



# MANTUA TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION QUARTERLY BULLETIN

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## THE LIFE OF THE MANTUA TROLLEY



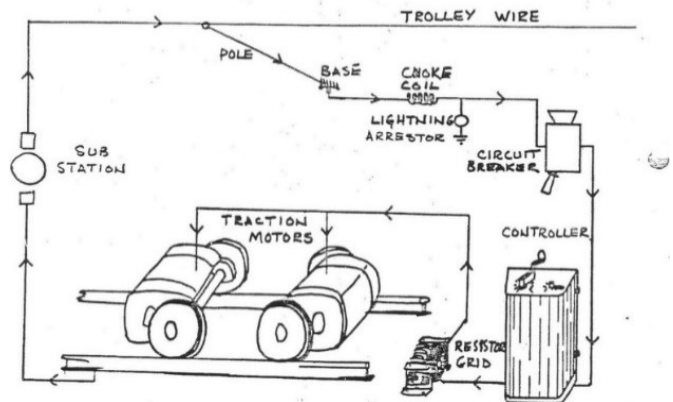
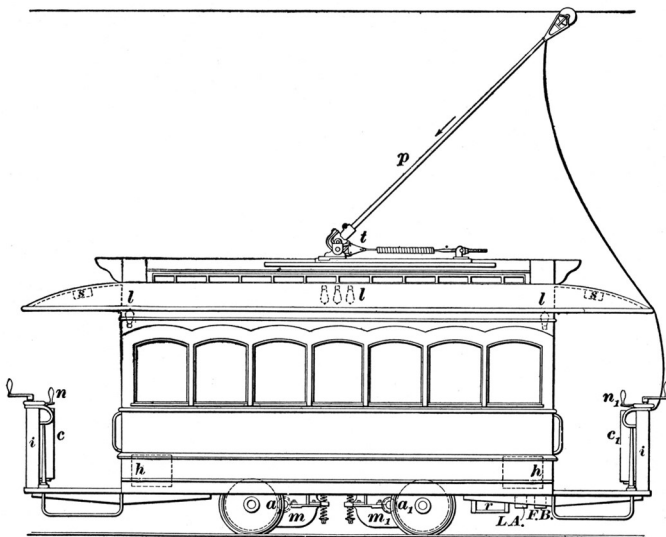
**The Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Trolley  
at its terminus in Mantua, New Jersey  
(Job Scott's house is to the left, his water tower is in the center background)**

# The Life of the Mantua Trolley

By Jeff Gellenthin

Frank Julian Sprague was born on July 25, 1857, in Milford, Connecticut to parents David Cummings Sprague and Frances Julia King. Frank was an American naval officer who graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1878. During his naval career which covered serving on the USS *Minnesota*, the USS *Richmond* and the USS *Lancaster*, Frank invented the inverted type of dynamo. His main interest in the field of electricity was electric motors. He is known as the “Father of Electric Traction”. Frank worked for a time with Thomas Edison but did not like the fact that Edison was consumed with the development of the incandescent lightbulb. Frank moved on from Edison and founded the Sprague Electric & Motor Company. Frank’s company produced two inventions, a constant speed, non-sparking motor with fixed brushes and a method of braking called “regenerative braking”.

Frank Sprague got involved with electric streetcars. Several of his designs improved the concept of electric street cars. In 1888 Frank installed the first successful large electric streetcar railway system in Richmond, Virginia. This led to a boom in electric streetcar railway systems in other large and medium cities in America.



SIMPLIFIED STREETCAR CIRCUIT

The trolley line into Mantua belonged to the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Railroad. This railroad was authorized under a state law which was “An act to authorize the formation of traction companies for the construction and operation of street railways or railroads operated as street railways, and to regulate the same”. The law was approved on March 14, 1893.



Trolley Barn in Gloucester City on Market Street

By the end of October 1893, a trolley line had been constructed from Camden to Woodbury. By December of 1894, the trolley line was extended from Woodbury to Mantua.

“The outstanding event of 1894 was the extension of the trolley railway from Woodbury to Mantua and Almonesson. The people of Mantua were the first to grasp the advantage of the new line and proposed to secure the rights of way and to grade same, as an inducement to the Company to extend the line. It was not until October 4 that the franchise ordinance was



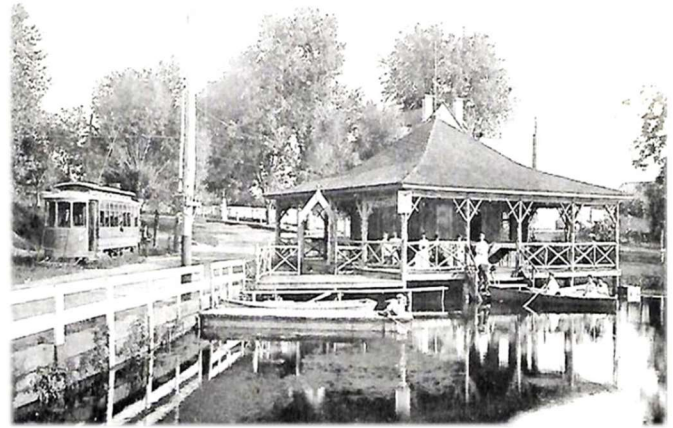
enacted, but on Christmas Day the line was in operation and a free ride was extended to all who desired. When the people of Mantua found they could ride to Woodbury in eight minutes, the popularity of the road was assured. Almost immediately, schemes were launched to extend the line to Swedesboro, Mullica Hill, Pitman, and Paulsboro, but they never materialized.”

...the above from *History of Woodbury, New Jersey*, James D. Carpenter, copyright 1937, page 99



The trolley line from Woodbury went to Almonesson and then to the lake in Blackwood.

<b>TROLLEY TIME TABLE.</b>	
In effect October 22, 1900.	
Cars leave Broad and Cooper streets every 15 minutes for Philadelphia	
Leave Woodbury for Mantua, a. m., 5.45, 6.15, 7.30, first car Sunday; 8.00, 9.15, 10.00, 11.30, 12.00. P. M., 1.00, 1.45, 3.00, 3.45, 5.00, 6.15, 6.45, 7.30, 8.15, 9.15, 10.15, 12.05, Camden car	
Leave Mantua for Woodbury, a. m., 6.00, 6.40, 7.45, first car Sunday; 8.15, 9.30, 10.30, 11.45. P.M. 12.30, 1.15, 2.15, 3.15, 4.15, 5.25, 6.30, 7.00, 7.45, 8.45, 9.30, 10.30, 12.20.	
Leave Woodbury for Almonesson, and city line—*6.55, *8.30, first Sunday car; 9.45, * 0.45 a. m., 12.45, 1.30, *2.30, 3.30, *4.30, 5.40, 7.15, 8.00, *9.00, *9.45, 10.45. p. m.	
Leave Almonesson for Woodbury, a.m. 7.15, 8.55, 11.10. 2.45, 4.45, 6.00, 10.00. p. m.	
Leave city line for Woodbury—7.22, 9.02, 9.52, 11.17, a. m., 12.52, 1.37, 2.52, 3.37, 4.52, 6.07, 7.22, 8.07, 9.07, 10.07, 11.00 p. m.	
* denotes Almonesson car.	



Trolley line at Blackwood Lake



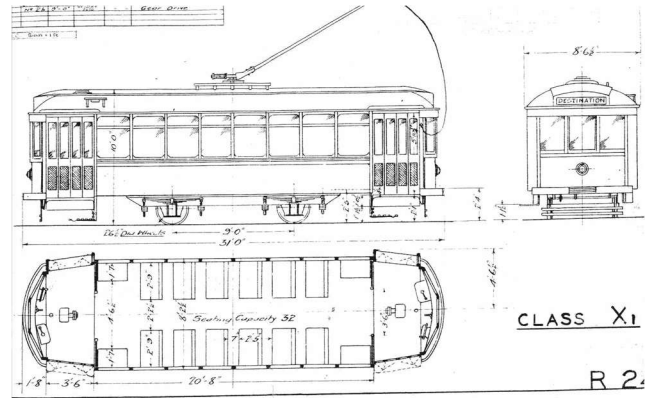
The trolley at the Gloucester County Court House. Passengers boarded the streetcar at the corner of Broad and Cooper Streets in Woodbury

For many years the weekly newspapers published the train and trolley schedules regularly. The above schedule is from the Woodbury Daily Times in 1900.





