CARS STOP HERE is the collaborative work of two young Tucumans with an intense interest in railway history and urban transportation.

CIRINO G. SCAVONE is a native of Cleveland, Ohio where he attended John Carroll University. He came to Tucson after completing three years service with the U.S. Army. Mr. Scavone, a bank officer with the Valley National Bank, has been collecting materials and pursuing the strangely elusive story of street railway operations in Tucson since he came here in 1959.

JOHN A. HANEY is a native of Colorado Springs, Colorado. He received his B.A. in business administration from Colorado College in 1962. After service in the army he spent four years in the insurance business before coming to Tucson to undertake graduate work at the University of Arizona in 1968. Mr. Haney recently received his M.S. degree in urban planning from the U. of A. and in the summer of 1970 was in training for a tour with the Peace Corps in Venezuela.

The introduction to CARS STOP HERE has been provided by DAVID F. MYRICK, the noted railroad historian of San Francisco, California. His credits in this field are lengthy. Most notable among them is his two-volume work on the Railroad of Nevada and Eastern California. Mr. Myrick is currently completing a multi-volume series on the Rails and Mines of Arizona, Sonora, and Baja California. He is a corresponding member of the Tucson Corral. Robert T. "Arizona Bob" Kubista provided editorial services and supplemental research and Don Buffin contributed the maps which accompanied the article.

One of the enjoyable aspects of publishing, as practiced by the Tucson Corral of Westerners, is that corral members as well as others in the community have a hand in the process. This issue of the Smoke Signal is indebted to the following persons who also aided in its creation: Tucson Westerners: Robert Leon, James M. Murphy, Thomas H. Peterson, Jr., Charles Rider and Glendon G. Sykes.

Other Tucumans who gave of their time and knowledge: Walter Fischer, Roy Laison, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Magie, J. R. Snider and Miss Halle Husek.

The authors wish to express special acknowledgment to Dr. Stanley Soho who has devoted much study over the years to the subject of streetcars in Tucson.

CARS STOP HERE
A BRIEF HISTORY OF STREET RAILWAYS IN TUCSON, ARIZONA

BY JOHN A. HANEY AND CIRINO G. SCAVONE

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Walter Fischer, Roy Laison, Robert Leon, Mr. & Mrs. C. E. Magie, James M. Murphy, J. R. Snider, and Glenton G. Sykes.

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Introduction

Trolleys in Arizona? Yes, there were streetcars operating in Arizona. As recently as 1948 the electric cars traversed the streets of Phoenix, five communities—Douglas, Bisbee-Warren, Prescott, Phoenix and Tucson—were served by streetcars. Other lines were proposed but the road from a dream to reality is a long one and, while streetcar companies were organized in other places such as Tombstone, nothing transpired as the typical promoter was long on enthusiasm but short on cash.

Omitted in the usual comprehensive tomes of Arizona history is the subject of local transport—the dashing stage driver, fighting off Indians or other terror, made much better copy. Arizona's railroads are given varying amounts of recognition but, if mentioned, are only a few words allocated to the horse-cars and trolley companies. Arizona's recorded history is not alone distinguished by this lack of attention; the same situation prevails in Nevada, New Mexico and other states. The streetcars were there but historians found it convenient to neglect them.

Surveying the broad spectrum of the social scene of western cities in pre-automobile days, one finds that much local activity centered around the streetcar lines. Not only did they make life a little easier for the average citizen, they also broadened horizons by geographically expanding the physical limits of social contacts, amusement and employment. Successful streetcar promotions in western towns could be traced to some special reason for continued patronage. Concentrated employment at a distant point, an amusement park or picnic grounds, an educational institution or real estate promotion helped to insure development of horse-car lines and, later, trolley systems.

In Tucson, probably all these factors contributed to the formation and expansion of the streetcar system, the relative importance of each cause varying with different eras. Though streetcars were operated in Tucson only 32 years, the story is a difficult one to assemble and this monograph reflects the scarcity of available material. Nonetheless, it is a significant contribution to a little known but important subject.

David F. Myrick

CARS
STOP HERE

The unique title of this issue of the SMOKE SIGNAL is taken from wording which appeared on the signs used to indicate the stops and pickup points on the streetcar routes in Tucson.

On June 25, 1930 the TRT (known as the "child of the Tucsan Gas, Electric & Power Company" because its list of officers was the same as those of TGE&L) asked for a franchise to operate for another 25 years. An editorial in the STAR questioned why the company was asking for an $8 fare for slower bus service. The STAR also asked why the company did not remove streetcar tracks it was not then using and why the company operated streetcars at all. The STAR further suggested the company extend bus service all over the city but was opposed to extending the franchise until the citizens decided between streetcars or buses.

The first City Planning Commission was formed early in 1930 by a city ordinance. At the very first meeting the City Council requested commission advice on whether to continue the streetcar system's franchise. The answer was, "No." They advised discontinuance of "these bumpy little cars." In November, 1930, a petition granting the change to buses was narrowly passed by the City Council following a discussion of the change and a reading of a protest signed by 28 residents along East Third Street (now University Boulevard.)

So the little electric cars passed from the Tucson scene. At the stroke of midnight, Dec. 31, 1930 Dallas E. Smith took old No. 10 out of the car barns on the last run. By the time he returned, with Mrs. Painter at the controls, it was already January 1, 1931 and the buses were here to stay. There was no fanfare, no celebration, no regrets. No one was there to lament the passing of steel wheels on steel rails. No photographs of the occasion is known to exist. The cars had stopped there.

Epilogue

The university streetcar line was replaced by the university bus line of a slightly different route. The Speedway route also was changed and a new bus line was started for crosstown service. A Mountain View Bus Line made a short appearance but disappeared after four or five years. Quickly the public became unhappy with the new bus routes and schedules and regretted the passing of their streetcars.

Remnants of streetcar days still remain in the Old Pueblo. Almost all of the rails in use at the end of service remain in the streets. They may be covered with asphalt, but in the heavily traveled sections the shiny rails poke through in tribute to a sleepy little desert town that once had an efficient transit system.

Recent improvements and a change of grade on West Congress Street in conjunction with construction of the Pima County Governmental Center Complex required the removal of about 1,000 feet of track. Such occasions as this continue to remind bustling, modern auto-oriented Tucson of quieter and calmer days when the little cars were an important part of urban life in the Old Pueblo.
The mule car operators had worn bluish-black trainman style uniforms with flat-topped round hats and black visors. Their hats had brass number plates. Mr. Fischer’s hat was softer, brown, had a slight eight-side shape to it, a black visor and steel number plates at the temples. There were both winter and summer hats. The uniform was fawn-gray for both shirt and trousers, with black tie to complete it. Mr. Fischer took considerable ribbing because his badge, instruction rule book, and cap numbers all were 13. There may have been some truth to the tale of an unlucky number because he had his first accident only three days after starting his new job. Mr. Fischer worked off and on, in three periods, for the streetcar company. He first worked between May, 1926 until May, 1927. Then, he rejoined the company and worked from September, 1927 till June 1929. A few months later he moved to Chicago, planning on improving his position but was caught in the Great Depression and returned to Tucson to work for the company again, this time from March, 1930 until

November of 1944. When the company learned of his predicament, it wired him the money to return to Tucson on the recommendation of Mrs. Walker, who approached Max Pooler, the general manager at the time. Mr. Fischer’s total length of employment was 16 years and 10 months and covered the phasing out of the black wagons and the advent of the electric interurban.

