

James H. Taylor

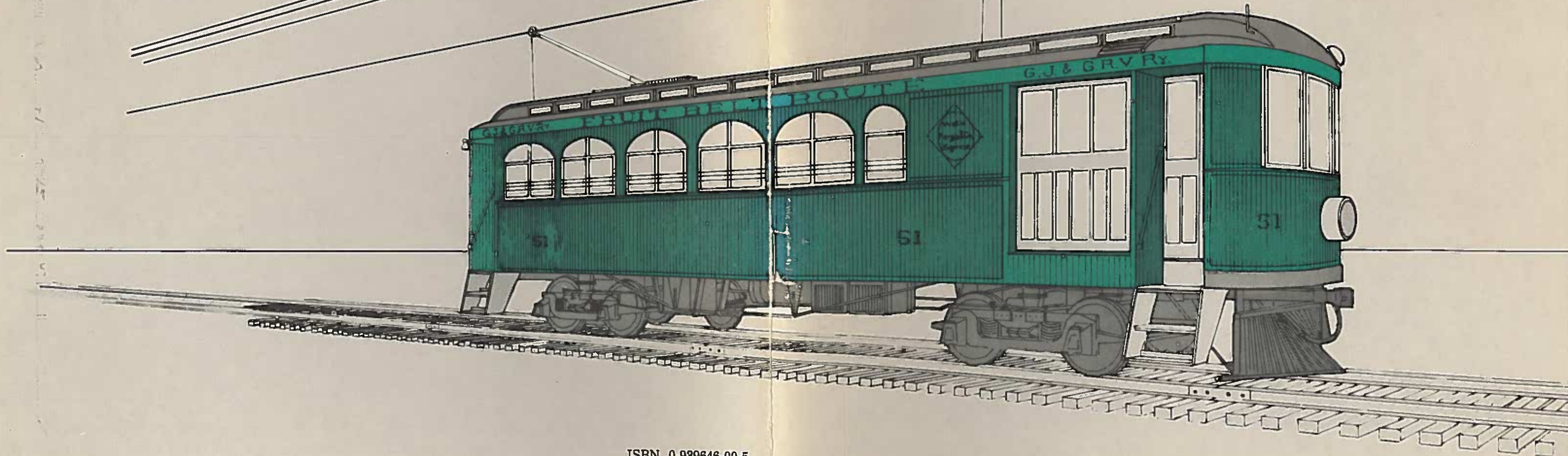
# THE FRUIT BELT ROUTE



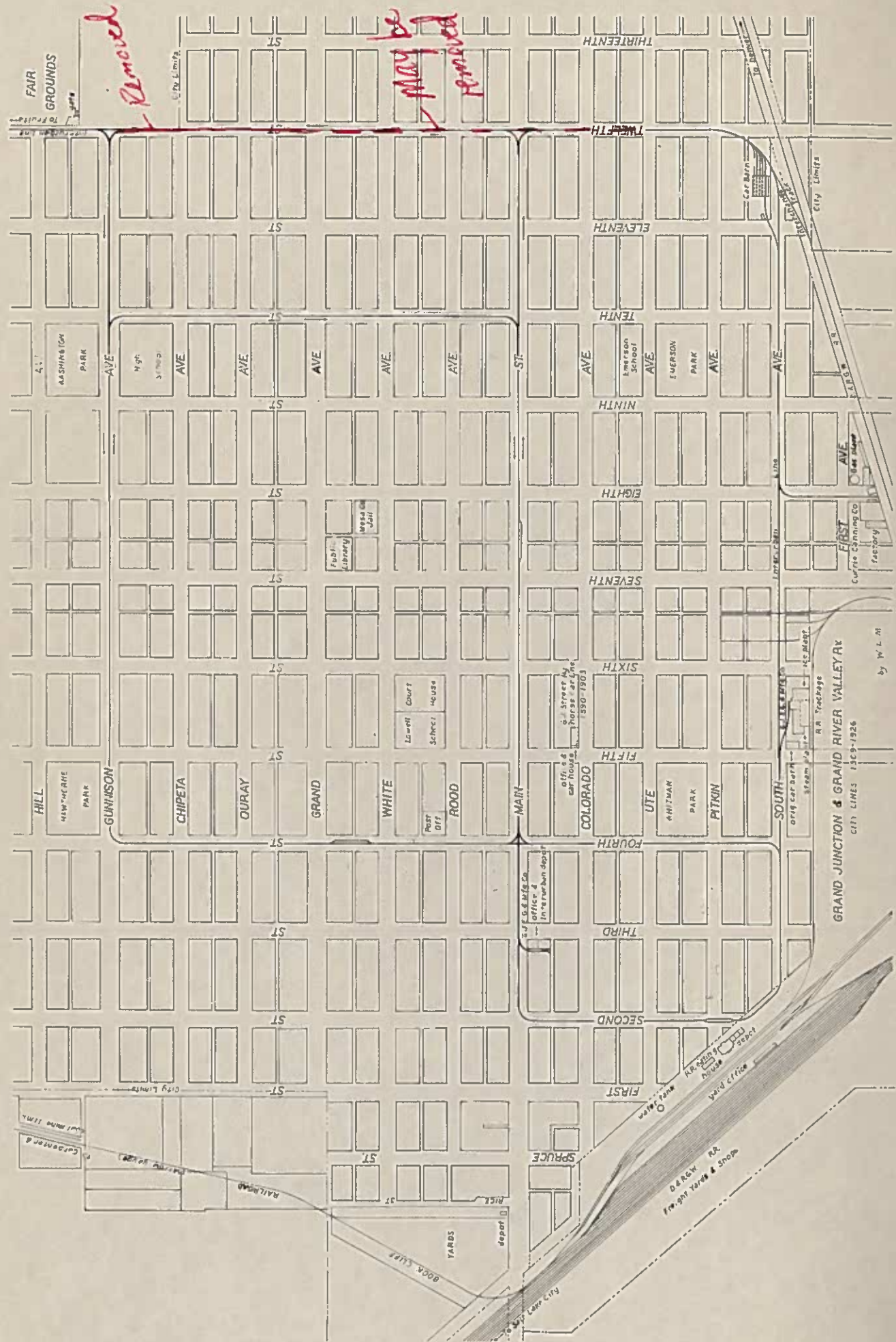
The Railways  
of Grand Junction, Colorado  
1890 - 1935

**The Horse Car,  
Trolley,  
Interurban Route  
to Fruita**

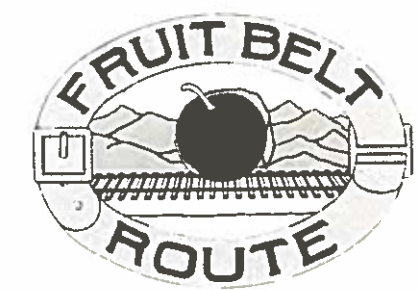
By William L. McGuire  
and Charles Teed







# THE FRUIT BELT ROUTE



The Railways  
of Grand Junction, Colorado  
1890 - 1935

By William L. McGuire and Charles Teed

National Railway Historical Society, Rio Grande Chapter  
Grand Junction, Colorado

THE PUBLISHER of this book is the local chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. The NRHS dates back to its founding in Philadelphia in 1935. A chapter was formed in Colorado West in 1977, choosing the name Rio Grande. It flourishes with meetings, outings and the recording of local history.

The authors are members of the chapter and acknowledge their encouragement by the group. They also call attention to the support and information from the people of the Museum of Western Colorado and the Mesa County Public Library. Help has come as well from the City Clerk, the County Clerk and dozens of people with recollections, photographs, printed matter and collectors items.

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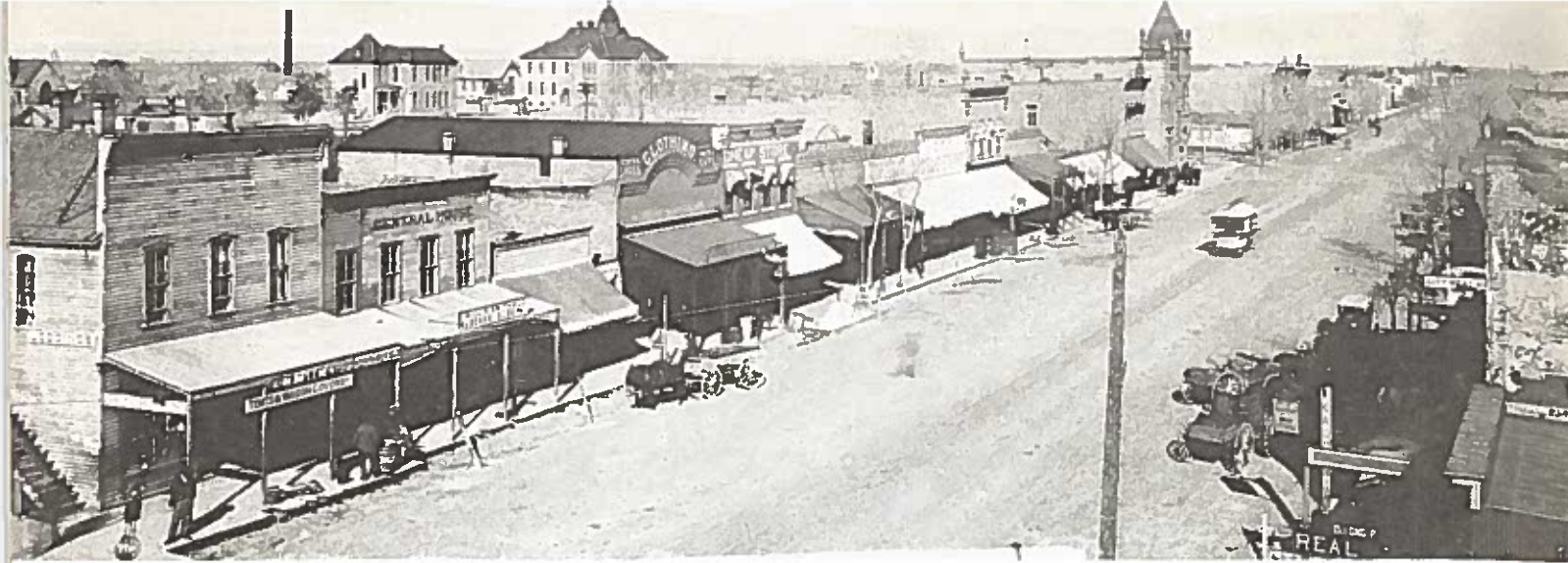
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On the cover: The Interurban Car. Drawing by W.L. McGuire.





THE PANORAMA of a county seat is seen from the roof of the Canon Block at Fourth and Main. The horse car is nearly to the competing bank, at Fifth street. In the distance is the Methodist church at left, the standpipe at

Seventh for water pressure, Lowell school and Franklin high school. Sidewalks are of wood. Photo from Sentinel files.

## 1 It Started in '81

Consider Colorado in the 1880's.

The Civil War was past and America was bursting with vigor and ideas.

Adventurous men were building new cities, settling sparse areas of the nation, looking for business opportunities, farm land.

Gold and silver drew men to the Rockies, and now came the developers and the promoters.

The Ute Indians had left the valleys of western Colorado and men from the east and midwest were seeking areas to build towns. They found a place where the Gunnison river flowed into the Grand that looked ideal. The railroad was coming soon and the valleys were busy travel routes. Hotels, stores and services would be needed.

In the fall of 1881 they staked out a mile-square townsite. Soon there were a few log cabins, stocks of goods in stores and an application for a post office. Now they needed a name and settled on calling it Grand Junction.

It's over the ridge of the Rockies where the water drains to the Pacific. It's in the river valley, in sight of mountains all around. The folded, barren Book Cliffs stretch along the northeast. To the east is a high flat-top mountain, a mesa, Grand Mesa. The Gunnison river flows in from the south, and closing in on the southwest is the rugged Colorado National Monument.

Coming down from the high country in the east is the Colorado river, winding its way into Utah. It was originally called the Grand river this far and beyond, but

in the 1920's a change brought the Colorado name into use for its full distance.

The town map was neatly arranged. Main street was set in place. North avenue and South avenue formed two boundaries. First street was the western edge and 12th the eastern, with all north-south streets numbered. They put avenues east-west, using names, not numbers. Ute avenue was there; Gunnison; Rood and White for two pioneers; Ouray and Chipeta, honoring a friendly chief and his wife.

To the promoters the soil seemed productive, the winters mild, summers reasonable with such low humidity. There was little rain, but heavy mountain snows melted slowly to make streams dependable for irrigation.

Fruit trees soon were the pride of the valley. Eastward there were sheltering bluffs and these palisades protected the peach and apricot blossoms from spring frosts. Down the valley to the west was Fruita where spring was catchy for peaches, but apples and pears did well.

The early settlers were a mix from many states, many countries. They were often people of education and experience, innovative in business, interested in science and world events.

It was a compact county seat, yet with space to grow. Travel routes in the river valleys led to farms, ranches, fruit orchards, other villages.

It was an unusual time, a new town in a nation past its centennial. It was an unusual place, and the 20th century was nearly here.

## 2 Barney Kennedy's Line

Edwin Price knew everybody in town. No wonder, as he had been editing the News ever since he started the paper in 1882.

He knew all the lawyers, and Dr. Bull, Quinn the grocer, Telin the artistic tailor, W.H. Lee who sold boots and shoes as well as groceries - and hosts of other people. He printed a paper every Saturday with ads for the milling company, the banks and such stores as Bliss ran, "One Price to All." There was news of Smith who put a new front on the old log cabin that had been the newspaper office and set up an ice cream parlor.

There was railroad news, "Will the Rock Island buy the D&RG?", and columns of the doings of the engineers and firemen. Newcomers were part of his weekly columns, like the mention of Judge Connely and Orson Adams taking their meals at the railroad eating house in midsummer of 1888.

Adams, he found, was an easterner, graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, and had come west several years before to settle cattle problems for his employer, the National City Bank. He was there for a time in the cattle business, then moved to Grand Junction in 1887, staying to be active in business and finance.

And Price knew men like Barney Kennedy, the one who had a horse and rig for every occasion.

As the decade of the '80s waned, B.K. Kennedy became well known to the town Board of Trustees. When they needed a man and team in the spring of 1888 to haul garbage they hired him for 45 cents an hour or 50 cents a load. He was the one to dispose of stray dogs. For \$3.50 a day he and his team worked on the streets. When bids were turned in in June 1889, for the year's street work the trustees took his bid of \$4 a day, obviously trusting Kennedy. But they had to back out the next meeting, bowing to the complaint made by a lower bidder who would do it for \$3.75 a day.

He was the town marshal from October 1, 1888, and so was no stranger when he came to talk with the trustees and Mayor Orson Adams in March of 1890.

Street cars were on his mind.

Newcomers were being lured by the tales of sunny weather, irrigated fields and orchards and the need for storekeepers and professional men.

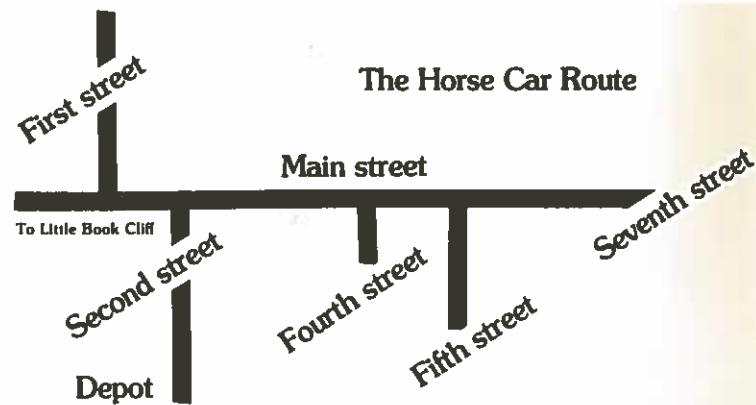
The town needed transportation. It wanted desperately to be a metropolis, so a car on rails would be a sign of progress. Even Aspen had a horsecar line. Rosy thoughts

MAIN STREET at the turn of the century had the old court house on the Sixth street corner at left, First National Bank building a block away, advertising banner down the

street — and the horse car rails in the midst of the dirt surface. Photo from Sentinel files.







of rapid growth were not being realized and the trustees had received criticism in July of 1889 from Benton Canon and a citizens committee. "Find ways of ending the stagnation," Canon demanded.

So in 1890 there was little talk and no delay for the trustees to give Kennedy the franchise for 20 years to build and run a street railway. He could change to whatever power he wanted, electricity, cable or enclosed motive power, but not steam. Horses were not mentioned, but surely were assumed to be in his plans.

Certain streets were listed as available, and within six months he was to have a car in operation, running north from the depot on First street, then east on Main to Seventh. Within a year he was required to have 2½ miles laid down. Cars were to run every hour. Fare was to be a nickel. Good cars "with all modern improvements for the comfort and convenience of passengers" were part of the agreement.

All this, along with more details spelling out the plan, were in the franchise of "B.K. Kennedy, his associates, successors and assigns."

We are sure of this much about Kennedy. We know he could call on influential men of the community, for on August 2 he filed incorporation papers for the Grand Junction Street Car Company. And with him were Benton Canon, Thomas B. Crawford, and George Wheeler, outstanding citizens all.

Born in Ireland, with a wife from Iowa, he had come before 1885, the time of the first census.

And one recollection in 1937 stated that Kennedy was "remembered by all pioneers as being in charge of the first bus, the first livery stable hack, the first stage and other forms of early transportation."

True? In the 1980s we can't say.

But the company was formed, capitalized for \$25,000 in \$10 shares. Wheeler was president and manager, Canon the vice president and Crawford the secretary-treasurer.

Ties came in by June 14, the Star said.

On August 2, 1890, the News said that iron (rails) arrived and were distributed along the streets. "Superintendent Kennedy says construction will be pushed as rapidly as possible." They finished the track by the 30th and were at work building the stables at Fifth and Colorado. Kennedy told the reporter they expected operation next week.

In the News on September 13 the headline said "Grand Junction to the Front in Local Transportation." "The day of the street car in Grand Junction dates from September 10, 1890. Two cars were received for service on the 9th, but were drawn to the stables of the company.

The two cars had been purchased from a Pueblo street railway company, but were "thoroughly refitted and repainted and varnished and look as bright as new dollars," The Star reported.

They were not put upon the track for use until Wednesday morning, the 10th. "The establishment of a street car line in this city marks still another step in her inevitable destiny. The courage manifested in establishing this plant demonstrates the courage of its promoters. They foresee at this point the leading city on the Western Slope. Except the city of Aspen, Grand Junction is the only city on the Western Slope of Colorado that has a street car line."

On another page Price reported in his newspaper that members of the city council, the press, W.T. Carpenter of the Little Book Cliff railroad, and banking representatives had a free ride on Thursday afternoon.

He also reported:

"The line extends from the D&RG depot up Second street to Main, and up Main to Seventh, and from Second street westward to a connection with the Little Book Cliff line. The track is very smooth and exceptionally pleasant to ride on. President Wheeler and Superintendent Kennedy are deserving of especial mention for the diligence and care they have constantly taken in the construction of the road. Mr. Carpenter is constructing a switch so as to transfer immediately from the one line to the other. This will prove a great convenience in attending the fair, since the Little Book Cliff runs very close to the fairgrounds."

Both lines were narrow-gauge, and the fairgrounds at that time were north of town.

In a lengthy review of the year January 3, 1891, in one paragraph the reporter tells of the street cars:

"But in addition to the construction of residences, business blocks and school houses there have been marked advances made in metropolitan development. A system of a car line have been erected, with necessary barns, at a cost of \$10,000. This line was put in operation in August of this year and has been paying since the first day of its operation. Its patronage is constantly increasing and will, of course, grow with our increasing population. It is the purpose of the gentleman who own this plant to constantly extend it to meet the requirements of a city whose greatness is assured." (Evidently he didn't check the 'August' date - nor his grammar.)

The ceremonious first day was recalled in a later story saying that "Barney Kennedy, who was then manager of the line, invited a number of prominent citizens to take a ride in the cars and afterward a pleasant little lunch was served."



A SUMMER MORNING in 1892 finds a hose cart race on Main street. Car No. 2 waits in the distance, and No. 1 with the white horse is here in front of the Brunswick Hotel. Men crowd roofs and balconies, while a lone lady stays at the roadside, oblivious. Dan Morgan copy of original in Sentinel files.

There was trouble completing the full distance called for by the city, so Kennedy had to ask for an extension of time. This was granted on March 24, 1891, giving him until the end of 1892 to have the 2½ miles in operation.

A reorganization came in the month of July, 1891, to bring into being the Grand Junction Street Railway Co., taking over the franchise.

Kennedy, Canon and Crawford were in the firm, now with ex-Mayor Adams and W.H. Crawford Jr.

A month later they had been to the city council and had a new 20-year agreement handed them. They had ten days to take over the existing line. It was running a 3-foot system of 22 pound rail. An iron turntable was at Fifth and Main, with a line running down Fifth to the car barn. There were two four-wheel cars and probably either three or four horses available.

Peter Johnson, who drove the car at some period of time, told his daughter Sevina, now Mrs. Jim Davidson, that there was a black horse, a chestnut sorrel "Chester", and "Charlie," the famous white horse.

The roundup of the year's events by the News in January of 1893 again used the word, "metropolitan" in telling of two miles of track. This figure may have stretched the truth. Wheeler, Canon and Crawford were mentioned as officers, but not Kennedy.

In 1892 he had been active in the community and Master of Masonic Lodge #55, but on February 2, 1893, he resigned and later joined the lodge at Rico in southern Colorado. In 1897 he sailed from Seattle for the gold fields of the Yukon and died there of scurvy on May 26, 1898.

Years later John Newman, a highly respected Black

resident, said that Kennedy himself turned the street car over to him when he found the line was not paying as it should. Newman was to feed the horse and then take all he could make in fares. Bert Parsons, another Black, helped for a time and Frank Catalina held the job until 1901.

By then electric power was coming into use, running cars farther and faster than the old horse cars and at less cost. Cable cars had worked, but the trolley replaced them, picking up power from an overhead wire with a wheel "trolled" along by the pole on top of the car. Profits were higher in city after city.

Inspired by such ideas, the editor of the News stated flatly in December of 1893 that an electric railway was "an assured fact" to connect the fruit lands with the city. He promised something more to say as plans developed, but seems to have been quiet instead.

Until nearly the end of the 1890's very little attention was paid to the horse car running the scant two miles in a mile-square town.

True, it was an era of great interest in amateur photography, and one of the "most distinguished and laughable" subjects for the camera fiends, as the local paper called them, was the white horse Charlie and the little street car. The comment was made that he had been shot from all angles, one of the best being of him taking a sun bath in front of the Mesa County State Bank on a summer day.

The little city was growing more sophisticated as it moved toward its 21st birthday. A horse car just didn't measure up to the town's opinion of itself.



### 3 Sold! For \$875

There never were any real outcries, simply grumblings about the horse car.

Complaints came to the aldermen that the line was not living up to the terms of the franchise. It was not running regularly, people said, only to meet the trains.

In May of 1897 the county judge's wife brought the driver to court on a charge of cruelty. Mrs. W.S. Sullivan said that young Louis Wetzel had been applying the whip too freely on the old horse, and then had spoken to her in an ungentlemanly way. As the representative of the Society to Prevent Cruelty to Animals she took the case to municipal court but the lad was found not guilty because of lack of evidence.

Yet from about that time things began to go in a difficult way for the company. In May of 1898 the aldermen insisted that they be told if owners were complying with the franchise. A week later Crawford read a statement to them which was then buried in the street and alley committee. Evidently the soft answer turned away their wrath.

Feelings simmered along until July 24, 1899, when William Nishwitz brought a complaint to the council. They immediately instructed the city attorney to draw up papers revoking the company's permit.

This spurred Crawford again, coming back immediately with a letter. The city clerk dismissed this in the minutes

FINE CAR, FINE BUILDINGS. The street may be dirt, but the rails are in place. The buildings on the north side of Main between Fifth and Sixth were substantial blocks of

brick or stone. There was no white horse that day; a dark one was in use. From the Chamber of Commerce framed display.



CHARLIE AND THE CAR, "the picture that everyone knows" of the street railway. Credit is given to the white horse Charlie for drawing the car for years until the line

ceased in 1903. Photo from the Museum of Western Colorado.

by saying "no action was taken," but the Denver Times gave it full coverage the next day. Crawford was known in the state capital as the colonel who officiated in the office of the adjutant general in the statehouse.

He had told the council that he was about to build an electric plant using the rapids of the Grand River. With this power he would change to an electric line and extend the rails to make a total of four miles. One mile would serve the new sugar factory and its many employees, while the other new mile would run to Teller Institute, the Indian school. The afternoon drills of the 300 boys and girls would no doubt attract many trolley riders to see the students in their attractive gray uniforms.

Crawford had lost a large sum of money during the nine years of operation, the Denver paper said.

His elaborate plans again softened the ire of the council. Ordinance 85 which would have killed the line was given to a committee. The clerk's record book left space for it, but the two pages for this ordinance are still blank.

Step by step the history of the horse car line comes to an end.

On November 30, 1900, the council received a letter from Benton Canon offering to sell the two horses, harness and two cars for \$100, surrendering the franchise. Under this offer he asked the city to take up the rails and sell them for him, estimating that there were 30 tons, worth \$30 a ton. He had earlier talked of asking \$500 for everything, he wrote, but found that he had more rails than first thought. The city responded favorably, but would charge him for the labor of removing the rails.

On January 10, 1901, the city offered a total of \$750 for everything and on January 18 the aldermen raised the offer to \$875. This was accepted and the city owned the street car line.

February 21 brought a demanding editorial that the city should pension Charlie. The work had been tiring as the animal had been taken out of the barn at all hours of the night to pull the car to the trains. "Lately the old horse has been lying down in the tracks of the car line in front of the Hotel Brunswick and it is a reflection on the good people of this city to see the old horse lying in the street, apparently worn out with his labors." He now deserved a rest with plenty of food and care as he is a favorite of the people of the town, the editor chided.

April 9, 1901, is the historic date when the city received the deed. It was said to be the only street car line in the United States under municipal ownership. Now the city fathers also found they had a whole new set of problems. First came a property owner with a bill for \$20 barn rent. The council hedged, saying "the same must be paid by the driver of the car as he had received all the proceeds of the line," but they referred it to a committee.

The next week four bids were opened, offering from \$12 to \$26 per month to lease the line. And now they were ready to compromise on the barn rent by paying \$10 for April and May, half the original bill.

In May the lease to operate the line was given to John M. Price until April 1, 1902, at \$15 a month.

The 1900 census showed Price as a Black, age 40, born in Illinois, divorced. He had two daughters, Bessie, 11, born in Kansas, her mother from Missouri, and Edna, 8, born in Colorado, her mother from Kansas.

Shortly Price asked the council for an extension down Fourth street for the one block to the Grand Hotel. That night they ordered the street commissioner to take up the switch at the Brunswick Hotel. They also ordered the street and alley committee to investigate the car barn rent. The \$5 a month was a matter of concern.



## They gave Charlie away.

In June a citizen protested the way the line was operated, favoring certain hotels. He was told that the city did not operate it, therefore the problem would have to be settled by Price.

Price asked a second time for the extension to the Grand Hotel and was referred to the street and alley committee.

Finally the committee recommended that the track be laid down Fourth by the lessee. The alderman approved, saying that it should be planked and kept in good repair so that it would not interfere with wagons crossing. The rails were furnished by the city.

