

# Leaves of History



Historic Area: **Hanlin Station**

## HISTORICAL TOUR - HANLIN STATION

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Leader, John Kranak

Meet at Paris Presbyterian Church parking lot and be prepared to leave at 6 p.m. Share a ride. Set odometer to 0.0 miles.

Keep together. Watch for car behind you.

Drive 1.3 miles. Turn right on Hanlin Road. Stop and park under or near overhead 4-lane. Unload to hear speaker. Gardner, Kranak.

Proceed to 2.1 miles. Park where available along road near small concrete bridge on the turn. Unload. Wilson, Snyder, Fulton, Mirich.

Watch odometer. 2.7, Gilliam. (Note springhouse on left.) Flood control dam on right.

At 3.1, "the spring." Noted far and near for its good water. Was formerly a watering trough. On left.

3.4, former site of Sutherland sawmill. Home of Milo Reed, right.

3.7, hidden lane on right. John Gordon property at one time. John Kranak born in house on highest hill. Covered bridge spanned the creek.

4.3, Bartleyville Road. Turn right, cross bridge, drive a few hundred feet and park along side of road. Note the lovely homes and the beautifully kept lawns. Kranaks lived near by and John will point out where he played ball. Boyce School of Hanover Township was in this area. Now a residence.

Drive past this section, thru a wooded, shady area, and into the little town of Bartleyville. Park along road where available space. First two-story house, Frank Swartz home, on left. Across road, hidden Arnold lane, led to boarding house on hill, kept by John's mother, Mary Kranak. Flat area against hill where railroad spur once hauled coal from the mine above, to main line.

Drive to turn-around, and return to beginning of Bartleyville Road. (This little "side trip" was a distance one way of .8 miles.)

Stop and park near end of Francis Mine Road. Much history on both sides of the "arch." Note high pile of slag on right before going through arch. Note nearly hidden pilings on left.

Kranak farm, buildings, railroad station, stores, post office, school, blacksmith shops, freight office, telegraph system, passenger boarding area - all are gone, but sites will be pointed out.

The Hanlin Gristmill was .3 miles up Francis Mine Road. See story in this booklet.

Tour will continue through arch and up Hanlin Hill to Orchard Hills, on the Doc Boles farm. Enroute up the steep hill, note on left, remnants of coal mine near road on left. Pete McMahon and Charlie Fleet mine. Near top, on right, old Grant Boyce farm, now coal-stripped. Note in distance acres of pink crown-vetch covering spoils.

Stop at top of hill for more memories and good-byes. Group will disperse here.

(For any who wish a snack before returning home, Cone Heads snack shop is located on Old 22, just beyond Paris church where cars were parked.)

### THANK YOU

Old pictures of the Hanlin area from the files of John Kranak, Marion Goffoli and Albert Miller. Covered bridge picture, courtesy of Jean Irwin Lewis. Hanlin School painting by Joyce Bertovich Takah. Possibly others contributed original pictures in the past.

Thanks to all who came and participated in any way. Your enthusiasm is appreciated.

### SPECIAL THANKS

To John Kranak for his invaluable leadership and his inexhaustible store of knowledge, and especially his willingness to use them.

TEXT AND LAYOUT BY KATHRYN SLASOR

## Hanlin Station - In Its Heyday

When the Panhandle Railroad was built down the Harmon Creek Valley in the 1860's, its route lay through the lands of the Hanlin family, who came to this area about 1800. Although the railroad company resisted having too many stations on its line, it was often a part of the contract for the right-of-way that a station be established, especially if the landowner was prominent and held a large tract of land. Thus Hanlin Station was located where the road from Eldersville to Paris crosses at Harmon Creek, and dates back to about 1865.

It was a young Irish lad, only 16 years of age, who blazed the trail into the wilderness of what is now Hanover Township. A few settlers had preceded him, but not many. Soon a three story log house gave to the wilderness its first appearance of civilization. In the succeeding years, the lad grew into manhood with a "heart of oak and sinews of steel. He died in his 91st year. That man was Alexander Hanlin." (Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph, June 16, 1913, when reporting the death of Alexander Hanlin's son, Grant Scott Hanlin, on this date.)

