



INSPECTION TRIP - CHICAGO & WEST TOWNS RAILWAYS, INC.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23rd, 1939

ITINERARY of TRIP

- 12:00 noon Depart in special cars of 139 type from C&WT terminal at 22nd & Kenton opposite Hawthorne Works, Western Electric Co.
- 1:00 p.m. Arrive LaGrange station, stopping en route in Riverside, at Desplaines River, Brookfield and LaGrange Park to photograph special cars in typical backgrounds.
- 1:25 p.m. Arrive Harlem barn to inspect and photograph shops and rolling stock, including line car 15 made of old passenger car.
- 2:05 p.m. Leave barns and proceed to 52nd Avenue, cross to Chicago Ave., car route and then to Roosevelt, west over joint track with Chicago Surface Lines to Austin and on to Desplaines Ave., north along regular route, stopping at typical residential background for photographs, to Lake Street and east to the Lake Street barn.
- 3:00 p.m. Arrive Lake St. barn and inspect and photograph equipment, including old power plant.
- 3:45 p.m. Leave Lake Street barn, retracing route to 22nd, then east to Kenton Avenue.
- 4:30 p.m. Arrive Kenton Ave., terminal, and leave special cars.

The above times are approximate and will be varied from as conditions may require.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC RAILFANS' ASSOCIATION
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

BULLETIN NUMBER THREE

April, 1939

CHICAGO & WEST TOWNS RAILWAYS, INC.

CHICAGO & WEST TOWNS RAILWAYS, INC.

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION & EQUIPMENT

Issued on the Occasion of CERA Trip No. 8 over the Chicago & West Towns Rys.
LaGrange - Chicago Avenue - Lake Street Lines, Sunday, April 23rd, 1939.

Edited by George Krambles

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Chicago & West Towns Railways, Incorporated is the successor to a group of small companies which built the various street railways which connect Chicago with the western suburbs of Cicero, Berwyn, Lyons, Riverside, North Riverside, LaGrange, LaGrange Park, Forest Park, Maywood, River Forest, Melrose Park, Brookfield and Oak Park.

The first of these companies was the Cicero & Proviso Street Railway, incorporated in February, 1889, which built the first line from Crawford (now Pulaski) down Madison to Harlem, thence to Lake Street and down Lake to Cicero and back to Madison, with car barns at Lake and Cuyler Avenues. This line was operated by horse car until the power house at Harvey and North Streets adjacent to the car barns was built in 1891. In the next few years the lines on Chicago Avenue and Madison west of Harlem were built by this railway.

In May, 1895 the Suburban R.R.Co. was organized to build the lines to the south, centering around 22nd Street and terminating at what was then the edge of Chicago and later also the terminal of the Douglas Park branch of the Metropolitan West Side Elevated Railway at Cicero. One line ran down Laramie Avenue from 22nd to Lake Street where it connected with the Lake Street Elevated. Another ran over the tracks of the Wisconsin Central (now Soo Line) and the Chicago Harlem & Batavia Railways to reach the old Harlem race track, but these branches were abandoned about 1903.

The Chicago Consolidated Traction Company purchased the lines of the Cicero & Proviso Railway in February 1899. The Suburban Railway went into receivership July 30, 1902 and the Chicago Riverside & LaGrange Railway had to be formed to extend the line of 22nd Street the short distance from Crawford to Kenton Avenues, which was then acquired by the Suburban (May, 1903).

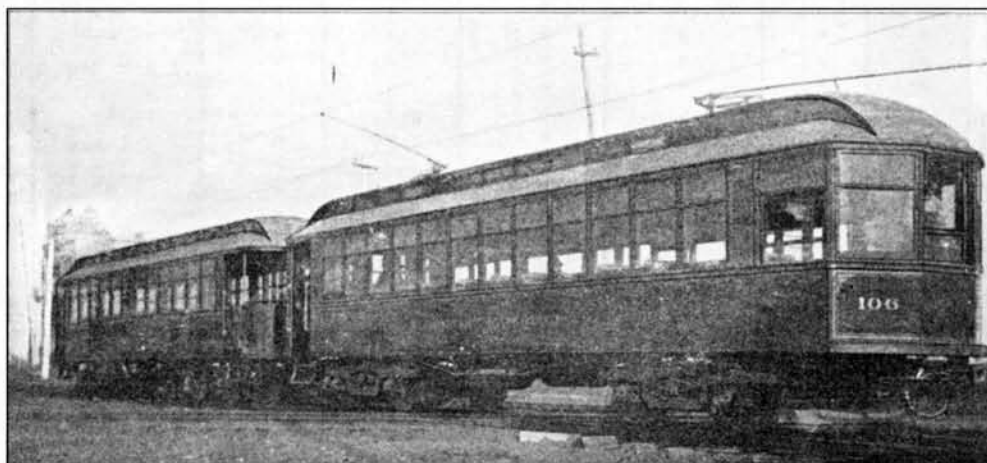
In November, 1910 the County Traction Company was organized to take over the lines of the Chicago Consolidated Traction Company outside the corporate limits of Chicago (and the street railway lines in Evanston, to the north of the city) while the Chicago Railways Company (now Chicago Surface Lines) took over the lines which were within the city.

