

# THE ELEVATED NEWS

---

SAFETY

SERVICE

SPEED



RELIABILITY

COMFORT

COURTESY

TIME SAVING SERVICE

## CONTENTS

**The Rate of Return on the Elevated.**

**Another Fare Boost in Seattle.**

**Closing Train Gates on Passengers.**

**One Way to Practice Thrift.**

**Make Your Money Mean More.**

**Our Courtesy Column.**

# **THE ROAD OF SERVICE**

Parties who are planning trips to any point along the north shore between Chicago and Milwaukee will find it both economical and convenient to charter a special train on the

## **NORTH SHORE LINE**

Such special trains are run to meet the requirements of the parties and can be supplied on short notice and at comparatively low rates.

Regular trains between Chicago and Milwaukee every hour.

For full information apply Traffic Department, 72 West Adams Street.

**CHICAGO NORTH SHORE &  
MILWAUKEE RAILROAD**



# The Elevated News

Issued Monthly by Chicago Elevated Railroads

LUKE GRANT, Editor

Room 1105, Edison Building

---

Volume VII

January, 1921



Number 2

---

## *The Rate of Return on the Elevated*

**A**FTER an exhaustive study extending over two years, during which 57 hearings were held and 4,804 typewritten pages of testimony taken, the Public Utilities Commission on January 6 handed down its decision in the rate case of the Elevated Railroads. No change was allowed in the rate of fare, which remains at 10 cents for cash fares or four tickets for 35 cents.

For rate-making purposes the Commission found the present value of the Elevated Railroads to be \$86,250,000 and regarding the rate of return upon that valuation the Commission in its award said:

"In considering the rate of return to which petitioners should be entitled, the Commission found, in the Chicago Surface Lines and the Peoples Gas Light & Coke Company cases, recently decided, that these companies were entitled to a return of 7.5 per cent upon the fair values of their properties devoted to the public use. There is no reason why the petitioners herein should be subject to any different order, and the Commission so finds." While finding that the Elevated Railroads were entitled to a return of 7½ per cent upon the valuation of the property devoted to public use, the companies, at the present rates of fare, will not be able to earn anything like the return indicated by the Commission as a reasonable rate on the investment.



The Commission estimated that the Elevated Railroads would earn in 1921 approximately \$18,400,000.

It estimated that the operating expenses and depreciation for the year would amount to \$14,753,000, leaving a balance of \$3,647,000 to provide for a return on the value of the property. That would mean a rate of 4.22 per cent on the valuation allowed by the Commission.

The actual earnings and expenses of the roads as shown by the records for the last three months, indicate probable earnings, at the existing rates of fare, of \$18,186,987, and operating expenses of \$15,474,837, which would leave a balance of only \$2,712,150 for return on the investment. That would give a rate of 3.14 per cent a year, on the value of the property devoted to public use, as allowed by the Commission.

Neither the estimate of 4.22 per cent made by the Commission nor that of 3.14 per cent, based on actual income and expenditure for a period of three months, can be said to be a fair return on the property investment. The figures show that the Elevated Railroads were justified in asking higher rates of fare to enable them to earn a fair return.

The Elevated Railroads wish their patrons to know the facts. The figures quoted proved how absurd is the claim that fares can be reduced while operating expenses remain as high as they are. On the Elevated Railroads wages constitute about 70 per cent of operating expenses, so that in the last analysis an argument for reduced fares is an argument for reduced wages.

The most recent tabulation of fare increases in other cities throughout the country, shows that on December 1 there were 110 cities on a 10-cent fare basis and in none of those cities are the wages paid to trainmen as high as they are on the Chicago Elevated Railroads, nor is the average ride nearly as long.



### *Another Fare Boost in Seattle*

SEATTLE has "peoples ownership" of its street railway system. Now according to all theorists Seattle ought to be happy. When the lines were owned by a private company and that company said it could not operate on a 5-cent fare, the politicians of Seattle raised a great howl. The city bought the lines and everybody was happy—for a few minutes.

