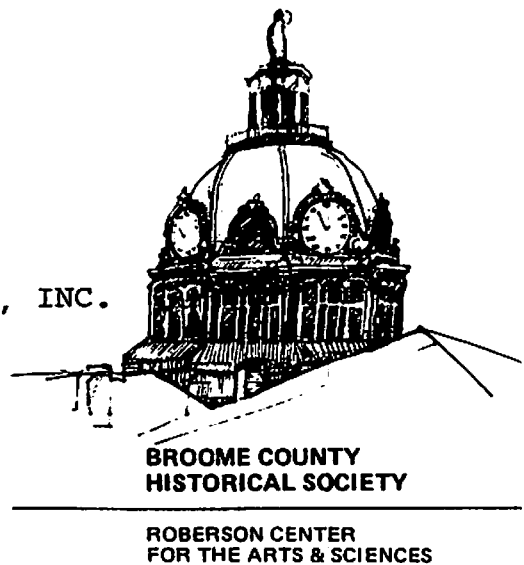




A
RAILROADERS OF AMERICA, INC.
TOUR



Good Morning! The Susquehanna Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Broome County Historical Society at Roberson Center welcome you aboard the CHENANGO VALLEY EXTRA, a special train chartered from the New York, Susquehanna and Western Railroad, Northern Division, a Delaware Otsego System railroad.

This brochure,---a guide to where you are going, what you will see, and to what you'll be doing---, has been prepared by Laurence E. Leamer of the Broome County Historical Society. We hope it helps you enjoy your day more fully. We will be travelling the right of way of what was once the Syracuse and Utica Division of the former Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad.

In addition to this guide, members of the Broome County Historical Society or Roberson will be present in each car as "Historical Guides" to help point out significant landmarks and try to answer your questions. The "Guides" may be identified by their distinctive name tags. Indeed they will be introducing themselves to you.

Also in each car is a "Car Attendant" from the Susquehanna Valley Chapter, NRHS. He will look out for your safety and comfort. He may be identified by his Chapter blue and white badge and name tag. Your Car Attendant will assist you in getting on and off the train, in finding a seat, by helping you move about the train, and by answering any questions you might have about the train and our schedule.

We should acknowledge the help and encouragement for this trip we have received from the Chenango County Chamber of Commerce, the Oxford Historical Society, the Village of Sherburne Planning Board, and from Town Historians along our route. The arrangements for the tours and the displays we will see today are the result of willing volunteers in the above mentioned organizations. We should thank them.

For your comfort and safety, as well as the comfort and safety of your fellow passengers, we ask that you board and detrain only at designated vestibules where Car Attendants are available with step boxes. Please do not smoke except in designated areas,-- dome lounges and vestibules. Do not hang out of nor extend arms or heads out of any open windows or vestibule doors. Do not run on or about the train. If you need help when passing from one car to another, do not grab onto the train between cars, but rather ask your Car Assistant for assistance. Do not attempt to get on or off a moving train. Be alert when walking through the train for any sudden jolts or stops. And when off the train, do not step on rails nor climb aboard any railroad equipment. Also please help keep your car clean; receptacles for trash, etc. will be provided. Or ask your Car Attendant. Your cooperation is appreciated to help assure a safe and enjoyable day for all of us.

Please do feel free to roam about the train. It is one of the advantages of train travel that you are not confined to your seat during your journey. We have a Snack Bar serving coffee, tea, donuts, sodas, and potato chips. Ask your Car Attendant for directions. There are rest rooms only in the Dome cars.

Remember, SAFETY is important! Follow directions of Car Attendants. Feel free to ask questions of your Guides and Attendants. Enjoy the train, the stopovers, your fellow passengers, and yourself on this trip aboard the CHENANGO VALLEY EXTRA.

SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY CHAPTER BROOME COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ROBERSON CENTER FOR ARTS & SCIENCES

T R I P G U I D E

for the

C H E N A N G O V A L L E Y E X T R A

Second Annual Excursion

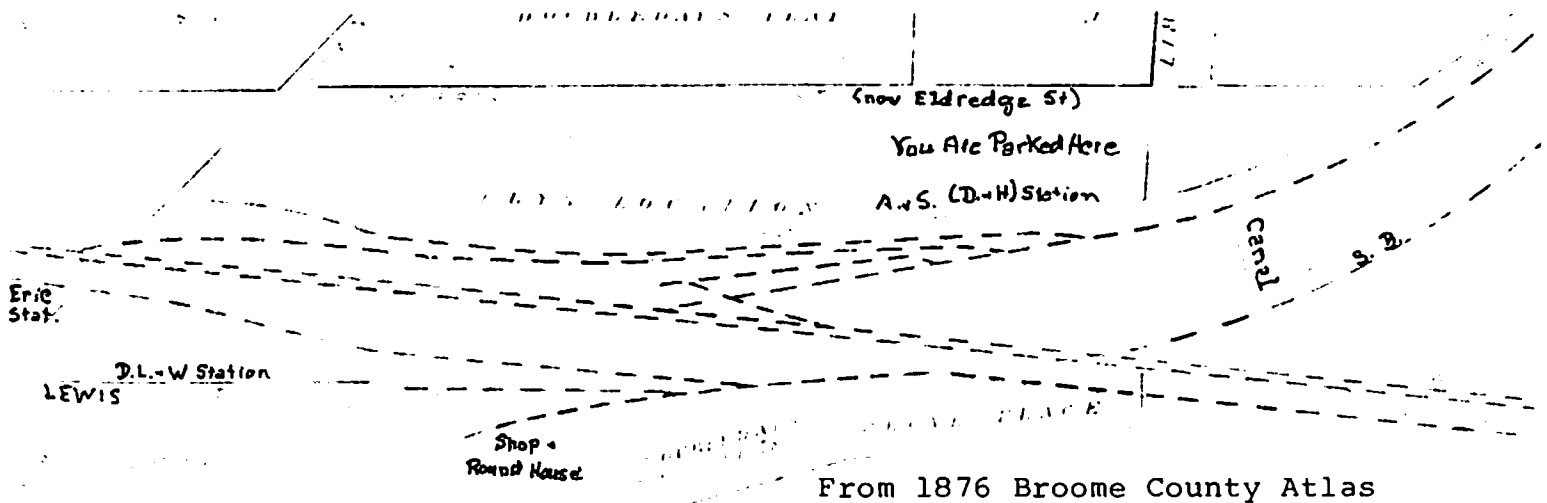
September 29, 1984

All-day Train Excursion from Binghamton to Sherburne back to Oxford
and Return

Maps from the 1876 Atlas of Broome County and the 1875
Combination Atlas of Chenango County, New York

Welcome aboard the CHENANGO VALLEY EXTRA !!!! We of the National Railway Historical Society, we of the Broome County Historical Society, and Town Historians & residents awaiting our arrival along the way --- all hope to make this one of the greatest and most memorable events ever to occur along this now 114 year old Utica, Chenango & Susquehanna Valley (U.C & S) Railroad route. We hope this Guide will help.

On Monday morning December 19, 1870 the first scheduled train from here to Utica pulled out of this very rail yard --- #9, The Utica Express leaving Binghamton at 6:20 a.m., passing through Norwich two hours later, and arriving in Utica at 10:55 a.m. Actually it was a D. L. & W. train. For beginning in 1870 the D. L. & W. contracted with the U. C. & S. to operate a "Utica Branch" over U. C. & S tracks.



In the 1870's this railroad yard was the center of great railroad activity. We would have boarded over there to the southwest at the old D.L. & W. station. The building now standing was not built until 1900. It is now designated as a historic landmark, --- soon to be taken over for preservation and use by its new owners. Through these very yards since the 1840's have pulled many different railroads, --- the Erie (E.R.W. on the map) from New York City since 1848 and from Chicago since 1851, the Lackawanna (D.L. & W) from Hoboken & Scranton since 1869 and from Buffalo since 1882, the Albany & Susquehanna (A & S) (later the Delaware & Hudson) from Albany since 1869, and since 1854 the Syracuse & Binghamton (S. & B) over whose tracks the D.L. & W. Utica Branch operated since 1870.

One hundred years ago many coal cars, filled or empty, would be being shifted around here for the next part of their journey. Engines would be being fired up and watered for their departure. The big Round House and Shops, where steam engines were maintained and repaired, would be steaming with activity. Probably one of the many long freights to pass here would go by. Indeed in the 1880's a 178 car coal train is said once to have gone up the very track we will follow. Note that we are boarding today on the spur that once was the boarding place before the A. & S. (D. & H) station. Yes indeed you are on historic ground !!!!

The Chenango River Valley up which we will go is itself something really special. It has had a long history as a major thoroughfare, --- 200 years and more ago as the old Indian path to and from the Utica-Rome area from which Indian affairs were managed before the American Revolution by the English. Settlers began moving in after 1785 (the same time early settlers began moving into Broome). Soon stage coaches began traversing old Indian paths. In the 1830's the Chenango Canal was built, providing a vital link between the Southern Tier and the Erie Canal. After 1837 you could take a canal packet boat from Binghamton to Norwich for just \$1.50 and twelve hours of your time.

Just before and following the Civil War, railroads were the way of the future. Residents of the Chenango River Valley wanted in on the act. So they bonded themselves and got railroads built. One was the Utica, Chenango & Susquehanna Valley Road over which we will travel. In 1870, just five years after the Civil War, this road was finished. It was immediately leased to the Lackawanna which saw its value for carrying coal. The Chenango Valley and its then rich dairying region again caught up to the new times.

Alas, just as the canal was killed by the railroad in 1872, the railroad (at least its passenger service) was killed by the auto. On April 29, 1950, thirty-four years ago, passenger train service ended. Early in the present century four passenger trains, two milk trains, and several freights operated daily in each direction over these lines. But no longer. In 1920 the sleeper between Hoboken and Utica was discontinued. By 1940 passenger service was cut to two locals operating each way. And when Conrail took over, all through freight was terminated (only occasional local freight continued). Probably our Chenango Valley Extra is the first passenger train from here to Norwich & Sherburne to operate in the last 34 years. And the auto,--- with the advent of Superhighways 81 and 88, has left the old Chenango Valley stranded as it never was in its Indian pathway-canal-railroad eras. --- a beautiful historic old thoroughfare midway between two speed avenues by which we moderns rush blindly to our destinations.

