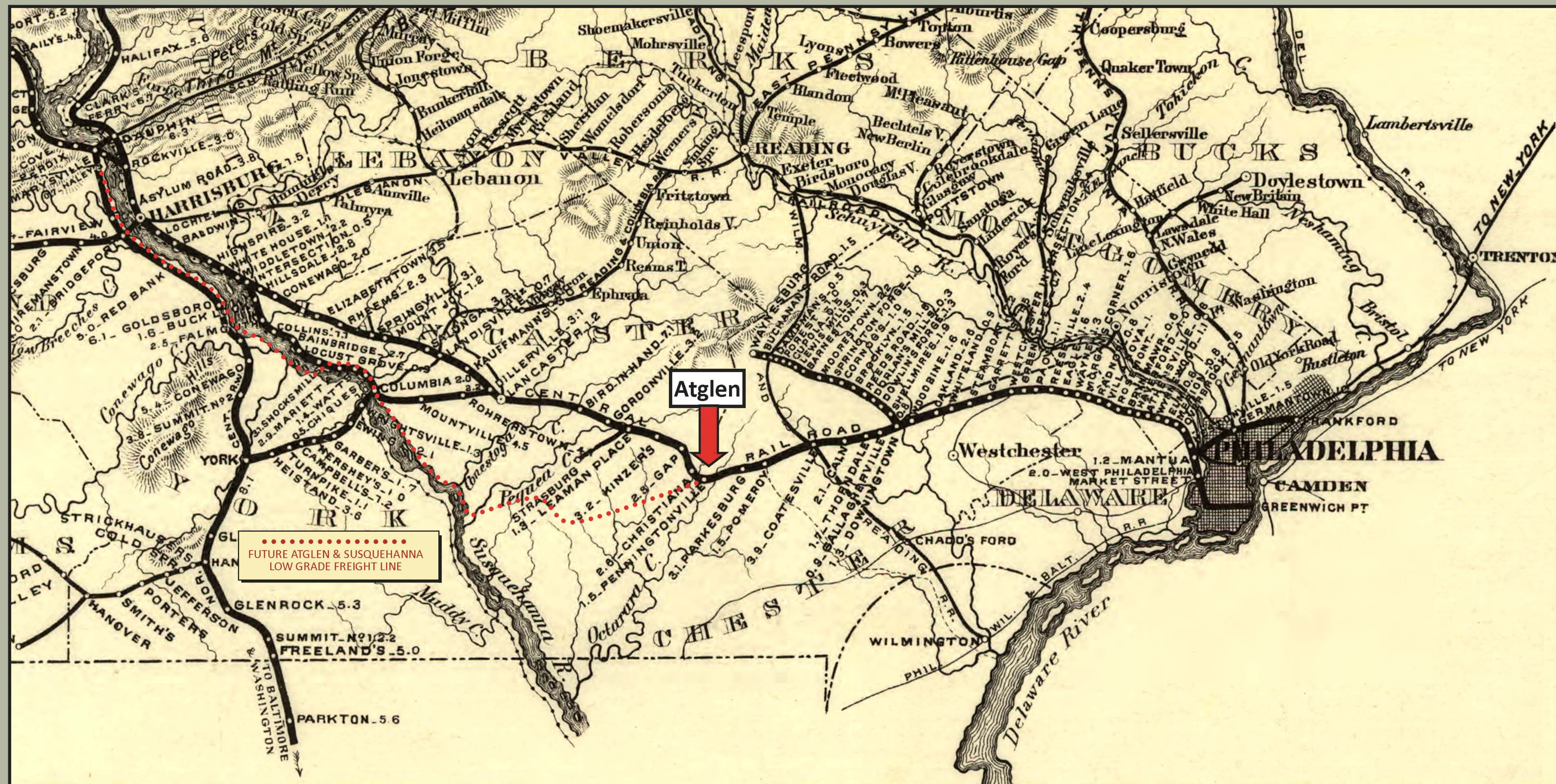


A Perfect Freight Road Blazes West

The Atglen & Susquehanna in the Borough of Atglen

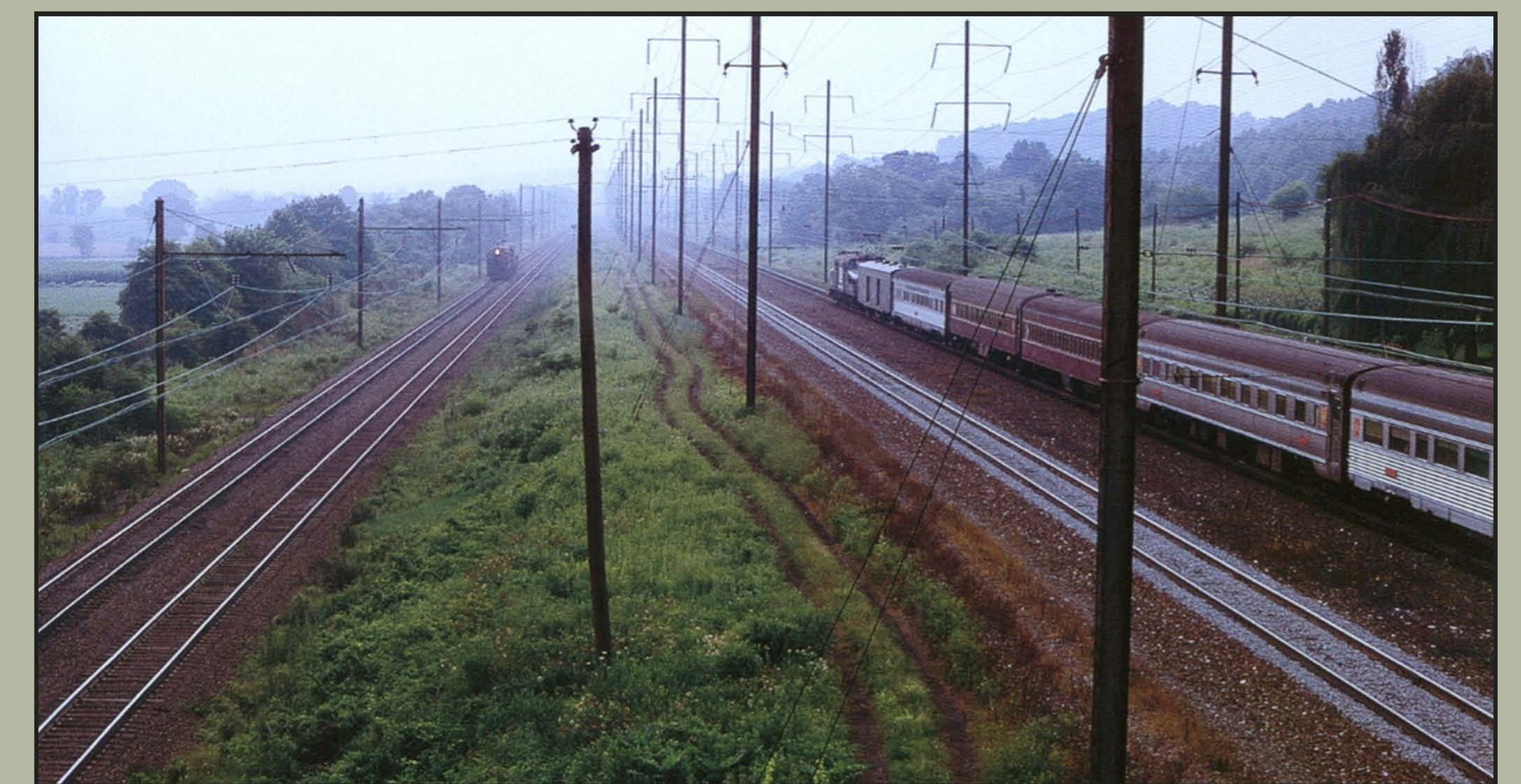


Portion of 1871 map of the Philadelphia and Erie Railway, branches and connecting lines.

Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington, DC.



Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, PA.



James P. Shuman, from the book PRR Facilities in Color, Volume 5: Harrisburg Div. Passenger



James P. Shuman photograph, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, PHMC.



Southern Lancaster County Historical Society, Quarryville, PA.

When construction of the A&S began in 1903 (lower left image), the Borough of Atglen (formerly Penningtonville) was no stranger to the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) and its predecessors. Penningtonville was an important stop on the 1830s route of the original state-chartered Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad. Atglen witnessed the full expansion of the PRR's main line (upper right image c.1909) and a remarkable advancement in railroad service—the A&S—a dedicated through-freight route. Westward from Atglen, the A&S distinguished itself as the PRR's premier freight road.

With its low grade and no eastern grade crossings, the A&S bolted west from Atglen on a nearly perfect tangent (see map, other panel). The PRR's passenger *and* freight-serving main line curved north, where trains slowed to climb a

steep grade through the historic "Gap" in Mine Ridge—the original 1830s route. Within Atglen, equally vital passenger and freight stations were pressed close to the PRR's surging four-track main line bound for Lancaster and Harrisburg (upper right image). Eastward to Philadelphia lay the congestion of frequent stops on the main line and all that Pennsylvanians knew of railroads after seven decades.

Separation of the two-track A&S from the four-track main line began in Parkesburg, where the A&S gracefully ducked under the two southern tracks of the main line (lower right image). Free of the main line, and all its track-hugging development, the A&S assumed its own route as it reached west to Atglen (middle right image). The precedent of a bold and unyielding road resonated throughout construction of the A&S.



John Dziobko, from the book PRR Facilities in Color, Volume 6: Harrisburg Div. Freight.