

# Life of the Street

## Car Man in Omaha

The life of the average street car man in Omaha—motorman or conductor—is beset with not a few hardships of which the general public knows nothing. His hours, for example, are almost as uncertain as those of the country doctor during an epidemic of whooping cough, and he may break his fast in the gray of the dawn or in the broad glare of noontide.

Ask your conductor (since the company inhibits conversation with the motorman) how many hours he puts in in a day, and he will answer: "What day?" Which is a laconic way of saying that no two days are the same in this respect. With him, unless he has a regular run, life is something of a lottery, and he spends many a half-day in the reading room at the car barn, improving his mind with magazines and newspapers, while he waits for fortune to smile on him and permit him to take out a car. It is for this reason that the alarm on the little nickel-plated clock out at his house needs to be constantly shifted, that it may utter its warning any time from 4:15 a. m. to 12 m.

The principal rendezvous of the crews now is at Twenty-fourth street and Ames avenue. Here an average of 150 conductors and motormen show up every day for work.

### How They Are Arranged.

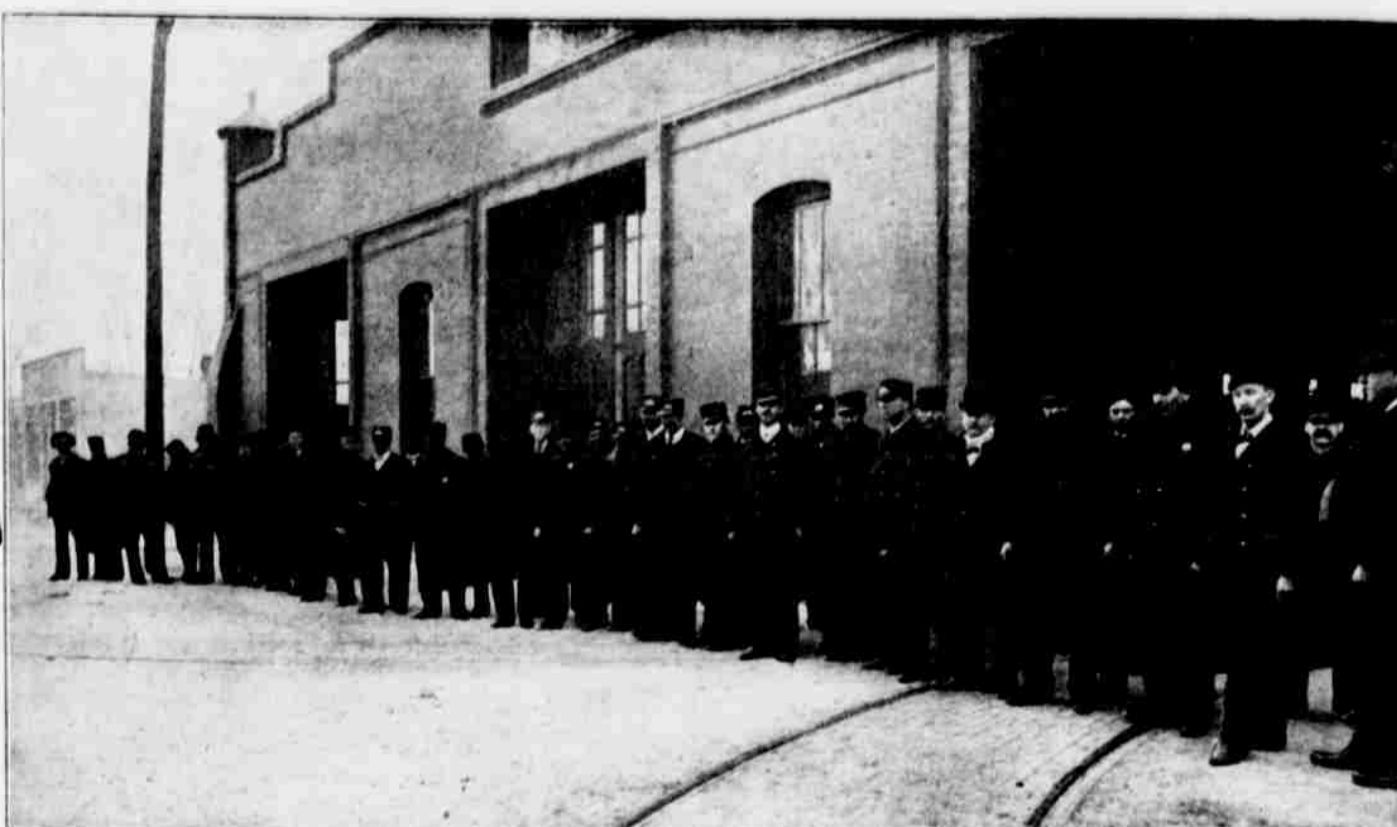
"The force is divided into three shifts," said S. G. Clayton, the day foreman. "The first reports for duty from 5:05 to 7:30 in the morning, and between these hours cars