During that time, Emil Wick was the master mechanic at the car barns and he had two assistants, Joe Whalen, mechanic, and Jack Whaley. Jack Smith was a general helper. Slim Myers was the foreman during the time of the streetcars and the busses. There was another motorman, Tony Grossen, who was not assigned a badge number for some reason. Mr. Painter was the auditor of Tucson Gas & Electric Power Company and it was his wife who brought the last streetcar back into the car barns on its final run. Motorman Dallas E. Smith took out the car at 12:00 midnight December 31, for the final run in 1930 to the University area. Occidental Bus Lines began Tucson’s first strictly bus service in 1924. The next year, on November 24, TRT opened the Speedway bus line with two 21-passenger pay-as-you-enter city buses purchased from the Garford Motor Truck Company of Lima, Ohio. The bus line operated in a large loop on Sixth Street, Campbell Avenue and Speedway Boulevard, running in both directions every 30 minutes. Streetcars operated about every 15 minutes at the same time. Thus, between 1925 and 1930 both buses and streetcars were being operated by TRT.

By 1927 some people complained about the buses blocking traffic and forming a blind to cars behind them. Moreover, no specific stopping places were designated for the buses and drivers were not obligated to observe the “Cars Stop Here” signs. Streetcars had always had definite stopping points, didn’t straddle across streets and didn’t stop wherever a passenger happened to be or, at least, not often. Virtues never before attributed to the streetcars now appeared but it was too little and too late. To the knowing, the inevitable end was in sight.

It has been the fashion to think of Territorial travelers as always riding off into the sunset astride high-stung horses or dashing across the desert wastes in stagecoaches, battling Indians all the way. Perhaps it was that way for some, but in truth many people who had business in the Old Pueblo had to resort to the street railway system around the turn of the century. Horses and wagons can create traffic jams as effectively as cars, trucks, and busses do today. Since it was not possible for everyone to own and feed a hungry horse, it was walk or ride, even though riding meant a trip across town in a mule car and later one of those new-fangled electric streetcars. A horse is considered private transportation if it is your horse. If the horse happens to be pulling another man’s carriage for him, it is correct to say that it then constitutes public transportation, especially if the roads on which the carriage rides are laid in the middle of a public thoroughfare. Such was the case in Tucson, Arizona 73 years ago.

The beginning was certainly modest enough. In 1879 public transportation in Tucson was provided by Bill Morgan whose mule drew a herdic to Nine Mile Water Hole (near present-day Cortaro) northwest of town on the Santa Cruz River to meet the incoming stage. That the noble herdic had been invented by Peter Herdic only a few years before 1879 made no difference at all to Bill Morgan, who regularly drove his herdic, a low-slung, closed-body carriage with a buck entrance and side seats, wherever business took him. With the arrival of the first Southern Pacific train on March 17, 1880, he expanded his business and began carrying passengers to the new railroad station. His mule cars lent their name to the light electric streetcars of 1916, which were called herdics by the old-timers who recalled the identical seating arrangement in the earlier vehicle. (see photo, page 62).

It seems that the earliest attempt to organize a real streetcar system occurred in 1881 when the articles of incorporation of the Tucson Land & Street Railroad Company were filed in the offices of the Pima County Recorder. The incorporators were P. R. Tully, James H. Toole, J. S. Wood and James Buell. The company’s object was “to build and operate a street railway from the business part of the town out to Buell’s Addition, and to sell lots in said addition.” The coupling of street railways with land promotion was popular in other cities, too. Street railway lines paralleled gas and electric service lines as they pushed out to the hoped-for suburbs. Apparently the Tucson Land & Street Railroad Company was never built for maps and records do not reveal any construction, operation or equipment.
Fifteen years later, on April 7, 1896, the city council authorized construction of the Nelson Street Car Line "under certain conditions." The line to the University of Arizona was to be built first, work commencing "within three months from the date of the passing of the ordinance, and shall be completed within one year." The ordinance also required the same completion time for work on any other line begun by the new company. An indemnity bond of $1,000.00 was required of the guarantee before work could commence. Authorization and action were two different things and the Nelson Line turned out to be no more than a wishful dream. It takes a strong man to eat boiled owl and a stronger man to remain a loyal investor when heavy bills appear on the already dark horizon.

The Tucson Street Railway appeared a year later, the result of persistence and faith in the idea of a streetcar line. The new group was incorporated on September 9, 1897 and included M. P. Freeman, president, A. H. Matas, vice-president, N. Y. Samaniego, treasurer and Charles F. Hoff, secretary. Other incorporators were Frank H. Hereford, J. H. Levis, and R. Y. Brady. This company actually began construction and on Thursday, May 12, 1898, Charles F. Hoff, the line's chief promoter and later secretary and general manager, drove the "golden spike" at the university end of the streetcar line to honor its completion. A gate was prepared in the fence around the university at the termination of the line.

Tucson Street Railway used two types of mule-drawn cars; the open type, which had seats in rows like a railroad coach, and the closed herdic type, which had seats parallel to the sides. The mule cars could be driven from either end, the driver switching the team for the return trip. Experience taught the wisdom of using a new team for each round trip. It seems reasonable to assume that the exchange of teams took place at the barn on Stone Avenue. This barn is standing in 1971, albeit in sad disrepair.

From 1898 to 1900, the Tucson Street Railway was operating lines from the Southern Pacific Depot on Toole Avenue, west on Tenth Street, south on Sixth Avenue, west on Congress Street, north on Stone Avenue, then east on Third Street (now University Boulevard) to the university grounds at Park Avenue. There was also a branch line on Pennington Street between Main and Stone Avenues. On the northwest corner of Campbell Avenue and Speedway Boulevard, university and return to the car barn, seven days a week, using all three streetcars, with relief drivers. The streetcars entered the old car barn from the west side. That is, they entered from Stone Avenue as the mule cars had. The buses later entered from the north side, turning off Fifth Street. The west entrance had two tracks running inside, with at least one grease-pit inside the barn. To the left of the entrance was the motormen's locker room, and to the right was the streetcar office, which contained a desk, two chairs and a large iron safe about the size of a four-foot cube. In the top of the safe was a key where canvas bags of the evening's receipts could be dropped by the motormen after their last run, which left the car barns promptly at midnight. Mr. Fischer recalls that at one time Tucson suffered with an invasion of grasshoppers. The galling motormen, knowing the skittishness of most women about insects, collected handful of grasshoppers which they put into the canvas bags with their money. When the bags were taken to the Tucson Gas & Electric Power Company offices for counting, the grasshoppers hopped out and business was disrupted until all were caught and disposed of. The counting and bookkeeping office was on Pennington Street, just west of the present site of Jacome's department store.