On August 14 a crowd watched the progress of building the curve from Main to Fourth, the newspaper reported. On the 19th Price threatened a Mexican laborer on the construction job and the crew talked of walking off but on the 21st "The street car was successfully piloted around the famous curve at Fourth and Main this morning."

They vacated the barn on Fifth street in October, placing the car and horse in the city corral. The Sentinel commented that the old white horse would have to wander around the corral now that the barn rent was being saved.

In November the justice of the peace heard charges against Price of using profane language in public. This was a complaint of the Buena Vista hotel and he was found guilty and fined. He appealed to county court but lost, Judge Sullivan dismissing the appeal.

In January, 1902, the council ordered the rails on Fifth street covered with dirt. The iron turntable at Fifth and Main was not now needed as the tracks to the old car barn were not in use.

In March Price's lease was extended to May 1, and in April he requested extension for a full year. It was tabled, but on the 22nd the city attorney was instructed to draw up a year's lease for the mayor's and clerk's signature.

On June 24, 1902, the old argument with the Buena Vista appeared for again. Attorney Guy M. Sternberg appeared for the hotel, saying that Price was steering traveling men to certain other hotels. At the end of an open argument Price was "read the riot act," the Sentinel said. He was told to run the car in the interest of the general public.

In an unfortunate accident in July the horsecar knocked down and severely injured John Brennan, an old man who was crossing Main street. He was deaf and did not see or hear the car coming, though Price was ringing the bell.

As August came with its midsummer heat the Sentinel reported that the line was abandoned. Four horses were hitched to the car running it bodily up Colorado avenue to

the old street car barn. This was to be only temporary to give Charlie a rest.

The street and alley committee was told in December to look into covering the tracks and abandoning service. They took their time in studying the matter, but it came up in April.

At that time the council voted down the motion that the tracks be removed. And now Frank Catalina came to the council and asked the city to repair the tracks and give him the privilege of operating the old street car. He had driven it before the city took over, and his request was referred to the committee - where it died.

By July 15, 1903, the operation was at an end. Street Supervisor Armstrong reported that he could sell a quantity of the old rails for \$20 a ton. He was instructed to take up every foot of track and sell all if possible at that price. It is said that they went to Palisade for a connection between a coal mine and the Rio Grande tracks.

And on December 8, 1903, the council ordered the old cars sold at the best advantage.

The final action came in 1904. On May 10 the council had authorized \$10 payment to H.G. Bidwell for pasture rent for Charlie. Two weeks later they decided not to pay the bill but to give the horse to Mr. Bidwell instead.

People were glad to be rid of "humerous" tales of the horse car. The Ouray Herald, for example, had repeated the story of one William K. Evanson of Janesville, Wisconsin, who told of the mule car in Fremont, Nebraska. He said that the car and mule were left at the depot for anyone wanting to go uptown. Get in, hit the mule a crack and the critter went to the end of the line and stopped. Drop a nickel into the hopper, if you're honest.

The Herald said that this was like Grand Junction, except that the Colorado line had "an old bobtail, flea-bitten horse."

The horse was gone, the cars sold, the rails taken up. Grand Junction was back to dirt streets, plank sidewalks and crossings, express wagons, buggies and lumber wagons.

Only a rare Reo, Schacht or Winton chugged through the dust. Mud splashed as high as the display windows when delivery wagons rushed down the street on a rainy day. The visitor or the resident might hire a horse and rig from the Blue Barn or one of the many other livery stables.

Now the steel rails or the slippery planks along car lines would not catch the skinny tires of the young folks' Columbia or Superior bicycles.

Anyway most of the town walked wherever they went.

## 4 Smith's Brave Attempt

Now came the hurting years for Grand Junction.

Its pride was hurt. The little railroad center found itself with no street car since Charlie was retired and the track and cars sold.

True, the Rio Grande was busy and the Colorado Midland as well, with their east-west routes. The Little Book Cliff went from town to the coal mine northeast and the Uintah ran from Mack, not far down the Rio Grande Western, climbing over a spectacular pass to asphalt mines in Utah.

The valley was filling with fruit raisers, ranchers and farmers. Prospective trade was right at hand but to the dismay of the merchants, wholesalers and professional people the poor roads meant poor business. The ten or twenty miles by horse and wagon were disheartening.

This geography was made to order for the dreamers who read of fortunes made by owners of electric railroads. The main routes were water-level routes.

By fall of 1904 George Smith was ready to strike out with an idea he had been working on since 1899 or earlier. There were many named Smith in the county but this particular George Smith was the one known as "English George". He was born in Yorkshire on January 25, 1858, and married a lass there eight years his junior. Both he and Jane were counted in the first Mesa County census, 1885. He developed several coal mines, first the Book Cliff mine which he sold to W.T. Carpenter who then built the railroad to haul out the coal.

In 1898 he was elected state representative and the following summer took his dream of irrigation and electric railroads to England to seek financing.

He stopped in Denver on his way home and was quoted at length in the Denver Republican as saying "I have no doubt I shall secure the money" to build 40 miles of ditch to irrigate 80,000 acres, as well as financing a 40-mile railroad from Palisade through Grand Junction to Fruita.

The 1900 census shows him as boarding at Richard Sutton's hotel in Palisade, superintendent of a coal mine. With him at the boarding house were 28 miners, ten from England, two from Wales and the whole an international group.

He was in the headlines again in May, 1901, when he came home from a trip to Cleveland where he had once more gone traveling to seek funds for ditch, power plant and railroad. The Sentinel's page one news story could have passed for an editorial. "Now is the golden opportunity," it said, speaking of the Hon. George Smith and the money which was "readily available."

While he had been quoted in 1899 as saying "The right of way has been given us by the county" we have not found the record of that railroad route.

In 1904 there is no doubt about the right of way.

He came to the county commissioners at their 10 a.m. meeting September 13, 1904, to ask for a 15-foot strip of land along highways in large sections of the county. This included much of the area between Grand Junction and Fruita, as well as to Palisade and on up the river valley to DeBeque. The Plateau valley to Collbran was also within the squares of land in the permit they gave him.

One cautious amendment was offered, but voted down, which would have given the elected officials the power to set rates for passenger and freight service.

Smith was to bring in a map by December 31, 1905, showing which roads and which sides of the roads he would use. Also by that time he would have to prove that the corporation was fully organized, with money enough to build 10 miles of line in 1906. More mileage would be required each year through 1914.

That very same September night he came to the city council to ask for a franchise within the town. He had this all written out, asking for three east-west streets and for four north-south ones. He told the council he had the consent of property owners on these streets and would build two miles in town within 18 months, adding to it year by year. He promised good cars, running frequently, handling express and freight as well as passengers.

The aldermen were not in a position to act immediately, nor were they in any mood to accept Smith's ready-made proposal. It was read and ordered published - at his expense.

Evidently there was hardly a ripple of excitement around town or any pressure on the council. They did not bring it up until November 25, when it had a full discussion with various amendments proposed. At one time they thought of prohibiting freight hauling on any city street, to say nothing of the mayor's proposal for a \$25,000 bond to guarantee construction.

The meeting adjourned to December 6 as it was obvious that a favorable vote could not be mustered that November evening. They agreed to meet with Smith and the city attorney in the meantime to talk over the amendments needed.

By now the town was paying attention, the Sentinel's editor laying out the facts as he saw them. Why, naturally Smith could not get a favorable vote when he had failed to take the aldermen into his confidence. What were his plans? Where did he expect to get the money? Why should they give him such a "concession which must eventually be worth large sums of money" without having been told of a real intent to build? Maybe he just wanted to keep others out while trying to make a killing with his piece of paper! The editor laid it on the line.



"Our monorail is a perfected system."

Came December 6 and all other business was set aside for a long evening spent on the one topic of a street railway.

The franchises of Boulder, Greeley and Fort Collins were read and commented on. The performance bond was brought up, Smith now being "perfectly agreeable" to putting up ten or twenty thousand within six months if they would give him that long to see if he and his eastern parties felt the franchise was acceptable. Some aldermen were ready to approve the proposal; others were not. Prominent citizens spoke, and the split between Democrat and Republican became loudly evident. In the end they all retired for another conference with the city attorney.

It was now December 20, time to decide. No comments were permitted from Smith or citizens and immediately the franchise matter survived a motion to lay it on the table.

Freight was then considered - and banned on White avenue, the street of churches. They set the bond at \$15,000 to be furnished by the first of April, with work to start at that time. The clause was added that 1½% of the gross income was to be paid to the city after 12½ years of the 25-year franchise.

It passed, 6 to 1.

Smith and Charles A. Steyn brought in a \$15,000 bond on March 28, 1905, Steyn being president of the construction company organized to build the line. They were reassured on April 1 when Smith came and wrote out a statement that he had commenced work.

Just a shadow of doubt may have been raised by his statement that the work consisted of surveying. And to this day we wonder why he added that the bond would be furnished in due time, when it appears that he had already put down the only bond needed.

No worry. Surveying was under way and other booming things were in store for the area. The sugar factory was bringing prosperity to the beet growers, mountain water was a possibility in town and the apple and peach trees were bearing heavily.

But not a thing happened concerning electric railroads during all of 1905 except for a proposal from a trio of outsiders for a monorail. If they could reach an agreement with the construction company, they said they would bring their "perfected system" into use, saving 40% of construction costs. This would please city folks and Plateau valley people.

The line would make the heights of Grand Mesa easily accessible for valley people tired of midsummer heat. They showed an exquisite model to prospective investors but the plans never came to pass.

Steyn came back to the county officials in mid-December when financial soundness was due to be demonstrated. He pleaded for relief from such certification, instead citing the ordering of rail and ties for the city system. He stated that two miles of line would be operating by June 1, 1906. The commissioners were agreeable to his plea.

The map of the route was presented on January 4, 1906, running along county roads from Grand Junction to Palisade. They were satisfied with this, too.

A fervent attempt by Plateau valley business people to get a railway built came on June 1, 1906. A delegation came down that warm evening to meet with the Chamber of Commerce.

"The meeting was most harmonious," the Sentinel said in telling of the evening and the elaborate late lunch which finally ended around 1 a.m.

But through 1906, as in 1905, there was no action. No rails were laid, no wire seen, and Smith's \$15,000 bond was in jeopardy. June passed, Steyn's promised completion date. The 18 months from the April "start" had arrived when Attorney John H. Fry approached the city council on November 30, 1906, asking for 60 more days so that financiers from New York could investigate. Finally a franchise extension was granted on January 9, 1907, giving until March 31 to get two miles in operation.

In reality this was not enough time to get rails and wire in place, a power supply arranged and cars running. So Smith came back to introduce Orson Adams, the banker, who convinced the council that money was arranged for and that everything was now ready to push the matter through. He said he would return in two weeks with further assurances and a request for a reasonable length of time to build.

The Sentinel's headline the next day crowed that "Electric Road Seems Certain." The aldermen wanted their town to blossom with modern conveniences and soon agreed to extend the franchise until November 30, 1907.

The promises of spring did not produce a trolley to ride on and only one more attempt was made to keep Smith's franchise alive. In the fall he asked for more time but his plea was voted "indefinite and incomplete."

The episode had extended over the pages of four calendars, from September 1904 through '05, '06 and '07.

It brought a whimper from the editor in early 1908 that nobody loves us here in the western part of the state. Other communities with less in their favor had secured money for almost any enterprise, just for the asking, he said. Here, even with productive land, fine fruit and superb climate it looked as though we would have to dig into our own pockets for anything that needed doing.

But things were about to break in a different way.

## 5 Power Plant — and Rail Line

The editor who had moaned in January that money could not be found for building electric railroads brightened with the coming of spring.

In April, 1908, his biggest headlines proclaimed that men of wealth and experience had formed the Fruit Belt Power and Irrigation Company. They were said to be capitalized for \$1,500,000 to develop the water power of the Grand River at DeBeque.

With a dam above DeBeque and a plant some 6½ miles downstream a huge amount of electric power would be generated. They said this would be enough to light all the towns and farms for the 30 miles to Grand Junction and beyond. There would still be ample power, according to their figures, for pumping irrigation water to the lands above the canals so that more acres could be farmed even with the valley's low rainfall.

Six directors of the power company were listed. Four were from Colorado Springs, Horace K. Devereux, Eugene A. Sunderlin, J. Arthur Connell and George B. Tripp. Two were from western Colorado, Adams of the local bank and C.C. Parks, Glenwood Springs banker.

"The Men Are Here to Start the Work," the Sentinel said, adding that consulting engineer W.C. Allen\* and right-of-way man Charles E. Noble were also in the visiting party.

The others met and left, but Allan and Noble stayed to open an office in Room #1 of the Canon block, the building where Adams' Mesa County State Bank was located. Allan was not so much in the news, but Noble was the man who led negotiations with the city and county in legal matters and rights of way. He was an attorney and the former treasurer of the Colorado Midland Railway.

Editor I.N. Bunting exulted that the lighting would be a boon to the people in town or on the ranch. Greater would be the benefits to industry. Even greater - but let him tell it:

"A still greater possibility is presented in the construction of this plant - it is the opening gun for an electric railroad in this valley."

He spoke of a rail line running from Mack to Palisade and then through the Plateau country. This would transform the valleys and bring a change which would be "cause for wonder" to all who have western Colorado's interests at heart.

The company spent little time in promoting the power plant, for shortly Noble was talking trolleys as his main point. By May he spoke before the Chamber of Commerce in Grand Junction and soon inserted the full text of a proposed street car franchise in the newspaper. He

\* Hurried reporting. Later always shown "A.G. Allan".

announced that this would be the request before the council on Tuesday, June 9.

Charles Noble did his work well toward ensuring favorable action for the trolley. He brought in Devereux for a meeting with Mayor J.S. Wentworth, Chamber President Charles E. Cherrington, the board, and several other prominent citizens.

They were boosters all. Devereux was looking for a profitable venture for his group of financiers. Noble certainly wanted the progress to be smooth, and the mayor and Chamber directors were promoting their city. There was harmony in the discussion and the appointment of a committee to hold a public hearing at once to study details of the plan. Devereux said he wanted nothing unreasonable and Cherrington said "The Chamber of Commerce is always anxious to aid any proposition that will prove beneficial to the city."

The committee included Edwin Price, postmaster and editor of the News; William Buthorn, hotel owner; and three real estate developers, Frank A. Lyons, Horace T. DeLong and James Rankin.

They came back to report on their discussions with Devereux and local citizens. They suggested wording about paving along the track, of specifying that some of the first track should be built on Main street, of finishing the project in five years, not ten. Continued maintenance would be required, transfers provided for, and payment of 2% of gross revenues as soon as the city's population reached 25,000. (Optimism prevailed, for that figure never came until a special census in 1977, 69 years later.)

That evening of June 9, 1908, the council chamber was well filled. The mayor and all but one of the aldermen were present. First off, the written consent of property owners along the route was presented, city engineer J. F. O'Malley certifying that these names constituted more than the required half.

But then Aldermen Maurice Hertz moved that a committee be appointed to make amendments, reporting back to the council later.

Out of order, said Mayor Wentworth. We'll discuss it now!

Discuss they did, for more than a hour, then called for the question to pass and publish the ordinance. Tempers were high and the motion was defeated.

Noble declared the application dead.

Please, not so hasty, soothed the visiting attorney from Colorado Springs. The council could legally adjourn to a later time and then consider again this "first reading." The idea fell on willing ears. The aldermen adjourned to June 19, saving the proposal and saving face for all.



Those people — and that ditch — on 12th street!

One amendment which had been proposed by James W. Bucklin would have reserved the right of the city to buy or condemn the line at any time that state law permitted municipal ownership. This was called unfair, possibly allowing the takeover whenever it became profitable. The amendment was defeated but Bucklin was a man slow to forget.

On June 19 the council met again. They spent two hours in debate, reading the franchise section by section, adding a word or a sentence in items as they went. Noble fielded their questions and won the vote, 7 to 1. J. C. Plank was still arguing for his amendment which had not been seconded, one which would have required a forfeit of \$5,000 if the line were not ready by the stated date.

Nothing about the trolley came up at a council meeting on July 14th, except hearing a letter from three people who had previously given their consent for the line to run on their street. They now said they did not want freight cars on 12th. The protest was laid on the table and forgotten.

Final passage of the franchise for the city line took place at the next meeting, July 17, 1908, with work to start by October 1 and have three miles in use by July 15, 1909. It gave the firm the rights for 25 years with payments of \$1,000 a year to start in 12½ years. The vote was unanimous.

Noble had all needed consents in town by the end of July and was working on a route east from Seventh street toward Palisade. He told the paper that he was finding ranchmen eager to donate the rights of way as they believed the interurban would increase the value of their properties. He admitted that two men wanted pay for their strips of land but otherwise he said everything looked favorable.

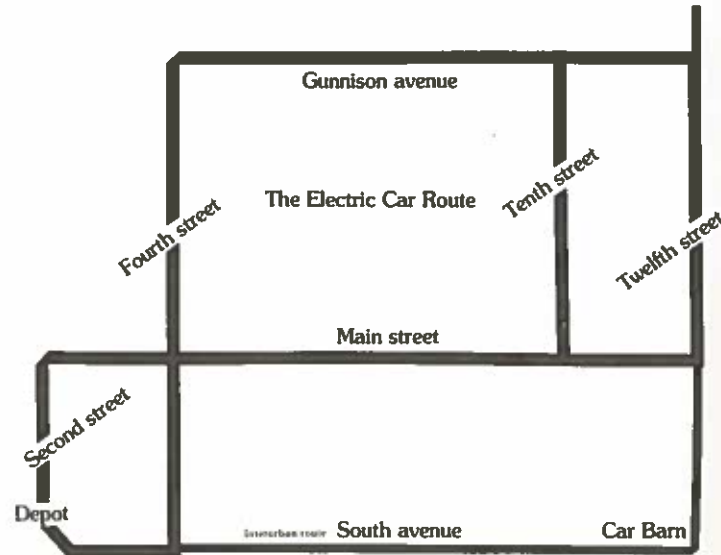
Plateau valley people kept the pot boiling with word that the Midland, the Rio Grande and the electric line were all three after the right of way there.

Work was to start October 1, but it was not until October 13 that the Fruit Belt company asked the city engineer to determine the grades of 12th street and the streets around Pitkin and South avenues. They said they were ready to start building in a few days.

On October 15 the Sentinel brought to light the worry which had pestered the railroad's engineer Allan and city engineer O'Malley. How could they build on 12th street when the irrigation ditch "runs clear down the length of 12th street, splitting that important street wide in two?"

At this time the company said they planned on getting the Palisade line done quickly and letting the city route be done at a slower pace.

Who owns the ditch? What to do?



Enter the city council again, solving the problem by letting the company remove the trees and move the ditch. Yes, at the company's own expense.

Legal matters were taken care of on November 20 when Sunderlin, Curtin and assistants came over on the Midland and met with Noble and Allan. They filed incorporation papers for the Grand Junction Electric Railway Company. Offices were in Colorado Springs and Grand Junction, with a capital of \$100,000. In this organization were Devereux and Sunderlin, leaders of the April visit and holders of the franchise. With them were Thomas E. Curtin and Henry C. Hall, said to be "very prominent in the business circles of this state and other western states." and Charles M. MacNeill of the famous Utah Copper Company.

Curtin was a New Jersey native, the senior member of the Curtin-Sunderlin firm of developers, owning land in the Rifle area. MacNeill won early wealth in the Cripple Creek mines, transporting and smelting. With experience in the chemistry of ore reduction, learned in Aspen in his younger days, he was a partner in the Bingham Canyon copper mine in Utah and was fabulously wealthy. Devereux was huge and handsome, a Princeton football hero, where he graduated in 1881, star of the Glenwood Springs polo group.

These were the kind of people who assured the reporter in Grand Junction that they were ready to build lines just as soon as working and construction forces were organized.

## 6 Years to Plan — Two Months to Build

The firm wasted little time in getting the work done.

In December 1908, they had rails ordered and brought in Daniel Herrington of Colorado Springs as construction engineer to look over the route. Noble showed him around, let him return home, and said that the engineer would be back as soon as materials were on hand.

By January 1 the contract with the Grand Junction Electric, Gas & Manufacturing Co. was signed to supply power "temporarily." Orson Adams, president, ordered extra machinery and expected it to be delivered without delay.

Equipment included an 18 x 18 automatic high-speed stationary steam engine, a Westinghouse 150 kilowatt generator, "railroad type," a Crocker & Wheeler generator and enough accessories to make a double unit - the normal one plus backup. The Sentinel assured readers that the Palisade line would probably be built very soon.

But first it was time for merry-making and back-slapping.

On January 7 the Sentinel brought out its big headline type to say that all arrangements were complete for a visit by the top men the next week.

Charles M. MacNeill would be in town, not only president of the Utah Copper Co., but also "with interests in many other financial and development enterprises."

Also coming was Chaloner Schley, New York financier "associated with the great banking house of Moore & Schley," who was now in Colorado Springs for his health. Judge D.R. Babbitt would be here, formerly of the Springs but now in New York, general counsel of Utah Copper, as would Clarence C. Hamlin, Esq., attorney and newspaper publisher.

Certainly Sunderlin would be visiting, general manager of the local enterprise and secretary-treasurer of the Louisiana, Arkansas & Gulf Railroad. Devereux as well, president of the Fruit Belt and "financier of large interests." Curtin was coming, senior partner with Sunderlin in several development projects and president of the Grand Junction Railway Company.

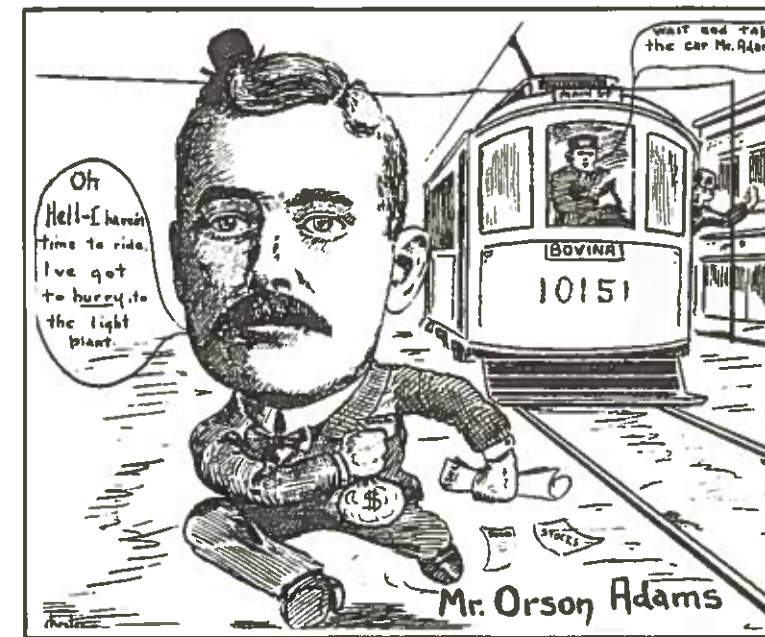
They would take the Midland to Palisade, to be met there by Adams and Noble, coming by auto through the fruit area in time for a banquet at the La Court hotel that evening. They would go from here to Salt Lake City in their private car attached to a Rio Grande train.

They came in on time, to be delighted with the valley, their hosts, and the prominent citizens they met. All was set for the elaborate dinner with its beautiful decorations. The 80 guests were ready to answer the invitation of Adams, whose electric firm was paying the bill for the banquet.

It is hard to imagine a more elegant dinner in any small city of the time than the one at the LaCourt that Wednesday, January 13, 1909. It was a fine hotel, operated by a proud host, William Buthorn. The game room had mounted deer and elk heads with smilax intertwined and electric lights of many colors gracing them. No candles for this affair; it was electric all the way.

The speaker's table had a steel track and electric trolley model ready to run back and forth when Adams pressed the button.

There were flowers, an orchestra, place cards with cartoons and witty sayings, and fine food.



FROM THE 1909 Banquet. Courtesy of Alvin Adams.

Adams had George Warner as toastmaster, greetings from Mayor Wentworth and recollections from George Smith, telling of his pioneering efforts to get a line built. Hamlin spoke of "Politics as I Have Found Them," sparing no feelings of city or company officials.

They called MacNeill the angel of the line and in turn he passed the compliment that the Grand Valley was heaven.

Babbitt, Devereux and Sunderlin had their chance to speak, and the evening ended with a toast and good feeling.



They hurried to build.

The next day the town was treated to the full story of the evening, including the menu:



Capitalizing on the high spirits of the dinner, the company came right back with publicity the next day on signing for the car barn at Fifth and South streets. They had taken the bid of W.C. Boyer, the city's leading contractor, who promised to have the 40 by 75 foot building ready in a very short time.

Yes, they pushed. The rails came in the next week, with a gang of 20 men unloading the "fine 60-pound steel rails." The same train brought in a flat car for the construction crew, one that had been used in Colorado Springs but was now proudly lettered G.J.St.Ry. No. 1.

The reporter mentioned that other material would be in as soon as the barn was ready to store it. The best class of material was coming, they said. Number 2-0 groove trolley wire was ordered, with 5/16 galvanized suspension wire and poles of Oregon cedar, 30 feet long, painted and preserved, with a probable life of 15 years.

The Chamber of Commerce directors had a different opinion of the "fine" rails, wondering a few days later if they weren't old, worn rails. But they thought that "by inverting these old rails, as is often done," excellent service could possibly be obtained.

February saw the final route approved by the aldermen and work going ahead in earnest. The local paper was following progress almost daily. A carload of spikes came in. Four cars of Oregon pine ties were in the Rio Grande yard. Idle men were hoping to get work digging post holes. Two four-wheel passenger cars of the old Colorado Springs Transit Co. were being rewired and people were guessing just how the double loop would be used.

By the last week in February readers were being told that bids for track and overhead work had been opened and were being reviewed. An electrical engineer was here, studying the route to Palisade to make a complete report on the feasibility of the plan. Sunderlin and Adams were taking him for a drive through the valley area.

The High Line reclamation project was at last coming into being, making a wider area of irrigated farmland ready for settlers.

March 1, 1909, found page one of the Sentinel filled with news that the cars would run within the next eight weeks and that the interurban line had been incorporated. Many of the men involved with the city line were announced as being heads of the line to Palisade. Capital of the new firm, Grand Junction and Grand River Valley Railway Co., was set at \$2,000,000.

Not all the material was yet delivered, Sunderlin said, so that work in the city would be delayed until probably March 10. The car barn was "just about" completed; ties were scattered on Fourth street and Gunnison avenue. Main street would be dug up last to avoid disturbing businesses until the very end.

The Palisade line would start this year, Sunderlin said flatly.

An editorial praised Adams for securing capital for the rail projects and for getting such a fine project under way.

The editor pointed out that lines up and down the valley would bring a large population in quick touch with the city. He "confidently believed" that they would extend up the Gunnison valley too, to Delta, Hotchkiss and Paonia.

"We built three miles in 26 days and 6 hours."

The sky was the limit in belief, and here in town a gang of 20 men actually did start work on Saturday, March 12, 1909. They began tearing up South avenue west from Fifth street. Company officials said the rumor of bringing in a large gang of Greeks to build the line was untrue. Local men were hired, they assured the evening Sentinel, denying the story the morning paper had printed.

