

**A GENERAL CHRONOLOGY
OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY
ITS PREDECESSORS AND SUCCESSORS
AND
ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

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1826

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- Jan. 6, 1826 Duff Green (1791-1875), a politician-entrepreneur and close friend of VP John C. Calhoun, begins publishing the *United States Telegraph* in Washington as a national organ of the anti-Adams forces. (EAH)
- Jan. 7, 1826 Sandusky *Clarion* published proposal for a railroad for a railroad to the Miami Canal at Dayton. (RRH)
- Jan. 10, 1826 Mathew Carey, writing in *United States Gazette*, concedes necessity for a portage road or railroad in place of the canal tunnel to cross Allegheny Mountain. (Rubin)
- Jan. 1826 New Board of Delaware & Raritan Canal Company elected giving greater control to New York, Newark and Elizabethtown investors. (Thompson)
- Jan. 31, 1826 Columbus & Sandusky Turnpike Company incorporated in Ohio to replace the canal originally projected on that route; organizers include William Neil of Neil, Moore & Co., the "stage coach king of Columbus"; company later gets a federal land grant of 27,000 acres. (PL, Marvin)
- Feb. 8, 1826 Pennsylvania Canal Commissioners issue first report; call for replacing summit canal tunnel with a portage railroad; recommend beginning canals at both ends and resolving crossing of mountains later. (CC)
- Feb. 8, 1826 Lancaster Canal Company incorporated in Ohio to build canal from Carroll to Lancaster. (McClelland)
- Feb. 9, 1826 Pennsylvania authorizes construction of Chesapeake & Ohio Canal within state after defeating two previous bills, providing it begins western section within three years and uses and federal funds equally between eastern and western ends; passage engineered by William Lehman to reduce western opposition to Pennsylvania Canal. (PL, Rubin, CHTP7)

- Feb. 10, 1826 Maryland House Committee on Internal Improvements reports in favor of creating a Board of Public Works; to subscribe \$1 million to Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, \$500,000 to a company linking it with Baltimore, and \$500,000 to a canal from Baltimore to York Haven. (Rubin)
- Feb. 1826 Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvement in the Commonwealth cuts initiation fee from \$100 to \$20 and annual dues from \$10 to \$5. (Rubin)
- Feb. 25, 1826 Commonwealth of Pa. authorizes construction of canal portions of Main Line of Public Works (Penna. Canal) between Middletown and Duncan's Island (Eastern Div.) and between Pittsburgh and Freeport (Western Div.); also the French Creek Feeder between Bemus Mill and Conneaut Lake; the latter is completely disconnected from the rest of the system but is the common portion of rival routes via Allegheny or Beaver/Shenango valleys; Board may appoint Acting Commissioners to superintend work at \$4 per day; \$300,000 appropriated. (PL); passes House 60-32 and Senate 19-14 (Klein)
- Feb. 28, 1826 Maryland legislative resolution calls for requesting U.S. Engineers to survey for canal from Baltimore to C&O Canal. (PL)
- Mar. 1, 1826 Tippecanoe County, Ind., created, and Lafayette established as county seat. (Vexler)
- Mar. 3, 1826 Canal Commissioners offer engineering jobs to James Geddes and Nathan S. Roberts (1776-1852) of New York. (CC)
- Mar. 4, 1826 Canal Commissioners ask Sylvester Welch (-) to report for work on Eastern Division Canal. (CC)
- Mar. 4, 1826 Granite Railroad incorporated in Massachusetts; oldest component of New Haven system.
- Mar. 6, 1826 Canal Commissioners recommend increasing the number of Commissioners from five to nine to prevent recent difficulties in securing a quorum with Commissioners who serve part-time; also to allow all Commissioners to disburse money instead of only Acting Commissioners as at present. (CC)
- Mar. 6, 1826 State of Maryland subscribes \$500,000 to Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, providing Congress subscribes \$1 million; also appropriates \$500,000 for a canal between Baltimore and Washington, \$500,000 for a railroad from Baltimore to York Haven, and \$200,000 for improving rivers on the Eastern Shore, none of which are actually made. (verify)

