars, and operated on a 10-minute schedule. Long after their retirement, the car roofs and bodies still could be seen at the barn barn in 1921. Riders paid upon boarding. If they failed to pay, a motorman would draw the rider's—and others'—attention by ringing a bell.

By January 1894, local newspapers reported numerous incidents of attempts to steal rides, and by March the cars had become so popular that a new livery stable was built to accommodate the people who came to New Boston by buggy to ride them. By March 30, 1894, the company cars had logged 51,060 miles and earned \$3,327 in profit.

Even into the 1930s, the company's line extended from a loop at Second and Massie streets to a terminal station in New Boston, where a return loop was made.

Double-tracking of the main line began Nov 4, 1894.

The first motormen included Washington Hopkins, William Bricker, Arthur Haupt, Alex Crouch, John Gerlach, a Mr Holman and a Mr Cooper; with early conductors Bert Kaps, Earl Pixley, Alfred Richardson and, somesay, Sam McCullough and Shirley Grimes.

At various times until 1899, the firm was managed by Smith and Timmonds, although in 1894, when Davis died, Levi York (who served on City Council when electricity came to Portsmouth) served briefly as president. His son, Raymond, became a director in 1899.



Half-fare ticket stub dates from mid-to-late 1890s.

LARRY STANLEY COLLECTION

Sam B. Baird later served as general manager until 1904, when the York interests obtained control of the company, with Levi D. York as president until his death in 1920, his son, Raymond, as vice president, and Hugh Higgins as secretary-treasurer. Higgins had been employed in a clerical capacity since 1895.

Born Dec. 20, 1847, in Wednesburg, Staffordshire, England, Levi D. York came to America in 1868, and to Portsmouth in 1879 as superintendent of Burgess Steel and Iron Works. After fire destroyed the plant June 6, 1898, he built a new mill at Yorktown, completed after May 1899, and disposed of his interests in a merger July 15, 1900. President of PSRR&LC, he was a member of Calvary Commandery No. 13, Knights Templar, and Portsmouth Elks. He died Sept. 19, 1920, at the Mayo Hospital, Rochester, Minn., after having been stricken in mid-July while on a trip in Michigan. He is buried in Greenlawn Cemetery.



York

His son, Raymond D. York, general manager, was born in Patterson, N.J., March 14, 1876, and came to Portsmouth with his parents in 1879. Following school, he was employed by Burgess Steel. In 1899, he joined PSRR&LC as vice president, and three years later was made general manager. He also was a director of the Portsmouth Banking Co., Provident Savings and Loan and Irving Drew Shoe Co., was a 32nd degree Mason, and a member of All Saints Episcopal Church.

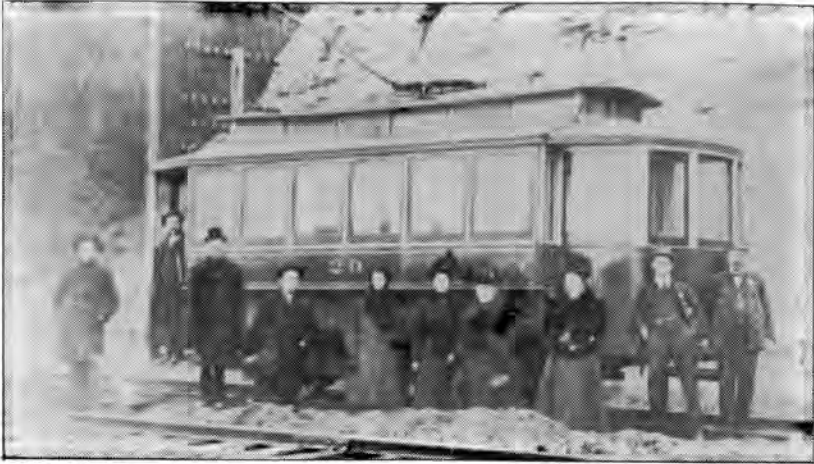
GROWING PAINS

By the turn of the century, Portsmouth's population had grown from 11,350 in 1880 to 17,850, and the need for improved transportation was evident.



Four early streetcars roll across the Lawson Run trestle around the turn-of-the-century.

S. NEFF COLLECTION



Sciotoville car No. 20, with employees and passengers, pose at "The Narrows" between Sciotoville and New Boston. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION

Property for new car barns at Second and Madison streets was secured Jan. 16, 1902, from Burgess Steel & Iron Works, of which York then was president. This lot, at 201 Second St., was 148.63 feet east/west by 132.8 feet north/south. Additional tracts were conveyed May 24, 1915, for car barns and garage facilities at Third and Madison streets.

Property also was obtained in July 1903 in Sciotoville, opposite the present East High School, and an extension from Millbrook Park to a Sciotoville loop was opened Dec. 11, 1903. Eastbound, the first car departed 10th and Offnere streets at 4:10 a.m., arriving at Millbrook Park at 4:30 a.m. and the Sciotoville loop at 5 a.m. Westbound, cars departed Sciotoville every ten minutes until 10:10 p.m., and traveled only as far at 10th and Offnere streets. Cars going downtown from 10th



Postcard, circa 1910, depicting Sciotoville car No. 20 crossing Harding Avenue. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION



Streetcar passes along the Winchester Avenue near Gallia Street bend and Baltimore & Ohio Railroad trestle.

S. NEFF COLLECTION

and Offnere streets also began operating on a 10-minute schedule between 5.30 a.m. and 8:20 p.m.

Two fares were required on a one-way trip to Sciotoville, with round-trip fare initially priced at a fraction under 15 cents. Commuters came to depend upon the Sciotoville line, which lasted to the end. PSRR&LC's successor, Portsmouth Public Service Co., sold the loop site Dec. 12, 1938, and the grounds were used for carnivals and tent shows until residential housing was erected.

The original 24-seat cars were replaced in 1904 by larger, double-truck cars with clerestory roofs, except for Car 50. Still in use in 1916 and dubbed "The Airship" because of its high trucks, it was made by PSRR&LC by splicing together two of the old 24-seat cars.

On April 3, 1906, the company's capital stock was raised from \$125,000 to \$500,000.

By 1906, the system operated about 12 miles of track, and on Oct. 10 York already had begun to secure rights-of-way for an interurban system to Ironton. Company offices by then were at 924 Offnere St

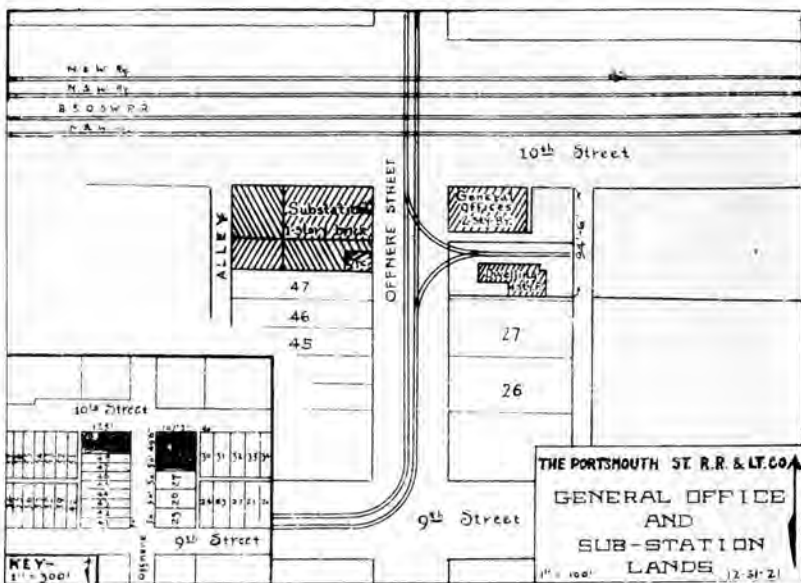
On May 15, 1912, City Council enacted legislation granting PSRR&LC a new 25-year franchise; and requiring paving between tracks.

During the 1913 flood, high water interrupted city service for 10 days, and Sciotoville service from March 27 to April 6. The flood also destroyed a Second Street bridge over the Scioto River, and in June the company offered to deed land to the Scioto County Commission to accommodate a new Scioto River Bridge at the end of Third Street. By July, however, the Commission rejected the offer in favor of the Second Street location.



