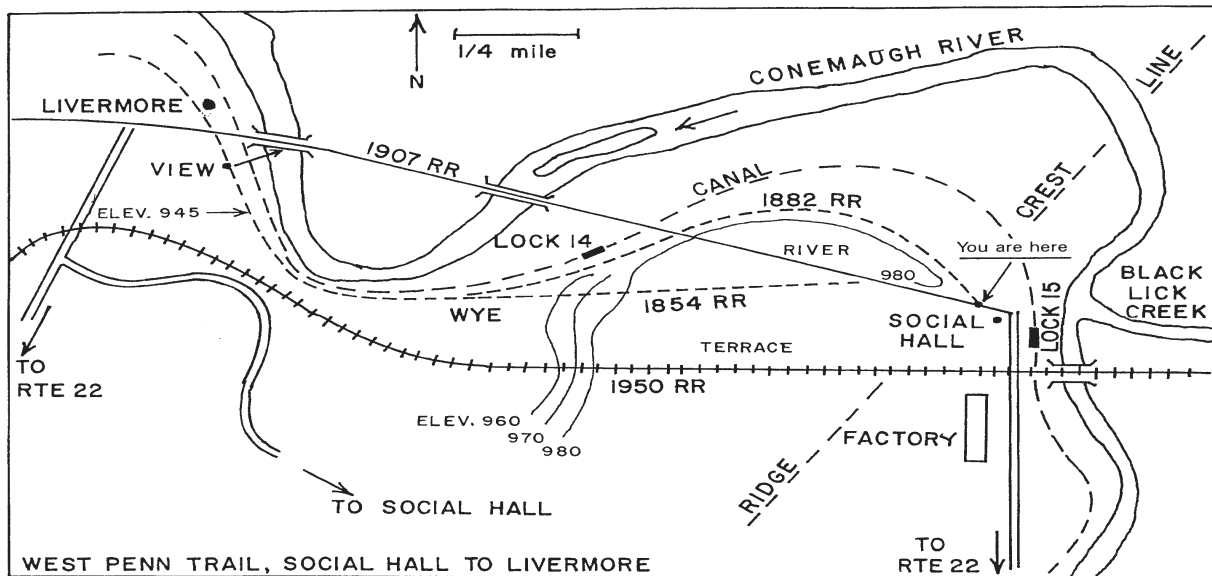


WEST PENN TRAIL at 1882 RR GRADE MERGE



In 1882, three major changes were made to the West Penn Railroad line. At Blairsville, the line was extended, up the north side of the river for 12 miles, to Bolivar. At Saltsburg, the canal was no longer in operation, so the railroad was relocated onto the canal right-of-way. Between Livermore and Social Hall, the steepness of the roadbed was decreased by curving the tracks around a hill, to avoid the previous straight-line climb immediately east of the new WYE. The original (1854) roadbed climbed 25 feet in a distance of only 0.88 miles on a gradient of 0.53%.

That slope was reduced to 0.26% by relocating the tracks onto the longer roadbed (1.75 miles in length) that climbed more gradually from Livermore to this point at Social Hall. The new 1882 segment of the line begins at the WYE one mile west of here, and traces an S-shaped course that crosses the 1907 grade (the trail) one-half mile west of here. The 1882 line was abandoned only 25 years later, in 1907, when curves were eliminated by cutting a new straight line through hills, rather than around them, and fitting that straight line with five bridges that enabled trains to cross the river, rather than submissively follow the meandering bank of the stream.