

# THE ELEVATED NEWS

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## *Relative Speed of Subway and "L" Trains*

**M**ANY people living in Chicago are "sold" on the idea that only through the construction of a vast subway system can they be given the benefit of rapid transit. The idea is erroneous, as the facts show. But the people are daily being fed on "subways" and as a majority of them, perhaps, have never ridden in a subway, they take for granted that a train under ground can be run at a higher speed than one on an elevated structure.

Even those who have traveled in the subways in New York are apt to be misled on the question of speed. There is an incessant roar and noise as a train rushes through a narrow bore underground, which gives an idea of great speed, although such travel is nerve-racking rather than particularly fast. Another factor which adds to the illusion is the close proximity of supports and walls in a subway. As they are close to the windows of the train as it dashes through, the passenger gets a notion that he is traveling at a tremendous speed. As a matter of fact he gets a similar idea in a panorama while sitting perfectly still and seeing the scenery move quickly past.

One of the chief reasons why many Chicagoans imagine that trains in the New York subway travel very fast, is that the blocks in that city are much shorter than in Chicago. A man boards a subway train at South Ferry, for instance, and travels to 125th street. He notes the time and instinctively compares it with the time it would require to travel from Madison street to 125th street in Chicago. But what are the facts? The distance to 125th street from South Ferry in New York is 8.4 miles. The distance to 125th street from Madison street, is 14.75 miles in a straight line. That is quite a



difference. The same is true of shorter distances. The Chicagoan visiting New York who travels from the city hall to 96th street, speaks of the fast time he made without realizing that the distance is the same as if he traveled from the Loop to 58th street on the "L."

If one will give the matter a little thought he must admit that there is no physical or mechanical reason why the same type of trains, driven by the same motive power, should travel any faster in a hole in the ground than on an elevated structure raised above surface traffic interference. They do not travel any faster, either, as a matter of fact. The speed at which electric trains travel depends entirely on the gears and the power of the motors and whether they run under or over the surface makes no difference.

So much has been said about the relative speed attained in the New York subways and on the Chicago "L" roads, that a transportation engineer was sent to New York by the "L" to make actual checks. The time schedules are not always quite dependable, for the reason that in the heavy rush hours, most trains run a little behind their schedules. In that respect it was found that New York and Chicago are about on a level.

The investigator rode in the subways and on the elevated lines in New York for several days, during rush hours and non-rush hours, making actual checks to fractions of a second. While engaged in that work, others made similar checks on the Chicago "L." The train numbers were taken, the hour when the test trips were made, the distance and in fact everything that could be done to get accurate information. When similar runs were compared and averages worked up from the mass of data, the result showed little difference in the speed of the subways and elevated lines in New York and Chicago. The slight difference was in favor of the Chicago "L."

Here are some of the results shown:

Average speed of express trains in rush hours:

Chicago "L" .....	16.89	miles	per	hour
New York subway.....	16.80	"	"	"
New York "L".....	16.29	"	"	"

Much faster time could be shown on all the lines on certain runs and in the non-rush hours. For instance, an actual check on an Evanston Express southbound, showed that it left Loyola at 8:33½ a. m. and arrived at Wells and Randolph at 8:59½, the elapsed time being 26 minutes. The distance is 8.9 miles, so that the speed averaged 20.5 miles an hour. In that particular service, however, no stops are made between Loyola and Chicago avenue. That particular run is faster than any run in New York, either subway or elevated, for a similar distance, but is not included in making up the average, because it can hardly be called typical.

The point which the tests mentioned prove is, that trains elec



trically propelled, running on rails, can run as fast on an elevated structure as in a subway and that they actually do.

### *Chicago's Need of More Rapid Transit Lines*

THE greatest need of Chicago in the way of transportation facilities, is more rapid transit lines. While the Chicago "L" gives as fast and reliable service as any local transportation company in the country, it serves only a small proportion of the daily car riders. The fault lies largely with the people themselves, as they have never made an insistent demand for more rapid transit.

Chicago is a young city and there may be living in it today a few old-timers who remember a time when there was no talk of subways. The younger generation has no such recollection, for subways were in the conversation stage of construction when they were born and that is as far as it has gone. We have built "dinky" subways and we have built "comprehensive" subways, on paper, and we have appointed "commissions" to make investigations and reports and a barrel of money has been expended in making elaborate plans. While we have indulged in conversation, other large cities have built rapid transit lines.

In the city of New York, that is the island of Manhattan and the Bronx, 70 per cent of the car riders use the subways and elevated lines and only 30 per cent the slower surface cars. In Chicago 80 per cent of the car riders travel on the surface lines and only 20 per cent on the rapid transit lines. What is the reason?