PSRR&LC cars 300 and 304, built by Kuhlman Co., stranded at Ninth and Offnere Streets during the 1913 Flood.

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Map depicting PSRR&LC's properties and trackage at 10th and Offnere Streets.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT

The company's two-story office building and station at 10th and Offnere streets was completed in the fall of 1913. Cost was estimated at \$15,000, with work done by Kaps Brothers. Architects were DeVoss & Donaldson.

In January 1914, the company granted a 2-cent wage increase to employees, previously paid a minimum of 20 cents an hour and maximum of 23 cents an hour. PSRR&LC employed nearly 200.

Plans for a new Scioto River Bridge from Second Street to West Portsmouth were approved by Scioto County Commissioners in March 1914, and revised in August 1915, for a branch streetcar route envisioned to West Portsmouth. By the end of the year, the bridge was opened, and rails laid — but not connected with the system.

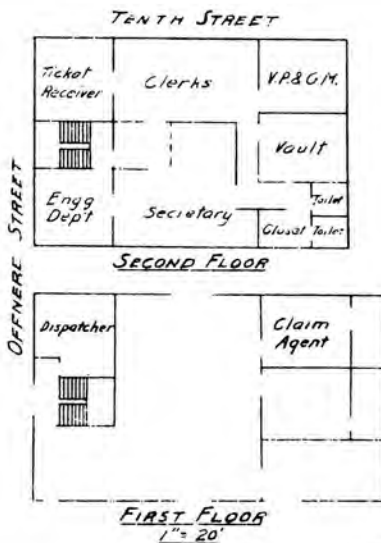
In March 1916, the Norfolk & Western Railway Co. brought suit against PSRR&LC for \$2,398 in repairs the railroad made to frogs and ties at the 10th and Offnere street grade crossing. The N&W claimed that since 1911 the company had refused to comply with an agreement dated Feb. 23, 1900.

Edgar Gore, conductor, was elected president of the 60-member Street Railway Employees Union 455 in December 1915. Other union officers included C. W. Joyce, vice president, Andy Workman, financial secretary, Robert Strother, recording secretary, W.D. Potts, warden, and Clay Bennett, corresponding treasurer.

In May 1917, with tracks on Ninth Street undergoing heavy repairs, the company recommended single-track operation on Chillicothe Street, with opposite direction traffic on a parallel street, preferably Washington Street. This never materialized.



General office building and station (above), constructed in the fall of 1913, housed offices of both PSRR&LC and OVTC. Note old Norfolk & Western Railway watch tower at far left and wye service tracks. Floor plan of the building appears below. CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT



N

FLOOR PLANS
GENERAL OFFICES
Tenth and Offshore Sts.



Employees of Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co.

C. A. COTTLE COLLECTION

In July 1917, the firm announced fares, effective Aug. 1, would change from six tickets for 25 cents to seven for 25 cents, as per a 25-year franchise granted in August 1912 which called for a decrease after five years.

On Oct. 15, a 10-inch gas line broke between Star Yard and Sciotoville, forcing PSRR&LC's power plant to shut down. Cars were stopped nearly four hours while coal fires were started.

A week later, the firm petitioned county commissioners for a franchise to build and operate a branch line across the new Scioto River bridge to Nauvoo. Bridge rails were laid with provision cars should be continuously running within seven years of 1916. The company proposed half-hour service with 5-cent rates, or seven tickets for 25 cents, and the Board of Trade approved of the proposal with minor changes. Construction was projected within 18 months of granting of a franchise, but the West Side project fell through.

In January 1918, snow disrupted trolley service on all city routes. A car was frozen to the rails on the Third Street line, and R.D. York said the company had 17 operational cars.

On Christmas Day 1919, fire destroyed the car barns at Third and Madison streets, with 11 cars and electrical equipment lost. An application was made with the PUCO Oct. 12, 1921, for approval of the issuance of \$175,000 of second mortgage, 12-year bonds at 8 percent interest to get additional equipment and make roadbed improvements. The PUCO approved this application Dec. 1.

In 1920, the company carried 971,774 passengers, and earned \$245,581 in revenues for streetcar operations, but paid \$226,619 in expenses, for a net gain of only \$18,962, leaving insufficient funds for much-needed

improvements.

The annual report of PSRR&LC was submitted to City Council as provided in the streetcar ordinance of June 7, 1921. An audit conducted that year disclosed outstanding securities of \$250,000 in common stock; \$250,000 in first preferred stock, and \$331,500 in first mortgage, 20-year, 6-percent bonds due July 1, 1934.

In 1922, the company listed Raymond York as president, John B. Knauss, a vice president of Portsmouth Stove & Range Co., as vice president and superintendent; Henry Scott Jr as secretary; and Benjamin W Hopkins as treasurer.

PSRR&LC was re-organized as Portsmouth Public Service Co., with a deed from PSRR&LC to PPSC dated Jan. 29, 1924, and from Ohio Valley Traction Co. to PPSC on Feb. 9.

Half-hour service between Portsmouth and Wheelersburg, and 15-minute service between Portsmouth and Sciotoville was initiated Jan 23, 1925. The next day, PPSC petitioned City Council for a fare increase to 7 cents. The company pointed out that since early 1924 it had operated five-minute service within Portsmouth, yet carried 320,083 fewer passengers than in the previous year. Annual salaries for motormen amounted to \$85,000. The 7-cent fare went into effect March 1, 1925.

Meanwhile, on Feb. 5, the company petitioned City Council to operate bus service to North Moreland.

The company converted from two-men to one-man car operation March 1, 1926. In that year, James F Loftus served as manager, and offices were at 733 Fourth St. A new car barn at Third and Madison streets was ready by July 1. The barn and machine shop was 50 by 150 feet, a garage 50 by 68 feet. Cost was \$43,000. In addition, installation of new 100-pound rail on Chillicothe Street was completed Aug. 1, 1926, and work on the Offnere Street underpass was begun by the city and the N&W Nov. 1, 1926, under contract with Morris, Grey and Hunter of Roanoke, Va.

ELECTRIC POWER

Electric street lighting first was considered by the City of Portsmouth Aug. 19, 1885, with a representative of Thomson-Houston Electric Co. of Boston, Mass., offered the city a 50-light arc machine and lights. Council approved the proposal Sept. 7, 1885, and electric service began Jan. 21, 1886.

Issuance of bonds for financing was approved by the legislature April 9, 1886, and the city subsequently purchased the equipment — a Buckeye noncondensing engine and T-H arc-light dynamo — for \$13,046. The machinery was installed in the Water Works plant then at the foot of Gay Street, and was operated by the city until Jan. 22, 1894, when City Council enacted legislation giving PSRR&LC an electric franchise. PSRR&LC agreed to provide the service for \$4,500 annually, and the equipment was moved to the first generating station at the southwest corner of 10th and Offnere streets, a 74½-by-125-foot tract purchased from Portsmouth Street Railroad Co. July 1, 1893.

When PSRR&LC was constructed in 1893, the firm of Southern Engineering Co. of Louisville, Ky., was contracted to provide two 66-inch by 18-foot Park Brothers' boilers, two Ball & Wood engines, a 500 hp Chicago heater, pumps, valves, pipes and other materials, for \$8,500. The engines, with 14½-by-14 inch cylinders, operated at 40 pounds' boiler



Electric substation at 10th and Offnere streets, December 1921, housed equipment supplying power to the streetcar system.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT

pressure at 265 rpms to produce 1,000 hp.

Construction of the powerhouse began Aug. 5, and was completed Oct. 5, 1893.

The first transmission line was routed from the substation on Offnere Street to 11th Street, 11th and Gallia Streets to New Boston, and down Center Street to Millbrook Park. Chestnut poles ranging from 20 to 60 feet high were spaced approximately 125 feet apart, and used 4-pin crossarms and copper wire.

