

Shelton's Grove

An interesting footnote to the history of the Niles & New Lisbon Railroad is the story of Shelton's Grove. The Grove was located along Little Beaver Creek, near the tiny community of Teagarden (see Before It Was a Bike Path, slides 50, 51). The community was founded by William Teagarden who located there in 1804. Teagarden dammed the Creek and built a sawmill, which became the center of the small community.

Sometime in the early 1800's William sold about 200 acres of his property along the Creek to another early settler, Sam Shelton. Sam married, had six children, and like most of his neighbors, probably earned a living farming. But in 1875 it appears the Shelton family opened a coal mining operation on their property, near Long's Crossing, Milepost 26.5 on the Niles & New Lisbon Railroad:

Salem on Sunday, the 15th
The Shelton Coal Company, southwest of Franklin Square, has commenced shipping coal from their works. This is a seven foot vein, and bids fair to be one of the best paying mines in the country. The wool firm of Snyder & Shinn.

Buckeye State, New Lisbon 6-24-1875

On Thursday forenoon, a man named O'Brien was fatally injured at the Shelton coal works, near Long's Crossing, on the Niles and New Lisbon Railroad, by the caving in of a large quantity of coal. When first discovered he was completely covered, with the exception of the face, and it was some time before the huge pile could be removed, during which time he suffered intense agony. Although smashed almost to a jelly he still lives, with no hopes of his recovery —Reporter

Ohio Patriot, New Lisbon 3-16-1876

While the lands along the Little Beaver Creek contained rich deposits of coal, two of Sam's sons, Vernon and Homer, were apparently more interested in the calm, peaceful pond created by Teagarden's dam, and the adjacent park-like grounds on Shelton land. By 1878 the brothers began developing the spot into a local picnicking attraction:

TEEGARDEN'S, May 31, 1878.
ED. BUCKEYE:—Although we cannot boast of a Niagara, or Ancient Pyramids, yet the place has its picturesque scenery and attractions. Almost every day there may be seen parties of tourists and pleasure seekers from different parts of the country, pleasantly enjoying themselves along the banks of this noble stream. Some find amusement in the lighter festivities, some in croquet—for which there is a splendid ground,—while others gaze upon the splendor of nature with admiration and awe, and say, "It's a feast for the eyes and a harvest for the soul;" still others repair to the boat with a hook and line, but come not back with—many fish.
Last Saturday we had the pleasure of

Buckeye State New Lisbon 6-6-1878
(Editorial article regarding Shelton's Grove)

The Presbyterian Sunday School had a grand pic-nic at Shelton's grove last Thursday.
— About 30 persons took in the grove

Ohio Patriot 8-15-1878
(Salem news section)

By the following year, informal outings and picnics at Shelton's evolved into a more formal commercial venture, complete with newspaper advertising by the brothers:

SHELTON BROS. will be ready to accommodate pleasure parties on their grounds on and after June 1st.

Ohio Patriot
New Lisbon
5-22-1879

SHELTON'S Picnic Ground.

The best place to spend a day for recreation and pleasure ever offered to the people of Columbiana county. Entrance to the ground from the old turnpike road leading from Salem to New Lisbon, and midway between the two places, bordering on the waters of middle fork of Little Beaver.

**BOATING,
FISHING,
BOWLING,
CROQUET
PLAYING**

And other amusements can be enjoyed by a party of 100 or less for the small sum of \$5.00, over 100 special rates, except for Sabbath or day school picnics. Small family picnics, boating and fishing parties accommodated. Cigars, peanuts and horse feed always on hand at lowest prices. Ice, ice-cream and Lemonade and other articles furnished by the quantity when ordered in advance. Motto: Strict temperance in all things.

We ask the patronage of the public in general and propose to give value received. Parties wishing to engage the ground should do so as far in advance of the time as possible.
Yours truly,
SHELTON BROS.,
Teegarden, Ohio.