Before Alexander Hanlin died, he bought an old grist mill that had been erected by an earlier settler. In 1848, Grant Scott Hanlin succeeded to the mill. As folks came from the East, many stopped in the little valley between the two great hills. Hundreds of acres were taken up by the Hanlin Clan and their succeeding generations, until, at one time, practically the entire section was owned by Hanlins. Broad farms were laid out and rich, golden grain was brought to maturity. From the fields, the grain was taken to the old grist mill and eventually found its way to eastern markets. Continued on Page 4



The covered bridge over Harmon Creek at Hanlin Station went out with a flash flood in either 1904 or 1905, according to Warren Columbia, who lives nearby. Mr. Columbia recalls that he was on the spring wagon with his father, hauling empty milk cans from the station. Sprinkles turned to torrents of rain as they pulled onto the bridge, hoping to be safe. As the water became higher, the elder Columbia whipped up the horses, saying, "This is not going to improve!" Shortly after the wagon pulled away from the bridge, they heard a crash behind them. And even though the bridge had been built high above

the water and was reached by ramps, it was no match for this cloudburst. Father and son escaped with their lives, and the son still remembers, at age 94. In the above picture is the timber-decked bridge that now spans Harmon Creek where the covered one once stood

Grant Scott Hanlin married Sarah Fink, of Cross Creek. The Fink family was widely known for their interests in keelboating. The couple lived happily together for 65 years. Both died in 1913.

About 1895, modern machinery came into its own, and farmers began sending their grain to newer grist mills. Those who had eaten of the wheaten loaves made from the burred grain, now bought the finer, smoother flour, and the music of the old grist mill gradually stilled.

Deserted after nearly one hundred years of faithful toil, the old mill bowed its proud head before the ravages of time, and sank slowly, but surely, to decay. The mill race no longer churns the rippling waters and the old stone burrs have fallen to earth. The sunshine penetrates every nook of the historic old structure, and the rains and wind beat incessantly upon it. Lonely it looks, and lonely it is - - - but the birds still sing around it. (From the Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph, June 16, 1913.)

More than eight decades have passed since the old Hanlin Mill was described as decaying, and more than a century has gone since Grant Scott Hanlin adjusted the burrs and with saddened heart, ground the last grain of corn.

Now, in the year 1996, all traces of the Hanlin Mill have sunk into oblivion. Today's oldest residents do not remember it. But word of its existence, and its location, have been passed down through the generations. When one drives east from Hanlin Station, in the direction of Francis Mine, he or she might imagine the creaks and groans of ancient machinery just prior to crossing the little iron bridge a few hundred yards up the road. Nothing remains but a wide space along the berm of the road. Continued on Page 5



ARCH UNDER THE TRACKS  
at Hanlin Station. 1996



PASSENGER WALKWAY under tracks at  
Hanlin. Constructed circa 1910  
following the tragedy of the Flem-  
ing family in 1904. The arch and  
the walkway are side by side, about  
200 feet east of the steel bridge.  
During summer months, foliage and  
brush fully obscure it from view.

Prosperity came to the quiet little community about 1878 when the Keystone Coal Company opened a mine near here. A company store was established and by 1882, the company employed sixty men in the mines. Operations slowed down when the tiple near Steubenville was destroyed by a string of run-away cars.

Hanlin Station became a shipping point for milk from the farmers of Jefferson Township. Not only milk, but animals and livestock were brought to the "stock yards" adjacent to the station for shipment.

