



# transit-times

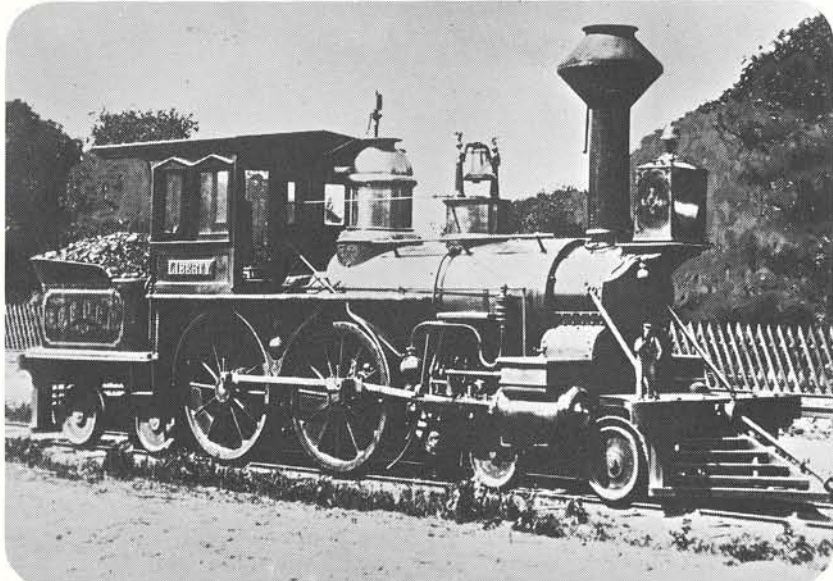
TRANSIT



*For the Good of Your Community*

VOL. 6, NO. 5

OAKLAND, SEPTEMBER 1963



*"The Liberty," first locomotive in East Bay public transit, 1863*

**A** PICTORIAL history of public transportation in the East Bay, commemorating the achievements of the past century—from the beginning of the first train and ferry service in 1863 to the vast transportation network of today operated by the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

## 1863-1963

IT WAS a sprightly September 2, 1863, that the San Francisco and Oakland Railroad Company ran a stubby steam train on a four-mile journey into history.

An ornate little locomotive, the "Liberty," with an ornamental figure riding the front pilot deck and three cars trailing behind, puffed away down Seventh St. from Broadway to Oakland Point, to load passengers aboard the ferry Contra Costa. The first train-ferry service in the Bay area was initiated, with what Oaklanders termed "great pomp and ceremony."

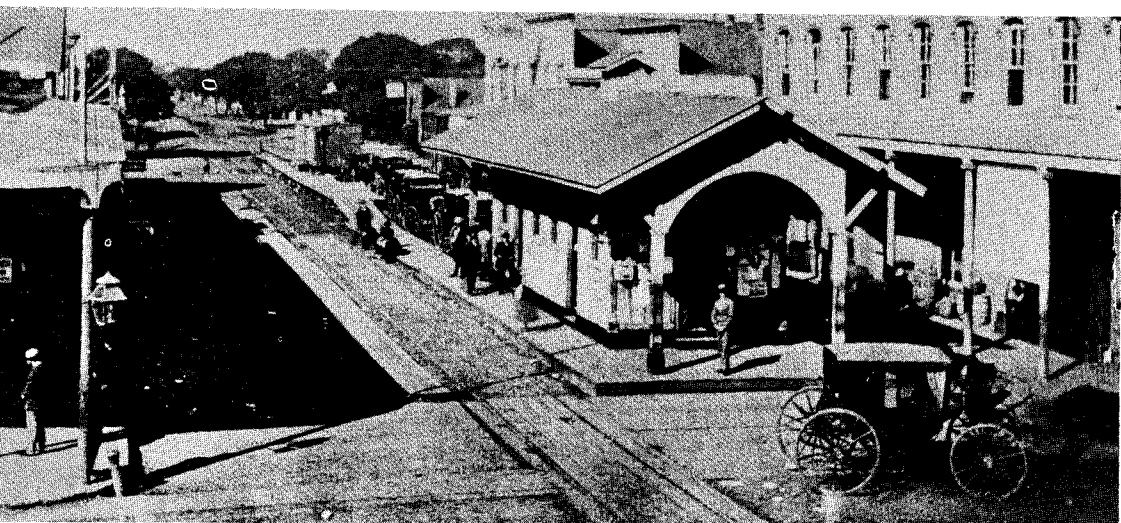
There was no doubt it was an auspicious occasion. The event came during an outward lull in the transit feuding and ferry boat competition which had been churning the waters of the bay for a decade. It also marked the beginning of a new era of even more expansive plotting and progress, the inauguration of the initial transbay commute.

Along with providing a new concept in combining rails and water to solve the ever-lasting problem of crossing the bay, Oakland had managed to provide a terminal for the yet-to-be-completed transcontinental railroad.

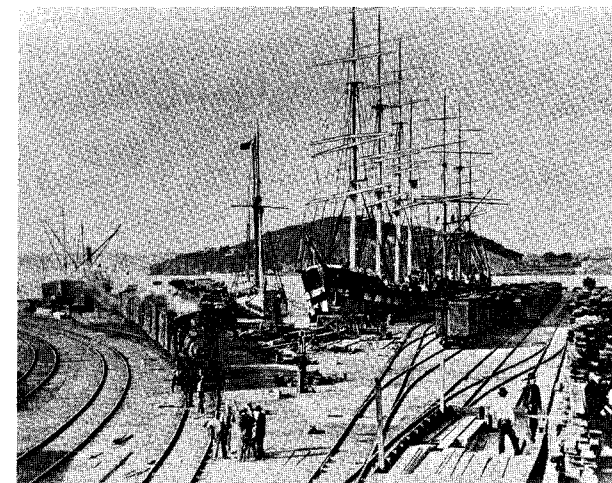
The "Local," as it was called, was to know changes and extensions, becoming an important part of Central Pacific and then, Southern Pacific, operations. Technically, it always was a train, not a street car. But that didn't bother the passengers. The "Local" was an integral part of local transportation, a hub of horse car and street car lines, a means of getting around both locally and across the bay, a main link in the Southern Pacific's vast inter-urban network.

---

TRANSIT CENTER: Station at Seventh and Broadway served first East Bay steam local, then first transcontinental train. Gas light on corner, first in Oakland, was turned on in 1866.



OAKLAND WHARF in early 1870's is shown still under construction, but well enough equipped for the title "where rails and water meet." This was terminal for first East Bay train-ferry service, first transcontinental train, as well as sailing ships.



It was over those same lines, in November of 1869, that the first transcontinental train made a triumphant entry—the local welcome undimmed by the fact that the train had been running into Alameda for two months while tracks were being completed between East Oakland and Melrose.

Oakland pioneers, a sharp aggregation with acquiring talents, had been thinking transportation as early as 1850—working up from row boats and whale boats to sailing vessels and ferries, with a shallow enough draft to get across the bar where San Antonio Creek—now the estuary—emptied into the bay. The transcontinental train heading westward, the need to get from community to community and across the bay, whetted their plans.

An ordinance for a steam train and ferry service down Seventh St. had been granted as early as 1857, but the usual lack of finances interfered. The plan was revised in 1861 as the San Francisco and Oakland Railroad, with the silver-tongued lawyer and future mayor, J. B. Felton, as president.

Building started on August 8, 1862, with M. T. Dusenbury turning up the first spadeful of earth at the Point. A wharf, three-quarters of a mile long, was built for the ferries, with piles unloaded at Goat Island and then laboriously towed over by row boat to be put into place.

The Contra Costa, "recovered" from a boiler explosion that killed six persons in 1859, was ready for service, fitted out so horses could be driven on and off. Cattle pens were provided at the Oakland Point wharf and at the landing in San Francisco on Davis St., between Broadway and Pacific. Newspaper ads of September 1, 1863, announced six daily trips each way and stressed the presence of the cattle pens.

James Bachelder was the first engineer and Dusenbury, who had officiated with the shovel, was the first conductor. The "Local" was in business, to the horror of the competing Larue ferry lines.



The following year the railroad was extended to San Antonio, and Larue threw in the sponge and his two ferries. Financially pressed, the "rail and ferry line" was taken over by A. A. Cohen of the San Francisco and Alameda Railway in 1865 and from Cohen moved into the holdings of the Central Pacific, just in time for arrival of the transcontinental train into Oakland.

In the meantime, things were rolling in other quarters.

Oakland had also been talking about horse cars for five years. And finally, on October 30, 1869, the first car moved out on flat rails "up town" from First and Broadway. The crowds were having a boisterous time. Why not, this was the age when "miracles" were happening in transportation.

There had been a ruckus the day before, October 29th, when workmen tried to prevent the street car crew from laying rails across the tracks of the Seventh St. steam train. But onlookers and police had stepped in, the tracks were laid and the volunteers were about to get their reward—free rides the first day.

Those first in line scrambled into the 16-passenger car, two placid horses shambled off in a trot, and a transportation system that was to become the finest in the nation before the turn of the century was away to a start.

Oakland, already straining at the village seams with a population of 10,000, had entered the era of street transportation.

In the years since, the East Bay has gone from tracks to tires, from Dobbin to Diesel. It's known confusion, promoters, empire builders. It's sampled horse cars, steam trains, cable cars and the great period of the electrics, which carted off thousands to the ferries, then spilled them back again at the end of the day.

It's known the clank clank of street cars, the quieter roll of motor coaches. And it's been welded into one vast community, each section united to the other, by transportation.



NORTH on Broadway from 7th St. in 1869, showing the tracks of Oakland's first horse car line. This was the day of wooden sidewalks, dusty streets and village blacksmiths.

In October, 1960, East Bay added a new period, crossed into another new era—transportation for the benefit of the public alone.

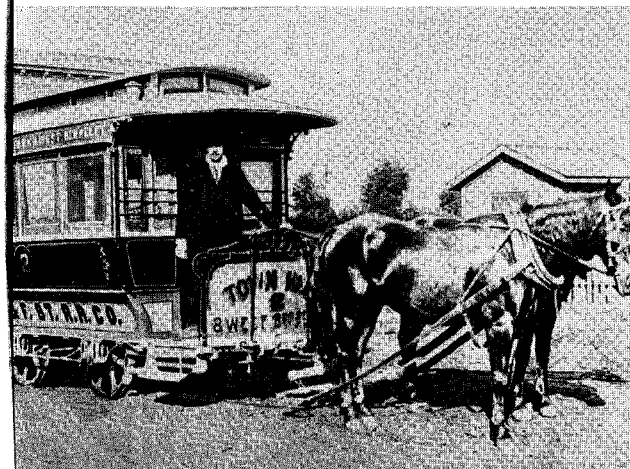
For the first time, riders had their own transportation system, publicly owned and operated. Under the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, they began flying their own banner. Nothing to promote except the use of their system and helping it grow.

It was promotion of another kind that really set the East Bay on the move.