Hundreds of spectators watched, then helped to put the construction flat car on the first pair of rails so they could brag that they helped start the line. G.G. Boyer had the excavating contract and was told to hire whatever crew he needed. By Monday the pole crews would be added and possibly 75 or 80 men would be at work, the reporter glowingly wrote.

There was new talk of the line so badly wanted for the Plateau valley, and also of extending the Midland west from Grand Junction to Mack so that it could use the Uintah system in working its way toward Salt Lake City.

But dreams aside, the reality was in the picture of two gangs at work on Main street. Poles arrived and there was talk of ordering two single-truck cars and two more trailers. Two double-truck cars were said to be on order for the interurban.

No doubt there were many sidewalk superintendents as the crew built the trolley line. Little boys must have watched, and one little girl of five - going on six - was Harriet Northrup, in the 1980s Mrs. Stephen B. Johnson Sr. She had been going to kindergarten and her father was building a new house at 1010 Chipeta, just one house away from the rail line. She watched the men at work,

ORSON ADAMS, former mayor, industrialist, banker, influenced investors to build the street car system and the interurban.



anxious for them to finish so she could ride.

Last spike ceremonies came at 2:30 p.m., April 12, 1909, on Gunnison avenue near Seventh street. More than three miles of track had been put down in 26 days and 6 hours. Overhead work was coming along, poles being set on Gunnison avenue. The cars should be in town within 10 days and were "pretty apt" to be running by May 1. The reader was told that the lines of poles, neatly painted black and white, "make a fine appearance and add to, rather than detract from, the appearance of the street."

The hoped-for opening date could not be met, but on May 5 the page one story included pictures of a trailer and the first two cars of the line. Details of the motive power highlighted the story. With more cars to come, it was said that they could take care of 4,000 people every two hours.

Ticket sales were starting. The girls of St. Agnes Guild of the Episcopal church had a thousand ticket books of 20 rides each on sale for a \$1 apiece, giving a souvenir of the first trip, still at the nickel rate. A "handsome percentage" went to benefit the church building fund and headlines assured readers that the girls were pretty.

Editorials heaped praise on the progress, hoping for the first run to come soon. Steam was turned on to the new power plant machinery, testing to make sure everything was ready, the story of May 6 told.

The countdown continued during the month. Another editorial praised the "epoch-making event just ahead." It was predicted that the line would open on Monday, May 17. Power connections were made to the main track. On the 14th the electricians walked out, but came back the 15th and linemen were hard at work. The start on Monday looked impossible, but seemed hopeful for Tuesday or Wednesday, the 18th or 19th.

Finally on Tuesday invitations were out for the official opening at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 22, 1909.

Sunderlin asked the manager and staff of the Sentinel to go on the first trip of inspection of the new railway. Staffs of other papers of the city were to ride also, as were company officials, elected officials and Chamber of Commerce representatives.

Friday's paper stated that all was ready, the band engaged, bunting decorating the cars.

"all Hail the Day" trumpeted Saturday's editorial, again calling for the electrification of western Colorado. On and on went the hopes expressed by the editor.

He was prophetic in one statement. He was sure that the men who built the city line were wise in looking far beyond this loop "because local passenger traffic at the present time will not begin to pay."

Opening day had come - and for now all was happiness.



## 7 All Hail the Day!

"All hail the street car and the accommodation it affords, together with the promise it gives for future development."

So gloated Monday's paper, telling of the great event which had just taken place.

"This day will live long in the history of Grand Junction" wrote editor Bunting, ranking it with the first irrigation

system and the coming of the Rio Grande Railroad.

By Friday night the work had been complete, and at 5 a.m. that Saturday, May 22, 1909, residents were awakened as a test car made two passes over the line.

The ceremonies started at 1:52 p.m. when Edith Adams, Orson's 5-year old daughter, pulled the lever to turn on power for the overhead wire.

EDITH ADAMS had the honor of starting the big Ideal engine on opening day. Photo from Alvin P. Adams.



STARTING THE STREET CARS.  
MAY 22ND 1909.



OPENING DAY SOUVENIRS. One of several post cards from the collection of Jim Ozment. And a celluloid button of the cars from the Museum of Western Colorado.



Promptly at 2 p.m. the two cars and their trailers moved out of the car barn at Fifth and South. They went west to the depot, up Second to Main, east to 10th street, up to Gunnison, then west and finally down Fourth to South Avenue.

There was red, white and blue bunting on the cars. The motormen were J. F. Peck and J. Ladd. Passengers included Curtin, Sunderlin, Adams, Superintendent A. G. Allan and other officials of the firm, along with 11 representatives of the Chamber, the city council members, newsmen and the Grand Junction band.

Special guests were those who had taken the first ride on the horse car 19 years before. Small boys clambered into every spare seat and stood on the sideboards. Cigars were given to the passengers on the first official trip. No, the ladies were not mentioned; it was a man's world.

Yards and porches were alive with people all along the route. "Everybody cheered the cars, and handkerchiefs and hats were waved everywhere," the Sentinel reported. Free trips continued all afternoon and evening.

So many years have passed that it is hard to find those who rode that first day. Mrs. Johnson suspects that she did, and certainly was along for one of the very earliest rides. It's a safe bet that the company's local attorney, S. G. McMullin and his young son Howard were riding that day.

By evening the rows of lamps on the cars made a fine showing and one or two special trolley parties were planned for the after-dark hours.

Compliments were paid on the smoothness of the ride and the handsome appearance of the trolley property. High praise was again heaped on Adams, the one who interested the outside capital in the project of his home city and county.

The four miles of line had been completed in just over two months, with predictions that it would constantly grow in length. In April it was called "more than three

miles in length." In May it was "about four miles!"

People were proud of the two "strictly modern" motor cars of the summer and winter type, one end closed, the other open. They were said to have exceedingly large motors, powerful enough to pull three loaded trailers. Seating capacity of each car and trailer was 40, or as many as 70 including standees. Equipment included electric heaters, "powerful search lights," and the latest improved fare registers. They were originally built by the Pullman Car Company, and were the Colorado Springs cars reincarnated. Before rewiring and refurbishing they were called depressing and inadequate in that city.

It had been a truly emotional day, one long to be remembered.



Scene at Opening of Grand Junction's City Street Railway System.

A YEAR LATER this picture was used in the booklet at the time of opening the Fruita line. Courtesy of Mrs. Gus Nagel.



## 8 The Zig-Zag Route

Now Grand Junction had a system to keep its people out of the mud.

The celebration of May 22, 1909, had been the start of a trolley that went round and round every day from 6 in the morning to 11 at night. On Sundays it was an hour later, 7 a.m. to midnight. All cars ran to the fair grounds for advertised attractions and the cars were waiting for Park Opera House patrons after all performances.

For a nickel a youngster could ride to school on rainy days or a shopper could catch a ride home.

But the country roads were still dirt, the horse the way to travel and distances forbidding.

The local papers continued to preach that the city line was only the beginning of an electric rail network and actions of the financiers seemed hopeful. They obviously wanted to build where the potential passengers were and where there was freight to be hauled.

Less than a month after the grand opening they made news by purchasing the local utilities including the electric, gas and ice plants. Two million dollars was the capitalization and plans were announced for spending \$800,000 or more on improvements.

Devereux, Sunderlin, Curtin and MacNeill were familiar names with their Grand Junction and Grand River Valley Railway Company. This was now the umbrella over the city line, the utilities and the interurban proposals. They were hinting that several other big propositions were to be started. People thought that the DeBeque power plant would now be built soon. Curtin was president and MacNeill the vice president. They met in town frequently, coming from their home base in Colorado Springs, talking freely of railway construction and other ideas. However they never were able to say just when or where they would be building.

The right of way was the main stumbling block. They came in July in MacNeill's new private Pullman car, The Cyprus, were met in Palisade by Adams and again were driven down the valley to evaluate the route. On the way they stopped at the showplace orchards of W.B. Cross and that evening were entertained for dinner at Adams' home. The next morning they drove through the Fruit Ridge and Pomona districts west of the city and to Orchard Mesa on the south.

All the while they talked of the Palisade line, or even one for 70 miles up the Grand river valley to Silt. Always they were intent on having private right of way and spoke of the need of a 40-foot wide strip to allow switches and side tracks and for a double track whenever business should grow to warrant it.

Clifton badly wanted the line and the supporters held

several meetings at their homes. But toward Palisade the enthusiasm was not quite universal for cutting 40 feet out of producing orchards. Some Clifton ranchers not directly on the route pledged five dollars an acre for a fund to buy land from those who would not donate it.

A new feeling came in late August when folks in the lower valley sensed that possibly they could have the first line built. A group met at Bethel, halfway to Fruita and at that time called "a bustling little community." They decided to offer two miles of route for a rail line, a mile north and a mile east of the Bethel church.

The Fruita Chamber of Commerce held a meeting with a big attendance but the company men were not able to get their autos through the mud from a heavy afternoon rain. The lower valley people were there that Saturday night, then came back 400 strong the next Tuesday for straight talk by the boosters and the officials. Now they were able to get through as the roads dried out.

Charles Noble said they had assumed that the Palisade line was the first to be done, but that Adams had convinced them to look at the Fruita area. Nothing would be said against the upper valley, but he praised the lower valley for its fine fields and orchards and its unlimited possibilities.

A flurry of activity and headlines filled the next few weeks. At the end of August the News printed a story that the DeBeque plant was a sure thing. It would be built just as soon as it could be certain that the demand for electricity would make it profitable for investors. A week later Curtin was quoted as being ready to spend several hundred thousand dollars on a reservoir and canal for irrigation of land at Silt. In mid-September Curtin again promised the Clifton-Palisade line just as soon as the right of way was secured.

Later in September came a proposal to use DeBeque power to pump water into the High Line canal rather than building the difficult upper stretch of the canal. Attorney McMullin told the News that this would be a savings for water users and would also make the power plant feasible. At about this same time the Plateau valley was agog with another group's announcement of a huge reservoir in that area for irrigation and power - and an electric railway. "The exact details of the transaction have not been made public," said the News, and evidently the development died aborning.

All these were dreams, but the most encouraging happening was the \$60,000 order that Adams placed in September for new generating machinery for the electric plant. This would bring the capacity from 400 kilowatts to 1,000 kilowatts and effectively end the speculation about a hydro plant at DeBeque.

### Woeber built the cars.

He ordered three generators, two boilers, a switch-board and accessory items for delivery in December. People knew the General Electric name and believed that Adams had bought the best.

By October 15, 1909, there was the expectation that the Fruita line was possible, and one story flatly stated that construction would start in 30 days. Sixty miles of wire was on its way, 1,500 poles had been ordered and two carloads of ties were already delivered.

Sunderlin made friends by announcing that if they built the Fruita line the fare would be five cents round trip for students at the Appleton school.

When Loback, Hunter and Pomona districts joined to form what was called the first consolidation in the state they built the school just west of Hollandville and called it Appleton. Gradually the neighborhood took the Appleton name and forgot the four corners where Tom Holland had his store.

This had been the heart of the little settlement, the place to buy groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes. It was also the meeting place for hired hands in the evening.

A blacksmith shop was there at the corner, a cannery and the Brethren church. Those sturdy Protestants, Dunkards from Kansas, were strict in religion, thrifty farmers, "different" in their ways.

The Fruita survey was completed, not taking the short, straight route but laid out in zig-zag fashion through the farms and fruit land most heavily settled and cultivated.

At the end of November the company directors met and Sunderlin announced that they were ready to build the road to Fruita. It should be in operation by June 1, 1910.

Details were given:

- All rights of way are signed except two or three, and these will be settled in a very few weeks.
- The permanent route is surveyed and fixed.
- The route includes 15 segments in the 15.6-mile distance. About 800 feet of trestle is needed.
- Twenty cars of steel are here; 80 cars of ties and 15 cars of poles have arrived, with 15 more cars of poles on their way. All are of the very best material.
- Three hundred men will be employed in construction.
- Officials are leaving for New York to buy the cars.
- Service will be hourly, one car leaving Grand Junction for Fruita every hour and the same from Fruita. More frequent service will be provided as the need arises.
- Freight will be handled in standard rail cars.
- Loading platforms will be built every mile.
- There will be three passing tracks, each with telephone dispatch service.

And one final announcement was made — that nothing

could be said now about the Palisade plans as all attention is devoted to the Fruita line.

When the shopping trip was over, Sunderlin ordered cars from the Woeber Carriage Co. in Denver. This firm dated back to the 1880s and had built many kinds of vehicles. Their trolley cars were in use in Denver, Butte, Galveston, Pueblo and other cities.

By January, 1910, work was under way at the power plant, so much being done in the installation of the new machinery that lighting service was sometimes disrupted.

Adams took another big step in February by signing a \$70,000 contract for a headquarters building at Third and Main. This was to house the offices for the whole company, the electric and gas firm and for the local and interurban rail lines.

The steel frame was the first in Grand Junction and was designed for five stories. Only two were being built the first year. The basement would have storage and stock rooms, lockers and showers, with possibly some rental space. The general offices of the company, an express office and the lobby waiting room would take up the first floor. Twenty offices for rent would be on the second floor. The stairway entrance was on Third street, with the main entrance on the very corner.



COOKING CLUB in Colorado Springs included the men influential in the Grand Junction electric railways. In front, from left, Fred Sherwin, Clarence Hamlin, Spencer Penrose, F. Drexel Smith and E. A. Sunderlin. In back are Charles MacNeill, Samuel Shober, Joel Hayes, Chaloner Schley, Duncan Chisholm, Eugene Shove, Horace Devereux, Percy Hagerman and Dr. Boswell Anderson. Photo from the Joel A. H. Webb collection.





YELLOW BRICK made a neat little depot for Fruita. An electrical sub-station was in the back, dropping the high transmission voltage to the 600 volts D.C. for the cars.

Since interurban days it served as a Public Service Co. office, and recently with additions as fire and police stations. Photo from Judson C. Thode and Ed Haley.

Meanwhile the newspapers had kept alive the question of the starting date for construction of the rail line. In October of 1909 they promised 30 days. In November it was "very, very soon." By February "all is ready." In March "to be known in a few days."

Finally on March 8, 1910, just a year after starting the city line, two gangs started work toward Fruita. By the 15th it was under way in earnest, and at this same time the wires from the Redlands hydro plant were being extended to the city for extra power.

By early April the tracks were built up 12th street past the small farms and orchards with their country homes. Swinging to the west a considerable cut was made and beyond that the pile driver was at work building the trestle.

Four condemnation cases came to court, two by the A.N. Andersons of First Fruit Ridge and those by Mac Miller and Martin Woodring. All said they were willing to have the rail line run along property lines but objected to having it cut across their fields. Crews built the line where it was surveyed, so there was no delay, and the cases were filed in February for hearing in March. In June the decisions were in, the jury awarding damages to the ranchers.

Farm families paid close attention as the men and teams worked their way along the route. Preston Stoner had a peach orchard on Fruit Ridge and his little girl Georgia - in the 1980s Mrs. Charles Holmes - remembers that she was sort of a tomboy. She spent springtime hours watching the "furriners" at work between her father's place and neighbor Charles Meade's.

The 15 or 20 men were using pick and shovel, teams and scrapers. At noon one very warm day the men lay down for lunch in the cool green alfalfa on the Meade farm. As she remembers it, they really damaged the hay for it was nearly ready to cut, and the farmer came out with a shot gun to make sure they understood his feelings. They understood. Mrs. Holmes admits "Westerners weren't too kind to foreigners."

A happy day came on April 21 when the first car moved on the new tracks. Residents rushed out to see No. 2 of the city line pushing material out to the work gang.

A report the last of April told of the pole lines installed, double as far as North avenue, with the power line hung on a wire strung between them. Outside the city, single poles carried the trolley wire supported on arms, and also the three high tension wires, the feeder line and phone lines.

Crews finished the 888-foot cut and the 610-foot trestle over the canal, the orchard and waste ditch. At about that

"We'll finish the job on time."

time, May 14, the town was jammed with Civil War veterans attending the GAR convention. To end the festivities on Saturday afternoon they were invited to go for an excursion as far as the line was built. Several hundred of the men and their ladies took the ride. Delighted, they said.

They let the contract in May for the yellow brick Fruita depot, 27 by 69 feet in size, at Mesa and Pabor streets. The track went straight into town on Pabor and beyond the station to the Y-tracks for turning the cars. The Fruita Mail spoke of Grand Junction people buying homes in the village, now that commuting would be so quick and easy.

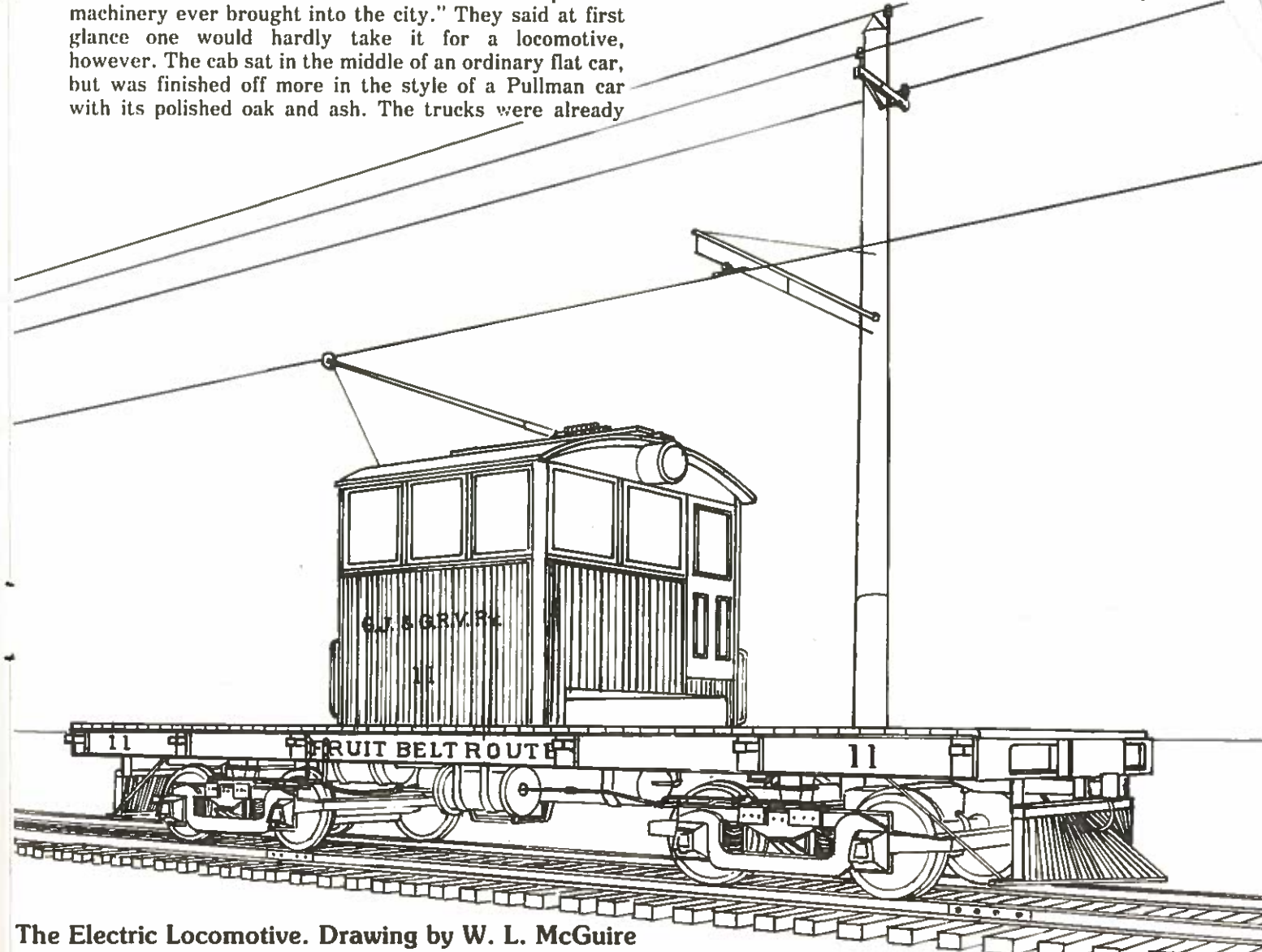
On June 10 the electric locomotive arrived on a flat car and the Sentinel told details of this "handsomest piece of machinery ever brought into the city." They said at first glance one would hardly take it for a locomotive, however. The cab sat in the middle of an ordinary flat car, but was finished off more in the style of a Pullman car with its polished oak and ash. The trucks were already

delivered, built by J. Brill of Philadelphia, with General Electric motors. The cab was built by Woeber and the equipment for the engineer was described as superb. It had the finest of gauges, a string of interior lights, automatic air and straight air brakes as well as a hand brake.

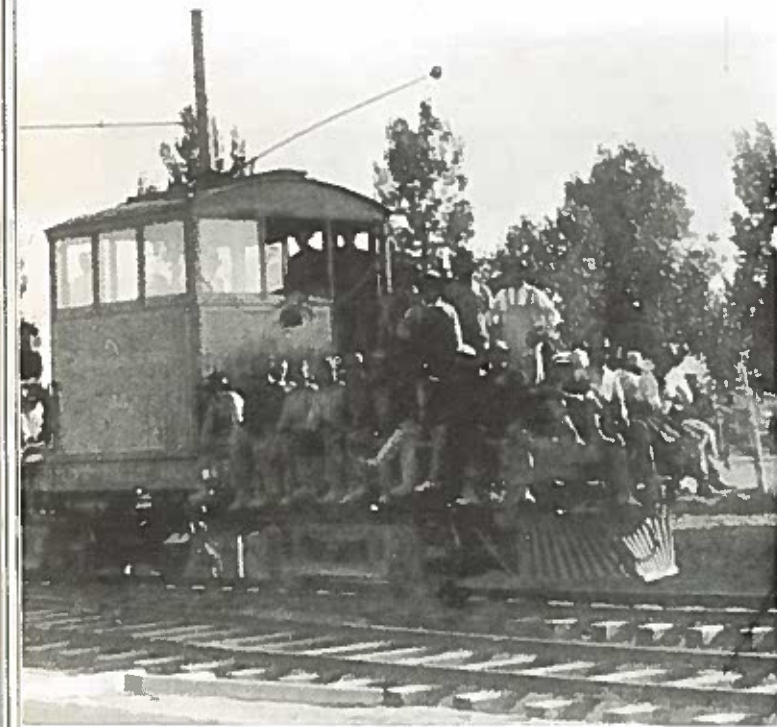
The News was effusive but gave the length as 40 feet and the weight as 24 tons.

The construction men finished the job on time. July 14th had been set for the celebration and the overhead wires were ready by the 9th. The track was being ballasted, the new cars were in town and tested. Residents were cleaning up their yards, ready to show off to the visitors who were coming.

The Fruit Belt Route to Fruita was ready to open.



The Electric Locomotive. Drawing by W. L. McGuire



CAB-ON-FLATCAR, that's what No. 11 looked like. This locomotive (and this crew) were used for track building, then over the years it hauled the carloads of freight. Dan Morgan copy from original in Sentinel files.



## 9 They Came by the Thousand

The work and worry passed and now it was time to celebrate.

July 14 was here, summertime of 1910, time for the event Fruita had promoted so intently. The Fruit Belt was open. The stand was ready to serve the free barbecue. The chicken pie dinner for the dignitaries was being made ready on the mayor's lawn, decorations were in place, the merry-go-round set up and street vendors were hawking their wares.

Grand Junction was excited, too, for wasn't this the first of the network the papers had been writing about? Fruita would have the morning and afternoon programs but Grand Junction would entertain that night.

Lee Haney did his work well, the publicity man from the Colorado Midland that Sunderlin had brought in to

**A DAY TO CELEBRATE.** Fruita played host to thousands the day the interurban opened. Track was laid but not ballasted and a work car stands at the end of track. The banner for the Fair Store, the jolly crowd and natty

show his stuff. He had promised a "triple-decked, double-action, six-cylinder, compound, triple-expansion celebration." It had sounded big, tossing out all those superlatives from automobile ads and railroad lingo.

And it really was a big affair. The crowd was estimated at 7,000 in the town of 1,500. People carried home

officials are here with Car 52. The rail coach attached (and the one in the distance) are no doubt Colorado Midland cars. From W. L. McGuire collection.

**T**HE Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway Company takes this opportunity to extend to all of its friends appreciation of the many courtesies received during the process of construction. Starting now on its active operations, it sincerely hopes that the happy relations now existing will continue, and it assures the public that it will exert every effort in its power to merit the patronage and good will of the people interested in the welfare and growth of this progressive community.

That Grand Junction should possess a street railway system was a dream that took possession of its progressive citizens as long ago as twenty years.

In 1890 there was incorporated in Grand Junction a system known as the Grand Junction Street Railway. It was a privately owned enterprise and came into the possession of the city itself, after defaulting in the payment of taxes. For a short period it enjoyed the distinction of being the only municipally owned street railway in the United States. It was operated with



THOMAS F. CURTIN, President  
CHARLES M. MACNEILL, Vice Pres.  
E. A. SUNDERLIN, Vice Pres. and Gen'l Mgr.



ORSON ADAMS, Sec. Treas. SPENCER PENROSE, Director  
WM. S. ILIFF, Director THOMAS B. STRARN, Director

THE APPLE FOLDER, souvenir of July 14, 1910. From Bob Gustafson.

thousands of the apple folders that Haney created to publicize the day. The covers for all the little folded pages had the roadmark of the Fruit Belt on the front, quite possibly his brainchild too. The back was apple-shaped, and the whole was held together by a loop of red twine.

Grand Junction folks spilled into town, proud of their neighbor. Newsmen came from Denver, staying the night before in Colorado Springs then coming over on a special train. The officials were there to bask in their success. Glenwood Springs people and those from closer points took the Rio Grande or the Midland at special excursion rates. From Montrose, Delta and the North Fork a one-way ticket brought them in and back again.

The interurban itself had a round trip fare of 50 cents from town, while rates from the crossroads were less. The cars stopped wherever folks flagged them down. Bunting, flags and decorations could be seen all along the way.

The Colorado Midland band was a feature of the day, with 40 pieces and called the best in the state. Their special train with the journalists and officials rolled into town at 10 a.m., was switched to the interurban track and pulled by the electric locomotive to downtown Fruita. Indian students from the Teller Institute had a band there to meet all trains and escort visitors to the Circle Park.

Clifton and Fruita played a spirited game of baseball in the morning, the home team losing, 8 to 2.

The parade came at 1 p.m., led by D.W. Smith, president of the Chamber of Commerce. Next came the Midland band, and the decorated autos with the maids of honor and one with an immense apple as the throne of local girl Mabel Skinner, national Apple Queen. The town had many floats — from hardware and jewelry stores, the Women's Club in lavender and white, the Woodmen of the World, the Mesa County Mail, harness shop, the plumber and the banker. More 1910 autos were toward the end, flags flying, and then Percherons and other show horses to end the parade.

Speeches came next, two and a half hours of them, the Sentinel said, with "a crowd that was simply terrific, following every word of each speaker."

The mayor welcomed the visitors, but Junction mayor

Thomas Todd was ill and not there to respond. Congressman Taylor was cheered, newsmen were welcomed, and the oration of the day was given by C.C. Hamlin, newsman and attorney. The Apple Queen shared the stage.

The afternoon featured another ball game (Fruita 7, Palisade 0), a baby show, broncho riding and relay races for cowboys and cowgirls.