Walter Fischer also recalls that his streetcar was painted a light cream color and ran on 1200-to-1800 volts, direct current, with series light bulbs inside that glowed when power was low. His No. 10 had air-doors, while Nos. 11 and 12 had hand-operated crank-style door openers. No. 10 also had a sand-box for sudden stops and a foot-button to operate the bell-ringer. Speed was controlled with a lever-handled rheostat arm. Tickets were dispensed from a double roll, about a foot in diameter when new. Tickets were sold in pairs, one given to the passenger and one kept in the car. Both were punched, each driver having a different shaped punch. The tickets were blue with black printing and cost 8¢ one way and 15¢ for the round trip.
After the last run at night, university students would sometimes steal the trolley, one at a time, to prevent from the end of the track at Park Avenue and deposit it on the steps of the Agriculture Building on campus. The first time this happened, the president of the university, Dr. Von Kleinmould, brought the subject up at an assembly. He announced that the guilty students should leave the room and put the streetcar back. It was returned in 10 minutes. In addition, the student athletic fund was charged $60.00 for damages to the car, and $50.00 was not easy for the fund to come by in those days.

The boisterous students also found that the small cars could be easily derailed by jumping from side to side within the car. Many a streetcar was bashed off the rails this way, annoying the conductor and plaguing the adult passengers. Many Tucson oldtimers recall their childhood games of pulling the trolley off the wire when the car stopped at the passing-track. The infuriated operator would chase the children, which was the whole idea in the first place. Others remember how noisy the old two-man cars were. When their run started at 5:00 a.m. the unholy racket would wake up the residents all along Fourth Avenue.

Not all Tucsonians have cause to remember the streetcars with nostalgia that comes with the passage of time. Tucson attorney James M. Murphy gave up three toes to the little trolley when, as a youngster, he tried to catch a ride on the back of a passing streetcar, as kids frequently did at the time. Murphy still recalls the shock and the pain of the encounter in March of 1924 although to his credit, he remains a confirmed railway buff.

In 1924, the Tucson Rapid Transit purchased a single-track, one-man, double-ended Birney from Douglas Traction and Light Company. The Birney had been built in February, 1919 by the American Car Company. TRT assigned the car No. 10. The electric cars remained with but few alterations until the advent of the motor buses, which Transvia, Occidental, Tucson Rapid Transit Company, and the White Star Bus Line sought to institute. A 15-year bus franchise was granted to TRT in 1925. This franchise was separate from that granted to operate the streetcars.

The original mule car barn, later streetcar barn and still later, the bus barn, was located at the northeast corner of Fifth Street and Stone Avenue. The original adobe wall of the mule-car barn still stands, as does almost all of the streetcar barn. During the period when Federal Light & Traction Company of New York operated both Tucson Gas, Electric & Power Company and the Tucson Rapid Transit Company, the property at Fifth and Stone was used as general shops for the rolling stock of both companies. It was not until after TRT was sold by Federal in 1946 that the then bus barn facilities were moved elsewhere. The old car barn last saw use as part of the service department of a new-car dealer Zimmerman Buick. The building is presently vacant and in a deteriorating condition.

The power house was located on the northeast corner of Main Avenue and Sixth Street. On the site today is the modern multi-story office building of Tucson Gas & Electric Company, which still owns the land.

The best account of this period has been provided by Walter H. Fischer, a former streetcar motorman and bus operator, who began working on May 26, 1926 and stayed with the company until the end of October 1944. He recalls that his streetcar was No. 10, that of Bill Hammond was No. 11 and Leland Henderson operated No. 12. They were all-day drivers. The working day began at 6:30 a.m. and ran till midnight, on a 12 minute schedule. Mr. Fischer drove on the university line, running from Congress Street to the there was a golf course known as the Tucson Country Club. In a newspaper article printed in 1916, there is reference to a line on Speedway Boulevard to serve this country club. However, this was only a proposed extension of the streetcar line from the university gate at Park and Third Street, north on Park and then west on Speedway to serve the country club and company-owned property in the vicinity. This proposed extension was never built.

About 1900 a line south to Carroll's Gardens was added. The line ran east on Congress Street, north on Sixth Avenue, east on Tenth Street, south on Toole Avenue, south on Fourth Avenue and then west on Seventeenth Street to the park. South Fourth Avenue became a fashionable neighborhood, second only to Snob Hollow. In September of 1902, the South Stone track was laid to Seventeenth Street, providing yet another route to Carroll's Gardens. The line on Pennington Street was removed and replaced by a line on Congress Street about 1902 after the removal of "the wedge," a pin-shaped block of buildings formed by West Congress Street and Madison Lane between Stone and Meyer Avenues.

Transit power consisted of one or two mules or horses, or a combination of each. Contemporary photos show a team of a horse and a mule, while others show a single horse pulling a car. The horse was known to lie down in the streets when tired while the mule placidly gazed at whatever scenery presented itself until the companion felt like going on. The first drivers obviously had no set schedule and would often wait two or three minutes for a prospective passenger to walk up or for a paid passenger to do a little haggling. Many of the drivers were in the habit of taking a midday siesta. Moreover, it was not unusual for some of the drivers to "partake of spirits" while on duty.

Glenna G. Sykes, Tucson historian and former city engineer, recalls a personal mule car anecdote. In 1906 his family lived in one of the Feldman cottages on First Avenue just north of Third Street (now University Boulevard). One hot summer afternoon Sykes, his small brother and one other boy worked their way through the brush (there were virtually no houses) to the end of Third Street. A mule car was standing with its little team occasionally shaking their heads to flick away the flies. The driver was stretched out asleep under a thin mesquite tree. There were no passengers and, quite practically, he was resting his team until a fare came along. One of the boys threw a rock at the mules, hitting one of them amidships. The team came alive instantly and started off down the track at a lope. At this point the driver awoke, spent a few fruitless seconds chasing the boys and then took off west after his rig. The mules had already gone good and must have been almost to Sixth Avenue before he overtook them.

The system was noted for slow operation, long waits between cars and labor trouble. All of this led to the local saying, "If you're in a hurry walk, but if you have time, take the streetcar." The 1902 Tucson City Directory claimed that the two highest priority needs of the bustling little community (population 7,731) were an electric streetcar service and a brewery. In 1971 there are those who might still agree with that assessment of the community needs.

According to one historian, the mule cars were lightweight and the "roistering University of Arizona students, for sport, used to flick them from the tracks and trundle them onto the campus, where the watchman would find them the next morning." Another writer referred to the horse and mule-drawn cars as having "plodding motive power—not at all respons-
An interruption of service due to a temporary loss of motive power.

The route going south of the business district went as far as Elysian Grove. Before 1902 the area was known as Carrillo’s Gardens, having been developed by Leopold Carrillo around 1880. The Gardens were located approximately where Carrillo School is today. It was a landscaped, wooded park of about 25 acres and a pleasure resort with boating, dancing, shooting galleries and other diversions, including a small zoo. It was also famous for its rare and beautiful flowers and a large man-made lake. One-half block north was the Shrine of the Sinners, standing today in the path of urban renewal. In 1902 Emanuel Drachman purchased the park and ran it as the Elysian Grove. Between 1902 and 1915 the area contained a ball park, dancing pavilion, skating rink, airshow stage and grandstand.

According to Glenston Sylves, the first airplane to fly in Tucson came in on a freight car and was brought to the Elysian Grove and prepared for flight there. This momentous occasion on February 20, 1910 was well attended by the population, many of whom arrived by streetcar. Arizona, remember, was then a Territory with some wild Indians still in the bushes.