- Mar. 8, 1826 Susquehanna & Patapsco Canal Company incorporated in Maryland to build from Baltimore up Susquehanna River to York Haven; old Susquehanna Canal can merge with it if it subscribes \$150,000. (PL)
- Mar. 10, 1826 Canal Commissioners accept William Strickland's terms for employment; set this season's surveys as: Philadelphia to New York state line via North Branch of Susquehanna and between Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers via Cumberland Valley, Conococheague, Mononcacy or Conewago Creeks; authorize secretary to ask Secretary of War for loan of U.S. Engineers. (CC)
- Mar. 11, 1826 Canal Commissioners hire William Strickland as Engineer at \$3,000 per year plus expenses, effective Apr. 1; to evaluate work of surveyors and especially lay out Eastern Division from Middletown to the Juniata with assistant, Samuel Honeyman Kneass. (CC)
- Mar. 13, 1826 Canal Commission Pres. John Sergeant and Strickland view Susquehanna from Middletown to mouth of Juniata; find that the Harrisburg Canal, Fire Insurance & Water Company has already staked out much of the route sought by the state between Stony Creek and Harrisburg; in the first mile there is only room for one canal at foot of mountain. (CC)
- Mar. 1826 Maryland Canal Company incorporated to build from Baltimore to Georgetown. (Rubin - what PL - apparently part of Gen. Improvement Act)
- Mar. 17, 1826 After a personal interview, Canal Commissioners agree to employ James Geddes, who is to locate a canal from the mouth of the Juniata up the Susquehanna, West Branch and Sinnemahoning Creek across to the confluence of the Kiskiminetas and the Allegheny. (CC)
- Mar. 21, 1826 Gen. Simon Bernard issues preliminary report on Chesapeake & Ohio Canal east of Alleghenies; cost of \$8 million is four times previous estimates. (Ward)
- Mar. 28, 1826 Pennsylvania places further restrictions on Delaware & Raritan Canal; combined with engineer's estimate of \$3 million kills project; New York investors withdraw funds. (PL, Thompson)
- Apr. 1, 1826 Commonwealth of Pa. establishes Internal Improvement Fund and state borrowing to finance canals; Secretary of Commonwealth, Auditor General and State Treasurer are to constitute Commissioners of Internal Improvement Fund; authorizes first state loan of \$300,000 for canal construction; existing state debt was then \$1.84 million; funds earmarked for paying interest on the improvement bonds are grossly inadequate, in expectation of income from tolls that never materialize, unlike New York's fund, which makes no reliance on toll income; act also appropriates \$20,000 for improving North Branch of Susquehanna. (PL, Bishop)