Before getting to Woodbury the trolley could stop at Washington Park in Westville



This method of control of the streetcar has been confirmed by historians at a streetcar museum in Pennsylvania. That museum, called the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, maintains a similar streetcar and line on which they give visitors a ride on their restored electric trolley.

The electric streetcars were grounded through their wheels which were in contact with the metal railway racks. This prevented the passengers from getting electrocuted while getting on and off the trolley cars.

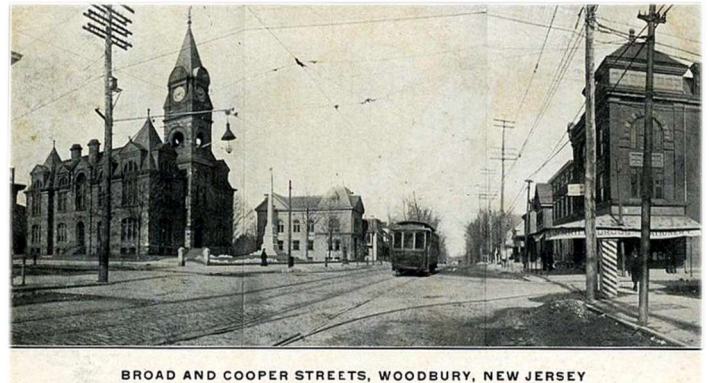


Looking North toward Woodbury, NJ

**DID YOU KNOW?**

A man by the name of Mr. Strain once owned Strain's Boat Works at 11 Broadway, Mantua. After the demise of the Mantua Trolley, he used salvaged trolley tracks to launch boats into the Mantua Creek near the bridge over the creek.

When heading south from Woodbury, the line eventually terminated in Mantua at the Telford Inn. There was no roundhouse or turntable or circular track to turn the trolley around for its return trip to Woodbury. The motorman of the streetcar simply shut down the controls at the front of the streetcar and turned on the controls at the rear of the streetcar.



Above is a postcard of the corner of Broad and Cooper Streets in Woodbury, circa 1908. The trolley car is coming up the tracks from the direction of Gloucester. The courthouse is on the left and trolley tracks are clearly visible in the roadway which appears to be cobblestone. On the right, tracks appear to go down Cooper Street towards Almonesson.

The trolleys that went through Gloucester County with passengers that wanted to go to Philadelphia ended up at one of the Camden ferries. Passengers would disembark the trolley and take the ferry to Philadelphia. Once they arrived at the ferry terminal in Philadelphia, they could get on a Philadelphia trolley and continue their journey.

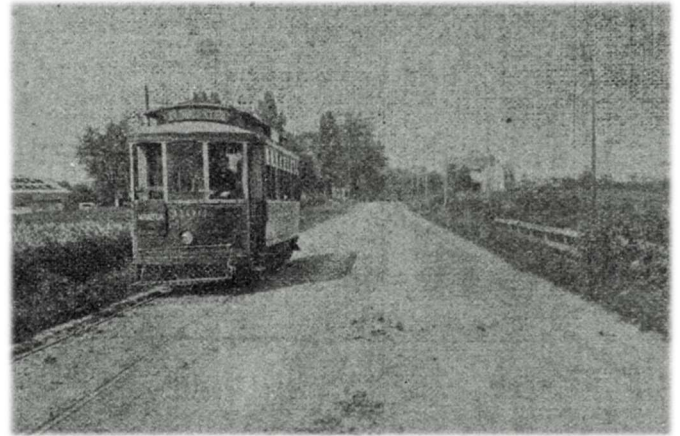
The following is a timeline through newspaper articles that defines many of the events associated with the trolley before, during and after its existence:

**August 31, 1894** (Camden Daily Telegram) – *The committee of citizens of Mantua, who have for some time been negotiating for the right of way for the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Electric Railway to that place, reported at a recent meeting that, with the exception of two property owners along the proposed route, the privilege had been granted.*

**September 27, 1894** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *Survey is being made for the extension of the trolley road to Mantua, and beyond. Several carloads of ties are now in Woodbury, ready for immediate use.*

**September 29, 1894** (Courier Post) – *The citizens of Mantua last night enthusiastically closed with the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Railroad Company in its proposition to extend the road from Woodbury there and work will be immediately begun. It is expected, too, that before many weeks' arrangements will have been completed to connect Camden with Glassboro on the same road. For weeks the people of Gloucester County below Woodbury have been clamoring for an extension of that road. Especially having the Mantua people, led largely by Lawyer John J. Crandall, taken up the matter. Last night's meeting was held in the Masonic Hall and about a hundred people were there. It was announced that the right of way had been secured along the Mantua Road from Woodbury, a distance of three miles, and that a strip of land thirty feet wide running along the easterly side of the pike between the two places had been signed over to the railroad company. The roads officers said they would construct the extension and have trolley cars running*

*by Christmas, provided the grading and banking was done by the citizens.*



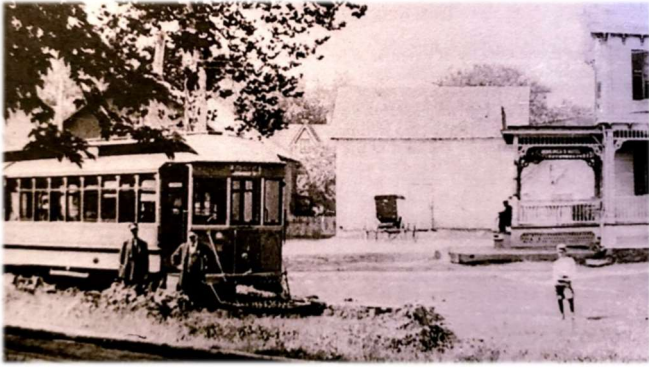
The Mantua Trolley nearing Woodbury along Mantua Avenue  
(courtesy of Jeff Gellenthin)

**October 4, 1894** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *The efforts of the people of Mantua to secure the extension of the trolley railroad from Woodbury to Mantua were crowned with success on Friday evening, when the citizens in mass meeting accepted the proposition of the Trolley company to secure the right of way and grade the roadbed, and the company to equip the road and have same in operation before Christmas. The cost of the grading will be about \$2,000 according to the estimate of Surveyor William M. Carter.*

**October 16, 1894** (Camden Daily Telegram) – *The extension of the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Electric Railroad from the southern section of Woodbury to Mantua, three miles south, while meeting with some opposition from the landowners along the proposed route, will undoubtedly be commenced in a few weeks. President Morgan of the Trolley Company has filed applications with the township authorities of Mantua and Deptford.*

**October 23, 1894** (Courier Post) – *The citizens of Mantua have commenced with the work of grading the roadbed for the trolley road from that place to Woodbury.*





The Mantua Trolley at its terminus at the Telford Inn in Mantua, New Jersey

**October 31, 1894** (*Camden Daily Telegram*) – *The Deptford Township Committee yesterday afternoon held a special session to take final action on the ordinance giving the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Electric Railroad Company the privilege of laying tracks through the township of Mantua. President Morgan, of the trolley company was present at the meeting, and after the passage of the ordinance, said it would be accepted by the company. On Monday afternoon the Mantua Township Committee passed an ordinance granting the company the franchise over the route proposed to complete the line to that place.*



Looking North up Bridgeton Pike (Route 45) from the point at the Telford Inn

**November 2, 1894** (*Camden Daily Telegram*) – *Woodbury City Council held a special meeting to consider the application of the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Electric Railroad for the location of their tracks from the present terminus at Salem Avenue to Mantua Township. A large number of*

*representative citizens from Mantua headed by John J. Crandall, Esq, were present, and were given the privilege of expressing their view on the trolley. Lawyer Crandall said he was known as the “Mayor of Mantua” and wanted the trolley to run to that place, but the fare should not be over five cents to Woodbury. He advocated a track on each side of the road, with a driveway along the centre.*