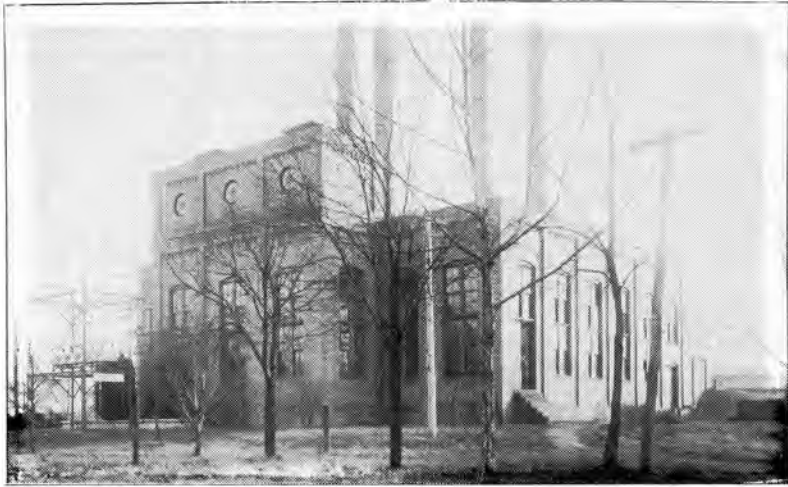
With acquisition of the electric street light franchise, PSRR&LC distribution circuits were strung down Offnere Street to Ninth Street, west to Chillicothe Street, south to Second Street, and west to Scioto Street.

By 1903, due to higher demand, the company purchased additional property east of Millbrook Lake, where a brick building was erected to house two Westinghouse generators delivering 2-phase, 60-cycle, 2,300-volt, 250-kilowatt service. This plant was placed in operation in April 1904, and hand-fired coal was used as fuel until the advent of natural gas, supplied by Portsmouth Gas Co. Natural gas in 1921 was rated at 1,000 BTU per cubic foot. Coal was supplied via a track which connected with the nearby steel plant tracks.

With the Millbrook station on line, two 2,300-volt circuits were run to the Offnere Street site, where a rotary converter changed the current to direct to power the streetcars.

PSRR&LC purchased the T-H equipment from the city March 31, 1905, and subsequently scrapped it when a GE vertical turbine was installed in 1906. From time to time, machinery was added at Offnere Street until it comprised six circuits supplying 6,600 volts.

By 1916, Millbrook supplied 23,000 volts, and for interurban service 550-volt substations with rotary converters were erected at Franklin Furnace and Hanging Rock. Increased demand also led to development of still another substation at 10th and Washington streets, and by 1921 Portsmouth and Sciotoville had a combined total of 415 arc street lamps.



The Millbrook Power Station, constructed in 1903-04 by Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. and upgraded in 1916.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH. 1921 COMPANY AUDIT



PSRR&LC's No. 1, built by General Electric in September 1915 (c/a 3848), is believed to have been used to ferry coal between the company's power plant and a nearby steel mill service track. It was sold to Evansville & Ohio Valley Railway in 1920, and later sold to Cook Transit Co., which discontinued operations in Evansville in 1957. CARLACKERMAN COLLECTION

In early 1924, PSRR&LC was sold to Portsmouth Public Service Co., formed by the H. L. Doherty interests and subsequently part of Virginia Power Co. Then, on Jan. 25, 1925, a consolidation of major power companies in Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia involved all street railways between Portsmouth and Cabin Creek, W Va. In addition to Virginia Power, the merger involved Appalachian Securities Co. and American Gas & Electric Co. into the Ohio Power Co. system.

H.G. Donner served as PPSC's first division manager of the electric utility department, and was succeeded the same year by J F Loftus. Rebuilding of Portsmouth's electric distribution system began July 21, 1926, with ornamental street lighting on Second and Chillicothe streets completed Oct. 26, 1926, and the entire project by Jan. 10, 1928.

PPSC's transportation unit was sold in 1928 to Consolidated Gas & Electric Co. of New York, which continued local operations under the PPSC name. C.T Long was made manager, serving until 1930, when Carl J Phipps was named to succeed him.

TRACK SPECIFICATIONS

Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. tracks were 4-foot-8½-inch standard gauge, laid principally with 7-inch, 70-pound high T-rail supplied by various manufacturers.

Within Portsmouth and New Boston, the company had a total of 15.07 miles of track, with 11.67 miles in the city, 10.94 miles of which was brick-paved. This total includes the unconnected single track on the Scioto River bridge and double track on the Young Street viaduct, passing sidings on Findlay Street between 16th and 17th streets and Eighth Street near Broadway Street, and the power station track at Millbrook Park.

Tracks at the Second Street car barn, originally laid in 1893, were expanded in 1906. On the Belt Line, the Third-Sixth Street line, 1.834 miles long, and the Findlay-17th Street line, 1.849 miles long, and the passing sidings were completed in 1907

A wye service track at Offnere Street near the general office building was installed in 1915.

Single tracks on the Belt lines were paved for a 9-foot right-of-way, while paving of the double-track rights-of-way were 18-feet, 11-inches wide with track centers 9-feet, 11-inches apart.



Cross-section of standard double-track grading as used by Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co.

MILLBROOK PARK

Social items of the era often described streetcar parties, for it was quite the thing in those days to entertain guests by taking them for a trolley ride, especially in hot summer days when car sides were open.

The popular trip was to New Boston's 85.38-acre Millbrook Park for a day's picnic outing, and cars could be chartered by church and social groups. Millbrook also had a theater, dance pavillion, boat dock, baseball field, roller coaster, merry-go-round and rink. A passenger station was located in the park's center, and row boats were rented by the hour for modest fees on the manmade lake, built as part of the power plant's water supply and storage system with a spillway at the south end.

The park's showpiece, the pavillion, built in 1902, had several bowling lanes, pool tables, and short-order restaurant on the first floor, with roller skating and dance hall on the second. Built at a cost of \$15,708, the two-story frame structure was 81 feet by 154 feet 6 inches by 28 feet high.

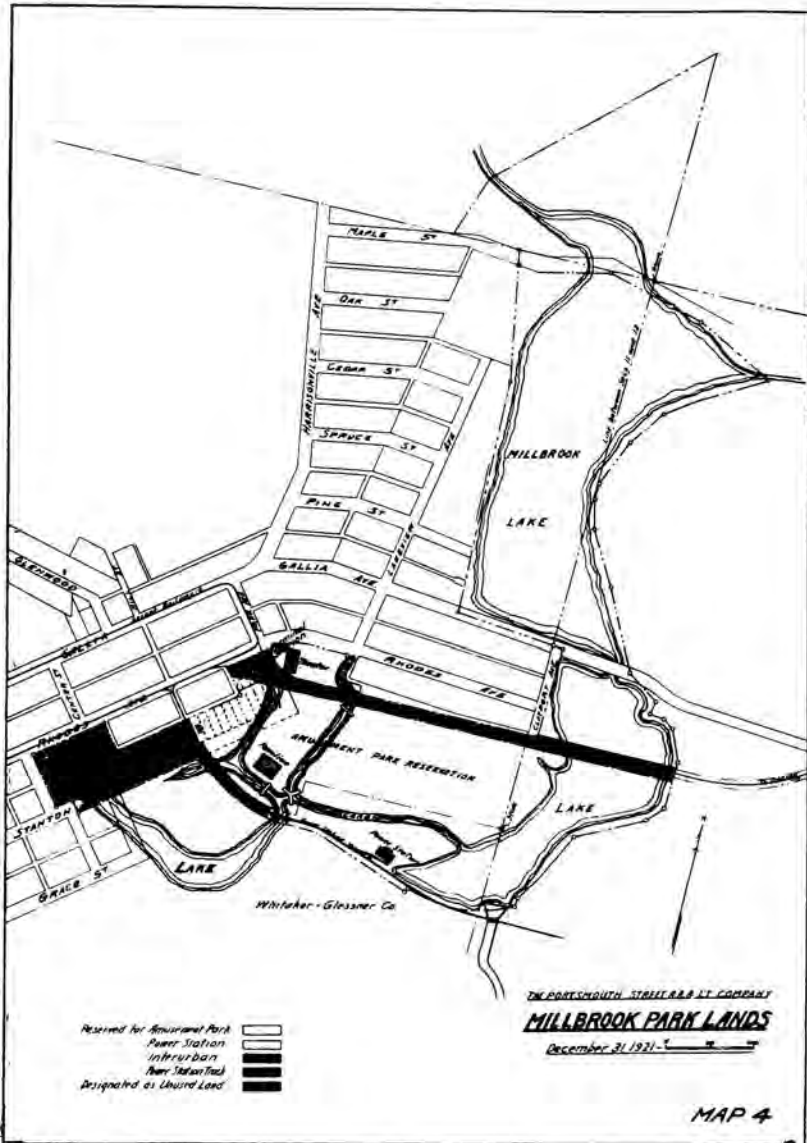
The Casino Theater offered summer stock productions, and the diamond was home to the local semi-pro team.