Those first businessmen not only knew that people had to get about this area and to San Francisco, they knew that if all the pasture land and tree-studded hills were to be sold as city lots, there had to be a way to get the buyers to the property.

The answer was horse car lines, lots of them.

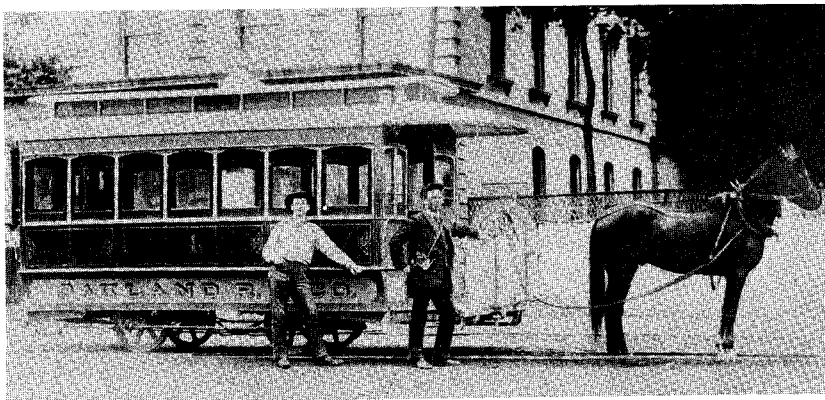
But there was trouble at first among the city fathers. The town charter dealt only with franchises for steam railroads. A street car railroad powered by horses had been proposed in 1864, but things moved slowly through official channels. In 1866, the needed franchise was granted by the State Legislature which also set the fare at 10 cents or 16 rides for a dollar and, taking no chances, added a speed limit of eight miles an hour.



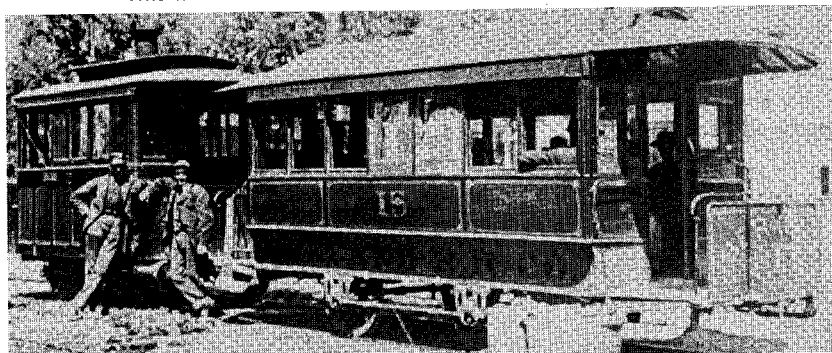
ONE OF OAKLAND'S first horse cars, after long service as No. 8 on the Telegraph Ave. line, took on a new number and destination after it was acquired by the Claremont, University and Ferries Railroad in 1891. It operated from Shattuck Ave. and Center to the Southern Pacific depot in Berkeley, with a branch on Sacramento St. to Peralta. Discovered in a backyard on Delaware St. in 1948, the car has been restored by Louis L. Stein, Berkeley transportation historian.

By the autumn of 1869, the Oakland Railroad Company had laid its first rails as far out Telegraph as "the new Berkeley road," and a building was put up at the foot of Broadway to house the company's four horse cars.

The cars of the O.R.C. connected with the steamer Whipple, and the Oakland Daily Transcript of November 1, 1869, reported that between 1500 and 2000 customers had landed at the foot of Broadway that day, crowding into the horse cars that continually rumbled through the streets.



AN ALERT looking Dobbin stands proudly with street car and crew on Telegraph Ave. in the Temescal district in front of the "Brick House," a famous watering place. The building, still standing, now houses a hardware store. This was in the 1880's.



STEAM DUMMY No. 2, with ex-horse car No. 15 on Telegraph Ave. at the Temescal Car House in 1875. The line operated between the College of California in Berkeley, and Temescal, connecting with the horse cars to Oakland.

"The city appeared to be all life," it added.

The new horse car line at first ran out Telegraph to 36th St., then 40th. In 1870, it was extended to Temescal Creek and, apparently, was an immediate success.

The round trip to Temescal took an hour and it was a good team that could make three runs a day.

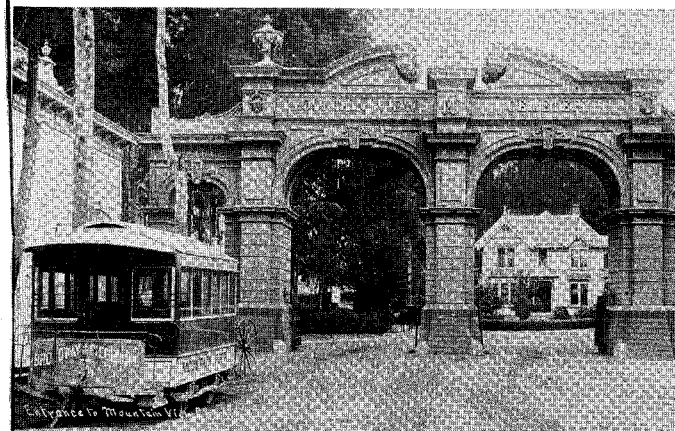
When the College of California moved from Oakland to a new campus in the country at Berkeley in 1873, the horse car went along. But the trip to Berkeley was a bit too long, so in 1875, a steam dummy line was established between Temescal and the University. An extra fare was charged for that part of the trip, and for the next 16 years the O.R.C. provided the only transportation between Oakland and Berkeley.

Students rapidly became expert at joggling horse cars off the tracks and at heckling the operators—who fortunately were hired for brawn, the ability to collect fares by force, if necessary, and to subdue obstreperous passengers.

The steam dummy, with the street car behind, didn't end the hijinks. One car, skidding on greased tracks, ended in the mud of Strawberry Canyon. The climax came one night when a bunch of the boys spotted a car on a siding, waiting to be picked up by the steam dummy. They climbed aboard, released the brakes and were off!

Somewhere along the line, one of the company men heard the rumbling and threw a switch to prevent a crash. The car, according to his memory, coasted merrily all the way to downtown Oakland—longest free wheeling ride in company history.

Meanwhile, the second horse car line, the San Pablo Railroad Company, had opened for business in 1871, a relative of the O.R.C. It also ran from First and Broadway, to 14th St., then out San Pablo Ave. to Park Ave. The settlement which grew up at the end of the line took the name of one of the system's promoters, J. S. Emery.



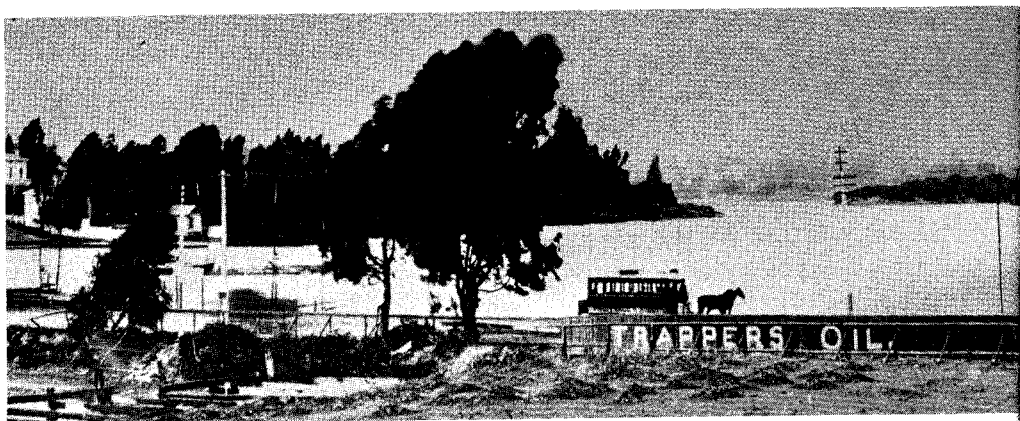
THIS WAS HOME for the Fourteenth St. Railroad Company in 1877. The car barn was located on 14th St. at Peralta.

HORSES of the Broadway and Piedmont Railroad were turned loose to graze in nearby fields while cars lay over at the end of the line in front of the massive gates of Mountain View Cemetery. The year was 1878.



With operation of these two lines, which consolidated in 1873, the horse car boom was on. Practically all of them started to get real estate on the market. There was promotion, duplication, speculation. Franchises were handed out like hot cakes to speculators who never got around to building the lines.

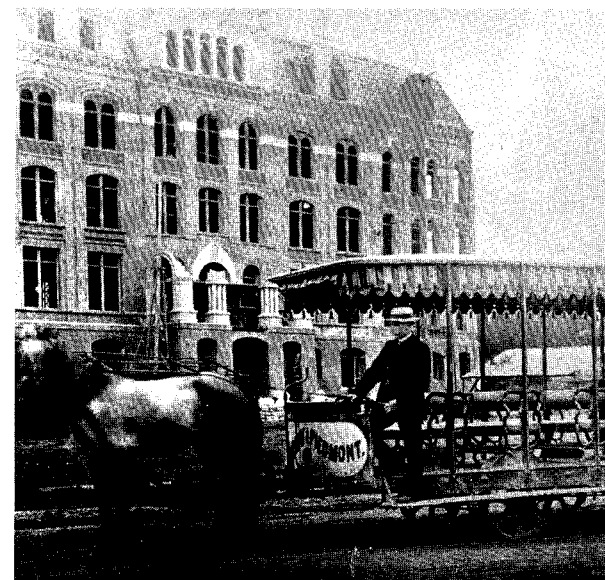
Streets were covered and recovered. Broadway, at one period, had six sets of tracks running down part of the street. But the lines that actually were built spread out to all sections of the East Bay and became the nucleus of a transportation system that by 1893 was credited as the finest in the nation.



COWS MUNCHED happily along the muddy edges of Lake Merritt ignoring the plodding passage of the horse-drawn street car of the "Tubbs Line." It ran from Seventh and Broadway to the Tubbs Hotel at Fifth Ave. and East 12th.

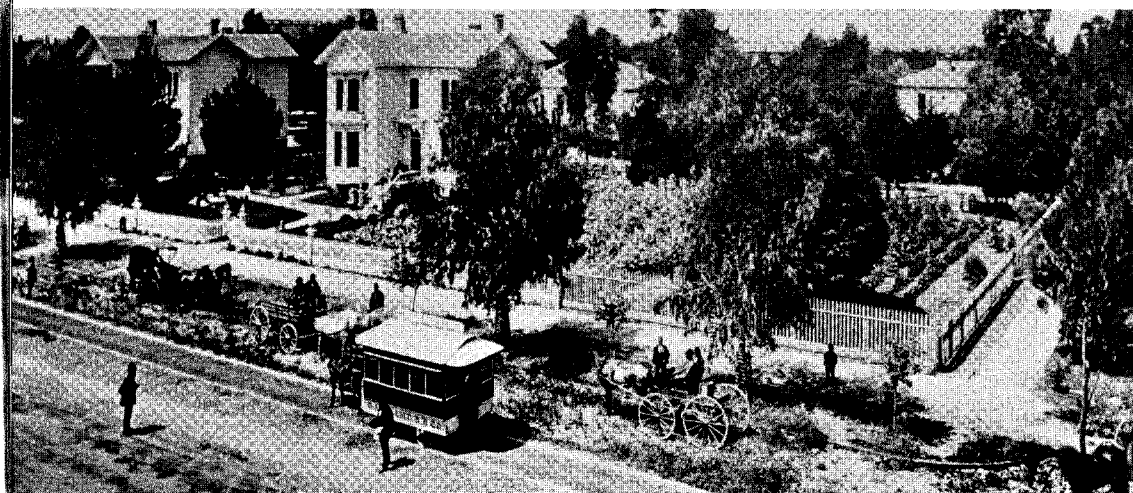


IN THE 1870's and 80's, boom days of the horse car, the Market St. Railroad provided service west of Broadway. This is car No. 1 at the intersection of Market, West and Seventh.