On July 15, 1913 the County Traction Company, the Chicago Riverside & LaGrange Railway and the Suburban R.R.Co. were combined to form the Chicago & West Towns Railways. The Evanston lines were operated temporarily until the formation within a few weeks of the Evanston Railway, and old-timers recall the occasional transfer of cars thru the city of Chicago. This completes the geneology of the present company.

OPERATION: The "West Towns", as the system is popularly referred to, operates local street railway service within and between the various towns and villages named in the historical sketch. A complete map of the railway lines of the company appeared on the cover of CERA Map Number One, issued in March, 1939, showing railway connections and intersections. The West Towns probably serves more communities than any other traction system of comparable size and the LaGrange line, which is the fastest in the system, serves seven not including Chicago itself. This line is also the most interesting from a scenic standpoint, traversing a forest preserve section bordering the Desplaines River and passing directly by the entrance to Brookfield Zoo, which in itself attracts crowds which severely tax the facilities of the company during the summer season, especially on sunny Sundays.

Heavy traffic lines, such as 22nd - LaGrange, require two man operation while others are adequately handled with one man cars. At present, service on the various car lines is about as follows during most of the day:

© The Suburban R. R. Co. also operated a line from 22nd & Harlem to Harrison St., east on Harrison to Cicero, where it connected with the Garfield Park branch of the Metropolitan West Side Elevated Railway, which terminated there at that time.



A TRAIN ON "SUBURBAN"

CAR LINE	BETWEEN	INTERVAL	RUNNING TIME
LaGrange	22nd & 46th to LaGrange	20 min.	35 min.
Madison St.	Austin to 19th & G&NWRy	12 min.	24 min.
Berwyn	22nd & 46th to Harlem & Ogden	20 min.	25 min.
Lake St.	Austin to 25th Avenue	10 min.	19 min.
Chicago Ave.	Austin & Lake to Austin & 35th Street	12 & 15 min.	53 to 60 min.

Owl car service is operated thru the night on the LaGrange, Madison and Lake Street lines, and busses give owl service on the Berwyn line. The most peculiar line of the West Towns system is the Chicago Avenue line which runs on Chicago Avenue, Harlem Avenue, Madison St., Desplaines Avenue, Roosevelt Road, 52nd Avenue and 35th Street; roughly an S shaped route.

BARNs: There are two barns on the West Towns, that at Lake & Cuyler serving the north group of lines while that at 22nd & Harlem berths the south group. Power was originally supplied from power stations located adjacent to each carhouse, but at present the station at Lake Street barn is not used. This plant contains horizontal engines coupled to Siemens-Halske d.c. generators having armatures outside of their field structures with surface commutator. Power is now purchased from the P. S. Co. of N. Ill.

LAKE STREET BARN FIRE: On December 2, 1936 a disastrous fire gutted part of the Lake Street barn and destroyed 18 passenger and 7 other cars as well as damaging some other passenger cars. While repairs were made to damaged cars a number of small St. Louis Car Company type cars were borrowed from the Chicago Surface Lines. The passenger cars which were destroyed were numbered 109, 110, 113, 117, 118, 120, 121, 125, 129, 131, 137, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, and 162. Sweepers 1, 2, 3, and 10, Single Truck snow plow 4 and vestibule work cars 10 and 11 were also burnt.

