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Sparks of Modernity in Asheville Infrastructure:
Perceptions of the Electric Street Car

A Senior Thesis

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In Candidacy for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in History

By

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On February 1, 1889, the citizens of Asheville, North Carolina thronged around the area where Patton Avenue and Pack Square met. It was opening day for the Asheville Electric Street Railway Company and the demonstrations proceeded smoothly. The two trolleys in operation for the event were packed with citizens and making their return trip from the depot in Biltmore Village.¹ Mr. E.D. Davidson, one of the key individuals behind the creation of the company “rose to the drama of the occasion and ordered his car to halt.” Davidson then disconnected the trolley from its power source and hitched six horses to the front, imitating the electric trolley’s predecessor, the horse-powered omnibus.² An omnibus was similar in design to the electric trolley, but it ran on wheels and animal power.³ The trolleys, in comparison, connected to their central source of power through a wire system attached to the tops of the vehicles, so Davidson would have broken this connection with a switch in the conductor’s seat.⁴ In an attempt to display the superiority of electricity to horsepower, the trolleys ascended the hill on Biltmore Avenue. As the electric trolley surpassed its horse-drawn partner and sailed up the incline, the crowd cheered. According to David C. Bailey, “No one watching that day could fail to grasp the significance of what he saw – or to be impressed.”⁵ Just as the modern electric street car left behind its outdated competitor, Asheville chose to whole-heartedly accept modernity as a chance to flourish in the mountains of Western North Carolina. This acceptance only went so far, as the city struggled to cope with the changes that the trolleys would effect, making them a

¹ “How the Trolley Cars Came: As Told To The Editor Of AERA By John H. Barnard,” Asheville, NC, 1930. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

² Martin W. Sandler, *Straphanging in the USA: Trolleys and Subways in American Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 7.

³ Sandler, 7.

⁴ Frederick Dalzell, *Engineering Invention: Frank J. Sprague and the U.S. Electrical Industry* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010), 60.

⁵ David C. Bailey and Joseph M. Canfield, *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky: Street Railways of Asheville, N.C and Vicinity* (Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 2000), 8-9.

controversial, expensive, and celebrated innovation. Though they offered Asheville's economy a grand attraction, the terrain and evolving industrial climate of the city made it increasingly difficult to sustain the electric street railway.

The Asheville Electric Street Railway was one of the first fully-operational, expansive systems of its kind in the United States, but very little research has been focused around the topic. The majority of scholarly works related to the subject most commonly draw upon the life of Frank J. Sprague and his inventions or the start-up of the electric street car in Richmond Virginia. While there are articles that mention the trolley line in passing or give a fairly brief history of its development within the city, there is only one book that intentionally focuses on just the development of the electric street railway in Western North Carolina. The majority of secondary information relating to the electric street railway must be found within tertiary sources used as reference material and as clarification.

Many contributions have been made to documenting the history of early electric transportation systems as a whole. In *Straphanging in the USA: Trolleys and Subways in American Life*, Martin Sandler offers a linear outline and explanation of the development and advancement of public transportation throughout the ages. As a Pulitzer Prize nominee and Emmy Award winner, Sandler's works focus on the impact of industrialization in the United States. This particular work is unexpectedly different from the majority of his publications in that it falls in his series of educational books for juveniles under the Oxford University Press. Though brief, the book is filled with immediate, relevant information that gives clear insight on the impacts of electric trolleys within America in the early twentieth century.⁶

⁶ Martin W. Sandler, *Straphanging in the USA: Trolleys and Subways in American Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

Asheville's long history has been celebrated and studied many times over, but few of these studies delve into the subject of the Asheville Electric Street Railway Company. Nan K. Chase's *Asheville: A History* is a concise and detailed history of the area.⁷ Chase illustrates both the development of an industrialized economy and the cultural changes that overtook the area during the first half of the twentieth century. Her historical survey of the area serves as a strong support for the surrounding events of the trolley system. Lou Harshaw's *Asheville: Mountain Majesty* offers invaluable information on the development and modernization of the city. In comparison to Chase's history, Harshaw focuses on a narrative of modernization instead of people. Harshaw, who served the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, has written multiple books on Western North Carolina, including: *Trains, Trestles, and Tunnels: Railroads of the Southern Appalachians* and *The Southern Appalachian Mountains: Places of Discovery*.