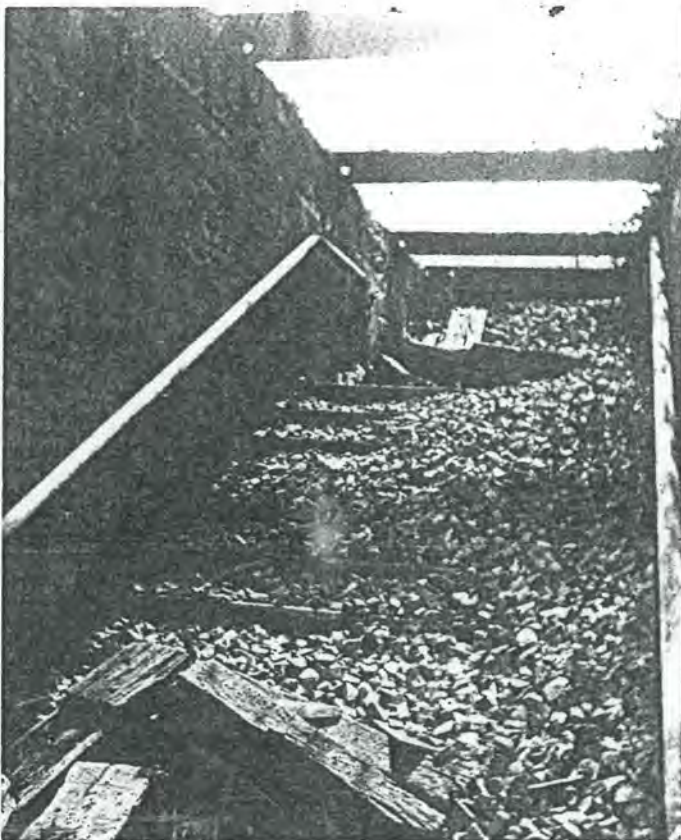
Hanlin was the center for all local trade and boasted of the comings and goings of a wide neighborhood. It was to Hanlin Station that the girls from Pittsburgh came, and boarded a different mode of transportation - the horse-drawn wagon, for their outings at Kidd's Mill.

Hanlin Station is now but a small cluster of houses nestled quietly on the hillside. All traces of the station are gone, as are the trains and the tracks. At what was once an important stop on the line, now all is silent. Time now stands still at Hanlin Station.

#### THE FLEMING FAMILY TRAGEDY

The hurrying motorist who barely slows his vehicle to pass under the railroad at Hanlin Station does not see the second opening under the tracks to his right as he drives north toward Old Route 22 from Eldersville.

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#### STAIRWAYS OF THE PAST

After the Fleming family tragedy, the underground passageway for boarding trains was built. Debris-strewn steps may still be seen along with the glazed tile walls. Stairway on the right was used for boarding eastbound trains, while the one on the left served for boarding trains headed west. Built circa 1910.



Top Row - Scenes of railroad days at Hanlin Station, loaned by Marion Goffoli.



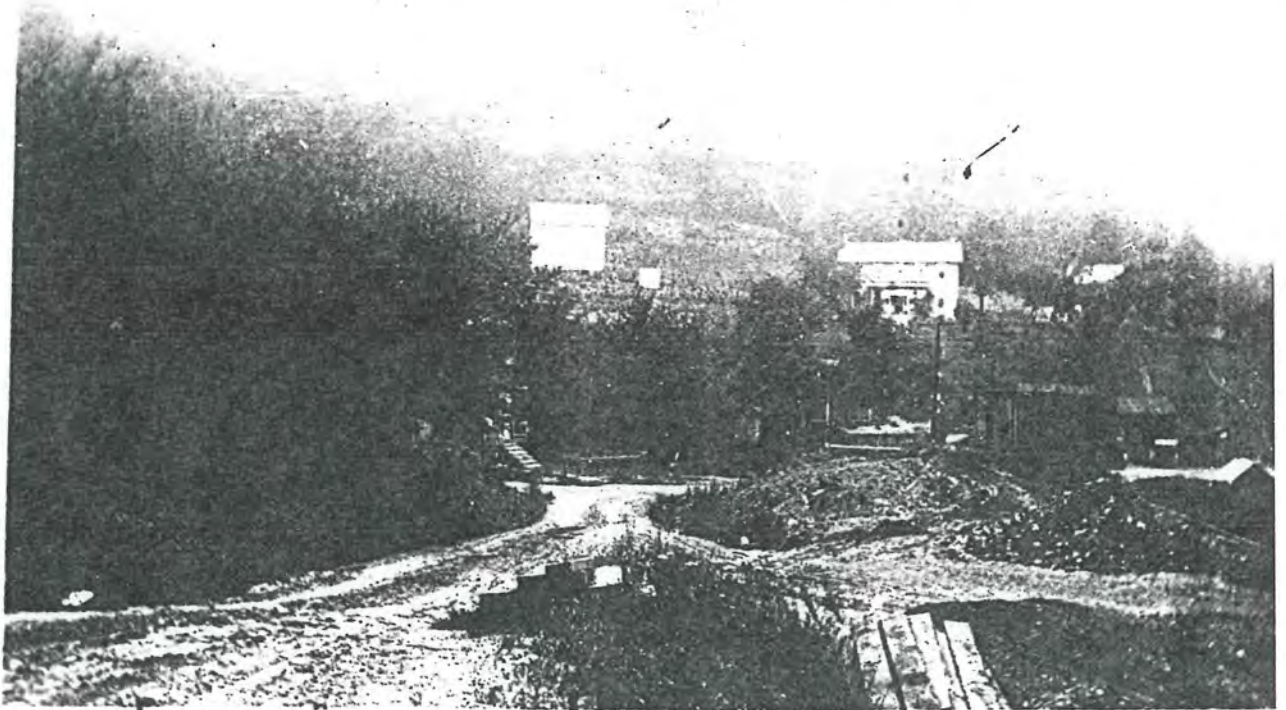
THE OLD STONE HOUSE AT Hanlin Station provided many fond memories for the Kranak family. The barn, the spring-house, even the dog house is remembered by each member of the family who called it home in the late 1920's.





