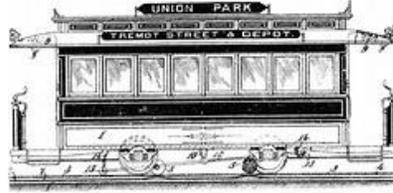


# Transit Times



# and Gazette

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR & A NEW DECADE!

**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION TROLLEY VOLUNTEERS WILL BE HELD SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020 AT 1:30 PM ON THE MEZZANINE LEVEL OF THE LINDBERGH AUTOMOTIBLE BUILDING.**

**INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW - "WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE RAILROAD SPIKE?":** The hook-headed spike, which is in use today, by railroads to fasten steel steel rails to crossties, is said to have been designed in 1831 by Robert L. Stevens, the first president of the Camden & Amboy Railroad (which eventually became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad) in New Jersey. The first patent for a machine for making hook-headed spikes was issued to Henry Burden of Troy, New York in 1840.



**NOVEMBER 26, 1942** - Former mayor Henry Kiel died. He served three terms as mayor, from 1913 to 1925. On Election Day in 1913 the man who would become one of our greatest civic leaders left St. Louis for a construction job in Texas, thinking he had lost. He woke up the next morning on a train in Arkansas, to be told he had won by the narrowest of margins.

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### **450 FEET UNDER LAKE MICHIGAN, CLASSIC CAR CACHE RESTS IN FRIGID SILENCE** -

**WISCONSIN** -- The world's largest collection of 1929 and 1930 Nash Motors automobiles exists not in a museum, but rather entombed in the frigid depths of Lake Michigan.

The cars, 268 of them, are lashed in rows inside and crumpled in a heap next to the wreck of the SS Senator, a Great Lakes steamship that rests for eternity in an uncharted sinkhole about 15 miles east of Port Washington, Wis.

The Senator, which sank during the final days of the Roaring Twenties as the country was plunging into the Great Depression, sits upright nearly 450 feet down; so deep that few, if any, divers will ever see her in person. Her collection of vintage autos once bound for Detroit join the pantheon of ships, airplanes, submarines, train cars and other vehicles of yesteryear that populate the bottom of Lake Michigan.

"Those cars on the inside are in pretty good condition," said Tamara Thomsen, a maritime archeologist and shipwreck diver with the Wisconsin Historical Society who surveyed the Senator wreck in November.

In April, the wreck was added to the National Register of Historic Places; one of nearly 150 U.S. shipwrecks on the historic list. Coincidentally, the Senator sits within the boundary of a pending [National Marine Sanctuary](#) that will become the second such protected area of shipwrecks within the Great Lakes.

The ship sank on Halloween, Oct. 31, 1929; mere days after the infamous Black Thursday stock market crash that threw the country into an economic spiral.

She is the lesser known among a trio of Lake Michigan shipwrecks that week. On Oct. 22, the SS Milwaukee train car ferry sank off Milwaukee with all 52 hands. On Oct. 29, the SS Wisconsin steamer sank off Kenosha with about 18 lost.

The Senator left Kenosha two days later, laden with \$251,000 worth of brand new cars from Nash Motors, a Wisconsin-based automaker founded by former General Motors president Charles W. Nash. The company had just begun offering a new 8-cylinder engine model that month and the 1930 models incorporated a 133-inch wheelbase -- the longest Nashes built to date.

The cars were bound for dealerships across Michigan and the Midwest. Nash filled a niche between luxury cars like a Packard and economy models like a Ford. The cars would likely have sold for \$1,000 to \$2,000 to professionals like a doctor, lawyer or bank manager looking for a practical, higher-end ride.

"You kind of had to want a Nash," said Jay Follis, marketing director at the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Mich. "Other companies sold similar vehicles for less, but Nash had a great reputation."

It was foggy the night the Senator steamed northward. About 10:20 p.m., the ship's crew heard the fog signal of another steel bulk carrier, the 420-foot Marquette, bound for Indiana Harbor with 7,000 tons of iron ore from Escanaba.



**(Left) Photo** Caption - A late 1920s Nash Motors automobile on display at the Rambler Ranch classic car museum in Elizabeth, Colorado.

Despite visibility about 100 feet, Captain George H. Kinch sailed the Senator at full speed, sounding fog signals as the 33-year-old ship cut through the pea soup. According to period news accounts, the Senator sounded a passing signal of one short blast -- indicating a port-to-port passage -- and the Marquette acknowledged this signal by returning

one short blast of her own.

