



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The trolley took a turn

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The picture with this article was taken in 1908 at the intersection of East Center Street and Main Street in Medina. Here we seek workmen laying track for the Buffalo Lockport & Rochester (BL&R) trolley system.

Getting the right-of-way for this electric railroad had some difficulties. Problems occurred in Spencerport at Main Street, Middleport in crossing the Catholic cemetery and Medina at West Center Street.

Residents who lived in many of the finer homes on West Center refused the BL&R access to their street. They did not want the noise, traffic and commercialization of their fine residential neighborhood.

Therefore, the trolley took a turn off East Center at the four corners and followed Main Street to Commercial Street. At Ohio Street it angled off to the west side of Salt Works Road to the New York Central Railroad where it ran directly north and

parallel to it until leaving the county.

This was certainly a round-about way to get through Medina but it solved the problem for irate residents on West Center Street. The residents on Commercial Street probably didn't like it any better but they didn't have as much clout.

Laying tracks for this line began in 1906. The railway was formally opened on Sept. 2, 1908 and ran until April 30, 1931.

There was also another glitch in Medina. A.L. Swett had negotiated with the state to have the lift bridge in Medina built wider to carry the trolley

freight cars over to the north side of the canal to his foundry. However, he could not gain right of way at the northeast corner of Commercial Street and Prospect for track to round the corner and go over the bridge. That's why to this day the lift bridge is wider than most others on the Erie Canal. Consequently, raw materials to the foundry and goods produced had to be trucked to the railway depot.

The moral to this is: Rights of way are sometimes difficult to obtain and once acquired they should never be given up in my opinion.