THE "SURREY with the fringe on top," operated by Broadway & Piedmont Railroad, on Broadway in front of St. Mary's College in 1878.

TELEGRAPH was a pleasant thoroughfare with spacious homes when Oakland's first horse car line ran along its dusty edges in 1874. The tiny car, on its way from the state university at Berkeley, opened in the back like a pie wagon and lacked the usual platform.

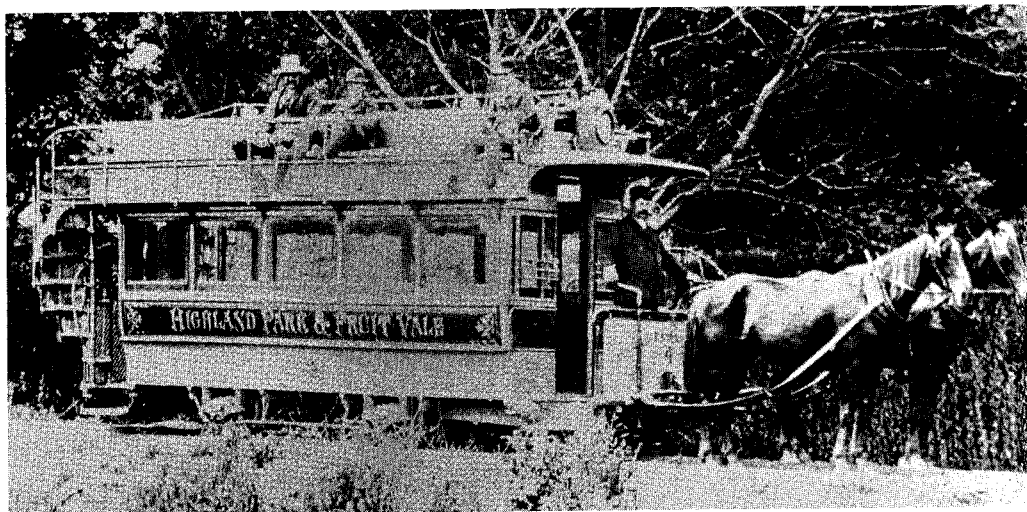


Each line had its purpose, and its individuality. One early car was a surrey type, with a fringe on the top. The tiny cars that made their way along the side of Telegraph Ave. were entered through the back—one high step and you were in. Most of the cars were small, with hard wooden benches. They could be driven from either end; the horses just switched around when the cars got to the end of the line.

Perhaps the most startling innovation was the double-decked car, like a London omnibus

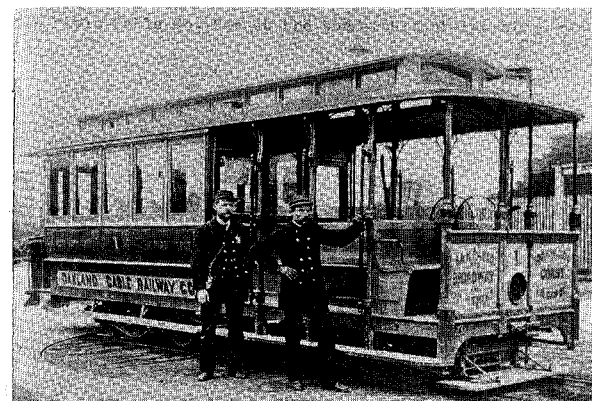
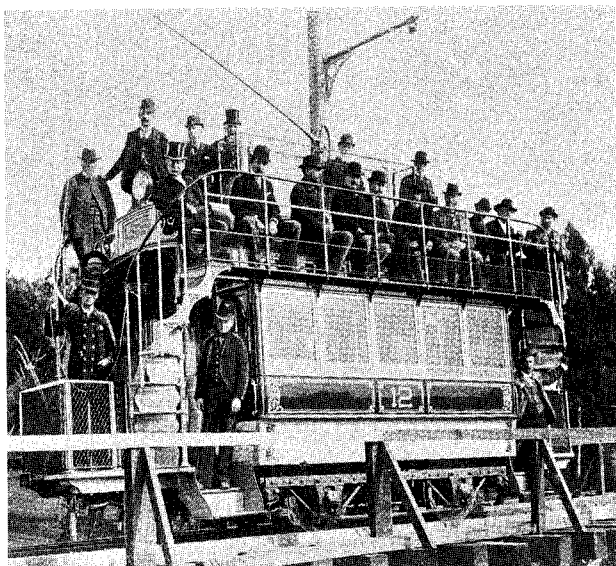
Those on the Highland Park and Fruit Vale Line were luxurious indeed, with mahogany trim, upholstered seats and a spiral stairway to the rooftop benches.

Later, converted to electric trolley cars, they were still unusual; but they didn't match, in "gingerbread" appearance, the trolley invented here by the Pullman Company and put on the East Oakland Railroad Company run to Trestle Glen. It had double spiral staircases at each end and a wire cage for the motorman and the trolley apparatus, resembling an airy fruit basket.



THE HIGHLAND PARK and Fruit Vale line offered service in omnibus - type cars, with mahogany trim and upholstered seats for inside passengers, fresh air and a bench for those who climbed topside.

EVERYONE obliged the photographer when the East Oakland Railroad Company's double-decker stopped for the moment on the trestle crossing Indian Gulch in Trestle Glen in 1894.



A DETERMINED CREW prepares to push car No. 1 of the Oakland Cable Railway Company off the turn table at Water and Broadway. Tom Pardee was conductor and Herman Zurell, motoman.

THE OLD and the new—horse car and cable—share Broadway near Ninth St. in 1886. Oakland's skyline then boasted of tall church steeples and a stubby tower atop City Hall.



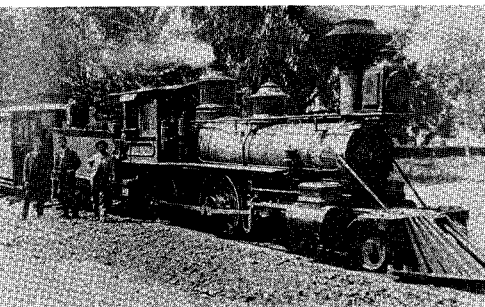
Old Dobbin was still reigning supreme in the 1880's when a new invention entered the field, the cable car.

Senator James G. Fair of Comstock fame was the first to get a cable into operation, on the old San Pablo Ave. Line, in November, 1886. But his efforts to build a turntable at Seventh and Broadway led to his subsequent defeat in the local transportation field.

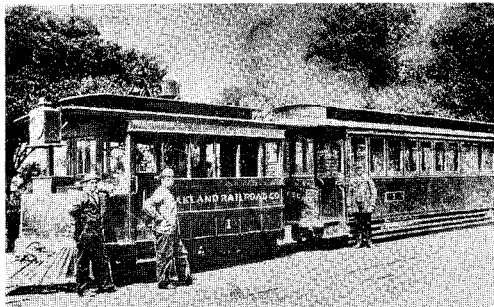
Fair, who had bought the pioneer Oakland Railroad Company and the Tubbs line the year before, wanted the cable turntable at Seventh and Broadway. Frederick Delger, prominent official and property owner, didn't. Over a weekend, while Delger was out of town, Fair went ahead and built the turntable, arousing the enmity of his opponent.



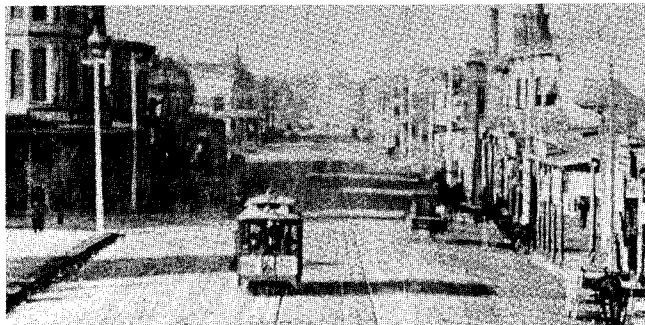
STEAM LOCOMOTIVES replaced horse cars on Telegraph, but only for a brief time after Senator Fair of Comstock fame purchased the Oakland Railroad Company. Shortly after this picture was taken at the Temescal end of the line in 1887, the locomotive was ruled off the street.



CITY FATHERS refused to approve use of the steam locomotive on Telegraph Ave., even after Senator Fair tried the subterfuge of coupling a horse car ahead of the engine.



THE HORSE CAR, too slow for the long trek from Temescal to the university campus in Berkeley, was supplanted by Oakland Railroad Company steam dummy No. 1, shown at the campus edge in 1889.



NORTH on San Pablo from the intersection of East 14th St. in the late 1880's. The horse car was about gone, but the cable was in its glory.

Delger got in his licks when Fair tried to run a steam locomotive out Telegraph. The opposition, led by Delger, stopped Fair in his tracks—narrow gauge by that time. He tried the dodge of running a horse car hooked to the front of the locomotive, but it fooled nobody—not even the horse.

As a result, Fair sold out in 1887 to other transportation giants, Crocker, Huntington and Hopkins, and they replaced the steam locomotive with the well known steam dummy.

The San Pablo cable, meantime, continued to jerk along. It extended to the foot of Broadway and, despite losses, operated until 1899, before it finally gave in to electricity.

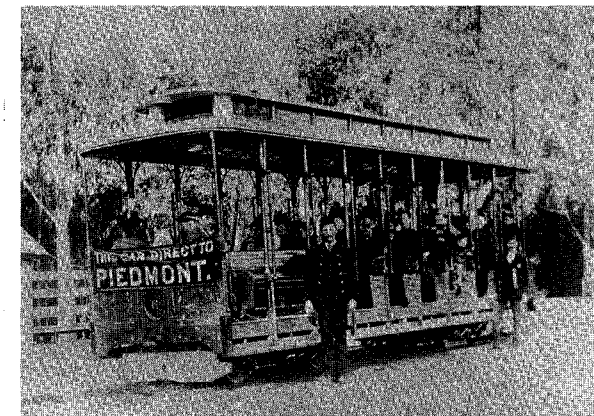
The second cable venture was launched by James Gamble, one of the pioneer developers of Piedmont. The Piedmont Consolidated Cable Company had two sections, both operating out of a power station at 24th and Harrison Sts.

