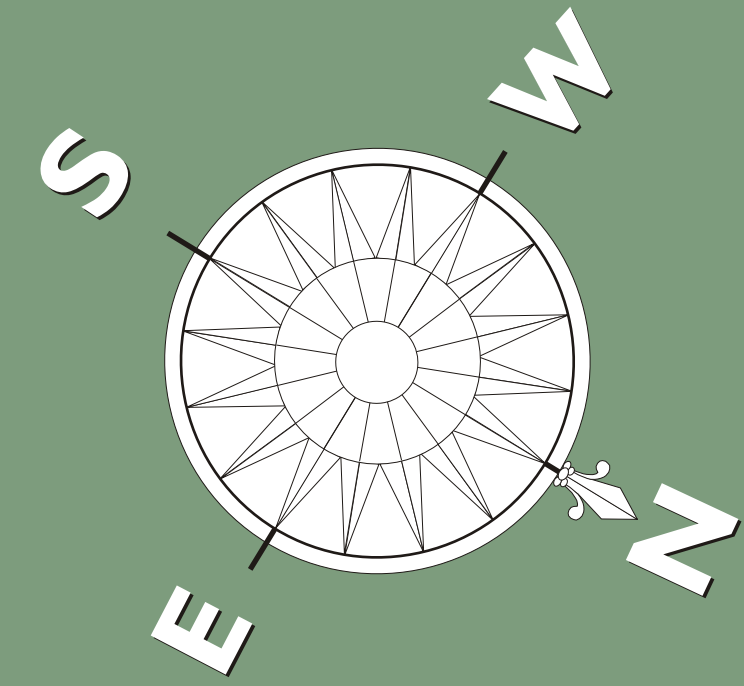


# PHILLIPSBURG / EASTON TRANSPORTATION HUB EARLY 20TH CENTURY



## CANAL HISTORY

In the early 1800s, canals were built as an alternative transportation route to the rut-ridden, mud-mired trackways that had served the animal-drawn carts of pre-Industrial Revolution America. As this canal era began, the Phillipsburg/Easton area became an important canal shipping hub. It is the only place in the continental United States where three major towpath canals came together: the Morris Canal, completed in 1832 (closed in 1924); the Lehigh, completed in 1829 (closed in the 1940's) and the Delaware, completed in 1833 (closed in 1932). This is one of the reasons Easton is home to the National Canal Museum.

## THE MORRIS CANAL

On December 31, 1824, the New Jersey Legislature chartered the Morris Canal and Banking Company to construct an artificial waterway which would link the Delaware River with the Passaic River. The Morris Canal was different from other canals. This canal defied the hilly terrain of northern New Jersey, literally climbing mountains by way of water-powered inclined planes, gradually climbing what seemed like an insurmountable elevation, over 900 feet going east. The route employed 23 lift locks and, more importantly, 23 inclined planes; 7 of each were in Warren County.

## THE LEHIGH NAVIGATION SYSTEM

The Lehigh Navigation System's Lower Division Canal was completed in 1829. From its northern terminus of Mauch Chunk (now known as Jim Thorpe), the Lehigh Canal carried coal 43 miles southeast to Easton. It had a total of 64 locks and 8 dams with an elevation change of 353 feet.

## THE DELAWARE CANAL

The Delaware Canal was constructed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a part of its state-owned canal system. The Delaware Division was authorized by the Pennsylvania Legislature on April 9, 1827, and construction began later that year. The 60-mile-long canal was built along the west bank of the Delaware River from navigable water at Bristol to Easton, where it connected to the Lehigh Canal and Morris Canal. It utilized 23 lift locks, a guard lock, a tide lock and nine aqueducts to climb 165 feet to meet the Lehigh Canal in Easton.

## RAILROAD HISTORY

The real impetus for the industrial development of Warren County was the construction of the railroads. The Central Railroad of New Jersey was completed through Warren County in 1852. Other lines followed, including the Belvidere-Delaware (which was completed to Phillipsburg in 1854), the Morris and Essex (which ran from Hoboken to Phillipsburg by 1866), the Warren Railroad (which ran from New Hampton to Delaware Station and completed in 1856) and the Lehigh Valley Railroad. As all of these railroads passed through Phillipsburg, the town became a gateway to the west (Cunningham 1953:25).



	Train Round House
	Road
	Canal
	Rail Road

Prepared by Warren County Morris Canal Committee - 2008  
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