**December 6, 1894** (*Gloucester County Democrat*) – *From one to two hundred men are at work this morning building the extension of the trolley road from its southern terminus to the city.*

**December 13, 1894** (*Gloucester County Democrat*) – *The usual talk of the town in former years at this season was hunting, but now it is trolley.*

**January 2, 1895** (*Camden Daily Telegram*) – *The Mantua Branch of the Camden, Gloucester and Woodbury Electric Railway was placed in operation yesterday and was liberally patronized. The new branch works perfectly and promises to be a paying investment.*

**January 10, 1895** (*Gloucester County Democrat*) – *To the Editor: My attention was very interestingly called to an article in your issue of January 3rd headed “Trolley to Mullica Hill” and signed X. Now, Mr. Editor, if X will take the trouble to come up to Mantua from Mullica Hill, of which X is supposed to be a resident, take the thirty minutes or maybe sixty of a cold morning to get here, put up his horse, and step aboard a trolley car near Mantua Bridge, in eight or ten minutes he will find himself in Woodbury, and then consider that but a few weeks ago, not months, a large body of large timber has been cut, removed, stumps dug up or blown out, big trees taken up by the roots, culverts built, hills, big, big hills, too, dug down, meadows filled up, poles erected, ties laid, rails laid end to end for nearly six miles, presto! What a wonderful change all done in a few weeks, and in the shortest days of the year! Mr. X, your reasons, political, educational, financial, religious, and social are the biggest reasons in the world, and in the near future we, the people of Mantua, hope and expect to realize the advantages following the advent*

of the "Trolley". And you, Mr. X, your friends, your neighbors and all the rest, we hope to see before long going county-townward through Mantua by trolley.

**January 24, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – One unpleasant feature of the trolley is the have the conductor give the passengers the disagreeable odor of liquor when collecting the fare.

**January 31, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – The lumber for the trolley bridge is expected to arrive by boat in a few days.

\*The existing bridge at Mantua Creek was not suitable for the trolley to cross over. It seems that folks had to board the trolley north of the bridge until a new structure was constructed.



The above picture shows the trolley line bridge across the Mantua Creek. To the left is the road from Mantua to Woodbury. Prior to the trolley bridge being built, passengers got off the trolley and walked across the bridge to get to Mantua. After the trolley bridge was built, the trolley line terminated at the Telford Inn.

**February 25, 1895** (Courier Post) – The trolley road did a good business yesterday. It is understood that the company will commence the building of their second track to Mantua as soon as the weather will permit.

**March 30, 1895** (Courier Post) – Work on the second track of the extension of the trolley road from this

city to Mantua has been commenced by the distribution of materials along the line.

**April 4, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – It is given out that the trolley will make Mantua its southern terminus, at least for the year, A double track is to be laid to that at once.

**May 2, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – A dirt car on the Mantua end of the trolley road ran away Monday morning and made better time for a short mile than Pennsy's Atlantic City Flyer. It was the end car of the train, and when on the downward trip, south of Stille Chew's house, became detached from the train and started ahead. A number of workmen on the car took time by the forelock and jumped off. On, the car went toward Mantua Creek, gathering momentum at every turn of the wheels, until the jumping off place was reached. Here she jumped exactly fifteen feet from the end of the rails, before she struck. The load of dirt went on into the creek, and the car went to pieces. Nobody was hurt.

**June 6, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – The Mantua Trolley line carries an average of two hundred passengers daily. On Memorial Day seven hundred fares were taken.

**June 27, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – Ho! For the trolley bridge. At last, the Camden, Gloucester and Woodbury Electric Railroad Company have awakened out of their lethargy, and the contractor has commenced work on the same. Judging from the progress being made, in the near future cars will be running into the centre of the village.

**June 28, 1895** (Camden Daily Telegram) - The Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Railroad Company has commenced the erection of a bridge over Mantua Creek. When completed the new bridge will make the terminus of the road in the centre of Mantua Village.

**July 29, 1895** (The Philadelphia Inquirer) – Mantua - The trolley bridge is now completed. Rails will be laid this week and by Saturday cars will run to the middle of town.



**August 15, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *The trolley bridge is now completed, so that the tracks may be laid. This is welcome news for the people of Mantua as they can ride a great distance for the same money, and at the same time avoid the long walk.*

**September 5, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *Some of our boys on Monday endeavored to amuse themselves in the absence of the employees, by throwing a small wire over the trolley, thus receiving a small shock.*

**December 26, 1895** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *Lot for Sale – Being the property situate on the Main Street in the village of Mantua, N.J., known as the Sweeten Homestead. This property contains a good house, large barn, potato house, large building 50x70, two stories, with boiler and engine and other machinery suitable for manufacturing purposes. As an investment alone this can be made one of the best, as it is within two minutes of the terminal of the C., G. and W. trolley with a service of 35 trains daily. And cheap railroad fares. Mantua is destined to be a great suburban town. When looking and inquiring about this property try and shun the chronic kickers and old fossils who think trolley and stone roads have killed the town. You will find them. Take my advice, go to the young, energetic businessmen of the town and they will tell you it has a future.*

**August 19, 1896** – (The Morning Post) – *Early yesterday morning thieves cut the feed wire on the Mantua branch of the Camden, Gloucester and Woodbury trolley road and succeeded in carrying off about 3000 feet. The theft had been carefully planned and the end of the wire was tied to a pole to prevent “grounding”, which would have been detected at the powerhouse. Someone familiar with electricity evidently planned the work. It is supposed that wagons were used to carry off the booty, though no clue can be found.*

**July 23, 1897** (Morning Post) – *Woodbury – Negotiations have been opened by the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Railway with the Mantua and Glassboro Turnpike Company for the right of*

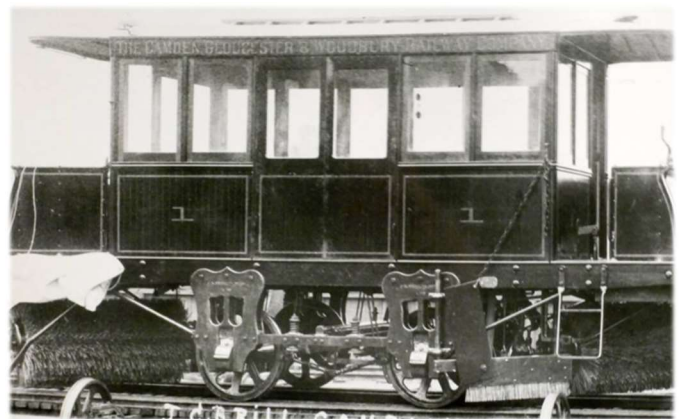
*way from the present terminus of the railroad in Mantua to Glassboro. This will give a continuous trolley line to Philadelphia and will be completed within the year.*

**January 14, 1898** (Woodbury Daily Times) – *An ice pond is to be built in Mantua, and the trolley company has offered to light it for free.*

**March 10, 1898** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *A change in the timetable on the trolley gives twenty trains each way between Mantua and Woodbury.*

**October 25, 1898** (Woodbury Daily Times) – *A bright little lite was ended last evening, when Jennie, the two-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fortune, was killed by the Mantua trolley, in front of her home, before her mother’s eyes.*

**February 14, 1899** (Woodbury Daily Times) – *A notice in the post office is to the effect that the Mantua trolley crew are feeding the quail and rabbits along the line and ask for donations. But they are now tied up like the rest. Even the snowplow can’t keep that line open.*



A trolley car equipped with snow brushes,  
front and rear

**February 23, 1899** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *The trolley commenced running on Friday night for the first after the blizzard. It was a welcome sight, as many depend on it to get to their businesses, and the residents do not feel as though they could do without it now.*



**May 22, 1899** (Camden Daily Telegram) – *It is reported that a project has been started for the building of a trolley line from Pitman Grove to Mantua to connect with the Camden, Gloucester and Woodbury Railway, whose terminus is at Mantua and is meeting with such encouragement that there is a probability of its being more than mere talk.*