Mrs. Charles Cole was one who was there for the big day. As a young bride from Sedalia, Missouri, she had married Kirk Anderson, a rancher down Appleton way.



LOCAL GIRL Mabel Skinner, named earlier that year as Queen of the National Apple Show in Denver, ruled the Fruita celebration. Her throne was high on an EMF auto. Photo from Sentinel files.



horse power, two cars being used for three or four years, after which the road was abandoned. Prominent among the original movers who planned to provide Grand Junction with its horse car line were Hon. Benton Canon, the late Barney Kennedy and other public-spirited citizens. With the abandonment of the old horse car line numerous projected street railways followed, there having been not less than four electric railway companies formed within the past ten years, and it was not until the summer of the year 1908 that Mr. Orson Adams suc-

ceeded in interesting Messrs. Thomas E. Curtin, E. A. Sunderlin and Horace K. Devereux of Colorado Springs, who in turn interested with them Mr. Charles M. MacNeill of Colorado Springs, who, at the invitation of these gentlemen, visited Grand Junction in July, 1908.

After this investigation it was decided by Mr. MacNeill to build the City railway, which was completed and started operations May 22, 1909, the City line securing its power from The Grand Junction Electric, Gas and Manufacturing Company.



L. F. McMAHON, Auditor T. L. HARVEY, Supt.  
S. M. L. McSPADEN, Pur. Agt. C. E. NOBLE, Right-of Way Agt.



S. G. McMULLEN, Gen'l Atty. HENRY C. HALL, Gen'l Counsel  
J. H. BRINKERHOFF, Gen'l Supt. E. L. MOSE, Chief Engineer

About this time the advisability of connecting the towns of Mesa County by electric railways was seriously considered, and preliminary surveys were run to Clifton, Palisade and Fruita. The necessity of a private right of way led the Company to accept the offer of the citizens of Fruita, and those of the intervening territory between that point and Grand Junction, with the result that on this day, July 14th, 1910, is opened for operation one of the most modern and fully equipped interurban electric railways in the West, and the first electric railway in

Western Colorado to handle passenger, freight and express business. The building of additional railway required additional power facilities, which the rapid growth of the city of Grand Junction also demanded, and large expenditures have been made to give to this community a modern power plant of large capacity. Out of these necessities and demands there has been created The Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway Company—"The Fruit Belt Route."

# 76 -  
First Run 7-14-10  
Ans - 10-31-28-

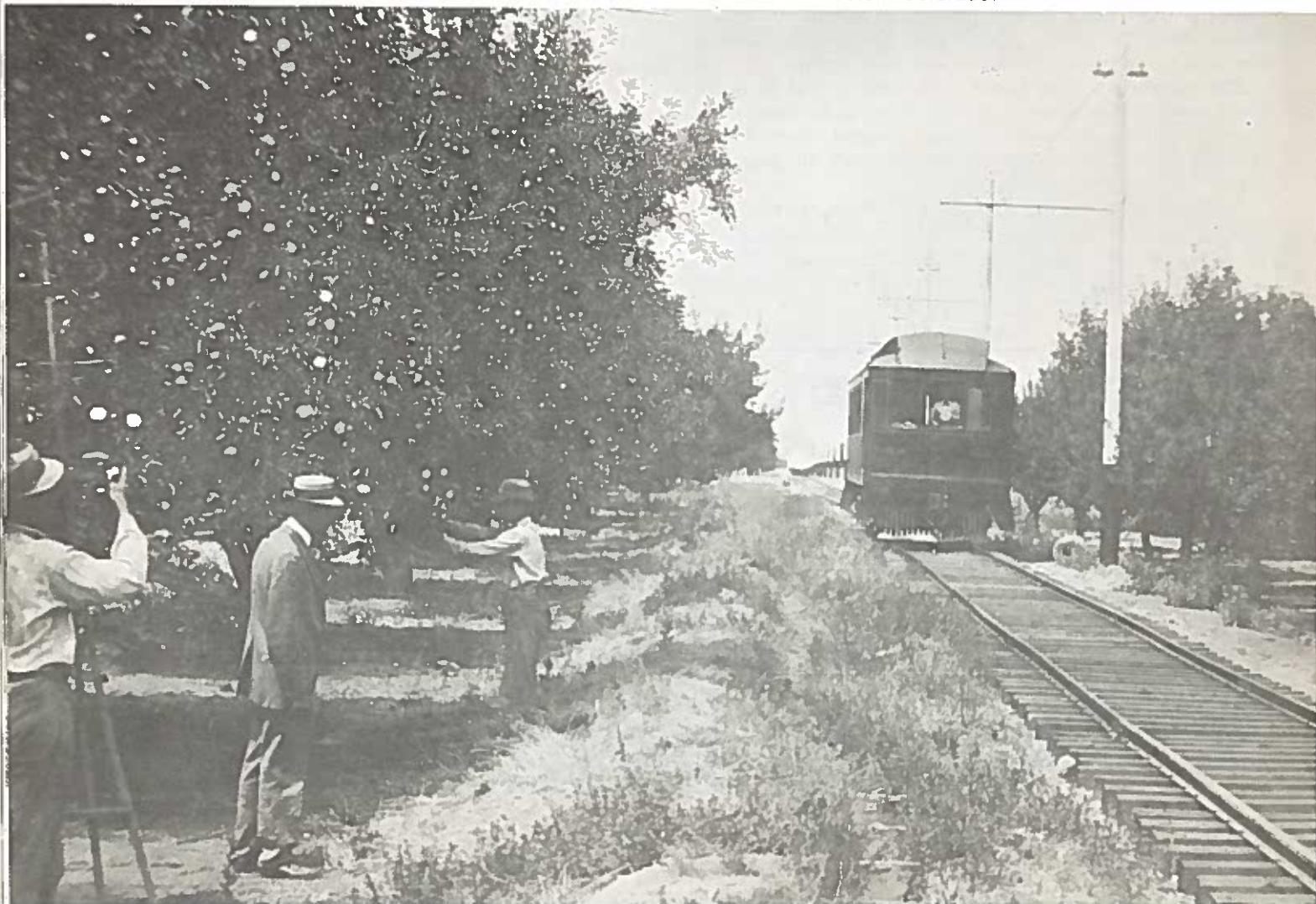
She was homesick for her city life and feeling hemmed in by the mountains of Colorado.

But "We dressed up the best we could," flagged the car and went to Fruita to celebrate. She doesn't remember the band or the speakers, but "in that little park people

were milling as thick as fleas. There was a large crowd." Yet her heart wasn't in the celebration for her husband was sick, and then was ill with a fever for many days. He later died and memory of the day is one of sadness.

FRUIT COUNTRY. The interurban ran through orchards of apples and pears from the edge of Grand Junction into Fruita. This scene became almost a trade mark for the

line, especially through post cards with their "wish you were here" messages to folks back home. Photo from the Museum of Western Colorado.



Howard McMullin was a youngster of nine that July day. His dad was the company attorney and big brother Bentley had a job as conductor for the day. "Those were the big interurban cars, with some Colorado Midland passenger cars hooked on. They carried the whole damned town down there, a huge crowd," he says.

And for another one who remembers the day there's Mrs. Gus Nagel. She was Emma Berg, just graduated from Fruita Union High School, coming down with her family from their home four miles north of town. "We'd been interested in their building the interurban and there was some talk they were going to go to Loma and to Collbran. And you bet I was there for the opening! The cars came in packed full and went out packed full and then came back the same way. That great big crowd was there, it was just everywhere. We had gotten the interurban!"

It was a holiday, stores closed, everybody celebrating.

As evening came the village emptied out toward Grand Junction. There was a lavish dinner at the La Court and a lengthy concert by the Midland Band. They played from a platform on the steel skeleton of the Electric Building under construction at Third and Main with 3,000 listening, the paper reported.

A smoker for company stockholders came at 8:30 and shortly after dark an automobile parade went up Main street and back again, with flags and fireworks. The Elks sponsored a street fair all that week and the Parker carnival was in town.

Curtin and Sunderlin answered the newmen's questions. Yes, we will extend our lines to Orchard Mesa and into the Plateau valley just as soon as we have the rights of way and the capital. Yes, we may be forced to go by way of Orchard Mesa because of the high cost of land to the east. Yes, the commissioners may let us use the public highway between Clifton and Palisade.

They gave credit for the project to MacNeill and Penrose.

Local people might have had copies of the larger publicity booklet of the GJ & GRV Ry but it was designed for travelers on the through trains. It invited them to stop for a ride through the orchards — or to stop and buy land.

It was all quite effusive, quite pointed in telling of the virtues of the valley. The highlight was the "hurricane deck" story by Mr. Sherman, a local reporter. No doubt the breezes did blow his whiskers as he sat out front on the locomotive, that odd cab-on-flatcar machine.

It had been a grand opening, called a new era in the history of the Grand Valley.



"GREETINGS" was the caption of this art taking up much of Page 1 of the Daily Sentinel one day just before the grand opening.



# The Route in the 1880's

# Station Stops Listed

From the Rio Grande depot east on South avenue to 12th street and north to Patterson Road.

Diagonally through Centennial Plaza and Northern Way (south of Lakeside) down the trestle through Westwood apartments and along the canal to F 1/2 road.

West, then NW, W and North, crossing G road just east of 25 road. West, slightly north of G road to 24 road and then north along the east side of 24 to Holland (Appleton).

West along south side of H road to 23 road, then north on the west side of 23, curving to cross Persigo Wash and west through fields to 21 road. North to about J 1/2, across Hunter Wash and to J 3/4 then straight into Fruita on Pabor avenue to the depot.

UNION STATION, Rio Grande and Colorado Midland depot

12th and MAIN

BOYER near Orchard avenue

WELLINGTON near Fairmount Hall and Wellington avenue

FRUIT RIDGE 26 road and F 1/2

WELCH F 3/4 and 25'

WHITE AVE. in platted Pomona Park, 25 1/4 and G

POMONA 25 & G

TURPIN 24 3/4 and G

HOLLAND 24 & H

BETHEL 23 & H

ROGERS (Loback and Miller were also there at one time, all three on 23 road, between H & I)

COPECO 22 & I 1/4

SAXTON 21 1/2 and I 1/4

HUNTER 21 & J

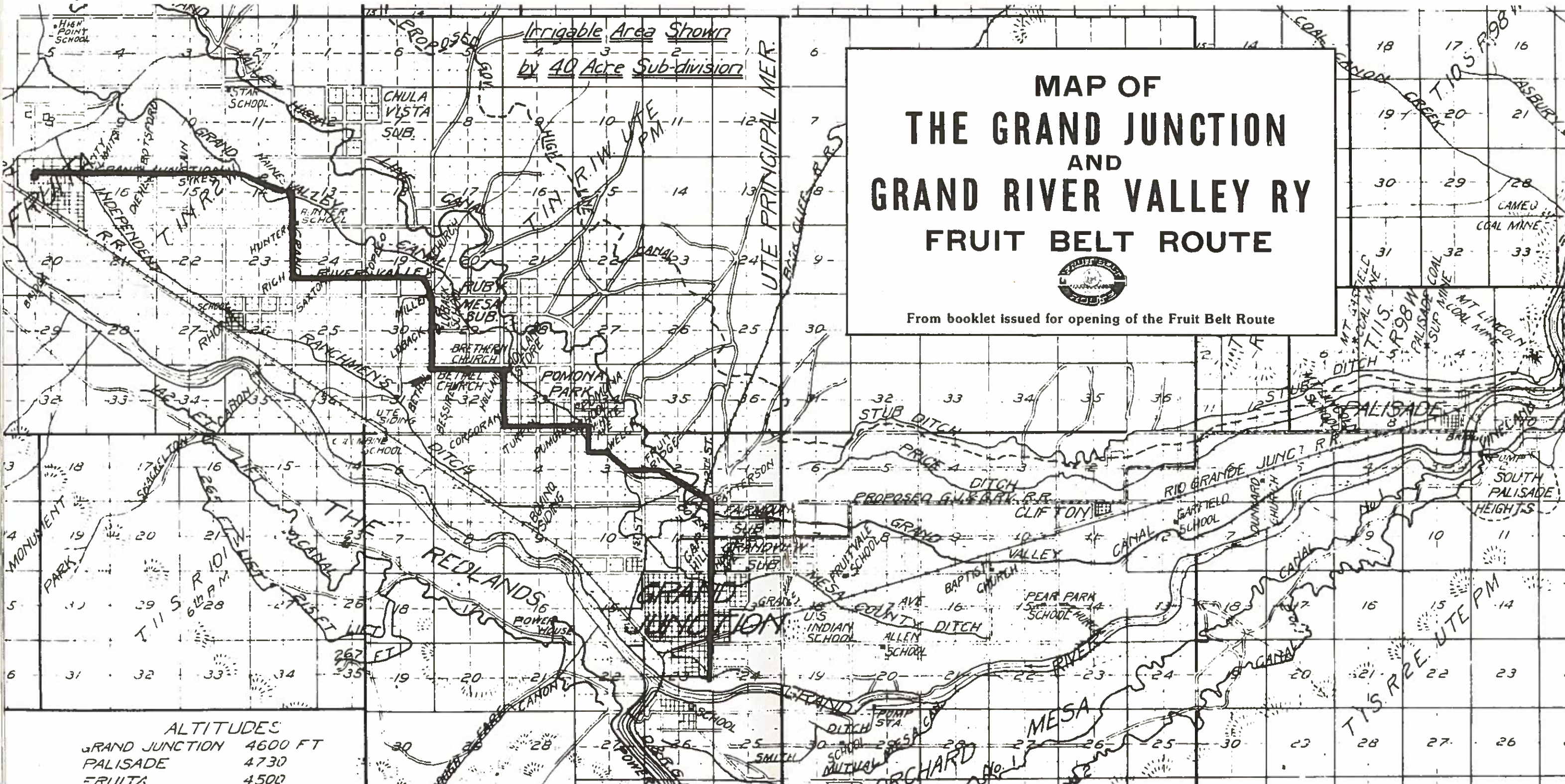
ROSEDALE (Haines, at one time) 21 & J 1/2

SYKES 20 & J 3/4

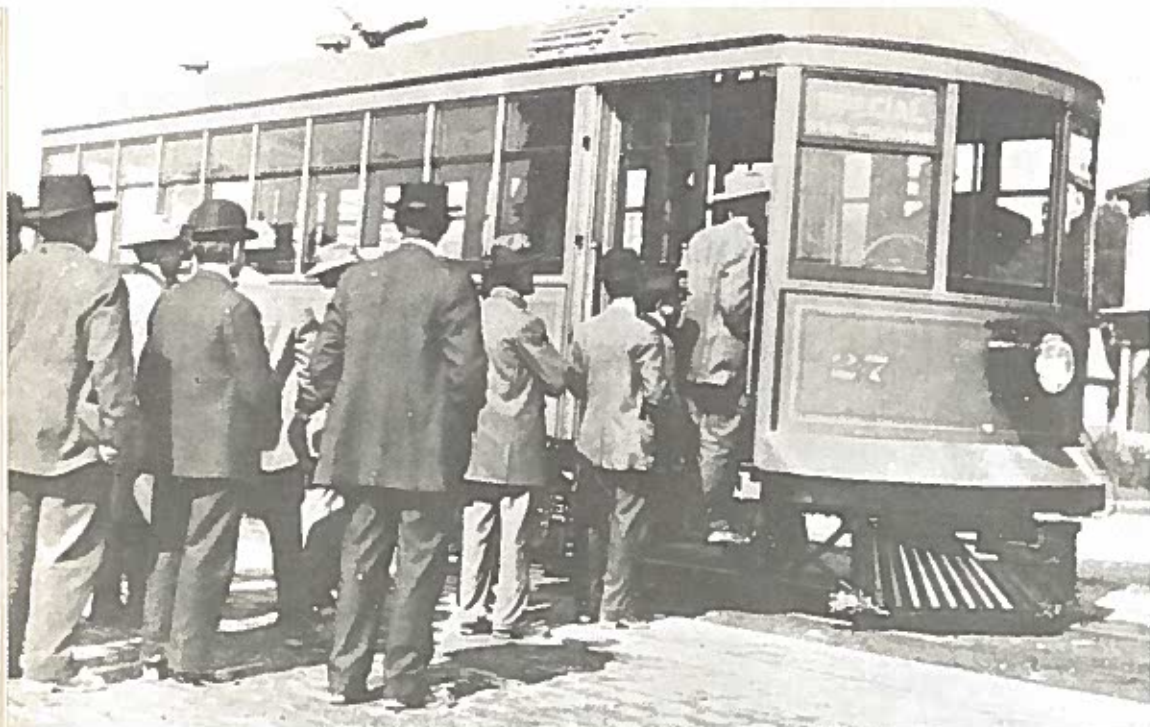
CAIN 19 1/2 & J 3/4

DIEHL 19 & J 3/4

FRUITA DEPOT, Pabor and Mesa avenues







Illustrations  
From the  
Report of the  
GJ&GRVRY for  
July 1 to  
December 31, 1912  
By Courtesy of  
Jackson C. Thode  
and Ed Haley

"One man operation,  
Pay-As-You-Enter car"  
Probably at Main & 8th.



"Car Barn - Grand Junction"  
Facing east at 12th street;  
interchange track with  
Rio Grande in foreground.



"Standard Waiting Shelter"

## 10 The Fruit Belt Route

What a celebration that had been, the 14th of July in 1910 when the Fruit Belt started running!

An era of good feeling was here. Fruita loved the attention showered on her that opening day. Grand Junction felt a glow, thinking of her rich friends from Colorado Springs who invested in western Colorado and were about to make a network of rail lines centered on this town.

There is always the question of what might have been. As soon as the Fruit line was opened almost every town in the Grand valley and beyond was proposing an extension.

Certainly the Clifton, Palisade and Plateau valley line was a real possibility. Things had gone so far in 1907 that J. Elvin Harris, prominent rancher near Mesa, had given the right of way through his place to the Plateau Railway Company.

Most owners accepted the proposition that their property would gain in value and were willing to donate rights of way. Delta and North Fork folks up Paonia way expected to be served. The Rifle Reveille loved the reference to the Palisade line and was sure their upper valley area would be connected.

"Interurban to Clifton Now Certain" said the Sentinel's headline. But the right of way was still a sticker and an alternate proposal was to go to Clifton by way of Orchard Mesa. The idea was to cross the river on the Rio Grande bridge and climb onto the mesa by tunnel and fill. Possibly another line could follow the river bank and then the combined lines would run back across the river at Clifton over a proposed bridge.

An Orchard Mesa booster meeting developed a plan for a motor car line instead. Most fantastic, considering the auto industry of 1911, was this plan to buy 20 or so large autos and trucks. The cars were to carry 20 or 30 passengers and the trucks should be large enough for fruit hauling.

They would lay down tracks 18 inches wide made of 2 by 4s on edge and bolted together, with a half-inch space between each plank. The cost of lumber, ties and fencing for the 12-mile line was estimated at \$1,500 per mile. When the railroad was ready to be built the interurban would take over the right of way.

Sudden enthusiasm died equally rapidly. Another proposal would extend the rails west of Fruita to Loma and Mack to connect with the Uintah. If that line

SUMMER DAY IN FRUITA. Bicycles, knickers, heavy foliage and a man laboring to load and unload express are

marks of the 1910's or '20's at the Fruita interurban depot. Lower Valley Heritage photo from Ross Williams.





**A nickel for a ride and a ticket slip.**

were widened to standard gauge it might be possible to extend the line to Salt Lake City. This idea had a second life later, with a new owner.

Yet those who could read the omens noticed that the right of way agent, Charles Noble, was leaving in the fall of 1911 for Colorado Springs. The news item said that he would be back next spring when negotiations for construction would be renewed.

He never came back.

The Fruit Belt was always alert in its relations with the public, using the friendly newspapers for headlines and news briefs. They used advertising, too, eye-catching large spaces, calculated to warm the hearts of newspaper accountants and to flatter citizens with the attention paid to the people of Mesa County.

They were merchandisers, using an informative advertisement in the paper the very first day after the opening. It gave the schedule for leaving the depot - Union Station, it was - heading for Fruita every two hours. The runs started at 6 a.m. and continued until 10 p.m. From Fruita the schedule was from 7 a.m. through 11 p.m. on the odd-numbered hours. Coupon books for trips worth \$6 were advertised for \$5, and at one time during that first month for \$4.50.

The company promoted its line for pleasure riding with extra trips and special rates. First came evening rides at a 50-cent round trip rate after 6 p.m. Next came a half-fare Sunday special, cars every hour from each end.

POSED AT FRUITA. Bags and boxes are unloaded and No. 51 is ready for the return trip. The employees line up for the photographer, with Harry Smith at left and Alfred

Advertising made it known that cars stopped on signal at all streets in town and at all cross roads and sidings. Riders soon found that a match or lantern was the signal for after-dark stops in the country.

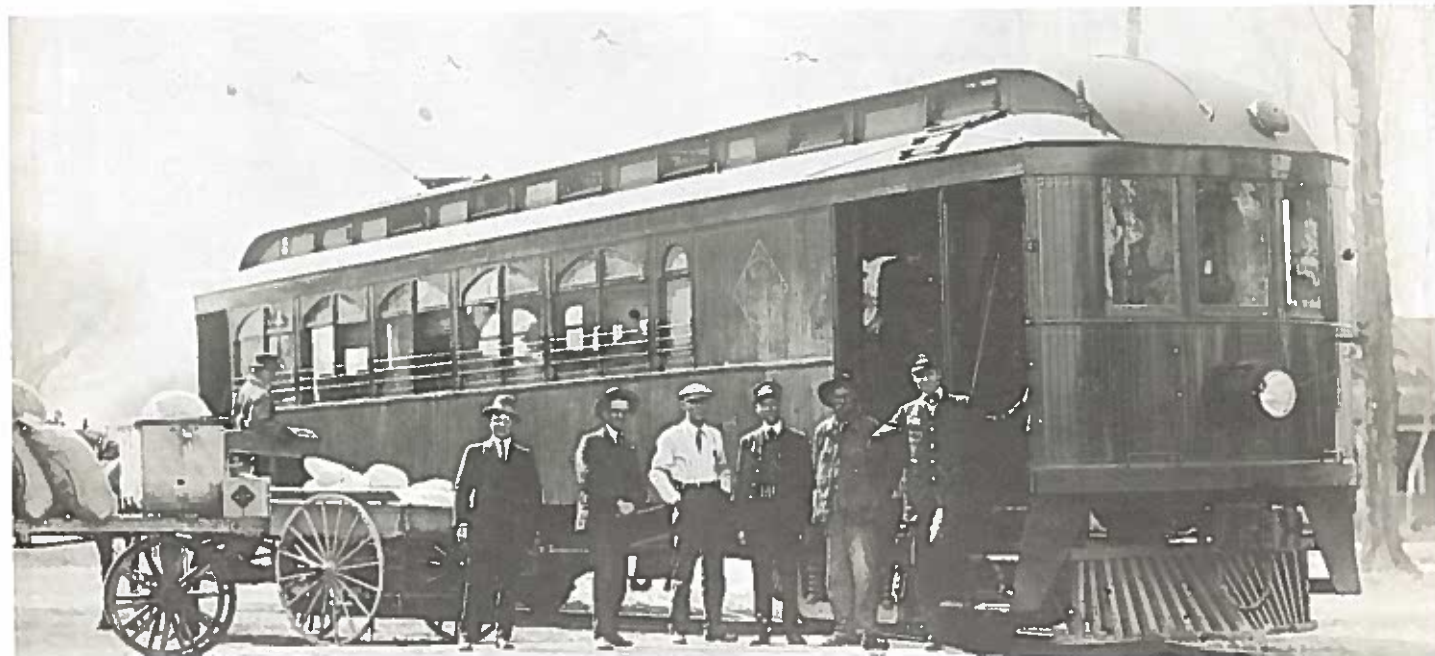
The locations of waiting rooms were given, the depot in Fruita or the car barn at Fifth and South in Grand Junction. Tickets were on sale there or at the gas office, 123 North Fourth street, or "Passengers can Pay on the Train, Not Necessary to Have a Ticket."

Freight and express were handled just as soon as approved by state and interstate commissions. The rates to Fruita were the same as the Rio Grande, but for all shorter distances they were "considerably less." It was noted that to or from Diehl, the station 1 1/4 miles short of Fruita, the rate would be 50 cents a ton for coal, while the rate to Fruita was 55 cents. Apples from Diehl could be shipped for 2 1/2 or 3 1/2 cents a box and at less cost from the shorter distances. "No shipment too large or too small to handle," said the announcement.

When school started in September an extra run was made from Fruita at 8 a.m. so there was a car in each direction to suit school hours morning and afternoon. Students rode for five cents, paying in the morning and receiving a "ticket slip" good for the afternoon return trip.

Runs that fall were slowed slightly to allow track work on soft spots before winter set in. News items told the public that riders would be surprised at the improve-

Brown between the conductor and the motorman. Other names are forgotten. Photo from Mrs. Zelma Parkes.



SCHOOL DAYS at Appleton meant a ride on the interurban morning and afternoon for many youngsters. Special rates and special schedules suited students going to Fruita and

Grand Junction as well. Photo from files of the Grand Valley Water Users Association.

ments made since the July opening. On 12th street the old poles had been taken down, the problem ditch filled up and all this "without a cent of cost to the city or county." About 21,000 cubic yards had been taken out of the cut to make the grade easier and to provide ballast for other places.

Eight teams and a crew of men were at work, as well as a gang of 50 Greeks, the reporter said. The work train had the right of way over the passenger cars, delaying trips by a scheduled 15 minutes.

At the end of 1910 Fruita town officials expected quick settlement of a franchise fight between John Beard and his associates on one side and the interurban company on the other. Matters were complicated when Carl C. Harding of Telluride came in with an application. Fruita asked for work to start within 60 days and to be complete within six months, but Harding said he needed a year. He backed out. It took until the next July to decide, but the company won and used the interurban poles for lines to connect with the Grand Junction plant.

They held a super special anniversary event in Fruita on July 14, 1911, as an Interurban Day combined with an Iowa Day. An amazing 22 round trips were scheduled

from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., with the last car leaving Fruita at midnight. Trailers were added from Welch, the stop between Fruit Ridge and Pomona. The Colorado Midland ran a special train from Palisade to bring the many from Iowa who had settled in that area.

Some 1,000 came to town wearing tags "Greetings from Grand Junction," and the village estimated a total of 2,000 visitors, half of them the Iowa crowd.

The band was there, the town decked with flowers, bunting and welcome signs. Tuesday or not, all business houses closed at 11 a.m. W. E. Pabor, founder of the village, was a speaker along with other dignitaries, and then the crowd adjourned for a water fight and ball game. Fruita beat Rifle 15 to 8.

After years of mild weather, spring frosts had become a problem and fruit growers were building cisterns for oil and running smudge pots on dangerous nights to save the blossoms. The company built business and made friends in 1911 by cutting the rate for crude oil to 4 cents a hundred or \$14 a car, with another cut in 1912.

Fruit shipments started in 1910 and were quite sizable by 1911. Nine cars went out in September, six of sugar beets and three of apples. Incoming shipments were



**"Very serious damage was caused by a wash-out which resulted in the destruction of five bridges."  
Annual report for 1921.**

considerable, thanks to lowered rates. They included fruit boxes, fertilizer, oil, and household goods for new residents. Remember that the moving van of that day was often a rail car.