The reason, of course, is that the rapid transit system in Chicago does not serve all sections of the city and the people living in territory through which there are no elevated roads, are obliged to rely on other means of transportation. That is why the greatest need of Chicago today is the development of the existing rapid transit lines to their full capacity, supplemented by a subway in the downtown district where it is impracticable or undesirable to build more elevated lines. To build an extensive subway system before the present elevated lines are utilized to capacity, would be a public waste of money. The elevated lines are here and with additional tracks and with a system of transfer privileges between surface and elevated, the lines could be developed to give the city a real system of rapid transit.

Speed with safety is what the people in every large city are demanding today and that can be attained on an elevated line just as easily as in a subway and at a much lower cost of construction. Subway construction is the most expensive, while travel in subways is the least desirable. Why should anyone wish to travel through a



hole in the ground when he can make as fast time traveling in the open air and sunshine?

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### *Improvements in Northwestern "L" Service*

PATRONS of the Northwestern "L" have noted with satisfaction the great improvement in the service on that line in the last few weeks. The closing of the old Kinzie street station, combined with the utilization of an additional express track north of Wilson, have made this improvement possible.

All trains leaving the end of the line in Wilmette from 7:15 until 8:18 in the morning, take on passengers at stations north of Loyola only, then run from Loyola to Chicago avenue without a stop. These trains are designated by two white "markers" or small flags, carried on the front and rear.

These fast trains not only give a superior service to the people in Evanston and Rogers Park by getting them downtown a few minutes sooner, but they improve the situation for all passengers living south of Loyola as well. All the other morning trains, except the Evanston, start from Howard, making stops at all stations north of Wilson. The Evanston trains, having picked up their loads north of Loyola, leave the Howard trains to pick up passengers at stations between Loyola and Wilson, so that they are no longer crowded and passengers get seats, even in the rush hours.

Although six additional 6-car trains have been put in service in the morning rush hour, all trains are making much faster time and with much less congestion, as a result of the closing of Kinzie street station. While that station was in service, the utmost number of trains that could be put through was 57 an hour. Even with that number there was a great deal of congestion and delay south of Chicago avenue.

At the present time 63 trains an hour are being put through the "neck of the bottle" and patrons have noticed that they are no longer delayed between Chicago avenue and the loop. That is due entirely to the better operating conditions which the closing of the Kinzie street station makes possible. The abutment and approach to the new Wells street bridge extend about a hundred feet farther north than the old bridge. That means that the new approach is so close to the old Kinzie station that a train could not stand between the bridge and the tracks leading into the North Water street terminal. A stop at Kinzie street therefore meant delays to northbound trains which frequently extended back on to the loop. Southbound trains were similarly delayed because the Kinzie street station platform extended north to the curve in the road, so that a southbound train could not



round the curve while the train ahead was standing at the station. This caused congestion all the way up to Chicago avenue.

Of the passengers using the Northwestern "L" daily, more than 40,000 of them ride downtown so that they get the benefit of the reduced running time. What that means in the morning rush hours, is seen in actual checks made on the Evanston trains which run from Loyola to Chicago avenue without stop. The running time from Loyola to Randolph and Wells, a distance of 8.9 miles, is 26 minutes, while the closing of the Kinzie station has resulted in reducing the running time of all trains from Chicago avenue to the loop by three minutes.

At no time since the Northwestern "L" began operation, has the morning rush-hour service been quite as good as it is today, and as soon as the necessary physical changes can be made, a similar evening rush-hour service will be installed.

### ***Comparison of "L" Service with Other Cities***

THE Chicago Elevated Railroads run more car miles for the number of passengers carried than are run by the transportation companies in any other large city in the country. The car mile is the unit by which service is measured. The smaller the number of passengers carried per car mile, the greater the measure of service given the public and the higher the cost of operation for the company.

The following comparison of the "L" with some of the larger cities is of interest:

Company	Passengers per car mile
Chicago "L" .....	3.68
New York Subway .....	6.09
New York "L" .....	5.65
Cleveland Street Cars .....	8.20
San Francisco, Municipal Lines.....	7.40

From the foregoing table it will be seen that the Chicago "L" carries only a little more than half the number of passengers for each car mile run, that are carried in the New York subway and less than one-half the number carried on the municipal surface lines in San Francisco. In Cleveland, which is popularly supposed to have the best service of any city in the country, it will be seen that the cars carry nearly two and one-half times as many passengers per car mile as the Chicago "L."

The figures shown indicate the measure of service given the public, but they show also the relative cost to the companies to fur-



nish that service. The rate of fare in Cleveland is 6 cents, with an additional charge of 1 cent for a transfer. It can readily be seen why the Cleveland company can operate on a lower fare basis than the Chicago "L" and still earn a much higher revenue per car mile. The same is true in the other cities, where the density of population is greater and the average length of ride is lower. The average ride for all passengers on the "L" is about 7 miles, while in Cleveland it is less than 3 miles.