Ohio Patriot
New Lisbon
7-24-1879

Note availability of "cigars, peanuts and horse feed" along with "ice cream and lemonade."

The Shelton's motto: "Strict temperance in all things" was adhered to closely, as the Picnic Ground soon became a favorite destination for Sunday school and church group outings.

During the 1870's US railroads began marketing rail travel for personal enjoyment. Rail excursions, even short trips to local attractions, became fashionable. The Shelton's were fortunate in that the Niles & New Lisbon Railroad passed close by their site.

Cleve. & Mahoning Valley R. R.

NILES & NEW LISBON DIVISION.

On and after Monday, May 14, trains will run daily (Sundays excepted) as follows:

p.m.	a. m.	Stations.	p. m.	a. m.
9 10	11 30	Ar. New Lisbon	Dp. 2 25	6 15
8 59	11 19	Robbins	2 36	6 26
8 53	11 13	Teegarden	2 42	6 32
8 48	11 08	Long's	2 47	6 37
8 42	11 02	Franklin	2 53	6 43
8 35	10 55	Dp. Leetonia	Ar. 3 00	6 50
8 33	10 53	Ar. Leetonia	Dp. 3 02	6 52
8 27	10 47	Washingtonville	3 08	6 58
8 17	10 37	Green	3 18	7 08
8 07	10 27	Loveland	3 28	7 18
8 00	10 20	Canfield	3 35	7 25
7 42	10 02	Austintown	3 53	7 43
7 36	9 56	Ohlton	3 59	7 49
7 35	9 55	Junction	4 00	7 50
7 32	9 52	Mineral Ridge	4 03	7 53
7 20	9 40	Dp. Niles	Ar. 4 15	8 05

Mahoning Dispatch
Canfield, Ohio
7-6-1877

Schedule Effective
5-14-1877

Note listings for Long's Crossing and nearby Teagarden, just 5 minutes and about 1 ½ miles apart.

Over the years, the N&NL would carry tens of thousands of happy passengers to Shelton's. The first mention of Shelton's Grove in Canfield's Mahoning Dispatch appeared in the Sept. 5, 1879 edition. Editor Fowler introduced readers to Shelton's with a full description of the Grove Excursion (plus a compliment to N&NL Agent Leet).

The Excursion and Picnic.

THE Sunday School Excursion of the M. E. Church in Canfield, on last week Thursday, to the Picnic grove of Messrs. Shelton, near Long's Station on the Niles & New Lisbon railroad, was indeed a luxury and an occasion that all will remember with pleasure. Through the obliging Agent at this place,—Mr. S. E. Leet,—a large and pleasant car was secured, which afforded room for nearly all to be seated quite comfortably.

The grounds are easy of access from Long's Station by public roads and also by a very beautiful private road, through a narrow valley upon the premises. A pond of water, of perhaps a mile and a half in length, narrow

and of moderate depth, affords a fine opportunity for boating, which was especially enjoyed at this time by all the party. There are also swings and croquet grounds provided, and a very nice and convenient dining hall, having tables and seats, for lunch; and this day being warm, ice-cream was furnished the company. As we did not remain all day, it was also given at the usual price of the grounds for a day, which is for a company of one hundred or less, \$5.00. Our company numbered one hundred and fifteen members of the Sunday School, Church and congregation. It is intended by this School to repeat at a suitable time in the future, its visit to Shelton's grounds. PASTOR.

Word spread, as the Grove became a popular destination for groups and organizations in communities all along the N&NL rail line:

Greenford.

The excursion and picnic to Shelton's Grove on Friday was a grand success. Four Sabbath schools were represented, the Ev. Lutheran, Baptist, Disciple and German Reform Lutheran. The committee on transportation had only chartered three coaches, but the Railroad Co. sent four, and it is well they did, for they were all crowded, over 300 being in waiting at Green station to board them. The party arrived at the Grove at half past 10 a. m. and from that time until 5 p. m., they enjoyed themselves in boat riding, swinging, and other amusements; and there never was a party went out that enjoyed themselves better. Not an incident nor accident happened on the trip or at the grove to mar the pleasure of any one. Besides those going on the train, almost fifty more went by private conveyances. Revs. Keifer, Morrison and Roller were present.

