



Our Old Bookcase, August 31, 2017, Western Ohio Electric Railway Bridge over C.H. & D. Railroad

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**Photo caption:** Note the wooden pile trestle structure of the Western Ohio Electric Railway Bridge, over the Train on the C.H. & D. Railroad at Robb Avenue east of North Main Street, in Lima, Ohio.

### **OUR OLD BOOK CASE**

***By Joyce L. Alig, President, Mercer County Historical Society***

I love this old postcard photograph of the Western Ohio Electric Interurban Car traveling under electric power, over the bridge above the train on the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton Railroad Track. Note the network of support for the electric wires which provide power for the Electric Interurban Car. The post card was sent by "Golda" at Lima, to Mrs. George Tester, at Rockford, Ohio May 2, 1911.

I have written about the C.H. & D. (Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton) Railroad history with references to its track through Mercer County and Western Ohio, as well as the various owners of that railroad, from start to finish in Mercer County. This railroad connected Toledo, Delphos and Shanes Crossing (Rockford) prior to 1881, when it was extended to Mendon, Mercer, Oregon Station, Celina, Montezuma, Chickasaw, St. John's Station, Steineman Station and then to Dayton, Hamilton & Cincinnati. The C.H. & D. discontinued operating in Mercer County in 1923. I assigned five pages of research resources to this Railroad, in the book, "***Passport, Mercer County Ohio History, Marion Township,***" printed by Messenger Press in 2012. These Township Passport Series are available through the Mercer County Historical Society.

I wrote about the Western Ohio Railway and the Interurban car on January 11, 2001, and January 28, 2016, in the area newspapers. Detailed resources are available from various publications. Scott D.

Trostel wrote the book, ***“The Lima Route,”*** about the area Interurban Cars which was published by CAM-TECH Pub., Fletcher, Ohio, 1998. Trostel’s book, ***“The Lima Route,”*** provides an overview of this history of the Western Ohio Railway, and related tracks here in Western Ohio. The 1986 ***“TIMELINE”*** magazine by the Ohio Historical Society carried an article about the Interurban by H. Roger Grant. George Nearing, published the book ***“Auglaize County Postcard Images,”*** with the Auglaize County Historical Society in 2008. Frank Shuffelton wrote about the Interurban, in his book, ***“The Saint Marys Story, 1823-1973,”*** printed by The Leader Printing Co., in 1973. Allen County Historical Society, Lima, has published articles about the Interurban. The area newspapers not only wrote about the Interurban, but also published the Western Ohio Railway Schedules.

Lima and Dayton had Electric Railway Centers. The Western Ohio Railway opened between Wapakoneta and St. Marys and between St. Marys, New Bremen, Minster and Celina, in 1902. In 1903, the link was made to Toledo. In 1911, the Minster and Loramie Railway opened. Nearing wrote, *“In 1931, the Western Ohio abandoned its equipment and tractors were removed in New Bremen. The Minster Line was discontinued in 1932.”*

The wooden trestle structure, in the postcard photograph above, can be studied in the book, ***“A Treatise on Wooden Trestle Bridges, according to the Present Practice on American Railroads,”*** by Wolcott C. Foster, published by John Wiley & Sons, at New York in 1897. I found this book on my NOOK Reader, from Barnes and Noble.

Remember that the Mercer County Post Card, Post Office History, and Discontinued Post Office Post Mark exhibit on the second Sunday of November , November 12, at the Mercer County Historical Museum, 130 East Market, in Celina. Bring your Post Cards to show others, and while you are there, you can view the other post cards on exhibit. It would be great to see some postcard photographs of the Interurban cars of the Western Ohio Railway.

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