## OUR COURTESY COLUMN

**L**ETTERS commending the following employes for meritorious work have been received in the last month:

Oak Park Trainman Joseph Prielozny, badge 6222, is commended for finding seats for standing passengers and for pulling down the window shades when the sun is shining.

Metropolitan Trainman Oscar Peterson, badge 4213, is commended for helping an aged woman from the train and directing her to her destination.

South Side Trainman Charles G. Curry, badge 2647, is commended for finding a seat for a woman passenger.

Northwestern Trainman Frank Ortener, badge 1494, is commended for his extreme kindness to a passenger.

South Side Trainman William Buckley, badge 2986, is commended for calling stations distinctly and for courtesy to a lady.

Metropolitan Trainman Frank Paris, badge 4264, is commended for picking up from the tracks a cane that a blind man had dropped when he was boarding the train.

South Side Trainman Robert C. Richards, badge 2219, is commended for pulling down a window blind for a young lady.

Metropolitan Trainman William Jones, badge 4861, is commended for finding seats for ladies and for distinctly calling the stations.

South Side Trainman Samuel Patnod, badge 2238, is commended for coming out on the platform at Congress Street to advise a patron that he had given two tickets to the agent instead of one.

Metropolitan Conductor Harold Norin, badge 4650, is commended for his distinct enunciation of station names.

South Side Trainman Charles G. Curry, badge 2647, is commended for his courtesy, consideration of standing passengers and for calling the stations distinctly.

Northwestern Conductor John McCormick, badge 574, is thanked and commended for finding and returning a bag containing a large sum of money.

Platform Man C. W. Watson, State and VanBuren, is commended for assisting a lady to recover her lost pocketbook.

R. A. Bailey, Despatcher at Loomis street, and the employes of the South Side Lost and Found office are thanked and commended for their assistance given a lady to recover a pocketbook left on a train.

Oak Park Conductor John Chemelick, badge 6144, is commended for his courtesy in direct



ing a passenger who did not know her way around.

South Side Trainman Manuel Newman, badge 2752, is commended for his patience, courtesy and clearness in answering questions.

Metropolitan Motorman L. F. Wanaurney, badge 4031, and Conductor J. L. Reid, badge 4219, are commended and thanked for their kindness in stopping their train at the west end of the Lombard Station platform in order to save a walk of half a block for a crippled passenger.

South Side Conductor Thomas J. Canavan, badge 2229, is commended for finding and returning a music notebook left on his train.

Metropolitan Trainman Dan Slater, badge 4249, is commended for his distinct calling of stations, for finding seats for standing passengers, and for his general efficiency.

Platform Man N. Connors, badge 12, at Adams and Wabash, is commended for his pleasant manner and the efficient way in which he performs his duties.

Metropolitan Trainman J. F. Wernes, badge 4903, is thanked and commended for taking care of a little girl who got lost and for bringing her home to her parents at the end of his run.

Northwestern Trainman M. Gargaro, badge 1628, is commended for requesting seated passengers to move over and make room for standing passengers.

Sherman Scott, porter at Roosevelt Road station, is commended for preventing an intoxicated man from paying his fare and going up the steps to the platform. He requested the man to sit down and rest a while, telling him there was danger of his falling off the platform.

Northwestern Trainman R. A. Davis, badge 1583, is commended

for finding a seat for a woman passenger.

South Side Trainman Charles Doherty, badge 3020, is commended for his kindness to a passenger.

Platform Man D. M. McNamara, badge 37, Randolph and Wells, is commended for courtesy and pleasant manners.

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### Magnetic

A young man from the country called on a certain great manufacturer in his workshop, and the man of metals and machinery picked up a powerful magnet and said:

"That magnet will draw 3 lbs. of iron from a distance of two feet. There is no natural object on the face of the earth that has more power."

"I dunno know about that," said the young countryman thoughtfully. "I know a natural object, wrapped in muslin and frills, that is drawing me every Sunday evening over three miles of ploughed fields."

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### He Swore

Village Constable (to villager who has been knocked down by passing motorist):

"You didn't see the number, but could you swear to the man?"

Villager: "I did, but I don't think 'e 'eard me."

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### Not Worth Much

The tourist from the East had stopped to change tires in a desolate region of the far South. "I suppose," he remarked to a native onlooker, "that even in these isolated parts the bare necessities of life have risen tremendously in price."

"Y'er right, stranger," replied the native, gloomily, "an' it ain't worth drinkin' when ye get it."



# Travel the Electric Way

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## North Shore Line

Trains leave the North Shore Passenger terminal at 209 S. Wabash Avenue every hour on the hour

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Excellent dining car service on trains leaving Adams and Wabash at 7:15 A.M. 12:00 Noon and 4:45 P.M.

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