THE children and members of the M. E. Church of Canfield took the early train south for Shelton's Grove Tuesday, where it had been arranged to hold a picnic. Boating, swimming, fishing, swinging and other sports were indulged in, and a good time had generally. The party returned at 5:30 p. m. all feeling that it was good to have been there.

Mahoning Dispatch 8-19-1881

Mahoning Dispatch
9-16-1881

The Sunday School Picnic.

On Tuesday August 29th, Canfield was almost totally deserted. An Excursion and Basket Picnic, in which the Presbyterian Sunday School was joined by the Sunday Schools of the Congregational Church here and the Mission Church of Loveland Station, together with teachers and a large number invited guests, went to Shelton's grove, in Columbiana county, to spend the day and enjoy the sports and pleasures usually indulged in on such occasions.

At 8 o'clock that morning, several hundred persons, men women and children, boarded the train in waiting at the station here, and in a short time they were passing swiftly along to their destination. A happier crowd is seldom seen together than this one seemed to be. Even the "deacons" smiled on this occasion, when some one suggested that the male "members of the flock" wear a "big sun-flower" as an insignia as well as a mat-

ter of identification. No person without a big sun-flower in his button-hole was entitled to a seat at the first table.

Arriving on the grounds, this vast multitude took everything by storm. Boating was the chief amusement of the day. The day being a most delightful one, both old and young enjoyed it as the "event of the season." Dinner was served about mid-day, the tables fairly groaning with their load of good things. The children had a regular feast, and all present fared sumptuously.

After spending several happy hours at the grove, the whole party returned, many tired out and fatigued with the sports and events of the day, who retired that evening to dream of naught else but "mountains of cake" and "big sun-flowers."

Mahoning Dispatch 9-8-1882

THE I. O. O. F. picnic held at Shelton's on Tuesday was attended by about 60 persons from Canfield, and several from Washingtonville. The Salem Good Will Encampment, under whose auspices the picnic was to be held, failed to put in an appearance owing to the inclement weather, but those who did attend report an elegant time.

Mahoning Dispatch
8-4-1882

With so many people from all walks of life attracted to the Grove, observance of the "strict temperance" motto sometimes became an issue for the Shelton brothers.

Columbiana True Press
Leetonia, Ohio
8-27-1881
as reported in
The New Lisbon Journal

THE New Lisbon Journal says: On Friday, James Edwards, Samuel Martin, Jr., and Joseph Greenawalt were arraigned before Mayor Dickinson for trial on the oath of Homer Shelton, charging Edwards and Greenawalt with drunkenness, and Martin with drunkenness and stealing a linen duet, during a picnic held at Shelton's Grove on the evening of the 13th inst. Edwards pleaded guilty, and was fined \$5 and costs. Martin was discharged on recommendation of prosecuting witness on payment of costs. Greenawalt was also discharged.

The popularity of Shelton's continued to grow during the 1880's, as tourists and picnickers traveled to the Grove on daily scheduled and special N&NL excursion trains.

QUITE a large number of our young people are arranging to picnic at Shelton's on next Wednesday. M. L. Edwards has the affair in charge, and will furnish round-trip tickets at \$1.50 per couple. This will include all privileges at the ground.

Mahoning Dispatch 5-25-1883

THE Sunday Schools of this place will hold a union picnic at Shelton's grove, on Thursday next. A special train will leave the depot at 8 A. M., standard time, returning at 5 P. M.

THE union Sunday School picnic held at Shelton's Grove on Thursday was attended by about five hundred persons.

Mahoning Dispatch 7-30-1886

Mahoning Dispatch 8-6-1886

By 1889 sizeable passenger traffic to and from the Grove merited construction of a station with a 50-foot platform for boarding, along with a building with slate roof.