They are not so happy now. They have found out that their "solution" didn't really solve anything. They have learned that it takes real money to operate a street railway system and that "hot air" supplied by politicians and theorists is a poor substitute.

Months ago the city council of Seattle raised street railway fares to 10 cents for each cash fare and 6¼ for tickets. The system was relieved of all obligations in the way of taxes, street paving, free rides to policemen and firemen and other burdens which the private company was obliged to carry. Still the lines were steadily running behind. The total deficit reached \$1,514,126 and the city in December had to meet the payroll with no money to meet it. The employees had to be paid and although they had been told by the politicians all about the beauties of municipal ownership, they demanded actual money for their service, just as they would have done if the lines were owned by a private company.

It is pretty hard to pay money when you haven't got it, so the city treasurer suggested that the employees be paid in scrip, bearing 5 per cent interest. The employees asked the banks if they would cash the scrip. The bankers promptly refused. If the city hadn't the money to pay the employees, the bankers thought it probably wouldn't have the money to pay them, either. So the street railway employees said if they did not get their wages they could not work.

The city council got busy. It passed an ordinance raising the ticket rate to three tickets for a quarter, the new rate to become effective Jan. 8. That, however, wouldn't meet the December payroll of the employees. So the city



tapped the interest fund—the fund set aside to pay the interest on the bonds with which the lines were acquired from the private company. The interest fund amounted to \$250,000. The Dec. 10 payroll amounted to \$139,000 and another payroll had to be met on Dec. 24. The bond interest falls due on March 1 and amounts to \$375,000. Seattle is wondering how it will be met.

Of course, there is a way out of such difficulties. There always is. The city attorney has been asked if the money cannot be “borrowed” out of the general funds. The purchase plan provided that the debts and expenses should be paid out of fares, but it is a pretty safe bet that it will land on the taxpayer to make up the deficit. There are no doubt advantages in that plan. You see, many who ride in the street cars do not pay direct taxes, while many of the heaviest taxpayers do not ride on the street cars. By making up the deficit from the general funds, therefore, the fellow who doesn’t use the street car helps to pay the bill. It’s a great system. By that method it would be possible to give the people transportation without paying any fares at all. They simply would pay in taxes.

Most people, however, probably agree with James F. Langhorn of the state bureau of inspection and supervision of public records of Seattle, who in his report on the subject said: “This calculation shows that an 8 cent fare is necessary. In other words, those who have ridden on the street railways have done so at a loss to the system, or less than cost. Now who pays this cost? The permanent residents of the city and they must not only eventually pay the loss of their own ride, but also the ride of the transient. The people of Seattle own this system and should collect cost of service, especially when there has been deducted from such cost many items which a private corporation must include, such as taxes, assessments on gross revenues, and the cost of services now performed by officers of the city.”

Chicago might learn a lesson from Seattle, for under a “people’s ownership” plan with a 5-cent fare, the taxpayers



would have to pay not only for their own cheap riding, but of the thousands of transients in the city who daily use the street cars.

---

### ***Closing Train Gates on Passengers***

**D**ID you ever get angry and feel inclined to cuss when a trainman swung his gates shut just as you were about to board an elevated train? As Cartoonist Briggs says "it happens in the best regulated families" and is a daily occurrence. In fact it happens many times a day.

Instead of getting angry and cussing the trainman next time it happens, just stop a moment and analyze the situation. In the first place another train will come along in a minute or two if it is during the rush hours and it is in the rush period that it most frequently occurs. A minute or even two or three minutes is not long to wait. On the other hand an accident is a serious matter.