"Telephone Junction 40" said the ads in the spring of 1912, to ask about the "frequent service on Sundays" for excursions to the Lower Valley to see the blossoms. Arrangements were being made to run a buffet car on the evening trip Sundays, or possibly every evening. The announcement would be made as soon as the car could be placed in service. Was it ever accomplished?

There was no question about the service for fair week in that September of 1912, with extra runs from Fruita to the fair grounds right at Gunnison and 12th streets. Also added were three round trips taking fair goers for a dime to Bethel and back to see picking and packing methods.

More schedule changes and slightly faster trips came in February, 1913, and another change in May with "Time cards available at the depots and hotels."

For the 4th of July in 1913 Fruita again pulled out all the stops. "Monster Celebration" was the plan for Iowa day and the holiday. There were band concerts, two baseball games, broncho busting, roping, steer riding and races. Shade and ice water were supplied for picnickers and open-air dancing that night at a "Big Masque Carnival." The trip was half-fare, with two sections for the busy hours.

Special cars and special rates came along whenever events like the rodeo would bring merrymakers." "Phone Junction 40" was the regular rallying cry of the advertisements, offering "Information cheerfully given."

Two early aviation meets were great events for the town - and for the trolley and interurban.

But the aftermath of that agitation from 1912 to 1914 for municipal ownership brought a shaky financial condition and inability to finance proposed extensions. The local system had to carry the overhead expense which could have been distributed over a larger system.

By the end of 1913 it was hinted that reorganization was coming. Rumors of discontinuance were squelched by Sunderlin in April of 1914, but there were meetings to see how a reduction in schedules could best be handled. Superintendent McSpadden told the men that the old schedule meant heavy losses because passenger receipts had been falling off.

School Children would be taken care of, but possibly night cars would be dropped.

On August 1, 1914, the company was foreclosed by bondholders because of default of interest payments. Finally, the Grand Junction and Grand River Valley Railway Co. was dissolved. Immediately a new company

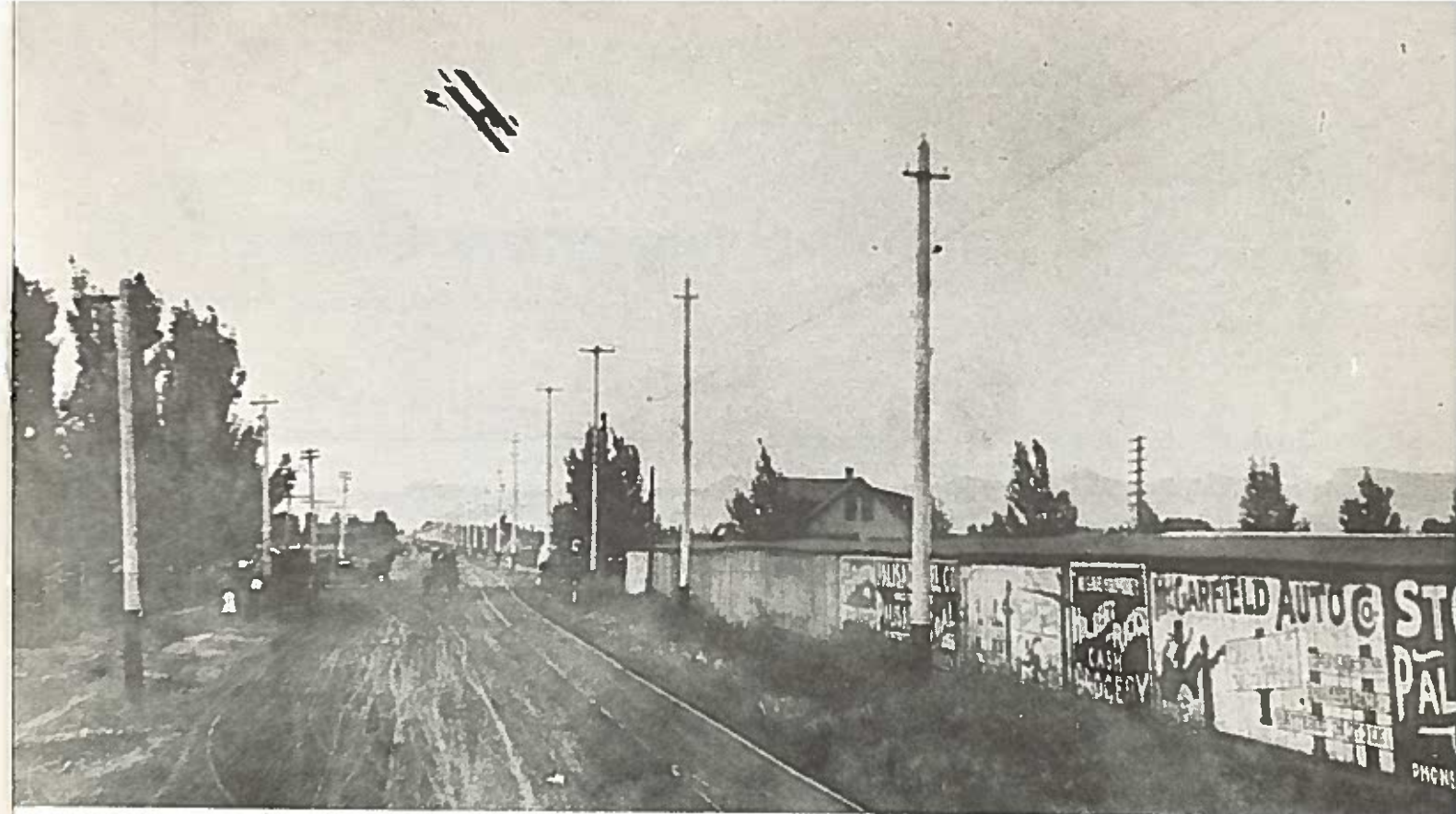
formed with the simpler name of Grand River Valley Railway Company.

In April, 1915, the company contracted with the Post Office Department to carry a mail pouch each way between Grand Junction and Fruita. The rate of pay was small, but it was a service that was needed and wanted. As in contracts with other electric lines, no parcel post or bulky matter was carried.

By the harvest of 1916 the interurban was hauling all it could find cars for. Newspapers carried word that 90 cars were urgently needed, box cars or gondolas, with bulk apples and cider apples piled at the sidings.

They still catered to the people, offering such things as

CLOUDBURST in the hills took out a bridge and damaged the track. Hard work made repairs in short order. Harry Smith snapshot in W. L. McGuire collection.



PLANEFEST, October 10, 1914. Lincoln Beachey circles toward the fair grounds, behind the advertising fence so well remembered. Inside, a crowd of 3,000 will watch his daring skill and see him race Barney Oldfield around the half-mile oval. Here on 12th street the interurban rails

stretch to North avenue starting the zig-zag route to Fruita. Double poles support the overhead wire to the city limits, then single poles are the rule. From the album of Mrs. Alice Reed.

a free trip to town and back for ranchers on Blossom Sunday excursions, for tours of the electric plant.

A. E. Carlton bought the Colorado Midland railway in 1917 for about a million and a half. Folks wondered if he and Penrose, MacNeill and the other wealthy men from Colorado Springs would pour money into improvements on the line.

He announced that the first extension would be the eight-mile line from Fruita to Mack for connection with the Uintah. They could then haul Gilsonite asphalt material directly into Grand Junction over the interurban. Survey work started and plans were announced for converting the narrow-gauge Uintah to standard-gauge and building a half-mile tunnel under Baxter Pass. It could then extend to Salt Lake City.

Sadly the Midland was forced into abandonment in 1918. So again there was not too much change despite rumors and high hopes. Advertising continued, full of optimism. News items were a mix of good and bad.

The Spanish Influenza epidemic in late fall of 1918 frightened people and brought an end to night service until nearly Christmas.

A third floor was added to the Electric Building and the business college moved in. The Modern Woodmen filled two cars one August evening in 1921 for an outing in Fruita. The line was ready for the season's rush of harvest business, expecting 500 carloads that year.

The routine was suddenly interrupted by a cloudburst and flood on Wednesday, August 24, 1921. Storms in the Book Cliffs caused torrents to run from the mountains.

These damaged or carried away 20 highway bridges and the Rio Grande bridge just west of Grand Junction. On the interurban there were many minor problems and one major one when the bridge was taken out at the Hemmer crossing. No autos could get to Fruita that day either.

They said the rail line would be out a week, but by Sunday morning the cars started to run again.

Year by year there were worries, yet the line served the area well. In his speech to the Rotarians in June, 1922, Sup't. A. E. Anderson quoted figures showing 90,735 passengers carried during 1921. The passenger cars traveled 189,630 miles and freight cars 15,165. The average fare paid was 17 1/2 cents.

He said 653 carloads of freight were handled, 345 of fruit, 279 beets and 29 of other commodities.

By now electric railway fortunes were mainly downhill, but there was one bright spot ahead for the Grand River Valley.

Hopes had been alive since the 1890s for a larger irrigation ditch, higher up the slope of the valley to bring water to more acres. Private money never could do it, but the federal project of the High Line Canal was built at last and put into use in 1919.

Sugar beets were an important crop on the new land, and Holly Sugar reported early in 1919 that large contracts had been signed with growers.

The interurban immediately planned to erect more loading dumps. And they talked of extending the railway into the area north and east of Fruita around the Enterprise school.



"We cannot hope to see any improvement in passenger traffic."

Joe Stewart, General Manager. February 1, 1926

From 1921 the talk was serious. The plan then was to leave the main line at Haines about three miles east of Fruita and run to the northwest. It might go far enough to connect with the Uintah about five miles north of Mack, they said, or possibly extend into the Book Cliffs to haul out coal for the generating plant.

Or maybe, said the officials, they might build five miles of standard gauge electric line and another six of narrow gauge industrial line with gasoline power.

The route was laid out and the ranchers were asked for the right of way. The proposal also would have them doing the grading, with the company furnishing the ties and rails and doing the construction. The company urged this idea, saying that the growers would get the immediate benefit, while it would take years for the railway to earn a profit.

It was accepted and the ranchers started grading in May of 1924. The crew laid the first rails on August 6 and

by November 4 the first shipment came out of this 5½-mile line.

The "Peavine," as some called it, was in use, a bright day for the railway.

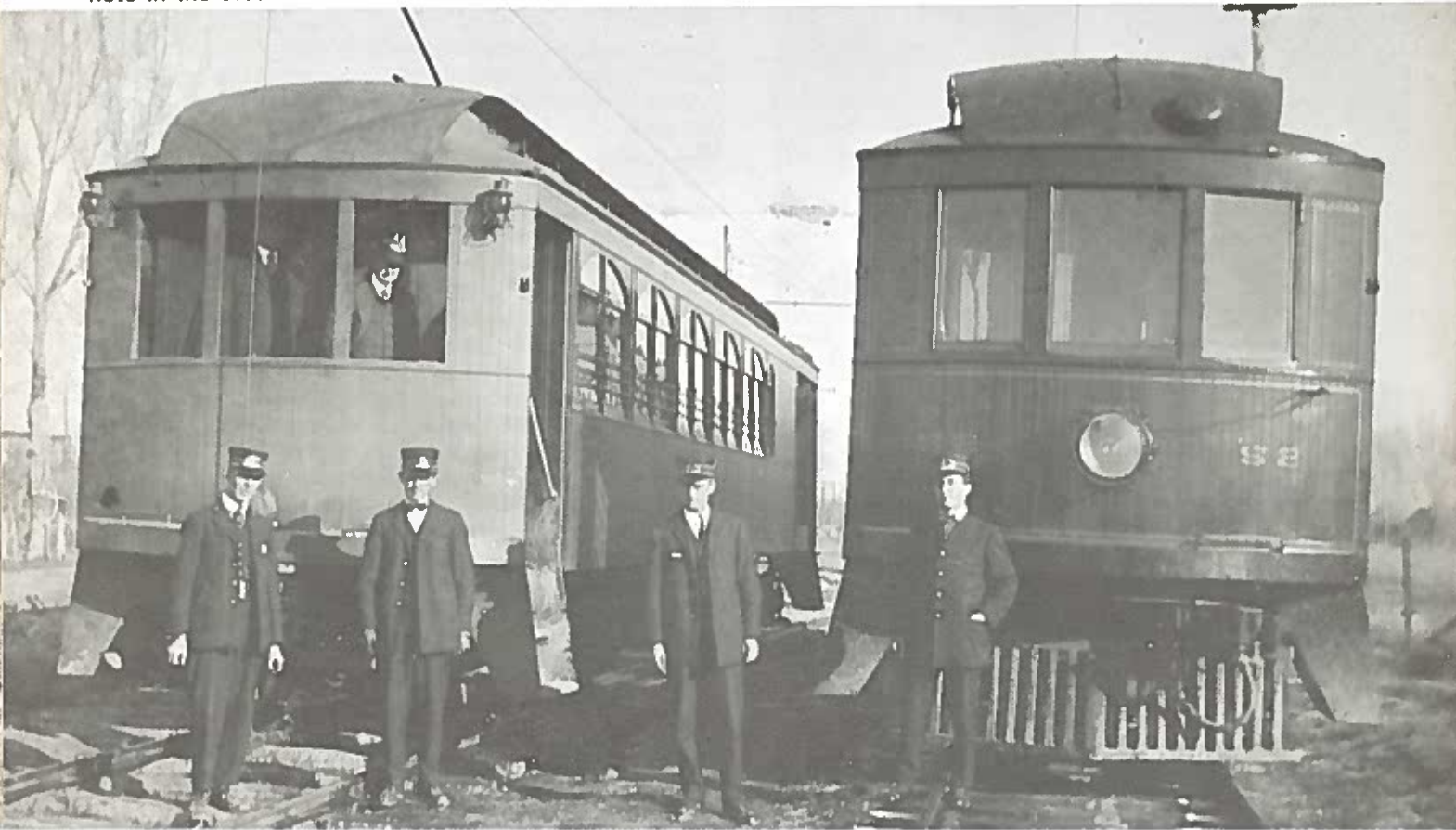
Of course winter traffic was light, so light that they would deliver cars of fertilizer and let them stand on the main line for unloading right into the fields. The 40 carloads that first year brought extra income during the off season.

By now the glamor of the apple and pear orchards had faded, losing the original reason for the Fruit Belt Route to the lower valley. Farmers and ranchers had changed to other crops like potatoes and sugar beets. These shipments were important to the railway and supported it long after passenger traffic disappeared.

No more extensions were ever built. Palisade's fruit never moved by the electric rail. The hydro-electric plant was not built. Dreams of passenger business had passed by.

Al Britton as the three men on the left. At right is Edgar O'Neil, with Joe Stewart, general manager, in the car. Courtesy of Mrs. Joseph H. Johns.

AT THE APPLETON SIDING. The cannery at left and the curve beyond the cars mark the spot where interurban crews stopped No. 51 and 52 for a morning snapshot. A note in the album identifies S. J. Johns, Wm. Peth and



## 11 Trolley Pleasures and Problems

But what had been going on in town during the year after the trolley line opened?

It was hot that May 22nd when the celebration was so joyous, and hotter still as the summer sun bore down. Folks settled into the routine of the four-wheel cars going around and around.

The dullness was broken on a Friday morning in July when the 11 o'clock trolley somehow knocked down the wire at Fourth and Main.

That was a show to wake up the town. The wire writhed and twisted, kicking up dust, occasionally coming close enough to the rail to send up a shower of sparks.

Worse than that, a passing pedestrian was stepping across the tracks just as the heavy copper wire fell. It knocked off his straw hat and tingled his foot and leg.

He disappeared down the street, repair crews came and an hour later the power was back on and the stalled cars were running again. The daily paper made the most of the awful possibilities of such a happening.

For several months there was really nothing new to say about the street car line, though the papers paid attention to interurban plans and progress. Then early in 1910 the city officials started talking about street paving.

That brought out headline type and considerable attention in the news columns and at city council meetings. Until now there were only dirt streets in the city, and a faction against change and growth was known as the "Little Junctionites".

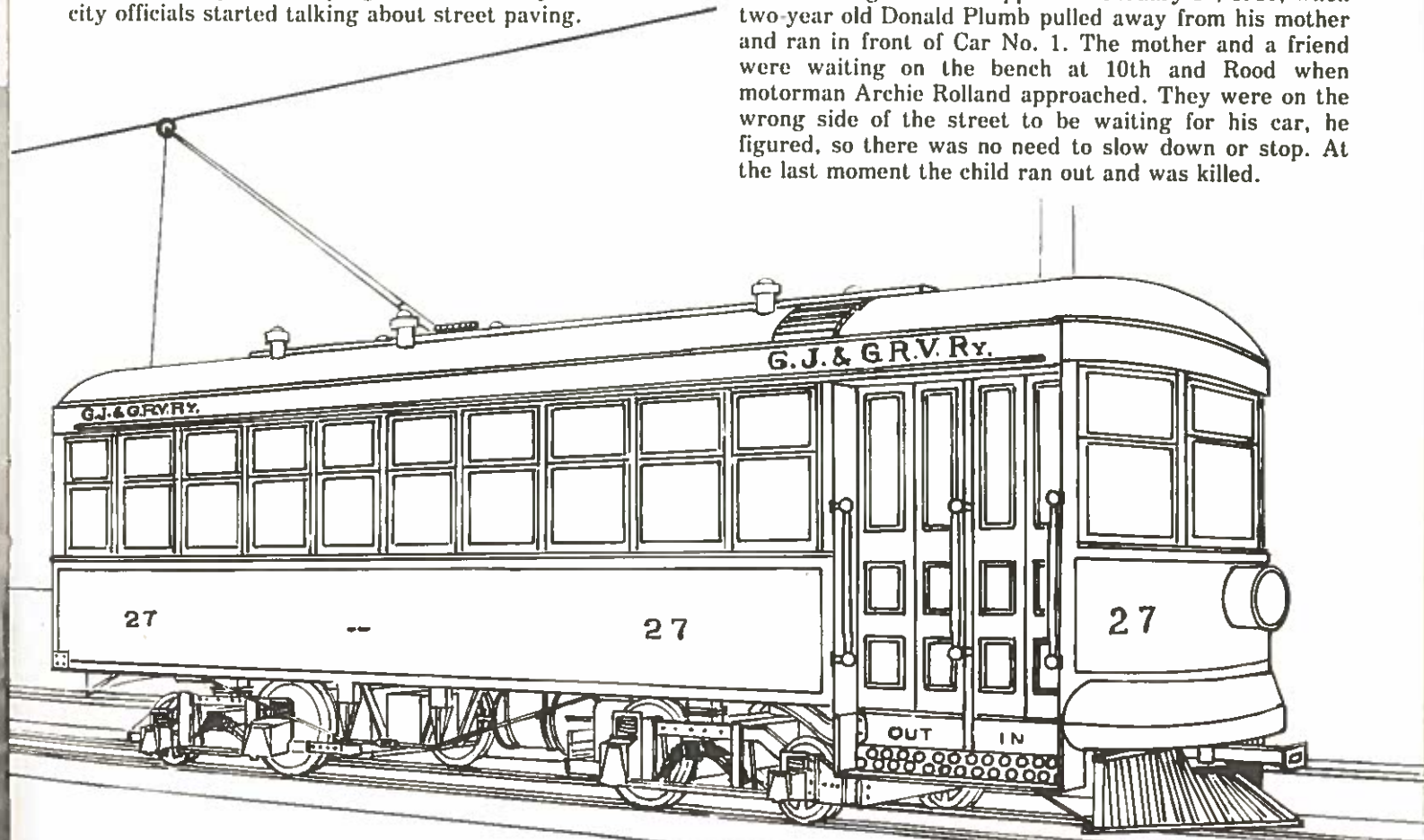
If asphalt, brick or concrete streets were going to be built the trolley company was caught with the possibility of paying heavily during the next few years. But they might be saved by the wording of their franchise, a "very interesting" twist, the News called it. Their story quoted from the franchise:

"Grades shall have been determined by the city engineer and approved by the city council before track is laid and where streets are paved the company shall pave between the rails and for the two feet outside."

City Attorney Bucklin said that "The clause reads where streets 'are' paved, and it will be remembered no streets were paved then or now."

Therefore there was no requirement when the tracks were originally laid, the reporter assumed, but now when the city paves, the company will do the same.

A shocking accident happened February 10, 1910, when two-year old Donald Plumb pulled away from his mother and ran in front of Car No. 1. The mother and a friend were waiting on the bench at 10th and Rood when motorman Archie Rolland approached. They were on the wrong side of the street to be waiting for his car, he figured, so there was no need to slow down or stop. At the last moment the child ran out and was killed.



City Street car. Drawing by W. L. McGuire



## Paved streets!

Sunderlin reported in June on the first year's business with 292,786 passengers carried for an average income of \$40.10 per day. All records were broken when President Taft visited the Fruit Fair in September and 7,753 people rode the cars for revenue of \$387.65. Folks were proud of the growth of the city and the fine showing the street cars made the first year.

Otto Peth left his job as bartender to run the cars May, 1910. He was the motorman who stayed until the very end.

Memories of the little cars still linger. Mrs. Johnson, the girl who watched the men building the line, recalls that her mother would put her on the car in bad weather to ride to Hawthorne school over at Fourth and Hill. Peth was the motorman. "He watched me like a hawk," she says. "He was a love, one of my best friends. Just big and blustery and kind and full of fun."

And she remembers Otto's son, Bill, when he grew up and became a motorman too.

"He was such a handsome boy, at least in my eyes, anyway. By now I'm not too sure what he looked like, but I remember exactly how his father looked."

Her mother arranged for her to ride home when it was stormy, and if she didn't have a nickel with her, Mr. Peth would assure her it was all right, to bring it next time.

The cord ran the full length of the car "and if you could reach it you'd ring the bell when you wanted to stop," she says.

And there were advertising cards. "I learned to read those with Mr. Peth's help. I was always talking to him. I wasn't a retiring child. I was polite but I wasn't afraid of anybody. It seems to me there were cards for Wrigley's gum, Fells Naptha and Ivory soaps, the tobaccos, maybe Martin's Transfer."

There were banners on front for the big events like the county fair.

By August, 1910, the contractors finished the car barn at 12th street, just above South avenue where the tracks connected with the Rio Grande. It was a point of pride for the company, with its storage tracks, the work pit under the south track and the little office jutting out on the front corner.

Work had started on the Electric Building May 5 when they dug the basement extending 12 feet under the sidewalks. Nick Weimer and son Bunk used a horse-power sweep to drill holes for the concrete pilings. Steel went up soon and the building was finished and ready for use by November 28, 1910.

Owner Orson Adams saved the first floor for the company. There was a telephone exchange, and large

waiting room with space taken out in the center for a cashier and ticket agent in a steel cage.

A private office was set aside for Sunderlin, the general manager. Other name plates read:

S.M.L. McSpadden, passenger service, purchasing agent and chief clerk.

R.L. Goodale, gas and electric plant manager.

A.C. Foster, ice plant and central station sup't.

J.H. Brinkerhoff, construction superintendent.

Harry Smith, meter department.

Fred Huntsman, wiring foreman.

Over the years it was a prestige address. Baxter Candy Co., was in the basement, the YWCA in the front upstairs corner and attorneys Sternberg & McMullin also on the second floor. When the third floor was built the Hoel-Ross Business College was located there. In the 1980s it is still in use for offices, the Enterprise Building.

There was no paving finally in 1910 but things came to a head in 1911 with Paving District No. 1. That called for work on Main street from Second to Seventh and on certain blocks to the side.

Charles Noble spoke out at a council meeting in April but plans went ahead to spend \$94,000 for the work, \$20,000 of this to be paid by the street car company. On June 17 the city ordered cement machinery so they could be ready for work as soon as the river went down and sand could be dug from the river bottom. City officials were handling the paving except along the rails and hired Earl D. Mosley, the young company engineer, to supervise the work on that nine-foot strip.

Poles were reset and crews completed the passing tracks before the work started. One was on Main between Seventh and Eighth and one on Fourth between Grand and White.

These passing tracks allowed a new route pattern to start in July to avoid interference with paving work. The explanation was complicated, but the public was assured that service would be even better than before.

When the new routing started the rate was cut from a dime "around the loop" - five cents out and five back - to just a nickel to ride no matter how the trip was made.

Pleasure riding was part of the trolley business, too, with a "moonlight car" running on Saturday nights. The last car was then at midnight. It was called a popular innovation for weekend shoppers.

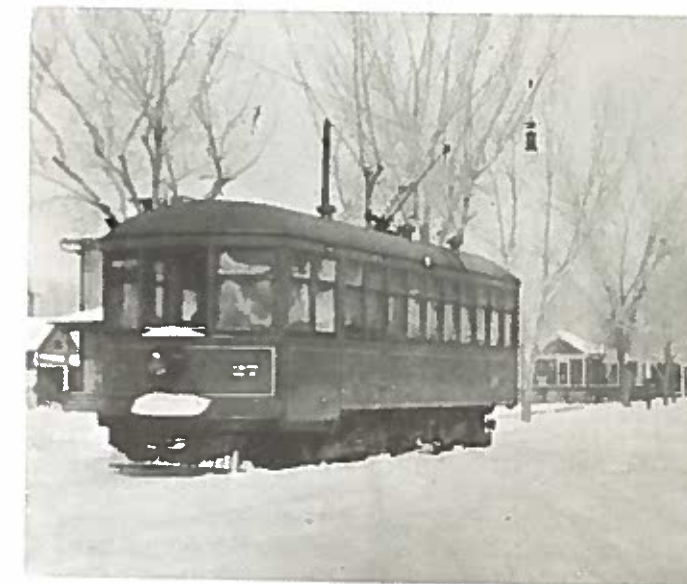
Politics and discrimination arose in the paving work with the labor union and the city council both crying out. They claimed that the street railway paving was being done by foreigners working 10-hour days at low wages. They were outsiders, the charges went, and were contributing little to the town's economy.

## "We pay \$2.00 a day."

Not true, said Mosley, saying he was hiring local Greeks and paying them \$2.00 a day while the usual wage for track gangs was \$1.75 a day. If the commissioners could get white labor for him he would hire them, he said. But he added that the only white man who had applied was a broken down hobo.

Three days after the outcry Mosley resigned. He was pointly given a "magnificent" gold watch by the company and a "beautiful emblem watch fob" by the workmen.

They laid the first paving in Grand Junction at 9:05 a.m., the reporter was precise in his writing, August 21, 1911, at Main and Second. The railway company did the work with city officials watching the activity. Six inches of concrete were put down in this strip, ties laid and concrete poured around them. A cushion of sand was on top of this and then paving bricks with joints filled



SNOW STOPPED THE CAR? The pole is up, but the shades are pulled. Whatever the story, No. 27 is posed on Fourth street. Photo from W. L. McGuire collection.

## My! Didn't It Snow!

There was only one time that anyone recalls the trolley being stopped by weather.

That was Thanksgiving of 1919. The weather report Wednesday was for rain, changing to snow, and snow it did! It holds the record at the weather bureau for the most snow in 24 hours: 17 inches; most in any one storm: 23.6 inches; and the deepest snow ever on the ground: 17½ inches. That winter brought 65 inches of snow, compared to the average of 26.3 inches.

