

1889 Description of the Columbus Consolidated Street Railways

This description of the Columbus horse powered street railway was written at the peak of the horsecar era. By 1892 all described here will be gone replace by the electric streetcar at great convenience to the public. With Electric power the six horse car lines would more than double and the riders travel time would decrease. Columbus would change for the better.

PAY YOUR FARE

Gossipy Sketch of the Street Railway Service

With the Number of Men, Horses and Cars

Employed and Owned by the Columbus Consolidated.

Over 1,500 Cars per Day Pass A Given Point.

The Veterans of the Roads.

(Columbus Post, June 29, 1889) – The Columbus Consolidated Street Railway pays an important part in the work of this busy City. This company and the gas company receive more left handed blessings from the populace than all the other corporations in the city.

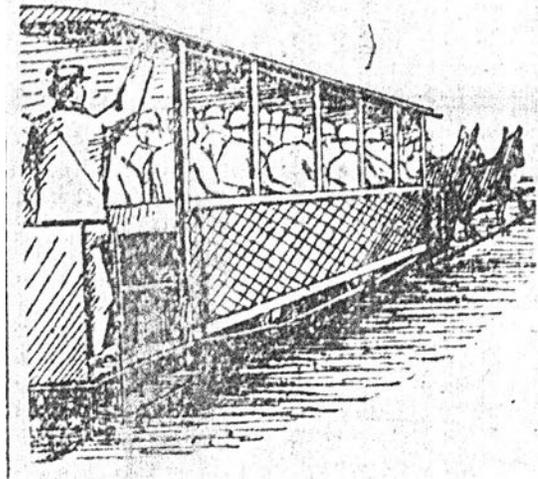
It would be a very difficult matter to run any business that the public has to do with that would please everybody. This short sketch of the street railway of Columbus is not a tribute for or a tirade against the company or its officers and managers.

The public is rejoiced when the company shows signs of such prosperity that new and handsome cars are put on any of the lines. The last section of the city to lift their hands in benediction upon the company are the residents of the Oak street line. A summer car was simply a dream to them, save when they rode on the high or Long street lines. Now the two-horse palace car, with seats for two and an aisle in the center, is a familiar sight to the east siders. Its familiarity does not prevent it being a most acceptable thing.

A wide difference exists between the palace car and the dumpy. You have seen the little low sad like apology of a car that runs to the asylums – of course that line does not belong to the

Consolidated, but they have a few that are really first cousins to the cemetery line. The most unsatisfactory and uncomfortable line is what is known as the Green line. Possibly the cars are as good as the patronage. It is but just to the company to say that improvements have begun there that will make the line one that will be quite satisfactory instead of being a ceaseless cause of complaint.

The money-making line is the High street or White line. This artery of the capital bears to and from their work hundreds of workmen and women daily. The north and south extremes furnish a large amount of the honored workmen of the city. The early cars carry good loads of honest lads and lassies going to their ten hours' work.



The East side is a trifle lazy and fails to get down town at 7 a.m., save, of course, a few. Thus the Oak street lines run light in the early morning. The Red line, and east line also, carried many workmen to and from their place of toil.

The colors that distinguish the various lines are familiar to all: High Street, white; Long street, red; Main street, blue; Neil avenue green, and Oak Street, black or dark brown.

John Perry is the oldest conductor on the Long street line. James Holland is the oldest conductor on the High street line. The oldest driver on the oak street line is Edward Hobson. One of the most familiar characters on the Oak street cars is Rubadue –“Old Rub.,” as he is familiarly known by many. Rubadue has two noted peculiarities or traits as a driver. He never permits a fare to escape the box if he can help it, and he is rarely on time, except on the last home trip.

The majority of these men are very faithful to the interests of their employers, and are in the main obliging to the patrons of the road.

Major A. D. Rodgers is the courteous head of this big corporation. Superintendent Atcheson is the principal purchasing agent, but is not known to the public as is the busy assistant superintendent, Fred Atcheson. From the latter The Post learns that from any given point between State and Long streets there may be seen passing during 18 hours of the day 1548 cars.

THE WHITE LINE.

The High street line has thirteen cars running from one end to the other of the line, a distance of six and one-half miles, or thirteen miles on a round trip. This distance a car travels in one hour and fifty-severn minutes. Besides the through cars six cars, called trippers are run between the court house and Eighth avenue during the hours when the heaviest traffic is on. These make four trips each in the morning, three trips from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.. and four trips from 4 until 8 p.m.

The road is now double tracked from one end to the other and if it were not for the tunnel would become of the pleasantest roads in the country.

NORTH HIGH STREET STABLES.