But aside from the danger of accidents, which the Elevated Railroads are particularly anxious to avoid, there is the question of efficient operation to be considered. You might think that it would not delay a train long to let just another passenger on, and as a matter of fact it would not. But there is another passenger following you and another following him and so on. It is quite obvious that some one must be the last to get aboard that particular train. If the trainman opened the gates to let you aboard after he had passed the starting signal to the man ahead, or to the motor-man, how could he refuse to let the man behind you get on and the man behind him? Don't you see that if he followed such a course he would hold his train at that station indefinitely and "gum up" the service all along the line?

That probably never occurred to you. As a matter of fact when the situation is explained in that way to some irate passenger, he usually admits that he was wrong and hasn't thought of the matter in that light. Sometimes a passenger calls at the General Offices to make a complaint against a trainman for closing the gates in his face. Inva-



riably when the necessity for such action has been explained to him, he leaves the offices good natured with some remark that after all the operating officials know what is best and he had not thought of the matter in just that way.

A few seconds or even a minute or two of delay really means little to the individual passenger. To the men who operate elevated trains, it means the difference between good and poor service. During the evening rush hour at Wabash and Adams on the outer track, twenty-one trains go north in a period of fifteen minutes, or at the rate of one train in every 43 seconds. What would happen if a train was held ten seconds after it got the signal to go? It would mean that all trains following would be held up and the service demoralized. Thousands would be inconvenienced.

To give good service during the rush hour with the present limited track facilities on the loop, it is absolutely necessary to keep trains moving. They must run according to prearranged schedules. If one train falls behind the delay affects every other train which is following and a few seconds delay will do it.

Think that over next time the gates are closed as you are about to step aboard. Do not think that you were singled out, or that the trainman had any intention of being discourteous or unaccommodating. He was acting for the best interests of all concerned, including yourself. In the non-rush hours when the interval between trains is a little longer, it is not unusual for a conductor to hold a train a second or two when he observes a passenger hurrying. But he cannot do that in the rush hours and the passengers should understand the reasons why he cannot.

---

### ***One Way to Practice Thrift***

THE savings department of the United States Treasury has designated the week from January 17 to January 23 as a national Thrift Week. The national slogan for the week is "Make Your Money Mean More."

There are various ways in which you can make your



money mean more. One way is to leave in the garage the automobile you have been using to carry you downtown every morning and back every evening and ride on the Elevated. Instead of paying anywhere from 15 to 25 cents a mile for the privilege of riding in an automobile, you can ride on the Elevated for from 1 to 2 cents a mile.

Not only can you save money by using the Elevated, but you actually can save time. On the Elevated you do not have to wait for the whistle of the crossing policeman. You do not have to be on the alert all the time trying to figure out what the other fellow is likely to do. You are not delayed by street traffic and you always have well-lighted, comfortable cars at your command any hour of the day or night.

The annual migration from the automobile and other means of transportation to the Elevated, started later than usual this winter, owing to the exceptionally fine weather. It never reaches its height until the snow begins to fly. It always begins with the snow and ends with the coming of the blue-bird. When the sun shines on both sides of the street at the same time, other means of transportation may be satisfactory, but when snowdrifts pile up, the old reliable "L" is the only way. At certain seasons of the year you may feel rather independent of the "L" but it is mighty convenient when the snow flies.

Suppose the Elevated wasn't at your service when you needed it. You would miss it, wouldn't you? Isn't it to your interest, therefore, to see that the roads have sufficient revenue to enable them properly to function? There are some who seem to think they ought to be driven into bankruptcy.

---

### MAKE YOUR MONEY MEAN MORE

"Make Your Money Mean More," is the slogan adopted by the savings department of the United States Treasury for national thrift week, Jan. 17 to Jan. 23. Employees and patrons of the Elevated Railroads are now be-

ing offered a safe and convenient way to make their money mean more, through a popular subscription sale of stock of the Commonwealth Edison Company.

The Commonwealth Edison Company supplies all the electric energy used to move cars on all the elevated and surface lines.



It supplies the current that illuminates most of the homes and the public streets in the city. It has the largest central station in the world and maintains nineteen sub-stations with an aggregate capacity of 350,000 horse power.

