

WVa Central Railway

The West Virginia Central and Pittsburg Railway, usually abbreviated to WVaC, began construction in 1880. Starting from Piedmont WV on the B&O Railroad, the WVaC was laid along the north branch of the Potomac River to a coal field at Elk Garden WV. Later this line continued up the river through Thomas WV to the new town of Davis WV. In 1886-7, the WVaC was built from Piedmont to Cumberland MD where it connected with the C&O Canal and a branch line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. From Thomas, the WVaC continued down the North Fork of the Blackwater River to Elkins WV, where branch lines went to Belington, Huttonsville, and Durbin WV. By late 1889, trains were operating on the entire 112-mile long WVaC mainline track between Cumberland and Elkins. The railroad opened immense coal and timber resources of the Potomac Highlands region, and many new towns sprang up as people moved into this area. The WVaC was sold in 1902 and absorbed into the Western Maryland Railway in 1905.

[For a more detailed history of the WVaC **Railway**, see the 2003 book, **West Virginia Central and Pittsburg Railway: A Western Maryland Predecessor**, by **Alan Clarke** (TLC Publishing Inc, Lynchburg VA; 176 pages with 320 figures).]