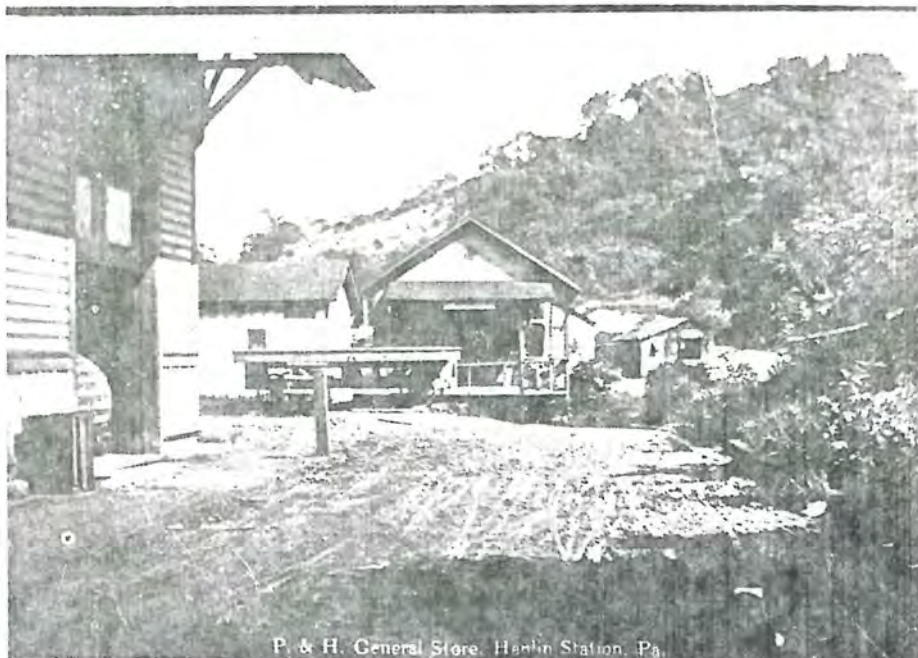
LOADER ON SIDING run by gasoline motor. Materials used to build the Eldersville Road from the State Line to Langeloth, from 1923 to 1926.

— Having arrived at Hanlin by train, the material was scooped into a buggy shown at top of incline, and dumped into trucks underneath. It was then hauled to a point at top of Hanlin Hill, across from the Boles farm, later Orchard Hills. Building on left, rear of livery stable and feed store. Nearly obscured in rear is freight house.



BARBER HOUSE AND BARN

Left, freight station. Platform with four wheels, for loading and unloading freight. Center, Parkhill and Stephenson General Store, anything from wire to food to shoes. Smaller white building left of store, storage room. Right background, blacksmith shop, one of the two in Hanlin.



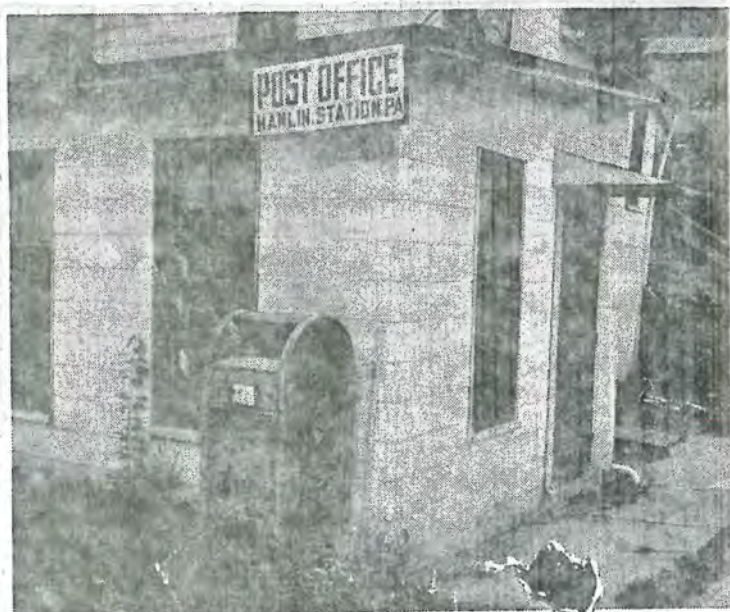
P. & H. General Store, Hanlin Station, Pa.