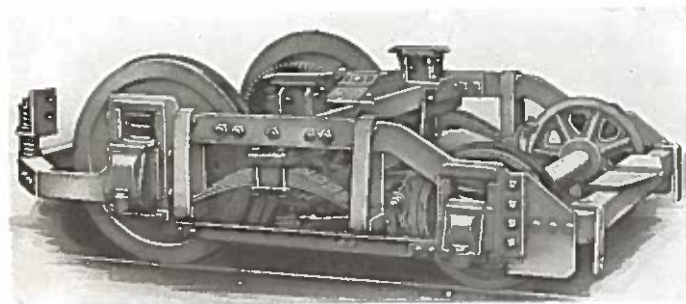
It stopped the cars dead. People like Mrs. John Giblin who expected to ride the trolley across town with year-old daughter Marguerite finally walked with her brother breaking the track and carrying the baby. Her husband and many men with the National Guard were away serving during the Ludlow coal strike.

Marion Fletcher trudged through the stuff on an errand of mercy to the hospital, carrying Thanksgiving goodies. Mrs. Gus Nagel is another who remembers the day. It was just a few blocks to her folks for dinner, but no trolley, no kinfolk coming in from the country for the holiday.

Sidewalks were hopeless; the middle of 10th street was a little better, presumably swept clear by the trolley as the snow started the evening before. That was the place to walk.



## Let's condemn it!



BRILL TRUCKS No. 39-E as shown in company booklet in collection of W. L. McGuire.

The trucks were of the four-wheel "Maximum Traction" style with the leading wheels about half the size of the power wheels. A 50-horsepower motor was on each truck, driving the larger wheels. The greater part of weight was on the large wheel set to give the extra pulling power.

The pair of doors were at the front, with passengers dropping their nickels or tickets into the fare box there.

A "first trip" brought out the Fruit Belt's master mechanic, J. N. Hinds, welcoming a long list of city officials, business men and bankers - not a lady mentioned - to try out the new cars. Praise was profuse.

The city council at that time was headed by Mayor Thomas Todd, a man who was pushing Grand Junction into a progressive position with a certain amount of fame nationwide.

The change in 1909 to the Commission form of government made each of the five elected officials responsible for one of the city programs. The mayor himself headed up Public Works, in charge of the police and fire departments and supervisor of all public utilities not owned and managed directly by the city.

The trolley, for example.

Mayor Todd started a storm by one little paragraph in his annual report of January, 1912. He stated that the city should take over the ice plant and run it.

Sunderlin took it as a serious threat when the local government would suggest taking part of the local utilities. He roared that Todd would take anything profitable, leaving the firm to keep the money-losing parts.

Through 1914 there was such agitation and antagonism that the railway never could raise money for expansion of the city route or the lines into the ranching areas.

Springtime had been quiet, but on July 30, 1912, Todd himself introduced a resolution to buy or condemn the electric company. It would be on the ballot of the August 27 special election.

From that day on it was fought in public by editorials, news items, company statements and in debate by the city council. As August came they took it off the ballot, but the talk started again in 1913.

In May the city attorney assured the council that they did have the right to condemn the electric, gas, and ice company. In July a "Committee of 70" was meeting to discuss the idea. The chairman was James Bucklin, still festering with his 1908 feelings about condemnation and municipal ownership.

They asked to talk with the company about purchase of the whole package at an agreed price. Adams spoke for them answering that this would be impossible without a vote of the trustee and the holders of the stocks and bonds.

But before July was over Sunderlin offered to sell everything - electric, gas, and ice plants, the trolley, interurban and the Fruita franchise and plant. He asked for \$250,000 cash and for municipal bonds to pay off company bonds of \$1,083,000.

With a shriek of horror, Bucklin, Todd and friends asked seven questions of Sunderlin. These concerned actual value, how he arrived at the figure for bonds, about private ownership and fair rates.

They also asked the tax commission's valuation of the property to see how this compared with the million dollar offer. For tax purposes the property was worth \$183,410, and the howl went higher. Reform and progress were in the wind and the "Committee of 70" decided to take the question to the people at the November election.

In October a petition was started by J. C. Plank which would have stopped any city ownership action for 10

WAITING FOR THE CAR at 12th and Gunnison, entrance to the fair grounds, now Lincoln Park. The pipe rail gave protection from the nearby track. Photo from Mrs. Pearl Porter.



years. He was a real estate man and a member of the council when the franchise was originally approved. But the election went on.

Voters that November of 1913 had interesting choices. They voted on a tax to support the Chamber of Commerce, a new \$15,000 fire station, a municipal saloon to avoid the ills of private ownership, and the purchase of the rail lines and utilities.

The fire station was approved. The purchase and all others were turned down, bringing out the next day's headlines "Ownership Probably Quiet for Several Years."

Actually it sputtered briefly the next June when a proposed ordinance to condemn the electric and gas works again was brought to the council. It was tabled, then withdrawn by the petitioners.

This ended the ownership question, but damage had been done.

As an omen of things to come, a 1916 ordinance took notice of buses and jitneys. Ones carrying four persons or less were to pay a license fee of \$15 a year; for five or more the fee was \$25.

Sunderlin advertised tickets for street car riding at six for a quarter, and then early in 1919 introduced tokens at the same price.

And with the franchise nearly half way through its 25-year life the company would soon have to start paying the fee of \$1,000 a year. The firm told the city council that the situation was different now and it was absolutely impossible to make payments and keep the system operating.

The question was put on the November 1919 ballot but lost by a vote of 537 to 332. The people wanted the payment.

Would the company continue to run the cars or would the "impossible" payment force it to stop the service?

Joe Stewart, general manager, laid out the figures for owner A. E. Carlton and asked for his advice. Income had been over \$8,300 for the ten months of 1919, up some \$1,500 from the year before. Costs had been just over \$9,000 to make a \$783 actual loss, plus payments of \$3,000 for paving. The paving costs would go down, Stewart said, but maintenance would be higher for the aging line.

"We will not discontinue," Carlton replied. "I have had faith in the future of Grand Junction for too many years to become discouraged over the outcome of our enterprise at this time."

The next summer there was another mild threat of quitting, telling the city commissioners that revenues were up but so were expenses. Revenues rose to \$10,625 in 1919. But against this income were operating expenses of \$11,132 and total expenses including taxes of \$15,621

## How long will the line stay alive?



"G" for GRAND is shown on these tokens, actually not far from dime size.

for a loss of almost \$5,000.

They appealed to the public in advertising of 1921, and again in 1922 told of troubles in other cities and of the low fare in Grand Junction. The ad concluded with the plea "Why not ride more?"

In June of 1922 Superintendent A. E. Anderson told the Rotary Club the facts of company life as he saw them. In 1921 the trolley carried 245,000 people, seemingly high but figuring to be an average of only 600 a day. At a nickel fare that meant \$30 a day. He reminded the Rotarians that Durango and Trinidad had abandoned their car lines. In Fort Collins the city had taken them over to keep them running. In Boulder the electric rates had been raised to keep the company solvent as it also owned the money-losing street cars.

Costs were increasing faster than income, especially when hampered by fares set by the 1908 franchise.

The world was changing. Feelings of love for the old street cars was slipping. The end was not far off.



SWITCH LOCK and key, both stamped to show ownership. From Bob Gustafson collection.



## 12 The Interurban Made the Difference

But how did the coming of the Fruit Belt line affect the two towns and the people?

- First of all, as Howard McMullin remembers, "There was the damndest land boom in Fruita you ever saw. They were building houses like mad down there. About the same time the interurban deal came along, the lumber yards got into a price war and you could buy lumber for a house for \$400. I know, because I got in on the final clean-up for the Home Loan and Investment Company on its Fruita deals."

In fact, he says, when the Enterprise district opened up five or ten years later, many a farmer bought a house in town and moved it out cheaper than he could build.

- Sometimes the apples were so close to the windows you could reach them. "In late summer when it was hot we'd have the window down and the car would bump the apple branches and the kids would take a chance and reach out and grab an apple. But if Clyde Scoles caught them they'd have trouble," remembers Wilma Shaw.

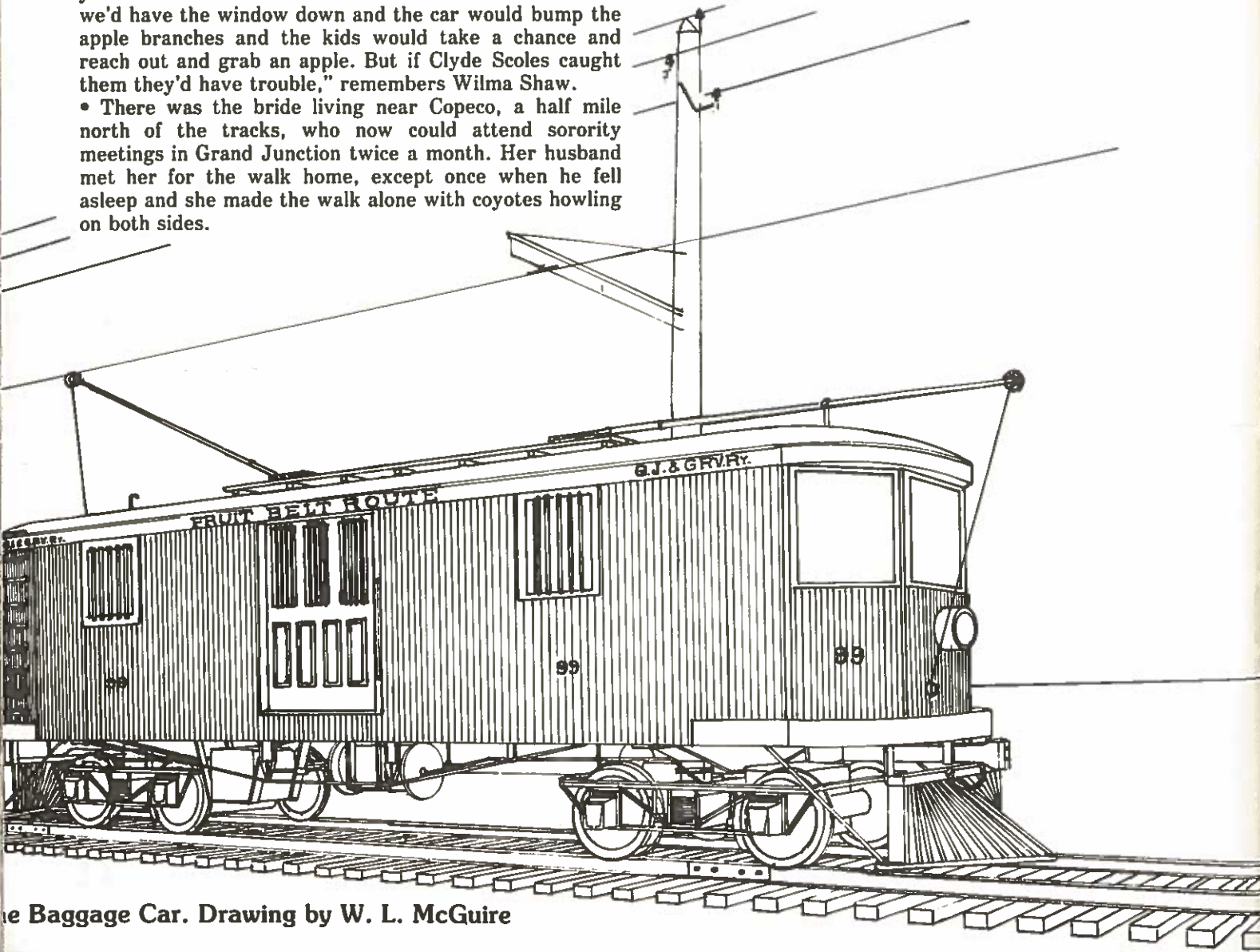
- There was the bride living near Copeco, a half mile north of the tracks, who now could attend sorority meetings in Grand Junction twice a month. Her husband met her for the walk home, except once when he fell asleep and she made the walk alone with coyotes howling on both sides.

- It became a regular Saturday trip for Appleton boys during basketball season as the YMCA in town was their only place to practice.

- In football or baseball seasons the Fruit Belt brought teams in or out of Fruita for games.

- And when a couple of Grand Junction sisters were quarantined out of their house when renters had scarlet fever, they moved to Appleton to live with friends. They rode to Grand Junction High for classes, just two blocks from the line.

- Apple orchards were going out, victims of insects, frost and seepage, but potatoes and tomatoes were coming in. Charlie Cain was known as "Potato Cain" for he planted them year after year, high price or low. They went by boxcar.



the Baggage Car. Drawing by W. L. McGuire

### Tin cans by the carload.

- The cannery at Appleton received tin cans by the carload, giving a job to local youngsters unloading and stacking them.

- Beet dumps weren't "dumps" to start with; you had to shovel those roots by the ton. Use the horse to plow them loose, pick them up, load the wagon, take them to the siding, shovel them into the car. Elevator belts came in later to lift them.

- A traveling variety show didn't arrive for the Fruita lodge hall program, so Paul Blackwell, actor, music teacher and promoter, rounded up eight or so amateurs from Grand Junction for the show. Music and recitations brought whistling and stomping. ("You know that crowd in Fruita!") The ride back on the midnight car is long remembered.

- Consider a little girl on a day in early spring, thinking about walking home from school. She lived a mile or so north of town and regularly rode the interurban (even had a special pocket in her dress for the ticket book) and knew the route well. Sauntering along, she went through the cut and was almost to the trestle when her dad came hurrying to stop her. The car from Fruita was due and a neighbor had warned him after seeing the girl heading for trouble. Riding over the trestle was simple and safe. Walking across it would have been a different matter for a child, with the open spaces between ties and no place to hide. "I must have been in the first grade," says Evelyn Olson Zipse. "It was just a springtime lark."

- And one Thanksgiving when dad was coming home for dinner at Appleton after his railway post office job. He and his buddies finished the run at 6:30 a.m. but were stranded by the famous 1919 storm. The boys at home made the ice cream with snow - couldn't get down to the ice - but the first car of the day didn't bring the men in until afternoon, maybe 4:30 or so.

JOEY JOHNS, "Master Salesman" for the Saturday Evening Post, won bicycles, trips and promises of a future job with the publishing company in the 1915 era. He was known around town and also went with his dad, S. J. Johns, to cover Fruita and the countryside for a regular weekly route. Dean Photo from Mrs. Joseph H. Johns.



### THE GRAND RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY 1928

**PASS** S. J. Johns & Wife  
Fr. Agt. Grand River Val. R.R.  
**ACCOUNT**

OVER ALL LINES UNTIL DECEMBER 31st, 1928  
UNLESS OTHERWISE ORDERED AND SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS  
ON BACK. VALID WHEN COUNTERSIGNED BY CHAS. RUMP.

No. 11

*Chas. Rump*  
PRESIDENT

THE COMPANY PASS was honored on railroads across the country. "Johnny" Johns kept year after year of his passes in a worn notebook that Marie Nowlan, his daughter, now has, but this one is in Gustafson's collection.





AUTOS, NOT WAGONS, are in this later picture with the city car trundling down Main toward Fourth. The arc light is gone, the street paved, some store names remain, while

others are newcomers here. Photo from W. L. McGuire collection.

- That Cowpunchers Reunion, an annual fixture at Fruita - how well the interurban served it. One man now recalls:

"I was just a blamed kid about ten or so and my dad and me, we come up that half mile road from home and we could see 'em coming and they was hanging on all over, back and front and by the motorman and all, and I just wilted. I thought we weren't going to get to go, and then by golly they stopped and dad and me, we crowded on and stood on the back and went to town. I'd been feeling pretty bad. I thought the jig was up."

- The preacher who lived on North 12th street could ride to Fruita and then be met by Loma parishoners week after week. His boy - now elderly - recalls the sound of the car and the click of the gate when his dad came home from a night meeting.

- The young man who had a job in the electric plant tending the Ideal engine with its foot-wide belt considered himself lucky. He worked with the generator which fed the line and lighted the town. Sometimes he had to tinker with the ammonia lines and compressor in the ice plant there on South avenue. Be careful of those fumes, he was told.

- And think of the farmer, sending his kid down the lane with a coaster wagon to get a piece of ice from the baggage compartment of the car coming from town.

- Or the young mother, going to get cream for breakfast from the next farm, forgetting that the 7 o'clock car was due and having her brother's brand-new Chevy booted into the irrigation ditch. She was popped out the door but wasn't really hurt.

- And then there was the kid who lived half-way down the mile from Holland to Bethel corner. He knew motorman Roy Combs, who would come along toward evening maybe running kind of slow with a drag of sugar beets. The boy would wave and point toward the store. Roy would slow for him to jump on and ride clear up to the store. Slow down, jump off. "He was a good old boy," his admirer says.

- Teachers rode from town to school, just like the students. If they had to keep someone after school it might be a two-hour session until the next car came.

- Think of the young nurse from Appleton looking for a job and having Dr. Day hire her for a day or two to clean off his desk. But first thing, he bought a book of tickets and sure enough she stayed in that office over the Fair Store for ten years. Her folks bought five acres and built a house and "I told the conductor more than once that I carried the whole making of the house out on the interurban. They brought out kitchen sinks and everything I wanted in the baggage compartment. They charged it against my ticket and that was 30 cents, round trip."

- Everone knew everyone, riders and motormen. Maybe not by name, for there is one fellow still remembered only as Pinkie, for his pink complexion. One motorman made the girls giggle by calling out "Punkin Center" as one of the station names.

- A young teacher was to teach commercial subjects the next year, so took a summer course at the Hoel school in the Electric Building. The interurban made it easy.

- The tale is told of the two Fruita cowboys at the dance over Sturtevant's store who needed refreshment. They "ordered" the motorman to take them to Grand Junction



CLYDE SCOLES wore Badge 14 as one of the best-known employees of the Fruit Belt. From the collection of Bob Gustafson.

where their favorite bootlegger could supply them. The round trip was made in short time and then the car took the usual crowd back to town.

- John Hart remembers the day he was hauling a load of wet, smelly beet pulp down South avenue, fresh cowfeed from the sugar factory. He met the interurban and the motorman pulled the trick of blowing the air whistle - forbidden in town. The mules were startled, tossed Hart off the spring seat into the messy load, and it was a run for home.

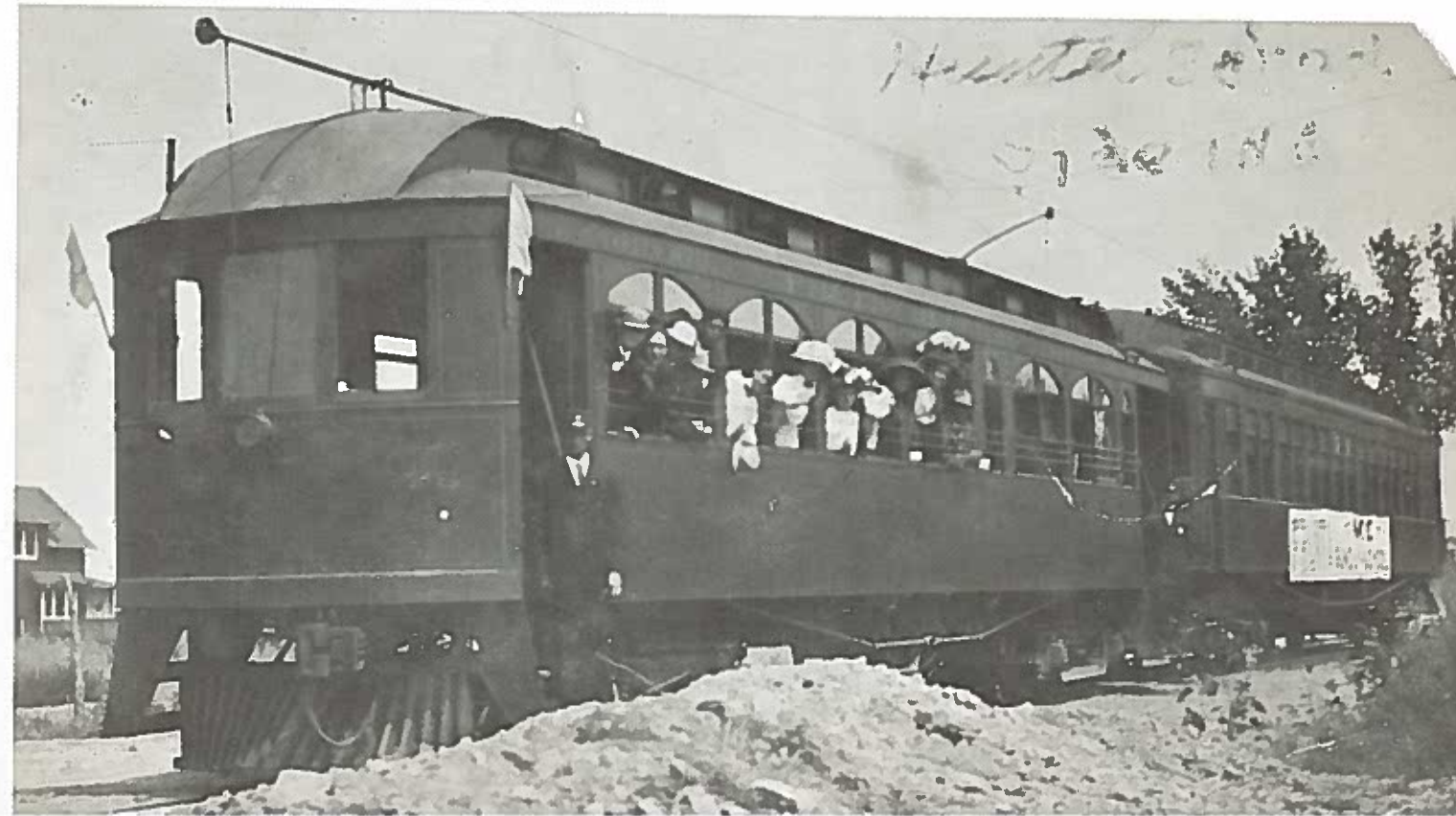
- Irrigation water was the lifeblood of the orchards, but sometimes the cause of problems for the railway. There at Bethel Corner one morning just as Clyde Sharp and Furman Kelley were heading for school, the car rounded the corner and flopped over on its side. Too much spilled water had softened the soil and the tracks simply sank. The kids ran for the car, and as Kelley remembers it they had to break a window to get the passengers out. The sliding doors had gotten into a bind, but the riders were only shaken up. Workmen by-passed the section of track, then got their jacks busy and by night had the car back on its wheels.



VERL SUTTON bought a commutation booklet on May 4, 1923, with 25 coupons for rides between Pomona and Grand Junction. They were valid for two months but he still had a few unused when classes at Hoel-Ross Business College were finished. He donated the booklet to the Museum of Western Colorado.

"EXCURSION TRAIN at Hunter school siding" someone wrote on this ragged photo. As a guess, the banner reads "Fruita ME Sunday School". No. 76 is pulling a

heavyweight main line car. From Bob Gustafson's collection.





## 13 I Recall the Street Car

Politics and finance aside, what do Junctionites remember about the trolley?

"I made many friends on that little street car," says Mrs. Johnson, the one who recalls watching the men building the line near her father's new house.

Especially she remembers Mr. W. P. Ela who lived at 10th and Main. "I would get on over at school and Mr. Ela usually sat on the little seat that faced into the aisle and Mrs. Ela sat on the first seat. They were a fine, beautiful couple. He would pat the seat and move over so I could sit with him. But you know, I was scared to death of him, with his fancy mustache and Vandyke beard."

One morning the trip to school was interrupted by a tree knocked down by a severe storm, hitting the car. That was at Fourth and South. "Nobody was hurt but the roof of the car was damaged and there we sat with the trolley wire taken down so we couldn't go one way or the

other. I remember it was frightening but Mr. Peth comforted all of us."

Twelfth street, long unpaved and just two dirt tracks alongside the rails, was improved because of his constant nagging in the Sentinel, claims Al Look. "On Guard" was the title of his column and Qwert Yuioop was the character doing the complaining. ("Remember how the keyboard is arranged?" Look asked.) The wisecracks finally got results.

Why didn't the trolley make a profit? Comes the answer that the town was too small, both in size and in numbers of people, and maybe too poor. Then too, in those days so many were used to walking. One fellow speaks of his wife pushing the pram downtown with one youngster inside, two hanging on.

Walking was such a regular thing that Wilma Shaw can still draw the "cut-across" route from her home at 12th

THE SCENE CHANGES. Horses and wagons are still here, the ladies with the pram, a dusting of snow on the dirt street but the tracks and trolley have come. The 4-wheel

car No. 3 heads north on Fourth street, crossing Main. Photo from Allison Chandler.



PROUD NEW CAR. No. 27 of the city line comes down a residential street lush with shade trees. Photo from Allison Chandler.

and Ouray to downtown. Sidewalks were seldom cleaned in winter - or taken much care of in summer - so this let them go diagonally through three of the blocks, walking between the library and the jail, for example, the blocks from Grand to White, 7th to 8th.

A lady recalls her father walking home from work, maybe with a 50-pound sack of flour on his shoulder one night, cornmeal the next, maybe sugar or a bucket of lard some night soon.

For a child a Sunday treat was a nickel. Ice cream in a cone was two cents for vanilla, three for strawberry, but if you brought out a dish for the peddler his scoop was a little more generous. If you skipped the ice cream the nickel would buy a trolley ride. "You could ride it all the way around and get off where you started, one person recalls. "Some people said you could get a second and third ride but my mother never let us do that."

Maybe it happened to lots of boys, but Dale Luke sure remembers riding home one day on the trolley steps.

## Bicycles vs. car tracks.

Nice, but when he jumped off with the car still rolling he hit once on his feet, then on his head. No damage, just a lot of dust to get off his clothes. "Kinda dumb," he says.

Kids were known to snatch torpedoes from the fireman's box on locomotives and put them on the trolley track. One grown man now insists that sometimes they would lift the wheels right off the tracks.

Crossed straight pins would be flattened into a pair of scissors and pennies looked funny after the wheels ran over them.

One kid, now a respected newsman, bemoans his childhood without a bicycle. His father wouldn't permit one in the family after once tangling with the tracks at Fourth and Main.

Curving tracks were also the downfall of Bill Papke, now of Glenwood Springs. He hurried home for lunch, then rode the motorcycle down 12th forgetting that the sprinkler had just come by. "The tracks curved and the motorcycle curved and I didn't," he says. "I can still feel the place on my rear where I took some meat off."

Lee Schmidt is another who mixed bicycle tires with trolley tracks. It was his eighth birthday and the new bicycle was soon to give him a "whomper."

Old Man Simonson's privy was the glory of neighborhood boys on Halloween down at Eighth and Main. It was moved to rest majestically on the passing track, always requiring the motorman's crowbar to move it off while the kids hid and watched.

One Halloween up on Gunnison the boys rolled the huge house-moving timbers of contractor White out onto the tracks. That made the motorman choose whether to wait for help or back up.

The town was so slow in building out from the center that delivery boys used to feel that it was "kinda scary" having to carry groceries out as far as 10th and Grand.

And a man who grew up to be a city official remembers the family's wonderment at the trolley line being built so far out of town as Gunnison. Not only far out, but soggy, and sure enough the rails sometimes did spread and the car would be grounded.

In 1915 Josephine Biggs rode in her father's seven-passenger Packard, chauffeur driven, from Colorado Springs to Delta. The only real impression of Grand Junction - aside from the July heat - was the hump going down Seventh street when you crossed Gunnison. You could hardly get an auto over the tracks, as she remembers it.

The county fair meant heavy traffic for the rail lines. Were there Indians to see at the fair? You bet, one man recalls, and they camped over behind the cottonwoods. The trees still outline the curve of the race track.