By 1915 the park had been taken over by Tucson Amusement Company. Even though the streetcars continued to serve the park, it experienced a period of decline and finally, in 1921, the area was designated a residential area and was subdivided for that purpose. In 1902 the streetcar system doubled its inventory of rolling stock with the purchase of two new cars,
A California-type car on Congress Street heading east. Its destination, Elysian Grove, will be by way of 4th Ave. and 17th Street.

loudly but Miss Lopez would not heed his warning. Since the neighborhood was predominantly Mexican, an attack on the car by Miss Lopez’s neighbors was expected and crew members enlisted several of their non-union co-workers to accompany them on their next run. A crowd was there to meet the car but no incident occurred.

The heavier cars caused the light rails (16 pounds per foot) of the original mule car line to become twisted, bent and battered. This track had to be replaced with 60-pound rail on North Stone Avenue and Third Street. The job was completed on June 20, 1918. This track, like the track on Congress, South Stone and Fourth, was set on graded ground with gauging bars. Concrete was then poured over it to keep it in place. So substantial was this arrangement that a salvage attempt during World War II on Seventeenth had to be given up as being too costly.

The heavier streetcar tracks were put to a second test during Tucson’s Copper Days in early 1969. Held in the downtown area annually, Tucson’s Copper Days include an impressive display of heavy mining equipment loaned by local mining companies. Promoters of the 1969 affair decided to demonstrate the strength of a new drill bit by putting a hole right in the middle of Congress Street. Prudently, they obtained city permission first and even checked the maps showing underground utilities. However, none of the current maps showed the location of the old streetcar tracks below the surface of asphalt. The equipment operators started to drill, blissfully unaware of what was under the asphalt, although they noticed that their brand-new bit was having some difficulty. It should have: on removing

the bit they found they had drilled right through the head and foot of the 60-pound rail, and about eight inches of concrete besides. After they realized what had happened, they took great pride in the capabilities of their new drill bit.

In 1916, a few years after the Federal Light & Traction Company of New York acquired control of TRT, the new owners arranged for the purchase of four new streetcars from the Watson Works of the Brill Company of Springfield, Mass. Smaller than the two-man cars then in use, they required only one man for their operation. They were Nos. 6 to 9, with seats running lengthwise, facing each other. The cars were of light construction and specifically designed for the TRT. They were the only new cars purchased for the line.

Before long, complaints reached the transit company office about the sudden jerking when the hand brakes were applied quickly. The manager at that time, Sam Headman, said that air brakes had been ordered and would be placed on the new cars as soon as they were received. The operating schedule could not be shortened to a car every 10 minutes until the new air brakes were installed. Whether the new brakes were installed remains unknown.

With the arrival of the new one-man cars, the older cars saw little service and were retired about 1920. The new cars from Brill remained in service until the end of the streetcar operation, except for one solitary car that was sent to the Trinidad, Colorado company, which was also owned by the Federal Light & Traction Company.

making a total of four. The following year Charles F. Hoff, general manager of the Tucson Street Railway announced that the company had still another new mule car, this one built locally and ready for use. The wheels, trucks and iron were cast by Gardner, Worthing & Goss, and the wood work executed at Ronstadt’s Carriage Works. Other material was purchased in Tucson. The new car had electric buttons for the use of passengers wishing to stop the car.

One of the drivers lived along the line near Ronstadt’s Carriage Works. He was a friend of Rosstandt, and around noon the driver would leave his mule car standing in the street and go inside the carriage works for lunch with the owner. Noon was no time to ride the mule car at least when this man was the driver.

It is interesting to examine the street railway’s financial statement of January 1, 1904. The document is reproduced on the following page. As of that date, the system consisted of 8½ miles of steel track, 13,840 redwood ties, seven cars (two more having been acquired, source unknown) 34 head of stock, a car barn, lot, buildings and tools, a 20-acre park, five-acre tract, two blocks, and three lots near the university. Earnings and operating costs per car mile were so similar, especially during the first half of 1903, that the company’s profit was only $1,404.36. The general manager’s recommendation of providing closed cars is noteworthy for in subsequent years such cars were purchased. Also, fare collections from 1898 to 1904 increased from $826.70 to $5,612.10.

This statement painted a picture of optimism and gave no indication of the events to come in the next few years. Mr. Hoff, on April 14, 1905, transferred the operation to L. H. Manning and Associates. Charles Hoff would not reveal the figures involved in the transaction but added that he would continue as manager until the new owners desired to make a change. He disposed of all his Tucson interests, netting an estimated $75,000.

The first hints about electrifying the system had come in 1902 when the Arizona Citizen announced that a proposed company, composed of both local and outside interests, planned to run a main line down Congress Street and to construct a belt line to the suburbs. They also contemplated extending the system to outlying points of interest, such as Fort Lowell, San Xavier Mission and the race track south of town. On April 30, 1905, the first steps were taken to transform the existing street railway into an electric line. A suit was filed in the District Court for the foreclosure of the first mortgage bonds, which the Consolidated National Bank held in the form of 200 bonds of $100.00 each. L. H. Manning, Mayor of Tucson, in a speech given before his election, said,

“When this suit is settled, it will be the first step in the direction of a complete reorganization looking to the change to an electric line.” Interestingly, Mr. Manning had obtained the Tucson Street Railway only two weeks before.

Control of the Tucson Street Railway after it passed into the hands of Mr. Manning is difficult to document since a successor operator destroyed many of the old records in the early 1960s. However, Manning & Associates apparently operated the company at least until the line was electrified in 1906.

The Tucson Street Railway became Tucson Rapid Transit Company in 1905 when TRT was incorporated on June 16. The incorporators were: George F. Kint, Mose Drachman, William W. Daily, Rosario Brenn and Samuel L. Kingan. It is worth noting that public transit in a portion of Tucson has operated under the name of Tucson Rapid Transit Company from that date in 1905 until February 1967, when the company
I desire to draw your attention to the falling off in fare receipts during the real summer and the real winter months. Closed cars in the winter and the improvement of our park should increase our receipts during these months instead of decreasing them.

Very truly yours,

Chas. F. Hoff,
Sec., and Gen. Manager.

The Annual financial report of the Tucson Street Railway for 1903.

The hand written notations are those of Secretary and General Manager, Charles F. Hoff.

powered by an electric motor and designed so dogs could chase and try to catch the mechanical rabbits. However, during holidays and other special events, the electric streetcars were fully loaded and as a result pulled down the electric voltage so much that the electric motor moving the mechanical rabbits was slowed, allowing the panting hounds to catch the decoys.

No wonder business started falling off at Elysian Grove.

Due to a loss of passenger revenue caused by the decline of Elysian Grove, the line on Main Avenue and west of Stone on Seventeenth was removed from service in 1918 and the track was torn up in 1923. The university line then ran from Park Avenue and Third Street via Third and Stone, and looped via Stone, East Seventeenth, Fourth Avenue, Toole Avenue, and Congress Street to Main Avenue, or north again on Stone. The cars were scheduled to run on intervals of 12 minutes. The passing tracks on South Stone and South Fourth Avenues were removed and the Southern Pacific railroad station stop was bypassed at the same time.