**March 9, 1900** (The Philadelphia Inquirer) – *Mantua people want a trolley depot and more streets.*

**July 23, 1900** (Courier Post) – *The only drawback that Alcyon Park has is transportation to and from its shady borders for so many people who would otherwise seek its many pleasures, The steam cars to Pitman and wagon road are the only means of reaching the park; and the station is a good half mile away, the trip having to be made either by stage or afoot. When the trolleys from Mantua go all the way through Pitman and Alcyon Park, then the park will be the best patronized of any in this section of the country. Whether the trolleys would pay, as their heavy patronage would be enjoyed only three months of the year, is a problem that no doubt has deterred the company from extending its line.*

**December 5, 1900** (The Morning Post) – *Two efforts were made on Monday to derail cars on the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury trolley road. A brick was placed on the track on the Mantua branch, and a small tree was thrown on the track in the woods near the Crown Point Road.*

**December 21, 1900** (Morning Post) – *Glassboro – The officials of the Camden, Gloucester, and Woodbury Trolley Company, in connection with an inspection of the road made yesterday, went over the route of the proposed extension of the road to Glassboro. The visit of the officials was pleasing to the residents along the route as showing an interest in the agitation of trolley service, and they have hopes of having service within a year. An official of the company stated that the trip was merely taken to look over the ground, and that at present the company has no plans in connection with the talked of extension from Mantua to Glassboro. Residents all along the line are in favor of the extension.*

**October 26, 1901** (Woodbury Daily Times) – *The people below here are circulating petitions for the extension of the trolley, which are being numerously signed. It is now believed that the extension will be made to Pitman Grove by the time camp opens next season.*

**July 16, 1903** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *Pitman Grove - The trolley company is missing the harvest that would have been theirs had they extended their lines.*

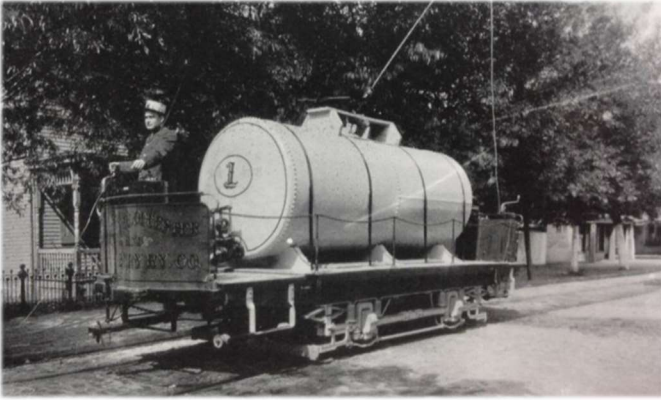
**January 12, 1905** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *Pitman Grove - The seeming certainty that we are at last to have trolley service has aroused our citizens to the fact that it would be very unsatisfactory service indeed were the trolley to come over the route projected, that west of the town. The Board of Trade held a special meeting on Monday evening and appointed A.S Clark, Harmon Dilks, Dr. L.M. Slaughter, J.M. McCowan and Carl Woodruff, a committee to confer with the boards of trade of Glassboro and Clayton, and also with the trolley company. Our citizens are practically unanimous in desiring that the trolley shall come in the town where we can have an all-year service instead of simply a summer service which it will be if it comes west of the towns.*

**November 30, 1905** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *The trolley bridge at Mantua, somehow took fire on Monday, and was with difficulty put out.*

**May 14, 1908** (Gloucester County Democrat) – *An old citizen of Mantua township died on the 13th, aged 72 years, after a lingering illness. The funeral will be held from the homestead on Saturday at 2 o'clock p.m. Carriages will meet trains in Wenonah and the trolley in Mantua.*

**November 10, 1909** (Woodbury Daily Times) – *The Mantua trolley car was struck this morning a few minutes after 6 o'clock by the Delaware River train. The trolley car was splintered up about the framework and was knocked from the track. The three people in the car were shaken up, but not seriously hurt. Travel was delayed for hours, and had it not been for Dr. Grauch's automobile, people*

would have been compelled to walk to and from Mantua. The cow catcher of the engine was somewhat battered up.



Dust control - A type of trolley car equipped with a water tank that sprayed as it rolled down the tracks

**February 20, 1912** (Courier Post) – *There was plenty of excitement on a Mantua trolley car for a long time on Saturday, when the motor box became overheated and a blaze started to burn through the car. The crew left the car standing and started to work as a bucket brigade in extinguishing the flames. The car was the one leaving here at 7:28 in the morning and a number of commuters were made late at work through the incident.*

**May 28, 1912** (Courier Post) – *Landlord Ryan, of the Telford Inn is the most charitable man in town today according to the opinion of a vast number of residents and it is all because he has favored the general public by erecting a waiting station for trolley cars at the Inn. The station fills a long felt want, especially on rainy days.*



Carl's Market, Mantua, N.J. (circa 1950's)



Walter Buzby, Trolley Motorman - 1914  
(courtesy of Barry Bengel)

### **GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

After the demise of the trolley system, a new form of transportation came into use. This was the bus. In the Mantua area, the Wood Bus Company provided that need for public transportation. The Company had a garage on Main Street between Pitman and Barnsboro. The company no longer exists but for many decades it took passengers from the Gloucester County area into Philadelphia. In the picture to the left is a Wood bus at the corner of Main and Union Street (now Mantua Boulevard).





Trolley Motormen - 1914  
(courtesy of Barry Bengel)

*demand for firewood of all kinds. Farmers are cutting a lot of wood and unemployed persons are going to the country roads and barren strips of woodlands to gather wood for their fires. In the last few days scores of wooden ties have been removed from the abandoned stretch of trolley track between Woodbury and Mantua for use as firewood. The tracks, owned by Public Service, are being rapidly dismantled without cost of labor to the company as persons searching for firewood pry up the rusty nails and slide out the wooden ties.*

The extension of the trolley beyond Mantua was discussed heavily over the years of its existence. However, tracks to Mullica Hill, Pitman Grove and Glassboro were not to be.

In their day, trolleys enabled people in rural areas to get jobs in large cities, shop in major department stores, and to go to vacation destinations that might have taken two or three days by horse drawn vehicles. With the growth of the use of buses and automobiles, the improvements and expansion of roadways and the building of the Ben Franklin Bridge, trolley transportation systems in and around Mantua faded away and were long gone by 1930.

**April 15, 1925** (The Morning Post) – *The State Highway Commission will advertise tomorrow for bids for the paving of South Broad Street, Woodbury. This is the result of a decision of the Public Service to take up their tracks south of Cooper Street and replace the Mantua trolley service with buses.*