- Apr. 4, 1826 Peter Kean of Elizabethtown elected Pres. of Delaware & Raritan Canal Company, replacing John N. Simpson, who is forced out. (Thompson)
- Apr. 4, 1826 Maryland act creates Board of Public Works to plan roads and canals. (PL)
- Apr. 5, 1826 Canal Commissioners hire Nathan S. Roberts, formerly of Erie Canal, as engineer at \$3,000 per year plus expenses; assigned to Western Division to survey between Pittsburgh and mouth of Kiskiminetas River; appoint James Dunlop Harris (1797-1842) of Bellefonte as his assistant (CC); Harris is son of James Harris (1755-1825), state legislator and co-founder of Bellefonte. (Cummings)
- Apr. 5, 1826 New Brunswick Steam Ferry Company replaces *Legislator* with *Long Branch*; runs against *Emerald* of New Exchange Line controlled by Vanderbilt and Gibbons; they soon drive it out of business by cutting fare to \$2. (Lane)
- Apr. 6, 1826 Pennsylvania, Delaware & Maryland Steam Navigation Company incorporated in Md. to operate a through line between Baltimore and Philadelphia with a land portage between the head of Chesapeake Bay and the Delaware River (PL); organized with William Meeteer Pres. (Holmes)
- Apr. 6, 1826 Maryland Canal Company incorporated in Maryland to build from Baltimore to point on C&O Canal; state may subscribe \$500,000. (PL - or 3/6? or 4/4?)
- Apr. 6, 1826 Maryland act authorizes state subscription of \$500,000 to Susquehanna & Patapsco Canal. (PL)
- Apr. 7, 1826 Pennsylvania orders all estate taxes be paid into Internal Improvement Fund; \$20,000 appropriated for paying engineers and surveyors. (PL)
- Apr. 7, 1826 Columbia, Lancaster & Philadelphia Rail Road Company incorporated in Pennsylvania; does nothing. (PL)
- Apr. 7, 1826 Pennsylvania appoints Charles Treziyulney engineer of improvement of Susquehanna River (check PL)
- Apr. 7, 1826 Pennsylvania assents to Susquehanna & Patapsco Canal but must build side cuts into river opposite Columbia and mouth of Conestoga Creek. (PL)
- Apr. 8, 1826 Danville & Pottsville Railroad Company incorporated by Daniel Montgomery (1765-1831) of Danville, George W. Smith (1800-1876), Mark Richards (1785?-1843), et al. to link Schuylkill and Susquehanna Rivers between Pottsville and Danville with branch to Sunbury; may hold

1,000 acres of coal lands, providing are more than five miles from Pottsville. (PL)

- Apr. 10, 1826 On recommendation of Canal Commissioners, Pennsylvania act increases number of Commissioners from five to nine, giving more representation to branch line advocates. (PL)
- Apr. 10, 1826 Pennsylvania act establishes basic operating rules for canals and provides for penalties for injuring or misusing works. (PL)
- Apr. 10, 1826 Pennsylvania appropriates \$500 to clear Penns Creek to Spring Mills. (PL)
- Apr. 10, 1826 Canal Commissioners appoint James Geddes as Engineer to survey from the mouth of the Juniata up the Susquehanna to the West Branch and across to the Allegheny River via Tobys Creek and the Clarion River; William Wilson appointed assistant. (CC)
- Apr. 12, 1826 Report of James Shriver, U.S. assistant civil engineer, on survey for canal between C&O Canal and Juniata River via Wills Creek presented to House of Representatives. (Rept)
- Apr. 1826 Canal Commissioners employ Sylvester Welch of the New York Canals to do engineering work in the Harrisburg area. (CC)
- Apr. 1826 New stagecoach line established between Pittsburgh and Cleveland. (Vexler)
- Apr. 17, 1826 Mohawk & Hudson Railroad Company, oldest component of New York Central System, incorporated in New York to bypass the numerous locks on the Erie Canal between Albany and Schenectady; charter granted on application of George W. Featherstonhaugh (1780-1866) of Duaneburgh, N.Y. (Stevens, GrnBk)
- Apr. 19, 1826 Union Canal Company of Pennsylvania orders Chief Engineer Canvass White to run survey up Swatara Creek to foot of Broad Mountain for extending a branch canal and investigating the potential of the coal trade at Pine Grove. (MB)
- Apr. 24, 1826 Canal Commissioners recommend a survey up the Juniata across to the Mouth of the Kiskiminetas, although using the Raystown Branch, rather than the Frankstown Branch as actually done later; hope to engage Canvass White of New York. (CC)
- May 8, 1826 Nathan S. Roberts reports that cheapest route for Western Division Canal is down west bank of Allegheny River, much to the consternation of Pittsburgh interests, who want it to terminate in the city; Commissioners set