The business of the Commonwealth Edison Company is indispensable to the life of the city. For that reason, investors in its securities are assured of a steady and fair return on their investment. The company pays dividends at the rate of 8 per cent per annum, which is a high rate of return on an investment that has no speculative features.

The Commonwealth Edison Company desires a larger distribution of its stock among its customers. Its aim is to have every customer a stockholder and with that end in view it is now offering a limited number of its shares at the current market price to investors of moderate means. The company would have no difficulty in disposing of the present issue of stock to large investors, but it prefers to have one thousand customers holding one share each rather than to have one holding a thousand shares.

Three plans have been evolved by the company for the popular distribution of this stock. The first plan provides for the purchase outright for cash at the price quoted daily on the Chicago Stock Exchange. A second plan provides for a cash payment of \$10 a share and the balance within thirty days. Shares bought on that plan are also at the current price on the day that the first payment was made. The third plan provides for easy monthly payments and is intended to encourage thrift among persons of moderate means. Under the third plan a cash payment of \$10 a share is required

and the balance can be paid in monthly installments at the rate of \$10 a share until the payments have been completed. The price per share on the savings plan is \$108.

The market price on the day this is being written is 103½ a share, it having gone up a point or two in the last few days. The price is not likely to ever be lower than it is at this time, while it is reasonable to expect that with an improvement in the money market it will advance materially. Before the war the price was as high as 150 a share.

The various Liberty Loan campaigns educated the workers and persons of moderate means to the value of sound investments. In its thrift campaign the government now is urging citizens to make their money count. Here is an opportunity to make your money earn 8 per cent return for you, while the security is as sound as any bank. Many times the wage-earner, with only a limited amount of money to invest, hesitates about putting it in stocks or bonds because of the fear that some time he may have to have cash on short notice. Stock in the Commonwealth Edison Company is practically the same as money in the bank, because there always is a ready market for it and it has the advantage of paying the investor almost three times the return that he can get on his savings account in the bank.

The present sale may be discontinued any day and certainly will close by the end of January. If you are interested in this opportunity to make a safe investment, you can obtain full information and purchase the stock at the Investment Department of the Commonwealth Edison Company, Room 1110 Edison Building.



## OUR COURTESY COLUMN

**E**MPLOYEES of the Elevated Railroads are noted for courtesy, and recently they were put to a real test. The "politeness" reporter of the Chicago Tribune spent two hours riding around on different elevated trains and failed to find a single employe who was not courteous and civil. He found it difficult to award his \$50 prize in such a field of contestants.

The Tribune politeness prize finally was awarded to South Side Conductor Marcellus F. Simpson, badge 2118, as being just a shade more polite than any of the others. Mr. Simpson was surprised when he was handed the \$50 by the Tribune reporter for doing only what he is daily accustomed to. He probably was almost as much surprised a day later when he received another check for \$50 from Britton I. Budd, president of the Elevated Railroads, who was greatly pleased at the good showing made by the trainmen.

Five other trainmen received favorable mention by the Tribune politeness reporter and each one received a check for \$25 from Mr. Budd, to show that he appreciated their work even if all could not win the Tribune prize. The five receiving honorable mention and a prize from Mr. Budd are:

Metropolitan Trainman P. M. Dedrick, badge 4792.

Metropolitan Trainman C. Moony, badge 4920.

Oak Park Conductor John Gil-martin, badge 6100.

South Side Conductor W. Egan, badge 2067.

South Side Trainman R. E. Brown, badge 2192.

The good showing made when the Tribune politeness reporter made his investigation is all the

more creditable for the reason it was made a few days before Christmas, when traffic always is unusually heavy and the trials of the employes accordingly multiplied.