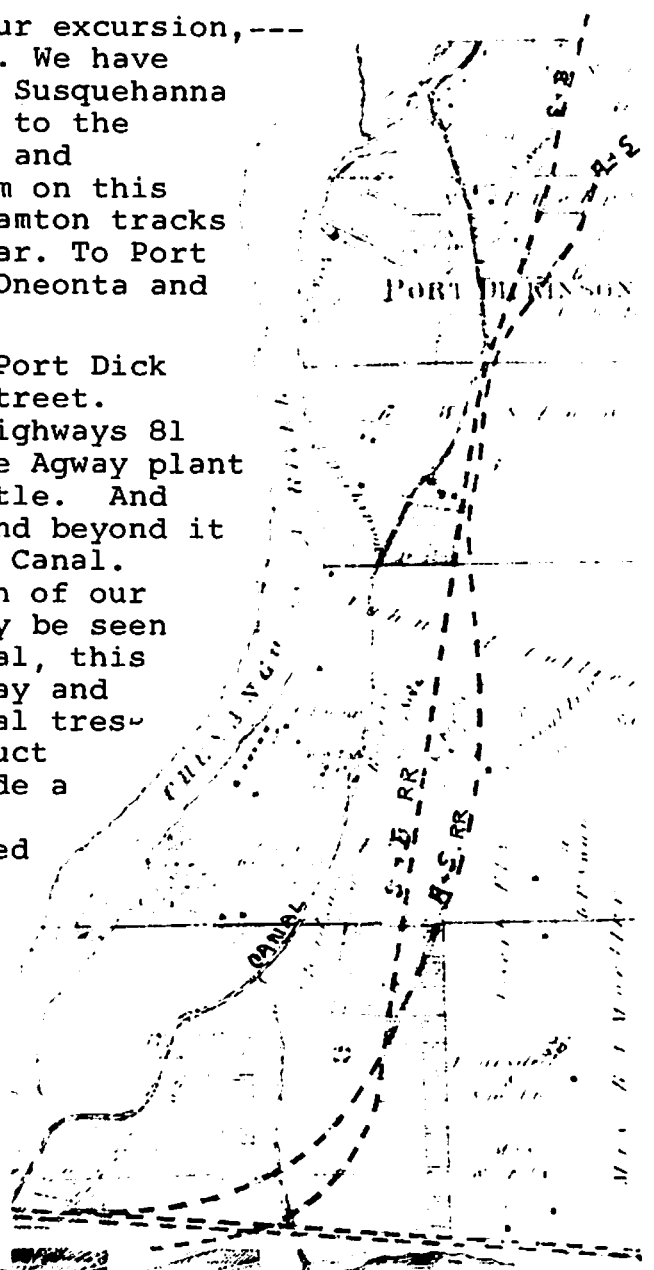
Residents like to imagine that CHENANGO was an Indian word for "beautiful valley". It could well have been. With help from the notes below, watch the old and the new passing your window or the one across the aisle. Enjoy the many breath-taking landscapes. Watch for the points of interest we shall alert you to below. Wave to those along the road who may be waiting to greet us as we pass. Help us by your imagination, your interest, your attention to make this the greatest railroading - colored leaf viewing - history enjoying adventure from Binghamton of all times !!!!!

Binghamton to Chenango Forks

Here we go on the first leg of our excursion,--- the first 11.1 miles to Chenango Forks. We have boarded on what were once the Albany & Susquehanna tracks. As we pull out of the railyard to the east we'll depart from the former Erie and Lackawannato New York. You can see them on this 1876 map. Then onto the Syracuse-Binghamton tracks dating back to 1854 before the Civil War. To Port Dick from where the A. & S. turn off to Oneonta and Albany (now the D. & H.).

Between our departure point and Port Dick don't miss our passage over Robinson Street. Then for the first time you will see Highways 81 and 17 from underneath. You'll pass the Agway plant and on your left an old-time coal trestle. And finally Brandywine Highway #7 itself and beyond it (and years before it) the old Chenango Canal. Here in just our first mile or two much of our economic and transportation history may be seen in what survives; old streets, old canal, this old railway, and overhead a superhighway and perhaps a plane. Alas, also an old coal trestle,--- surviving monument to the product that produced these railroads to provide a way to get Pennsylvania coal to the northeast. But coal died and oil-fueled autos and planes took over, leaving behind here the remnants of a past flourishing economic age.

On north from Port Dick and into Hillcrest. The old train tracks seem at places to have become almost overgrown by trees. Occasionally to your left you may get a glimpse of the familiar Brandywine. To the right a large complex you may never have seen; the U.S. Government General Services Administration (an army medical supply depot). Then maybe the



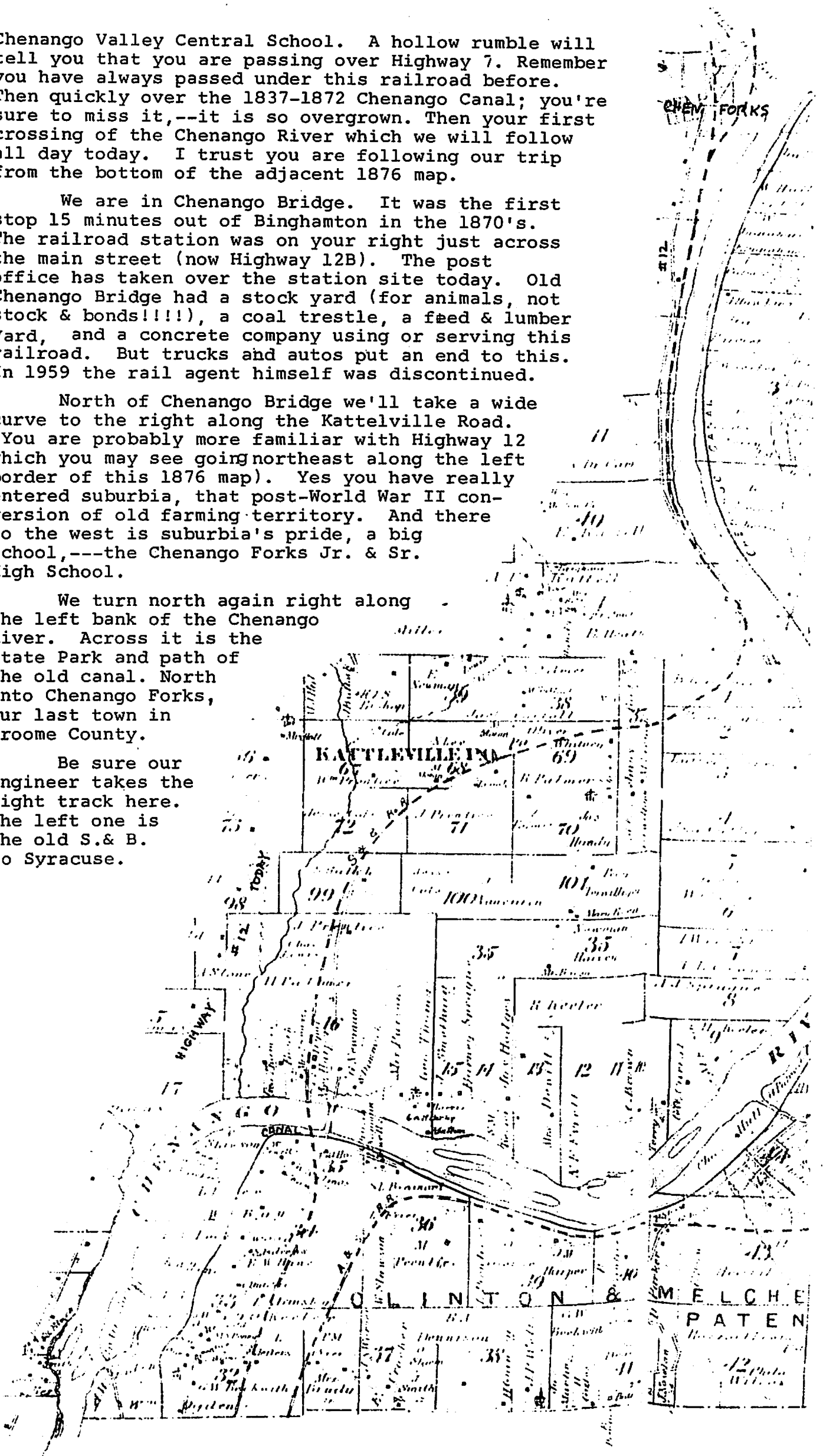
Chenango Valley Central School. A hollow rumble will tell you that you are passing over Highway 7. Remember you have always passed under this railroad before. Then quickly over the 1837-1872 Chenango Canal; you're sure to miss it,--it is so overgrown. Then your first crossing of the Chenango River which we will follow all day today. I trust you are following our trip from the bottom of the adjacent 1876 map.

We are in Chenango Bridge. It was the first stop 15 minutes out of Binghamton in the 1870's. The railroad station was on your right just across the main street (now Highway 12B). The post office has taken over the station site today. Old Chenango Bridge had a stock yard (for animals, not stock & bonds!!!!), a coal trestle, a feed & lumber yard, and a concrete company using or serving this railroad. But trucks and autos put an end to this. In 1959 the rail agent himself was discontinued.

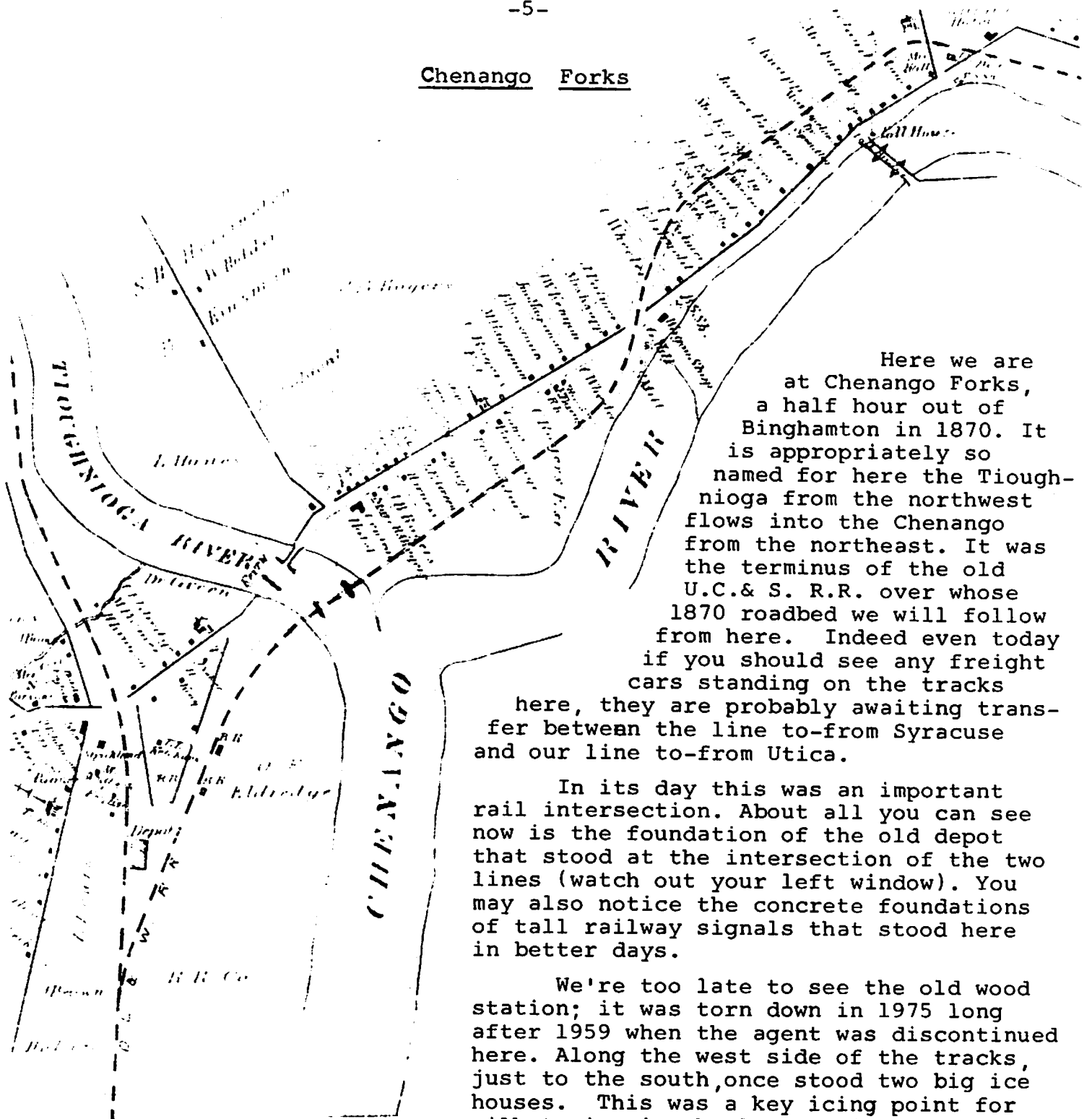
North of Chenango Bridge we'll take a wide curve to the right along the Kattelville Road. (You are probably more familiar with Highway 12 which you may see going northeast along the left border of this 1876 map). Yes you have really entered suburbia, that post-World War II conversion of old farming territory. And there to the west is suburbia's pride, a big school,---the Chenango Forks Jr. & Sr. High School.