They have a new station at V T Shelton's Platform fifty feet long, and building with a slate roof.

Leetonia Reporter
8-2-1889
Teagarden Section

The exact location of this station is not clear, but it likely remained at Long's Crossing.

Based on the above 8-2-1889 article and other period newsclips it appears Homer ended his involvement with the Grove sometime during the 1880's. Brother Vernon took charge, with continuing efforts to expand the appeal of his grounds.

A large and handsome new boat, to be used on the creek at Shelton's grove, was received at this station last Saturday and taken by wagon to its destination. Mr. Shelton is adding many improvements to his pleasure grounds, and for picnics and small parties it is the leading resort in this section of the state.

Leetonia Reporter 6-13-1890

Leetonia Reporter
7-15-1892
Editorial

Shelton's Grove.

The editor and family enjoyed the pleasures of the I. O. O. F. picnic held at Shelton's grove last Saturday. It was pronounced by all to have been the largest and most successful picnic ever held in that beautiful grove. Mr. Shelton deserves great praise for the efforts put forth to make all happy.

The grounds are being well patronized and their fame is spreading all over Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. New features for the pleasure and comfort of patrons are being added every season, the most notable one this year being the electric pleasure boat. A trial trip was made last Saturday, and though not an entire success, demonstrated that it will be all that is claimed for it when the additional batteries are placed in it.

The Grove enjoyed its greatest popularity, drawing the largest crowds, during the 1890's and the first years of the 20th century. One of the most popular events staged at the Grove was the annual Harvest Home Picnic, held the last Saturday in August. Prominent political figures at the state and even national level journeyed to the Grove to speak. The event attracted thousands.

DISCUSSION.

The harvest home picnic, the picnic of the season, will be held at Shelton's grove tomorrow, Aug. 24th, and if it is a fair day, it will be the largest picnic of the season.

Leetonia Reporter 8-23-1895

The Great Annual Harvest Home Picnic was held there on the last Saturday of August for 50 years. National figures, senators and governors frequently addressed huge crowds in the large speakers hall. Typical was the gathering of about 8,000 people on Saturday, August 26, 1905.

Yesteryears, Salem News
11-14-1995
Shelton Grove article

Rivaling the popularity of Harvest Home were the celebrations of national holidays--July 4th brought thousands to Shelton's Grove for dancing, baseball, boating and fireworks.

HURRAH !

Leetonia Celebrates the Glorious Fourth at Shelton's.

Independence day was observed in a quiet way by the general cessation of business. The town was liberally decorated with flags and bunting and presented a holiday appearance. There was no public demonstration, however, beyond the incessant popping of fire crackers and the irrepressible whoop and hurrah of the small boys, the most of our patriotic citizens having retired to the umbrageous shades of Shelton's grove, there to enjoy the picnic given by the Leetonia fire department.

The grove was crowded with pleasure seekers, five hundred and sixty-four tickets having been sold from this station alone. The attendance is estimated at 8,500. Of course where all classes are mingled promiscuously together there will be an occasional jarring of words by hot-headed disputants, but the large crowd was quite as orderly and well behaved as could be expected. Notwithstanding the prevailing idea that money is scarce, the amusements were well patronized and the firemen will be well recompensed for their trouble and expense.

A ball game between Leetonia and Washingtonville nines was one of the features of the afternoon. The score was 4 to 5 in favor of Leetonia.

Dancing, boating, etc., constituted the principal amusements of the day and evening, the scene being illumined at night by a brilliant display of fireworks which were fired from the hillside near the camping ground, across the open space along the creek bottom. This afforded every one a good opportunity to witness the display.

Take it all together those present enjoyed a very pleasant day. The weather being dry and not oppressively hot, the entertainment good, and the occasion a national one, of course they could not help enjoying themselves.