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When in use in Los Angeles, the cars were used as trailers, that is, customarily they were towed behind a motorized car during rush hours, thereby doubling the seating capacity. They were converted to individual motor cars for use in Tucson and were equipped with fenders and all the latest improvements, including air brakes, and were painted green and yellow. Each car carried 30 passengers, but additional standees could find room. The ends were open to the elements, and consisted of four seats in the front and four in the rear. These seats were arranged like the seats in a passenger coach. The middle of the car was enclosed, with seats facing each other and running lengthwise, perhaps by arrangement with the car-card advertisers.

After the heavier track was laid, the first electric streetcars made their maiden trip on June 1, 1906. The last mule car trip was made on the same day. The entire city celebrated. Placards were hung on both cars, those on the mule-drawn vehicle reading “Good and Faithful Servant,” “Goodbye, My Lover, Goodbye,” and “A Has-Been.” The electric car was quickly termed an “Izz” because of the sound it made. An orchestra and civic dignitaries were on hand for picture taking and to see the first electric streetcar leave Congress Street and Stone Avenue on its round-trip to the university campus and on to Elysian Grove, reached via South Stone Avenue and Seventeenth Street. The arrival there was followed by a gala celebration at the Grove. "Now indeed," a writer in the STAR commented, "the metropolis of the Territory has a system that it can be proud of."

One knew one’s neighbors in those “good old days.” Any fresh bruise, a new wrinkle or hint of tattle-tale grey was certain to be commented upon by your neighbor across the narrow aisle. Your business became their business. As for the schedule? Well... the motorman, if pressed, would reply, “We aim to meet at the switch.”

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Not long after the advent of the first electric cars, enteringprising university students began greasing rails as an idle diversion, especially at the end of the line. More than once streetcars slid off the ends of the railroad. The control and direction of the earlier transit company became enmeshed with that of the Tucson gas and electric utility shortly after the incorporation in 1905. Previously, in February 1902, Tucson Gas, Electric Light & Power Company was purchased by the U.S. Light and Traction Company of Denver, Colorado. Following the electrification of the street railways as operated by TRT, the transit company came under the control of the same holding company that controlled the electric utility. Later, in February 1911, the Federal Light and Traction Company of New York City acquired control of both companies when it bought a number of properties held by U.S. Light & Traction Company. The Tucson gas and light utility and the street railway were among the properties transferred. To further entangle the thread of ownership and control, Federal Light & Traction Company was owned by Cities Service Power & Light Company, which, in turn, was held by Cities Service Company. It has been suggested that the inability to meet electric power bills led to the indebtedness that saw ownership pass to the same Denver firm that owned the power company. As late as 1930, daily streetcar receipts were taken in canvas bags downstairs to the power company offices to be counted there, according to Walter Fischer.

Even with the improvements to Tucson Rapid Transit by means of electrification of the line and extension of the system, competitive street railway company promotion was seen in 1906 by the incorporation of a City & Suburban Transit Company. This Tucson company applied to the Pima County Board of Supervisors, informing them of its intention to "build, equip and run a street railroad along certain county roads," and asked the board for a permit to run such a railroad for 25 years. The permit was granted on April 10, 1906. According to the permit, the railroad was to run along Martinez Road from where the road joins the western limits of the city and extend to the Martinez Ranch. The line was also to extend to an area known as “The Picnic Grounds,” and to the Agua Caliente Ranch far to the east of the Old Pueblo. The streetcars were to be powered by gasoline engines but could be converted to electric or other power. Rails were to be 25 pounds per yard. At least two miles of the railroad were to be completed and in operation within 15 months. Fares for each passenger for the first two miles could not exceed 5¢. The railroad was to be built in the center of the roadway, and cars were to "run at intervals not exceeding two hours on each day of every year, between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m." Records do not indicate that this railroad got beyond the permit stage. No interurban line ever appeared on the scene, although in 1970 Robert T. Kubista tried to organize a company called Tucson Cog Railroad Company, for the purpose of running a cog railroad up the side of Sentinel Peak ("A" Mountain).

On March 4, 1906 an amusing accident occurred when a party of citizens and visitors were touring the university and wanted to try a ride on a mule car. It was a record-breaking load, a good turnout of cars, and was a brave and a shaky and all was still.” The rails had spread apart and the wheels were "trespassing on the high-priced real estate of University Heights.” The male passengers patiently lifted the car back onto the rails and this was the cue for the mules to get in motion again to start pulling an empty car back to the barn. The driver soon caught up with it, however, and after reboarding he and the other passengers continued on to town with further mishap.

Late in the mule car era, a near disaster was averted when a cool-headed locomotive engineer prevented a collision between his engine and a streetcar the evening of October 28, 1905, shortly after five o’clock. The car was going down the slight Stone Avenue grade at a fast speed approaching the crossing at grade with the S.P.R.R. and the driver must have failed to hear the train engine. The Southern Pacific engineer, seeing a collision was imminent, applied his air and brought his locomotive to a sudden stop. The streetcar was also stopped just in time, but not before many of the frightened passengers got off in haste. Happily, there were no injuries. This incident brought the attention of the dangerous manner in which the streetcars were being operated. From then on, the drivers were compelled to stop at crossings to see that no train was approaching. Nevertheless, a very similar near-tragedy took place at the same spot in December, 1925. Walter Fischer, a former motorman and now Baptist minister in Tucson, remembers that a crossing guard was permanently stationed on Stone Avenue where the collision occurred. His job was to throw a derail warning on the streetcar rails if he thought it could not, or would not, stop in time. However, this one time he fell asleep in his shack and the motorman decided to cross without him. Mr. Brown, who later became a bus driver, bailed out just in time when a locomotive came thundering down the track and he suffered nothing more than a broken nose when he was hit by the cow-catcher and thrown clear.

The indicated men in the above photo are: 1- F. Rastrelli, 2- Ostra Haltkus, motorman, 3- L. H. Manning, and 4- E. Stevenson. Levi Howell Manning, mayor, was a very powerful figure in Tucson in those days. It was he who installed the power for the new electric railway. He naturally made the most of a political promise with the banner on No. 1: "The Goods are Delivered, L.H.M." This photo shows cars No. 1 and 2 on the first day of service at the car barn on North Stone Avenue. The last mule car is entering the barn.
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powered by an electric motor and designed so dogs could chase and try to catch the mechanical rabbits. However, during holidays and other special events, the electric streetcars were fully loaded and as a result pulled down the electric voltage so much that the electric motor moving the mechanical rabbits was slowed, allowing the panting hounds to catch the decoys. No wonder business started falling off at Elysian Grove.

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Henry and Albert Buehman Memorial Collection, A.M.S.

A damaged California-type car in the barn area. Note photographer Buehman's equipment case just to the left of the front of the car. Also note the side boards, plugging the doors of the local power utility.
making a total of four. The following year Charles F. Hoff, general manager of the Tucson Street Railway announced that the company had still another new mule car, this one built locally and ready for use. The wheels, trucks and iron were cast by Gardner, Worthing & Goss, and the wood work executed at Ronstadt's Carriage Works. Other material was purchased in Tucson. The new car had electric buttons for the use of passengers wishing to stop the car.

