

# THE ELEVATED NEWS

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## *Operation of "L" Trains in Foggy Weather*

**A**T THIS season of the year when fogs are common in Chicago, it might be of interest to patrons to know something of the rules governing train operation under such conditions. It will explain why trains run late on foggy mornings and show patrons why they should allow themselves a little extra time to get to their work on such occasions.

In every motorman's cab on the elevated lines, a card is tacked up in a position in front of his eyes which reads: "When view ahead is obstructed by fog, smoke or stormy weather, reduce the speed of your train so that you are positive you can stop in the distance you can see. **IN ALL CASES OF DOUBT TAKE THE SAFE SIDE. NEVER TAKE A CHANCE.**"

That card is prominently displayed at all times, whether the weather is foggy or clear. It is intended to make the motorman keep his mind on his work. When a fog has settled on any section of the lines, every motorman before taking his train out on a trip, is required to sign what is known as a "Fog Trip Order." It is a regular form blank with lines for names, dates, etc. The order reads: "This order is to notify you that a heavy fog has settled at various points along the line of road, and you are hereby ordered to disregard schedules and feel your way slowly over any part of the line where the fog has settled, and at all times be sure you are running your train at such a speed that you can stop within the distance you can see. **A VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER MEANS INSTANT DISMISSAL.**"

A new order is signed on each trip made by a train, the idea being mainly to impress upon the mind of the motorman the necessity for moving with caution. As a further precautionary measure, supervisors



are stationed at different points along the line during a fog, who warn each motorman as a train passes that point. By taking all these precautions, operation of elevated trains is made as safe in a fog as at any other time, but, of course, the trains will not make as good a time of speed. On such occasions safety is more important than speed and passengers should govern themselves accordingly, by leaving their homes a few minutes earlier on foggy mornings.

### ***Lowering New Bridge Is Big Engineering Feat***

**O**PENING of the new Wells Street Bridge to elevated trains in less than sixty hours after the old bridge was closed, was a tribute to the engineering skill of the city bridge department, the contractors who built the bridge and to the elevated railroads.

Another big problem, which was handled with great efficiency, was the diverting of the usual traffic on the Northwestern Elevated into the North Water Street Terminal. That this traffic was handled without a serious hitch and with little delay to passengers, was due to careful planning for months in advance.

The old bridge was closed to traffic at 8 o'clock on Friday evening and at 7 o'clock on Monday morning regular train operation was resumed across the new bridge. It was after midnight Sunday night before the track crews of the elevated roads began laying tracks, and the rails were laid and ready for trains before 6 o'clock in the morning. The old bridge was swung around on its center pier in the middle of the river and a gap cut out of its center wide enough to allow the new bridge to be lowered.

While the new bridge, with its massive leaves, each leaf weighing 2,500 tons, including the counterweights, looks impressive to pedestrians and to passengers on an elevated train, the greater part of the work is entirely hidden from view in the substructure. The substructure is supported by piers which rest on hardpan, 75 feet below the surface level. Eight thousand cubic yards of concrete were used in the substructure.

The first bridge across the river at Wells Street was built in 1841 and was swept away by floods and ice in 1849. The next bridge was a hand-operated wooden affair, 190 feet in length, which was built in 1856 and was burned in the big fire in 1871. It was replaced the following year with a hand-operated iron swing bridge, which in turn gave way to a steam operated swing bridge 220 feet in length in 1888. That bridge was reinforced in 1896 to provide for the operation of Northwestern Elevated trains, and it remained in service until replaced this month by the new double-deck trunnion bascule bridge. The width of the new bridge is 72 feet and the span gives a clear channel in the river of 220 feet.



Work on the substructure of the new bridge was begun in May, 1917, but owing to the war and the conditions which followed its close, it was not completed until January, 1921. The erection of the superstructure was commenced in May, 1920, the leaves being built perpendicularly, trains on the elevated being permitted to run through them until the old bridge was closed for the last time.

The share which the Northwestern Elevated contributes toward the cost of the new bridge amounts to approximately \$400,000.

### *When Seconds Seem to Be Minutes*

**W**HEN some slight delay occurs on the elevated lines, especially in the morning and evening rush hours when cars are crowded, passengers are apt to become impatient and imagine that the delays run into minutes, when as a matter of fact they run only into seconds. The passenger is impatient to get either to his work or to his home, consequently when a train halts he imagines he is being delayed much longer than he actually is.

Examination of the train sheets is the most convincing proof that delays are infrequent and of short duration. Every train on the elevated roads is run on a schedule and checks are made at various points along the line. If a train is a minute late on reaching the loop in the morning rush hour, that is noted on the train sheet. After a minute, half minutes are checked. Picking out the train sheets at random for the morning rush hour, they tell an interesting story. Train sheets for three mornings were taken and the longest delay shown was four minutes. That was for one train only. Delays of three minutes were few, only one appearing on the sheet for one day. Two-minute delays were more frequent, but of the trains late the majority were in the one-minute column. To offset the delays from six to ten trains on each day were marked one minute ahead of time on reaching the loop. The sheets examined were for the Northwestern road, but the average on all the roads is about the same.