"It's all Dutch to me."

And the high board fence around the fair, a memory for many. For awhile every 16th board was raised to make places to fasten the wire along the top, keeping boys out on top, but also leaving a gap at the ground. That sometimes let a small boy get in free, saving the quarter for more important uses. A quarter, too, for the grandstand, but you could sit on the rail and see almost as well. Nickel apiece for hot dogs, pink lemonade, Ferris wheel, they say.

A birthday party treat was a load of kids in the street car - open end, preferably - singing as they went. "Mr. Peth was extra nice to us, just smiling all the time," says Frances Winterburn Ragan. The Adams family were her next door neighbors and Edith was about her age. "When you heard a group singing as the car went by, that meant there was a party," she says.

Neil Straayer told on one of the oral history tapes of coming in May of 1911 as a boy who could only speak Dutch. He was on his way to work with friends in the orchards near Fruita. They had written that he should jump on the car at the depot as they had paid his fare.

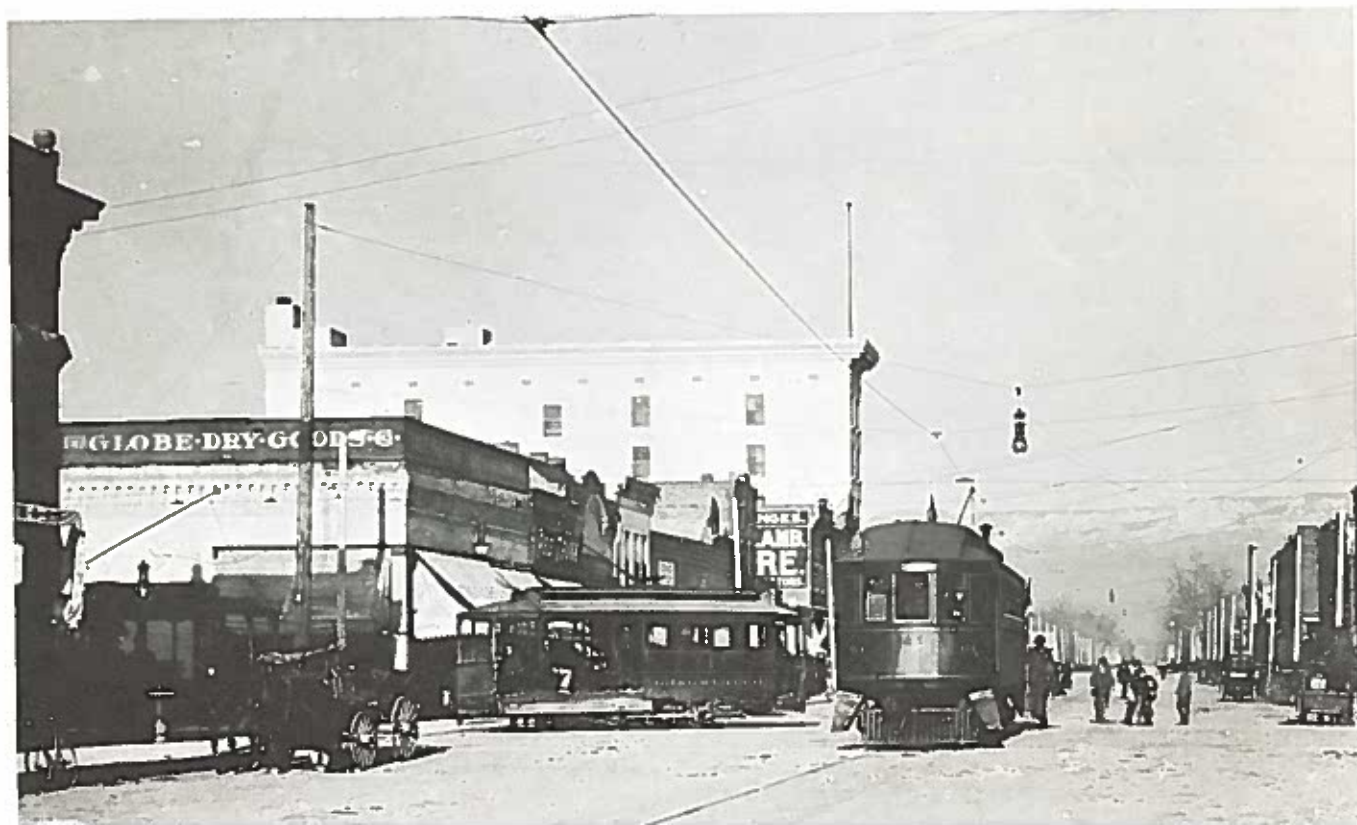
But he got on the little car and couldn't figure out why the motorman was trying to throw him off. Nobody could understand the boy from Holland either and there he was, on the city car, not the interurban. They tricked him off and a passer-by took him to a nearby house where people spoke Dutch. All was straightened out after a tense few minutes.

"Boots," Frank Blackstone's white bulldog, was a frequent rider from Seventh and Gunnison to his master's jewelry store downtown. Neighbors still tell of the dog's going by himself from his home on Hill avenue and jumping on the car for the trip. He'd walk home, they say, or sometimes come back on the trolley.

And there's the story of the man who came to the Avalon theater for a variety show every year. He had skits and such, along with giveaways by local merchants. According to the tale of a man who says he was there, the promoter hit up Charlie Rump, manager of the power and light and the trolley. Rump said dammit, you can give away the street car system. "The guy built it up all week as a big prize, gave it away, and the guy who won it wouldn't take it," our authority says.

FOURTH AND MAIN, with interurban No. 51 coming west on Main, one summer-winter city car taking the curve from Fourth to go east and another in the shadows. Arc light,

the new bank, the lines of poles - all mark a young, booming town. Photo from Allison Chandler



## 14 Hard Roads Conquer the Rails

"The Time Has Come" proclaimed the headline of a large advertisement on August 13, 1921.

The company warned the people of Grand Junction and the Grand Valley that the interurban was in danger of being abandoned. It spoke of the support given when the line was built and opened, but also of the recent antagonism. "Political elements" were mentioned. It begged the public to "use it, or let us quit business and sell our property."

No mention was made of the competition from good roads and the increasing sales of cars and trucks. However at this time they were fighting a trucker running between the two towns, finally putting him out of business.

In March of 1926 Henry L. Doherty's Cities Service system bought the entire holdings of the local utilities from the Carlton-Penrose interests. Doherty had started in Denver and had built up a giant company primarily interested in electrical and gas distribution systems. In the process it fell heir to street car and interurban lines.

Thus its first move in Grand Junction came hardly three months after acquiring the property when it asked the city council on July 7, 1926, for permission to remove certain tracks and do away with the city street car service. The request was tabled.

The Sentinel elaborated, saying that this was a letter from Charles Rump, general manager, and that there would be no abandonment until bus service was installed.

As reported by the paper, Rump had reminded the council that this was a small city, but one that needed new routes as it grew. Rail lines are too costly to build and buses are more comfortable and more satisfactory, he wrote.

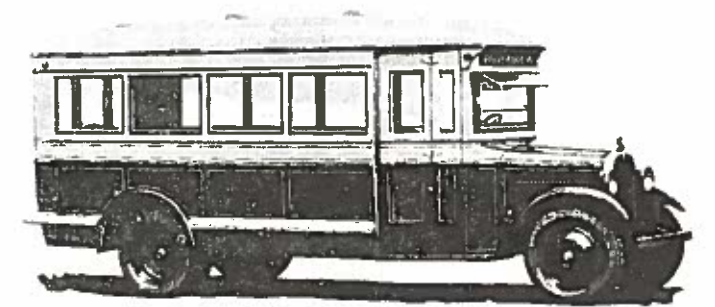
By September 17 the council discussed the request but took no action.

On October 19 the council finally met with Rump behind closed doors and came to a general agreement with him. Nothing more was announced at the end of the meeting, but a letter was to be written the next day and acted on that next evening.

It could almost have been a form letter, sent out wherever the death knell struck, trolley line after trolley line.

"Per your informal suggestion, we beg to submit for your consideration the following," it started. The style was formal, proper.

"A company has agreed to co-operate in trying out and demonstrating in the city of Grand Junction the superiority and utility of motor bus transportation until May 1, 1927. Beginning on or before November 1, 1926."



GRAHAM BROTHERS buses replaced the street cars. This factory photo is from clipping in a city scrapbook in the Mesa County Library.

The phrases went on and on. "Total mileage almost twice the present . . . Stopping places at the curb. . . To discontinue all passenger service except what is termed the interurban. . . Made in good faith. . . These magnificent buses. . . will be welcomed. . . A matter for you and the people to decide. . ."

The councilmen read and listened - and all voted for the trial period.

The last trolley run was made on Friday evening, October 29, 1926, and the next morning the new buses went into service with free rides for everyone. They had been ordered by telegram Tuesday the 19th and arrived by rail on Wednesday the 27th. This was "Believed to be record time for shipment of automobiles from Detroit," the news item added.

The city trolley was gone but the interurban continued under the ownership of the Public Service Co. of Colorado from November 23, 1926. The subsidiary was reorganized and the name changed from the GRV Railway to the GRV Railroad. (As an aside for the 1980s, Public Service spoke of power transmission lines they were building on the western slope, and of being ready to extend them into the oil shale country as soon as the power was needed.)

A retrenchment on March 20, 1927, brought the number of round trips from seven to five. The newspaper pointed out that this was caused by the improvement of roads and the general use of automobiles.

By August of 1928 the Colorado Utilities Commission heard the request to stop all passenger, express and less-than-carload freight service over the Fruit Belt Route. The approval came on October 3, 1928, and the city council also approved.

There had been postponements in starting the service 18 years before and now there was delay in stopping the cars. The first plan was for October 20, but the final run was not made until October 31, 1928.



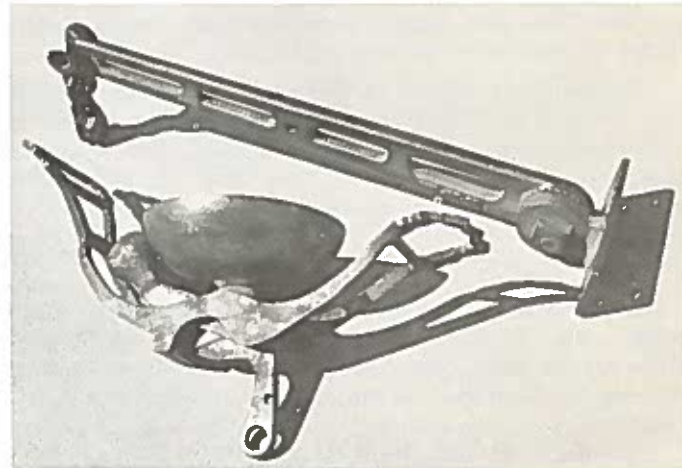
“...effective January 1, 1935.”

At 6 p.m. that Halloween the final car pulled out of Grand Junction for its last trip to Fruita and back. Bus service to Fruita, Loma and Mack was set for the next morning.

Still one trace of service remained on the interurban, hauling crops in the fall harvest season. Rolling stock, tracks and power lines were to be kept intact for use, both the original Fruita line and the Enterprise branch. In town this included only 12th street to connect with the Rio Grande, and the short distance on South avenue to the Eighth street spur to the Currie Canning Company.

In April of 1934 came the final abandonment request of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Approval was given on October 25 after bitter hearings, and now only permission of the state commission was lacking. That came on December 8, to take effect on January 1, 1935, when all the season's crops had been shipped out.

Western Colorado was left without an electric railway of any kind.



THE BELL FROM No. 76 — and a bracket from the bell cord. The bell cord ran the length of the car, supported on brackets like these. A “ping” would tell the motorman to stop. From the collection of Bob Gustafson.

It was happening this way all across America. At the turn of the century people felt that trolleys would always be needed as “everyone has to walk, don't they?” Country roads were not always passable. Gravel roads in those days? No, just a team and a scraper to shape them and a wooden drag to smooth them when ruts were too deep after the rains. In dust-dry western Colorado a sprinkler was needed day after day, all summer.

Motor cars? Only the toys of the rich, or possibly useful to a doctor who was on call at all hours.

Farming and ranching changed, too. Apples came and brought high incomes. They went out with insects, weather, seepage. Beets came into favor but the sugar factory closed down. Tomatoes were the crop, but the cannery closed. The valley was different, decade by decade.

The electric railway was gone. No more would the rhythmic beat of the air compressor be heard. No more the clang of the warning bell, or an air whistle to scare a team of mules.

We're modern in Grand Junction! We've got two-lane asphalt roads, a Nash, DeSoto or an Overland.

It's 1935, not 1890, 1904 or 1909.



Clyde Scoles and S. J. Johns in retirement years. Two of the long-time employees, they are remembered by those who rode the interurban. Sentinel photo from Marie Johns Nowlan.

## 15 The Bus and the Wrecking Crew

How did the bus systems fare which replaced the railways?

Really not too well.

The Western Slope Motor Way hurried its order for two Graham Brothers buses in 1926, laid out two routes and covered 350 miles a day to start, running from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

They carried 2,000 people the first day - free - then were down to very light use because “the people did not accept the modern idea,” according to one news story.

By February they announced they would not seek a franchise at the end of the six-month trial period. And by that time there were complaints from the city council that service was poor, with only one bus being used, not the two as agreed.

So on May 20, 1927, the Public Service itself started running the buses, using one bus with a second available if needed.

They intended to finish the 25-year franchise period to July 17, 1933, but ceased on October 10, 1932. They logged 371,193 miles but only 340,087 passengers. For its last year an average of two passengers per trip were carried. Costs were said to average \$650 a month, with income at \$245.

It had also been the Motor Way, a subsidiary of the Rio Grande, which took over on November 1, 1928, when the interurban stopped passenger service. They were expected to give better service, taking only 35 minutes to Fruita and continuing to Loma and Mack.

Shortly after, a Fruita petition to the state utilities commission was asking for the railway to resume service. They said the Motor Way had failed to live up to its promises, especially in handling freight shipments.

Manager Vic De Merschmann answered by changing bus schedules and promising daily truck service instead of the recent three times a week service.

So the bus sputtered along, later taken over by John Hayden and his Uintah Stage Line, running until 1949 or later.

In the meantime most rails in Grand Junction were left in place on the paved streets, simply covered with asphalt. Most rails on unpaved streets were removed and the poles and overhead wires in town were taken down. In the countryside all the rails were removed and sold after the interurban was abandoned.

The “Easy Rubens” got back their land in 1935. Some of the farmers had been a bit shamefaced through the interurban years, wondering if they were the country rubes, talked into giving their land without cost to the city slickers.

Harry Smith, local superintendent of the company, was in charge of clearing the rails and overhead wire from the line.

And Robert Gustafson prepared much of the paper work for men like William Reef in the Denver office to handle deeds returning land to the farmers. W. W. Tillotson was foreman of the crew taking up the rails and getting them ready for shipment and sale. Ties were generally given to the landowners.

I went out with Tillotson (Bill McGuire, co-author, speaking) to salvage metal from the box cars. The crew had a lot of work with big bolt cutters, cutting the wire to go into the melting pots. The ingots were sold to Denver scrap dealers.

The three interurban cars were stored in the car barn for several years. They were dirty, full of stored material, roofs covered with pigeon droppings.

Like the box cars and flat cars they were stripped of scrap metal and given away for farm use. At least one was used for years as a home for the Ran Smith family on J Road, east of 23 Road. They moved away and in the 1980s there is no trace of the car or yard, the field going back into cultivation.

In Fruita the straight run down Pabor avenue is buried under the asphalt, although sewer construction in 1981 brought up old ties and spikes.

In Grand Junction the curve at Fourth and South still shows and occasionally in other places a glimpse of rail can be seen through cracked asphalt. Repeated overlays have hidden almost all rails.

Permission to take up all remaining rails in Grand Junction streets was given in 1942 as a contribution to the war effort. Supplies of scrap metal improved so much that in 1945 the War Production Board sent its thanks and appreciation but declined the offer.

Except for brief bus service during World War II all local public transportation in Grand Junction was ended.

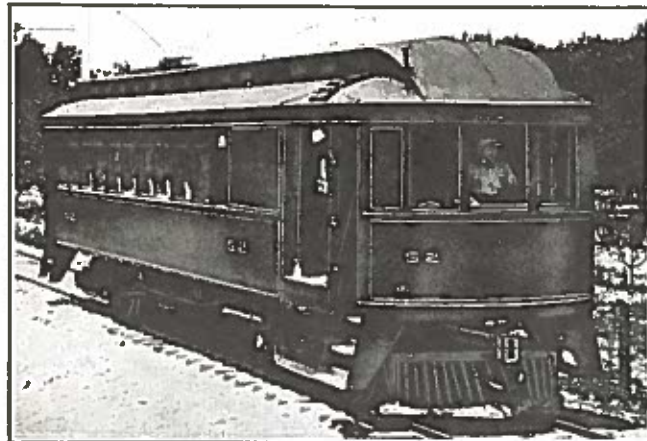
RAILS STILL SHINE at Fourth and South. NRHS photo





## NOTES ON THE GRAND JUNCTION & GRAND RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY

The Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway Company was organized in the year 1908 by Colorado parties, to build and operate city and interurban lines in the famous fruit growing section of the western slope of Colorado called "The Grand Valley." The completion of some 3.5 miles of line within the corporate limits of the city of Grand Junction, Col.,

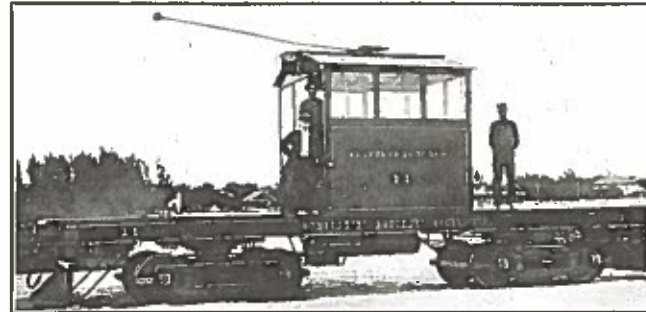


Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway—Standard Combination Car

was celebrated May 22, 1909. The first of this company's interurban lines, and the second one in the State, that from Grand Junction to Fruita, was opened to the public July 14, 1910. It is 16.02 miles long, running for the entire distance through the intensely cultivated orchard lands which are expected to yield its greatest revenue. This road was built with the special object of handling fruit in refrigerator cars direct from the orchards to the steam railroad yards at its terminals. The construction of the railway through a district where irrigation

which has the control of the power, gas and artificial ice utilities in Grand Junction. Power is transmitted to the Fruita terminal at 11,000 volts, three phase, where a 200-kw rotary substation feeds the trolley, and also a No. 0000 bare feeder which is tapped into the trolley at the quarter point; a similar substation equipment of 300-kw capacity is to be installed in the central plant at Grand Junction, with an auxiliary 150-kw belt-driven, 600-volt Westinghouse generator which is now feeding the line at that point. This generator is at present driven by a 200-hp Ideal high-speed engine.

The transmission line at 11,000 volts, the No. 0000 grooved trolley, the telephone dispatching circuit and (for about 4 miles at each end of the line) a No. 0000 bare copper feeder



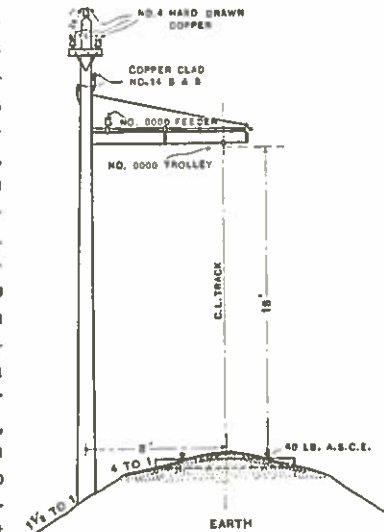
Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway—Electric Locomotive

are all mounted upon 35-ft. Idaho cedar poles. These poles have tarred butts, and are set 5 ft. 6 in. in the ground and cemented. The span on tangents is 100 ft. and on curves 80 ft. About 13.7 miles of the line consists of iron bracket suspension for the trolley, with iron insulator pins on the bracket arm for the feeder. The remainder of the line is cross-suspended over streets with the feeder on iron side brackets. The telephone line, of No. 12 copper-clad wire, is hung from wooden side brackets and transposed at every fifth pole. This telephone

electrolytic cell arresters, and the trolley by automatic fusible arresters placed 8000 ft. apart.

### POWER PLANT ADDITIONS.

To meet the needs of a growing business and also to furnish power for the railway the electric plant of the Grand Junction Electric, Gas & Manufacturing Company has been completely rebuilt under the supervision of the Stearns-Roger Manufacturing Company, Denver Col. The boiler room now contains two new 500-hp Heine water-tube boilers and two old batteries of two 350-hp boilers, each of the same make. The feed-water and hot-well pumps are also installed in the boiler room. The generating equipment includes a 500-kw Curtis turbine and three 150-kw belted generators, the latter being driven by single-cylinder Hamilton-Corliss engines. These machines are 60-cycle, three-phase, 2300 volts. They are run in parallel with the 800-kw water power station of the Redlands Power & Irrigation Company, located 3 miles south of Grand Junction, to which they are connected by a 2300-volt line of No. 00 hard-drawn copper.



Elevation of Pole and Line

The steam engines and the turbine exhaust into two Wheeler surface condensers fitted with Edwards dry-air pumps, and so arranged that one condenser and pump set may be held in reserve. The cooling water is circulated by low-speed centrifugal pumps through two cooling towers capable of cooling 36,000 gallons of water each per minute. These towers were especially designed by Henry Schwartz, of the Stearns-Roger Company. They are composed of frames spaced 4 ft. apart vertically, which support baffle strips laid flat and separated by wire netting of 2-in. mesh running vertically from the top of the towers to the bottom. The water is distributed at the top by small wooden troughs having serrated edges fed from the discharge pipe.



Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway—One of the Corrugated Culverts

The boiler feed water is heated in Wainwright feed-water heaters, and both live steam and exhaust lines are equipped with Crane oil separators.

The switchboard has one exciter panel for a 25-kw steam-driven exciter; a 25-kw induction motor set; one incoming feeder panel from the Redlands plant; four machine panels; one feeder panel for the Fruita substation; two feeder panels for the Grand Junction load and one arc panel. This board, of General Electric manufacture, replaces an old board on which duplicate machine switches were used to divide the cir-

cuits. The old equipment was a relic of the days when alternators were not run in parallel.

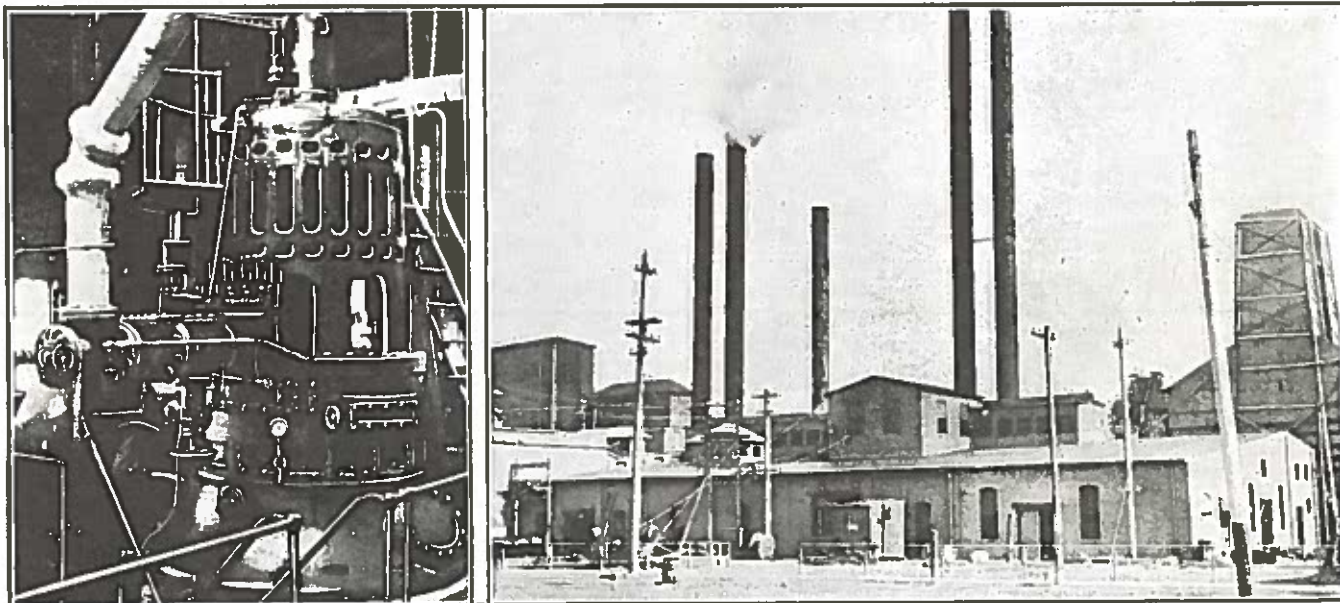
### ROLLING STOCK, ETC.

The passenger equipment of the railway consists of three interurban cars with bodies built by the Woerber Carriage Company, Denver, Col. These cars are mounted on Brill 27-E2 trucks, each carrying two 50-hp G.E.-219A motors. The trucks have 33-in. American steel wheels. The gear ratio is 19:71. Two of the cars are operated single-ended and have baggage compartments, while the third is a double-end car with a smoking compartment. A 30-ton locomotive, also of 200-hp capacity, but geared only 15:69, will be used in local freight and fruit gathering service. All cars are equipped with both straight and automatic air brakes, and they are strictly standard in all minor details.

The car house is located at the steam railway transfer. It is a steel building containing five tracks on 11-ft. centers and 150 ft. long, together with a brick bay containing the offices of the superintendent and dispatcher, locker rooms and shops. The pit track is equipped with a 20-ton hand-operated crane.

Owing to the fact that fruit shipments originating on this railway are consigned to all parts of the United States its business is being conducted under the classifications of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and its passenger, freight and express tariffs are on file with that body.

From ELECTRIC RAILWAY JOURNAL, October 15, 1910, published by the McGraw Publishing Co., now McGraw-Hill, Inc. By their permission and the cooperation of Traction Heritage, Vane A. Jones Co., Indianapolis.



Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway—Power Plant, Showing Cooling Towers at the Right; Also 500-kw Turbine, Looking Toward Condenser Pit

is universally practised made it necessary for the company to install on its 16 miles of railway no less than 8000 ft. of culverts and inverted syphons, which are of Watson corrugated culvert pipe.

### POWER AND LINE

Both the city and interurban lines are operated at 600 volts direct current, and obtain power from an affiliated corporation, the Grand Junction Electric, Gas & Manufacturing Company,

circuit is given very thorough protection, for G.E. telephone transformers are used at all sidings and terminal points where there are installed fused carbon gap lightning arresters; both wall and desk sets are heavily insulated. Each car carries a portable telephone set containing a repeating coil and the jacks for the portable sets are placed at every fruit loading spur. Drainage coils also have been placed every 3 miles. The No. 4 hard-drawn copper transmission is protected at each end by



WOEBER took pictures of their cars at the Denver factory. Here is the interior of No. 76 ready for delivery. Photo from collection of E. J. Haley.