One ran through Oakland, down Broadway from 24th St. south to 14th St., west to Clay, south to 8th, east to Washington and back to 14th, making a loop.

The other ran from the station, out the right-of-way previously used by the horse car line on Piedmont Ave. to Mountain View Cemetery. The cable car was pulled to a turntable at Oakland and Highland Aves., then was released for a gravity run to Blair's Park and the cemetery and a hook-up with the cable for the return trip downtown.

The first cable car hauled to Piedmont was in August of 1890 and more than 20,000 residents turned out for the event. Despite excitement of the day, the cable car was no answer to the hue for more rapid transportation, especially between Oakland and Berkeley.

PROMINENT figures of the day take a trial run to Blair's Park in an experimental overhead cable car, with inventor Henry Casebolt at the controls. Piedmont in 1887 was still a pleasant farm land.



ONE OF PIEDMONT'S cable cars in front of Blair Park at Moraga and Highland in 1890. A section of the cable line ran from a turn table at Highland and Oakland Ave. to Blair Park by gravity.

The solution was found in electric power.

The Oakland and Berkeley Rapid Transit Company, while waiting for legislative action, went ahead and built a double-track line from Second and Franklin, out Grove St. to the University campus in Berkeley. By the time the Legislature granted a franchise, the first electric street railway, under a new banner of the Oakland Consolidated Street Railway, was ready to roll.

It was May 12, 1891—an event greeted with mixed reception. Stores were decorated with bunting and the populace turned out to watch the new electric cars go by. But some feared the electricity would stop their watches. Others thought it might cure their rheumatism.

It didn't, but it did signal the end to the tinkling bell and the shambling trot of the street car horse. Pasture was at the end of his line.

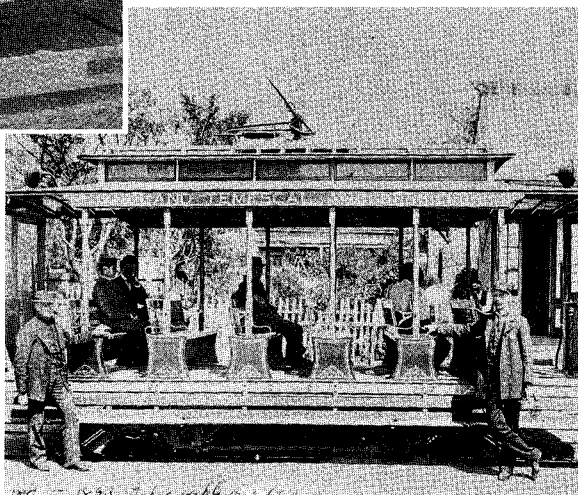
TROLLEY car No. 8 of the Oakland and Berkeley Rapid Transit Company on Dana St. at Bancroft Way, Berkeley, in 1892 during the early days of electrification.



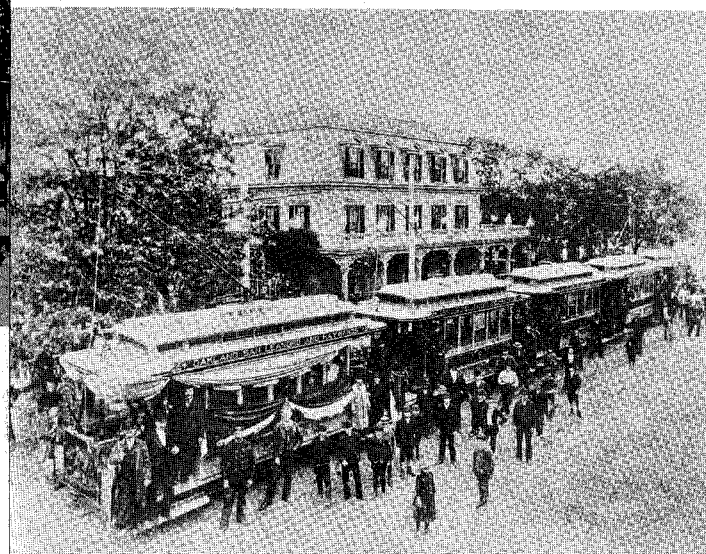
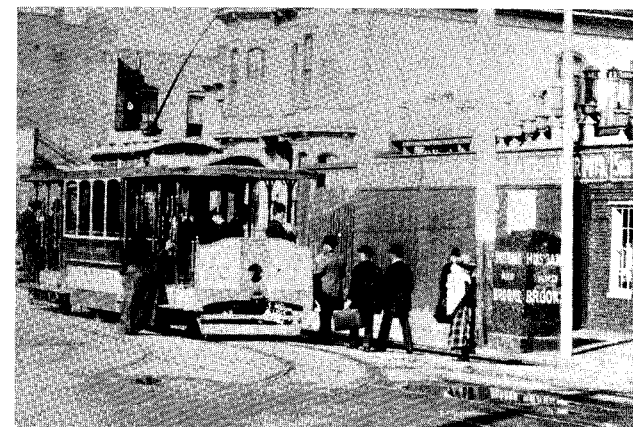
THE FIRST day of service on the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Electric Railway, May 7, 1892, showing train of street cars on East 14th at Davis in San Leandro.



THE OPEN bench type car was a breezy rarity, but it didn't discourage passengers from using — and liking — the Oakland, Temescal and Berkeley line. This picture was taken in 1893 at the end of the line, in front of where Sather Gate stands today.



WAITING passengers climb aboard Oakland's first electric railway, the Oakland and Berkeley Rapid Transit Company, at 13th and Franklin. The line opened May 12, 1891, and whisked riders all the way to Berkeley via Grove.



THE SECOND major electric road, the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Electric Railway, got an enthusiastic send-off in 1892 as it posed for posterity in front of the old Oakes Hotel in Haywards.

The second major electric road was the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Electric Railway, heralded as the biggest development affecting East Bay public transportation in its 29-year history.

The electric, which made its first run on May 7, 1892, opened up new territory, brought Haywards within easy riding distance of Oakland, and started a boom that hasn't yet stopped. By 1894, this line had settled an agreement with the Oakland Consolidated so that passengers could travel by electric all the way from Haywards to Berkeley. The East Bay was rolling!



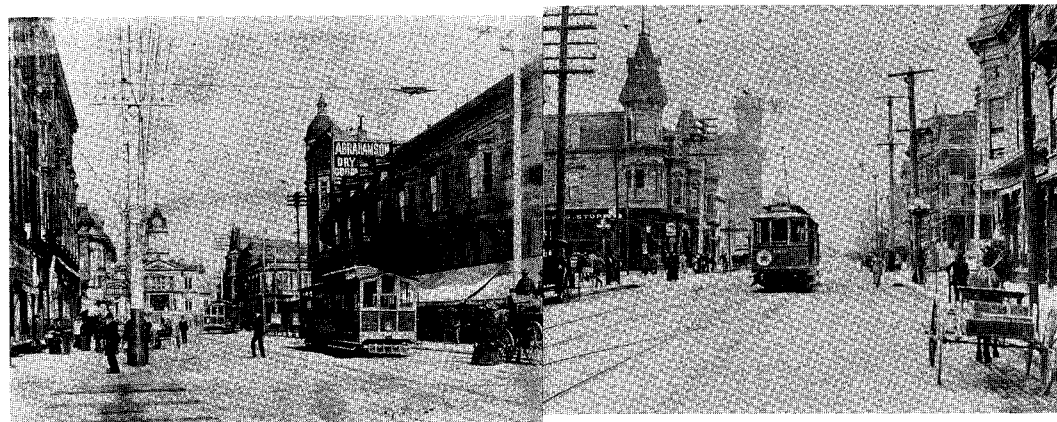
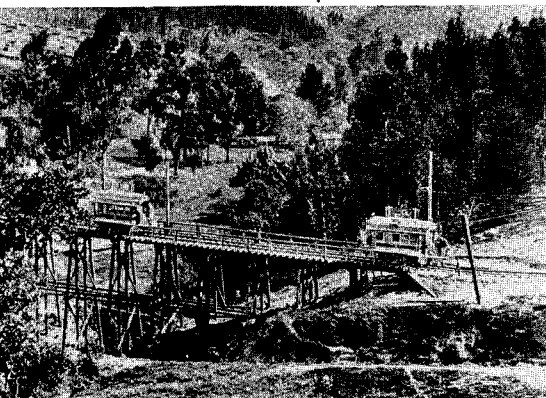
Other lines, in the meantime, had quickly switched to electricity. By 1893, Oakland took a bow for the most complete electric street railway system in the United States, all accomplished in two years.

And the time was ripe for the entrance of the greatest empire builder of them all, Francis Marion "Borax" Smith, who already had mushroomed his borax discoveries into a multi-million dollar fortune.

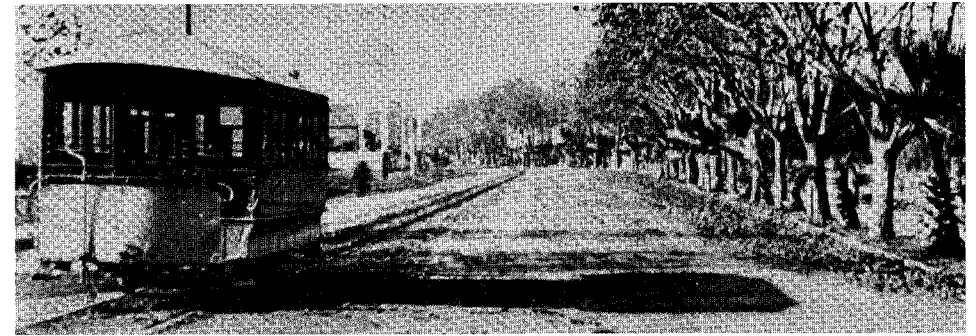
Smith saw no reason why his chosen home town shouldn't rise to unlimited heights, given the right push—like better transportation.

Along with F. C. Havens, a San Francisco attorney and business leader, he decided to do something for the disgruntled transbay commuters (then, too!) who had only "The Local" of the Southern Pacific for ferry-train service.

THIS WAS Washington St. in the early 1900's, looking north toward the old City Hall from 12th St. Trolley cars had replaced the horse car, but Dobbin was still used for other transportation.

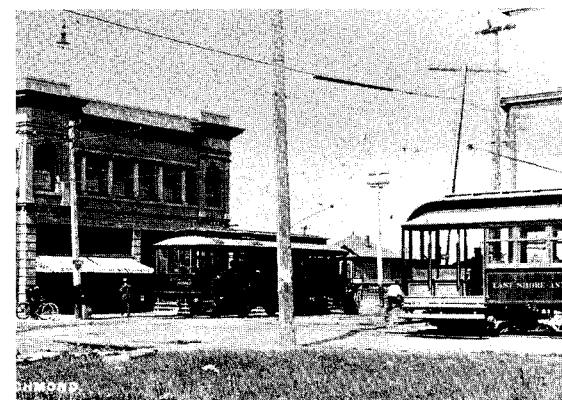


TINY trolley cars in 1894 cross the trestle that gave Trestle Glen its name, bridging Indian Gulch enroute from upper Park Blvd. to Longridge Rd. Line lasted until 1904.