Looking toward Steubenville. On left, freight station. Small white building, center background, telegraph office. Shady Bell, telegrapher. Platform front center, where passengers waited for train.



P. C. C. St. I. R. R., Hanlin Station, Pa.

The end of an era came to the tiny rural community of Hanlin, in Jefferson Township, on Friday evening, August 14, 1964. It was then that Postmaster, Mazie Fulton, closed the door of the Hanlin Post Office for the last time. Mrs. Fulton also retired at this time, having served the position since February 1, 1940. She had succeeded her father, F.M. Barber, who operated it for the previous fifteen years. It had been located in the same building for forty years. Hanlin rural routes were transferred to the Burgettstown Post Office.





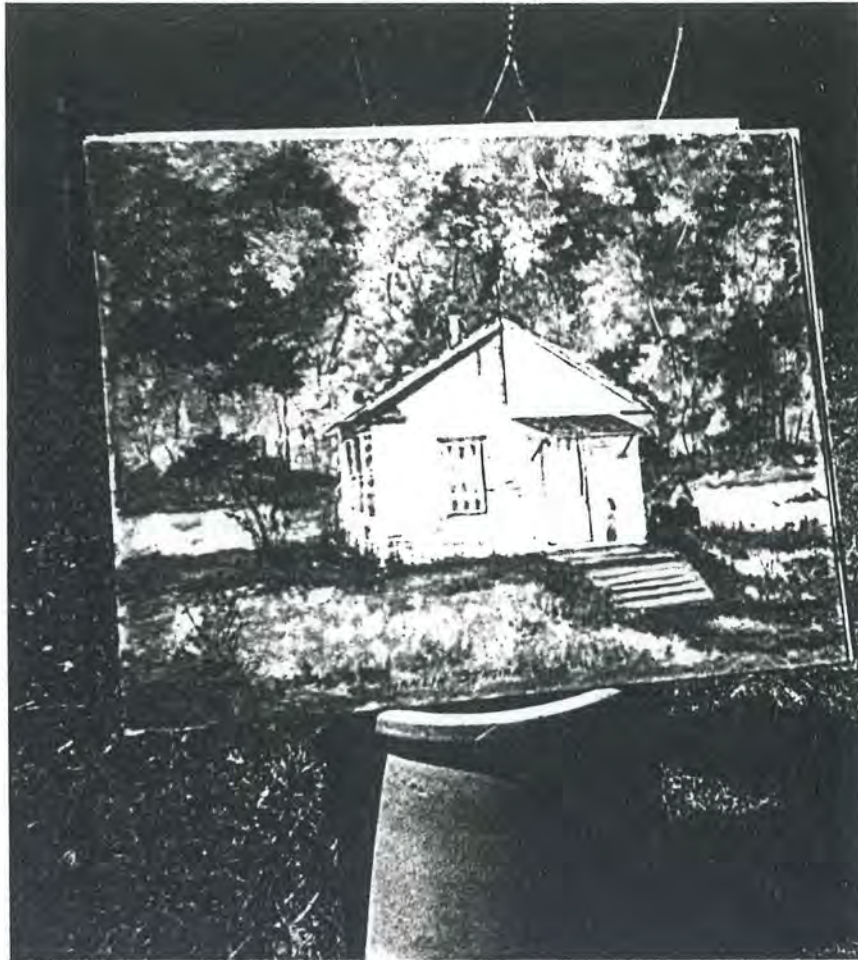


As one approaches the foot of Hanlin Hill from the direction of Eldersville, these two openings in the background of this picture are visible in seasons when foliage does not obstruct the view. The opening on the left is what is known as the "arch" under the Pennsylvania Railroad, seemingly having been a part of the scenery forever. However, this Panhandle section was constructed in the mid 1860's. The arch was probably built at this time, to allow the road from Paris to Eldersville to pass under the railroad tracks.