## City Council minutes

1888	1902	1909
3/8 Kennedy hauls garbage	1/14 To cover rails on 5th	1/12 OK for Gunnison
4/11 Kennedy paid for team	3/24 Extension for Price?	4/13 Final route accepted
5/7 Again paid	4/8 Same	6/1 Ord. 163 for protection
10/1 Kennedy named marshal	4/22 Extended	
	6/10 City to repair line	1911
1889	6/24 Condemn 'steering'	3/6 To pave
6/3 Kennedy wins contract	12/9 To cover tracks	9/2 Move poles for paving
6/10 Objection from loser		10/25 Spur OK'd at 3rd st.
7/1 Kennedy paid for dogs	1903	
7/12 Canon: 'stagnation'	4/14 To remove tracks	1912
	4/21 New request to rent	7/30 To hold condemn vote
	7/15 To take up tracks	
1890		
3/12 Kennedy wins franchise	1904	1913
	2/9 Walk problem	5/20 Legally OK to buy plant
1891	3/3 Smith's coal bids	11/6 Vote failed
3/24 Given time extension	5/10 Pasture for Charlie	
3/14 New trolley ordinance	5/24 Charlie given away	1915
	9/13 Smith's franchise	8/3 Assessment question
1898	9/24 No quorum	
5/23 Complying with it?	11/25 Franchise discussed	1916
5/30 Crawford's reply	12/6 More discussion	9/30 Bus licensing
	12/20 Approved	
1899	1905	1918
7/24 Request to revoke	3/28 Smith's bond in	4/9 3rd floor for Elec Bldg
8/1 Crawford's reply	4/1 'I have begun'	
9/16 Revocation ordinance		1919
		10/4 Q on annual payment
1900		11/9 Voters want payment
11/13 Crawford offers to sell	06	
	6/13 More time needed	1920
	11/30 Fry asks for time	9/14 To inspect track
	12/12 Smith also asks	
(1901)		
1/10 City offers to buy	1907	1922
1/18 City buys line	1/9 Extension finalized	7/19 Spur for Currie Canning
2/12 Question about lease	3/13 Adams asks 8 months	
4/9 Deed received	3/27 OK'd to 11/30	1924
4/15 To receive bids to run	4/10 Finalized	9/3 Q on ballast
4/29 Bids in	11/12 Time request dies	10/1 Co. says 'soon'
4/14 John Price the winner		1928
6/4 He asks 4th st. line	1908	8/29 Track & wire removal
7/9 Again asks	6/9 Franchise considered	
7/16 Agrees to line on 4th	6/19 Again	1942
10/8 To vacate horse barn.	7/14 Again	10/23 Gave track for scrap
12/10 Price in court	7/17 Passed	1945
	10/13 Q about grades on 12th	8/29 Don't need scrap
	11/27 Move the ditch	
	12/9 Change to Gunnison	

## Roster of street and interurban cars

Cars No. 1, 2, 3	Four-wheel motor cars bought from Colorado Springs early street car line. Said to have been built by Pullman. Summer-winter cars with one end closed, one open. No. 3 retained as spare until end of operations.
Trailers No. 4, 5, 6, 7	Open trailers also bought from Colorado Springs.
Cars No. 26 and 27	Pay As You Enter cars bought from Southern Car. Co., High Point, N.C.
Cars No. 51 and 52	Interurban passenger cars with baggage compartment. From Woerber Brothers Carriage Co., Denver
Car No. 76	Interurban passenger car without baggage compartment. Double end for operation without turning. From Woerber
Car No. 99	Double end, baggage car. From Woerber.
Locomotive No. 11	Raised cab in center of flat car. From Woerber
Work Car No. 01	Presumably the first flat car, unpowered, bought at start of city line.
Tank Car No. 572	Unknown except for 1913 report to Interstate Commerce Commission

## All cars scrapped.

## Persons with first-hand information

Alvin Adams	Mrs. Joseph Johns	Mrs. Rex Rankin
Paul Bainter	Mrs. Harriet Johnson	Mrs. Alice Reed
Josephine Biggs	Furman Kelley	Harold M. Rider
Bud Buthorn	Sylvia Larraidi	Bill Rump
Tom Charles	Al Look	Mrs. C. S. Saxton and Peggy
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Cole	Mr. and Mrs. Dale Luke	Mrs. Clyde Scoles
L. E. Crider	Mrs. Vera (Harvey) Moyer	Vern Sharp
Mary Jane (Davison) Crow	Charles Ed McCormick	Mr. and Mrs. John Snyder
Mrs. Sevina Davidson	Howard McMullin	Joe Standiford
Wayne Edwards	Mrs. Gus Nagel	
Mr. & Mrs. Webster Flene	Hilda Nauman	
Marion Fletcher	William Nelson	
Poge Fulton	Mrs. L. C. Nowlan	Mrs. W. W. Tillotson
Mr. John Giblin	L. D. O'Neil	R. R. (Bunk) Weimer
Bob Gustafson	Bill Weir	Robert Williamson
Mr. & Mrs. John Hart	Tony Perry	Mrs. Charles Willsea
Roy Hartman	Gilbert Peth	Ted Winterburn
Mrs. Georgia Holmes	Ted Porter	Mrs. Kenneth Young
Lowell Heiny	Mrs. Pearl (Ridley) Porter	Mrs. Clarence Zipse
Howard Hottes	Mrs. Frances Regan	Harold Zimmerman

## Corporations formed and dissolved

GRAND JUNCTION STREET CAR CO. Aug. 2, 1890. Benton Canon, B.K. Kennedy, Thomas B. Crawford and George Wheeler. For 20 years. Capitalized for \$25,000. Horse or other power.

GRAND JUNCTION STREET RAILWAY CO. July 10, 1891. Kennedy, Crawford, with Orson Adams and W. H. Crawford Jr. Horse or other power. Most streets listed, and to Orchard Mesa Heights and to Mesa County Fair Grounds. 20 years. \$100,000.

GRAND JUNCTION STREET RAILROAD CO. July 6, 1893. To purchase the street railway. Canon, Adams, Wheeler, D.T. Stone and John F. Moore.

PLATEAU VALLEY RAILROAD CO. June 6, 1895. Fine P. Ernest, George W. Vallery and Fred S. Rockwell of Denver; Prescott T. Stevens of Montrose and Orson Adams of GJ. To build in Mesa, Pitkin and Arapahoe counties. 50 years; capital of \$250,000. Offices in GJ and Denver.

MESA COUNTY RAILWAY & TRACTION CO. April 28, 1905. George Smith, Wm. F. White and Lovies F. Ingersoll of GJ; Chas. A. Steyn of Denver and Francis M. Burger of Palisade. To run to Palisade and Colbran and west to the state line. Electric power. 50 years; \$300,000 capital.

PLATEAU VALLEY RAILWAY CO. May 18, 1907. John D. Carlisle, Thomas H. Brown, Lemuel T. Steward, H.F. Roeschlaub, Straud M. Logan, Lee L. Prewett, Wm. M. Porter, Morgan Hall and Patrick McCallery. From Colbran to mouth of Plateau Creek. 50 years; capital of \$50,000. Office in town of Mesa.

FRUIT BELT POWER & IRRIGATION CO. Feb. 7, 1908. E.A. Sunderlin, Lloyd M. Bassett and Dunbar F. Carpenter of Colorado Springs. (Directors included H.K. Devereux and Orson Adams.) To use Colorado river water through Gerstin power canal at DeBeque. For 50 years; \$1 1/2 million.

GRAND JUNCTION ELECTRIC RAILWAY CO. Nov. 19, 1908. Horace K. Devereux, E. A. Sunderlin, Thomas E. Curtin, Henry C. Hall and P. M. McMahon of Colorado Springs. To build in or out of GJ. Offices in Colo. Springs. Capital of \$100,000.

GRAND JUNCTION & GRAND RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY CO. Feb. 25, 1909. H.K. Devereux, E. A. Sunderlin, Thomas E. Curtin, Henry C. Hall and Frank McMahon. To build in GJ and to Palisade and other points - rail lines, gas and electric etc. Directors these five plus Orson Adams and Charles E. Noble. For 20 years; capital of \$2 million.

AMENDMENT TO GJ&GRV Ry. April 20, 1910 To build interurban line to Fruite; and also to Palisade and other points.

DISSOLUTION of GJ Electric Railway Co. May 28, 1910.

GRAND RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY CO. Sept. 29, 1914. E. A. Sunderlin, C. C. Hamlin, C. B. Gamett, J. A. Hull and H. A. Jones of Colorado Springs. Directors Spencer Penrose, C. M. MacNeill, E. A. Sunderlin, A. E. Carlton, C. C. Hamlin, R. R. Wright and H. R. Bull. For 20 years. Capital \$1,250,000.

## Employees of the rail lines

Admittedly incomplete:

R. H. Arthur	Poge Fulton	Mae Kane	Otto Peth	L. J. Sidenstricker
Paul Bainter	--- Goodale	Ernie Ladd	Bill Peth	Harry Smith
D. Berger	Emanuel Grove	Pearl Larson	Gilbert Peth	Will Stephens
Al Britton	Henry Goodwin	John Lake	"Pinkie"	Frank Strasser
A. Brown	John Hall	J. R. Lockett	Guy Porter	Harry Swearingen
Roy Combs	Peter Hansen	Coy Powell	Coy Powell	Foster Sykes
Harrie Davidson	T. L. Harvey	John M. Price	Leta Sykes	Bill Thomas
Barker Duncan	Earl H. Hoyt	Archie Rolland	Ben Thomas	W. W. Tillotson
Miss Erickson	Frank Johnson	Henry Neesham	Clyde Scoles	Charles Veedor
Everett Faulkner	Peter Johnson	John Newman	J. W. Scoles	Ted Winterburn
Frank T. Faulkner	Hazel Johns	Edgar O'Neil	Harry Schwartz	
Louis Tazio	Joey Johns	Bill Papke	Howard Schwartz	
	S. J. Johns	Tony Perry	William F. Selke	Kally Whitney

DISSOLUTION of GJ&GRV Ry Dec. 8, 1915.

GRAND RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD CO. Nov. 22, 1926. Clara N. Stannard, John E. Loiseau, Harry T. Hughes, Virgil L. Board and Guy W. Fuller of Denver. Offices in Denver, branch in GJ. 50,000 shares w/out par value to purchase all property of GRV.

DISSOLUTION of GRV Ry, Dec. 16, 1926.

GRAND JUNCTION TRANSIT LINES. Trade name registered March 28, 1945, by John W. Hayden, doing business as 57 Cab Service, GJ Transit Lines and Uintah Stage Line.

UINTAH STAGE LINE. Affidavit of trade name June 17, 1949, by Wesley E. Hayden and John W. Hayden, co-partners.

OTHER CORPORATIONS OF INTEREST

GJ TELEPHONE & ELECTRIC LIGHT CO. Feb. 15, 1888, by J. F. McFarland, T. M. Jones and David Roberts.

GJ ELECTRIC AND MFG CO. Dec. 15, 1890 by Sterns, Lacombe and others. Offices in Denver.

Same name, March 11, 1899, to buy telephone and electric light company. By S. G. McMullin and others.

GJ MINING AND FUEL CO. Nov. 8, 1899 by George Smith and two from Arapahoe Co. for coal mining and coke making. Offices in Denver.

GJ Electric & Gas Co. August 4, 1903 by McMullin, Guy V. Sternberg and Charles S. Newton. (Orson Adams name deleted and Newton written in.)

GJ ELECTRIC, GAS & MFG CO. Feb. 9, 1907 by Adams, John A. Ewing and Arvid P. Wells. AMENDMENT March 11, 1910, naming T.E. Curtin as president and Adams as secretary. Offices changed from GJ & Denver to GJ and possibly Colorado Springs.

CURRIE CANNING CO. March 27, 1912. By Arthur S. Currie, Robert E. Hardy and S. G. McMullin. Office at GJ. \$50,000 cap.

FRUIT BELT CANNING & PRESERVING CO. Feb. 20, 1915. By Thomas B. Holland, W. S. Wallace and W. P. Ela. Offices at Holland Station, RFD 2, GJ. For 20 years; capital \$100,000. For operation of farms and orchards.

APPLETON CANNING CO. May 15, 1915. By T. R. Holland, A. Lindenmeyer, Thomas B. Scott, Theodore W. Scott, M. M. Cottingham and Edwin K. Smith. For 20 years; capital of \$25,000. Office at RFD 2, GJ

DISSOLUTION of GRV RAILROAD CO. Nov. 19, 1935. Quit claim deed for all franchises and property given to Public Service Co. of Colorado on Nov. 22, 1935.

## Primary newspaper references for the railways of Grand Junction

Reference code	1906	1909 Continued	1911 Continued	1914 Continued	1925
N News	S 6/2 Plateau valley asks	N 10/6 Plateau note	S 3/29 Orchard Mesa trolley	S 6/15 Old service restored	S 5/24 Street car schedule
S Sentinel	S 6/14 Smith wants time	S 10/8 Interurban info	S 3/31 O.M. motor line	S 8/1 To foreclose	S 10/7 Minor flood
ws Weekly Sentinel	S 7/12 Needs more time	N 10/9 New Plateau line	S 4/11 Smudgers ride free	S 9/28 Foreclosed	
a The Great Divide, Denver	S 12/1 Time extension	S 10/11 Order elec. machinery	S 6/17 Brick for paving	S 10/9 New charter	1926
b Denver Times	S 12/13 Asks for more time	N 10/16 Fruita construction	S 6/27 Survey to Clifton	S 10/10... & later: Plane meet	S 3/3 Citiea Service buys
c Denver Republican in News		" " Engineer busy	S 6/28 Goodall out	S 10/12 Aviation meet story	S 3/12 PSC president visits
d Ouray Herald in Weekly Sei	1907	N 11/2 School fare 5¢	N 6/28 Ford replaces G.		S 7/7 Applies to abandon
e Clifton Success in Sentinel	S 1/24 Financing is certain	S 11/6 Easterners visit	N 7/1 Editorial: growth	1915	S 8/7 Council considers
f Fruita Telegram in Sentinel	S 3/11 Plateau is certain	S 11/11 80 cars material here	S 7/1 4th of July schedule	S 4/6 Mail schedule	m 8/13 Goodbye street cars
g Fruita Mail in Sentinel	S 3/14 Francis extended	S 11/15 Fruita survey done	S 7/11 Crowd coming to Fruita	S 4/21 Collision	m 9/21 Don't delay
h Denver Press in Sentinel	S 3/28 Final action	S 11/16 Shopping for city cars	S 7/14 Iowa Day	S 5/2 Joey Johns photo	S 10/18 Auto line
i Denver Republican in Sentin	S 11/13 No discussion	S 7/27 300 men to work	S 7/27 Street car schedule	S 7/17 Line improvements	S 10/19 C of C favors bus
j Rifle Reveille in News	S 11/27 Too indefinite	S 11/24 Goodale arrives	S 7/28 Fruita light plant	S 8/11 Ad: rates to rodeo	S 10/20 Trial of buses
k Colorado Springs Gazette	1908	N 11/27 Orchard Mesa line	S 7/29 Schedule	S 9/2 Street car tickets	S 10/22 Bus to replace
l Colo. Springs Telegram in S	S 1/27 Downcast editorial		S 8/7 Midnight car		S 10/29 Bus arrives
m Western Colorado Progress	S 4/11 Men are coming	N 1/15 Electricity for homes	S 8/10 Route to Clifton	1916	S 10/28 Need 90 freight cars
n Denver Post	S 4/13 Men are in town	S 2/10 Light plant work	S 8/10 Paving route change	S 12/16 Schedule	S 11/31 Otto Peth
	" " Amended canal plat	S 2/14 Child killed	S 8/12 Faveling laborers?		S 10/28 Interurban reorganizes
	S 4/14 Office opened	S 2/19 Condemn Fruita ROW	S 8/15 Mosley gets watch	1917	m 12/17 Pic & story on bus
	S 4/16 Editorial of praise	S 2/19 Electric Building	S 8/21 First paving	S 1/25 Cars are good	1927
	S 5/22 Certainty	S 2/21 Ready to start	S 8/24 Uintah tunnel	S Series of ads: 3/13, 3/17,	S 2/3 Complaints by Council
1888	S 5/25 Apply for franchise	S 3/1 When will it start?	S 9/1 Fruita light plant	4/18, 5/15, 5/23, 6/11, 7/5 ++	S 2/17 Will not seek franchise
N 6/2 Adams at eating house	S 6/3 Give idea fair deal	S 3/3 Contributions	S 9/13 Curtin ill; recovering	S 4/20 Ranchers ride	S 3/17 Interurban schedule
	S 6/9 Changes suggested	" " Work to start	S 4/21 Carlton buys Midland	S 5/25 Extension to Mack	S 5/15 Plans for buses
1889	S 6/10 Livey council session	S 3/7 Condemnation case	S 5/29 Rehabilitation	S 5/19 New bus schedule	S 5/19 New bus schedule
N 7/13 Stagnation survey	S 6/20 Approved	S 3/8 Preliminary work	S 6/16 Survey to Mack	S 6/28 Remove unused track	
" " Kennedy 'bus line ad	S 7/18 Final approval	S 3/15 Force at work	S 10/31 Curtin obituary		
1890	S 8/6 Securing ROW	S 3/26 Progress	S 11/1 Cars halt for funeral	1918	S 6/18 Survey started
a May Description of town	S 8/8 Midland to Plateau	S 4/16 Paving question	S 11/2 Paving done for year	S 1/13 Benefits farm district	S 8/19 Applies to abandon
N 8/2 Rails arrive	S 10/14 Build city line at once	S 4/22 Trip on interurban	" " MacNeill is president	S 11/25 Editorial: Fruite lights	S 8/29 Motor bus
N 8/30 Tracks complete	S 11/15 12th St. ditch	S 5/2 Fruita building	" " Fruit traffic	S 12/16 New trolley schedule	S 10/3 Redlands plant
N 9/13 Cars arrive. Route	S 11/20 Organization complete	S 5/13 GAR in town	S 11/3 Magazine article	S 12/20 3 cars ordered	S 10/19 Thru rate granted
	S 12/2 Rails ordered	S 5/13 Trailers needed	S 11/22 Sunderlin is president		S 12/30 Restoration demanded
1891	S 12/4 Engineer arrives	S 5/14 GAR rides	S 11/25 Editorial: Fruite lights	1919	S 10/10 Discontinue buses
N 1/3 Start of horse line	S 12/11 Railway looking better	S 5/28 Interurban opening	S 12/16 New trolley schedule	S 1/13 Benefits farm district	S 12/9 State gives OK
		S 6/3 No excursion	S 12/20 3 cars ordered	S 3/21 Ad	1929
1893		S 6/6 Report on year		N 6/29 Raise freight rates	S 1/6 New buses
N 1/28 Horse car line	1909	S 6/10 Loco arrives	1912	S 8/21 Woodmen ride	S 3/29 Buses being removed
N 11/18 Electric Ry coming	S 1/2 Order equipment	S 6/18 Progress report	S 1/24 Orders new cars	S 8/22 Ride enjoyable	S 5/19 Tracks removed
N 12/2 It's assured	S 1/7 Financiers to visit	S 1/14 Dinner	" " May build to Paradox	" " Fruit rush starts	S 7/10 Paving over tracks
N 12/23 Antimosity to Smith	S 1/13 Plan elegant dinner	" " Contract let for barn	S 1/25 Freight platform on 5th	S 10/26 Flu epidemic	
N 12/30 Progress story	S 1/14 Dinner	S 1/19 Rails arrive	1 1/25 To spend \$100,000	S 11/2 Rails spread	1931
	" " " "	S 2/3 C of C investigates	S 1/30 Delays	S 12/18 Night service	S 1/1 PSC report for 1930
1897	" " " "	S 2/3 New streets in route	S 1/31 Fruit Belt cuts rates	1919	1932
N 5/8 Driver arrested	S 2/5 Legal ad	S 2/16 More material arrives	S 2/17 Contract for new cars	S 2/7 Large beet acreage	S 10/10 Discontinue buses
N 10/23 Kennedy in Yukon	S 2/15 Legal ad	S 2/16 Cars to come soon	S 4/30 Redlands machinery	S 2/25 Spring work	
	S 2/27 Expert visits	S 2/27 Expert visits	S 5/3 Fruit Belt way car	S 3/12 Joe Stewart mgr.	1934
1898	S 3/1 To Palisade & Fruita	S 3/1 To Palisade & Fruita	S 5/6 Ad: freight	S 5/30 Ad: metal fares	S 4/14 Asks to abandon
N 8/13 Kennedy died	S 3/2 Editorial	S 3/2 Editorial	S 5/24 Line to Clifton	S 10/14 Q of annual payment	S 10/25 ICC gives OK
N 8/20 Insurance Q.	S 3/11 To start city line	S 3/11 To start city line	S 7/6 Buffet car	S 10/25 Ad: payments	S 12/9 State gives OK
N 8/27 Masons honor him	S 3/12 Work begins	S 3/12 Work begins	S 7/24 Officials here	S 12/16 Services	
	S 3/22 Survey Plateau valley	S 3/22 Survey Plateau valley	S 7/31 City to own light plant	1919	1937
1899	S 3/29 Photo of progress	S 3/29 Photo of progress	S 8/1 Sunderlin replies	S 2/17 Contract for new cars	S 3/28 Recalls horse car
N 7/29 Ord to revoke	S 4/10 Council gets deed	S 4/10 Council gets deed	S 8/2 Editorial	S 2/17 Contract for new cars	k 8/25 Devereux obituary
b 8/2 Crawford's elec line	S 4/18 Advertise for bids	S 4/18 Advertise for bids	S 8/6 Ford resigns	S 4/30 Redlands machinery	n 11/6 Adams obituary
S 8/3 Goodbye Charlie	S 4/30 Bids opened	S 4/30 Bids opened	S 8/8 Sunderlin agrees	S 5/3 Fruit Belt way car	
N 8/5 Crawford's electric	S 5/6 Smith back from Ohio	S 5/6 Smith back from Ohio	S 8/10 Merger with Uintah	S 5/6 Ad: freight	1940
c 8/19 Smith back from England	S 5/15 Price gets contract	S 5/15 Price gets contract	S 8/24 Aviation Day	S 5/24 Line to Clifton	k 10/29 Hamlin obituary
	" " Take out switch	" " Take out switch	S 9/4 Schedule	S 7/6 Buffet car	1943
	" " To erect new barn	" " To erect new barn	S 9/9 New city cars here	S 7/24 Officials here	S Historical edition
	S 5/21 All ready	S 5/21 All ready	S 9/21 Excursion	S 7/31 City to own light plant	
	S 6/12 Price did not call out	S 6/12 Price did not call out	S 10/2 Ad: new cars	S 8/1 Sunderlin replies	



# From the Hurricane Deck of an Electric Locomotive

By E. A. Sherman.

You have seen the shading tints of a sunset so blended one with the other as they stretched upward and away to the zenith that at no point could you place your mental finger and say: "Here is where purple ceases and blue has its beginning." The line of demarcation is so faint, and the shading so gradual, that one may hardly establish a definite boundary.

Even thus is the great interlocked community comprised by and including Grand Junction and Fruita. Busy centers of trade and industry are each of the cities, yet the blending of their territories extending over twelve miles by shortest line, that it is difficult to say where city or town leaves off and suburbs and country begins. The truth of this situation is most vividly borne in upon one's conception while riding from Grand Junction, the eastern terminus of the Grand Junction and Grand River Valley Railway, to Fruita, the western end of the line.

From the bustling business center of the metropolis of the Western Slope one passes quickly to the home sections, where residences of comfort and luxury abound, and shaded avenues offer welcome coolness to the pedestrian and passenger alike. Gradually the dwellings become more scattered, miniature orchards and gardens creeping in between here and there, as if trying in sheer desperation to stem the encroachments of city life and activity.

From the smaller tracts, "God's Half-acres," as they may well be called, from the peace, plenty and contentment of the lives of the dwellers and tillers thereof, the vision broadens and larger cultivated areas are presented to view. Five and ten acres under generous cultivation and yielding bounteous returns, adjoin each other and make up a giant chessboard, where wagonloads of fruit are the pawns and man is king, indeed.

Through avenues of heavily laden trees where one may reach from the car window and nearly grasp the luscious fruit as it hangs in tempting profusion from every bough and twig. From thousands of trees is wafted the aroma, par excellence, than which no nectar-sipping god ever inhaled a sweeter. When the orchards are in bloom the entire area might well be called a corsage bouquet, resting upon the bosom of Nature.

And yet not all the land is bearing the fruit of maturity. Here and there are newly planted stretches, young orchards not yet arrived at the period of either blossom or bud, adolescent attendants upon the trees of maturer growth. In fact, the prospect may well be considered a short course in horticulture for the spectator, since he can see Nature's bounty in all its stages of development.

No rough log cabins or tumbledown shacks are these which mark the habitations of the owners and workers on these broad plains. But substantial, ample and ornate homes of intelligence and competence are the abiding places of those who make this erstwhile desert a paradise of peace and plenty.

As the eye sweeps the broad vistas that extend for a score of miles on either side of the right of way, the impression comes that

the spectator is up on the bridge of an ocean liner, and that the green fields and orchards over which his gaze roves is a vast, calm tropic sea, moving in gentle undulations that do not break the surface of the waters.

On all sides stand hills, cliffs and mountains, silent witnesses of the half-forgotten past, yet watching in mute agony the hand of steel that unceasingly extends its fingers, ever grasping more firmly and eternally these guardians of eternity, and wresting from them the keys of the treasure vaults over which they have stood guard for years—yea aeons!

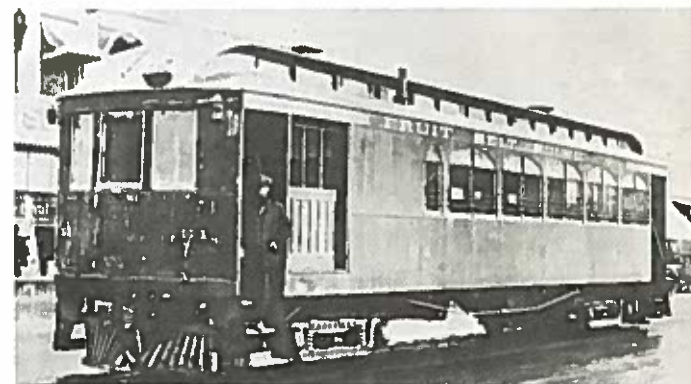
Winding like a silver serpent across the miles of fertile country is the Grand Valley canal, which quenches the thirst of the thousands of acres that ever claim its bounty as it turns here and there to divide its refreshing waters to the waiting acres.

Thus may one feast the eye and find rest for spirit and body. Gentle and cooling breezes fan the forehead, while wooded knolls and sparkling streams along the way beckon the weary to throw aside the cares and worries of the world and rest upon the lap of the Mother of us all.

For sixteen miles the harnessed lightning speeds the modern chariot of the twentieth-century gods and goddesses, to the sheltered town of Fruita, to the westward, where with gently beckoning fingers of verdure her orchards entice the tourist.

Then one alights mid the scent of roses and the call of birds and the hum of bees within the borders of the Apple Queen's domain, over which stands an immutable guard, Monument canon, in morolithic majesty.

The feature story in the publicity folder.  
Courtesy of Mrs. Gus Nagel.



NEAR THE END, No. 51 had been modified as a double end car with two poles, controllers and cowcatchers so it could work the short runs. Otto Peth is at the door, veteran of street car and interurban service. Photo from Allison Chandler.