The theater, built in 1905 for \$21,250, also was a two-story frame building 101 feet by 89½ feet by 28½ feet high, and had a theater seating capacity of 500. The River City Band played without fail during summer Sunday night concerts. Major rail replacement was done in 1906-07, with the Y-bridge constructed in 1908 for \$9,910.



Open-side car No. 102, with motorman visible pauses on the loop at Millbrook Park after delivering passengers for an afternoon of professional baseball

CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION



Map of Millbrook Park lands, dated 1921, indicates location of Casino Theater, Pavillion and Power Station. Baseball diamond and roller coaster were located east of Pavillion and north of Power Station.



The Casino Theater (above), as it appeared in 1921, and the Pavillion (below), were constructed in the early 1900s by Levi D. York as part of the popular Millbrook Park recreational complex. Live entertainment was featured in the 500-seat theater, and roller skating and dances were held in the Pavillion until popularity waned in the World War I years.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT



In 1909, the local Ohio State League team was started, and the Millbrook grandstand and baseball diamond erected. The grandstand, which seated 1,100, cost \$6.656 and was 42 feet by 217 feet, with an 8-foot fence.

Prior to Millbrook Park, there was a dance pavillion called Grandview Park on a hillside above the Conley switch. It was dismantled when Millbrook Park was opened.

In 1914, car tracks into the park were rerouted, and the station was moved to Rhodes Avenue. At Millbrook, an extension also ran up to Sciotoville.

On Jan. 1, 1916, the company began a new New Boston route, with new tracks installed on Norfolk Street, Walnut, Rhodes and Park. Eastbound cars used Walnut Street and Rhodes Avenue; westbound cars returned on Gallia Street. Charles Noel was in charge of this work. For the first trip on the new Rhodes Avenue line, Harry Cottle and John Page were motorman and conductor, respectively.

THE BELT LINE

There formerly was a line known as the Sixth/17th Street Belt Line, which served residential districts on the city's north and southeastern ends, and was single-tracked except where it traversed main lines at Third and Chillicothe streets, and at Ninth and Findlay streets. Known as Route No. 3, the Belt Line was constructed after City Council authorized the franchise April 8, 1906.

The Sixth Street line ran from Third and Chillicothe streets to Union Street, north to Sixth Street, east to Campbell Avenue, north to Eighth Street, and east on Eighth Street to Kendall Avenue in the old Earlytown section. The hilltop route ran north on Findlay Street, east on 17th Street, south on Offnere Street, east on Grant Street, northeast on Garfield Street, and east on 17th Street to Mound Street.

At the terminals, motormen manually had to swing the contacts from one end of the car to the other to reverse direction; at main line junctions, they had to use long switch bars to manually throw the



Early streetcar moves up 17th Street toward Greenlawn Cemetery in this scene from a postcard dating to about 1910.

PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY

switches.

In the early cars, motormen used a left hand for throttle, and right hand for the brake. A button on the floor activated a warning bell.

So-called summer cars — open-sided, with seats across rather than lengthwise, as in regular cars — were not used on these belt lines.

City cars, unlike the Belt Line cars, could only go forward, while the Sciotoville car had controls at both ends.

On May 26, 1916, a right of way was offered for construction of an addition to the Belt Line on Grandview Avenue from 17th Street to Scioto Trail, but the company responded it did not "feel like taking up anything

new until we get rid of what we've got on our hands right now "

Then, on June 17, 1916, streetcar tracks were proposed across the new Lawson Run Viaduct and a franchise was obtained. In previous years, a subway enabling PSRR&LC to cross the N&W tracks and connect the Eighth Street and 17th Street lines via Kendall Avenue had been discussed, but expansion of the N&W's vast east end yards pre-empted these lines from ever joining.

The end of Belt Line service was foreshadowed in 1916-17 with announcement that a new N&W passenger station/office building would be constructed directly upon what once was the intersection of 17th and Findlay streets. For the next eight years, PSRR&LC — and later, PPSC — explored alternatives, including locating tracks from 17th Street down Waller Hill. However, declining revenue resulting from the growing popularity of automobiles convinced company officials to replace the Belt Line with motor buses.

On Sept. 1, 1926, City Council enacted legislation enabling PPSC to abandon its Sixth Street and 17th Street trolley lines, and to initiate motor bus service for residential areas as soon as equipment arrived. Shortly thereafter, 12 buses were put in service with tickets priced at 10 cents each or five for 35 cents.

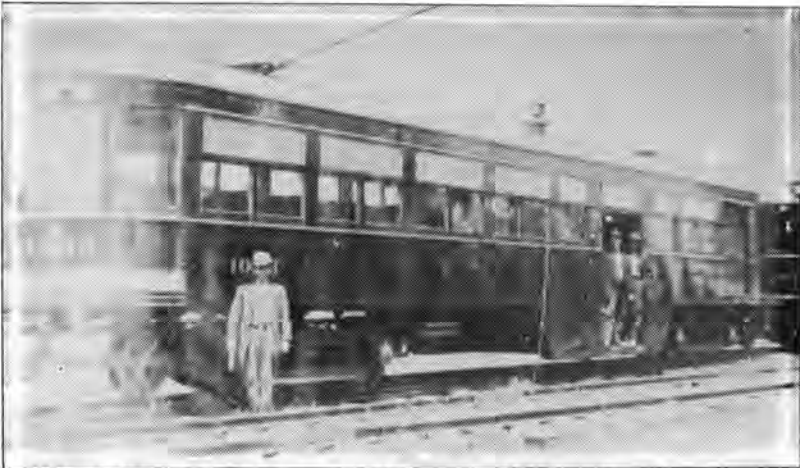
Belt Line tracks were removed in 1931, while the double-track main line remained in operation with nine Cincinnati-built streetcars.

THE INTERURBAN LINE

Interurban service connecting Portsmouth with other cities in southern Ohio had been envisioned by York as early as 1902.

By Oct. 10, 1906, the first right-of-way was secured, but development of the service would take another decade.

A company known as the Portsmouth-Ironton Traction Co. was



Ohio Valley Traction cars 1003, one of four three-compartment passenger-baggage units, and 2001, a baggage car, delivered in 1916.

CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION



Ohio Valley Traction Co. car No. 1002 at car barn yard behind Second Street, December 1921. CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT

dissolved Jan. 8, 1913, when OVTC changed its intended terminus to Ironton.

Meanwhile, proposals for a traction line between Portsmouth and Jackson by way of Munn's Run, Harrisonville, and Beaver, or by way of the Little Scioto River and Stockdale, were made to the company by supporters, but OVTC already was committed to the Ironton route.

Permission for its financing was granted by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio on April 8, 1914, with issuance of half a million dollars of bonds approved. Mortgage holder was Guaranty Trust of New York City.

The interurban line made its first run Sunday, Dec. 20, 1915, from Sciotoville to within a mile of Franklin Furnace, with Jacob Hermann, who was in charge of the West End car barn, and C. Evans, as motormen. The car, No. 300, left at 2:45 p.m. and derailed twice on the journey. Aboard were General Manager Raymond York, traffic manager H.H. Higgins, Frank Kroger and Charles Noel.

By April 1916, seven more miles of track were laid, using 70-pound rail, to Hanging Rock, and on April 27 a Wheelersburg stop was added to the schedule thanks to a committee of J. Arthurs, Charles Daehler and R.E. Thomas.

Double trolley wire was hung along the right of way, with the second wire used as an emergency wire in the event of a break so as to avoid service disruptions. Work on the traction line, however, was slowed by winter weather and by grading work in the Hanging Rock area. More than 100 men were employed in the construction.

