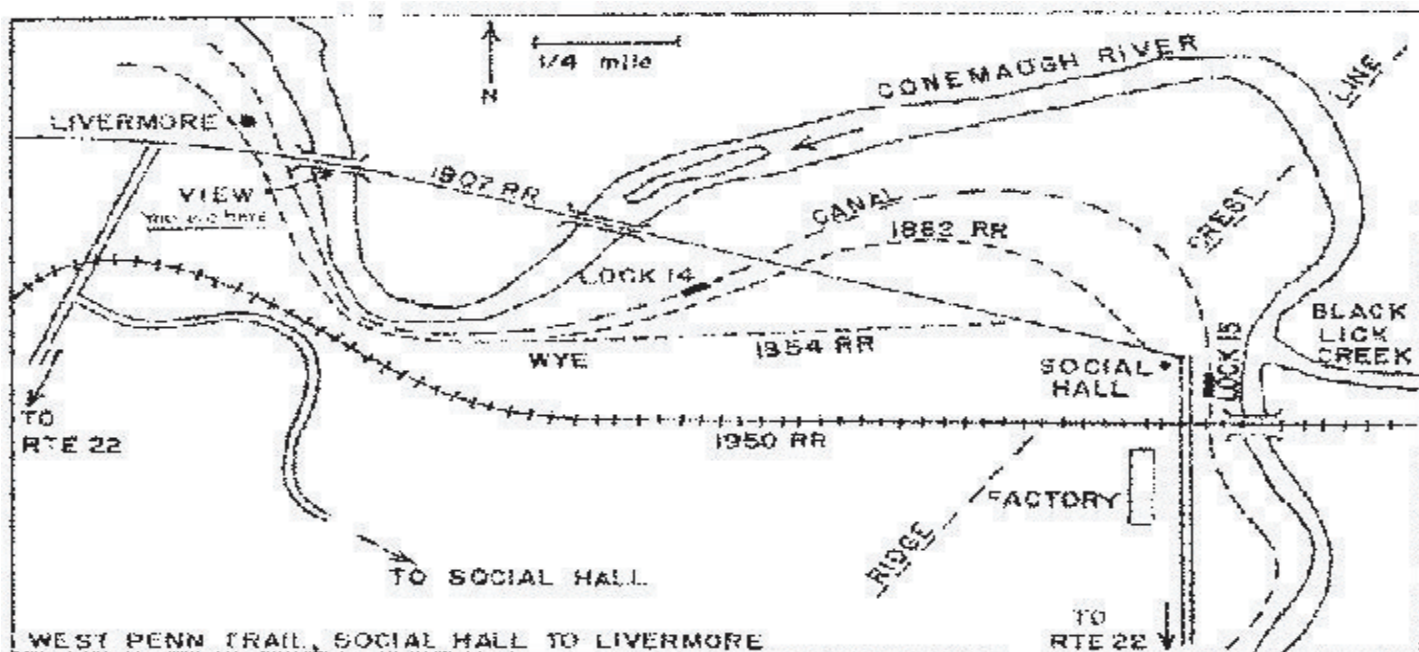


WEST PENN TRAIL

at

BRIDGE No. 4 OVERLOOK



You are standing on the edge of the original (1854) roadbed of the West Penn Railroad. Trains ran on this hillside bench until 1907, when the roadbed was relocated by building five stone arch bridges, a tunnel, and cuts through hills, on a straight line across the meanders of the river.

When the first railroad grade was being excavated, in 1854, boats were still running in the canal that ran along the river bank at the base of this low bluff, so the railroad was forced to dig its own, parallel path above the narrow strip of flood plain occupied by the canal.

Grading of the railroad bed, from Blairsville to the Allegheny River, was completed in 1857. In that same year, as chance would have it, the State abandoned the canal and sold it to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, but by then it was too late to move the West Penn RR onto the canal right-of-way. Today, the canal along the river bank is buried in "flood-mud," but this old railroad bed, abandoned like the canal, is put to use again, now as a trail. Along this original line of the railroad, one can find several cut-stone box culverts that were built in 1854. Look for them.