We turn north again right along the left bank of the Chenango River. Across it is the State Park and path of the old canal. North into Chenango Forks, our last town in Broome County.

Be sure our engineer takes the right track here. The left one is the old S. & B. to Syracuse.



Chenango Forks



Chenango Forks 1876

Here we are at Chenango Forks, a half hour out of Binghamton in 1870. It is appropriately so named for here the Tioughnioga from the northwest flows into the Chenango from the northeast. It was the terminus of the old U.C. & S. R.R. over whose 1870 roadbed we will follow from here. Indeed even today if you should see any freight cars standing on the tracks here, they are probably awaiting transfer between the line to-from Syracuse and our line to-from Utica.

In its day this was an important rail intersection. About all you can see now is the foundation of the old depot that stood at the intersection of the two lines (watch out your left window). You may also notice the concrete foundations of tall railway signals that stood here in better days.

We're too late to see the old wood station; it was torn down in 1975 long after 1959 when the agent was discontinued here. Along the west side of the tracks, just to the south, once stood two big ice houses. This was a key icing point for milk trains in the long period before refrigeration. Every winter ice was cut from the nearby Chenango to fill the ice houses. Also a big water tank stood here with its proud tubular nose to "feed" thirsty steam engines. Feed, coal, and

lumber companies in old Chenango Forks were active users of this rail center.

Chenango Forks to Greene

We are now 11 miles out of Binghamton, 30 minutes by train in the 1870's. Another 8 miles (or 20 minutes in 1871) we'll be in Greene. And what a fascinating 8 miles this will be. Much of what follows was written especially for us by Mildred Folsom, the Town of Greene's own historian.

First we'll cross the famous Tioughnioga River. 200 years and more ago it was a major "superhighway" between our area and the center of the Iroquois Confederacy. Indeed exactly 204 years ago Indian Chief Brandt and his warriors may well have passed this very spot as they moved about quickly supporting the British in the Revolutionary War. Look out your windows to the left and imagine original Americans passing here by canoe. And note from the above map that there was a ferry and not a bridge across for horse, buggy, & walking in 1876. Shortly after passing the point where the one bridge crosses the Chenango, (remember you have probably taken it to or from the State Park), you'll be in Willards, with its Willard Hotel in 1876. Willard's Station had been a flag stop since 1901 but had no agent since 1898. Finally in 1928 it was discontinued. At Willards we leave Broome for Chenango County.

Believe it or not, you are now on what in 1870 was the Greene Railroad. By 1869 the U.C.&S. had been completed to a point just north of Greene. Railroad fever was at its height. Every town wanted a railroad to pass through it. So both Greene and Smithville Flats were resolved that the U.C.&S. should pass through it. In 1869 the Greene Railroad Company was organized to build the road with \$200,000 capital stock put up by the town. Not to be outdone, nearby Smithville Flats in 1870 incorporated the Central Valley Railroad Company with \$300,000 subscribed by the town. But first land had to be surveyed, a block of land in Chenango Forks which either line would have to secure to get access to the Syracuse tracks would have to be purchased, and before construction could begin a map and survey had to be filed for approval in Binghamton.

Greene was in the lead; the survey completed. But Smithville bribed the Greene surveyor promising him \$3,000 to destroy his survey and come to Smithville to do theirs. When the Greene folks heard of this, they broke into their surveyor's office. He had disappeared and had smeared ink over his Greene RR surveys. But Greene quickly made another survey, hurried it to Binghamton over muddy roads, and after more delays, finally got the needed approval. Poor Smithville Flats, having lost the race, still built its C.V.RR, from Smithville Flats to the Greene RR about three miles north of the Forks (i.e. just before the bridge). Sorry to say, this nine mile long C.V.RR only operated for three short years. But the poor village of Smithville Flats hadn't paid off its \$300,000 investment until 1925.

Just beyond the C.V. Junction is what is now called "Stillwater Bridge" across the Chenango. It was completed in October, 1870,---a 128' long all wooden structure which was said to be "one of the finest in the country". The bridge-tender's house was near the tracks on the west approach. For 34 years, after every train passed the tender had to walk across the structure to be sure no ember from those early engines (often wood-burning) had fallen to ignite the bridge. Don't worry! In 1904 an all iron bridge was built,---the longest on the line.

GREENE PO

DIST. No 17

STILLWATER BRIDGE

No 6

DIST. No 12

DIST. No 19

DIST. No

CHENANGO RIVER

On October 22, 1970, just three weeks more than 114 years ago today, the wood bridge was finished, the last rail spike had been driven two miles south of Greene, and the first Excursion train from Binghamton came up this very track. More on it when we reach Greene. Incidentally, Stillwater Bridge is considered by railroad photo-buffs to be most photogenic. Unfortunately there is no good place to let a crowd off a train here; you'll have to return by car some day to get its photo.

Now we are on the east side of the Chenango River and as you may see from the foregoing map, for the first time we will have the old Chenango Canal close to our tracks between us and the river. Look out your west (left) windows. The canal is badly overgrown. But you may perhaps see the towpath and at points even see standing water at the bottom of the old canal. The East River Road parallels our tracks to your right.

The Chenango Canal

Back in 1825 the Erie Canal was completed across New York State, thereby opening trade & travel. We in the Southern Tier were left stranded between two great internal canal systems,---that of upper New York and the other of Central Pennsylvania. So in 1833, now 151 years ago, the N.Y. Legislature authorized the building of this Chenango Canal connecting the Erie Canal at Utica and the Susquehanna at Binghamton. Later an extension was to be built along the Susquehanna to Pennsylvania. On October, 1836 a 97 mile long, 40' wide at the top and 28' at the bottom, 4' deep, 116 lock, \$4,500,000 project was finished. What an era for 35 years!!!!

Imagine the daily Packet boat from Binghamton to Norwich passing by out there. Yes indeed, it's the "Norwich" itself with Capt. Henry T. Stover. He left Binghamton at 6 a.m. this morning. He's being pulled by mule along the towpath, making a mile and a half an hour. He'll reach Greene by noon and Norwich at 6:30. One way fare, \$1.50. Needless to say, when this train in 1870 averaging then 22 miles an hour, began making the Binghamton-Norwich run in only two hours,--- it took only two years for the canal to give up the "race". The Chenango Canal ceased operations in 1872, now 112 years ago.

Over there across the canal and river is the mode of travel that in time will almost kill the railroad we are on,--Highway 12. From your western window you may see fascinating sights (and sites) along it between Chenango Forks and Greene. 1) Geneganslet Golf Course---built in 1928 when golfing was young. 2) The large red barn on the site of the Marcy Cheese Factory which did business 1870-1904 (see the prior map). 3) Two Round Barns, built in 1914 and 1931. 4) Old Indian Mound about 40' in diameter near where the Genegantslet Creek enters the Chenango (The Mound was opened in 1829. A quantity of human bones and Indian artifacts were found. And ¼ mile to the west is the oldest complete Indian Stockade settlement ever discovered in N.Y.State. Yes indeed, you are in old Indian territory!!!!) 5) Greene Airport built on Gross Flat in 1945; a Civil Air Patrol for boys 15-18 (1943-1952), Flying Club organized 1945, and in 1963 a Sky Divers Club. 6) The Octagon House

Just South of Greene the canal leaves us (note we now have a road between us and the canal bed) and "crosses" the river!!!! That's right, Greene was the site of an architectural wonder,--- of a water-filled aqueduct by which canal boats might pass above and right over the Chenango River. Ruins of the aqueduct can still be seen (but maybe not from your west window). From 1884 to 1916 the Greene Fair was held for 32 consecutive years on the 26 acre tract between you and the river. The polio epidemic in 1916 caused the fair to be cancelled, forever. But from 1906 through 1915 a little ferry carried 16-20 people from the west side to the Fairgrounds during fair week. Two ropes were run from pulleys on one side of the river up over the canal aqueduct and down to pulleys on the other side, then down under the boat. A man on the bank turned a large lever one way to pull the boat across, then back the other way to pull the boat back. Round trip fare was 5¢. In 1921 the Fairground and buildings were sold for a poultry farm. So just south of Greene, look West young man!!! For there is the site of what was probably the world's only "Canal Aqueduct-ferry-duct"!!!! ---- and a "Poultry-Fair Ground"!!!!

Greene

As we pull into Greene, across the river is the site of Chenango Valley Mills, built in 1828. A dam was located there, probably not only to provide power for the mill but also water for the canal & aqueduct (thus giving "Stillwater Bridge" its name). After 1931 the dam was no longer needed by the mill, so after 1949 the mill became a building supply company. Next on your left on Monell Street is the Old Auction House, originally a school built in 1858 which became a H.S. Academy from 1874 to 1902.

Now we reach the brick R.R. Station built in 1913 for \$14,000 on the site of an old sawmill. The last passenger train (until today!!!) pulled in here in 1950. In 1962 this depot was purchased by a Saddlery which now has a new Yarn & Fabric Shop in it (Town Historian Mildred Folsom writes "Every lady on this trip will enjoy a stop here." Sorry we can't stop this time.)