The firm also negotiated for the former artificial gas plant property at Fourth and Hecla streets in Ironton, where a freight depot for the interurban was projected.

On April 22, 1916, three of six 60-foot traction cars ordered by PSRR&LC arrived and were set on Bashman siding near the city pumping station above New Boston. The cars, manufactured by the G.C. Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland, were painted dark red, and numbered 1000-1001-1002. Each was a passenger car with three compartments. Two combination baggage and express cars arrived by May 16.

The Kuhlman Car Co., started in 1892, had been absorbed by Brill in 1904, but continued production under its own name until it was reorganized as J.G. Brill of Ohio in 1931. It ceased operation the following year.

Because of their size, York announced the interurban cars would not run farther west than the Millbrook "Y" bridge, where all city cars would connect with the traction cars.

Announced fares were Portsmouth to Wheelersburg roundtrip, six tickets for 25 cents, with one ticket collected Portsmouth to New Boston, one New Boston to Sciotoville, and one Sciotoville to Wheelersburg. The company announced the first traction car would leave New Boston at 4:50 a.m.; the second at 5:20, and the last at 11. In addition, a new waiting station was planned at the New Boston "Y" at the foot of Park Avenue on Rhodes.

A major celebration occurred Monday, May 22, 1916, when interurban service between Portsmouth and Wheelersburg opened to the public. Four cars, numbered 1003, 1000, 1002, and 1001, were occupied by 250 members of the Business Men's Association and Board of Trade. The



Ohio Valley Traction Co. interurban car from the 1000 series is seen beside the Second Street car barn, date unknown. Lettering on car's side has been retouched.

CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION

first car left Washington Hotel at 4:10 p.m., arrived Wheelersburg 5:31 p.m., and returned from 7 to 8.

The dark red interurbans were equipped with shrill whistles, and were quite the attention-getters of the day.

Meanwhile, construction was delayed at Hanging Rock through the fall of 1916, with the first car operated to Hanging Rock Nov 30, Thanksgiving Day, for 37½ cents fare. The line now was three blocks, in Hanging Rock, from Ohio Valley Electric Railway of Ironton.

On Feb. 20, 1917, a new route for Sciotoville streetcar and OVTC line cars through Lakeside and Idlewild was opened from just east of the Millbrook spillway, running northeast to Gallia Pike and behind the filtration plant, then parallel to the railroad tracks. A new bridge over Millbrook Lake also was planned.

The first traction car into Ironton was operated the evening of September 13, with 30 employees and Police Chief Henry Clark aboard. Motorman Perry Hilterbride operated the car, which left New Boston at 6 p.m. and arrived in Ironton at 7:45 p.m. Some employees reportedly played violins and mandolins.

On Sept. 28, two traction cars collided in dense morning fog near Haverhill, with two slightly injured and service disrupted a little over an hour. The first fatality occurred Nov. 20 when a trespassing pedestrian stepped out of the way of a westbound N&W freight train and into the path of a traction car.

Public operation from New Boston to Ironton's Elm Street loop began Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28.

On Feb. 9, 1924, OVTC officially was absorbed into Portsmouth Public Service Co. According to the deed, the interurban right-of-way was 50 feet wide in New Boston, and from 15 to 25 feet wide along the route.

In October 1926, PUCO granted PPSC permission to lower fares from Portsmouth to Ironton to 50 cents. This followed a slash from 90 cents to 75 cents, which was done just three months earlier

On Jan. 24, 1930, the PUCO, in an announcement made 30 days before, ordered a suspension of OVTC operations between Portsmouth-Ironton for at least one year, after which PPSC owners expected to know what they will do with the line. The last car was run Thursday Jan. 23, 1930.

Formed and established by York, it has heavy patronage many years, but the advent of auto and motor bus travel caused heavy financial losses in later years, and the 28-mile line never reopened.

PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY			
Interurban Service Between Portsmouth and Ironton			
TIME CARD			
Portsmouth Washington Hotel	Ironton Marting Hotel	Portsmouth Washington Hotel	Portsmouth Washington Hotel
Leave	Arrive	Leave	Arrive
5:00 A.M.	6:18 A.M.	4:22 A.M.	5:40 A.M.
6:00	7:18	6:22	7:40
7:00	8:18	7:22	8:40
8:00	9:18	8:22	9:40
9:00	10:18	9:22	10:40
10:00	11:18	10:22	11:40
11:00	12:18 P.M.	11:22	12:40 P.M.
12:00 Noon	1:18	12:22 P.M.	1:40
1:00 P.M.	2:18	1:22	2:40
2:00	3:18	2:22	3:40
3:00	4:18	3:22	4:40
4:00	5:18	4:22	5:40
5:00	6:18	5:22	6:40
6:00	7:18	6:22	7:40
7:00	8:18	7:22	8:40
8:00	9:18	8:22	9:40
9:00	10:18	9:22	10:40
10:00	11:18	10:22	11:40
11:00	12:18	11:22	12:40

Portsmouth Public Service Company's published schedule for interurban service.

LARRY STANLEY COLLECTION

ROLLING STOCK

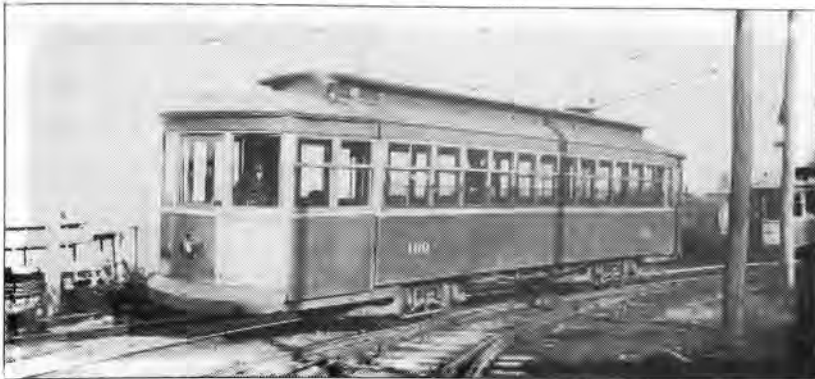
An audit of Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. at the end of 1921 indicates the company owned and operated 15 passenger cars at that time; one work car; and one baggage car

Eleven passenger cars had been destroyed two years earlier in a Christmas Day 1919 fire at the Madison Street car barn, including one of 1000 series interurban cars. Most of the cars destroyed were older models.

Those which survived the fire included Numbers 100, 102, 104, 106 and 110, built by Brill Car Co. in 1903, the 200 and 206, built by St. Louis Car Co. in 1904 and remodeled in 1913; and the G.C. Kuhlman Car Co.-built 300 and 302 (ordered in October 1911) and 402 and 406 (ordered in October 1912), and a vintage work car, No. 12, built around 1898.

The 300, 302 and 406 regularly worked on the Belt Line routes.

The following information pertains to details of various rolling stock



PSRR&LC car No. 100, shown December 1921, originally constructed by Brill Car Co. of Philadelphia in 1903 as an open-body car and rebuilt as a closed-body car in 1917. The car was 15-feet, 10-inches long overall, and seated 52.
CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT



PSRR&LC car No. 206, shown December 1921, was constructed by St. Louis Car Co. in 1904. Similar to the 100-series Brill cars, the 206 likewise was improved in 1917.
CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT



PSRR&LC car No. 402 was part of an order placed in October 1912 to G C Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland. CITY OF PORTSMOUTH. 1921 COMPANY AUDIT

P-A-Y-E Cars

Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co.'s first pay-as-you-enter streetcars built by F. G.C. Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland, Ohio, were put into service in July 1912.

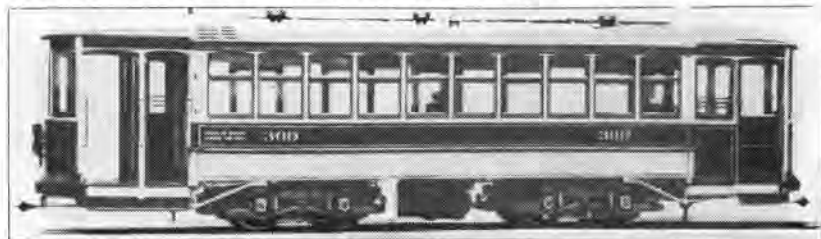
Numbered in the 300 series, these cars initially were used exclusively on lines serving the business district during rush-hour, and quickly became quite popular with the public.