RESTING in the street on one of its days off is a horse car of the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Electric Railway. Photo was taken in 1905 looking west on B St. from Main.

A GOOD representation of Richmond's rolling stock in the early days of electric power. At the Sixth St. and Macdonald Ave. junction are three cars of the East Shore and Suburban Railway.



WAGONS and trolleys still had the right-of-way at the turn of the century when this photo was taken on Park St. at the intersection of Santa Clara in Alameda.



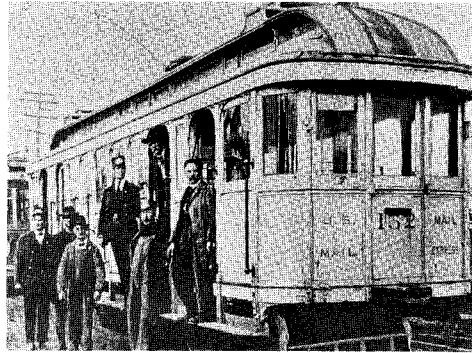
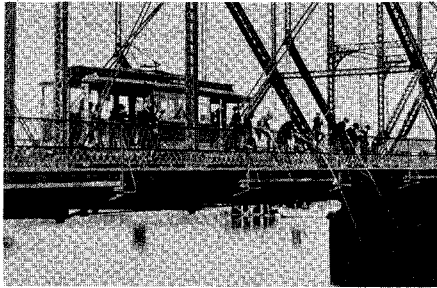
EASTSHORE and Suburban Railway Company provided transportation out Macdonald to San Pablo Ave. in early Richmond days. Streets were seas of mud or dust, depending on the season.

They especially liked the idea of buying a lot of land (cheap) and selling it (not so cheap) to the multitudes who would be attracted from San Francisco.

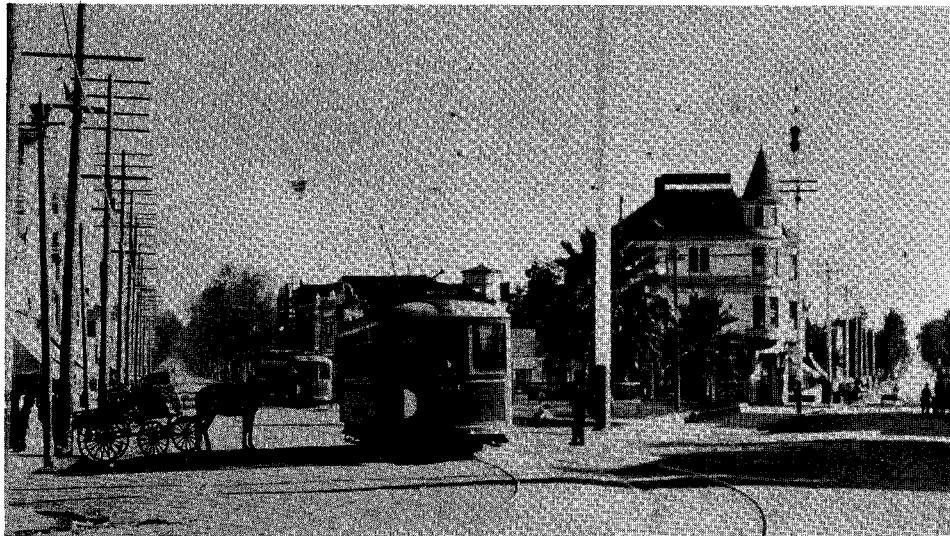
They decided to improve and extend street car lines, bringing outlying districts into the fold. The street car service would sell the land, as it had in the past; the land owners would support the car service. Eventually new light, water and power services would be in order.

To get his first right-of-way, Smith obtained control of the eccentric California and Nevada Railroad, a joyous little wood-burning line that huffed and puffed, rolled off the rails, set fire to grain fields and never got closer to its Nevada goal than the Bryant picnic grounds at Orinda.

THOSE were the days! Fishing was so good in the estuary, the sportsmen were undisturbed by the trolley crossing the Park St. Bridge to Alameda.



STREET cars even carried the mail when the electric made neighbors out of Oakland and Hayward in 1892.



SOUTH on East 14th and Washington, showing San Leandro's Plaza from Davis St. in 1910. Washington was newly paved.

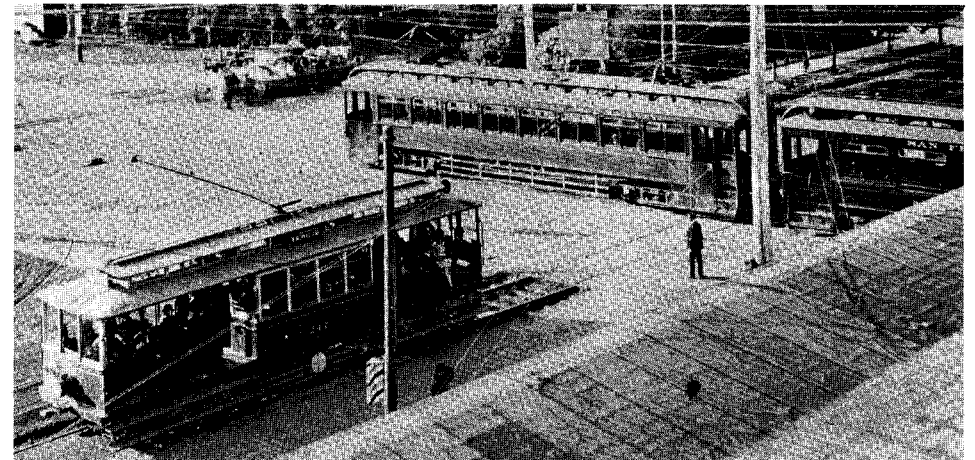
It took merrymakers from 40th out San Pablo Ave. to the town of San Pablo, up the valley to the Orinda of today.

Then, in July, 1893, Smith started picking up street car lines, one after another, merging them into one system and coordinating them with a mass real estate development, the Realty Syndicate. Late in 1901, the last big independent line, the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards, was brought in and Smith realized his goal of one single street railway in the East Bay, the Oakland Transit Consolidated.

Now he could concentrate on development of transbay transportation. Smith first planned an underwater tube to Yerba Buena Island—called Goat Island in those days. He wanted to use part of the island for a ferry terminal, but Congress balked the plan. He switched to a new scheme, a ferry train service under the name of the San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose Railway—forerunner of the Key System.

A trestle, 3¼ miles long, was built from the foot of Yerba Buena Avenue across Oakland tidelands to deep water. On October 26, 1903 (October is an auspicious month in East Bay transportation annals) an electric-powered train picked up a load of prominent citizens at Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley, and carted them to the end of the pier, for transfer to the ferry Yerba Buena and fair sailing to San Francisco.

The long dominant S. P. had competition.



AN EARLY trolley car waits for the Key Route electric to cross San Pablo and 40th St. in 1909. Santa Fe sign, near station, can be seen across the street.

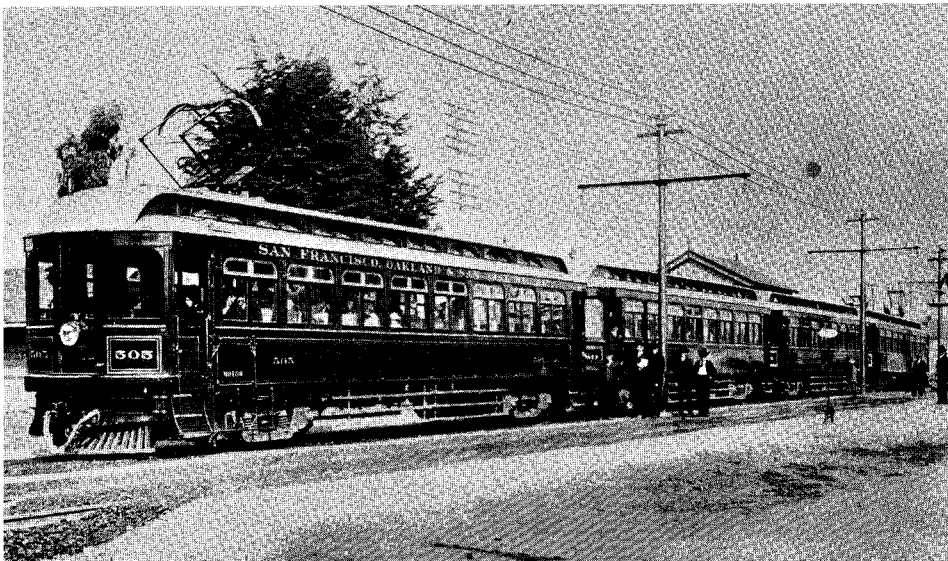


AN EIGHT car train, one of the first used by the Key Route after service opened in 1903, gives Berkeley commuters a speedy, smooth ride to the new Key pier. Travel time between University Ave. and San Francisco was 35 minutes.

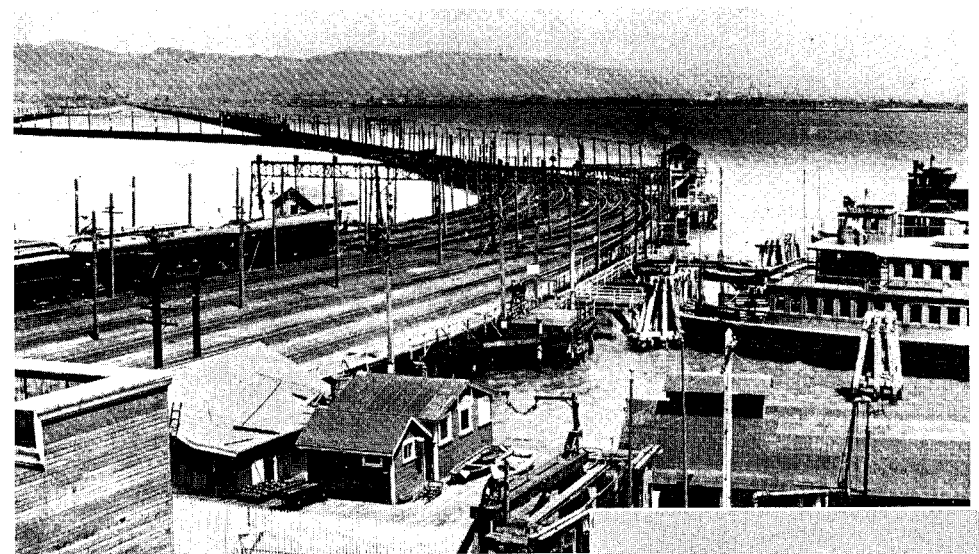




KEY ROUTE train and local trolley on Shattuck, looking north towards University Ave. in Berkeley in the early 1900's. The old Atcheson Hotel is at the left.