Fashionable Asheville gives a social and architectural history of the city. It focuses on the development of Asheville as a center for wealthy elite and their business in the area. Most importantly, Bailey focuses on the electric trolley system as a modern mode of transportation in the city and its importance to the city's reputation as a resort town. David C. Bailey majored in journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was the president of the Asheville Citivan Club, the president of the Citivan Foundation, and the chairman of the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. His other works include *A Farewell to Valor* and *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky*.⁸

A History of Buncombe County North Carolina, Volume II, by Foster Sondley, contains a concentrated account of issues regarding the operation of the trolleys on the steep grades within Asheville and demonstrates one of the many reasons why the electric trolley system may have

⁷ Nan K. Chase, *Asheville: A History*, (Jefferson, NC: MAcFarland & Company, Inc., 2007).

⁸ Obituary of David Bailey, *The Asheville Citizen-Times*, December 3-4, 2013, <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/citizen-times/obituary.aspx?pid=168306830> (Accessed April 5, 2014)

been better suited for areas with more consistent elevation.⁹ Formally Forster Alexander Sondley, a civil lawyer in North Carolina who retired to pursue his interest in history, his extensive personal collection was donated and became the Sondley Reference Library at Pack Memorial Library.¹⁰ *Asheville: A Pictorial History*, written by Mitzi Tessier, with photos from Paul Runnion, offers a glimpse at the lives of Asheville citizens throughout the years. Tessier, who moved to Asheville in the 1950s, also wrote *The State of Buncombe*. She was involved with the Pisgah Girl Scout Council and taught at Erwin High School. Her extensive civic involvements in Asheville lead her to write about the area.¹¹ Although electric trolleys are barely discussed, this particular work offers invaluable context regarding the factors that contributed to Asheville's growth in the 1880s.¹²

Research on the development of the electric trolley transportation system is incomplete without mentioning the creator of the electric street car, and former associate of Thomas Edison, Frank J. Sprague. While the Shoreline Trolley Museum in Connecticut houses the largest collection of his personal papers, *Engineering Invention: Frank J. Sprague and the U.S. Electrical Industry*, published by MIT Press, is the most extensive compilation of information on Frank J. Sprague and his revolutionary invention.¹³ The book is best used as reference material for understanding the extent of Sprague's involvement in the construction of many trolley lines along the East coast.

⁹ F.A. Sondley, *A History of Buncombe County, North Carolina* (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1977)

¹⁰ James Daniel Lee, "Sondley, Forster Alexander," *NCPedia*, 1994. <http://ncpedia.org/biography/sondley-forster-alexander> (Accessed January 7, 2015).

¹¹ "Oral History Register for Mitzi Schaden Tessier, University of North Carolina Asheville D. Hiden Ramsey Library Special Collections/University Archives," http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/oralhistory/VOA/S_Z/Tessier_M.html (Accessed January 7, 2015)

¹² Mitzi Schaden Tessier, *Asheville: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk, VA: Donning Company, 1982)

¹³ Frederick, Dalzell, *Engineering Invention: Frank J. Sprague and the U.S. Electrical Industry* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010)

The most comprehensive work on the electric street railway in Asheville and the surrounding areas comes from Harold E. Cox Publishing, a private company. *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky: Street Railways of Asheville, N.C. and Vicinity*, released in 2000, was co-written by two Asheville natives.¹⁴ David C. Bailey, mentioned previously, is also the author of *Fashionable Asheville*. Joseph Canfield, a transplant from Pennsylvania to Weaverville, with a “varied career in railroad transit,” also had a hand in authoring several works on electric trolleys throughout the nation.¹⁵ Given the academic backgrounds between these gentlemen, it would seem that this book has adequate credentials as a secondary source and as a history of the electric street car in Western North Carolina; it serves its purpose very well. Though the book offers acknowledgement to the Robert Fortune Collection at Pack Memorial Library, it lacks proper citations on almost all of its information, aside from image captions. As well, its broad spectrum leaves much information about the actual function and influence that the system had on the city itself. With a modicum of primary resources at their disposal, the authors opted to compile these for an ultimately linear history of this transportation event.

