

EARLY DRIVER EDUCATION



ST. LOUIS: RIGHT OUTSIDE THE BUILDER'S DOOR – (Continued)

After the war SLPS renewed its commitment to motorize the weaker trolley lines. Consequently, the 1700s were utilized to increase the amount of streamliner schedules on existing PCC routes, except that they did displace sufficient 1600s to equip one new line, route 22 *Jefferson*. While two PCC-equipped owl car routes (18 *Taylor* and 30 *Cass*) were abandoned in 1947, not until 1949 were any basic PCC car routes among those dropped. Those were the long Manchester-Kirkwood routes. Also discontinued was Broadway-Chippewa, a rush-hour variant of the Broadway line. The year 1950 witnessed the expiration the last three “county” lines, including the long run to Creve Coeur Lake which had boasted PCC rush-hour trippers as far as Crow’s Nest.

During this same period the 1500-series cars were modified to make them mechanically comparable to the 1600 and 1700 series, and they also received certain structural improvements such as all-steel roofs in place of the canvas covered wooden central section. Car 1623 had earlier been the recipient of an experimental ventilation system, and around 1957 the company began a project to air-condition car 1799; a financial crisis forced that effort to be cancelled.



Two cars from St. Louis’ initial order pass on Olive at 14th Street in 1940. These were the first production all-electrics. Note the 36-passenger Yellow Coach to the right and the Soldiers Memorial behind it.

St. Louis: Right Outside the Builders' Door: *(Continued)*: - Public Service won Bus Transportation magazine's maintenance efficiency award for eight straight years between 1945 and 1952, and, notwithstanding the NCL parentage, car and track maintenance met the same high standards. Near the end of the conversion program, SLPS announced a \$20,220,000 transit improvement program which included the purchase of an additional 100 PCC cars during the 1950 to 1953 period. Declining patronage obviated the need for additional rail cars. In fact, ridership had fallen to the point where the St. Louis rail system required only 12 conventional Peter Witt cars for rush-hour trippers on route 22 in 1951, and by 1952 only PCC cars were used.

By the fall of 1954 equipment requirements had declined further, allowing 50 cars of the 1500 series to be sold to the Philadelphia Transportation Co. This sale offered testimony to the Public Service maintenance program in that St. Louis was able to sell 14-year-old cars at a time when almost-new Minneapolis cars were being unloaded on Mexico City at bargain prices.

Route 40 *Broadway* was converted to motor coach operation on August 20, 1956, after the company declined to underwrite the extensive track relocation required by the construction of the Mark Twain Expressway. At the same time SLPS reiterated its commitment to continued rail service for as long as major track changes could be avoided. The conversion of the Broadway line made from 50 to 60 additional PCC cars surplus, and in May 1957 SLPS concluded a lease of 66 cars from the 1700 series to the San Francisco Municipal Railway. Shipment of cars, regauged and with front trolley poles installed by SLPS, continued into mid-1958, but did not affect the local requirement of 120 cars. A street-widening program in October 1958 forced abandonment of the Jefferson line and made about 40 more cars surplus.

During 1959 Shaker Heights Rapid Transit purchased 10 cars of the 1700 series, with SLPS Park Shops rebuilding them with standard three-pedal control and rewiring them for multiple-unit operation. At the same time, in anticipation of a bridge replacement program that would force abandonment of the 70 *Grand* line in January 1960 and isolate the shops, all active cars were run through Park Shops for general electrical repairs and a cosmetic treatment. Damaged cars were scrapped, and the 1500s were given a coat of gray primer to protect them for a future that never came. Both Boston and New Orleans considered acquiring them, but concluded that they were unsuitable to their unique needs.



William Rossell's influence on car design can be seen in the standee windows and the "next car" light on the dasher of PCC 1657 when new in 1941. Note the location of the side destination sign below the beltrail and behind the front door.

(to be continued.)