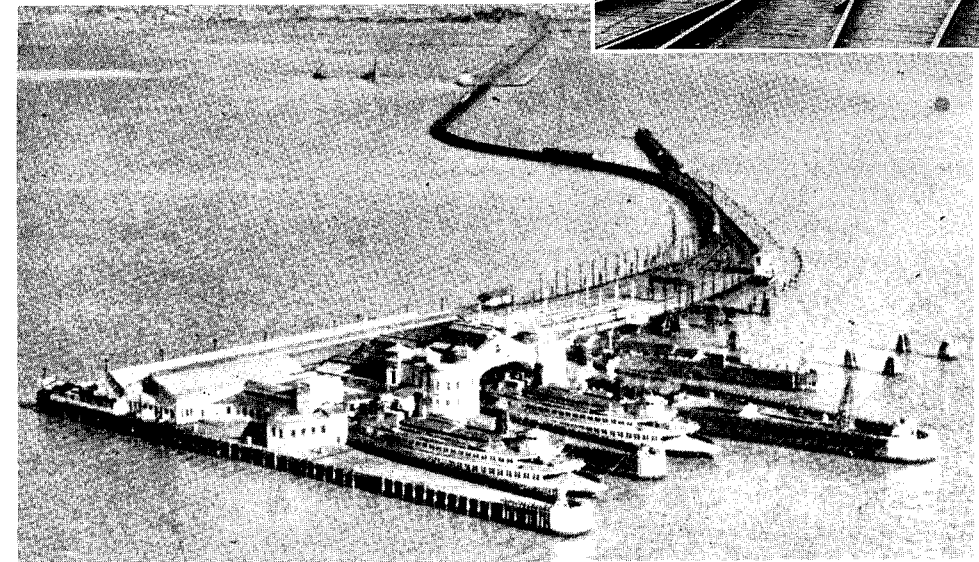


OCTOBER 26, 1903 opened a new commuting era. It was the first day of operations for the Key System. This four-car train, loaded with dignitaries, made the initial trip from Berkeley to the new Key pier, then boarded the ferry Yerba Buena for San Francisco.

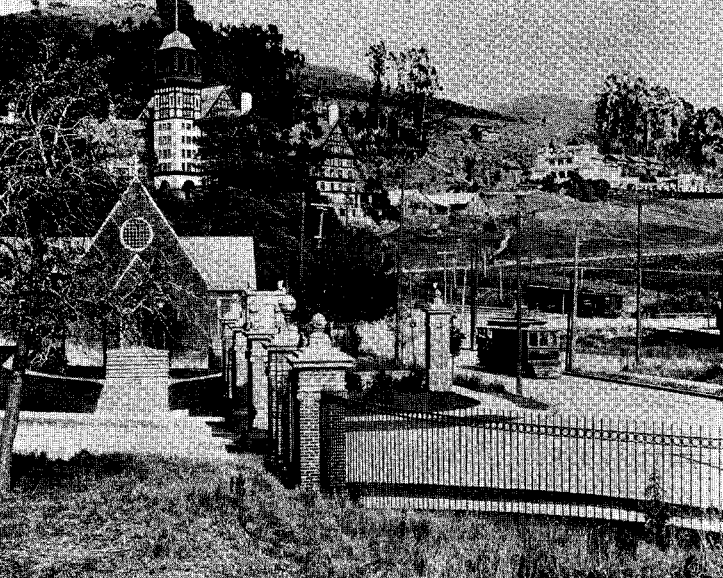


NEW Key Route trestle was constructed in 1912 to the left of the original structure.

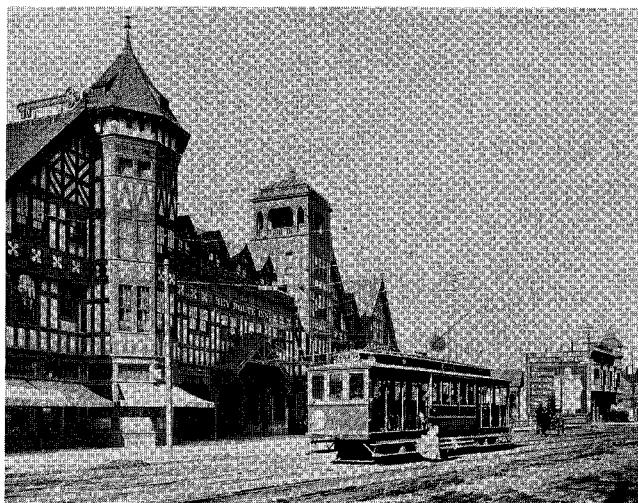
THE KEY pier in 1904, with cars of the San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose Railway — Key Route trains — waiting for their commuter load.



AN ORNATE terminal building greeted Key ferry passengers in 1921 as they landed and transferred to the train for remainder of their ride to the East Bay.



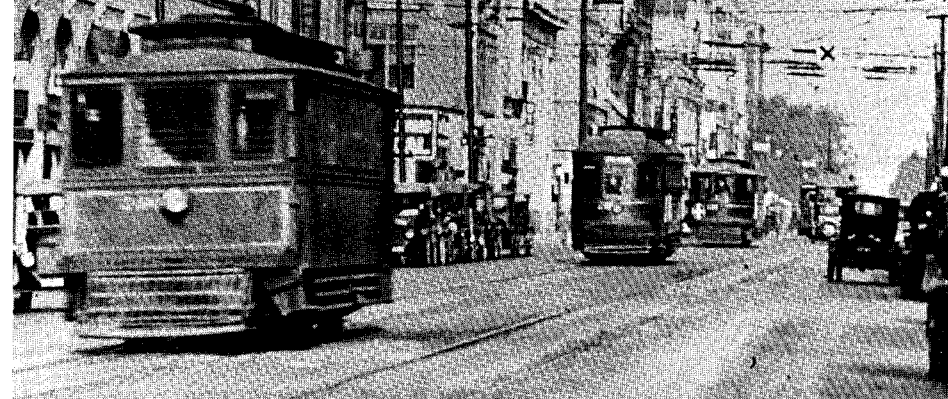
END of the Russell St. trolley line in Berkeley below the newly built Claremont Hotel. A freight car stands on a siding of the Key Route Claremont line near the future location of the Berkeley Tennis Club.



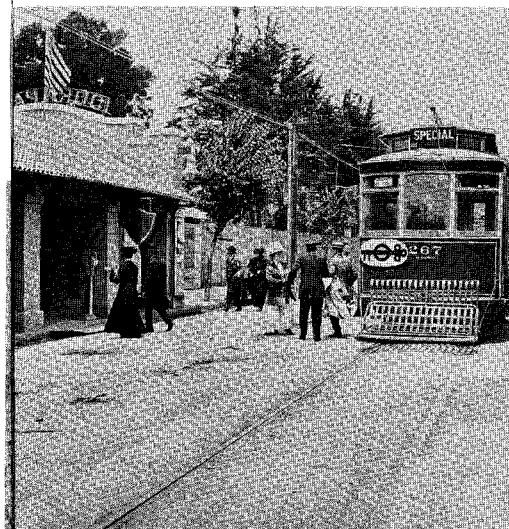
BROADWAY was still unpaved, but the Key Route Inn, built at 22nd and Broadway by F. M. "Borax" Smith, was among Oakland showplaces. The inn straddled the Key Route 22nd St. line.

Smith now turned his genius to expanding his local and interurban transportation system. He laid out branches from his main trunk line, branches that later became the basic structure of the Key System. He built the Key Route Inn on the 22nd St. line; the Claremont Hotel at the end of the 55th St. line; developed Piedmont Park for the 40th St. line and turned the old Ayalla Park in North Oakland into the Idora Park of fond memory—all for passenger revenue.

He steadily expanded until, in March, 1912, a sweeping merger combined all street railway transportation in Alameda County and Richmond into the San Francisco-Oakland Terminal Railways Company.



TROLLEY cars followed one another and parking places were in the usual premium in this early picture of 13th St., west from Webster in Oakland.



SPECIAL EXCURSION car stops at Idora Park in North Oakland. Popular during Panama - Pacific Exposition, Key Route tours ran until 1916.



THIS was the era when roadsters were spiffy, Broadway wore buttons and street cars like this one took you for a clanking ride to town for shopping, then home again.

The names, it seems, grew longer with the miles.

The transbay lines, under the popular name of the Key Route—the cities of the East Bay at one end and the trestle and piers at the other giving the appearance of a "key"—flourished and prospered, as did local street car service.

Then the fabulous bubble of "Borax" Smith burst.

Not content with their transportation empire, Smith and Havens invaded the field of water, light and power and a grand scale real estate promotion stretching from Contra Costa County to the Gilroy valley.

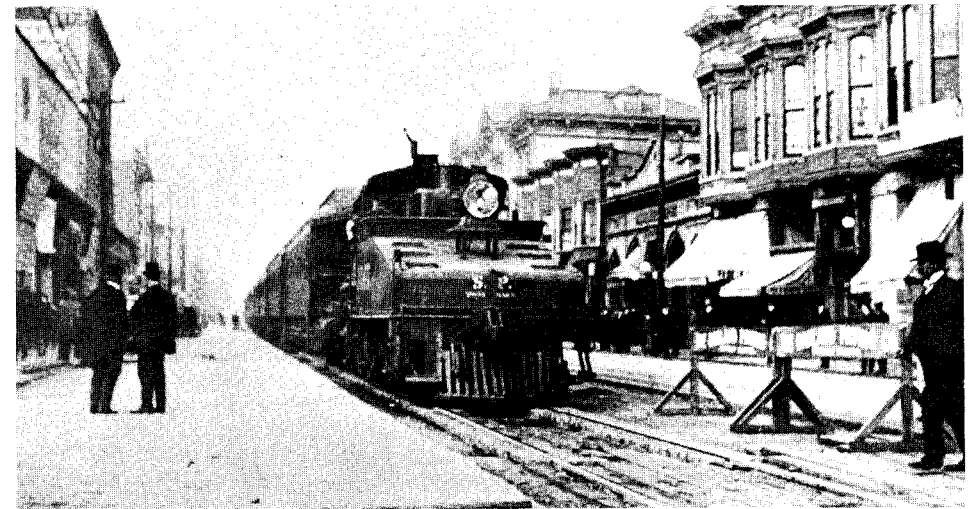




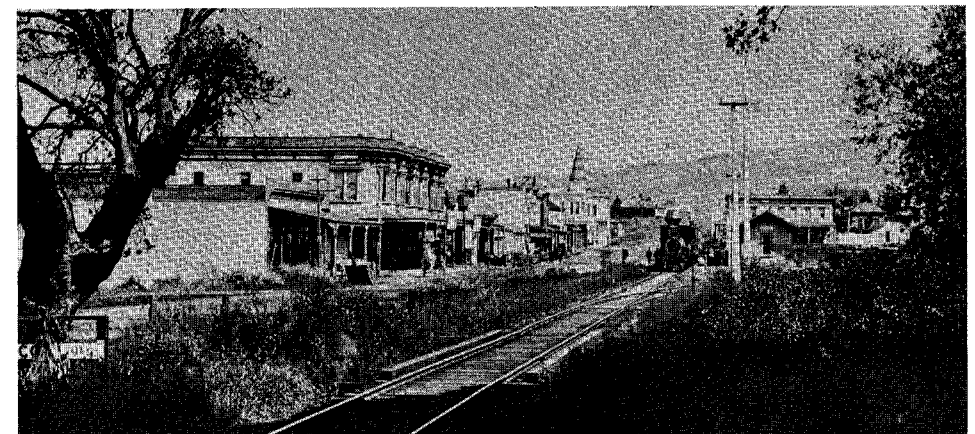
STEAM trains were still running along Shattuck Ave. when this photo was taken at the Berkeley station shortly after turn of the century.