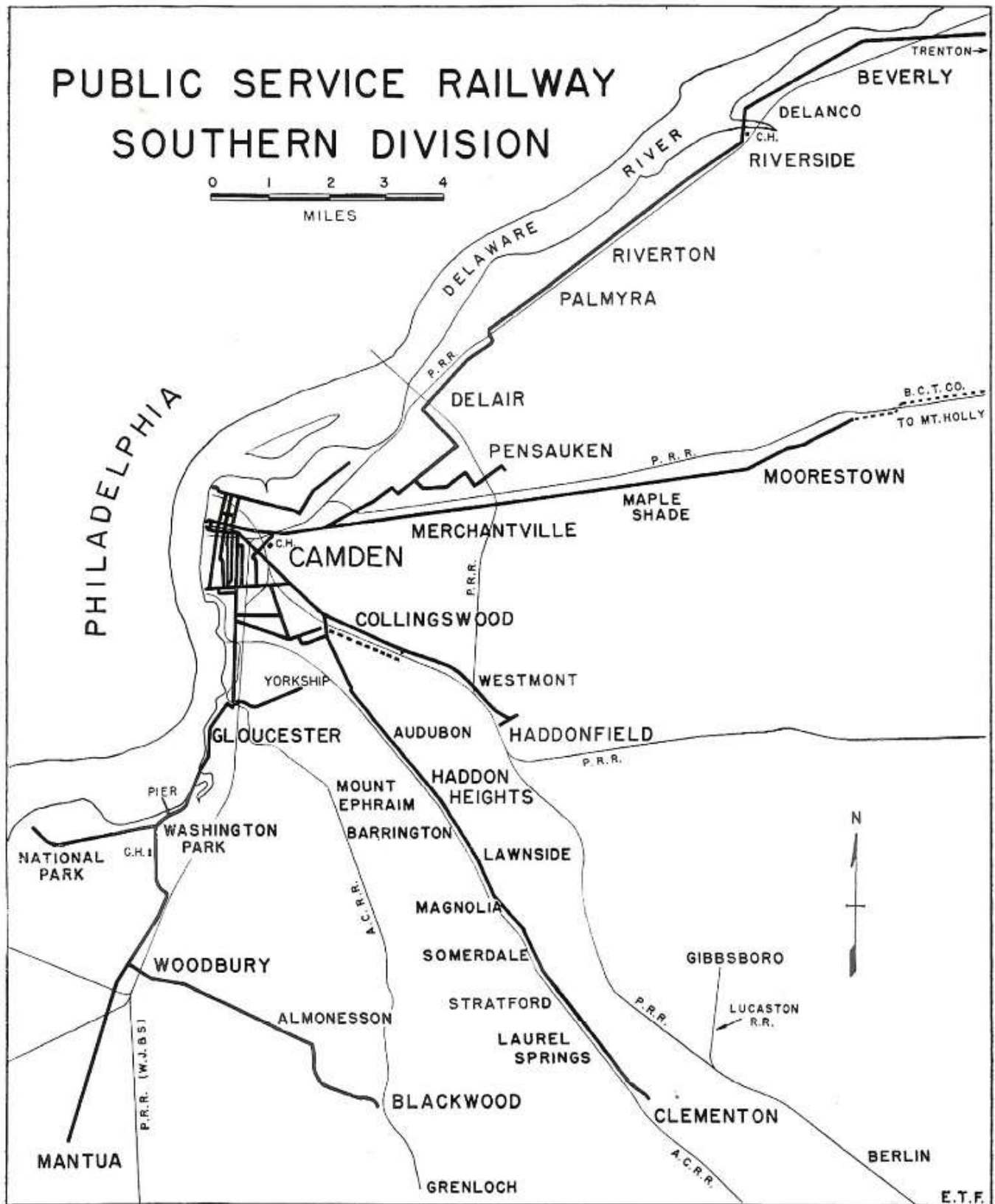
**October 24, 1925** (Courier Post) – *Trolley tracks along the Mantua Pike from South Woodbury to Mantua are being torn up and gravel being placed in the holes. In placing buses on the route instead of the trolleys, officials of the Public Service Company said they can now give riders better service. Rumors that the trolley would again be placed on the pike fell through when the workmen started tearing on the tracks.*

**November 29, 1932** (The Morning Post) – *Bitter cold weather of the last two days has created a brisk*

### WORD OF THE DAY

**NOGGING** (brick nog, nogging or noggod) is brickwork that fills the vacancies in a wooden frame. The technique was developed in England from the late 1400s to early 1500s. It is an integral part of the building structure that can also serve as fireproofing and soundproofing. The below recent photo shows one of the walls inside the Old Union Schoolhouse (the MTHC museum). A must see.





Map of trolley lines from 1919



## The Western Movement from Mantua Township By Herb Hood

Long before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies had been firmly established. Their major cities had been set up and were expanding. Their populations were growing. Their governments had been formed. Their economic growth was blossoming. There were even the beginnings, the roots, of westward expansion into the wilderness areas far beyond what might be considered as the reach of civilization of the times.

This westward movement was filled with dangers and hardships and required from the people who undertook it a kind of bravery and a willingness to accept the things that might impede their journey into the unknown, all for the promise of a better life. These westward moving pioneers had to travel over crude trails which would lead them to the Appalachian Mountains. One of the paths into the Ohio Valley and beyond was eventually known as the National Road. It was started in 1811 and completed by 1834.



By the early 19th Century, the wilderness of the Ohio country had given way to settlements. The road that George Washington had cut through the forest many years before called the Braddock Road, was replaced by the National Road.

In traveling to the western frontier these pioneers made use of wagons called Conestoga wagons. These wagons, first mentioned by a James Logan in 1717, were used by German settlers to transport goods to Philadelphia. They could carry a load of about 12,000 pounds, which is greater than the bomb load of WW II medium bombers. They were named after the Conestoga River in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The wagons were pulled by horses or

mules or oxen. The wagon's design kept its cargo stationary during transport and aided in the crossing of creeks and rivers, although they would leak unless caulked. This type of wagon was used extensively in the eastern United States and Canada. They were not very suitable for crossing the Great Plains. Most of the wagons making that journey were common farm wagons with a canvas top.



Conestoga Wagon

These early pioneers faced the possibility of having to fend off attacks by Native Americans and bandits. The threat of bad weather was always in the air as weather forecasting, as we know it today, did not exist. Struggling to get their overloaded wagons westward presented the risks of breakdowns and damaging accidents. There were creeks, rivers, and waterways to be crossed and fording places had to be found. Diseases threatened the well-being of these hearty pioneers. When they killed, the deceased could only be buried in graves along the sides of the trails, often times with only a crude marker showing their location. The families of the deceased would never again return to mourn their losses at the gravesides of these unfortunate souls. In fact, many of these westward going pioneers left behind loved ones buried in graveyards and cemeteries, both adults and children. In the Union Graveyard there are at least three children who are buried there whose parents and grandparents went west leaving them behind and never getting a chance to visit their graves again. Again, these gravesites would never again be visited by other family members. The memory of these deceased might only be carried by their pioneer families in their minds or through some kind of material object connected to the deceased or simply by a notation in a family Bible showing a birth and death date.

There were a number of people from Mantua Township, then part of Greenwich Township, that decided to make the journey west. The focus here is on three of them and their stories that can be told.

Mary Driver, the daughter of Samuel Driver and Keziah Twells, was born in Barnsboro on January 1, 1781. She was named after her grandmother, Mary Parks. Mary Driver grew up in Barnsboro living in the house that her grandfather, John Driver had built on a large tract of land that has been referred to in texts as “the Driver Tract” or “the Driver Estate” or “the Driver Plantation”. The house was still standing in the late 1960s.



The Driver Family Cemetery with the Driver House in the background



Closer View of the Old Driver House

Mary Driver was most likely raised in the Methodist faith, undoubtedly influenced by the Chew family. Two of her younger sisters, Kezia and Jane, married Chew Methodist preachers while a



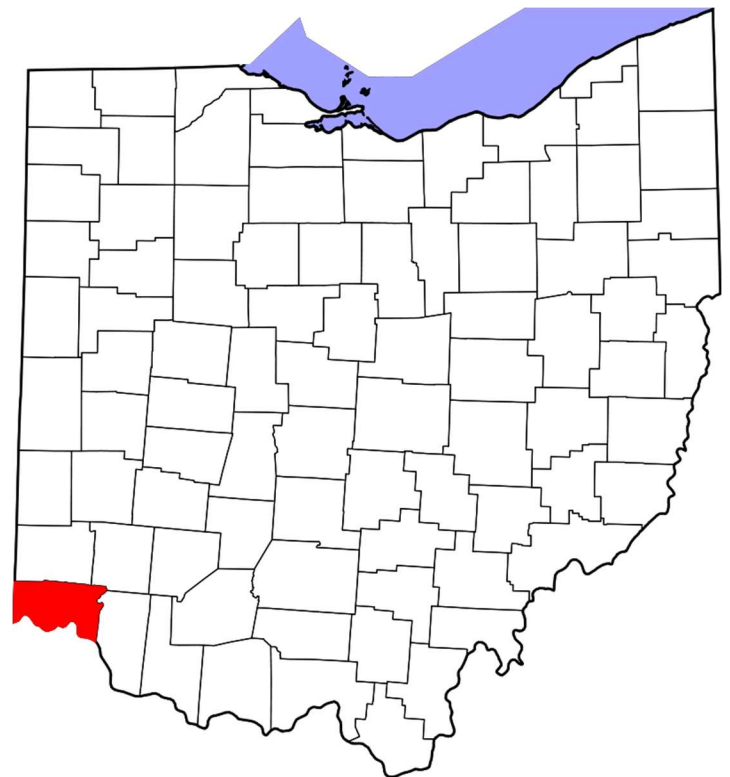
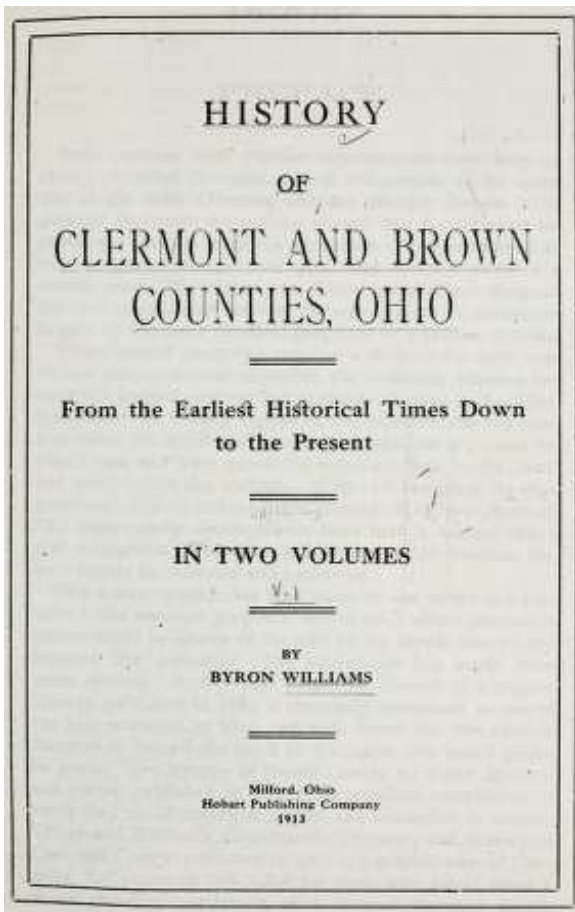
third younger sister, Martha, married another Chew who was the son of a Chew preacher.