they are told to look elsewhere for employment. We have scores of applications every week from men who want places on car crews, many more than we can give consideration, and a man has to be pretty well recommended if he expects the company to take up his case. There are more aspirants to positions as conductors than as motormen, principally because it takes longer to get a run as a motorman."

### Library for the Men.

A library of 300 volumes helps the crews to pass the time while they are waiting to take out their cars. These are the property of the Omaha Street Railway Literary and Entertainment club, comprising 150 members, all employees of the company. Here may be found a liberal assortment of works—fiction, scientific, mechanical, historical and religious—representing a wide range of taste and not a little evidence of good judgment and skill of discernment. All have been selected by the club and paid for out of the club treasury. When a member learns of a book which he thinks would make a valuable addition to the library he suggests it at one of the regular meetings, when the question of whether or not to buy it is taken up and voted upon.

A suite of two large front rooms on the second floor of the building is devoted to the use of the club rent free. Both are comfortably furnished. One is fitted up as the library and the other is used as a reading and card room. On the tables are a



STREET CAR EMPLOYEES IN FRONT OF CAR BARN.



ENJOYING PRIVILEGES OF READING ROOM.

are being run out as fast as they can be manned and equipped. The second reports from 9:15 to 12:56, and the third comes on any time from 10 a. m. to 12:56. This last shift relieves the other men for luncheon.

"The first shift consists of fifty-six crews and the second of twenty-six crews. The relief comprises all the way from six to ten crews.

"We have four classes of runs, known as 'daylight,' 'meal reliefs,' 'swings' and 'afternoon-and-nights.' The men who have the daylight runs are on duty from 5:30 in the morning until about 7 in the evening. The 'meal reliefs' run the cars while the regular crews are at lunch. The 'swings' come on early in the evening, thereby covering the two rush periods of the day. Their cars are the first ones in the barn at night. The 'afternoon-and-night' shift goes on just after lunch and run on through until midnight.

"The biggest rush of the day is between 5 and 7 in the evening. Nearly everybody, it seems, wants to leave the business portions of the city for the residence districts about this time, and all outgoing cars are crowded, while incoming cars are correspondingly empty. In the morning the order of course is reversed, but the rush is not nearly so great then. The cars are patronized during the forenoons at different hours by the different classes of citizens, with reference to their occupations. The first to appear are the laboring men, who have to be at work in shops and factories by 6 o'clock or earlier. Then come clerks and stenographers, then the business and professional men, and finally, if the day is pleasant, a great crowd of women bound for the department stores. At night, however, all classes appear to want to go home at the same time, and then we have to bring into service our full equipment, which is between ninety and 100 cars."

### Wages All Look Alike.

A motorman draws the same wages as a conductor—20 cents an hour for the time he is actually engaged in operating his car. Time spent in waiting to take his car out of the barn is not paid for by the company. "The wage scale is 20 cents an hour," said Mr. Clayton, "and all men get the same, whether new or old. In this respect the green hand is in as good a position to earn money as the veteran, the only difference being that the former is not so likely to get a regular run. Sometimes a new man has to be on the waiting list for a year or more before he gets on regular.

"In breaking in new men we place them in charge of some old, trusted employe and send them over the run eight or ten times. If they show an adaptability for the work they are put on the waiting list; if not

number of excellent magazines and newspapers, for which the club subscribes.

These rooms are open to members at all hours and there is seldom a time during the day or night that they are not occupied by a dozen or more seekers for knowledge or entertainment.

### Good Short Stories

Once there was a millionaire named O'Reilly, who had a servant girl working for him also named O'Reilly.

O'Reilly disliked fortune hunters, relates the Indianapolis Sun, so when one came to town—a duke from England—O'Reilly immediately invited the penniless man to his home.

"Pleased to meet you, duke," said O'Reilly. "Let me introduce you to Miss O'Reilly."