This thesis will combine information on the development of Asheville and the electric trolley companies with primary sources from newspapers, chronicling the industry in the area. While Asheville citizen’s anticipated the arrival of the electric trolley, it is clear that the city itself was not ready for this industrial advancement. As a new system of transportation, companies encountered difficulties gaining profits due to government regulations that required them to maintain the quality of the streets. In conjunction with this, the original construction of the streets barely allowed for the accommodation of these large, clunky machines. It is clear in through public and government accounts that though people were excited for the electric street

¹⁴ David C. Bailey and Joseph M. Canfield, *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky: Street Railways of Asheville, N.C. and Vicinity* (Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 2000)

¹⁵ Obituary of Joseph Canfield, *The Asheville Citizen-Times*, September 28, 2012 (Accessed April 5, 2014)

cars as a symbol of Asheville's success and modernity, the city was unprepared on many aspects that eventually led to the decline of the system.

The world was slow to regard the significance of electric street cars years before the Sprague's city-wide system was built. In 1879 Werner von Siemens, a German inventor and engineer, known for his work in telegraphy and creating a powerful steam engine from the Benson Boiler, debuted his raised electric locomotive.^{16 17} It took nearly ten years and the implementation of Frank J. Sprague's first successful design in Richmond, Virginia for the systems to gain popularity in the states. Asheville was chosen as the second city to receive one of these innovative transportation operations, but it took longer than expected. Because it was a relatively new business, gaining sufficient capital to construct a full-scale system was difficult during the introduction of the trolley. In conjunction with this, all of the cities that the trolley cars had been tested in by the 1900s, like New York, Berlin, and Richmond, had relatively level topography and were more urbanized than Asheville.

By the time tourism flocked to Asheville, the city had barely progressed from its rural and unnavigable past. Before the 1820s, Asheville was landlocked for lack of proper roads, and consisted mostly of livestock and tobacco fields.¹⁸ The first transportation milestone for the region was the Buncombe Turnpike, chartered in 1824. Its completion in 1828 opened the town to visitors, as well as allowed more economic opportunity for farmers in the area.^{19 20} By 1830, however, the population of Asheville was only 350.²¹ Development in the area for the next few decades was slow, but steady due to the city's isolated location. It took completion of the

¹⁶ Dalzell, 63.

¹⁷ "Innovations," *Siemens History*. <https://www.siemens.com/history/en/innovations/> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

¹⁸ Nan K. Chase, *Asheville: A History*, (Jefferson, NC: MAcFarland & Company, Inc., 2007), 16, 20.

¹⁹ Bailey, David Coleman, *Fashionable Asheville: The Fascinating Social History of a Famous Mountain Town, 1880-1930*, (Charleston, SC: BookSurge, LLC, 2004), 7.

²⁰ Chase, 18.

²¹ Harshaw, 333.

Western North Carolina Railroad in 1880 to fully open the city of Asheville up to the rest of the nation.²² On March 8, 1883, due to the sizable population “of 4,000, which [was] a gain of nearly 1,400 since the census of 1880,” the town officially became a “city.”²³ ²⁴ Its growing reputation as a summer resort attracted wealthy vacationers whose frequent visits required four passenger trains a day to service the traffic to the luxury hotels in the area. With floods of money pouring in, “Asheville was set for a major boom.”²⁵ This boom required the city’s transportation to adapt to meet the demands of its growing population. The present omnibus system in Asheville was slow, as it required horses to move the cars, limiting speed to the physical capacity of the animals.²⁶ With the prospective electric trolleys “country people could do business in town and be home in half a day.”²⁷

Though much excitement would eventually follow the idea of electric trolleys in Asheville, the original supporters of the endeavor struggled to find support. The original charter was first approved for the Asheville Street Railway Company on March 9, 1881 by the North Carolina legislature.²⁸ In the 6 years it took for E.D. Davidson, an investor and entrepreneur from Pennsylvania, to purchase the charter, Thomas W. Patton and James G. Martin ran the operation with horse-drawn trolleys.²⁹ Three men, including Davidson, with social and economic power in Asheville ensured the success of the company’s new endeavor. The very first volume of the *Street Railway Journal*, released in 1885, announced that “R.B. Vance, C.M. [McLoud], and

²² Richard Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*, (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2005), 9.