Mary grew up and met David Dailey. David, also a Reverend, was born on April 3, 1761. His name appears on the tax lists for Greenwich Township at least as far back as 1793. Mary Driver and David Dailey were married by Reverend Richard Sneath at the Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church on February 14, 1799. Of the children of Mary and David, four of them were named after Mary's brother and sisters, John, Kezia, Jane, and Martha.

According to the book, History of Clermont and Brown Counties, Ohio, by Byron Williams, David Dailey and his family moved to Hamilton County, Ohio in 1824.

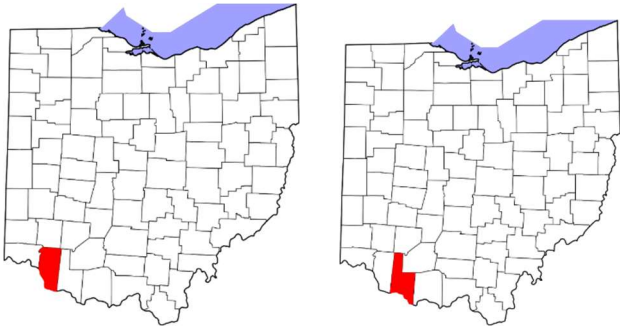


The Counties of Hamilton, Clermont and Brown are in the southwest of the state of Ohio.



Hamilton County, Ohio

Hamilton County was founded February 2, 1790.



Clermont County, Ohio Brown County, Ohio

Clermont County was founded on December 6, 1800, the first deed having been recorded on February 20, 1796. George Washington owned three parcels of land in Clermont County. Brown County was founded on March 1, 1818.

David Dailey and members of his family are buried in Cheviot which is in Hamilton County, Ohio. The children include Keziah, born in New Jersey in 1801 and died in Hamilton County on January 1, 1886, David, born on June 26, 1809, in New Jersey and died in Hamilton County, Ohio in 1872, Jane, born in 1815 in New Jersey and died in Hamilton County on September 12, 1865, and Martha, born in New Jersey in 1816, and died in Hamilton County on April 16, 1895. Another daughter, Emeline, was born in Ohio and died in Ohio.

Cheviot was founded in 1818 by a Scotsman named John Craig. Judging by the date of 1818, Cheviot was probably just beginning to grow as a community. Homesteading in that area was probably difficult.

Another person from the Mantua Township area to join the western movement was Reverend Elisha Dunham Chew. Reverend Elisha Dunham Chew, the son of Reverend Nathaniel Chew (born 1765) and grandson of Jesse Chew, Methodist preacher (1737-1812) was born on April 23, 1785, in Gloucester County, New Jersey. He died on March 18, 1876, in Oskaloosa, Mahaska, Iowa. On December 8, 1808, in Gloucester County, New Jersey he married

Elizabeth Heritage. Elizabeth was born on November 15, 1784. Elizabeth died on October 2, 1864, in Oskaloosa, Mahaska, Iowa. Elisha and Elizabeth are both buried in Forest Cemetery in Oskaloosa, Iowa.



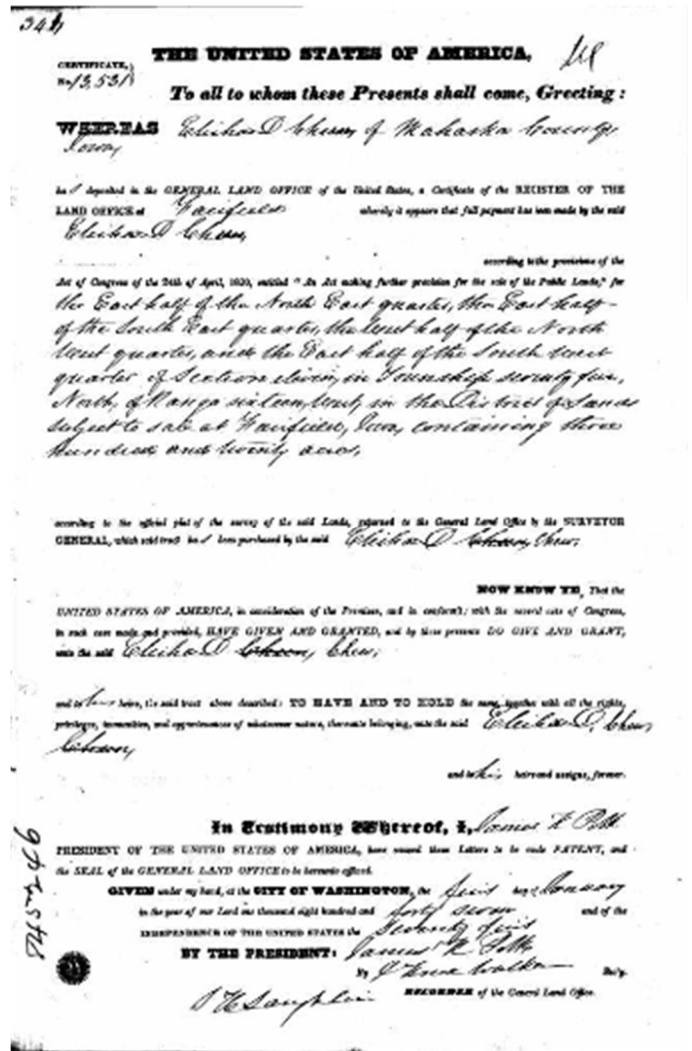
Headstone of Elizabeth *Heritage* Chew



Elisha bought land in Mahaska County.



Headstone of Elisha Dunham Chew



### TRIVIA TIME PICTURE



### TRIVIA TIME QUESTION

The picture on the left is a medicine for small children. Where could it be purchased?