ROLLING STOCK: All of the passenger cars of the Chicago & West Towns Railways, Incorporated used at present were built by the Cummings Car & Coach Company, except that numbers 100 to 141 were built under the original name of McGuire-Cummings Car Company and all are operated on the pay-as-you-enter basis. When built, cars of the 138-141 were equipped with Van Dorn automatic drawbars for multiple-unit operation but train operation has not proved satisfactory on this road. A roster of equipment accompanies this bulletin.

© The explanation of the odd route of the Chicago Avenue line is that it is the combination of parts of both the County Traction and Suburban systems, each of which had its own route to the Harlem race track, one from the north and the other from the south. The piece on 35th Street from 52nd to Austin was contributed by a real estate company.

CARS OWNED BY CHICAGO & WEST TOWNS RAILWAYS, INC.

April 1, 1939

4.

PASSENGER CARS

No.	Bought	Weight	Motors	Control	*Wheels	Seats	Operation	Doors
100	1917	43500	4-GE-247-D	K-35-G-2	Standard	Rattan	1 Man	Double
101	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
102	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
103	"	"	"	"	"	"	1 & 2 Man	"
104	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
105	1915	45000	4-GE-226-A	"	Wide	"	"	Single
106	"	"	"	"	"	"	2 Man	"
107	1912	44400	"	"	Standard	"	1 Man	Double
108	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
111	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
112	"	"	"	"	"	Leather	"	"
114	"	"	"	"	"	Rattan	"	"
115	"	"	"	"	"	Leather	"	"
116	"	"	"	"	"	Rattan	"	"
119	"	"	"	"	"	Leather	"	"
122	1914	"	"	"	Wide	Rattan	1 & 2 Man	Single
123	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
124	"	"	2-GE-203-L	K-51-A	"	"	"	"
126	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
127	"	"	4-GE-226-A	K-35-G-2	"	"	"	"
128	"	"	4-GE-247-D	"	Standard	"	1 Man	Double
130	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
132	1918	43500	"	"	"	"	1 & 2 Man	"
133	1919	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
134	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
135	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
136	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
138	1924	46200	"	(C-J-129-A)	Wide	"	2 Man	Single
139	"	"	"	(P-C-5-E-4)	"	"	"	"
140	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
141	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
142	"	37500	4-GE-247-I	K-35-H-H	Standard	Leather	1 Man	Double
144	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
145	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
151	"	"	4-GE-265-D	"	"	"	"	"
152	1927	--	4-GE-203-L	K-35-J-J	Wide	"	2 Man	Single
153	"	--	"	GE-M-K	"	"	"	"
154	"	--	"	K-35-G-2	"	"	"	"
155	"	--	"	GE-M-K	"	"	"	"
156	"	--	"	(C-J-129-A)	"	"	"	"
157	"	--	"	(P-C-5-E-4)	"	"	"	"
158	"	--	"	"	"	"	"	"
159	"	--	"	"	"	"	"	"
160	"	--	"	K-35-G-2	"	"	"	"
161	"	--	"	"	"	"	"	"
163	"	37500	4-GE-265-D	K-75-A	Standard	"	1 Man	Double
164	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
165	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

SERVICE CARS

NUMBER	TYPE OF CAR	NUMBER OF TRUCKS	BUILT BY	DATE BUILT
5	Snow sweeper	Single	McGuire-Cummings	1913
6	Snow Sweeper	"	"	1897
7	Snow Plow	"	Taunton Loc. Mfg.	1900
8	Snow Plow & Work Car	"	Cummings	1928
9	Snow Sweeper	"	"	1928
12	Work Car	Double	McGuire-Cummings	1912
15	Work & Line Car	"	Pullman (Rebuilt)	1927
16	Snow Sweeper	Single	McGuire-Cummings	**
17	Snow Sweeper	"	"	**
18	Snow Sweeper	"	Cummings	#
19	Snow Sweeper	"	"	#
-	Trailer Flat Car	"	-	-
-	Trailer Flat Car	"	-	-
-	Sand Car	"	-	-
0001	Flat Car	Double	McGuire-Cummings	-
-	Flat Car	"	Company Shops	1913
X-1	Dump Car	Single	McGuire-Cummings	1912
X-2	Dump Car	"	"	1912
X-3	Dump Car	"	"	1912

* - Wide Tread - 3"; Narrow Tread - 2-11/32"

** - Purchased from Tri-City Railway, Rock Island, 1936; rebuilt 1937.

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