THE FIRST TRAFFIC LIGHT - October 27, 1922 - 98 years-ago today, the first electric traffic signal erected in St Louis goes into operation at Lindell & Newstead, outside The New Cathedral, now known as the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis.

About nine feet high, it consisted of a concrete pedestal & a tower, topped by a red light,

which was lit at night, & turned off during daylight hours. Just below the light were glass slides, marked "GO", "Stop" & "Traffic Change." Each slide was illuminated when it was displayed.



Known as the "silent traffic cop", it faced each of the four street directions, & regulated by an electric motor, the Lindell Boulevard traffic saw the "Go" sign for 40 seconds. Followed by the "Traffic Change" for 5 seconds, giving motorists a chance to come to a stop, or clear the intersection. The "Stop" sign then lasted 20 seconds. The day after being installed, the light had to be turned off when policemen noticed smoke coming from the device, presumably from an electrical short-circuit.

Milwaukee, where the signal was made, had five in operation at this time, & Chicago had ten. Traffic signals of other designs were already being used in Detroit & Cleveland, among other cities.

NEW YORK SUBWAY OPENS - At 2:35 on the afternoon of October 27, 1904, New York City Mayor George McClellan takes the controls on the inaugural run of the city's innovative new rapid transit system: the subway.

While London boasts the world's oldest underground train network (opened in 1863) and Boston built the first subway in the United States in 1897, the New York City subway soon became the largest American system. The first line, operated by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT), traveled 9.1 miles through 28 stations. Running from City Hall in lower Manhattan to Grand Central Terminal in midtown, and then heading west along 42nd Street to Times Square, the line finished by zipping north, all the way to 145th Street and Broadway in Harlem. On opening day, Mayor McClellan so enjoyed his stint as engineer that he stayed at the controls all the way from City Hall to 103rd Street.

At 7 p.m. that evening, the subway opened to the general public, and more than 100,000 people paid a nickel each to take their first ride under Manhattan. IRT service expanded to the Bronx in 1905, to Brooklyn in 1908 and to Queens in 1915. Since 1968, the subway has been controlled by the Metropolitan Transport Authority (MTA). The system now has 26 lines and 472 stations in operation; the longest line, the 8th Avenue "A" Express train, stretches more than 32 miles, from the northern tip of Manhattan to the far southeast corner of Queens.

Every day, some 4.5 million passengers take the subway in New York. With the exception of the PATH train connecting New York with New Jersey and some parts of Chicago's elevated train system, New York's subway is the only rapid transit system in the world that runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No matter how crowded or dirty, the subway is one New York City institution few New Yorkers—or tourists—could not do without.

NATIVE AMERICANS ATTACK THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD - On October 25, 1853, Paiute Native Americans attack U.S. Army Captain John W. Gunnison and his party of 37 soldiers and railroad surveyors near Sevier Lake, Utah. Gunnison and seven other men were killed, but the survey party continued with its work and eventually reported its findings to the United States Congress.

Gunnison was a West Point graduate who had led several previous topographical surveys before being assigned to conduct this survey of potential railroad routes across central Colorado and Utah. Gunnison's mission was only one of four surveys dispatched by the U.S. Congress in an attempt to break a sectional deadlock over which route the proposed transcontinental railroad should follow. The whole idea of a transcontinental railroad was jeopardized by a bitter dispute between northern and southern politicians, with both factions stubbornly insisting that the line should have its terminus in their respective regions. Congress hoped that by turning the question over to the impartial and scientific surveyors of the topographical corps, a clearly superior route would emerge and break the deadlock.

Following Gunnison's death at the hands of the Paiute, his lieutenant, E.G. Beckwith, assumed command. Beckwith eventually found a potential railroad route through Weber Canyon in the Unita Mountains and discovered two feasible passes over the northern Sierra Nevada. The survey also provided valuable information on the geology, flora, and fauna of the West and set a high standard for subsequent explorers to follow. However, the results of neither the Gunnison/Beckwith survey nor any of the others succeeded in breaking the deadlock in Congress. Since no clearly superior route emerged from the volumes of maps and data gathered, the decision remained a political rather than scientific one. The issue would only be settled after the southern states seceded from the Union, leaving the matter in the hands of northern politicians.