²³ Tessier, 52.

²⁴ “Asheville Citizen,” *The Mountaineer*, 12 May 1883.

<http://www.newspapers.com/image/61612232/?terms=asheville%2Bpopulation> (Accessed February 1, 2015)

²⁵ Lou Harshaw, *Asheville: Mountain Majesty* (Fairview, NC: Bright Mountain Books, Inc, 2003)

²⁶ Sandler, 7.

²⁷ Tessier, 52.

²⁸ Sondley, 633-635.

²⁹ Starnes, 71.

M.J. Fagg have obtained the privilege of building a street railroad in Asheville, N.C.”³⁰ ³¹ These gentlemen were well-known in Asheville and the surrounding areas. Robert Brank Vance was a member of a very prominent family; his brother was the Governor Zebulon Baird Vance.³² C.M. McCloud was a chairman on the County Executive Committee of Buncombe and also served on the Committee of Finance.³³ ³⁴ Captain Marcellus Jefferson Fagg was former Confederate soldier who became a prominent railroad contractor who “was prompt to attend the many meetings held here looking to the bringing of the railroad lines to this place.”³⁵ Both Fagg and McCloud were also directors for the Western Carolina Bank, established in 1888.³⁶ Progress on the development of the street car lines was slow-moving, but the excitement of the Asheville people remained undeterred despite the many controversies that arose.

Characterizing it as “the outgrowth of the spirit of her citizens,” the initial reception of this new business venture was positive and reflected an excitement surrounding the idea of industrializing Asheville.³⁷ One of the main barriers preventing progress was gaining the appropriate funds. One citizen praised the outcome if the County Commissioners instituted a tax for this endeavor: “Pedestrians could hardly cross the streets, blockaded as they were, with

³⁰ “Notes and Items,” *The Street Railway Journal*, v.1 (August 1885): 225.
<https://archive.org/details/streetrailwayjou188newy> (Accessed March 2, 2014)

³¹ In numerous sources, C.M. Mcleod’s name is spelled various ways, including McCloud and McCloud. The author is confident that these are the same individual. In this paper, the spelling McCloud is used as the standard, as it is most commonly spelled this way.

³² Martin Reidinger, “Vance, Robert Brank,” *NCPedia*, 1996. <http://ncpedia.org/biography/vance-robert-brank-0> (Accessed December 12, 2014)

³³ “Buncombe Democracy: The County Convention Last Saturday,” *The Asheville Democrat*, 24 July 1890. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/62229853/?terms=C.M.%2BMcloud> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

³⁴ “The Committees: Committee On Finance,” *The Semi-Weekly Citizen*, 10 June 1880. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/63416218/?terms=C.M.%2BMcloud> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

³⁵ “Death of Capt. M.J. Fagg,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 1 February 1894. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/73494115/> (Accessed December 12, 2014)

³⁶ “Western Carolina Bank,” *Asheville Citizen*, 9 November 1889. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/61431436/?terms=western%2Bcarolina%2Bbank> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

³⁷ “Asheville to the Front,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 26 June 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59199246 (Accessed October 15, 2014)

vehicles of all kinds, laden with the products of the farmer, who had come to exchange them for the goods of the merchant. My heart, I know, leaped for joy.”³⁸

Asheville to the Front, an article published in several newspapers in 1886, also proudly declared: “Asheville needs a street railway and the Asheville people will have what they need.” The article, laced with state pride and hope for prosperity in the city’s “elegant new hotels, macadamized streets, waters works, and street railways,” was written by a man in Salisbury, but was praised widely throughout Western North Carolina. A reviewer in the *Asheville Daily Citizen* characterizes the author as a true representative of the state, “from the ocean to the extreme limit of the mountain territory.” Within the same year, an argument arose among the Board of Aldermen that the streets of Asheville were not wide enough to accommodate an electric railway system.³⁹

The city streets were originally laid out to meet the standards of the law for country roads, which required them to be “sixteen feet, clear of stumps and runners.” The public, excited for the trolley company to begin, attempted to invalidate the concern that, though the streets were a little wider than 16 feet, they were “not wide enough for a street railway.” One citizen proclaimed, “The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children until the third and fourth generations, and we of the present day are made to pay for the short sighted policy of those former days.” The author gave credit to the roads by relating the story of a gentleman:

He set himself to count the passersby and within a given time counted 100 in ten minutes, or six hundred an hour. And the calculation was not an extravagant one. If we had time, it would be a curious pastime to count the vehicles that pass our

³⁸ “An Interesting and Suggestive Letter from Rabbit Foot: Read Carefully and Digest,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 20 February 1886. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020682/1886-02-20/ed-1/seq-1> (Accessed February 1, 2015)

³⁹ “Asheville to the Front,” (Accessed October 15, 2014)

office during day-light. The result would be more surprising than that relating foot passengers.⁴⁰

With such passionate public support and constant progress from McLoud, it was inevitable that the Board of Aldermen address the possibility of public rails in the city. This began with C.M. McLoud's and W.E. Watkins' request for the Board of Aldermen to appoint a committee in order to discuss the matter. The purpose of this meeting was to "secure reasonable terms" so that the Asheville Street Railway company could "invest \$75,000 in the street railway and gas works enterprises."⁴¹

Though it was "hoped every encouragement [would] be given them," the unprecedented nature of the business required the board to set new guidelines for the company to follow, in the form of a city ordinance.⁴² The ordinance for the Asheville Street Railway Company was published in the *Asheville Daily Advance* on September 21, 1886:

Be it ordained that the Asheville Street Railway Company is hereby authorized and permitted to make, construct, maintain and use a single track railway for the transportation of passengers, along such streets in the city of Asheville as may be selected and determined by the Mayor and Aldermen for the term of twenty years.⁴³

The company also received permission to build the necessary equipment, such as rail switches and car stables provided that a board-appointed engineer oversaw the operations, and to operate as much as they saw fit "provided that no nuisance to the city of any of its citizens be created." The Board of Aldermen included a clause stating "the privileges hereby granted shall not be deemed exclusive" and "the Mayor and Aldermen hereby expressly reserving the power of granting privileges to any other corporation after the expiration of ten years from the date of this

⁴⁰ *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 13 August 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59199369 (Accessed October 15, 2014)

⁴¹ "Asheville Street Railway," *The Asheville Advance*, 23 October 1886. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/61576682/?terms=Mccloud> (Accessed December 29, 2014)

⁴² "Asheville Street Railway," (Accessed December 29, 2014)

⁴³ "An Ordinance Concerning the Asheville Street Railway Company," *Asheville Daily Advance*, 21 September 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/61576660 (Accessed October 5, 2014)

ordinance.” Any company or individual who sought an ordinance from the Board of Aldermen after such a time had the right to be granted one with similar specifications to the ordinance in question. The guidelines set for the Asheville Street Railway were rigorous. They required streetcar operators to keep the space between the tracks level with the street, at their own expense, and maintain quality conditions for other vehicles to pass over the lines with ease. One rule required them to conform to any changes in grade made to the streets, even after installation. Finally, the company had to start building within 60 days of the issued ordinance.⁴⁴ This 60 day grace period ultimately required the company to either have all their equipment, funds, and labor ready or nearly ready, which became a greater issue only a month later.

In October of 1886, the citizens of Asheville were in an uproar. The Board of Aldermen rescinded the ordinance to the Asheville Street Railway Company. The Board expressed a great deal of power when they proposed a new one to appease the public. Still unhappy, both the people and the Street Railway Company claimed the new ordinance “clog[ged] them with so many restrictions as in fact choke[d] the project to death.” The Board of Aldermen kept in the clause allowing them the agency to dictate which streets the trolley companies could operate on. The argument presented by the company and the citizens of Asheville against this rule declared that “a power hostile to the movement will select such by-ways or side street as would make the construction of the road a useless waste of money.”⁴⁵ If the Board favored Street Railway Company, the major roads would be equipped with the appropriate transportation. On the other end, they could order the company to construct on barely-used streets as a means of creating better infrastructure for the city without taking it out of the city’s pocket. The Aldermen also gave themselves the right to suspend operation, dictate fares, and impose taxes on the

⁴⁴ “An Ordinance Concerning the Asheville Street Railway Company”