No doubt the passengers on that train which was four minutes late thought they had been delayed at least twenty minutes. Train sheets are not available to every passenger, but most of them carry watches. Next time a train is held up between stations, look at your watch and mark the time that elapses. You will find out in nine times out of ten the delay is only a few seconds.

The average length of station stop on the elevated lines is only about 17 seconds and should a train be held up between stations as long as it is when loading and unloading at a platform, you would complain of the long delay. Prove it to your own satisfaction by your watch next time you are delayed on a train. You will discover that



your imagination goes a great deal faster than the hands of your watch.

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### *Floor Mats in Ravenswood-Kenwood Cars*

A READER of The Elevated News writes: "Will you kindly explain in the columns of The Elevated News why none of the cars on the Ravenswood line, or less than one-half of one per cent, are equipped with mats on the floors to protect the passengers' feet? The other lines have something of the sort."

Steel cars are in service on the Ravenswood-Kenwood line and the floors are made of a composition somewhat resembling cement. On all the other lines the cars have wood floors, so that the wooden strips are permanently fixed and are a part of the floor.

Largely by way of experiment ten cars on the Ravenswood-Kenwood line were equipped two years ago with leather floor matting, at an expense of about \$250 a car, the mats being so fitted that they could be taken out in the summer months. If patrons of the line appreciated the effort to make them more comfortable, they kept quiet about it, for no letters of comment were received, so that as far as the management could judge passengers were entirely indifferent about it.

The management, however, believed that the leather mat was practicable and an additional ten cars were equipped and are now in service, so that our correspondent's percentage figure is wrong. Ten per cent of the cars are now equipped with mats, and by the first of the year another twenty cars will be done. It is the intention to equip all the steel cars with mats, but it involves quite a large expenditure and must go along with other needed improvements as circumstances permit.

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### *Step Forward in the Car, Please*

A PATRON of the South Side Elevated writes that he takes a train usually about 6 o'clock in the evening at Dearborn and Van Buren streets. "The other day," he writes, "I got on the rear platform of the first car and it was so crowded near the door that it was hardly possible to squeeze through, but I finally got to the front end and found a seat. It was not the fault of your conductor that this crowd was at the door, because he kept asking them to move forward. I not only succeeded in getting a seat that night, but have done so several times. Why people persist in not going to the center of the car, I do not know."

Well, that appears to be one of the problems in local transportation that has not yet been solved. Perhaps passengers who enter



a car first crowd around the door to make it easier for others to get in and out. We assume that they are all willing to help each other and that is one of the ways in which they try to help. It doesn't work well, though. As this correspondent says, it frequently happens that cars are crowded at the ends while there are empty seats in the center. If it happens to be the front, or the rear car in a train, there always is room at the closed end, while the other end is crowded to the point of discomfort.

For your own comfort and convenience, as well as for the comfort of your fellow passengers, please step forward in the car.

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### *Explaining an Unusual Operation on Oak Park Line*

A PATRON of the Oak Park Line, who hopes that his curiosity is not an "unholy" one, asks an explanation of an unusual operation of a train on the evening of December 2. The train in question, he says, proceeded around the loop in the usual manner, but instead of going west on Lake Street it crossed over and circled the loop a second time, stopping for passengers at each station, not only on the loop but along the line. The result was that the train was overcrowded, and the patron wishes to have an explanation made in The Elevated News.

For the information of this patron and others, in case a similar occurrence might happen again, the sending of the particular train around the loop a second time was an emergency measure, caused by the burning out of a feed cable on a motor car, east bound at Cicero avenue. The car had to be cut out at the car house at Hamlin, making the train 17 minutes late on arriving at the loop. This meant an interval of 24 minutes between trains, so the preceding train was sent twice around the loop to help fill the gap and make the delay a little shorter for waiting passengers.

The net result of the operation was that those on board the train when it first ran around the loop were delayed 11 minutes by reason of the second trip around, while others who were waiting were taken aboard 12 minutes sooner than would have been the case had they been obliged to wait for the next train. It merely was a case of judgment as to which method was the better for the majority of patrons.

It is true that the train which circled the loop twice picked up double its customary load, but had it not done so the following train would have had to pick up a little more than twice its usual load. The method used tended to distribute the load and fill up the gap. On the whole the operation caused the least inconvenience to the greater number of patrons, which is always the dominant thought when such unforeseen delays occur.



## ANOTHER VIEW ON CHIVALRY

THE following letter comes from a reader and gives another slant to the lack of chivalry towards women passengers on the "L."

"I have just read your article on chivalry in the November issue of The Elevated News and cannot resist offering another view on this many-sided problem.

"Personally, I rarely offer my seat to a young woman or girl, because I feel that the long hours which I work entitle me to a seat in preference to a younger person. On the other hand, I invariably offer my seat to an elderly person, or to a person with a small child in arms, whether male or female.