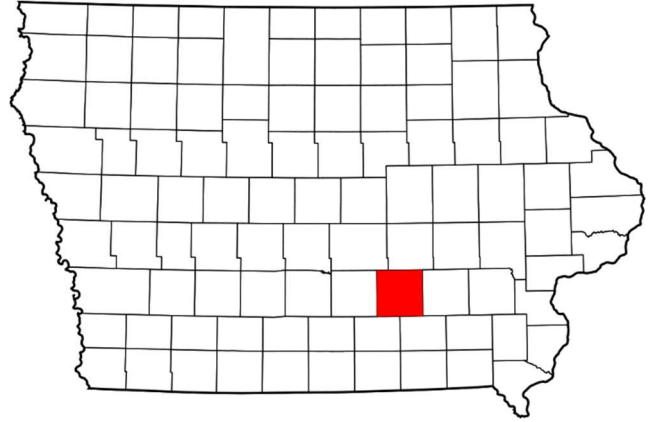
- A. Charles Smith, grocery store, Mantua
- B. D. Kirkbride, grocery store, Barnsboro
- C. Mantua Food Market, Mantua
- D. Sally Maud's Kiddy Korner, general store, Sewell





Elisha Dunham Chew

The children of Elisha were Asa Smith Chew (1809-1886), Elijah W. Chew (1812-1890), Anna H. Chew (1814-1896), James Stiles Chew (1816-1896), Sarah Springer Chew (1820-1905) and Burrows Chew (1824-1916).



Mahaska County, Iowa

The third person from Mantua Township to be talked about is Reverend Nathaniel Chew, brother of Reverend Elisha Dunham Chew. Reverend Nathaniel Chew was born on November 10, 1786, in Gloucester City, Gloucester County, New Jersey. His wife was Keziah Driver. She was born in Barnsboro, New Jersey on October 26, 1785. She died in 1812. Keziah is the daughter of Samuel Driver (1757, Barnsboro, New Jersey – March 17, 1806, Greenwich Township, New Jersey) and Keziah Twells (1759, Gloucester County – April 11, 1825, Barnsboro, New Jersey). Nathaniel and Keziah had a daughter named Sarah Driver Chew who was born on December 28, 1805, and died in Carpenter's Landing, Gloucester County, New Jersey on May 30, 1834. She married John Cawman Eastlack. Sarah is buried in the Mantua Union Cemetery.

Rev. Elisha D. Chew was born October 25, 1785 in Gloucester County, New Jersey. He died March 18, 1876 in Oaskaloosa, Mahaska Co., Iowa. He was married to Elizabeth Heritage, daughter of Richard Heritage and Anna Stiles Heritage, December 29, 1808 in Gloucester County. She was born November 15, 1784 in Gloucester County and died October 2, 1864 in Iowa. (Tombstone Record)

Elisha D. Chew remarried in Iowa Dec. 19, 1866 to Mrs. Martha Myers. (She had two children). About one year after said marriage, they separated.

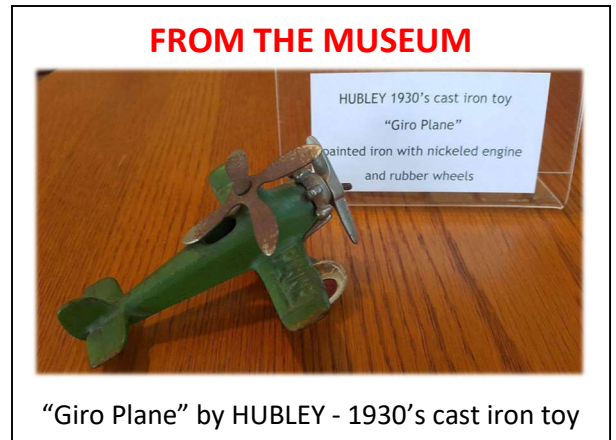
Elisha D. Chew preached in New Jersey, Philadelphia and Iowa. He moved to Iowa in 1845 and took up government land. He set aside one acre of this land for a cemetery and here many of the Chews of Iowa and buried.

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In Notes of Old Gloucester County Elisha D. Chew is mentioned as performing the marriage ceremony of a Rev. Nathaniel Chew in Iowa.

Elisha was very Puritanical about his dress, so much so that when the old "barn door" pants went out of style and ones of new design came in he refused to wear them, saying "they were the work of the Devil."

Mrs. William W. Wood,  
Oakland, California  
(a descendant) 1942.



"Giro Plane" by HUBLEY - 1930's cast iron toy





Sarah – Chew – Eastlack

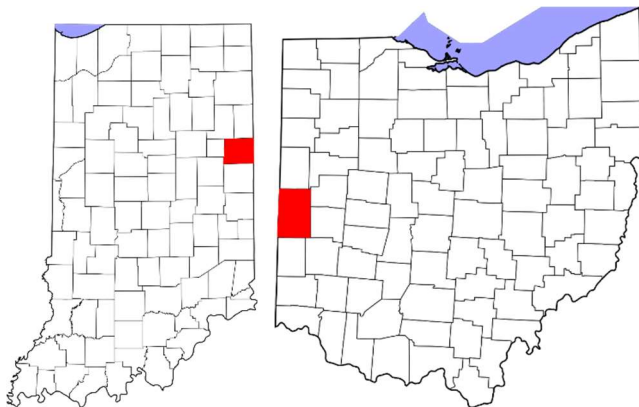


Ezekiel Cooper Chew

After the death of his wife, Keziah, Nathaniel married a second time to Mary West in Gloucester County, New Jersey about 1812. Mary was born in Gloucester County, New Jersey on June 17, 1795, and died in Gloucester County on February 27, 1848. Mary is the daughter of Job West and Sarah Jackson. Mary is buried in the Jesse Chew Cemetery. Nathaniel and Mary had two children. Ezekiel Cooper Chew was born on January 17, 1822, Gloucester County, New Jersey and died on August 27, 1888, St. Joseph, Indiana. He was a medical doctor, earning his degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. He practiced medicine in Darke County, Ohio and Jay County, Indiana.



The other child was a daughter named Rebecca West Chew (April 17, 1814 – April 10, 1893). Her husband's name was Charles Lock. Mary is buried in the Bethel Methodist Church Cemetery.

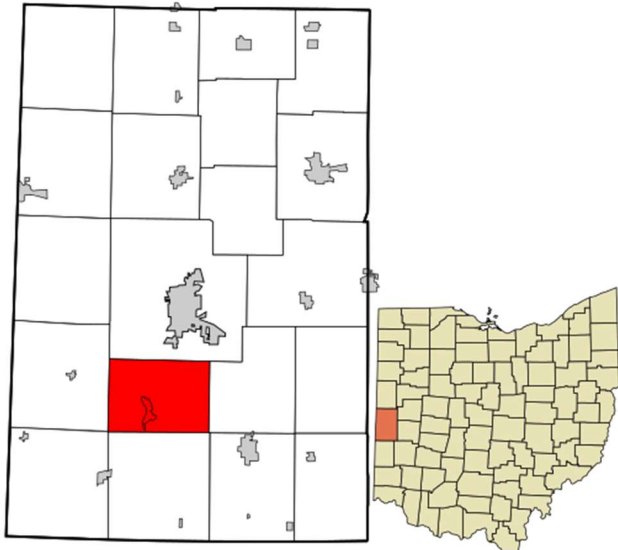


Jay County, Indiana

Darke County, Ohio

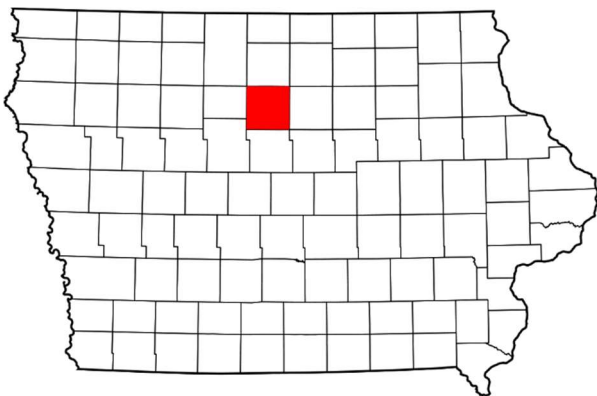
Sometime after the death of his wife, Mary West, Nathaniel moved west where on December 10, 1848, in Mahaska County, Iowa he married Nancy Mosier. The wedding was performed by his brother, Reverend Elisha Chew.

Nathaniel eventually moved to Ohio where the Federal Census of 1860 lists him as living in Neave, Darke County, Ohio in the household of Ezekiel Chew, his son from his second marriage. That census lists Nathaniel as being born in New Jersey as well as being a Methodist Episcopal Minister.