While doors were located at both ends of the P-A-Y-E cars, passengers were encouraged to enter by the rear doors, with fares to be paid upon boarding, and to exit by the front doors, thereby easing the burden of collections for conductors and making entry or exit safer for passengers.

The 300 series cars featured longitudinal seats in a Brill semi-convertible body — a somewhat unusual combination as PSRR&LC's order for cars so-designed was one of only four received by Kuhlman.

While the use of seats running lengthwise rather than across the cars resulted in a loss of interior width, the design proved to be advantageous in other ways, allowing for storage of windows and sashes in roof pockets during the summer. This design also minimized the breakage of glass, and prevented refuse from being trapped in window sills.

Another unusual feature of the Portsmouth cars was the generous width of the platforms — 7-feet-2-inches, compared to the normal 6-foot



PSR&LC car No. 300, first of the pay-as-you-enter cars ordered from G.C. Kuhlman Car Co. in July 1912. Cars had wide (7-feet, 2-inch) platforms to accommodate more passengers at fewer stops than conventional streetcars of the era.

THOMAS D. DRESSLER COLLECTION



PSRR&LC car No. 400 was part of the second order of P-A-Y-E cars delivered by Kuhlman Car Co. in late 1912. Cars were quite similar to the 300 series.

WILLIAM MIDDLETON COLLECTION

wide platforms built by Kuhlman. This was done to accommodate more passengers at fewer stops than most trolley companies had.

The additional platform length allowed standing room for passengers at the rear, where double stanchions provided a passageway. Doors, operated by levers, slid into pockets in the car body, and hoods were detachable.

Interiors of the 300 series cars were finished in cherry, with composition board ceilings.

They had Brill 27GE-1 double trucks with 33-inch wheels, four GE 216E motors rated at 40 h.p., GE K-35-G controllers, straight line air brake equipment; Ohmer fare registers, Smith heaters, and seated 36.

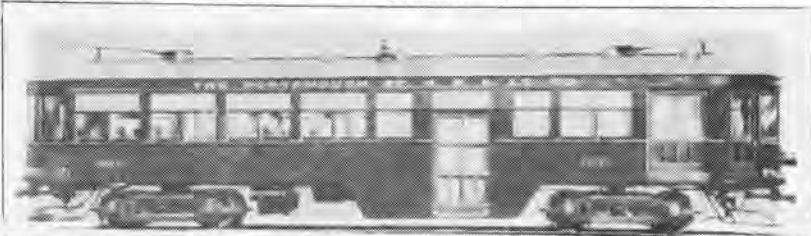
An order of four similar cars, numbered in the 400 series, was made to Kuhlman Car Co. in October 1912.

INTERURBAN CARS

Four double-end, center-entrance, steel-framed interurban cars were delivered by the Kuhlman Car Co. to Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. in May 1916 for use on the 26-mile Ohio Valley Traction line between New Boston's Millbrook Park and Ironton.

These cars, numbered 1000-1003, operated on an 80-minute schedule between terminals, with stops averaging but one per mile. In addition, the OVTC route was relatively flat, with the steepest grade only 1.5 percent, the longest grade a mere 3,000 feet.

Built with steel underframes and double flooring of yellow pine and maple, the 1000s were divided by glass panels into three compartments



Builders photo of Ohio Valley Traction Co. car No. 1002, delivered in May 1916 by G.C. Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland.

THOMAS D. DRESSLER COLLECTION

— baggage, smoking section and main passenger compartment. Motorman's cabs were located at both ends, with folding seats for passengers when not in use.

Reservable Brill-type "Winner" seats were provided with black leather upholstery, and a heater opposite toilet facilities could be removed to provide additional seating. Fold-away seats also were located in the baggage compartment.

Operated under the pay-as-you-enter basis, the 1000s had a seating capacity of 61.

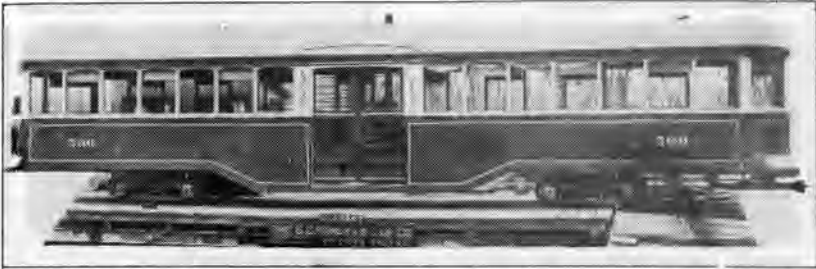
As part of the same order, Kuhlman delivered two 50-foot steel frame baggage cars in June 1916 for use on OVTC tracks. Constructed almost entirely of steel for double-end operation, these baggage cars could



Interiors of 1000-series interurban cars (above) and 500-series trail-style interurban cars (below) delivered to PSRR&LC /OVTC by G.C Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland.

WILLIAM MIDDLETON COLLECTION





PSRR&LC trail-style interurban car No. 500, delivered by G.C. Kuhlman Car Co. of Cleveland in May 1918, measured 48 feet long. These cars were ordered to relieve rush-hour congestion. THOMAS D. DRESSLER COLLECTION

carry a maximum load of 15 tons.

These cars, numbered 2000 and 2001, featured two 6-foot sliding doors, with 28-inch wide steel doors adjacent to the cabs, behind which iron pipe bars protected motormen from falling baggage.

Added to this fleet of smooth-riding interurban cars in May 1918 were three light steel, 48-foot trail cars with Cleveland-type bodies for use during rush-hour congestion.

These units, numbered 500-502, seated 59 or 60 passengers, depending upon whether a heater was in use, and provided standing room for 70 more, making for total capacity of 130.

The 500s had a centered double-door entrance measuring 5-feet-5¾ inches wide, with a fare box stand in the center of the car. Interiors were finished in cherry, with enameled pipe railings. The seats were fashioned of steel padded with hair felt covered by canvas-lined, twill woven rattan.

The Cleveland cars had a 5-inch gong mounted on front letter panels, and a cord running the length of the cars. They had air brakes and automatic couplers.

CINCINNATI CARS

In 1922, PSRR&LC accepted delivery of six cars built by the Cincinnati Car Co. as single-end city cars with 10 windows on each side, and arch-bar trucks. These lightweight cars were the first city-type curved-siders built by the Cincinnati firm, and were designated Lot SD-450.

For city running, the cars needed only fenders and small headlights and no toilets. The cars, numbered 500-505, were powered by 25 hp motors, and following discontinuation of streetcar service they were not resold.

In January 1925, PPSC also accepted delivery of three more cars, numbered 506-508. Similar to the 1922 cars — as the same sales drawings were referred to — they, in fact, had several variations, and replaced the Kuhlman interurban cars on the New Boston-Ironton route.

They were the first cars made with rounded corners on the body by the doors, and had modern pressed-steel bumpers, a semi-circular seat at the rear; and rear-entry, front-exit doors designed for one-man operation.

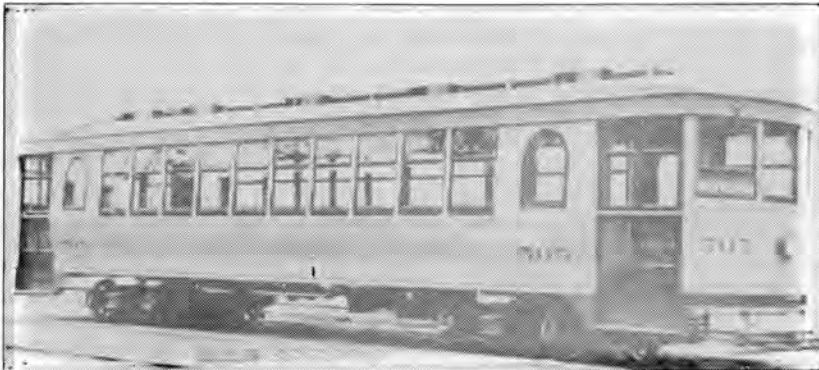


Portsmouth Public Service Co. No. 508, built by Cincinnati Car Co. in 1925, shown here beside Second Street car barn. was one of three (506-508) used both for city and interurban service. THOMAS D. DRESSLER COLLECTION

They also had such features as door levers which would not operate when brakes were off, and a "dead man's control" which, in case of a motorman's sudden illness, would automatically apply brakes, then open doors for passengers. Cost for the three new cars was \$38,000 plus.