Leetonia Reporter
7-5-1895

During these years, passenger traffic to and from the Grove was an integral part of business on the Lisbon Branch--not just on special occasions, but every day. The Erie timetable effective June 18, 1899 designated Shelton's Grove as a flag stop for all six of the daily ex Sunday scheduled passenger trains operating on the Branch:

NILES AND LISBON BRANCH.												
		20	38	22	Miles.	Central Time. June 18, 1899.		17	37	23		
		P.M.	A.M.	A.M.		Leave	Arrive	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.		
.....	Trains Nos. 17, 20 and 38 will stop on signal at Incline for passengers. All trains will stop for passengers at Shelton's Grove on signal.	+3.00	.....	+8.30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....		+4.30	+10.32	+10.32	.....	.....	.....	+10.30	.....	+6.30	.....	.....
.....		+4.50	+12.15	10.50	.0	.....	.....	+8.40	+11.25	+4.05	.....	.....
.....		f4.59	12.28	10.58	3.3	.....	.....	8.33	11.10	3.55	.....	.....
.....		5.06	12.45	11.08	6.3	.....	.....	8.25	10.35	3.44	.....	.....
.....		5.18	1.18	11.22	12.0	.....	.....	8.13	9.55	3.30	.....	.....
.....		f5.23	f1.28	f11.27	14.2	.....	.....	f8.07	f9.30	f3.21	.....	.....
.....		f5.27	f1.36	f11.31	15.4	.....	.....	f8.03	f9.20	f3.16	.....	.....
.....		f5.32	f1.42	11.36	17.5	.....	.....	7.58	f9.02	f3.09	.....	.....
.....		5.39	2.00	11.43	20.6	.....	.....	7.51	8.45	3.00	.....	.....
.....		5.43	2.50	11.48	22.4	.....	.....	7.47	8.30	2.50	.....	.....
.....		f5.49	f3.05	f11.54	24.8	.....	.....	f7.41	f8.03	f2.40	.....	.....
.....		+6.10	+3.40	+12.15	33.2	.....	.....	+7.20	+7.30	+2.20	.....	.....
		P.M.	P.M.	NOON		Arrive	Leave	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.		

Erie Railroad Public Timetable January 1900, page 18

But after 1900 the popularity of the Grove began to diminish. The arrival of the automobile, the rapid increase in its numbers and improved roads resulted in a change in travel habits and a dramatic decline in the popularity of Shelton's Grove. Many people were no longer satisfied with travel to nearby, quaint destinations like the Grove.

The annual Harvest Home Picnic was an early casualty of this change. Despite favorable weather and a personal appearance by Ohio Governor Judson Harmon, attendance at the 1911 Harvest Picnic was down. And for the first time in years, the Erie Railroad did not operate any special trains to Shelton's Grove for the event.

Harvest Home Picnic.
This annual event at Shelton's Grove was not so largely attended last Saturday as it has been in some former years. The usual crowd came in carriages and other conveyances, but this branch of the Erie railroad has ceased to be of use to the towns and farms through which it passes, and this year they furnished no accommodations to land the people at the grove, as has been done in the past.

The driveways to the grove are very attractive this time of the year. The sumac, the golden rod and the elderberries which fringe the borders of the highways add to the rustic appearance of the surrounding landscape. The Quaker City band of Salem furnished good selections of music all day. The merry-go-round, the swings and the boating furnished harmless amusement for the young, while the older ones looked on in contentment.

The last Harvest Picnic occurred in 1924 when fewer than 50 people attended the political gathering at the Grove. (Salem News, Yesteryear, 11-14-1995).

Special excursion trains to Shelton's Grove for church outings persisted into the 20th century a bit longer than specials to the Harvest Picnic. But with revenues from ticket sales down, these special excursions became more difficult to arrange with the Erie.

The Erie train for the Sunday school picnic at Shelton's Grove will leave here at 9 o'clock, Saturday morning.

