

Streetscars Diminishing on Streets of American Cities

BY MAC SERRRE
United Press International

A group of youngsters from the prairies of Kansas recently gawked in amazement at a streetcar rolling down Forbes avenue in Pittsburgh.

They had never seen one before, which is understandable because only 11 U. S. cities now have operating streetcar systems.

And the number will be reduced by one or two more in the next year or two. The electric trolley—once the marvel of urban transportation—is nearing the twilight of its existence in America.

The disappearance of the trolley car has become so complete it is hard to realize that only 15 years ago nearly every sizable city in the nation had streetcars, and there were still a number of electric interurbans.

Passing Era

The interurban line is down to but three in 1962—and one of these has petitioned for abandonment. Truly an era is passing.

The electric streetcar, invented by a New York engineer named Frank J. Sprague, made the modern city possible. Before electricity began to be used successfully for propulsion in the late 1890's, plodding horsecars took America's workers to their jobs and their wives shopping.

By 1920, buses were taking over in the smaller towns, picking up what traffic hadn't gone the private auto route. By 1940, even the big city streetcar systems were converting to rubber-tired "transit" buses.

Streetcar men didn't give up without a fight, however. In 1938 the Street Railway Presidents' Conference Committee came up with a "dream" streetcar design, popularly known as the PCC car.

Some 4,500 of these streamlined, comfortable and quiet street railway cars were built. Streetcar building enjoyed a modest boom right after World War II as a few transit firms decided to retain cars on the more heavily-travelled lines.

Orders for new trolleys tapered off, however, until 1951 when 73 cars were built for Boston and San Francisco. No trolleys have been built in the U. S. since.

Private cars made even deeper inroads on public transit than even transit men feared, and by 1954 lines which had supported streetcars no longer even supported a bus.

The decline of the streetcar merely forestalled the general decline of any form of public transit. Today, bus lines in many cities are in deep trouble.

Transit men agree, generally, that the modern streetcar was not conquered by technology. Far from it, it except for subways the streetcar remains the quietest, fastest, most efficient way to move large numbers of people.

The trouble is, those large numbers of people disappeared into their own automobiles. With some lines carrying only 20 per cent of their former

passengers, the bus was the only answer.

Streetcars remain in operation in 11 U. S. cities. In most cases there were special circumstances which made the trolleys retain their usefulness or made them difficult to replace.

Streetcar Fleets

Philadelphia and Boston operate large fleets of streetcars—all of the streamlined type. In both cities the trolleys travel underground for long distances, free from traffic delays. And on some lines the traffic still is simply too heavy for buses.

Los Angeles and San Francisco have streetcar systems. Los Angeles has the only remaining narrow-gauge trolley—3'6" compared to the standard 4'8 1/2". San Francisco also operates its legendary cable cars on three lines.

El Paso, Tex., has one operating car line—it goes across the river into Juarez, Mexico, and is the only international streetcar line in North America.

New Orleans operates two heavy streetcar lines which are distinctive on at least two counts. The Crescent City still is served by huge non-streamlined trolleys dating back to the early 1920's (except for a handful in Boston, all other U. S. trolleys are streamlined) and New Orleans has a streetcar operated by two-man crews.

Cleveland and Newark both have streamlined trolleys running on private rights-of-way in semi-rapid-transit service. Business is so heavy in the Cleveland lines that four or five cars are frequently coupled together and run as trains.

Baltimore and St. Louis still have a handful of trolleys each, but the Baltimore lines are scheduled to bow out this year and the St. Louis trolleys may go soon afterward.

The last streetcar in Washington, D. C., ran in late January.

Pittsburgh has an extensive trolley system that is the nucleus of every trolley fan in the Steel City. It has been delayed by steep hills, narrow streets, tunnels, bridges and many miles of private right-of-way which would be difficult to duplicate by bus line.

Pittsburgh's trolley fleet is relatively modern and includes a number of semi-streamlined cars.

U. S. trolley fans often journey across the border to visit the busy streetcar systems of Toronto and Mexico City, both of which operate large numbers of cars bought from U. S. lines.

Black as the future seems for streetcars, most railfans guess that a few lines will survive in such strongholds as Philadelphia, Boston and San Francisco for perhaps another 20 years.