One of the drivers lived along the line near Ronstadt's Carriage Works. He was a friend of Ronstadt, and around noon the driver would leave his mule car standing in the street and go inside the carriage works for lunch with the owner. Noon was no time to ride the mule cars, at least when this man was the driver.

It is interesting to examine the street railway's financial statement of January 1, 1904. The document is reproduced on the following page. As of that date, the system consisted of 8½ miles of steel track, 15,840 redwood ties, seven cars (two more having been acquired, source unknown) 34 head of stock, a car barn, lot, buildings and tools, a 20-acre park, five-acre tract, two blocks, and three lots near the university. Earnings and operating costs per car mile were so similar, especially during the first half of 1903, that the company's profit was only $1,404.36. The general manager's recommendation of providing closed cars is noteworthy for in subsequent years such cars were purchased. Also, fare collections from 1898 to 1904 increased from $826.70 to $5,612.10.

This statement paints a picture of optimism and gave no indication of the events to come in the next few years. Mr. Hoff, on April 14, 1905, transferred the operation to L. H. Manning and Associates. Charles Hoff, while usually upholding the name involved in the transaction but added that he would continue as manager until the new owners desired to make a change. He disposed of all his Tucson interests, netting an estimated $75,000.

The first hints about electrifying the system had come in 1902 when the ARIZONA CITIZEN announced that a proposed company, composed of both local and outside interests, planned to run a main line down Congress Street and to construct a belt line to the suburbs. They also contemplated extending the system to outlying points of interest, such as Fort Lowell, San Xavier Mission and the race track south of town. On April 30, 1905, the first steps were taken to transform the existing street railway into an electric line. A suit was filed in the District Court for the foreclosure of the first mortgage bonds, which the Consolidated National Bank held in the form of 200 bonds of $100.00 each. L. H. Manning, Mayor of Tucson, in a speech given before his election, said, "When this suit is settled, it will be the first step in the direction of a complete reorganization looking to the change to an electric line." Interestingly, Mr. Manning had obtained the Tucson Street Railway only two weeks before.

Control of the Tucson Street Railway after it passed into the hands of Mr. Manning is difficult to document since a successor operator destroyed many of the old records in the early 1960s. However, Manning & Associates apparently operated the company at least until the line was electrified in 1906.

The Tucson Street Railway became Tucson Rapid Transit Company in 1905 when TRT was incorporated on June 16. The incorporators were: George F. Kitt, Moses Drachman, William W. Daily, Rosario Brenn and Samuel L. Kingan. It is worth noting that public transit in a portion of Tucson has operated under the name of Tucson Rapid Transit Company from that date in 1905 until February 1967, when the company
An interruption of service due to a temporary loss of motive power.

A. R. Gene Muecke Collection

ible for its grizzled appearance. Railroad "torpedoes" were not used at this stage of the game, although they livened up things considerably after electric streetcars appeared.

As soon as a trip started, the driver would hang the reins overhead and walk along the narrow running boards to collect fares. Drivers of mule cars were paid $40 per month and track workers $1 for a 10-hour day. Fares were 5¢ per trip.

The route going south of the business district went as far as Elysian Grove. Before 1902 the area was known as Carrillo's Gardens, having been developed by Leopold Carrillo around 1880. The Gardens were located approximately where Carrillo School is today. It was a landscaped, wooded park of about 25 acres and a pleasure resort with boating, dancing, shooting galleries and other diversions, including a small zoo. It was also famous for its rare and beautiful flowers and a large man-made lake. One-half block north was the Shrine of the Sinners, standing today in the path of urban renewal. In 1902 Emanuel Drachman purchased the park and ran it as the Elysian Grove. Between 1902 and 1915 the area contained a ball park, dancing pavilion, skating rink, airdrome stage and grandstand.

According to Glenston Sykes, the first airplane to fly in Tucson came in on a freight car and was brought to the Elysian Grove and prepared for flight there. This momentous occasion on February 20, 1910 was well attended by the population, many of whom arrived by streetcar. Arizona, remember, was then a Territory with some wild Indians still in the bushes.

By 1915 the park had been taken over by Tucson Amusement Company. Even though the streetcars continued to serve the park, it experienced a period of decline and finally, in 1921, the area was designated a residential area and was subdivided for that purpose. In 1902 the streetcar system doubled its inventory of rolling stock with the purchase of two new cars.
TRT assigned the car No. 10. The electric cars remained with but few alterations until the advent of the motor buses, which Trans-Occidental, Tucson Rapid Transit Company, and the White Star Bus Line sought to institute. A 15-year bus franchise was granted to TRT in 1925. This franchise was separate from that granted to operate the streetcars.

The original mule car barn, later streetcar barn and still later, the bus barn, was located at the northeast corner of Fifth Street and Stone Avenue. The original adobe wall of the mule-car barn still stands, as does almost all of the streetcar barn. During the period when Federal Light & Traction Company of New York operated both Tucson Gas, Electric & Power Company and the Tucson Rapid Transit Company, the property at Fifth and Stone was used as general shops for the rolling stock of both companies. It was not until after TRT was sold by Federal in 1946 that the then bus barn facilities were moved elsewhere. The old car barn last saw use as part of the service department of a new-car dealer Zimmerman Buick. The building is presently vacant and in a deteriorating condition.

The power house was located on the northeast corner of Main Avenue and Sixth Street. On the site today is the modern multi-story office building of Tucson Gas & Electric Company, which still owns the land. The best account of this period has been provided by Walter H. Fischer, a former streetcar motorman and bus operator, who began working on May 26, 1926 and stayed with the company until the end of October 1944. He recalls that his streetcar was No. 10, that of Bill Hammonds was No. 11 and Leland Henderson operated No. 12. They were all-day drivers. The working day began at 6:30 a.m. and ran till midnight, on a 12 minute schedule. Mr. Fischer drove on the university line, running from Congress Street to the

there was a golf course known as the Tucson Country Club. In a newspaper article printed in 1916, there is reference to a line on Speedway Boulevard to serve this country club. However, this was only a proposed extension of the streetcar line from the university gate at Park and Third Street, north on Park and then west on Speedway to serve the country club and company-owned property in the vicinity. This proposed extension was never built.

About 1900 a line south to Carrillo's Gardens was added. The line ran east on Congress Street, north on Sixth Avenue, east on Tenth Street, south on Toole Avenue, south on Fourth Avenue and then west on Seventeenth Street to the park. South Fourth Avenue became a fashionable neighborhood, second only to Snob Hollow. In September of 1902, the South Stone track was laid to Seventeenth Street providing yet another route to Carrillo's Gardens. The line on Pennington Street was removed and replaced by a line on Congress Street about 1902 after the removal of "the wedge," a pin-shaped block of buildings formed by West Congress Street and Main Lane between Stone and Meyer Avenues.

Transit power consisted of one or two miles or horses, or a combination of each. Contemporary photos show a team of a horse and a mule, while others show a single horse pulling a car. A horse was known to lie down in the streets when tired while the mule placidly gazed at whatever scenery presented itself until the companion felt like going on. The first drivers obviously had no set schedule and would often wait two or three minutes for a prospective passenger to walk up or for a paid passenger to do a little shopping. Many of the drivers were in the habit of taking a midday siesta. Moreover, it was not unusual for some of the drivers to "partake of spirits" while on duty.