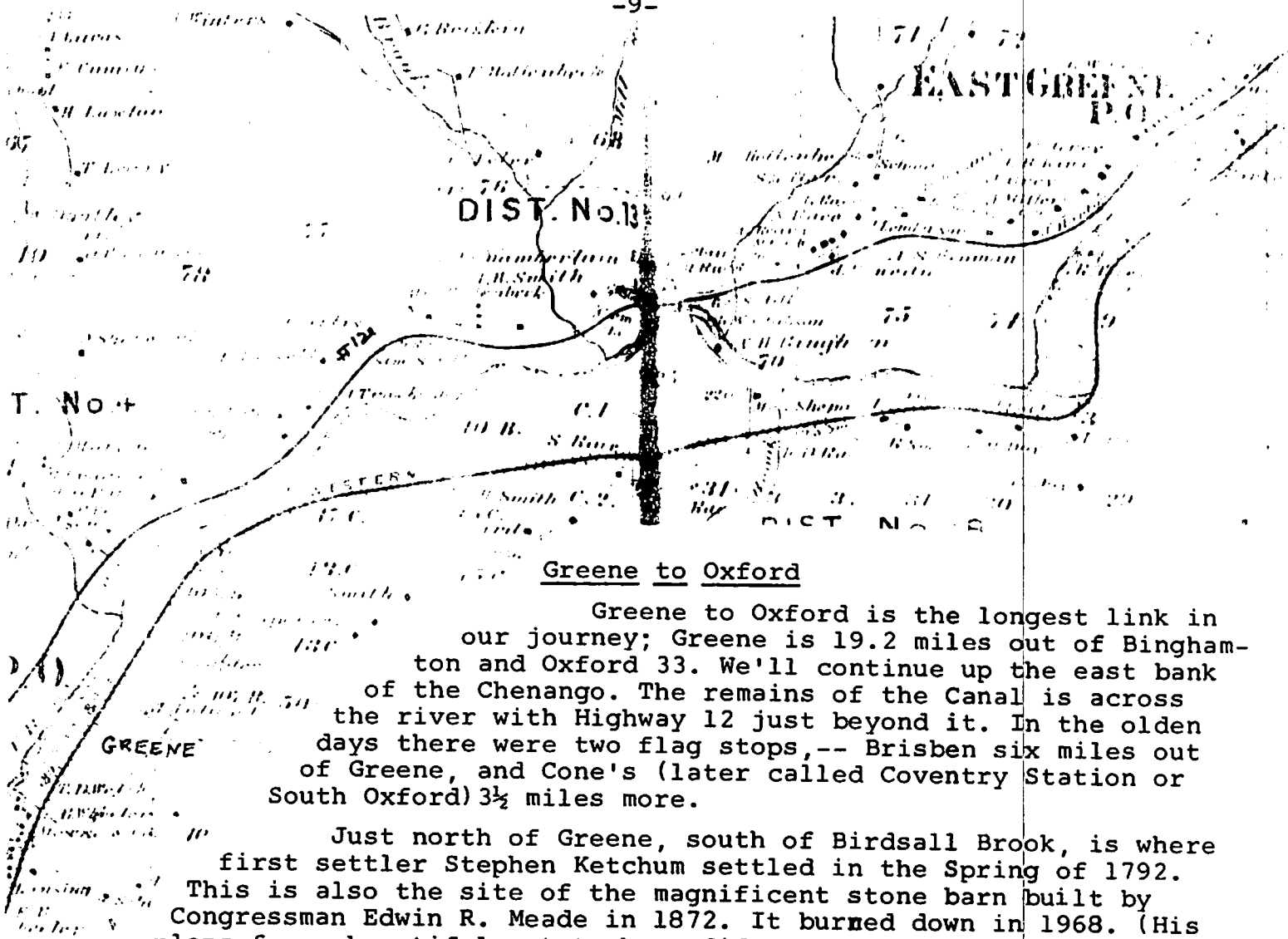
We'll then cross Washington Street (Route 41), originally part of the E-W Susquehanna-Bath Turnpike. From 1893 to 1950 a flag man was stationed in a little booth on the northeast corner. The first wooden toll bridge was built across the river to the west in 1807. (Remember Broome County was not "born" until 1806 and our Chenango Point first wooden covered bridge was built across the Chenango in 1805). Next we cross Genesee Street. Running west from it alongside the Park is Greene's business section. It is now part of Greene's Historic District. On the north side (62 Genesee St.) is the Rosekrans Building, built in 1892 - now on the National Register. It is covered with stamped sheet iron and is one of the few of its kind in existence.

East of the R.R. at the head of Washington St. is Greene's oldest house - built in 1810 - in the angle of Route 41 and East River Road. Watch for it from your right window. It is still occupied by descendants of Capt. Joseph Juliand, the Builder. Along the east side of the river a group of French Refugees settled in the fall of 1792. They were fleeing the French Revolution. While here Talleyrand himself is said to have visited. But around 1796 the 7-10 poor refugees move on to Asylum, PA selling 200 acres of their land to Capt. Juliand.

But for railroaders Greene's real prize comes up next,--- the original wooden depot built in 1870. After 1914, when the new brick station was built, Greene's first station became the freight station. A stock yard, the Dairymen's League, the Page Seed Company, two coal yards, three feed & fertilizer companies, and the Standard Oil Company were served here until its closing in 1963. The old Lyon Iron Works has today become the Raymond Corporation, Greene's major industry.

But just 114 years ago this very October Greene's old station was the site of a great event,--- the first train into Greene, an excursion from Binghamton like ours, arrived at 8 p.m. Saturday, October 22, 1870. What a celebration that was!!! The gaily decorated D.L. & W. locomotive, "Plymoth", puffed right into town. The conductor went from car to car shouting, "Greene, Greene. Two hours for refreshments." The town's six pound cannon barked a loud salute to this greatest event in the village's history. Probably old General Nathaniel Greene of Revolutionary War fame, after whom the town had been named back in 1798, looked down proudly from above. The town's band loudly welcomed the crowd of celebrators from Binghamton who all walked up to the Chenango House (now Sherwood Hotel), where they were entertained until ten. Then the excursioners returned to the train and to Binghamton "much refreshed".

Mildred Folsom and here fellow "Greenians" wish we were stopping again today. But considering how Binghamtonians celebrated in 1870, we cannot take a chance with "us" today. We're invited to return. Still in Greene but on our way again, across the river we can see the stone Episcopal Church, built in 1886, and the abandoned old Catholic Church which was originally the first Episcopal Church (built in 1834). (A new Catholic Church was built in 1981 on the Coventry Road.) The Congregational Church is the third on the street and was the first church built in Greene (in 1820). Between these buildings and the river is Greene's Athletic Field - where the Community Picnic has been held each Labor Day since 1919, taking the place of the Greene Fair.



Greene to Oxford

Greene to Oxford is the longest link in our journey; Greene is 19.2 miles out of Binghamton and Oxford 33. We'll continue up the east bank of the Chenango. The remains of the Canal is across the river with Highway 12 just beyond it. In the olden days there were two flag stops,-- Brisben six miles out of Greene, and Cone's (later called Coventry Station or South Oxford) 3½ miles more.

Just north of Greene, south of Birdsall Brook, is where first settler Stephen Ketchum settled in the Spring of 1792.

This is also the site of the magnificent stone barn built by Congressman Edwin R. Meade in 1872. It burned down in 1968. (His plans for a beautiful estate here did not materialize because of a reversal in his fortune. He was a Tammany man and was suspected of being connected with the notorious Tweed Ring of that day in N.Y. City.)

Proceeding north on the right side of the street are Upland Stove Company, Page Seed Co. (est. in 1896), Page Print, the GLF Buildings (which were once milk stations). Buildings on the right were mostly ice houses. The farm on the east was a large hop farm from 1875 to the early 1900's. As late as 1910 stacks of hop poles dotted the fields looking like Indian teepees.

On into the country we will cross a short road leading west. It goes to Cady's Mills where a bridge crosses the river, at the end of which was once a Witch Hazel Factory. Near the bend in the river, on your left, was the Day Spring Cheese Factory built in 1873. Then a sharp turn north. A tall yellow brick chimney marks the spot where Bordons Milk Plant ("A model of efficiency") was located from 1905 to 1945. When empty in 1953 it burned down.

We are almost to Brisben, indeed at the location of Samuel Wheeler's 1794 farm (the first around here). The Wheelers (Mr. & Mrs.) both died in 1808 and are buried on a knoll on the farm. Next Brisben.

In 1870 the railroad station was named Brisbin, after John Brisbin of Sherburne, the director of the Greene Railroad & D.L. & W. who rushed the G.R.R. papers to Binghamton. Two years later East Greene (just across the river), changed its name to Brisbin. No, this is not a typographical error. Brisbin changed its name to Brisben when confusion resulted from there being a Brisbin in Pennsylvania.

Brisben today bears no resemblance to the East Greene or Brisbin of old. Gone is all the activity of industry,--the canal and boat-building, the railroad depot, milk stations, Hotel, mills, schools, and stores. But Brisben's greatest claim to fame, especially among sports minded, should be for its "Louisville Sluggers"---(baseball bats to you who don't know). From 1905 to 1945 Brisben had the E. S. Ramberg Wood Products Company. The factory cut white ash logs from this area into 42" billets, usually 1,000 of them a day. They filled five cars a month for shipment to Louisville to be made, so it is reported, into 125,000 "Louisville Sluggers" a year. Probably the ash ran out. The factory closed. It burned in 1962. Some say the smokestack still stands. Watch for it. Anyway, old men, the "Louisville Slugger" of your youth was a hoax!!! It was really a "Brisben Slugger"!!!!

On then past Brisben following a graceful S-curve still along the east bank of the Chenango with our familiar modern Highway 12 by the Chenango Canal on the west bank. Watch your map. Soon we'll be approaching Cone's or Coventry Station (South Oxford is across the Chenango to the west). Notice on the map the home of Dr. T.S. Cone. Today Zerah Cone, a retired Oxford bank executive lives there. Out your east window you will see a large barn marked "Old Carriage House Studio". It is the Cone's. Next the well-kept lawn before the Cone home comes right down to the tracks. Zerah Cone himself may be outside his 145 year old house to wave to us. Zerah invites you to return someday so he may show you around. Next we will cross Bear Creek.

Oxford

Here we are in the 190 year old Town of Oxford, founded way back on Jan. 19, 1793. Benjamin Hovey, its founder, came from Oxford, MASS and thus gave it its name.

To our left is Oxford's 70 year old brick railroad station (now the village Water Department). Both Greene & Oxford got new brick stations in 1914. That year the Oxford Times described the new station as "elegant", "artistic & well proportioned", with "wire-cut tapestry bricks" (cont.)

(cont.)
DIST N with a Flemish bond". Also "two modern toilets" (wow, for 1914!!!!), waiting room in pine with creosote stain, terrasa floors, and a fantastically beautiful central light assembly resembling hanging baskets. What a station in its day! Oh yes, and genuine steam heat too (no old fashioned pot belly stoves). In 1914 the D.L. & W. reflected its pre-World War I coal-carrying prosperity in such stations it built.