The duke and Miss O'Reilly, who was dressed for the occasion, got along

famously, Miss O'Reilly doing most of the listening. Before two hours had passed the duke came out of the parlor and said to Mr. O'Reilly:

"Margaret and I love each other devotedly. Will you give me her hand in marriage?"

"Certainly, duke," answered Mr. O'Reilly, gazing up at his cigar smoke. "Margaret has always longed for a title. Can I send for a clergyman and have the ceremony performed now?"

The duke was delighted with this, of course, and answered heartily in the affirmative.

So they were married, and the drinks were on the duke.

He was very nearsighted, which fact accounts for this tale. It was on one of the recent snowy mornings, relates the New York Press, and he was undecided whether to yield to a Quixotic impulse and clean the sidewalk himself or to toss a quarter to one of the passing shovelers, and, calm in the assurance that some one had been set to work to earn an honest penny or two, pursue his own and more dignified way.

A preparatory survey, resulting in the discovery that a particularly cold and cutting wind was abroad, sufficed.

"Say, my man," he exclaimed to the first person he saw passing, "what would you take to clean this walk?"

"A shovel, by all means," was the laconic reply.

As a prominent politician went chuckling down the street the astonished questioner went into the house and kicked himself three times.

Charles Sumner, says Major J. B. Pond, in his "Eccentricities of Genius," was an aristocrat. He was my father's ideal. After I had got back from Kansas and visited my father's home in Wisconsin father said to me: "James, the Honorable Charles Sumner is going to speak at R—. We must hear him."

So we arranged to go. We walked nine miles to hear him speak. My father never spoke of him without giving him his title. He had enjoyed that speech immensely. I do not know whether I did or not. Father occupied a front seat with the intention of rushing up to the platform and grasping him by the hand when he had finished, but the Honorable Charles was too quick for

him. He disappeared, got to his hotel, and nobody saw him.

Father said: "James, the Honorable Charles Sumner is going to Milwaukee tomorrow morning, and we can ride with him a part of the way."

We were on the train early the next morning, and so was the Honorable Charles Sumner. He was sitting reading in the drawing room car.

Father stepped up and said: "The Honorable Charles Sumner? I have read all your speeches. I feel that it is the duty of every American to take you by the hand. This is my son. He has just returned from the Kansas conflict."

Honorable Charles Sumner did not see father nor his son, but he saw the porter and said: "Can you get me a place where I will be undisturbed?"

Poor father! His heart was broken. During his last twenty-five years he never referred to the Honorable Charles Sumner.

An English paper says that a well known lecturer was once invited to take tea at a certain house. Immediately on being seated at the table a little daughter of the house said to the guest abruptly: "Where is your wife?"

The lecturer, who had recently separated from his better half, was surprised and annoyed at the question, and stammered forth the truth:

"I don't know."

"Don't know?" repeated the child. "Why don't you know?"

Finding that the child persisted in her interrogations, despite the mild reproof of the parents, he decided to make a clean breast of the matter and have it over at once, so he said with calmness:

"Well, we don't live together. We think, as we can't agree, we'd better not."

He stifled a groan as the child began again, and darted an exasperated look at her parents.

But the little torment would not be quieted until she exclaimed:

"Can't agree? Then why don't you fight it out, the same as father and mother do?"

It was just after a dinner, reports the New York Sun, and the man who had been sitting next to the young woman with the beautiful arms and neck thought that he was the most fortunate individual in the room. He said all the bright things he could bring to mind and was congratulat-

ing himself that he was keeping up his end of the conversation fairly well, when the young woman began to display signs of nervousness. She gazed around the room as if looking for an avenue of escape, moved uneasily in her seat and allowed two or three jokes to pass her by without making it evident that she recognized them. Astonished and half alarmed, the man looked at her inquiringly, and, meeting his look, she said:

"I am in misery."

"In misery?" echoed the man.

"Yes," she replied. "I was vaccinated the other day and it has taken beautifully. I could almost scream, it hurts so."

The man looked at the beautiful arms, and, seeing no mark there, said:

"Why, where were you vaccinated?"

"In New York," she replied, with a smile.

### Car Run by Hot Water

A standard gauge railroad car, carrying its own motors, operated by "superheated water," was run over the New York & Putnam railroad from High Bridge to Van Cortlandt and return one day recently, reports the New York Sun, for the purpose of showing to some guests of the Storage Power company just what the Prall system of "superheated water" can do as a motive power. According to the stationery of the Storage Power company, Dr. W. Seward Webb is the president of the company, Henry L. Sprague is the vice president and Edward Barr is the secretary and treasurer.