For interurban service, the cars were equipped with pilots instead of fenders, and interior furnishings included leather seats. In interurban service, they were not as fast as the Kuhlman cars.

Trucks were of the same type of arch-bar construction as the city cars, except these had single coil springs. The 506-508 cars, likewise, were not resold.

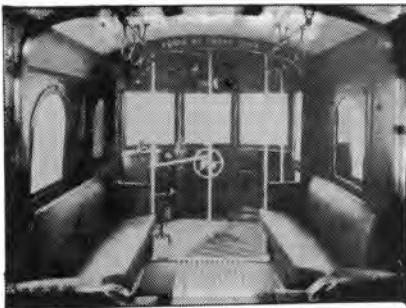
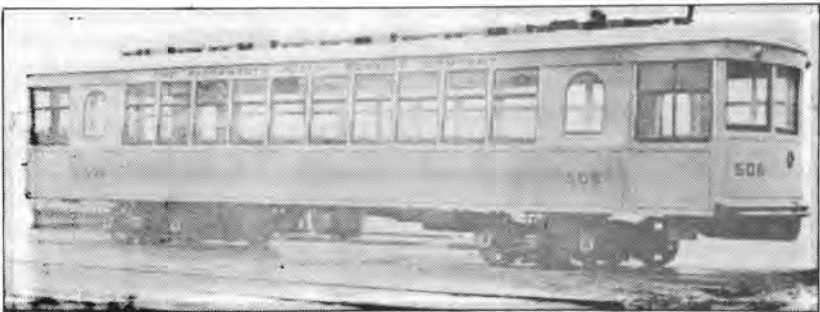


Portsmouth Public Service Co. No. 505, one of six curved-side streetcars (500-505) built by Cincinnati Car Co. in May 1922. These were the first curved-siders built for city running. COURTESY OF RICHARD WAGNER



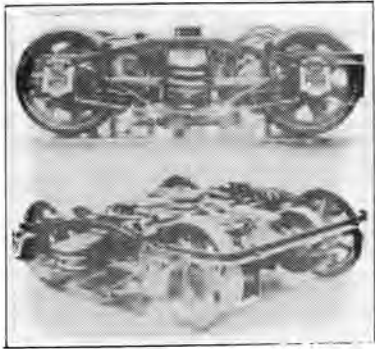
Curved-side streetcar No. 506, as seen from right (above) and left-hand sides. These cars were orange or yellow-orange with grey roofs. On interurban service, the 500s did not ride as smoothly as their Kuhlman-made predecessors.

COURTESY OF RICHARD WAGNER



Interior views of the front (left) and back ends of Portsmouth Public Service Co. No. 506-508 series cars.

COURTESY OF RICHARD WAGNER



Trucks built for Portsmouth Public Service Co. 500-series cars, shown with 25-horsepower motors attached, were of single-spring, 5-foot wheelbase construction. The PPSC-style truck became common among Cincinnati Car Co. curved-siders. COURTESY OF RICHARD WAGNER

GENERAL DIMENSIONS

Cars No. 500-505

Length Over Dashers...	42'11"
Length Over Body.....	33'3"
Length Of Platforms.....	4'10"
Rail To Top Of	
Trolley Boards....	10'5 ³ / ₄ "
Rail To Bottom	
Of Side Sill.....	27 ³ / ₄ "
Rail To Step.....	16"
Step To Platform....	14"
Ramp In Car Floor.....	2'1/4"
Extreme Width.....	8'6 ³ / ₈ "
Post Centers.....	30"
Clear Height Inside.....	7'3"
Bumper Extension.....	5"
Seating Capacity	50
Width Of Seats.....	37"
Width Of Aisle.....	25"
Door Openings.....	42"
Truck Centers.	23'9"
Wheel Base.....	5'0"
Track Gauge.....	4'8 ¹ / ₂ "
Wheel Size.....	26"
Type Heater.....	Elect
Type Ventilators.....	Elect
Vestibule Seats.....	Folding
Sliding Doors	
Single End Operation	



Four Cincinnati Car Co.-built curved-siders in yard behind the Second Street car barn in the 1930s. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION

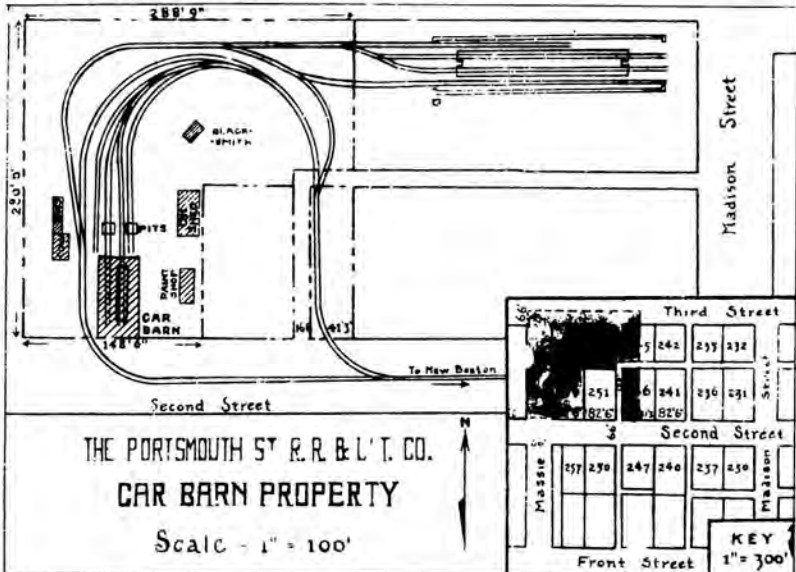


Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co. car barn at 201-203 Second St., as it appeared in December 1921 (above), was constructed in 1917. Today, it still stands as Bridge Carryout. Below is map detailing car barn yard track layout as of 1921. Car barn at Third and Madison streets, destroyed in Dec. 25, 1919, fire, was rebuilt in the mid-1920s.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, 1921 COMPANY AUDIT

CAR BARN, STRUCTURES

The company's Second Street car barn building, still standing today, was constructed in 1917, and measured 34 feet by 72 feet 4 inches by 16 feet high. It was built on a concrete foundation with an earth floor, and contained two service tracks, one of which crossed over an inspection pit 6 feet deep by 48 feet long.



Also on the premises were blacksmith, tool, coal and wood houses, erected in 1910; an oil shed built in 1915 and a paint building erected in 1920.

The car barn destroyed by fire in 1919 had a concrete foundation 202 feet 8 inches long, and contained twin inspection pits 158 feet long.

While PSRR&LC had no waiting shelters, it erected 122 signs fashioned of 15-inch diameter sheet iron, and lettered "CARS STOP HERE" in white on a black background. Sixty-four of these signs were placed on the main line; 28 on the Sixth Street line; and 30 on the Hilltop line.

THE END COMES

With expiration of Portsmouth Public Service Co's. 25-year franchise May 15, 1937, the City of Portsmouth began a lengthy legislative process that spelled the end of the streetcars.

In those days, with rail lines laid throughout the city and automobile traffic rapidly increasing, accidents were common, and Portsmouth had earned a dubious nationwide fatality ranking among cities of its size. Subsequently, city officials, determined to make streets safer, began seeking alternative forms of public transportation. For many motorists, the streetcars had become a hazard; for PPSC, an increasingly expensive operation — particularly, after the 1937 flood caused heavy damage.



Cincinnati Car Co.-built curved sider stops in front of Griffin Hall, as seen looking north from U.S. Grant Bridge, on Jan. 5, 1937.