A giant holding firm, United Properties Company, formed in 1910 with a capital of \$200,000,000, soon grew topheavy and unmanageable as more corporations were absorbed. Several of the companies began losing money and conflicting ideas over management developed.

Within a year, Havens attempted to pull out, but Smith was unable to deliver his blocks of transportation stock which had been deposited for collateral on a number of loans. The vast structure, already weakened, tottered and, in 1913, finally collapsed, forcing Smith into bankruptcy.



STEAM local at Seventh and Broadway in 1911. Sandwiched between buildings at the right is the Southern Pacific station.



NORTH on Shattuck Ave. from Allston Way in 1876, a big year for the Village of Berkeley. It was the start of the Central Pacific's steam train and ferry service to San Francisco. The station was at right, beyond a brush-protected "swimming hole."

The unscrambling took years. From 1914 until 1923, the transportation system was managed under informal receivership. Then, on June 1, 1923, a new operating company, the Key System Transit Company, took over.

Smith's dream became an efficient, well-run actuality under the leadership of John S. Drum.

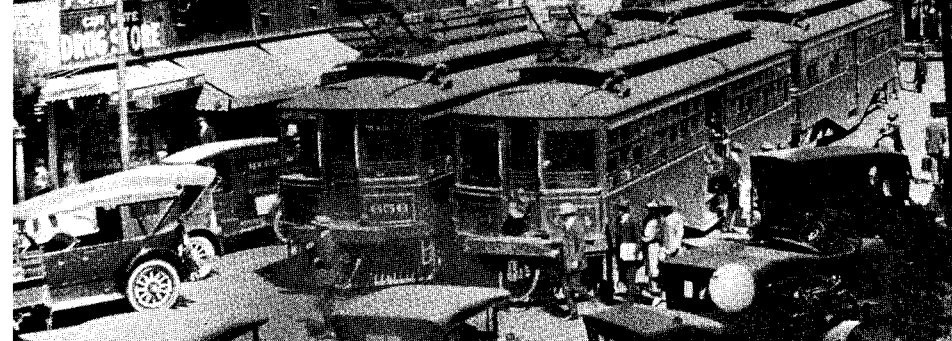
The company profited from the sale of tidelands, increases in fares, operation of one-man street cars. The program of progress continued under Alfred J. Lundberg, who took over as president in 1927.



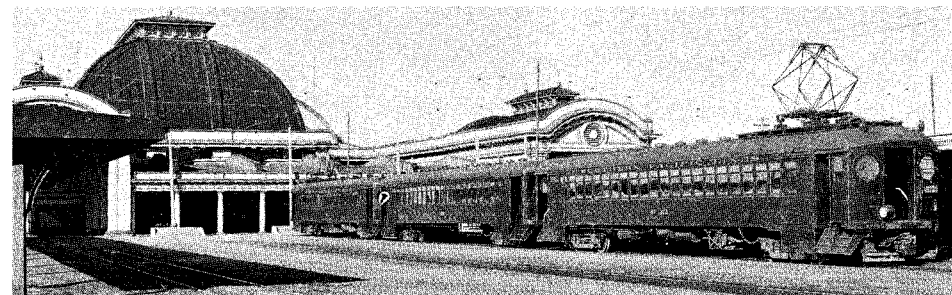
HOW MANY remember the old Southern Pacific station on Franklin St. between 13th and 14th? The new City Hall nearing completion in the background sets the date of the picture at 1913. Small building in front of the new structure is the old city hall.

The name became plain Key System in 1935, then evolved into Key System Transit Lines when National City Lines purchased controlling interest in 1946. As far as the public was concerned, it was all orange over the years and that's what you rode if you wanted to move.

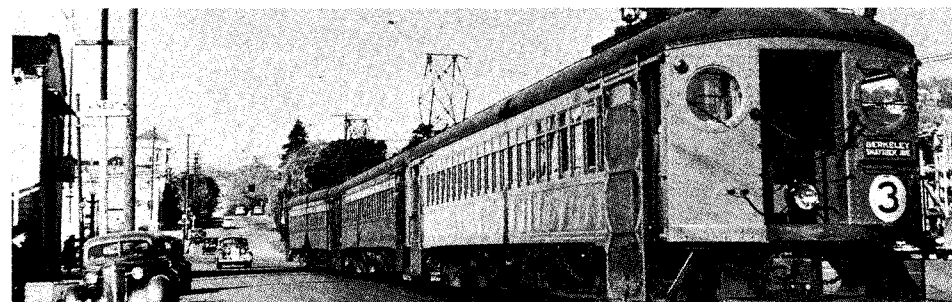
And what was the Southern Pacific doing all this time? For trains, from the initial days of "The Local," were an integral part of East Bay transportation.



THINK you have traffic problems now? This was the scene at 12th and Broadway about 1923 as the Key Route electrics and a passing street car bring early auto traffic to a halt.



FAMILIAR Southern Pacific red train waits for commuters at the ornate Alameda Pier before running its loop through Alameda.



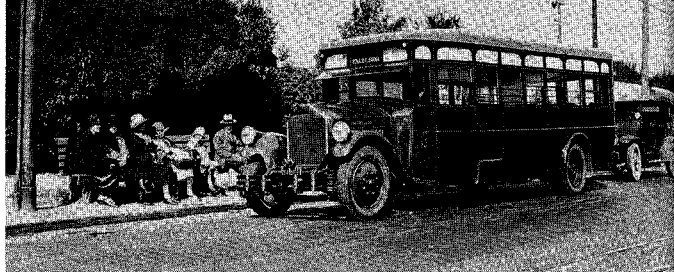
REMEMBER the "red trains" which roared into Berkeley in 1911 to fulfill an S.P. promise to "girdle the city with electric trains?" The Shattuck Ave. line, posed here at Vine St., and the Ninth St. line in Berkeley were the last to be abandoned, making their final run in July, 1941.

The Central Pacific had taken over the San Francisco and Oakland Railroad in 1869. The Oakland Mole, built on filled land from Oakland Point, was completed in 1881. Then the Southern Pacific took over Central Pacific in 1885.

The Webster St. bridge over the Estuary had been built in the meantime and in 1887, S.P. took over the South Pacific Coast Line and the operation of service into Alameda. In 1878, the S.P. reached out to Berkeley, via West Oakland, Shellmound Park, Stanford Ave., Adeline St. and Shattuck Ave.



BUSES have come a long way, too, since Pierce Arrow turned out this snazzy number in 1925 for the Excelsior run. This was one of the first buses to begin competition with the street car.



ONE of the early Key System buses shares street space with a trolley car at 58th and Telegraph in 1923.

Then they rested on their rails for a quarter of a century, until Smith began to provide competition.

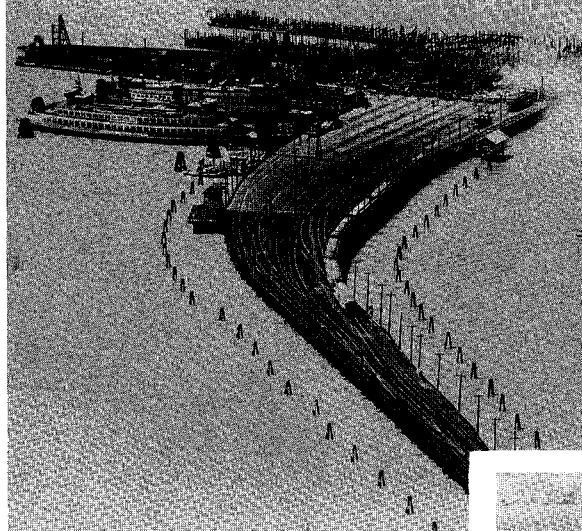
Smith's enterprises awoke the S.P. to the gold mine of interurban transportation. The railroad began expansion into interurban and street car systems that spread throughout California and into Oregon—the inspired answer to cities' transit problems.

By 1911, S.P. had switched from steam boilers to electric power. Faster equipment was in operation and a network of lines was laid out from San Leandro to Albany in fierce competition with the aggressive Smith system.

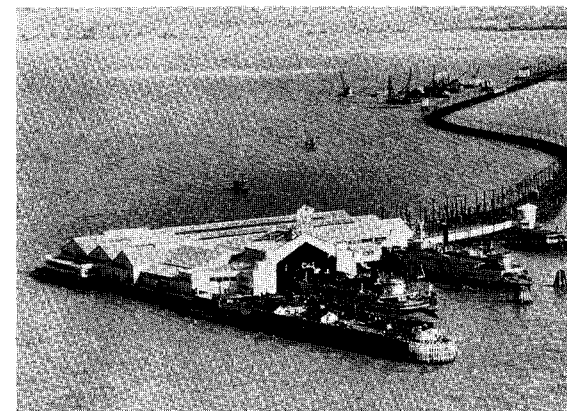
No one paid much attention at the time, but another competitor had entered the field, the automobile. Bus service was next, started by Key System in 1921 in Oakland's Montclair and Mills College districts.

As the Interurban Electric Railway, the S.P. joined with the Key System in January, 1939, in running trains over the new Bay Bridge. But financial losses were great and in 1941 the I.E.R. abandoned operations. The "red cars," known to thousands of commuters since 1911—all of whom had their favorite seats and guarded them jealously—were gone. Key System was alone in the field.

Then, in 1948, Old Dobbin, if he'd been around, would have had the last horse laugh. The electric street cars, which had put him out to pasture, were in turn sent to the barns, vanquished by buses that could get there easier, faster and cheaper.



KEY System pier and ferry slip after fire of 1933.



NEW Key pier, rebuilt following the 1933 fire.