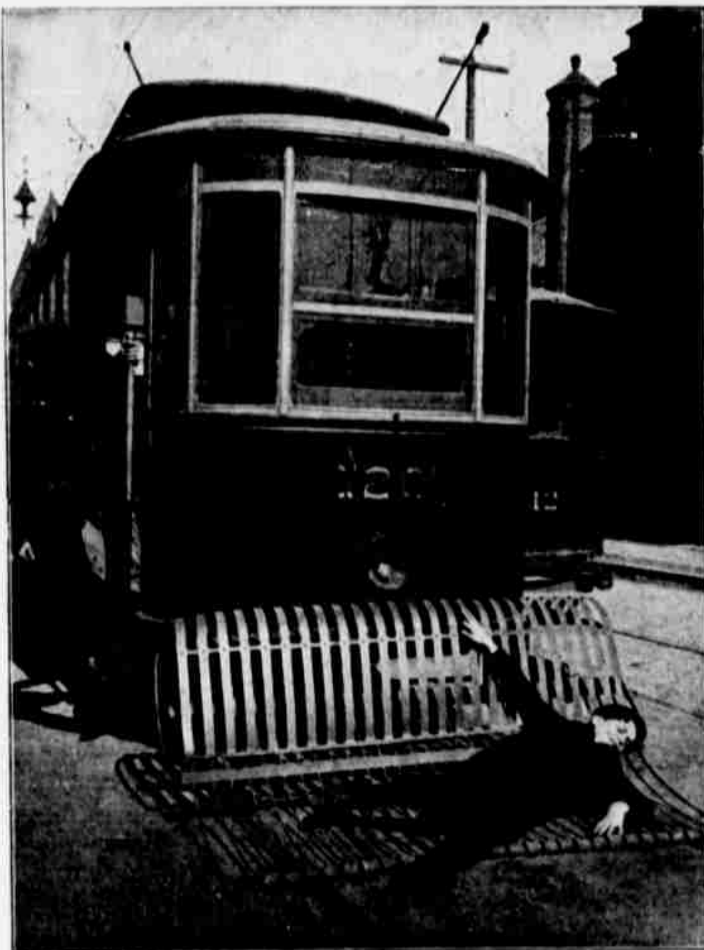
It was said that the distance from High Bridge to Van Cortlandt is nine miles and the run was made in twenty minutes. The return trip was made in about the same time. Attached to the under side of the car were three cylinders, each containing about 2,000 pounds of "superheated water," put into the tanks under a pressure of about 700 pounds to the square inch and at a temperature of 500 degrees Fahrenheit. Small quantities of this water pass from the storage tanks through measuring valves to motors attached to both the front and rear axles of the car. The motors, generally speaking, are much like the ordinary high-pressure engines. It is said that in operation the motors consume 400 pounds of water per car mile. It is also said that it is feasible to carry 12,000 pounds of water in storage tanks of a suburban car, which will make possible a thirty-mile run on one charge of water. To heat enough water (400 pounds) to run a car a mile requires about 17.5 pounds of coal, which, according to the prospectus-maker of the Storage Power company, would cost about 2 cents.

Among those who rode in the car were Joseph Leiter, Cyrus Field Judson and J. D. Hoadley.

### Brother Dickey's Protest

Brother Dickey came in yesterday in a state of mind, reports the Atlanta Constitution. He laid his hat carefully in a corner, on the floor, adjusted his brass-rimmed spectacles and delivered himself as follows:

"I see by de paper yestiddy dat one er dem poetry-makers been writin' ter you dat he done destroy Satan en bu'n 'im up on a wood fire, in de middle er de road? Well, sah, de days er Ananias en de wife what he had is not pass en gone! Dey is right beah in de worl' terday! De jee er a sensible human man talkin' lak dat! Satan is des ez live terday ez a balliff wid a warrant fer a blind nigger. Dea put it down at dat. But what I wants ter say, principle, is dis: 'Don't print no mo' fool talk in de paper dat Satan is dead; kaze, ef you does, dey won't be enough niggers in de meetin' house nex' Sunday ter raise two-dollars, or de tune ter 'Amazin' Grace!' Dat's de very news dey been waitin' fer dis long time; en ef once dey gits it in dey head, good, I'll hatter give up preachin' en go ter plowin' in my ol' age, en de honery, sufferin' heathens cross de water will never have another chance at a missionary fum Georgia! Dat's all."



NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH.



REPORTING FOR DUTY.