⁴⁵ “The Street Railway,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 1 October 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59022287 (Accessed November 2, 2014)

company.⁴⁶ In response to this, C.M. McLoud, the president of the Asheville Street Railway Company, affirmed that the money for the street car line would be furnished if “anything like reasonable privileges from the city authorities in the matter of right of way and grants” could be attained.⁴⁷ In a surprisingly hopeful tone, McLoud reassured the benefactor for the operation that he trusted in the “liberal spirit of people as heretofore manifested in on all occasions when the improvement of the city was at stake.” This benefactor was W.E. Watkins, a gentleman from Pennsylvania who was often involved in the dealings between the Asheville Street Railway Company and the city Board of Aldermen. McLoud claimed “in the event you will furnish the money for the building of the road under the arrangement, we will bear the expenses of all litigation that may arise.” Watkins, unimpressed by McLoud’s enthusiasm, ensured him that no investor in their right mind would agree to the outrageous terms set forth by the city board. Though excited at the prospect of taking his northern capital to the South, he would be forced to focus his money locally, in New York. He also advised McCloud:

If your people are not ripe for this thing, and it is presumable that they are not, judging from the actions of their representatives – you had better let the matter drop as it is certain that under the existing circumstances it will be impossible to get capital here to put into an enterprise to which people are apparently so unfriendly.⁴⁸

As a test of McCloud’s dedication to moving Asheville forward into a modern age, Watkins’ response inspired him to visit New York two weeks later and continue negotiations for the necessary funds. According to him, the Northern investors he represented were still interested, but could make no promises until they were assured that their money would not be wasted. The citizens of Asheville, also disappointed with the

⁴⁶ “The Street Railway,” (Accessed November 2, 2014)

⁴⁷ *Country Home*, Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room

⁴⁸ “The Street Railway,” (Accessed November 2, 2014)

Board of Aldermen, “still favor gas works and a street railway; and hope yet that we will secure gas-light and a street railway.”⁴⁹

This was just the beginning of the volatile relationship between the Asheville Street Railway Company and the Board of Aldermen that continued throughout its years of operation. Within the next year, two more ordinances for street railways were issued, one of them the long-awaited Asheville Street Railway Company grant. The Asheville Street Railway Company received permission to construct on the busy thoroughfares of downtown, including Patton Avenue, Merrimon Avenue, and Charlotte Street. This new ordinance granted the company, for a period of 20 years, power to elect the streets on which it would operate with the approval of the Aldermen and under the supervision of a board-appointed engineer. The board no longer had executive decision over what streets the company could run on. When constructing, the company conformed to the grades of the roads and any necessary adjustments made after installation. In addition to this, the company maintained the quality of streets as part of the agreement. A ten cent price ceiling was set for all fares, ensuring that the company would not overcharge the citizens. An additional clause was added regarding the safety of the street car lines. Any injuries or damages incurred because of negligence on behalf of the company remained the responsibility of the company. The city was not liable to suffer loss on their behalf. Finally, a clause added by the Asheville Street Railway Company itself, in response to the finicky nature of the Board of Aldermen, stated “the said mayor and aldermen shall not make any change or alteration in the terms and conditions.” In order to make any changes, the Board of Aldermen had to publish a notice for thirty days in at least one

⁴⁹ “Capt’n McCloud,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 21 October 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59022338 (October 15, 2014)

newspaper. The board could not rescind grants without following this rule. The guidelines presented in the document clearly characterized the tension between the two parties. Many of the guidelines set by the Aldermen question the viability of the street railway line. The few articles set by the Asheville Street Railway Company pointed out the poor business practices of the Aldermen, specifically the board's finicky approval policy.⁵⁰

The time finally arrived for a new era in Asheville, as the trolley company prepared for opening day. After a successful trial run on January 21, it was decided that the Asheville Electric Street Railway was ready for operation.⁵¹ On February 1, 1889 the first electric trolley to carry regular citizens in Asheville took its maiden voyage down Main Street in Asheville, operating under the Asheville Street Railway Company.⁵² The three conductors of this trolley were John H. Barnard, E.D. Davidson, and Frank Lewis. Barnard, who served as the superintendent for the Asheville Gas & Electric Company, and Davidson, who brought enough financial aid to purchase the already existing grant, were highly involved in bringing the electric street railway in Asheville.⁵³ Lewis, an associate of Frank J. Sprague, was sent to supervise and assist in the construction of the street car line while Sprague was otherwise detained in Richmond, Virginia.⁵⁴ On opening day, the trolley was flooded beyond capacity with excited passengers. While Barnard and Lewis were at the front of the car in the steering position, Davidson took the rear position in order to control the brakes. So many people crowded on the trolley,