The opening on the right tells a different story, one that involves tragedy and heartache nearly a century ago, and one that changed the course of local history. See the story of "The Fleming Family Tragedy" beginning on Page 5.

Snow covered the ground and capped the beams that at one time were destined to become an important chapter of the history of Hanlin Station. This section of piling once supported a set of rails across the roadway beneath, and formed the foundation for another railroad bed to run parallel to the Panhandle line already in existence. Carloads of mill slag were hauled over this new line and dumped for a distance of several miles. This slag may be seen at the side of the road near the arch, east to Francis Mine.





This version of Hanlin School is a picture of a painting done by local Jefferson Township artist, Joyce Bertovich Takah. When Joyce was looking for old pictures of township schools of the past, she drew a blank when it came to a picture of the one room school at Hanlin. Many former students of the school, and as many local residents, remembered it vividly, but no picture or snapshot ever materialized. Thus, as Joyce talked with many people, she gleaned a general idea of how the building must have looked. The above is the result of much work and patience, as well as talent.

A small white building may be seen near the foot of Hanlin Hill, nestled among a thick growth of trees and brush, on the left side of the road. This was a house whose last occupants were Grover and Sula Fulton. Since both are deceased, and there were no children, the house has nearly caved to ruins.

The schoolhouse stood nearby, a little farther up the old road beyond this house. It was taken down, and part of the lumber used to build the Fulton's new house.

Hanlin was known as School No. 7 in Jefferson Township, and was closed in 1929.

Boyce School was also an institution of learning in by-gone days in the area of Hanlin Station. This school was located in Hanover Township, on the road to Bartleyville.

And high on a quiet hill near Cross Creek Village, in the "new" section of the "old" graveyard is a granite tombstone inscribed with the name, "Fleming," in large block letters.

These two seemingly unrelated spots in the general locale are indeed very much related, and in a tragic way.

No one living today (1996) remembers. Only word of mouth stories that have been handed down through the generations, and sketchy articles from faded newspapers tell of the stark tragedy that stunned the community on Thursday morning, March 10, 1904, at 8:09 o'clock.

Mr. and Mrs. John Chalmers Fleming and daughter, Lottie B., lived on what is today Strope Road on the farm now occupied by Mrs. Betty Findling. On that fateful day nearly a century ago, the horse was hitched to the buggy and the family started for Hanlin Station to board two separate trains. John was headed for Burgettstown on business. Mrs. Fleming (Margaret Elizabeth) and their daughter had intentions of doing some shopping in Steubenville.

The accommodation train was due at 8:10. Mrs. Fleming and Lottie heard the whistle. They rushed across two sets of tracks to the platform where the west-bound passengers were to board. A warning shout from a young boy was lost in the roar of the locomotive from Express No. 7, which was running an hour behind schedule. Before the ladies could reach the platform, the pilot of the locomotive struck Mrs. Fleming, throwing her to one side. She died instantly from a fractured skull. Lottie was caught in the locomotive, her head terribly cut and torn from her body, which was horribly mangled and carried some distance down the track.

Meanwhile, Mr. Fleming had gone to the post office as his train to Burgettstown was not yet due. Thus he did not witness the accident. Upon hearing of it, he became wild with grief. Friends led him from the scene and later took him to his home. Mrs. Fleming was 56 years of age, and Lottie was 31.

An inquest was held and the jury returned a verdict holding the railroad company responsible for the two deaths. It read in part, "Said crossing is not safe for persons to get on westbound trains....must wait for the train whistles, nothing to warn you that it is not your train."

It is not certain when the railroad company took steps to alleviate this condition. However, a below-track-level passenger train boarding station was built, the remains of which may be seen yet today. In early spring, weeds and undergrowth choke the entranceway, a condition that remains until late fall, when the obscure opening again becomes visible.

Mrs. Fleming and Lottie were laid to rest in the graveyard at Cross Creek. As an occasional visitor to that site passes by the granite stone, he may never know the trauma that took place many decades before, in a tiny spot called Hanlin Station.



Freight office at Hanlin Station  
accommodated many types of cargo.