

Collection #
P 0523

INDIANAPOLIS STREET TRANSPORTATION ALBUM CA. 1890–CA. LATE 1940S

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Processed by

Barbara Quigley
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: One album with 16 photographs plus one loose photograph

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1890–ca. late 1940s (includes later copies of some of the earlier images)

PROVENANCE: Transferred from the Indiana Historical Society's education library in December 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0349

NOTES: *See also:* Indianapolis Street Railways Collection (OMB 20, BV 3038–3049)

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Citizens' Street Railway Company operated mule-drawn streetcars on Illinois Street in downtown Indianapolis in 1864, and this service grew as the city expanded. The Citizens' Street Railroad Company, founded by investors from Chicago, bought the system in 1888 and converted it from animal to electric power. The Indianapolis Street Railway Company purchased the system in 1899, allowed interurban electric trains to use its lines in 1900, and bought control of the Indianapolis–Broad Ripple line in 1902. The company began operating buses in 1925. In 1932 Indianapolis Railways, Inc. bought the system and became the first transit operator anywhere to use the trackless trolley in downtown traffic. The trackless trolley completely replaced the traditional streetcar in Indianapolis in January 1953. By 1957 trolleys had all been replaced by buses.

Sources:

Taggart, Charles Johnson. "Streetcars." In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994: 1305–06. General Collection: F534 .I55 E4 1994

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of one album containing 16 black-and-white photographs plus one loose photograph pertaining to Indianapolis Railways and its predecessor and associated transportation companies. Included are photos of street scenes with mule-drawn streetcars, trolleys, and buses; a parade; a strike; a transfer car; an open car; and company buildings. Photographers include the W.H. Bass Photo Company, Voorhis, W. Frank Jones, and Scholes. The images range in date from ca. 1890 to the late 1940s; some of the photos are later copy photos of earlier images. The front cover of the album is embossed with: L.T. Hixson / Secretary & Treasurer / Indianapolis Railways.

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Aerial view of the shops, garage, service, and transportation buildings of Indianapolis Railways, Inc. [ca. 1940]

"This view, taken at Pennsylvania and Market Streets, looking North, shows the parade of the Liberty Bell on November 19, 1904. The Liberty Bell was taken on a tour of the Nation that year." Businesses shown include the Grand Opera House, Aetna insurance company, and the Owl Cigar shop. [Bass Photo #3807]

Streetcars and horse-drawn wagons and carriages at intersection of Illinois and Washington streets. Businesses shown include the Hanover Shoe store, J.H. Reed (jeweler), the Taylor Carpet Co., People's Credit Clothing Co., Huder's Drugs, Wasson's Carpets, Badger Furniture, Pennsylvania Short Lines, and Crystal Palace. [Bass Photo #6487, taken 23 April 1906]

"This strike scene was taken near the intersection of Washington and Pennsylvania Streets during a four day suspension of service from Sunday morning, January 10, until late Wednesday afternoon, January 13, 1892." Shows crowd gathered around a mule-drawn streetcar. Businesses shown include the Model Clothing Co. and Bank of Commerce. [Bass Photo #15314]

"The old transfer car stood in the center of Washington Street just East of Illinois Street from 1885 until 1893. Transferring passengers entered the car and waited until their next vehicle came along." [Copy photo] [Bass Photo #15583]

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Intersection of Illinois and Washington streets, looking East -- shows streetcar with sign "This Car to Base Ball," a parked Buick automobile, L.S. Ayres & Co., a 5-cent casino, ticket office of the Pennsylvania Short Lines, and pedestrians. [Bass Photo #16508, ca. 1909]

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Open streetcar. "Open cars, of the type pictured, were in vogue a few years ago during the summer months. They were used in regular service and are remembered as a means of holiday excursions to ball games and the city parks." [Bass Photo # 18601, taken 15 February 1910]

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"Miles of new trolley wire have been installed in Indianapolis." Overhead trolley wires shown by the Lincoln Hotel at Washington Street and Kentucky Avenue. [Voorhis Photo #27519] [ca. 1930s]

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"First shipment of trackless trolleys which arrived in December, 1932." Shows crowd gathered by a fleet of 15 Indianapolis Railways electric buses by the State House and the Hotel Roosevelt. [Photo by W. Frank Jones, #63477]

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"Another view of the old transfer car. This body of a street car stood on a permanent foundation in the center of the tracks and eliminated the use of transfers and provided shelter for patrons. The old Bates House may be seen in the left rear of the picture." Also shown are the Crystal Palace and the James Bogert [Trunk?] Factory. [Bass Photo #88806-F]

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"This View of the old Virginia Avenue viaduct was taken early in the '90s at the time the structure was dedicated. The Courthouse may be seen in the distance." Flags and decorative arches shown at the dedication of the Virginia Avenue bridge in the 1890s. [Bass Photo #91483-F]

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"Mule car No. 10, one of the earliest cars in Indianapolis, is shown as it 'rushed' along the line past a blacksmith shop." Sign on the car says: "Mississippi St. & Madison Ave." [Bass Photo #201089-F]

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Bus no. 380 with Peoples Motor Coach logo on side and destination signs of E. New York and S. Emerson.

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"View of a trackless trolley. Indianapolis is tied with Chicago in having the largest fleet of trackless trolleys in operation in the United States. Both cities have 152 of these vehicles." Shows bus no. 604 with a destination sign for Riverside.

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"Ira Bartholomew, at the reins of mule car No. 225, is said to have been one of the first drivers in Indianapolis. The date and place of the photograph are unknown. Mr. Bartholomew's son, who is 81 years of age, presented the photograph to Indianapolis Railways on its 75th Anniversary." [Bass Photo #244762, ca. 1890]

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Elevated view of Illinois and Washington streets in 1901 shows streetcars, horse-drawn delivery wagons for the Indianapolis Abattoir Co. and the C.P. Lesh Paper Co., and crowds of pedestrians. Businesses shown along these streets include the Taylor Carpet Co., W.T Marcy (jeweler), the Badger Furniture Co., a railroad office, Crystal Palace, and a dentist's office. [Bass Photo #225544-F]

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Loose photo inserted into the album: Shows passengers boarding an Indianapolis Railways trolley with a destination sign reading College and Broad Ripple. The Indiana National Bank building is in the background. [©Scholes Photos, ca. late 1940s]

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0523).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.