Mahoning Dispatch 7-30-1909
Washingtonville Section

The Erie will run a special train to Shelton's Grove Saturday morning, leaving Washingtonville at 8:30, on account of the union Sunday school picnic, and may also include Leetonia. Leaves the Grove at 7 p. m., \$75 being guaranteed.

Mahoning Dispatch 8-30-1912
Washingtonville Section

The Sunday school picnic at Shelton's Grove last Saturday was not so well attended nor enjoyed as in former years. It was badly managed, and no attempt was made to inject new life into the day's amusements for the young. Five members of the Greenford band were engaged to play with the Washingtonville band, but no arrangements were made to have them brought here. The train pulled through Greenford without stopping to pick up the crowd there, so that the members of the band secured an automobile and came here so as not to

mobile and came here so as not to disappoint us. At 8:30 the train pulled out from this station with 90 full fare tickets sold and 57 halves. The printed bills called for 20 cents for the round trip for adults, but the price was raised to 30 cents; so that \$27 was realized from full fare tickets and \$8 from halves, making a total of only \$35. The Erie railroad was guaranteed \$75, which left the picnic managers \$40 "in the hole," or 4000 pennies from the S. S. treasury, which they did not enjoy.

Mahoning Dispatch 9-6-1912 Washingtonville Section

The last record in the Dispatch of a special train to Shelton's Grove appeared in 1914. That year the Washingtonville Sunday schools joined with other groups to afford the cost of chartering a special train from Washingtonville to the Grove and return.

The union Sunday school picnic has been joined with the Foresters and Business men of Washingtonville, and have chartered a special train on the Erie railroad to convey all passengers free from here to Shelton's Grove on Saturday. The special will leave here for the grove after the morning passenger train goes north. Enough baggage room will be provided on the train to carry all the dinner baskets that are wanted. Everybody can go and have an enjoyable day's outing.

Mahoning Dispatch
8-14-1914
Washingtonville Section

The last regularly scheduled passenger train on the Branch was discontinued three years later in June 1917, leaving a single mixed train each way daily to travel the line. It's likely Shelton's Grove remained a flag stop for picnic gatherings until June 1917, and perhaps even into the early 1920's for occasional travelers on the mixed train. But in 1919 Vernon's sons John and Mark sold the Grove to a Mr. Eagleton. He was unable to arrest the decline in patronage. And after the poor turnout at the 1924 Harvest Home event, the Grove was essentially closed, ending 40 years of Niles & New Lisbon trains carrying happy passengers to a day of boating, swinging, fishing, ice cream, dancing and picnics at Shelton's Grove.

Bob Gentzel June 15, 2023

Postscript

While Shelton's Grove was the best-known picnic grounds along the Niles & New Lisbon Railroad, it wasn't the only one. During the late 1800's and early 1900's, many towns and villages had their own, nearby rural grove used for local social gatherings and holiday celebrations. Leetonia and Lisbon were two such examples, each with a shady grove within a stone's throw of Niles & New Lisbon tracks.

In Leetonia, the Cherry Valley Iron Company owned much of the land north of the iron works, between Leetonia and Washingtonville. In September 1882 we find the first reference in a Leetonia newspaper to the Cherry Valley Grove, located on this land, about halfway between the two towns.

Labor Camp-meeting.

We again call the attention of our readers to the coming labor camp-meeting to be held on next Saturday and Sunday. Some eight or ten speakers will be on hand and it is confidently expected that the great and momentous question of labor will be ably discussed and presented in its various phases. Should the weather be auspicious we hope to be able to report that in the Cherry Valley grove was held the largest labor meeting that has ever taken place in Eastern Ohio.

Leetonia Democrat
9-22-1882

This gathering, like many subsequent meetings in the heavily industrialized town of Leetonia, which was surrounded by multiple coal and ore mines, was a labor meeting.

During the 1880's and 1890's, the heyday of Cherry Valley Grove, horses and buggies conveyed townsfolk from Leetonia and Washingtonville to the site, a regular meeting place on holidays and special occasions.