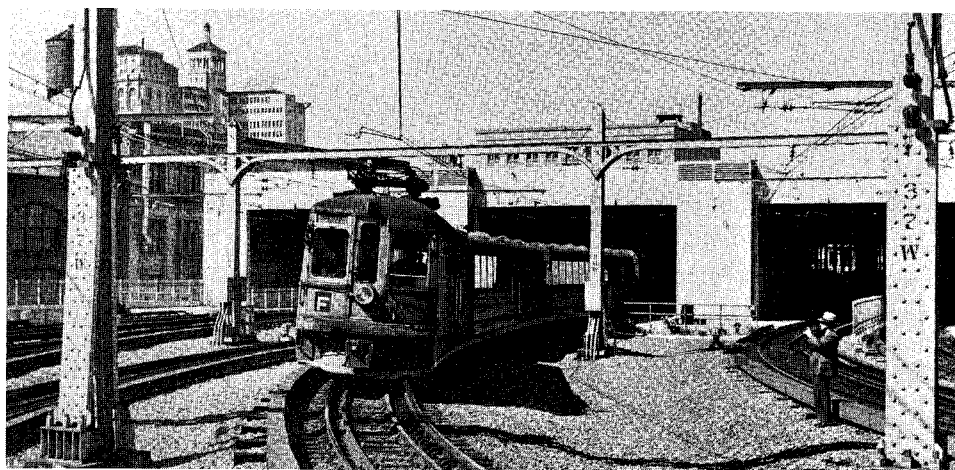
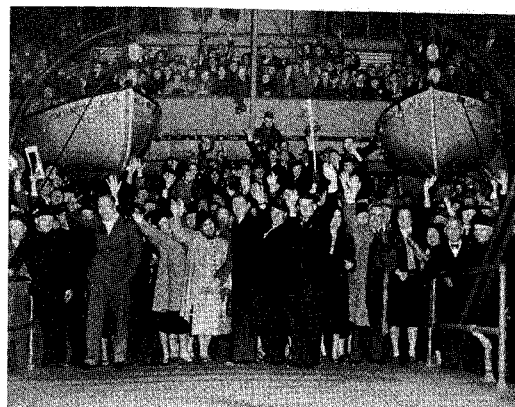


COMMUTERS moved from the ferries to the Bay Bridge in 1939, shortly after this Dutton Ave. train of the Southern Pacific made a test run across the bridge.

But the autos, really, were in command. Traffic jammed the streets, strikes halted the transit wheels. In 1953, after a contract dispute closed down transportation for 76 days, a fed-up public turned to one possible permanent solution—a transportation system they would own, governed like a school district or a municipality.

It took months of studies; then a law was passed by the State Legislature permitting the public to set up the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District. Experts went to work planning a program that would solve the transit situation, a program based on faster, more comfortable and more efficient service.

IT WAS a jovial crowd that jammed aboard the San Leandro for the last Key System ferry ride before inauguration of rail service on the Bay Bridge in January, 1939.

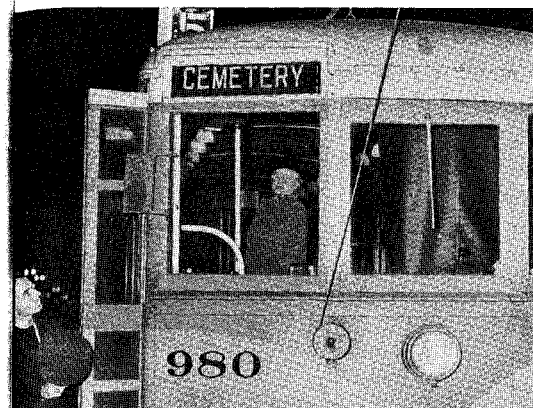


A FAMILIAR view to thousands of commuters, one of Key System's last transbay trains leaves the San Francisco terminal for the trip across the Bay Bridge. In this case, it's the F train, bound for Berkeley via Shattuck Ave., on its way to oblivion in 1958.

A \$16,500,000 bond issue, voted in October, 1959, provided funds to buy the Key System lines and to get the new transit district rolling on a pay-as-you-go basis. In the following May, agreement was reached with Key System on a \$7,500,000 price tag for their entire facilities. In June, Western Contra Costa County voted to annex to the district.

And, in October, 1960, the district was in business, rolling a transit system that would be admired by the visionaries of the past.

In 1910, Smith was king over some 75 miles of track. By 1963 AC



THE LAST street car to make a scheduled run in the East Bay carries an appropriate destination sign—"cemetery." The car, No. 980, rumbled for the final time into the car barn at Second Ave. and Foothill Blvd. early on Nov. 28, 1948—sent to the graveyard by the greater speed and economy of buses.

THESE were happy, prosperous days for the Key System if not for impatient riders. It was late in World War II, and patrons were struggling to get aboard the crowded trains. Both look a trifle tired.



Transit was operating service in excess of 1,150 route miles. Soon the transit district will have in operation 310 modern "Transit Liners" containing picture windows and streamlined comfort that would have astonished early empire builders. The latest order of new buses will feature a rear door exit operated by finger-tip control and bucket-style seats that might have jogged even the visionary-minded "Borax" Smith.

But Smith's plans for one metropolitan area, linked together by transportation, are approaching fulfillment. Buses operate on 96 AC Transit lines, connecting 11 cities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, San Francisco, and reaching constantly into new areas. Over 67 route miles of rapid, new intercity express service are welding major East Bay communities by the expedients of speed and comfort.





BRIGHT fluorescent lights run the entire length of the attractively painted ceiling panels.



ENTRANCE steps on the new "Transit Liners" are lower, closer to the ground for added passenger convenience.



SHINY aluminum panels brighten modern design of bus exterior with a silvery hue.

Transit patronage has grown steadily since the district went into operation. More people than ever are riding the buses, attracted by better schedules, faster service, modern equipment and terminals, new ideas—and a mutual attitude of respect and admiration. AC Transit buses soon expect to be carrying in excess of 53,000,000 passengers a year.

And soon to come with the future, (oh, shades of the past,) is an inter-urban system of high-speed travel undreamed of in the minds of movers nearly a century ago.



LARGE, forward slanting "picture windows" afford greater outside vistas and brighter daytime illumination. Wide seats give increased space for relaxed travel.



PUSH-TYPE doors, another new innovation, provide added safety with convenient holding bar while stepping from bus.

ENTIRE FLEET of "Transit Liners" come equipped with new air-cushion suspension, assuring a smooth ride free of pavement vibrations.



Just as the convenience of the private auto once dimmed the utility of public transportation, new improvements in mass transit today are being developed to vanquish the crowded monopoly of the car.

The beginning of a new cycle is at hand—the beginning of a new era in public transit.

The district already has received national acclaim for its level of passenger service, patronage gains, and for its plans to continue upgrading its bus fleet. But it doesn't expect to stop there. The district has now turned its efforts—and vision—toward better ways of doing things and especially, toward analyzing and improving each line to meet the needs of today and prepare for the needs of tomorrow.

## HISTORY'S TIMETABLE OF EAST BAY TRANSPORTATION

- 1863**—First train-ferry service between Oakland and San Francisco started Sept. 2, on Seventh St. between Broadway and Oakland Point.
- 1869**—On Oct. 30, first East Bay horse car, operated by the Oakland Railroad Company, leaves First St. and Broadway for a trot out Telegraph Ave. to approximately 36th St.
- 1871**—Second horse car line started on San Pablo Ave. between First St. and Broadway, and Park Ave., followed by additional companies extending service into other outlying areas.
- 1875**—The horse car is too slow; a steam dummy begins pulling the cars out Telegraph Ave., between Temescal and Berkeley.
- 1878**—Southern Pacific completes expansion of steam train service into Alameda and Berkeley, with transbay connections to the Seventh St. "Local" and ferries.
- 1886**—First cable car goes into operation in November on San Pablo Ave., from a turntable at Seventh St. and Broadway to the end of the line in Emeryville.
- 1890**—Cable car service is extended in August through downtown Oakland and into Piedmont by the Piedmont Consolidated Cable Company.
- 1891**—On May 12, the Oakland Consolidated Street Railway operates the first electric street car from Second and Franklin Sts., out Grove St. to Berkeley. Other lines begin conversion to electricity.
- 1892**—New territory is opened and an unending boom started on May 7 when the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards electric line begins operation.
- 1893**—Empire builder Francis Marion "Borax" Smith begins vast program of acquiring and consolidating street car lines into one united system.
- 1899**—Cable line on San Pablo Ave. converted to electric power.
- 1901**—All East Bay street car operations come under Smith's control, as Oakland Transit Consolidated, with final acquisition of the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards line.
- 1903**—First Key Route electric train runs from Berkeley to the new Key pier on Oct. 26 as Smith's dream of fast train-ferry service to San Francisco goes into operation.

- 1908**—Last horse car in Alameda County is abandoned from service between Castro St. and the Southern Pacific depot in Hayward.
- 1911**—Southern Pacific, awakened by Key competition and expansion, completes change-over from steam to electric power, and begins acquiring a network of interurban and street car lines that spreads throughout the State.
- 1913**—Smith's empire topples, and the Key Route goes into informal receivership for nine years.
- 1918**—Transbay cash fares increase from 10 to 11 cents, and local fares, from 5 to 6 cents.
- 1921**—Key System's first bus begins service May 14 in the vicinity of Mills College.
- 1930**—One-man street car operation begins March 19 on the College Ave. Berkeley line during off-peak evening hours.
- 1939**—Interurban trains operated by Key System and Southern Pacific routed across new Bay Bridge on Jan. 15, ending long era of ferry boat commuting.
- 1941**—Southern Pacific abandons interurban operations after nearly 78 years of East Bay service.
- 1946**—National City Lines gains control of Key System.
- 1948**—Last electric street car lines converted to motor coaches on Nov. 28.
- 1953**—Longest transit strike in East Bay history shuts down Key System for 76 days.
- 1955**—The State Legislature passes a bill permitting creation of a public agency to operate transit services.
- 1956**—Citizens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties vote Nov. 6 to establish the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.
- 1958**—Remaining interurban train service between East Bay and San Francisco abandoned by Key System and replaced by motor coach operation April 20.
- 1959**—Voters approve a \$16,500,000 bond issue on Oct. 20 to buy equipment for the new transit district.
- 1960**—A C Transit acquires the Key System and begins transit operations under public ownership Oct. 1.
- 1961**—Intercity express inaugurated, linking major East Bay communities with rapid, direct service.





*Tired old Dobbin pulls the last East Bay horse car to pasture in 1909*

PEOPLE OF THE EAST BAY—and the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District—can be grateful to those who have preserved some record of a complex transportation history. Especially, we are indebted to the California Room of the Oakland Public Library, Bancroft Library at the University of California, libraries of the Oakland Tribune and Southern Pacific Company, and to collectors Louis L. Stein of Kensington, Vernon Sappers, Albert E. Norman and Frank Rigney of Oakland, Gilbert Kneiss of Berkeley and Harre Demoro of Alameda, whose priceless photographs and records give such a vivid picture of the past.



Published by the

## **ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT**

**508 SIXTEENTH STREET, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA • 654-7878**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS • Robert M. Copeland, President • William H. Coburn, Jr., Vice President  
William E. Berk • William J. Bettencourt • John L. McDonnell • Ray H. Rinehart • E. Guy Warren