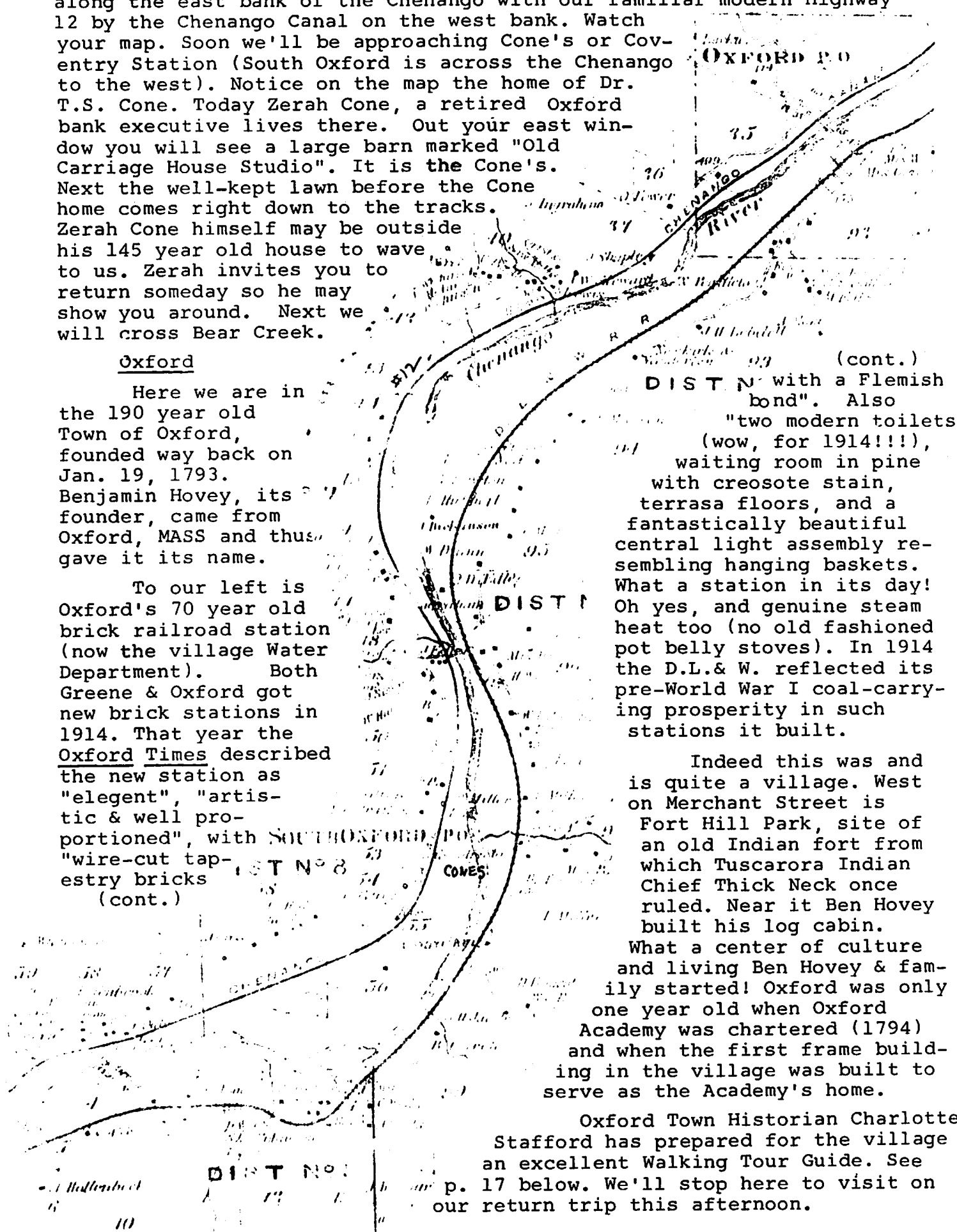
Indeed this was and is quite a village. West on Merchant Street is Fort Hill Park, site of an old Indian fort from which Tuscarora Indian Chief Thick Neck once ruled. Near it Ben Hovey built his log cabin.

What a center of culture and living Ben Hovey & family started! Oxford was only one year old when Oxford Academy was chartered (1794) and when the first frame building in the village was built to serve as the Academy's home.

Oxford Town Historian Charlotte Stafford has prepared for the village an excellent Walking Tour Guide. See p. 17 below. We'll stop here to visit on our return trip this afternoon.

Oxford to Norwich

We're now 33 miles from Binghamton; Norwich is another eight. In the olden days it was a 17 minute run with a possible flag stop at Lyon Brook. We'll continue on the east side of the Chenango until just below Norwich where we will cross the river again, meet the Canal briefly and then, tooting to alert the County Seat and that great old rail town, will pull into the station. Watch the hillsides to your right. Soon you will see a mysterious horizontal line in the treed hillslope. That was the path of the old Midland Railroad, the Ontario & Western (O. & W.) on its "mountainous" journey from N.Y. City to Sidney, Oxford, Norwich, and Oswego west.



Lyon Brook

At Lyon Brook, a few miles out of Oxford, you may see out of your right window in imagination "one of the most daring engineering feats of its time", the O & W Railroad's Lyon Brook Bridge. (The O. & W. is shown as N.Y. & O.M. on the 1876 map, i.e. N.Y. & Ontario Midland)

The O. & W. was an ambitious dream of how railroad fortunes might be made by cutting right over the ridges between New York City and Lake Ontario and points west; no leisurely following a valley as we are. So from Norwich to Sydney the O. & W. had gradually & windingly to work its way up and down the hillsides.

Watch the hills to the right as you approach & cross Lyon Brook. Notice the cut through which Lyon Brook flows. Perhaps you can see the break in the horizontal mark in the trees where once there was a bridge (if you visit the site you can still see parts of its foundation).

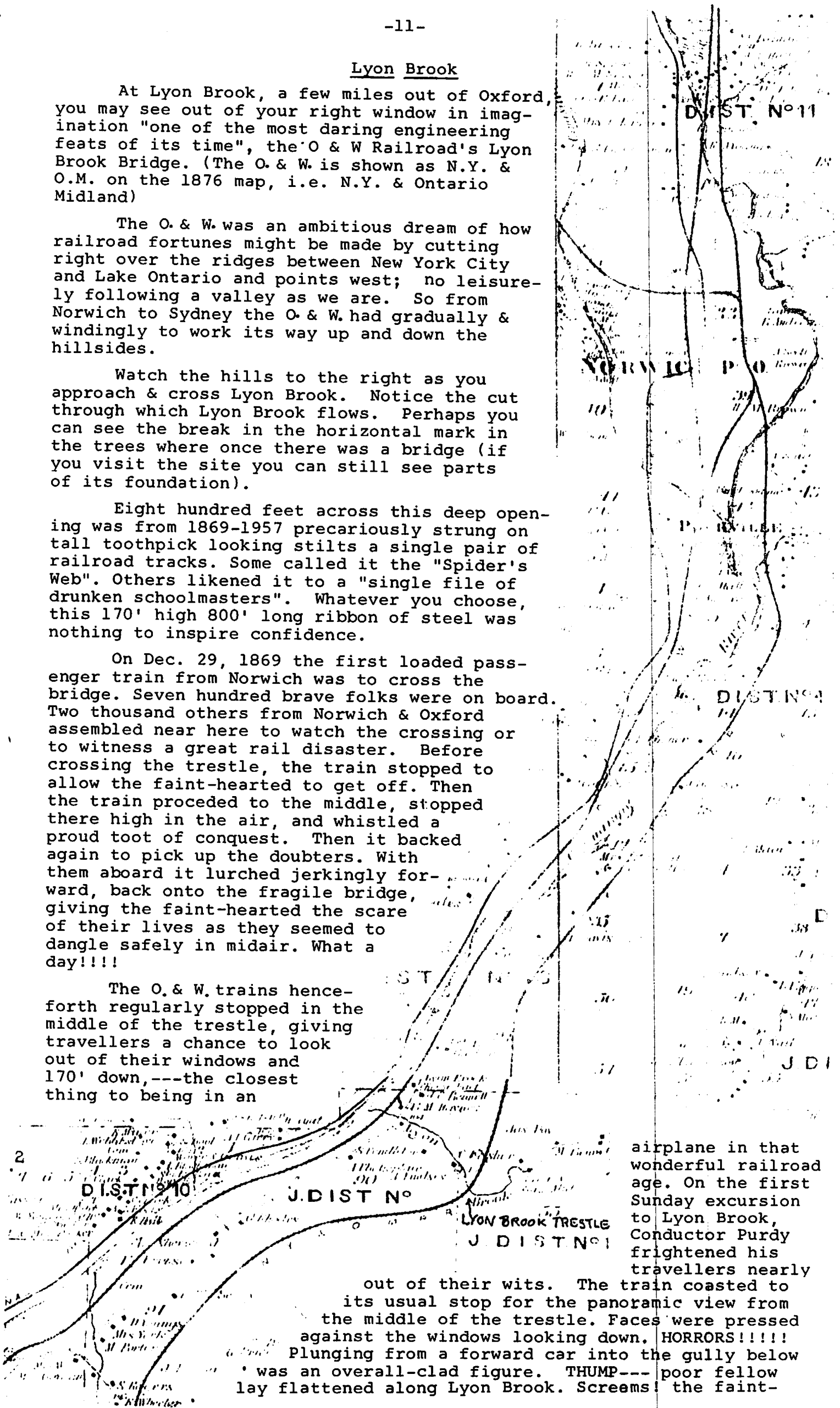
Eight hundred feet across this deep opening was from 1869-1957 precariously strung on tall toothpick looking stilts a single pair of railroad tracks. Some called it the "Spider's Web". Others likened it to a "single file of drunken schoolmasters". Whatever you choose, this 170' high 800' long ribbon of steel was nothing to inspire confidence.

On Dec. 29, 1869 the first loaded passenger train from Norwich was to cross the bridge. Seven hundred brave folks were on board. Two thousand others from Norwich & Oxford assembled near here to watch the crossing or to witness a great rail disaster. Before crossing the trestle, the train stopped to allow the faint-hearted to get off. Then the train proceeded to the middle, stopped there high in the air, and whistled a proud toot of conquest. Then it backed again to pick up the doubters. With them aboard it lurched jerkily forward, back onto the fragile bridge, giving the faint-hearted the scare of their lives as they seemed to dangle safely in midair. What a day!!!!

The O. & W. trains henceforth regularly stopped in the middle of the trestle, giving travellers a chance to look out of their windows and 170' down,---the closest thing to being in an

airplane in that wonderful railroad age. On the first Sunday excursion to Lyon Brook, Conductor Purdy frightened his travellers nearly

out of their wits. The train coasted to its usual stop for the panoramic view from the middle of the trestle. Faces were pressed against the windows looking down. HORRORS!!!! Plunging from a forward car into the gully below was an overall-clad figure. THUMP--- poor fellow lay flattened along Lyon Brook. Screams! the faint-



hearted fainted. Horrors!!! Who could it be? And why had he jumped?

The patrons were not amused when they found the "victim" had been thrown from the baggage car,---a straw-stuffed overalled dummy rigged up for the joke by none other than Conductor Purdy. Watch out. Conductor Purdy's ghost may be lurking today in that big open spot above Lyon Brook with another practical impractical joke for our special excursion.