Three of the biggest are the Bradford, Conn., Kennebeck River, Me., and at Washington, Ohio. Trolleys of all ages and types are operated on weekends by traction enthusiasts and are lovingly preserved, rehabilitated and maintained.

Rubber Mattresses Are Boom To Cows

New York—AP—The country's 23 million dairy cows one day may be bedded down on rubber mattresses.

This possible first major change in dairy barn housekeeping in more than a century was thought of six years ago by Mrs. Dan Stroup, a farm wife of Medina county, Ohio, when she designed an experimental two-inch mattress filled with foam rubber.

The Latex Foam Rubber Council said that since the new bed for Bessy has been U. S. farm land is being converted to other uses at the rate of about 2 million acres per year.

Sunshine Is Claimed Damaging to Laundry

New York—AP—The first thing many homemakers do on a Monday morning is to peek out the window to check the weather. If it is bright and sunny, they consider it a good wash day.

But, while the sun is drying their clothes, it's also affecting the fabrics—and often not too favorably. Bright sunshine causes fading of color, bleaching, loss of whiteness, and weakening of fibers, say home economists at the Oklahoma State university's various cultural experiment stations.

Chow dogs and polar bears are the only animals known to have black tongues.

Missourians Take Their Own Choice

St. Louis—AP—Folks in Missouri are divided in the pronunciation of their state. Some say "Missourie" others "Missouri."

Tony Heiberger, University of Missouri journalism student, asked Atty. Gen. Thomas F. Eagleton to give him the correct pronunciation because out-of-state students wanted to know.

"Surely our forefathers when adopting Missouri as the name of our state, left some indication as to how the name would be pronounced," Heiberger said.

Eagleton said he used the "Missourie" pronunciation, although no research had been made to see which of the pronunciations are correct.

So, Missourians take their choice, "Missourie", or "Missouri."

But Mrs. Virginia Terry of nearby University City wanted to know, "if Missouri is really Missouri, is Mississippi-Mississippi?"

Americans spend about 15 per cent of their food dollars for dairy products but get back about 25 per cent of their total food value in these products.

About three-fourths of the states engage in growing tobacco crops.

About 70 Million Expected at Fair

New York—AP—The number of visitors expected at the New York World's Fair in 1964-65 is the rough equivalent of the combined population of Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Cleveland, Seattle, Dallas, Atlanta, Boston, London, Paris, Moscow, Hong Kong, Rome, Leopoldville, Brussels, Dublin, Glasgow and the countries of Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Sweden and Denmark.

That's about 70 million.

New York raises about seven times more ducks than any other state.

Shopping Centers in Suburbs Give Face-Lifting to Country

By LEROY POPE
United Press International

New York—AP—The 19-year migration of retail trade to the suburbs and countryside accelerated in 1961 and now is giving the country its greatest face-lifting of the century.

Retailing had a good year for the most part. Sales of all stores gained about seven per cent over 1961, and by the time the last Christmas presents had been exchanged, the year's volume topped \$232 billion, according to Standard & Poor's.

Durable goods rolled up the biggest gains—perhaps 10 per cent—with general merchandise sales up about five per cent.

The gains in sales were not generally translated into better profits for merchants, though. Intense competition and rising costs prevented that.

Centers Created

But the big story in retailing is the creation of 600 new suburban and rural shopping centers and a 40 per cent rise in sales of discount stores, virtually all of them in the suburbs and countryside.

As recently as 1952, about 60 per cent of all new stores were opened downtown, whether on Fifth avenue or on Main street in Podunk.

Today almost 70 per cent of all new stores open in the suburbs are on the highways. Rural and suburban shopping centers grossed \$35 billion during the year, almost 23 per cent of the retail dollar.

The number of centers has grown in a 2,500-discount stores jumped to \$6 billion, up from \$4 billion in 1959. Associated Dry Goods, which Lorré & Taylor is the fifth avenue flagship, added \$63 million to its volume as one city by acquiring the great St. Bar & Fuller store in St. Louis.

"Bullocks", the west coast chain, continued its rapid expansion and, countering the

general trend, had much improved earnings. Interstate Department Store, Sears, Roebuck & Company, J. C. Penney and Montgomery Ward and the other leading chains all had good volume gains.