MIKE DEATERLA COLLECTION

In August 1938, after months of negotiation, PPSC informed City Council it could not guarantee a 5-cent fare for a new franchise. Its bus fare, at the time, was 10 cents, or five tokens for 25 cents. As a result, Council announced it would accept bids for a new bus franchise at a 5-cent fare.

Such bids were received from National City Lines, of which Charles R. Haller of Chicago was president; Portsmouth Transportation Co.; and S.V. Hopkins of Portsmouth, while PPSC could offer no less than 7-cent fares, or 5 tokens for 25 cents.

By December, the city announced it favored National Cities Lines, which promised to purchase PPSC's assets; abandon the streetcar line; install bus service within 30 days; and put up a \$65,000 performance bond for a 15-year franchise. Rail and copper trolley wire would be donated to

the city, with proceeds from salvage to be used to pay most of the city's share of Works Progress Administration costs in removal of the rails and repairing streets. Additionally, NCL promised to upgrade the Third and Madison street garage.



Ticket stubs for 5¢, 6¢ and 7¢ fares, dating from 1930s.

MIKE DEATERLA COLLECTION



A Portsmouth Public Service Co. curved-sider in the 400 block of Chillicothe Street, looking south, in January 1936. In three short years, all streetcar operations would cease in Portsmouth. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION

NCL, which was incorporated in February 1936 and operated numerous inter-city bus routes, proposed to form a local subsidiary, Portsmouth City Lines, and to retain as many of PPSC's employees as possible, with all workers local. NCL already had contracts with Amalgamated Association of Electric Street Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America, the same union which represented PPSC employees.

Finally, on Dec. 16, 1938, Council unanimously voted to award NCL a 15-year, 5-cent fare franchise, effective in 30 days. A second, emergency ordinance accepted a bill of sale from PPSC, which donated to the city rails, wires and all equipment, and releasing PPSC from further liability resulting from ordinances or rights-of-way

Said Frank E. Sheehan, then-city manager, "The streetcars will be removed immediately from the streets of the City of Portsmouth."

On Dec. 24, the city announced it would open bids Jan. 30, 1939, for the sale of approximately 10,000 pounds of copper wire and 850 tons of rail, to be delivered to the successful bidder to a Baltimore & Ohio or N&W siding. D. Labold, it was announced, made the successful bid.

National City Lines assumed ownership of all PPSC properties in a deed dated Jan. 10, 1939, and on Feb. 23 conveyed the franchise and properties to Portsmouth City Lines Inc., which made further conveyances of former electrical operations to Ohio Power Co.

New Boston Village, however, favored a 5-cent rate offered by C.E. Fannin of Ashland, Ky., operator of Blue Ribbon Bus Lines, and on Dec. 8 enacted an ordinance granting Fannin a franchise. However, village citizens petitioned for a referendum to decide the matter the following November, and National City Lines eventually was awarded the village franchise. Former PPSC rights-of-way in New Boston were conveyed by deeds to the village in February and March 1939.

The last streetcar to operate in the City of Portsmouth, No. 502, began its last ceremonial run at 1 a.m. Jan. 12, 1939, from the Second Street car barn to New Boston and back. The 502 was filled to capacity, and those aboard stripped it of whatever they could jerk off. Henry Clark, a retired motorman who began his career back in 1894, operated the car briefly, while Phipps, to retired from PPSC to serve as PCL general manager, operated the car for most of the 48-minute trip.

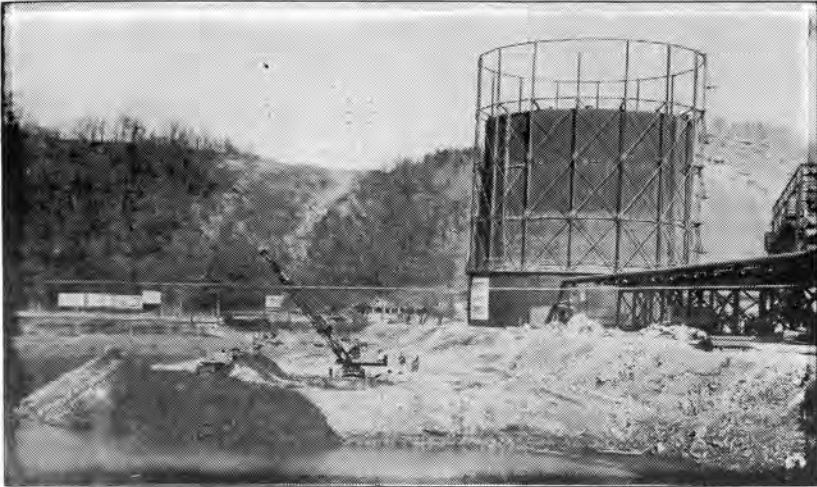
New buses began their routes at 5 a.m. the same morning.



THE KAH-PATTERSON CO., PORTSMOUTH, O.

The last Portsmouth Public Service Co. pass ever sold was this one, sold on Wednesday, Jan. 12, 1938. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION

Fading Reminders



Detroit Steel Corp. construction workers filling in the old spillway at Millbrook Lake, New Boston, on Feb. 18, 1957. CARL ACKERMAN COLLECTION



Portsmouth City Lines lettering still hangs on the east side of the former car barn shop building at Third and Madison streets in this 1986 photo. Note size of door at left. West-side wall once had four doors, and interior floor contained four inspection pits. LARRY STANLEY COLLECTION

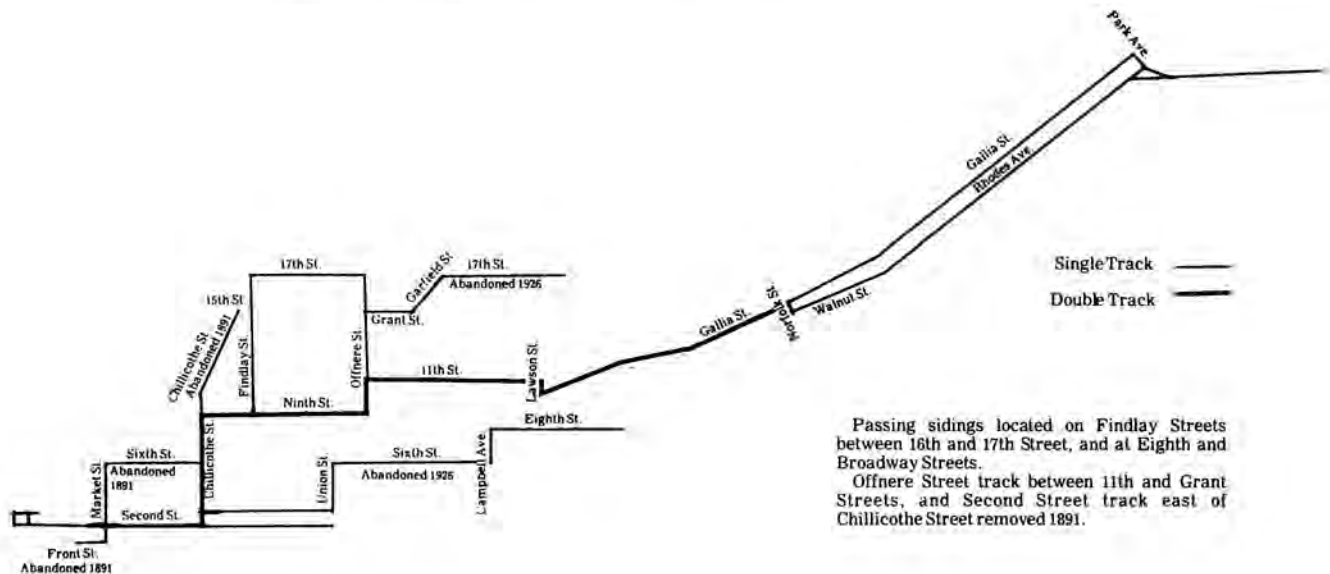


One of two piers, built by Ohio Valley Traction Co. and dated 1915, still loom today amid brush and trees on the west bank of the Little Scioto River at Sciotoville as a reminder of the old interurban line, which ceased operations in January 1930.

LARRY STANLEY COLLECTION

Portsmouth Street Railroad & Light Co.

System Map





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