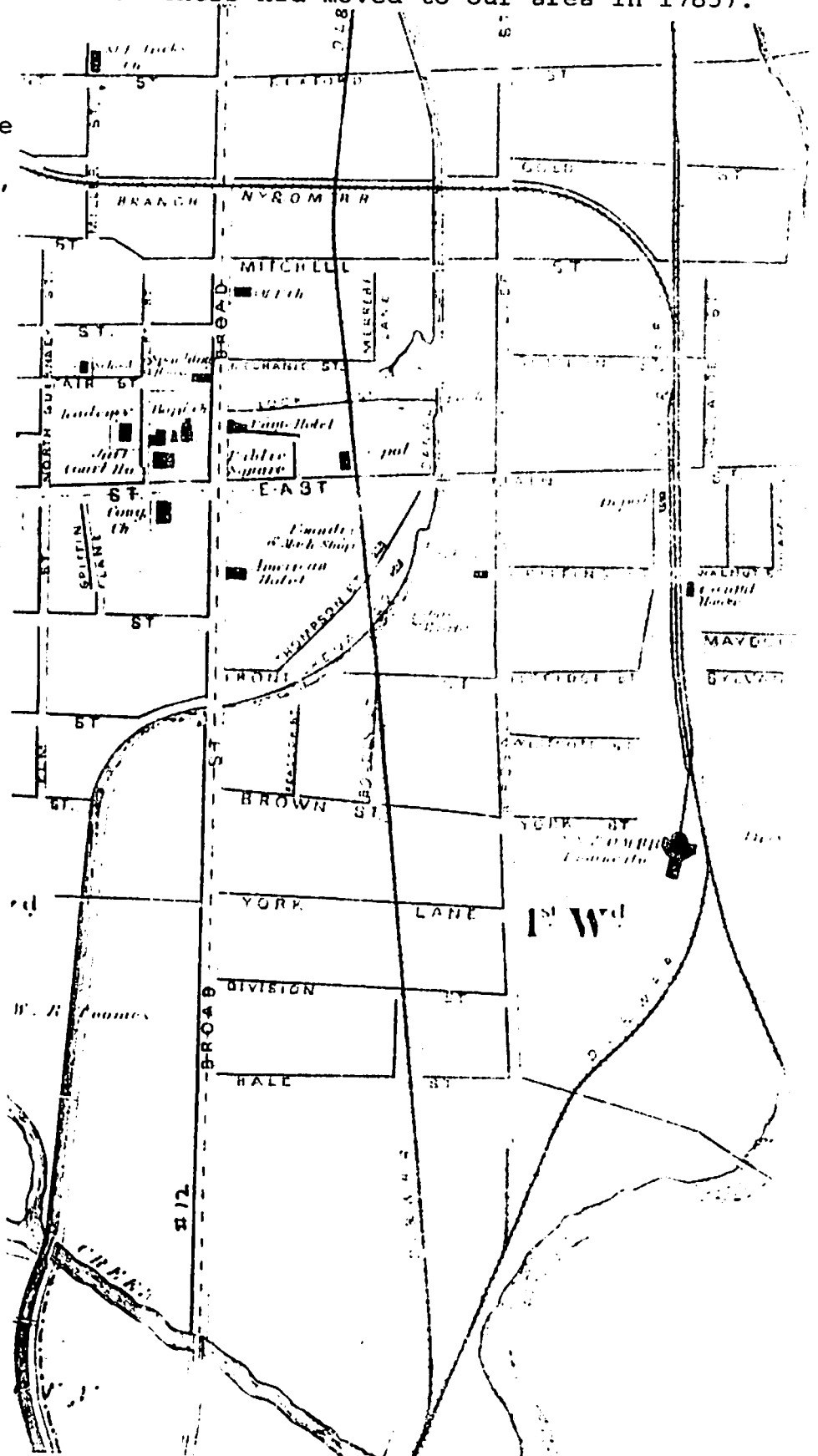
Norwich

Just south of Norwich we'll cross the Chenango again, then Gilmore Brook where from your west window you may see the remains of the aqueduct that took the canal over the brook. Next over Canasawacta Creek. Here the D.L. & W. connector to the N.Y. & O. M. and its big engine house takes off. But no more; the Midland and all its tracks are gone. And where its engine shop once stood, Norwich High has taken over.

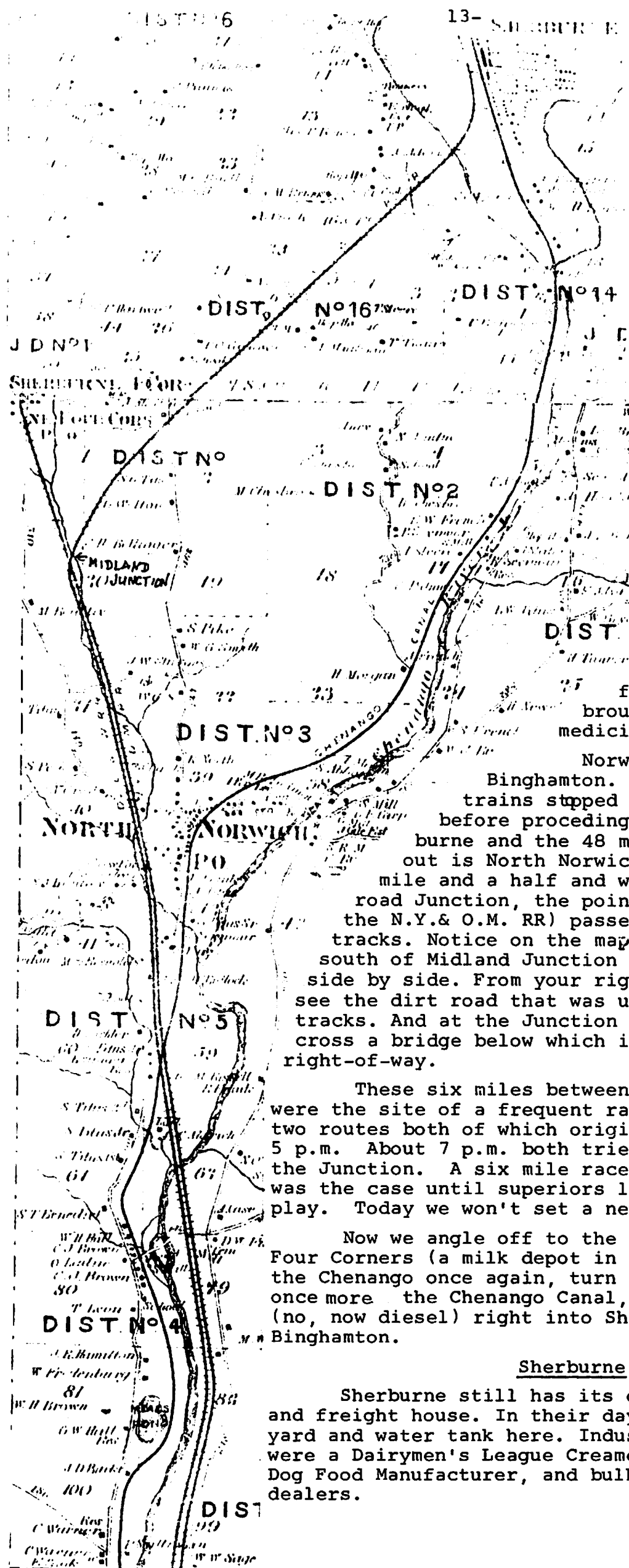
And so we pull from the south right into old Norwich. Way back in 1788 Avery Power, the first settler, came here. (The Leonards in future Binghamton came in 1787. Others had moved to our area in 1785). In 1790 the first log cabin was built on the site where the Chenango County Court House now stands. This court house which you should visit later was built in 1837, more than 30 years before the railroads came to town and at about the same time the canal was being dug through. This beautiful recently restored almost 150 year old landmark stands proudly at the heart of Norwich.

Our train will pass beside the D.L. & W. station. It was built back in 1902, thus this "82 year old" is the oldest station we have seen today. Norwich was quite a rail center in its day; 40% of its population was employed either by the Lackawanna or Midland. The D.L. & W. had until 1911 a 54' turntable, a roundhouse for a switcher locomotive, a track scale, a water tank, and a 200 ton ice house. The O. & W. (or Midland) had an even bigger layout since this was the headquarters for its Northern Division. But then on March 29, 1957 the O. & W. ceases to exist. Look down East Main a few blocks and you may see both where the Canal once was and where the O. & W. station & tracks were.

But the old D.L. & W. lives on agedly. We are here. Its rail station no longer



Central Norwich 1875



sells tickets but has been converted to other uses including the office of Norwich City Historian, Tom Lloyd.

If you were not on our tour last year and have never visited the Chenango County Court House, you must return some day. It is a remarkable old landmark. And you'll also love downtown Norwich.

Norwich to Sherburne

But we are not stopping this year. On our way out of town you will see a sidetrack leading to the Victory Supermarkets Distribution Center. It is the largest customer of the railroad today. The Center was formerly Bordon's Condensory which for years turned a major product of this area into Eagle Brand Condensed Milk of worldwide fame. Also Norwich Pharmaceuticals, founded here in 1885, has brought a bit of Norwich into medicine cabinets nationwide.

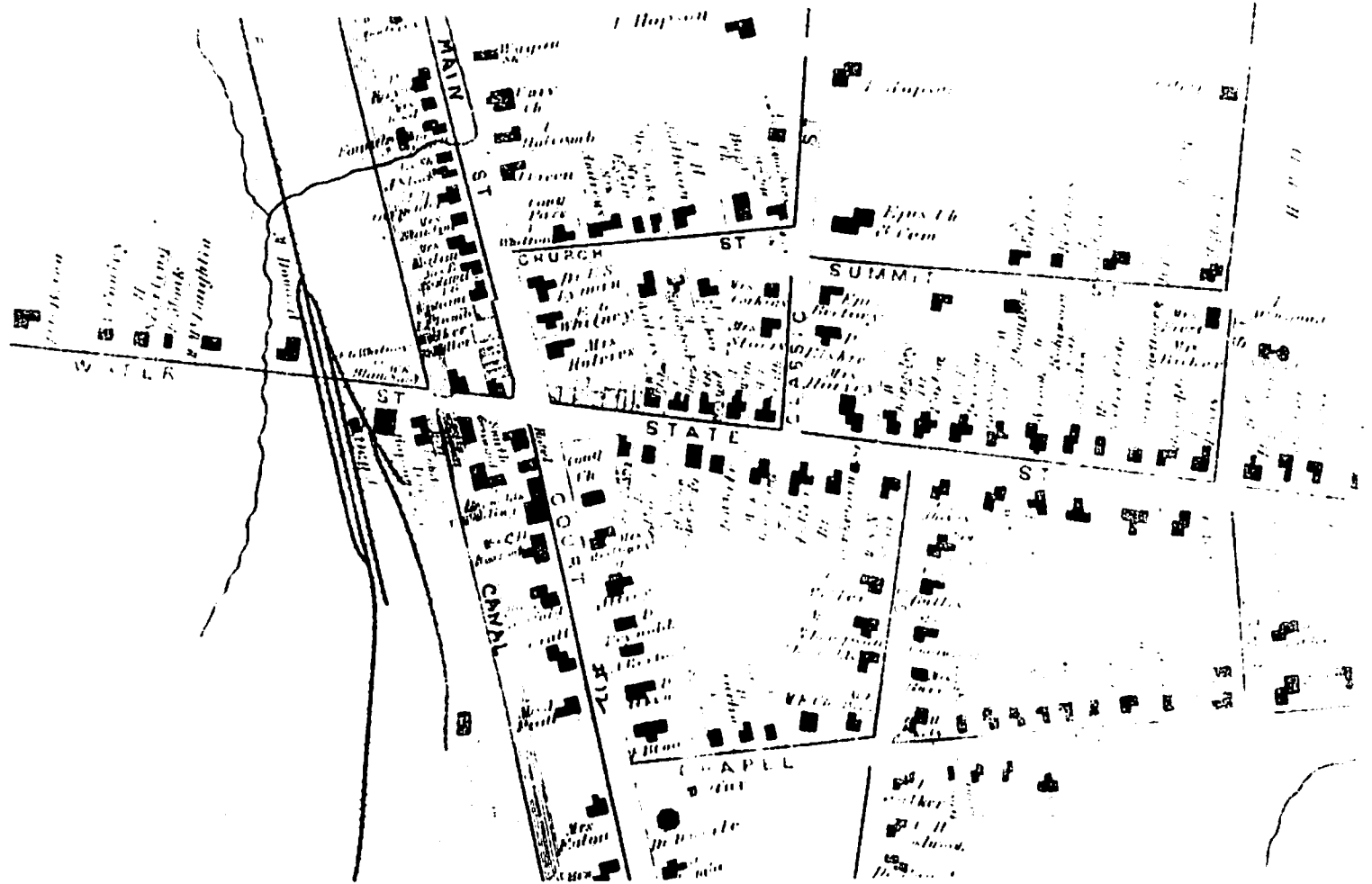
Norwich is 41.3 miles from Binghamton. In the 1870's passenger trains stopped in Norwich fifteen minutes before proceeding the eleven miles to Sherburne and the 48 miles to Utica. Six miles out is North Norwich, a flag stop. Another mile and a half and we are at the Midland Railroad Junction, the point where the Midland (i.e. the N.Y. & O.M. RR) passed under our D.L. & W. tracks. Notice on the map that for the six miles south of Midland Junction the two railroads ran side by side. From your right window you may today see the dirt road that was until 1957 the Midland tracks. And at the Junction we'll turn right and cross a bridge below which is the now bare O. & W. right-of-way.