The north stables are large, but not particularly beautiful in appearance. There are 126 horses that require 12 stablemen to care for; 20 conductors, 20 drivers and six extra drivers work for this bar. The sheds are large and contain 25 cars. This place is under the control of Capt. John Catheart, the foreman, whose hair and beard are as white as snow. Mr. Catheart has the respect of all his men and none speak of him but in the highest terms.

SOUTH HIGH STREET STABLES.

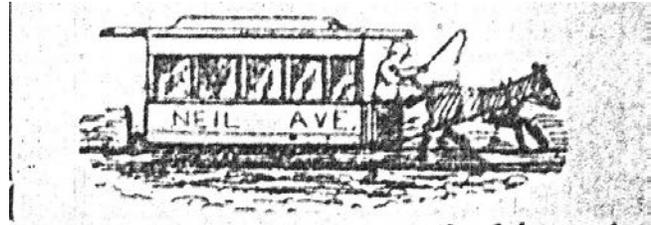
This is a larger and finer barn than the one on the north part of the street, and is the headquarters of more than the White line. From this place, the Mt. Vernon cars start each morning, also two Long street trippers; beside, the Neil avenue box are kept here, and all of these, in connection with six of the nineteen white cars used on High street are under the management of Mr. S.D. Kelly, the foreman.

The stable employs 17 hostlers to take care of 150 horses, used on the various lines mentioned above. The pay roll at this place contains the names of 10 conductors, 33 drivers, 10 extra drivers and 17 stable men. Cars to the number of 25 are shedded there.

THE RED LINE.

This line was long termed by the citizens the best road in the city. The line has a double track its full length, and is a pleasant road to ride on.

The long red stables at the east end of the line contain ninety-nine horses and eight hostlers are necessary to the health and welfare of the animals. A number of goats are kept around the place and at times make things pleasant for the boys when their backs are turned. The line employs twelve conductors, fifteen drivers, five extra drivers and eight stablemen. The sheds shelter twenty cars. Mr. Marion Crabtree, the foreman of the line, is well liked by the boys. Eight regular cars and four trippers do the business of his line.



OAK STREET LINE.

The Oak street line is a very pleasant road since the new cars have been placed in use. The stables contain 50 horses and the shed 12 cars. But 8 cars are used on the line of which number 6 have conductors. The list at this stable contains 9 conductors, 12 drivers, 3 extra drivers and 7 stablemen. The foreman of this line is Mr. J. Wilson.

THE BLUE LINE.

The Main street line is noted for the large amount of old men employed on that road. A new barn has been erected and new cars purchased since the large fire that destroyed all the live and rolling stock belonging to that line. The requirements of this road are 90 horses, 8 stablemen, 12 conductors, 12 drivers, 5 extra drivers, and Mr. C. Taylor, the foreman.

MT. VERNON AVENUE LINE.

This route pierces the northeastern part of the city and the Mr. Airy or Pan Handle sections of the Capital City. The line is traversed by 7 cars, all pay-boxes.

THE GREEN LINE.

The Neil line is more commonly spoken of as the "Huckleberry," on account of its miserable accommodations for the suffering hundreds, who are compelled to either ride in the leaky old cars or walk, as they see fit.

This route passes through a beautiful part of the city, and has the roughest old rail and the poorest horses of any of the six lines controlled by the company. Nine cars are supposed to travel from one end of this line to the other continually, but such is not the case, for whenever the driver gets behind time, he will turn back at the switch if he sees fit to, and the passengers, waiting at the north end of the line, to catch a car, often wait for half an hour before the last car should leave that point, and then are compelled to walk.

As mentioned above, a new track is being laid, and great improvements are looked for.

It is understood the company have decided to not put in a cross-over in the new track, thus making it necessary to go to the end in order to get back.

SUMMARY

The entire number of men employed by the company is 236. At present they have 123 cars and 515 horses.

The men employed by the company as conductors receive from \$1.38 to \$1.62 ½ per day for week days, as they work but 12 hours during those days. The conductors and drivers work on the same plan, being divided into four classes. They are called the early regulars, late regulars, swing men and extras. The early regulars take their car out in the morning and are done work at supper time, while the late regulars go to work at noon, and continue until the cars are in the shed for the night.

The swing men go to work in the morning and work until noon when they turn their cars over to the late regulars and rest through the afternoon in order to relieve the early regulars at supper time. These men in this way work six hours in the forenoon and five at night for their day's work. The extra drivers remain about the various stables waiting for an opportunity to get a day's work by someone not showing up to take his car, or to take the place of a man who wants to take a day's rest.

The extra conductors have but one place to report for duty and that is the main office. Here they can be found between 11 and 12:30 in the day time in order to take the place of a swing man if he wants off. Again from 3 to 4 in the afternoon they occupy their positions at the same place during the time the regular men are turning in their cash. Twelve extra conductors are always kept by the company for this work.