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Zee, White and pastels. Del Monte, Rich flavor. 14-oz. bottles.

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Wax Paper Zee, ideal sandwich wrap. 200 ft. rolls 39c

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Mrs. Wright's Fresh pastry. Perfect for 10 o'clock coffee break.

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Highway Grapefruit Fresh Segments. 5 for 89¢

Pineapple Dole, crushed. No. 2 can. Each 33c

Instant Coffee Chire & Seaborn. Savr. 20c. 6-oz. 87c

Tenderleaf Tea Picks you up. 48 bag pkg. 67c

Pineapple Juice Dole, frozen. 6-oz. can. 2 for 49c

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Real beauties Slowly ripened the way nature does it.

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LETTUCE Fresh Crisp Heads 2 for 25¢

GOLDEN DELICIOUS APPLES Fancy Quality 2 lbs. 29¢

Potatoes No. 1 Netteed Gems 10 lb. bag 49c

Yellow Onions Med. Size 10 lbs. 69c

Grapefruit Coacchella Ruby Red 5 lbs. 49c

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or MATCH SALE

Here's a sale that lets you save big while fitting purchases to your exact needs. Because these Mix-or-Match offers let you combine one- and two-item purchases to earn quantity-price savings, they're great for replenishing shelves. Smart shoppers will use this money-saving opportunity to balance budgets. Come in and get in on the low, low prices now!

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PREMIUM QUALITY BEL-AIR BRAND

Green Beans Cut or French 5 for 89¢

Broccoli Chopped Peak of flavor 5 for 89¢

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Vegetables Mixed Salad perfect. 5 for 89¢

Green Peas Tender and Sweet 5 for 89¢

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French Fries Reg. or crinkle 5 for 89¢

Spinach Chopped. Clean and leaf. 5 for 89¢

Potato Patties Western favorite 5 for 89¢

Squash Grand baked with Marshmallows 5 for 89¢

Waffles Heat in oven or toaster 5 for 89¢

MORE FROZEN FOOD VALUES...

Strawberries Bel-air, premium quality Year round fresh. 10-oz. 4 for 89¢

Cream Pies Banquet, Banana, Lemon, Chocolate, Coconut. 14-oz. 49¢

Chinese Dinners Kubla Khan. All regular 65c dinners. 59¢

Pepperoni Pizza Oh Boy, Extra good! 19-oz. 89¢

XLNT Tortillas Flavor of Old Mexico. 12-oz. 29¢

ICE CREAM SPECIAL!

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Cherry Vanilla—Choc. Chip Almond—Peppermint Candy—Choc. Marshmallow—Vanilla—Banana Nut—Macademia Nut—Choc. Marble—Butterfinger—Maple Nut—Butterbrickle—Butter Pecan—Neapolitan

Half Gal. 69¢

Builder Predicts All-Plastic Homes

New York—AP—By the 1960's builders of plastic homes will pour from a barrel materials for awalls and other parts.

Henry DeVore, the plastics expert who made the prediction, said also that continued progress with the man-made building material will result in many dramatic new techniques in home construction.

In town for the ninth national plastics exposition, DeVore, of Allied Chemical Corp., cited an experimental building constructed by Army engineers at Ft. Belvoir, Va., as one example of advancements in plastics.

The building, about the size of a two-car garage, was constructed of plastic panels, molded and shaped from foam sprayed from a 55-gallon barrel.

DeVore listed other plastic building materials already receiving attention—polyethylene cold water piping, plastic sewage pipes, and translucent plastic panels for industrial skylights, windows, room dividers, shower stalls and car parts.

Food Purchasing Survey Is Made

New York—AP—The man who invented canned pork and beans made his own containers for them.

Gilbert Van Camp, a former tinmith, produced the first can of this staple vegetable and meat combination in 1861 in the back of his small green grocer's shop in Indianapolis. Two years later, he began canning the combination under government contract for the Union armies during the Civil War.

By 1882, the output had reached six million cans a year. Today, the company he founded produces that many cans in four days, and the canning industry, about 800-million containers a year.

Enough material is contained in the tubless tires of a Boeing jet airliner's landing gear to produce 100 automobile tires.