⁵⁰ Asheville City Board of Aldermen, An Ordinance to the Asheville Street Railway Company, 1 November 1886. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

⁵¹ "A Southern Electric Railway Started," *Electrical News* 13 (1 February 1889), 80-81. www.jstor.org/stable/1762708

⁵² *Asheville Times*, February 1, 1889, Microfilm collection at Pack Memorial Library.

⁵³ "How the Trolley Cars Came: As Told To The Editor Of AERA By John H. Barnard," Asheville, NC, 1930. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

⁵⁴ 'How the Trolley Cars Came'

Barnard and Lewis were unable to signal Davidson to brake as they descended the steep hill leading down Biltmore Avenue. Davidson, who was “but a small man at best,” could not see over the all of the passengers.⁵⁵ This mistake led the trolley to speed out of control as it approached a sharp curve at the bottom of the hill. The car was derailed from the tracks towards the bottom of the hill. According to one spectator, the only factor that kept the passengers from receiving any serious injury was a collection of mud at the bottom of the hill.⁵⁶ P.R. Sluder, one of the people on this ride, cut his knee when the trolley came to rest suddenly. In an interview, Sluder claims, “he ruined a \$5 pair of pants, but was afraid to mention it for fear the company might sue him for getting blood on the floor of the car.”⁵⁷

Immediately after the opening of the electric trolley line, additional expenses were needed for improvements and extensions. In June of 1889, construction began on the North Main Street extension, with completion estimated in July.⁵⁸ In this same time frame, the company acquired two summer passenger cars. Summer cars were usually constructed with removable windows to allow for a breeze during warmer months.⁵⁹ They were seen as symbols boasting Asheville’s growth and prosperity. *The Asheville Citizen* raved “all credit and honor to the gentlemen who projected the scheme,” boasting the system “for the benefit of the people.”⁶⁰ During one of these improvements,

⁵⁵ ‘How the Trolley Cars Came’

⁵⁶ “The Development of Asheville Electric Street Railways,” *The Asheville Citizen*, April 29, 1887. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

⁵⁷ “500 Passengers Take Last Ride on Street Cars,” *The Asheville Citizen*, September 4, 1934. Archives of the North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

⁵⁸ “Work on Extension will Begin at Once – The New Cars Nearly Completed,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 14 June 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/73371227

⁵⁹ Martin W. Sandler, *Straphanging in the USA: Trolleys and Subways in American Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 18.

⁶⁰ “Handsome New Cars and Improved Equipments,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 31 June 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/74223222

“considerable complaint [was] made of the condition of Patton Avenue in front of the Buncombe warehouse. The street was torn up by the Electric Street Railway Company in changing their track and has not since been in order.”⁶¹ This represented one of the concerns held against the establishment of the transit system within the city. It also violated the terms of the ordinance that had previously been set by the Board of Aldermen which required the street railway companies to maintain the quality of the streets.

The city also found itself having to enact social changes. The Asheville Police, originally in navy, adopted “natty suits of Confederate gray” so that they would stand apart from the street car operators in the city, who wore “blue uniforms and badges” that strongly resembled officers’ uniforms. With a greater number of visitors in town, it was relevant to make sure they could differentiate between a policeman and trolley car ticket-taker.⁶² In March of 1890, the Asheville Street Railway Company had to change its hours of operation on Sundays “in order to afford employees an opportunity to attend church.”⁶³

Asheville experienced drastic economic growth and positive attitudes during the 1890s. At this time “over three hundred thousand dollars [was] now in the banks to Asheville’s credit.” The city wanted “to expand from the modest country village of the mountains” to a flourishing city. The citizens wanted every unattractive characteristic of their city fixed in order to “stand without a peer as an all the year ‘round resort in the United States.” The newspaper boldly declared: “Asheville stands today upon an eminence from which everyone with eyes to see can discover the greatness which nature

⁶¹ “Random Notes,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 16 Jul 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/73371810

⁶² “In Uniforms of Gray,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 16 June, 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/73371810 (Accessed October 12, 2014)

⁶³ “Sunday Schedule,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 22 March, 1890. www.newspapers.com/image/64004481 (Accessed October 12, 2014)

intended to be hers.”⁶⁴ There was no doubt that Asheville’s prosperity would catapult the city into a national position of even greater importance.