Now to the heart of the story: Lack of chivalry on the part of the young men of today can be blamed almost entirely on their mothers, to-wit: I have on many occasions ridden on crowded cars, both surface and "L," and seen women with several children under fifteen years of age, each child occupying a seat, while other women, even gray-haired ones were compelled to stand.

"On one occasion my wife and myself boarded a Wilson Express at 43rd street, bound for the North Side. My wife carried the baby, who was about six months old, and I carried a little girl twenty-eight months. Seven seats—I counted them—were occupied by children between 8 and 15 years of age, each with their parents, and yet the only person to offer my wife a seat was a spinsterish looking woman of probably 35 years of age.

"The most beautiful flowers do not blossom so profusely of their own accord, but because of the gardener's care. Blame the gardener."

## IT HAPPENED ON THE "L"

"DOES this train stop at 35th street?" asked the young woman as she rushed breathless up to the train doors.

On the platform was a man very much under the influence of moonshine. He overheard the question and before the trainman had a chance to reply he raised his hat, bowed with as much grace as Chesterfield might have shown under like circumstances, and replied:

"Madam, I will have this train stop at any station you desire."

## MY! MY! SUCH LANGUAGE

AN irate passenger writes complaining of being delayed getting to work on the morning of December 1 and winds up by saying "Stick this in your Elevated News." If he had used printable language we would have been glad to comply with the request. He was no doubt delayed as he says, but the delay could not rightly be charged against the roads. Trains were running over the old Wells street bridge and during the last few days of operation some difficulties were encountered. On the particular morning complained of, two separate trains broke apart when taking the "bump" on the old bridge and caused a considerable delay. The new bridge is now in operation and further delays of that kind will not occur.

## For Safety's Sake

"Dear God," prayed golden-haired little Willie, "please watch over my mamma."

And then he added as an afterthought, "And I dunno as would do any harm to keep an eye on the old man, too."



# Low Excursion Rates

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During the Christmas Holidays Excursion Rates between Chicago and Milwaukee and Intermediate Points will be given on the

## North Shore Line

On the basis of a round trip for one and one-half regular fares. Minimum Round Trip Fare \$2.25.

Excursion Tickets Issued December 22, 23 and 24 good for return until January 4, 1922.

Limited Trains Leave North Shore Station, 209 So. Wabash Avenue for Milwaukee and Intermediate points every hour on the hour.

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# Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad



## OUR COURTESY COLUMN

**I**F you were in a hurry to get to church on Sunday morning, because you sing in the choir, and you had a long distance to go, and you found when you reached the elevated station that you had left your coin purse at home and did not have a cent, and if the young woman in the cashier's booth said she would trust you and gave you two tickets, wouldn't you feel pleased?

Well, that is what happened to a young woman on a recent Sunday morning at the Vincennes station on the Kenwood branch and she wishes to thank the ticket agent, whose name she does not know. The ticket agent commended is Miss Catherine Bugler.

Other employes commended this month by passengers are:

Oak Park Trainman L. F. Weber, badge 6277, is commended for courtesy to women and children.

Metropolitan Trainman John O'Leary, badge 4787, is commended for finding seats for standing passengers.

Platform Man Daniel A. Kendall, badge 2793, at Indiana avenue is thanked for courtesy extended a man who tried to get a stick of gum from a vending machine. As the machine was out of order and a train approaching, Mr. Kendall gave the man a stick of gum out of his pocket.

Platform Man James Connor, badge 36, at Madison and Wabash, outer loop, is commended for courteous and efficient service.

Oak Park Conductor F. Lambert, badge 6088, is commended for giving directions to a passenger.

Oak Park Trainman A. Dewar, badge 6266, is commended for re-

storing a small kodak left in his car.

South Side Conductor Margaret F. Simpson, badge 2118, is commended for calling stations distinctly, attending to the ventilation of his car and showing interest in the comfort of his passengers.

Northwestern Trainman J. S. Bigus, badge 1435, is commended for finding seats for passengers and calling stations distinctly.

Metropolitan Trainman E. Guin, badge 4569, is commended for assisting a blind negro from his train to the stairs at Madison and Wells.

Oak Park Trainman J. E. Shire, badge 6145, is commended for courtesy and finding seats for passengers.

Metropolitan Trainman Dan Slater, badge 4249, is commended for calling stations distinctly, finding seats for passengers and efficiency in general.

Oak Park Trainman Edward M. Kouri, badge 6249, is commended for politeness and finding seats for passengers.

Oak Park Trainman Fred Buss, badge 6132, is commended for the service given passengers in an accident.

Metropolitan Trainman F. J. Janata, badge 4786, is commended and thanked for finding and restoring a lady's purse found on his train.

Oak Park Trainman Edward Kelmer, badge 6024, is commended for courtesy and calling stations distinctly.

South Side Trainman Lucius M. Hammond, badge 2439, is commended for polite and courteous manners and for calling stations distinctly.

South Side Trainman John F. Zeiher, badge 2783, is commended for pleasant disposition and attention given passengers.