These six miles between the Junction and Norwich were the site of a frequent race between trains on these two routes both of which originated daily in Utica at 5 p.m. About 7 p.m. both tried to meet and cross at the Junction. A six mile race was on!!! At least this was the case until superiors learned of this engineers' play. Today we won't set a new record.

Now we angle off to the northeast past Sherburne Four Corners (a milk depot in the early days), cross the Chenango once again, turn northward as we approach once more the Chenango Canal, and then we'll steam (no, now diesel) right into Sherburne, 52.4 miles from Binghamton.

Sherburne

Sherburne still has its old wood passenger station and freight house. In their day, there was also a stock yard and water tank here. Industries using the railroad were a Dairymen's League Creamery, three feed mills, a Dog Food Manufacturer, and bulk oil, coal, and lumber dealers.



Sherburne in 1875

Sherburne was founded back in 1795, just a few years later than the other villages we have visited. Sherburne's beautiful tree-lined streets and old Inn and Central Square give one a feel of small town life as it has long been lived. Many of us from the Southern Tier have stood along Sherburne's Main Street watching our offspring compete in the annual Tournament of Bands.

Sherburne hospitality is well known. Back in August 1868 this Utica, Chenango & Susquehanna Valley Railroad had been completed from Utica to Sherburne. August 19, 1868 was the day for the arrival in Sherburne of the first official excursion trains,--seven of them. A celebration was in order. What a celebration it was!!!!

15,000 visitors came to town via seven different trains. Eight out-of-town bands provided noisy welcomes. There were 56 cars of people (the above side-tracks must have been filled). A big cannon "booming" with joy!!! A free dinner was served in three tents located in the meadow just west of here. What a menu; 10 roast pigs, 16 hams, 141 chickens, 42 lambs, 83 pans of baked pork & beans, 24 bushels of doughnuts, 250 loaves of bread, 381 pies, 4,500 cookies, and 14,000 biscuits!!! ALAS, a heavy afternoon shower interrupted the affair, sending 15,000 prematurely back to their railroad cars.

Today Sherburne has a surprise for us. No, not an exact reproduction of that great day 115 years ago. But a MINI-CELEBRATION set up for us by the Village of Sherburne Planning Board and Sherburne's Council of Churches.

Many features of that great celebration of 1868 will be repeated, indeed improved upon, when we 400 "Southern Tierians" come to town. Yes indeed there will be a parade. There will be Sherburners dressed in costumes of 1868. You'll love the antique antiques in the old Dansovitch Building. See the Art Show (probably in the Library). And enjoy the old fashioned gas engines. Oh yes, of course, eating too. Three Sherburne Churches (Saint Malachy, the United Church of Christ, and the Church of Epiphany) are ready to serve those of us who have bought our tickets in advance. You'll be guided to the church your ticket is for. And don't miss the special anniversary display at the Methodist Church. This year Methodism in America is 200 years old and Methodism in Sherburne 150 years of age. You will be given a hand-out telling of these churches.

Two great hours; 12:30 to 2:30 . Please, Sherburne, no afternoon thunder storm this time to get us back to our trains. Our Car Attendants will have our seats reversed and ready for our trip home.

And Now to Oxford

ALL ABOARD!!! Next stop Oxford on our return trip to Binghamton. Our return trip is a good time for you to read our above Guide backwards and try to see the sights you missed or want to see again. In about one hour we should be pulling into Oxford where Town Historian Charlotte Stafford and members of the Oxford Historical Society await to show us highlights of their beautiful historic old village. Coming into Oxford from the north, on the left you will see the power house of the Veteran's Home and travel under the new bridge crossing the Chenango River. The route of the Chenango Canal may be seen in many places between Norwich and Oxford. St. Paul's Church and Parish House are on the left at the first street crossing. The freight depot is on the left as the train comes into the station.

But on you way to Oxford why not prepare for your visit by reading Charlotte Stafford's guide, reproduced on p.17. Note especially numbers 1, 16, 19, and 20. They will be open for us to visit on our tour. We will divide into groups, each with a guide.

And As We Return to Binghamton:

A Little History of the Railroad We Are On

Goodbye Oxford. Now we begin the final leg of our trip home to Binghamton. It is a good time to reflect a bit about the trip we have taken and about the railroad we are on. For we have now travelled over half of Broome's "newest" old railroad,--- now almost 114 years old, having been born after the Civil War and begun service from Binghamton to Utica on December, 1870.

In the 1870's four trains operated daily between Binghamton and Utica in both directions,---Two passenger trains and two freights. You could board a train or sleeper at 3 p.m. in Philadelphia or 4 p.m. in New York City and be in Binghamton at 6:20 a.m. to continue up the Chenango Valley on the "Utica Express". Or in the Chenango Valley you could board the D.L. & W's "New York & Philadelphia Express" in the morning, transfer in Binghamton and get to New York or Philadelphia late the same night.

Business grew by leaps and bounds over the Utica Division's first ten years. Engineers on passenger trains prided themselves on being on time; you could set your clock by the time the train went by. Growth and promptness ceased in the 1880's as coal transport increasingly took over. Thereafter the road focussed on upgrading its roadbed and equipment. But in the current century the auto takes over. On April 29, 1950 all passenger service ended after 80 fascinating years.

Today only freights operate through this beautiful valley. Railroad stations with their attendants are gone. The D O Line has taken over. What is it? The old U.C. & S. (D.L. & W.) now belongs to the Delaware Otsego Corporation (thus the D O Line). Its aim is to develop a regional rail system created from abandoned lines. Back in 1966 the corporation bought its first line, a 2.6 mile track out of Oneonta. It was to be a very small tourist attraction. But Highway 88 wiped it out. So in 1971 the D-O Corporation buys from the Delaware & Hudson its Cooperstown Branch. The Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley RR is born. In 1973 the Richfield Spring Branch, then of the Erie-Lackawanna, is purchased by the D-O Line.

In 1974 New York State passes the Rail Preservation Act to encourage the buying up of discontinued rail lines by regional carriers. So in the same year D-O Corporation buys the Fonda, Johnston & Gloversville RR; and in 1980 its biggest addition yet,--the N.Y., Susquehanna & Western in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Conrail decided to abandon its Binghamton-Syracuse and Binghamton-Utica branches. Shippers in the Chenango Valley were horrified. A Central Valley Shippers Association is organized to preserve this line and its service. As a result on April 3, 1982, just over two years ago, the D-O Corporation paid 4.2 million dollars for the two lines, calling them the New York Susquehanna & Western (N.Y.S. & W.). A Susquehanna engine & domed cars plus several former Central Railroad of N. J. commuter coaches have carried us today.

And now in 1984 extensive track and roadbed reconstruction are underway again. This explains our slow trip and perhaps occasional delays. BE PATIENT. We'll make it. For 114 years this railroad always has.

A Parting Word

Today we have shared in a "revival",--- an old time rail excursion, this time not to a railroad opening at Sherburne or Oxford like the ones there over 100 years ago. Today's "rail revival" is to remind us of a fascinating part of our heritage. Today has been the the Second Annual Fall Railroad Excursion sponsored again jointly by the Susquehanna Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Broome County Historical Society.

The slogan of the day at Sherburne back in 1868 when celebrating with 15,000 visitors its first train, was "PEACE HAS ITS TRIUMPHS AS WELL AS WAR" (Remember, the Civil War was just over). Such a railroad was certainly a triumph!!!

Today, as we relive the story of this once vital old railway, our slogan might be, "OLD IRON HORSES (now Diesels) AND THEIR TRAINS NEVER DIE --- UNLESS WE LET THEM!" Let's keep railroading alive!!! You have helped by travelling today on the reborn CHENANGO VALLEY EXTRA.

We of the Susquehanna Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society and of the Broome County Historical Society thank you for joining us on this great 1984 RAIL REVIVAL, our second Fall history-railroading adventure.

Would You Like to Join Us?

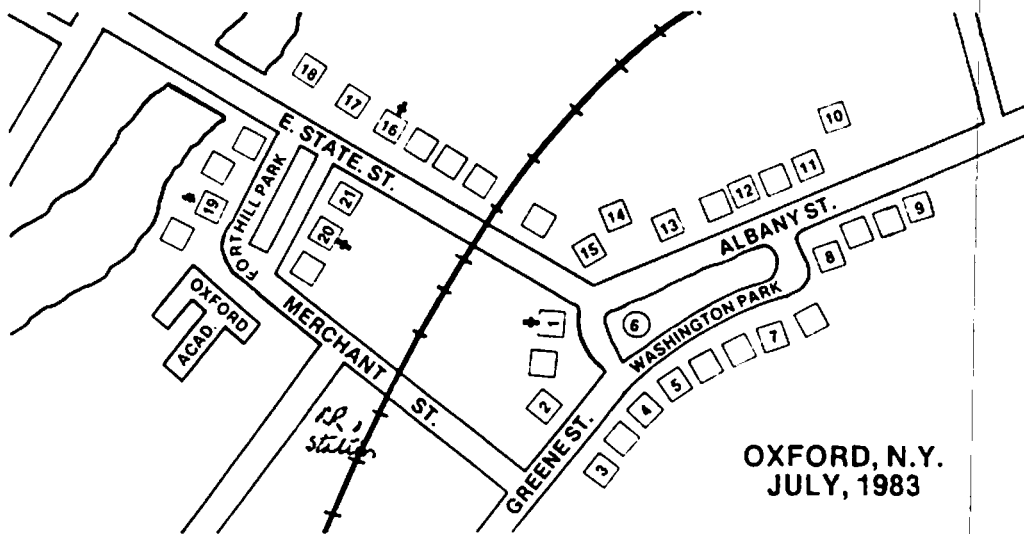
If you have enjoyed this trip you might like to continue your interest in local history or railroading or further show your support of us who are. If so we invite you to attend one of our meetings (to look us over) and perhaps join either of our organizations (thus receive our newsletters and meeting notices).