Suddenly, the Marquette appeared out of the fog only a few hundred feet from the Senator's port side. Despite Captain Kinch's frantic attempt to avoid the inevitable collision by throwing over the rudder, the Marquette struck the Senator just aft of amidships on her port side. As the Marquette pulled free, water began rushing into the stricken ship, causing an immediate port side list.

"SOS; collided with SS Marquette 20 miles east of Port Washington; sinking fast," was the first distress message over the radio at 10:30 a.m.

The ship settled quickly at the stern, the bow lifting high into the air. The Senator slipped beneath the waves just 8 minutes after the impact. Several of the 28 crew members leapt onto the Marquette

immediately after impact. A nearby tugboat that heard the crash plucked another 15 from the icy waters. Ten men died.

William Dorsch, 19, was the youngest survivor.

"I was down in the stoke hole when the warning came," Dorsch told the Milwaukee Journal. "I ran up the stairs, found a life preserver and then jumped off. Man, there wasn't much time to do anything else. It's a big thing for us that tug came along when it did or we wouldn't have lasted much longer."

Although the Marquette was badly damaged, the ore boat limped to Port Washington, where its captain met jeers for not doing more to help the Senator's crew. No life rings were thrown, ladders lowered or lifeboats launched.

An investigation report later found both captains equally at fault for steaming at high speed in dense fog. Ship owner Nicholson Universal Steamship Company of Delaware later honored Captain Earl Godersky of the tug Delos H. Smith and his three-man crew for their fog-enveloped rescue.

In 2005, Paul Ehorn and Rob Polich claimed to have discovered the wreck of the Senator, but it wasn't until November that Thomsen was able to wrangle together an ROV (remotely operated vehicle) from Duluth, Minn. and survey the wreck using coordinates from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The team found the Senator's pilothouse and bow cabins in great shape, not blasted off by the force of air escaping the ship during its death throes. The cars stored on deck lay in a crumpled pile off the starboard stern. Inside, the ROV found autos lined in neat rows of three in one of the holds.

Historical records available don't say whether the Senator carried 1929 or 1930 model Nash coupes or sedans. Thomsen and researchers hope to answer that and other questions about early Wisconsin automobile manufacturing as well as gain insights into Great Lakes historical vessel construction and shipboard life.

As for Nash Motors, the company went on to make the popular Nash-Healey sports car and Rambler compact. Nash merged with Kelvinator Corp. in 1937 before restructuring into the American Motors Corporation in 1954 with George W. Romney, who later was elected governor of Michigan, as chairman. Chrysler acquired the company in 1987 and rebranded its models as Jeep-Eagle.

"I think a lot of other companies, had they lost 260 cars and had the stock market crash in the same month, they would have locked the doors," said Follis. "It was only through the reputation of management Nash was able to keep going."

"I doubt, if you looked at their books, they made much of anything that year," he said. "I think a lesser company would have been done."

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### **FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION -PART 1 - GENNERAL CONSIDERATIONS.**

Generally speaking the freight business of a steam road is larger and more profitable than its passenger service. While on electric – traction lines this relation will not obtain, the subject of goods transportation is worth close study with the intent of following so far as may be expedient the practice of the great trunk lines.

Our city and suburban traction systems are largely evolutions from horse car lines, when the service had severe limitations as to weight, speed and distance. Then the matter of freight or express transportation was rarely ever considered. When the modern electric car appeared, capable of carrying 125 people at a higher rate of speed 25 miles out into the country, the view"- of the management seemed focused on the great advance in matters of

passenger service, and there were few managers who had eyes to the business for which the steam roads principally stand.

Still, this general proposition has had the attention of some traction companies and the results of establishing a freight service have been more or less satisfactory, depending upon the methods employed. Where the business offered has just been nibbled at, the profits, if any, leave been insignificant. Where the methods of the old line express companies, developed to meet the requirements of extensive interstate business, have been imitated in, a restricted territory, the cost of wagon service has usually eaten up the profits. Where the company has farmed out the business to an outside corporation or individual, the profits, if any, have been small. But where an operating company has concluded to run a transportation business substantially on the methods of the freight department of a steam road, it has made a wise decision. The pick-up and delivery business refused would not only have been unprofitable, but would have resulted in an absolute loss in most instances.