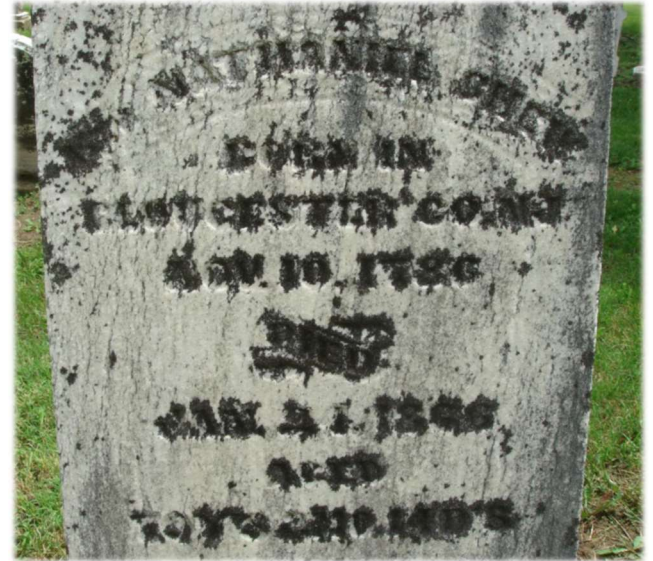
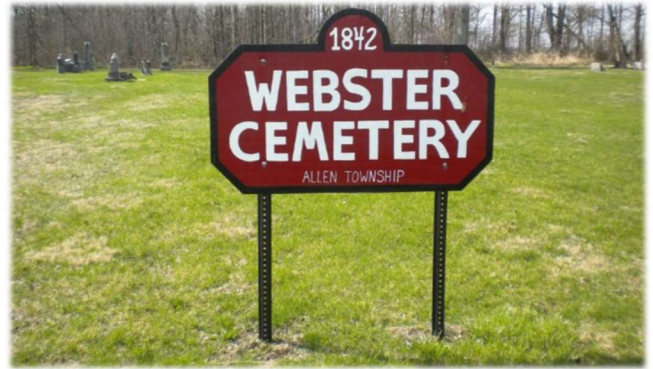


Neave, Darke County, Ohio

Nathaniel died on January 24, 1866, in Iowa City, Wright County, Iowa. He is buried in the Webster Cemetery in Rossburg, Drake County, Iowa. His headstone states that he was born in Gloucester County, New Jersey.



Wright County, Iowa \*



Reverend Nathaniel Chew is an example of a person who left behind loved ones buried in Graveyards and Cemeteries in New Jersey, never to visit them again.

**TALES FROM THE GRAVE**

**Lucinda Rebecca Polley** – Lucinda was born on August 15, 1848, and died on September 3, 1849. She is buried in the Union Graveyard. Her parents, Reverend Clark Polley and Eunice Melissa Couch moved to Cape May County. When Melissa died, Reverend Clark Polley relocated to Kentucky, then to Tennessee and finally to Florida, leaving his deceased daughter behind in Mantua.



## THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Mantua Township is filled with incredible human history. Preserving what we know, and discovering and uncovering the things that we do not know is part of the Mantua Township Historical Commission's mission. It is nearly every day that we reveal something that was not known by those living today. Forgotten stories, locations and artifacts are being restored and then presented through this bulletin, in our museum and library, and at certain historic locations in the township. This issue of our Quarterly Bulletin takes you down the tracks of the short-lived trolley and discusses the Western movement from the area. Prior bulletins introduce you to the old schoolhouses, a returned bell, the Veterans of long ago, lost communities, and businesses that were left behind by progress.

Much genealogical research has been and continues to be done for the historic residents of Mantua Township. Our knowledge about the local cemeteries and graveyard has greatly improved over the past few years. We have identified and cataloged nearly all of the standing headstones in the Union Graveyard. Not only the names and dates, but the story behind many of those buried. We have a better understanding of the history of the local Driver and Chew Family Cemeteries and continue to investigate. With this, we are now able to present a more informed tour of these locations and share greater details about the families and their roles in the community.

We strive to grow, and we encourage you to be a part of the process. Share with us and others your family story, what you remember, your old photographs and vintage items. Each day lived is another day further from the past. Consider making this your New Year's Resolution.

## RECENT NEWS

**October 21** – We had a wonderful, as we gave a public tour of the Mantua Methodist Church Cemetery, the Jesse Chew Family Cemetery, the Driver Family Cemetery, the Mount Zion Cemetery, and the Union Graveyard, all located in Mantua Township. The morning and afternoon tours were wrapped up with a museum tour and light refreshments. Thank you to those who attended and to all the members of the Mantua Township Historical Commission for your hard work and dedication in making this event a success. A special thanks to our bus driver, Rhonda.



Secretary Carolyn Olsen and Commission member Art Olsen at the Mantua Methodist Church Cemetery



Visitors at the Jesse Chew Family Cemetery



Chairman Jeff Gellenthin and Visitors at the Mt. Zion Cemetery



Visitors at the Mantua Methodist Church Cemetery



Secretary Carolyn Olsen and Commission member Art Olsen at the Wenonah Cemetery



Vice Chairman Herb Hood, Commission member Tom Downing

We were also able to attend the Wenonah Cemetery Walk and Picnic (this cemetery is also located in Mantua Township) sponsored by the Wenonah Historical Society. It was a great way to cap off a long day of digging into the past.

### RECENT DONATIONS

**Kathy MacGregor** – Miscellaneous books including The Birth of America, Gone with the Wind, 1902 edition of the Sears Roebuck Catalogue (replica), The White House, a historic guide, Reminiscences of Old Gloucester by Isaac Mickle – 1845.



**Jack and Pat Hart** - A lumber saw, wood construction clamps, bundle of deeds and maps associated with properties in Sewell, NJ.

**From the Estate of Janet E. Davis, Care of Kenneth and Francis Gregg, and Deanna and Charlie Kyser** – Vintage school teachers supplies, teaching aids and exhibits, Child’s Scripture Question and Answer Book – 1800’s, Scrapbooks, miscellaneous newspaper articles, Orol Ledden and Sons wooden crate, an antique toaster, garden tools, family and Sewell area photos, books including Life Book of WWII, The Civil War – 1963, Book of New Jersey (from Barnsboro School), America’s Story, miscellaneous Davis family documents and Sewell Baptist Church items memorabilia.

**Michael DiGiamberardino** - A vintage sled, two carpet beaters, music pupil’s lesson books belonging to his mother, Theresa Ratz – 1940-43.

### THANK YOU

Mayor Robert Zimmerman and the members of the Mantua Township Committee, for their continued support.

Barbara Price from the Gloucester County Historical Society for answering our research requests for documents, maps and pictures that have aided us in our own research activities.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Mantua Township Historic Commission

Location: 145 Mantua Boulevard

Mantua, New Jersey 08051

Mailing address: 401 Main Street

Mantua, New Jersey 08051

Hours are every Saturday from 10 AM to Noon or by appointment

856-630-9704

[mthc1977@gmail.com](mailto:mthc1977@gmail.com)

### Our mission is to preserve and share the rich history of Mantua Township

Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/MantuaTownshipHistoricalCommission](http://www.facebook.com/MantuaTownshipHistoricalCommission)

### MEMBERS

Jeff Gellenthin – Chairman

Herb Hood – Vice Chairman

Carolyn Olsen – Secretary

Kathy MacGregor

Carolyn Harris

Debbie Gellenthin

Tom Downing

Barbara Heitman

Art Olsen

### Contributors, Authors, and Editors of this Bulletin

Jeff Gellenthin

Herb Hood

Debbie Gellenthin, photographer

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### TRIVIA ANSWER

The correct answer “B”, D. Kirkbride, grocery store, Barnsboro. The Kirkbride store was a “fixture” in Barnsboro for over 180 years. It sat across the street from the Barnsboro Inn. The location still serves the community as the home of Jim’s Family Style Pizza.

The Mantua Township Historical Commission is accepting donations of historic pictures, documents and stories related to the Township’s past.

Merry Christmas and Happy New  
Year from the Mantua Township  
Historical Commission  
And from Mantua Township's Past



The above Christmas cards are from the John (Jack) and Aletha Heritage Collection.  
The Heritage's lived on Tyler's Mill Road in Barnsboro, N.J.