Some other employes, however, were remembered during the holiday season by pleased patrons. One of the most surprised was South Side Trainman Dacy Neece, badge 2244. Two days before Christmas, a lady boarded Mr. Neece's car at Fifty-fifth street. She questioned the trainman about the location of the wholesale house of Marshall Field & Co. The trainman took some pains to give her exact information as to reaching her destination and when she left his car she handed him an envelope. On opening it he was surprised to find it contained a \$10 bill. Mr. Neece has always tried to be polite and courteous and now he knows that it pays.

South Side Trainman Jerry Cee, badge 2789, on the stockyards special train on Dec. 24 was handed a note with a \$10 gold piece. The note read: "Your friends in the rear car extend to you their best wishes for a Merry Christmas." The same crowd ride on that car each morning, and the note shows that they are pleased with the services of Mr. Cee.

South Side Trainman Ray K. Doughty, badge 2890, was the recipient of a box of 100 cigars from a daily patron.

South Side Trainman Leonard Brink, badge 2629, received a morning greeting from a daily patron of a cigar with a dollar bill wound around it. He hesitated about accepting it, but the passenger insisted it was for good service, and Mr. Brink thanked him in returning the greetings of the season.

Northwestern Motorman Paul Krause, badge 342, received a box of cigars for Christmas from a



regular passenger in appreciation of the good service he renders.

One passenger was so pleased with the courtesy of Ticket Agent Miss Landgren at the Ogden avenue station of the Metropolitan that he handed her this limerick:

The Ogden L station cashier  
Is a joy to people she's near,  
Possessing the art  
Of reaching your heart  
And being most generally dear.

Others commended during the month are:

Oak Park Conductor J. Schlack, badge 6055, is commended for his courtesy to an old lady and a little girl on his train.

South Side Conductor C. W. Metcalf, badge 2619, is commended for the good judgment he used in handling a man who was under the influence of liquor and begging on the train.

Northwestern Conductor J. Dwyer, badge 1477, Agent Mary Rohr and Shopman Braske are commended and thanked by a passenger for the kind attention they gave her when she became ill on the train.

Oak Park Trainman Fred Buss, badge 6132, is commended for his courtesy to passengers.

South Side Trainman J. H. Roubie, badge 2949, is thanked and commended for finding and returning a bunch of keys to a passenger who had lost them. Mr. Roubie was offered a reward, which he refused.

Loop Platformman J. Hines, badge 92, is commended for directing a passenger to the proper train.

Metropolitan Shopman Ralph Danielson, who makes extra trips, is commended for distinct enunciation, and for his courteous treatment of a blind man.

South Side Trainman Chas. C. Gross, badge 2172, is commended for finding a purse and returning it to its owner.

Oak Park Trainman William Riley, badge 6189, is commended for his uniform courtesy.

Northwestern Trainman Helmut Goedel, badge 1066, is commended for finding seats for passengers, for distinct enunciation of stations, and for his business-like way of attending to his duties.

South Side Conductor Alfred Strohm, badge 2341, is commended for courteous and efficient service.

Northwestern Trainman E. F. Jackson, badge 1691, is commended for the manner in which he calls station names and for courtesy.

Metropolitan Trainman H. A. Robinson, badge 4546, is commended for giving correct directions to a passenger.

South Side Trainman Richard Dorsey, badge 2388, is commended for assisting elderly people, for distinct enunciation of stations and for his courtesy.

Metropolitan Trainman B. Horacek, badge 4032, is commended for the efficient manner in which he performs his work.

South Side Trainman Albert DeWitt, badge 2316, is twice commended, once for courtesy and exceptional ability, and once for distinct calling of stations and courteous treatment of women and children.

Metropolitan Trainman Werner Guenther, badge 4599, is commended for calling a taxi and assisting a passenger who became ill on his train.

South Side Trainman William Buckley, badge 2986, is commended for calling station names clearly.

Metropolitan Trainman Edward Maher, badge 4768, is commended for his courtesy and for finding seats for standing passengers.

South Side Trainman William Monrad, badge 2706, is commended for finding and forwarding a letter to a passenger who had lost it.