An example of nibbling at business is afforded by an eastern line that runs two or three trips per day of a combination express and passenger car» with a motorman, conductor and express messenger. Superficially, this plan is not without its attractive features, but, as the car is at the town end only ten minutes two or three times a day, shippers usually forward by steam road freight or express companies, whose depots are always open during business hours. The wayside or even through business of this combination car is insignificant, and is done at a loss.

Selling transportation privileges for a percentage of gross business transacted is a not uncommon manner of relieving the official mind of the bother of conducting a transportation business. Express companies pay the steam roads over which they run, on a basis of fifty and sometimes fifty-five per cent of gross business. The XYZ Express Company routes packages from A to B for example, over two different steam roads. Neither one of these companies is in a position to administer a transportation business over the line of the other. The XYZ is a great money maker; so is the lessee of transportation privileges on trolley lines. The Traction Company, would do better to pay a freight traffic manager a fair salary and own its business, than fatten a lessee. Numerous instances could be cited of traction companies that have contracted with small corporations or with individuals to furnish depots, cars, motormen and power for 33-1/2 to 40 per cent of the gross receipts of the express or freight business, with the result that the lessee takes virtually all the profits. The lessee is not interested in keeping down the car mileage nor the platform service. He can make a profit when a ten ton car is run ten miles with a ten pound package aboard.

It is unnatural for an operating company unfamiliar with freight and transportation, and wishing to haul all business offered, to adopt methods for years in use by the old line express companies. In spite of the vast territory the latter have to draw from, many of their wagon routes are not self-supporting, but, by the law of the company's being it must be prepared to take anything anywhere. There is so much that is profitable in their wagon routes, widely considered, that the balance is on the right side of the ledger. Let a traction company provide wagon service and you may see a \$200 wagon, a \$14 a week man and a \$250 horse wearing a \$30 harness, trying to catch up with fixed charges with a pound of tea under the seat. Would an old line express company deliver the tea? Of course, but that part of their service with the pound of tea is infinitesimal in comparison with the profitable wagon-miles they run. The traction company has no such supporting conditions.

If freight business of a steam road is more profitable than carrying passengers, a traction road should not be afraid to give freight a trial. Ignorance of the business, fear of public resentment; doubts of the suitability of tracks and bridges are some of the reasons why more traction companies are not carrying freight. A simple method of making a revenue is that of switching freight cars from a steam road to factories at a distance. Profitable night work is found in:

- Carrying ice from outlying houses to city distributing depots.
- Hauling ashes, brick, cement and building materials.
- Gathering butchers' refuse for rendering houses,
- Handling offal for packing houses.
- Bringing in milk from the country.
- Transporting farm produce and returning empties.

Some of the above industries require special cars owned by the shipper. Perishable goods are profitably handled at night and preferably so. Some of the lines of trade to which trolley transportation is particularly suited are as follows:

Bakers	Hardware
Beer and Ale	Ice Cream
Bread	Laundries
Butter, Eggs and Cheese	Liquors and Wines
Canned Goods	Meats
Cement	Milk

City Markets  
Cigars and Tobacco  
Confections  
Cracker Manufacturers  
Department Stores  
Farm Products  
Fish and Oysters

Mineral Waters  
Plumbers  
Pork Products  
Poultry  
Soft Drinks  
Wholesale Drugs  
Wholesale Grocers

although the traffic in the end will cover the entire trade list, In considering the question of goods transportation it should be certain that the charter gives the right to carry any kind of freight that may be offered. If not, it should be amended, for no satisfactory business can be done under limitations in this regard. Charters generally while framed to provide for carrying the mails and small packages, leave the company to face the municipal authorities in order to secure such extension as may permit the handling of heavy and bulky freight.

Presuming that it is decided to investigate conditions with a view of inaugurating a freight business, it is in order to proceed with a canvass of the trade in all lines, not neglecting to look out for new industries that are sure to be fostered by increased and improved transportation facilities afforded.

*(To be continued.)*

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### POST SEASON & HOLIDAY OPERATIONS



TNMOTTV Rich Chenault cheerfully distributes candy canes and jingle bells to our young passengers as they exit our historic St. Louis Waterworks Railway trolley car #10.



Carolers from Caroling St. Louis cheerfully provided excellent holiday entertainment for our many passengers on board.

**Below: One of the many car capacity runs.**



Clearing the Roberts platform and stairs.



Snow removal crew at work clearing tracks.