- canal prism of Western Division at 40' x 4' x 28'. (CC)
- May 9, 1826 Canal Commissioners appoint Abner Lacock Acting Canal Commissioner in charge of Western Division; authorize a committee of Board to examine the Susquehanna from Northumberland to the New York state line. (CC)
- May 10, 1826 Canal Commissioners thank Gov. DeWitt Clinton for supplying copies of New York canal reports and answering questions. (CC)
- Spring 1826 Swartwout & Company purchase single-hull, double-ended ferry *George Washington* for Paulus Hook ferry; supposedly built for Catharine Street ferry on East River. (HC)
- May 17, 1826 Daniel Montgomery of Danville, Thomas Enochs of Allegheny County, Gen. John Phillips of Erie County and Charles Mowry (1777-1838) of Dauphin County added to Board of Canal Commissioners by Gov. Shulze. (CC)
- May 19, 1826 Canal Commissioners order James Geddes, Nathan S. Roberts, Canvass White or any two of them to meet with Strickland at Harrisburg and help fix the final location between Middletown and the mouth of the Juniata; Harrisburg Canal, Fire Insurance & Water Company breaks off all negotiations with state. (CC)
- May 22, 1826 U.S. House Committee on Roads & Canals supports \$20 million full canal from Washington to Pittsburgh. (Rubin)
- June 17, 1826 Canal Commissioners order Congressman John Mitchell (1781-1849) of Bellefonte, a skilled turnpike surveyor, to make canal surveys between the Susquehanna and the Potomac via the Cumberland Valley and also via Conococheague Creek; report have engaged Canvass White on same terms as Geddes, and he will report for duty in a few days; White also brings his assistant George T. Olmstead; a committee from Pittsburgh appears before Board and asks that the Western Division terminate in Pittsburgh, not on the west bank in Allegheny City as located by Roberts. (CC)
- June 19, 1826 Canal Commissioners appoint Charles Mowry Acting Commissioner for Eastern Division; fix dimensions of Eastern Division of larger size (prism 43' x 4'6" x 31') between Harrisburg and the Juniata to accommodate the water company; set locks as 85' x 17'; approve location of Western Division above Pine Creek to be on west bank as located by Roberts because of slips, but order Roberts and Strickland to resurvey on east bank between Pine Creek and Pittsburgh. (CC)
- June 19, 1826 Gov. Shulze approves William Strickland's location of Eastern Division. (Bishop)

- Summer 1826 Discussions held in Baltimore for a railroad to the west along the line of the National Road. (Dilts)
- Summer 1826 Capt. Stephen Harriman Long (1784-1864) and Lt. Isaac Ridgeway Trimble (1802-1888) survey for a "National Road" between Washington and Buffalo. (Dilts)
- July 4, 1826 Gov. John Andrew Schulze presides at groundbreaking ceremony for first portion of Pennsylvania Canal at Harrisburg.
- July 27, 1826 Mohawk & Hudson Railroad organized; controlled by investors in New York City. (Stevens)
- Aug. 9, 1826 Canal Commissioners meet at Pittsburgh and hear remonstrances against canal being on west bank; authorize David Bates Douglass (1790-1849) of West Point to examine and give his opinion on location; in afternoon, Douglass and Strickland issue a joint report, and Commissioners authorize crossing the canal back to the east bank with an aqueduct at Pine Creek. (CC)
- Aug. 12, 1826 Canal Commissioners meet at Meadville to view Conneaut Summit; ask Secretary of War that Topographical Engineers now working on routes between Lake Erie and the Ohio River as extension of the C&O Canal give any useful information to D.B.Douglass for use by Canal Commission. (CC)
- Aug. 1826 Pennsylvania Improvement Society publishes a volume of Strickland's reports with plates but deletes Strickland's unqualified endorsement of railroads and substitutes a preface by the Society urging immediate construction of a canal. (Rubin)
- Aug. 23, 1826 Philadelphia, Dover & Norfolk Steamboat & Transportation Company begins operating steamboat *Norfolk* twice a week between Philadelphia and Dona Landing, connecting with *Philadelphia* between Seaford and Norfolk; runs through in 34:00 vs. 56:00 by outside route; uses steamboat *Franklin* on Delaware and *Norfolk* and *Philadelphia* on Chesapeake Bay. (Alexander, Gibb - Gibb has begun ca. 1825)
- Aug. 24, 1826 Union Canal Company of Pennsylvania accepts Frederick Graff's recommendation for a steam pump at Lebanon and approves contract with Joshua Malin of Pittsburgh for a steam engine. (MB)
- Sep. 12, 1826 James Geddes makes report on survey by northern route between Susquehanna and Allegheny Rivers; can't use the West Branch-Sinnemahoning summit as it is too long and dry; has stopped there because