Would you like to learn more about the local history of our area? If so, the Broome County Historical Society, which meets monthly on the third Wednesday at Roberson is for you. Drop in for any of our meetings. For example on October 17 we will meet to learn about "Not-so-Crazy Crazy-Quilts" and local history that may be learned from them. Or visit the Newcomb Library in Roberson and browse in this wonderful center of Broome County history books, clippings, pictures, postcards, old directories, etc. If you decide to join our Society (\$15 a year) you not only show your support of our endeavors but you will receive our Newsletter filled with interesting new items on Broome's history.

Perhaps it is railroading and railroad history that interests you. Great!!! Then a chapter of the National Railway Historical society is for you. Our Susquehanna Valley Chapter meets monthly at the Vestal Public Library. Come and hear the experiences of other railroad hobbiests. Join our Chapter and get on the mailing list for our interesting newsletter.

FAREWELL

Goodbye. Drive safely home! And "sweet railroading dreams" as you recall the scenic beauty of the Chenango Valley in the Autumn, the friendly Sherburnes & Oxforders, the fascinating history of the railroad we have travelled, and hopefully the many friendly excursioners like you! We'll see you next year.



OXFORD, N.Y.
JULY, 1983

* 1. St. Paul's Episcopal Church was constructed in 1857 with stone from local quarries according to plans of Henry C. Dudley, noted church architect. The Waterford crystal chandeliers were acquired for the church in 1868 by the Van Wagenen family. The chandeliers came from England before the Revolution to St. George's chapel, Beekman Street, New York City.

2. The Methodist Parsonage was formerly the Episcopal Rectory until a new Episcopal Rectory was built in 1858 nearer the church.

3. The VanDerLyn mansion, now occupied by Howard Brown, was designed in Gothic style, with tower, by Architect T. I. Lacy of Binghamton and was built in 1876.

4. The Glover House, owned by Howard Brown, was built between 1802 and 1817. The Mansard roof was added in July 1879.

5. The Erastus Perkins Tavern was built in 1801. It remained in the Perkins family until the 1850's. Later it became the Bartle House, then the Park Hotel. It was damaged by fire in 1903 and then remodeled into apartments. The building was converted by Mrs. Lyon into a nursing home in 1949 and is now called the Bida Home.

6. The Washington Park pagoda was designed by D. L. Sherwood and was built in 1875 at a cost of \$80. It is being restored by the Oxford Historical Society and the Oxford Revitalization Project as funds become available. Railing and spindles will be added, bric-a-brac in the arches under the roof reproduced and the roof restored.

7. The William Mygatt homestead, now known as Burkelea, the largest of the four Burke homes on Washington Park, was built in federal style in 1836 by Lemuel Lewis, Master Builder of Coventry.

8. The Gerrit VanWagenen House, Park End, was built about 1828 by Horatio McGeorge for Henry Shute, a lawyer from Virginia who soon returned to his native state. The original house on this site burned July 1, 1823.

9. Originally owned by Squire Morehouse, Sheldon Acres, the home of Clark and Sarah Rapaljie Tower, is a Greek revival house.

10. "The Old Brewery House", the Chester Stork home, has a cellar walled in brick and blue stone which is unique.

11. Nathaniel Locke built the Waldorf house in 1806. Henry VanDerLyn described the construction of the house in his diary. He later occupied the front room as a law office.

12. The William Van Wagenen House, designed by T. I. Lacy, was later the home of Ellen Douglas McDonald. Legend has it that this lady walked out of the house one morning leaving breakfast on the table and never reentered it during the remaining thirty-five years of her life.

13. The Henry R. Mygatt House (Knapp and Brown) has no-front entrance. The side door made a convenient way to enter his law office next door.

14. The Henry R. Mygatt Law Office is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Vogelgsang.

15. The John Tracy House was built in 1821. It was the home of John Tracy, lawyer and Lieutenant-Governor of New York State.

* 16. The Congregational Church was constructed in 1823 by Horatio McGeorge, Architect, at a cost of \$4,000. The Miller Memorial Chapel was dedicated February 1, 1888 as a memorial to Henry L. Miller. It was built in Queen Anne style: T. I. Lacy, Architect; D. L. Sherwood, Builder.

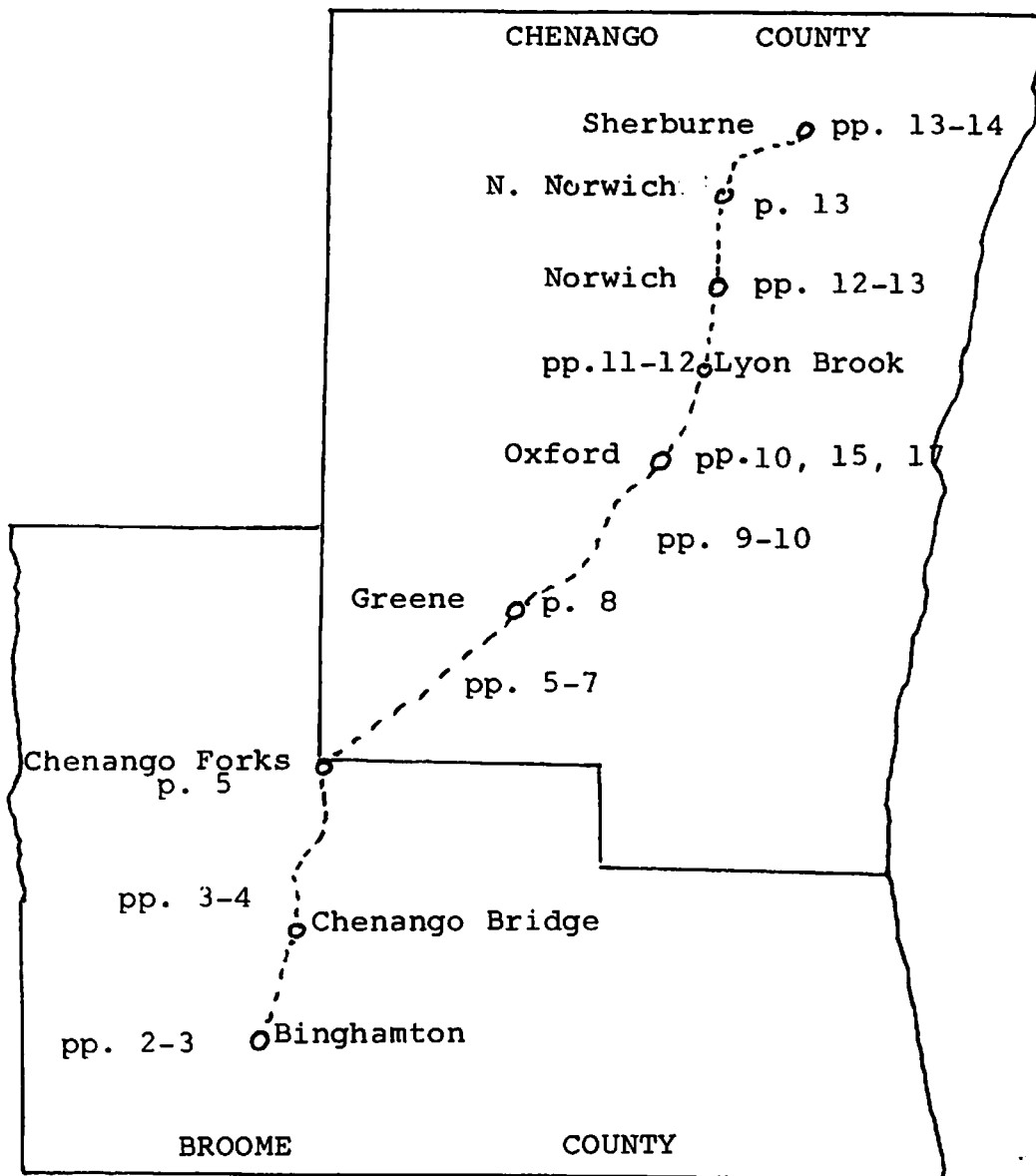
17. The house occupied by J. G. Thorp as early as 1855 is another example of Greek revival architecture.

18. The Nelson Chapman House, built in 1846, is now the Behe Funeral Home. Mr. Chapman lived there from 1846-1856. The Fort Hill House, a three story building with white columns together with the stores of Rufus Baldwin, hat store of Peleg Glover and cabinet shop of John Y. Washburn extending nearly to the river, stood on this site until destroyed by fire May 13, 1839.

* 19. The Theodore Burr House was constructed about 1809 by Mr. Burr, the famous builder of covered bridges as a home for his family. In 1900 the building was given in memory of Eli Lyon Corbin and Abigail Taintor, his wife, to the Village of Oxford to be used as a Library.

* 20. The Baptist Church was dedicated on January 9, 1834. The Church originally stood next to the Library and was moved across Fort Hill Park July 5, 1955.

21. The Epaphras Miller House was built before 1800 as Mr. Miller and his bride, Elizabeth, began housekeeping there in that year. This house is said to have been a station on the underground railroad as a ladder extended through an upstairs closet from the cellar to the attic where the slaves were hidden.



APPROXIMATE TIMETABLE

Read Down (Going)		Read Up (Returning)	
Miles	A.M.		P.M.
.0	8:30	BINGHAMTON	6:00
		Junction of Five Railroads	
		Canal & Chenango River	
		Crossing	
5.2		CHENANGO BRIDGE	
11.1		CHENANGO FORKS	
		Tioughnioga River	
12.		WILLARDS	
		CENTRAL VALLEY RR JUNCTION	
		STILLWATER BRIDGE	
		Chenango Canal (West)	
19.2		GREENE	
25.		BRISBEN	
		Louisville Sluggers	
28.5		CONE'S (Coventry Station)	
		Zerah Cone's Place (East)	
33.	AR - 9:45	OXFORD	
	DP - 11:00	1794 Oxford Academy	
		1800 Miller House (West)	
		Village Square	
36.5	11:10	LYON BROOK	
		Lyon Brook Bridge (East)	
		Canal Aqueduct (West)	
41.3	11:30	NORWICH	
		1837 Court House	
		Historic District	
		1902 Station	
47.3	12:00	NORTH NORWICH	
		Train Races	
48.8	12:15	MIDLAND RR JUNCTION	
52.4	12:30	Ar. SHERBURNE	Lv. 2:45