The "Ge-lorious Fourth" in our village passed off in the usual quiet way, most of the citizens spending the day out of town. The picnic at Cherry Valley grove is said to have been a success, and all present seemed to enjoy themselves. There were a few arrests made in our village, but of so slight a character as to be hardly worthy of notice. There were two or three slight skirmishes, but not a single, genuine real-old-fashioned fight. The march of improvement is onward.

Leetonia Democrat 7-9-1886

The Fourth in Leetonia.

Independence day will be duly observed in Leetonia, in the regulation style. The people will go visiting and receive visitors; the small boy will be happy with a few fire crackers, and the large boy will have a whole fire works; some will quietly snooze the day away lying in the shade, and others will snooze in the cooler. But the great majority will attend the two picnics to be held in neighboring groves. St. Patrick's church will hold their annual picnic in Bingham's grove, just south of Grafton furnace, and the Knights of Labor will entertain all who come to the Cherry Valley grove, midway between Leetonia and Washingtonville.

The Sons of St. George will have a grand picnic and gala day, in Cherry Valley Grove, on Saturday, June 18th. The affair promises to be a grand success, and the committee will guard carefully against any objectionable features. All who wish to spend the day in harmless sport and amusement should attend.

Leetonia Democrat 6-10-1887

Note: Bentley's 1902 Atlas of Columbiana County showed the Bingham family owned property on the outskirts of Leetonia, about ½ mile SSW of Salem Iron (formerly Grafton Iron)

Leetonia Reporter 6-24-1892

The popularity of Cherry Valley Grove was short-lived. The last Leetonia newspaper reference to a social function at this site was to a dance held there in March 1900. The last reference found to any activity at Cherry Valley Grove was a June 19, 1901 report of a Miners Meeting held there during an ongoing strike elsewhere in the region.

Miners Mass Meeting.

The miners of this vicinity held a mass meeting in Cherry Valley grove Wednesday morning, and there was said to have been over 500 present. The occasion was brought about by the presence of President Haskins, Vice President Sullivan, and Secretary Savage in the Palestine-Waterford field. They sent word Tuesday evening they would be here and the men were notified next morning as they came to work. All got a lay-off and repaired to the grove.

The time was spent in speech making and an impromptu reception to the state officers. The subject discussed was unionism and the importance of organization and necessity of getting every workman into the union.

The Amalgamation strike was frequently alluded to but no move made or thought expressed looking to any sympathetic action.

Leetonia Reporter 6-19-1901

Prospects for a resurrection of Cherry Valley Grove for future gatherings were put to rest in 1907 when the Youngstown & Ohio River Railroad completed a line between Washingtonville and Leetonia, raising a large steel bridge over the Erie Railroad tracks through the former Cherry Valley Grove area.

Work on the Y. & O. R. between here and Washingtonville is progressing slowly on account of the swamp near the Cherry Valley furnace and the bridges over the Pennsylvania and Erie tracks. The line is completed between Washingtonville and Salem. At the Cherry Valley grove a gang of men employed by the American Bridge company on Monday began the erection of the steel span across the Erie tracks. This will be ready before the trestle across the swamp, which will be constructed on piles and the pile driving is not yet completed.