the area to the west down the Clarion Valley is a perfect wilderness. (CC)

- Sep. 12, 1826 William Morgan abducted after being released from jail in Canandaigua, N.Y. and never seen again; rumor spreads that he was murdered because he was about to expose the secrets of the Order of Free & Accepted Masons; sparks the rapid formation of an Anti-Masonic political movement, which attains great strength in New York and Pennsylvania and shapes state politics for the next dozen years; Anti-Masonry is a radical populist movement (elites of both parties, including Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, were usually Masons); associated with Evangelical Calvinist Christianity (Masons were seen as Enlightenment freethinkers or neo-pagans), with rural areas and small towns, and with transplanted New England Yankee culture; Anti-Masons often support entrepreneurship, but of a small-town type opposed to wealthy urban merchants; also support free schools, abolition, and other programs of social improvement. (Fox,)
- Sep. 13, 1826 Canal Commissioners resolve it is inexpedient to proceed with Western Division south of Pine Creek; authorize construction of aqueduct over the Allegheny at Freeport, thus committing to the west bank location; order Geddes to make a sketchy reconnaissance from the summit to Foxburg on the Allegheny and then full survey down to Freeport and up to French Creek; he is to examine the Clarion River when the water is higher. (CC)
- Oct. 7, 1826 Granite Railway opens at Quincy, Mass.; first permanent commercial railroad in U.S.; used to carry granite blocks for the Bunker Hill Monument from a quarry three miles to a dock on the Neponset River; designed and built by Gridley Bryant (1789-1867). (Humphrey)
- Oct. 10, 1826 Pa. Gov. John A. Shulze reelected in landslide of 73,710 to 1,175 for Federalist John Sergeant; other factions not yet ready for open warfare, and Jackson and Calhoun supporters waiting to consolidate their power in the next Legislature. (Klein)
- Oct. 1826 Swartwout & Company dissolved; Cadwallader D. Colden surrenders lease of Paulus Hook ferry to Associates of the Jersey Company, who assume actual operation. (HC)
- Oct. 16, 1826 Stockton & Darlington Railway becomes first in world to begin a regular, scheduled revenue passenger service; passenger cars remain horse-drawn until 1833. (James)
- Oct. 26, 1826 General Simon Bernard issues final report on Chesapeake & Ohio Canal; estimates cost for canal of enlarged dimensions required by federal government at \$22.4 million, \$10 million for portage section alone; Western Division changed from Youghiogheny to Casselmans River route; considers either full canal or portage railroad with inclined planes to cross Allegheny

Mountain. (Ward [no date] - Rubin, Dilts have 10/23 - \$30 million, Sanderlin has 10/23, \$22 m - notes backers want smaller canal costing \$5-6 million)