Glenona G. Sykes, Tucson historian and former city engineer, recalls a personal mule car anecdote. In 1906 his family lived in one of the Feldman cottages on First Avenue just north of Third Street (now University Boulevard). One hot summer afternoon Sykes, his small brother and one other boy worked their way through the brush (there were virtually no houses) to the end of Third Street. A mule car was standing with its little team occasionally shaking their heads to flick away the flies. The driver was stretched out asleep under a thin mesquite tree. There were no passengers and, quite practically, he was resting his team until a fare came along. One of the boys threw a rock at the mules, hitting one of them amidstships. The team came alive instantly and started off down the track at a lope. At this point the driver awoke, spent a few fruitless seconds chasing the boys and then took off west after his rig. The mules had already good start and must have been almost to Sixth Avenue before he overtook them.

The system was noted for slow operation, long waits between cars and labor trouble. All of this led to the local saying, "If you're in a hurry walk, but if you have time, take the streetcar." The 1902 Tucson City Directory claimed that the two highest priority needs of the bustling little community (population 7,731) were an electric streetcar service and a brewery. In 1971 there are those who might still agree with that assessment of the community needs.

According to one historian, the mule cars were lightweight and the "roistering University of Arizona students, for sport, used to flick them from the tracks and trundle them onto the campus, where the watchman would find them the next morning." Another writer referred to the horse and mule-drawn cars as having "plodding motive power—not at all respons-
Fifteen years later, on April 7, 1896, the city council authorized construction of the Nelson Street Car Line "under certain conditions." The line to the University of Arizona was to be built first, work commencing "within three months from the date of the passing of the ordinance, and shall be completed within one year." The ordinance also required the same completion time for work on any other line begun by the new company. An indemnity bond of $1,000.00 was required of the grantees before work could commence. Authorization and action were two different things and the Nelson Line turned out to be no more than a wishful dream. It takes a strong man to eat boiled owl and a stronger man to remain a loyal investor when heavy bills appear on the already dark horizon.

The Tucson Street Railway appeared a year later, the result of persistence and faith in the idea of a streetcar line. The new group was incorporated on September 9, 1897 and included M. P. Freeman, president, A. H. Mataz, vice-president, N. Y. Samaniego, treasurer and Charles F. Hoff, secretary. Other incorporators were Frank H. Hereford, J. H. Levis, and R. Y. Brady. This company actually began construction and on Thursday, May 12, 1898, Charles F. Hoff, the line's chief promoter and later secretary and general manager, drove the "golden spike" at the university end of the streetcar line to honor its completion. A gate was prepared in the fence around the university at the terminus of the line.

Tucson Street Railway used two types of mule-drawn cars; the open type, which had seats in rows like a railroad coach, and the closed herdic type, which had seats parallel to the sides. The mule cars could be driven from either end, the driver switching the team for the return trip. Experience taught the wisdom of using a new team for each round trip. It seems reasonable to assume that the exchange of teams took place at the barn on Stone Avenue. This barn is standing in 1971, albeit in sad disrepair.

From 1898 to 1900, the Tucson Street Railway was operating lines from the Southern Pacific Depot on Toole Avenue, west on Tenth Street, south on Sixth Avenue, west on Congress Street, north on Stone Avenue, then east on Third Street (now University Boulevard) to the university grounds at Park Avenue. There was also a branch line on Pennington Street between Main and Stone Avenues. On the northwest corner of Campbell Avenue and Speedyway Boulevard, university and return to the car barn, seven days a week, using all three streetcars, with relief drivers. The streetcars entered the old car barn from the west side. That is, they entered from Stone Avenue as the mule cars had. The buses later entered from the south side, turning off Fifth Street. The west entrance had two tracks running inside, with at least one grease pit inside the barn. To the left of the entrance was the motor men's locker room, and to the right was the streetcar office, which contained a desk, two chairs and a large iron safe about the size of a four-foot cube. In the top of the safe was a money slot where canvas bags of the evening's receipts could be dropped by the motor men after their last run, which left the car barns promptly at midnight. Mr. Fischer recalls that at one time Tucson suffered with an invasion of grasshoppers. The gullant motorists, knowing the skittishness of most women about insects, collected handfuls of grasshoppers which they put into the canvas bags with their money. When the bags were taken to the Tucson Gas & Electric Power Company offices for counting, the grasshoppers hopped out and business was disrupted until all were caught and disposed of. The counting and bookkeeping office then was on Pennington Street, just west of the present site of Jacome's department store.

Walter Fischer recalls that his streetcar was painted a light cream color and ran on 1200-to-1800 volts, direct current, with series light bulbs inside that glowed when power was low. His No. 10 had air-doors, while Nos. 11 and 12 had hand-operated crank-style door openers. No. 10 also had a sand-box for sudden stops and a foot-button to operate the thrill bell-ringer. Speed was controlled with a lever-handled rheostat arm. Tickets were dispensed from a double roll, about a foot in diameter when new. Tickets were sold in pairs, one given to the passenger and one kept in the car. Both were punched, each driver having a different shaped punch. The tickets were blue with black printing and cost 8¢ one way and 15¢ for the round trip.
The mule car operators had worn blush-black train-
man style uniforms with flat-topped round hats and
black visors. Their hats had brass number plates. Mr.
Fischer's hat was softer, brown, had a slight eight-side
shape to it, a black visor and steel number plates at the
temples. There were both winter and summer hats.
The uniform was fawn-gray for both shirt and trousers,
with a black tie to complete it. Mr. Fischer took consid-
erable ribbing because his badge, instruction rule book,
and cap numbers all were 13. There may have been
some truth to the tale of an unlucky number because he
had his first accident only three days after starting his
new job. Mr. Fischer worked off and on, in three periods,
for the streetcar company. He first worked between
May, 1926 until May, 1927. Then, he rejoined the
company and worked from September, 1927 till June
1929. A few months later he moved to Chicago, plan-
ning on improving his position but was caught in the
Great Depression and returned to Tucson to work for
the company again, this time from March, 1930 until
November of 1944. When the company learned of his
predicament, it wired him the money to return to
Tucson on the recommendation of Mrs. Walker, who
approached Max Pooler, the general manager at the
time. Mr. Fischer’s total length of employment was
16 years and 10 months and covered the phasing out of
the black visor and the advent of the bus.

During that time, Emil Wick was the master
mechanic at the car barns and he had two assistants, Joe
Whalen, mechanic, and Jack Whaley. Jack Smith was a
general helper. Slim Myers was the foreman during
the time of the streetcars and the buses. There was an-
other motorman, Tony Grosetta, who was not assigned
a badge number for some reason. Mr. Painter was the
auditor of Tucson Gas & Electric Power Company and
it was his wife who brought the last streetcar back into
the car barns on its final run. Motorman Dallas E.
Smith took out the car at 12:00 midnight December
31, for the final run in 1930 to the University area.
Occidental Bus Lines began Tucson’s first strictly
bus service in 1924. The next year, on November 24,
TRT opened the Speedway bus line with two 21-
passenger pay-as-you-enter city buses purchased from
the Garford Motor Truck Company of Lima, Ohio.
The bus line operated in a large loop on Sixth Street,
Campbell Avenue and Speedway Boulevard, running in
either directions every 30 minutes. Streetcars operated
about every 15 minutes at the same time. Thus, between
1925 and 1930 both buses and streetcars were being
operated by TRT.