Leetonia Reporter 9-20-1907



Postcard ca 1907

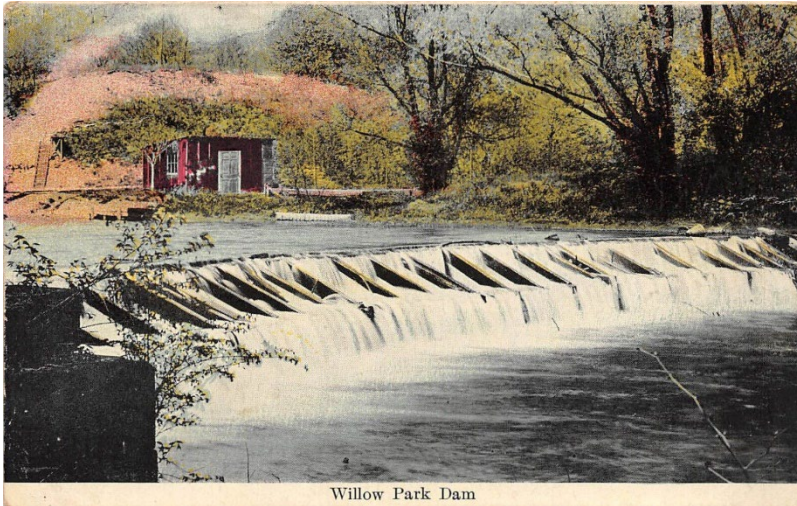
Youngstown & Ohio River Railway

Bridge over Erie Railroad, Cherry Valley Grove

In Lisbon, the local picnic ground was Willow Grove Park. The Park was located along the west bank of Little Beaver Creek, about a quarter mile north of the Canton Bridge (US Route 30 today). N&NL tracks ran along the hillside on the opposite Creek bank.

From the turn of the century (first reference in a Lisbon newspaper to Willow Grove was in 1903) and extending into the 1930's, Willow Grove hosted hundreds of local gatherings and picnics of churches, social groups, IOOF, Grange groups and family

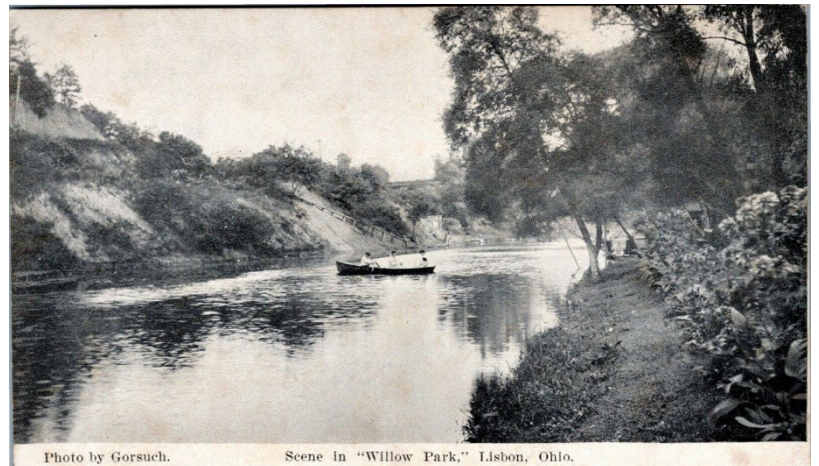
reunions. Like Shelton's Grove, about 8 miles north, Willow Grove featured a dam on the Little Beaver, a pond and row boats for the enjoyment of visitors. Over the years, the park offered swimming, camping, ice skating, a giant seasaw and rental cottages.



Willow Grove Park Dam ca 1914
Postcard Ebay

Willow Grove Park Lake ca 1910
Little Beaver Creek
Postcard Ebay

View Looking South Toward the Dam
N&NL Tracks Along Hillside to the Left



Willow Grove never attracted huge regional crowds like Shelton's. Instead, it catered to smaller groups from the immediate Lisbon and Elkton area. They came by foot, horse, carriage and hay wagon to frequent family reunions and gatherings by churches, local organizations and clubs. The Grove continued in this role into the 1930's, with a footbridge constructed across the creek in 1933. About 1940 a flood destroyed the dam, spelling the end of that chapter of the park. In the late 1940's, the Kiwanis helped lead a successful community effort to restore Willow Grove. Today Willow Grove Park remains open, one of several parks owned by the Village of Lisbon. (Preceding information from articles and newsclips in Lisbon newspapers, 1903 to 1947, available online through Lepper Public Library, Lisbon, Ohio)

Although the Groves at Cherry Valley and Willow were immediately adjacent to N&NL tracks, I found no indication excursions or regular trains ever directly served these sites.