- Nov. 1826 New Congress elected hostile to tariff and internal improvements. (Ward - verify)
- Nov. 10, 1826 Oden Bowie (1826-1894), future Pres. of Baltimore & Potomac Railroad and Governor of Maryland, born at "Fairview", the family estate in Prince Georges County, Md. (Sobel)
- Nov. 1826 New survey for Maryland Canal Company by Dr. William Howard finds route to Little Falls practicable with deep cut. (NilesReg)
- Nov. 22, 1826 Report of Susquehanna Commissioners notes extensive interference with navigation caused by fish traps, even installed by local residents on commissioners' own wing dams.
- Nov. 29, 1826 New Jersey legislative committee agrees that Pennsylvania has not assented to Delaware & Raritan Canal charter and orders return of \$100,000 bonus; liquidation of company is completed early 1828 at a loss of about \$20,000. (Thompson)
- Dec. 4, 1826 *George Washington* and *Richard Varick* reported on Cortlandt Street ferry; latter was designed as a team-boat to be called *General Jackson*, but converted to steam during construction. (HC)
- Dec. 1826 Jacksonians in Pennsylvania Legislature begin purge of all officers opposed to Jackson's presidential candidacy; Joseph Ritner (1780-1869), spokesman for the wool-growing region of southwestern Pennsylvania who had broken with the Jacksonians on the Woolens Bill, removed as Speaker of the Assembly; Ritner becomes a leader of the Anti-Masons. (Klein)
- Dec. 6, 1826 John Mitchell reports to Canal Commissioners on survey for canal between Juniata and Potomac Rivers via Cumberland Valley, Conococheague and Monocacy routes; Canvass White reports on best means of crossing the Susquehanna at Duncans Island at the mouth of the Juniata; George Mifflin Dallas (1792-1864), leader of the "Family Party" faction, secretly appointed a Commissioner in place of Robert M. Patterson. (CC)
- Dec. 6, 1826 Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Convention reconvenes at Washington to review Bernard's report; includes eight delegates from Baltimore; supporters believe estimate is too high and press for resurvey. (Sanderlin, Rept)
- Dec. 7, 1826 James Geddes reports on survey between mouth of Kiskiminetas River and French Creek. (CC)

- Dec. 8, 1826 Canal Commissioners elect William Darlington Pres., replacing John Sergeant, resigned to be U.S. delegate to Panama Congress. (CC, Scharf)
- Dec. 9, 1826 Canal Commissioners authorize a questionnaire to be sent to each of the counties asking for information on their productions, commerce and views on the impact of canals; William Strickland reports on resurvey of uppermost level of Eastern Division. (CC)
- Dec. 22, 1826 Baltimore committee appointed in reaction to small size of canal authorized in Susquehanna & Patapsco Canal charter of 1826; citizens lobby for a canal of equal dimensions of Pennsylvania state canals. (Rept.)
- Dec. 27, 1826 New Jersey authorizes first Delaware & Raritan Canal Company to surrender charter. (PL)
- 1826 Because of Erie Canal, eastern goods reach Columbus, Ohio, from New York in 20 days at \$2.50 per cwt., vs. 30 days and \$5 from Philadelphia.
- 1826 New York act orders a survey at public expense through Southern Tier counties untouched by Erie Canal; need to cross at least three high summits makes project unattractive. (Minor - date act, when report?)
- 1826 John Potter, a wealthy Scotch-Irish merchant from Charleston, S.C., moves to Princeton, the home of his son-in-law, Robert F. Stockton. (Watkins)
- 1826 Steamboat *New Philadelphia* launched at Kensington for R.L. & E.A. Stevens. (Alexander)
- 1826 Through father's political connections, William B. Foster, Jr. (1808-1860), joins Canal Commissioner's engineering corps as an axeman. (Hare)
- 1826 Congress subscribes \$100,000 to Louisville & Portland Canal Company to build canal around the Falls of the Ohio.
- 1826 Potawatomis cede strip of land in Indiana lying north of the Wabash and east of the Tippecanoe River.
- 1826 Louis Campeau establishes Grand Rapids, Mich., as a trading post where several Indian trails converge at the rapids of the Grand River.
- ca. 1826 First multi-boat packet line begins operating on Ohio River between Cincinnati and Louisville.
- 1826 Financial panic in New York in later part of year caused by money shortage. (Wyckoff)

