

BIG SUNDAY

COLUMBUS ROYALLY ENTERTAINED THE STATE.

Fifth Thousand Came in on the Excursion Trains.

Fifty Thousand More From the City and Neighboring Country Visit the Camp – The Crowds.

Columbus Dispatch (May 9, 1898) – Another fair-weather Sunday. One week ago, the sunshine and fair skies meant an inpouring of people to Camp Bushnell to the extraordinary number of seventy-five thousand. The crowds that the second day of excursions took to the camp have been estimated at more than 100,000.

The Sunday before there was a scarcity of vehicles to carry the people from the Union station to the camp. The restaurants were jammed from morning to night and in many cases could not begin to take care of all that applied at their tables and counters for the wherewithal to appease their camp-sharpened appetites.

For the second day of excursions, however, there was a very different completeness of preparation.

The crowds at the station were a sight to behold. The top of the viaduct was one mass of humanity, so tightly wedged in that it was almost impossible to get through on foot, much less with a wagon or carriage. The strain on the officers to prevent accidents was terrific. A lane had to be made through the mass of people to let the street car through, and at times the crowds had to be pushed back to permit the passage of the regular traffic. That dozens were not trampled to death or run over was almost a miracle.

Almost as great was the crowd at the intersections of High street and the streets running east to the camp grounds. The proprietors of vehicles were on the scene long before the first train was scheduled to arrive and their wagons blocked the roadways at the corner of High and Rich, and so on down to the court house. At Long and High there was another immense crowd. If the assortment of vehicles was varied and wonderful, it was more so this Sunday. One would think that the entire populace of the city was about to leave, and had only fifteen minutes in which to get outside of the city limits.

In other ways the city had made elaborate preparations for the coming of the hundred thousand. The dealers in food commodities had ordered shipments four or five times that of ordinary occasions. The restaurants were at work all of Saturday night getting ready. Restaurants that are not open on the first day of the week under any other circumstances, were with wide open doors this time, and workmen in the bakeries and kitchens who had thought that

the manager was bereft of his senses found that they were to be kept on duty all day to supply the extraordinary demand.

As early as ten o'clock the cars going north on the Neil avenue line were filled with people who took this roundabout means of finding a way of reaching the camp in comfort. By noon the Main street cars coming north were filled just as on last Sunday, and in the afternoon the crowds grew worse. The same was true of the Long street line, and that running out oak street. The former were boarded by the people a mile from the south end of the line on their downtown trip, and the latter as they turned north on High street to go to Union station. It was last Sunday magnified and doubled in every proportion, and those who had seen the crowds at that time, and had wondered how so many people could get to one place in one day, found that the possibilities of mankind to carry out its determinations were simply beyond the conceivable.

Fifty thousand or more passengers arrived at the Columbus union station by Sunday noon or a little after, this immense number of people being handled in an expeditious manner, making the banner day in Columbus railway circles.

Shortly after 7 o'clock the first excursion train arrived loaded to the guards and from that time until the afternoon one train being run into the station just as soon as one could be unloaded.

The arrangements for handling the crowds were excellent and strange as it may seem not a single person was injured in the terrible crush at the station.

The tunnels under the tracks were used in getting the people out of the station and their great utility was demonstrated to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The approaches to the station were crowded with Columbus people eagerly awaiting the arrival of trains from out of town.

The approximate [scheduled] arriving time of the trains were:

Big Four – West – 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Ohio Southern – 11:45 a.m.

Springfield - 10:25 a.m.

Cincinnati Northern – 11:00 a.m.

Cincinnati – 12:00 noon, 12:10 p.m., 1:00 p.m.

Norfolk & Western – 9:50 a.m., 12:00 noon

Cleveland Akron & Columbus – 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 11:40 a.m., 11:50 a.m.,
12:00 noon, 12:10 p.m., 1:00 p.m.

Baltimore & Ohio – East – 9:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 11:20 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

Midland division, two sections – 11:50 a.m., 12:10 p.m.

Pan Handle – East – 9:25 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 10:40 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Indianapolis division – 7:20 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m.

Cincinnati division – Dayton 10:30 a.m., Cincinnati 11:11 a.m.

Hocking Valley – Toledo Division – 7:15 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 10:00 a.m.,
10:45 a.m., 11:45 a.m.

Hocking division – 9:30 a.m., 10:40 a.m.

From Lake Shore – 9:10 a.m., Erie – 10:10 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Columbus Sandusky & Hocking - From Cleveland, Canton & Southern at Zanesville –
12:40 p.m.

Big Four – Cleveland division – 10:45 a.m., 12:05 p.m., 12:20 p.m.

In all there were at least 40 extra trains, additions having been made to the above list.

The C.S. & H. had four trains which were unloaded at their freight station, Neil and Mt. Vernon avenues, in order to avoid the crush at the station. The train from Shawnee arrived at 10:05 a.m. and from Sandusky at 10:45 a.m. One train from the Wheeling & Lake Erie arrived at 11:25 a.m. The train which arrived at noon had 12 coaches from the Wheeling & Lake Erie and eight coaches from the Erie. Nearly 1500 passengers were on this train. The C. S. & H. total was nearly 3,800.

The Ohio Central lines had trains from the north at 8:40 a.m., 11:10 a.m., and 11:25 a.m. The total was nearly 4,000.

Counting those arriving on the steam and electric lines, the total was about 60,000.

The Norfolk & Western unloaded a great many of their passengers at Broad street crossing near Camp Bushnell.

The Pan Handle trains from the east stopped at Cassidy's crossing just a short distance from Camp Bushnell, quite a large number alighting at that point.

Never was a greater crush seen in Columbus than that at the Union station Sunday evening. The crowd began arriving about 5 o'clock and from that time until late at night every place about the station was literally jammed.

The day and night forces of station employees were assisted by many police and it is due to the energetic work on the part of all that there were no lives lost in the crush.

The main gates to the station bridge were thrown open but passengers were compelled to show their tickets before going down to the trains. The underground tunnels were used with great success in the evening, passengers having to show their tickets before going up to their trains.