Riverfront 1984.

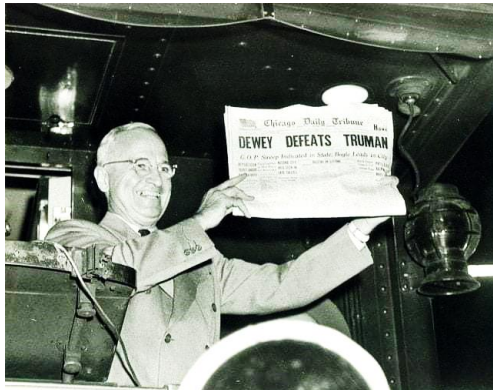


World's smallest car. 1958 Brusch Mopetta – Germany.

IN OUR TOWN: Ferguson was named for William B. Ferguson, a real estate developer. He donated nine acres of land for the construction of the railroad to St. Charles on one condition : that the station be named after him. The city that grew up around the station was also named for him.

HOW DO YOU FIGURE OUT THE PERCENT OF THE GRADE OF A RAILROAD TRACK?

Grades are expressed as the rise in feet per 100 feet of length. For example, a 2.2-percent grade (such as is found on the mountain grades crossing Mullan, Stampede, and Stevens passes) rises 2.2 feet per 100 foot run. A related, often-used term is "compensated grade." When determining power requirements for trains, railroad operating departments take into consideration a line's profile; however, curves set within long grades increase the rolling resistance experienced by an ascending train, so some factor must be incorporated to account for the curvature. Railroads today use a typical compensation value of 0.04-percent grade per degree of curve. Thus, a long 1-percent grade with a significant 6-degree curve would be considered a 1.24-percent grade for the purpose of determining required train power. Engineers can also incorporate grade compensation when constructing a rail line. If the railroad specifies a long climb up a hill should have a compensated 1-percent grade with maximum 2-degree curves, engineers will set the actual track profile at 0.92 percent.



President Harry Truman boards his train at St Louis Union Station, & is handed a copy of the Chicago Tribune, bearing the headline, DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN.

As the incumbent President, Truman covered more than 22,000 miles, making 271 speeches in his "whistle-stop" election campaign. But FDR's previous Vice-President, Henry Wallace, had decided to enter the Presidential race on the Progressive ticket. And Democratic Governor, Strom Thurmond, of South Carolina, was running on the State's Rights ticket, also known as the Dixiecrats. So

with the party divided into factions, most polls & political pundits were predicting an easy Dewey victory.

As a U.S. District Attorney, & later as special prosecutor, Dewey came to prominence by his pursuit of organized crime figures, Dutch Schultz & "Lucky" Luciano, as well as white-collar crime, sending the former President of the New York Stock Exchange to prison.

For those of us not alive at the time, it might be hard to understand, but Thomas Dewey was the American Hero of his day, considered second only to Charles Lindbergh in popularity. Several movies, & a top radio show of the day, "Gang Busters", were modeled after his career. Having been the Governor of New York since 1943, he had been the Republican nominee in the previous election, which had been FDR's narrowest victory.

After voting in the city of Independence, the Truman family spent the night in Excelsior Springs, where Harry went to bed early. Based on the results available at that time, Truman assumed he would lose.

Editors of the Chicago Tribune assumed the same, & with their regular staff on strike, the first-edition deadline was even earlier. Managing editor J. Loy "Pat" Maloney had to make the headline call, & he relied on the record of Arthur Sears Henning, the paper's longtime Washington correspondent. Henning said Dewey. When they realized their mistake, the papers were recalled, but it's estimated 150,000 made it into circulation, including those headed to St Louis.