By 1927 some people complained about the buses
blocking traffic and forming a blind to cars behind
them. Moreover, no specific stopping places were
designated for the buses and drivers were not obligated
to observe the “Cars Stop Here” signs. Streetcars had
always had definite stopping points, didn’t straddle
across streets and didn’t stop wherever a passenger hap-
pened to be or, at least, not often. Virtues never before
attributed to the streetcars now appeared but it was
too little and too late. To the knowing, the inevitable
end was in sight.

It has been the fashion to think of Territorial
travelers as always riding off into the sunset astride
high-stung horses or dashing across the desert wastes in
stagecoaches, battling Indians all the way. Perhaps
it was that way for some, but in truth many people
who had business in the Old Pueblo had to resort to
the street railway system around the turn of the
century. Horses and wagons can create traffic jams as
effectively as cars, trucks, and buses do today. Since it
was not possible for everyone to own and feed a hungry
horse, it was walk or ride, even though riding meant a
trip across town in a mule car and later one of those
new-fangled electric streetcars. A horse is considered
private transportation if it is your horse. If the horse
happens to be pulling another man’s carriage for him,
it is correct to say that it then constitutes public trans-
portation, especially if the rails on which the carriage
rides are laid in the middle of a public thoroughfare.
Such was the case in Tucson, Arizona 75 years ago.

The beginning was certainly modest enough. In
1879 public transportation in Tucson was provided by
Bill Morgan whose mule drew a herdic to Nine Mile
Watter Hole (near present-day Cortaro) northwest of
town on the Santa Cruz River to meet the incoming
stage. That the noble herdic had been invented by
Peter Herdic only a few years before 1879 made no
difference at all to Bill Morgan, who regularly drove
his herdic, a low-slung, closed-body carriage with a
back entrance and side seats, wherever business took
him. With the arrival of the first Southern Pacific train
on March 17, 1880, he expanded his business and
began carrying passengers to the new railroad station.
His mule cars lent their name to the light electric
streetcars of 1916, which were called herdics by the
old-timers who recollected the identical seating arrange-
ment in the earlier vehicle. (see photo, page 62).

It seems that the earliest attempt to organize a real
streetcar system occurred in 1881 when the articles of
incorporation of the Tucson Land & Street Railroad
Company were filed in the offices of the Pima County
Recorder. The incorporators were P. R. Tully, James
H. Toole, J. S. Wood and James Buell. The company’s
object was “to build and operate a street railway from
the business part of the town out to Buell’s Addition,
and to sell lots in said addition.” The coupling of street
railways with land promotion was popular in other
cities, too. Street railway lines paralleled gas and
electric service lines as they pushed out to the hoped-for
suburbs. Apparently the Tucson Land & Street Railroad
Company was never built for maps and records do not
reveal any construction, operation or equipment.
Introduction

Trolleys in Arizona? Yes, there were streetcars operating in Arizona. As recently as 1948 the electric cars traversed the streets of Phoenix. Five communities — Douglas, Bisbee-Warren, Prescott, Phoenix and Tucson — were served by streetcars. Other lines were proposed but the road from a dream to realization is a long one and, while streetcar companies were organized in other places such as Tombstone, nothing transpired as the typical promoter was long on enthusiasm but short on cash.

Omitted in the usual comprehensive tomes of Arizona history is the subject of local transport; the dashing stage driver, fighting off Indians or other terrors, made much better copy. Arizona’s railroads are given varying amounts of recognition but, if mentioned at all, only a few words are allocated to the horse-cars and traction companies. Arizona’s recorded history is not alone distinguished by this lack of attention; the same situation prevails in Nevada, New Mexico and other states. The streetcars were there but historians found it convenient to neglect them.

Surveying the broad spectrum of the social scene of western cities in pre-automobile days, one finds that much local activity centered around the streetcar lines. Not only did they make life a little easier for the average citizen, they also broadened horizons by geographically expanding the physical limits of social contacts, amusement and employment. Successful streetcar promotions in western towns could be traced to some special reason for continued patronage. Concentrated employment at a distant point, an amusement park or picnic grounds, an educational institution or real estate promotion helped to insure development of horse-car lines and, later, traction systems.

In Tucson, probably all these factors contributed to the formation and expansion of the streetcar system, the relative importance of each cause varying with different eras. Though streetcars were operated in Tucson only 32 years, that story is a difficult one to assemble and this monograph reflects the scarcity of available material. Nonetheless, it is a significant contribution to a little known but important subject.

David F. Myrick

Epilogue

The university streetcar line was replaced by the university bus line of a slightly different route. The Speedway route also was changed and a new bus line was started for crosstown service. A Mountain View Bus Line made a short appearance but disappeared after four or five years. Quickly the public became unhappy with the new bus routes and schedules and regretted the passing of their streetcars.

Remnants of streetcar days still remain in the Old Pueblo. Almost all of the rails in use at the end of service remain in the streets. They may be covered with asphalt, but in the heavily traveled sections the shiny rails poke through in mute tribute to a sleepy little desert town that once had an efficient transit system.

Recent improvements and a change of grade on West Congress Street in conjunction with construction of the Pima County Governmental Center Complex required the removal of about 1,000 feet of track. Such occasions as this continually remind bustling, modern auto-oriented Tucson of quieter and calmer days when the little cars were an important part of urban life in the Old Pueblo.
CARS STOP HERE is the collaborative work of two young Tucosans with an intense interest in railway history and urban transportation.

CIRINO G. SCAVONE is a native of Cleveland, Ohio where he attended John Carroll University. He came to Tucson after completing three years service with the U.S. Army. Mr. Scavone, a bank officer with the Valley National Bank, has been collecting materials and pursuing the strangely elusive story of street railway operations in Tucson since he came here in 1959.

JOHN A. HANEY is a native of Colorado Springs, Colorado. He received his B.A. in business administration from Colorado College in 1962. After service in the army he spent four years in the insurance business before coming to Tucson to undertake graduate work at the University of Arizona in 1968. Mr. Haney recently received his M.S. degree in urban planning from the U. of A. and in the summer of 1970 was in training for a tour with the Peace Corps in Venezuela.

The introduction to CARS STOP HERE has been provided by DAVID F. MYRICK, the noted railroad historian of San Francisco, California. His credits in this field are lengthy. Most notable among them is his two-volume work on the Railroad of Nevada and Eastern California. Mr. Myrick is currently completing a multi-volume series on the Railroads of Arizona, Sonora, and Baja California. He is a corresponding member of the Tucson Corral.

Robert T. “Arizona Bob” Kubista provided editorial services and supplemental research and Don Buftin contributed the maps which accompany the article.

One of the enjoyable aspects of publishing, as practiced by the Tucson Corral of Westerners, is that club members as well as others in the community have a hand in the process. This issue of the Smoke Signal is indebted to the following persons who also aided in its creation:

Tucson Westerners: Robert Lenon, James M. Murphy, Thomas H. Peterson, Jr., Charles Rider and Glenston G. Sykes.

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