Though there were difficulties with maintaining the trolleys in Asheville, the operation was ultimately a success. The prosperity of the Asheville Street Railway Company made the venture attractive to other businessmen who wanted to invest in the city’s growth. By 1895, roughly four more trolley lines operated in the area. The street cars for the Asheville Improvement and Street Railway Company were claimed “perfect in all their appointments” as “the company [would] spare no pains to give the public every attraction.”⁶⁵ A meeting of the “Fathers of the City” boasted positive prospects for both the Asheville Park and Hotel Company and the East Street Railway. The Asheville Park and Hotel Company was allowed to construct “From the city limits along the east margin of South Main Street, crossing the street at McDowell Avenue, and connecting with the Asheville street railway on Southside Avenue.” This charter specified a price ceiling of 25 cents for fares, since part of their line ran on private property. Construction of the East Street Line also began along East Street and Carolina Avenue. Delays were unavoidable, as “work should not begin until those streets should be made 40 feet wide.”⁶⁶ As mentioned previously, the streets of Asheville barely met the required 16

⁶⁴ “Asheville’s Future,” Asheville Daily Citizen, 16 February 1892. www.newspapers.com/image/65267409 (Accessed October 12, 2014)

⁶⁵ “The Asheville Improvement and Street Railway Company – Lake View Park – A Grand Addition to the Attractions of our Metropolis,” *The Asheville Citizen*, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020682/1887-04-29/ed-1/seq-1> (Accessed October 12, 2014)

⁶⁶ “Brains and Good Looks Very Prominent at the Meeting-Some Railway Projects-the New City Hall-Bill and Permits,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 9 May 1891. www.newspapers.com/image/73442069 (Accessed November 13, 2014)

feet.⁶⁷ This meant extra time, money, and effort was needed in order for the trolley system to run at its full potential.

Many individuals were sympathetic to the street railway lines, but others still felt that these businesses practiced unfair operations and overcharged the passengers. In an 1891 article released in response to complaints about the fares for different trolley lines, a reporter compared the, brand new, Asheville and Sulphur Springs electric railway against the Asheville Street Railway Company:

The Asheville and Sulphur Springs electric railway charges only a 10 cent fare for a four mile ride in the country, where passengers only get on at its termini. The Asheville Street railway charges a 10-cent fare for riding two miles in the heart of Asheville, where passengers get on at almost every foot along the lines. And yet the street railway says that it is forced to make this charge as a ‘business necessity’.

This harsh criticism was followed by an interview on what kind of expenditures went in to running electric railways as a response to the downtown lines excuse that the charges were a “business necessity.” To compose the article, the reporter interviewed Thomas Lowry, the president of St. Paul and Minneapolis railway. Lowry offered defense for the ten-cent fare in an analysis of the company’s revenue, costs, dividends, and stockholder pay-out. He claimed, “The earnings of the Asheville street railway for the month of August was over \$5000. Allowing, that the extra cost, by reason of Major Martin’s heavy grades, would put the operating expenses of the Asheville system at 75 per cent, the net income for August should not be less than \$1,250.” Lowry’s own company in Minneapolis, which had less intense grades, operated at a little under

⁶⁷ *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 13 August 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59199369 (Accessed October 15, 2014)

49% expenditure to gross earnings and only charged its passengers a 5 cent fare. Thus, Lowry justified the raise in fare in order to “help out this struggling corporation.”⁶⁸

After this, the trolley companies struggled to maintain their prestigious reputations in Asheville’s advancing industrial climate. The popularity of incandescent bulbs meant that people wanted to draw more power from the electric companies, who could not do so and sustain adequate power supplies to their trolleys.⁶⁹ In conjunction with added demand for power, the dangers of the street cars became more and more prevalent. In one court case, a defendant’s buggy was damaged on Patton Avenue by a trolley that he claimed operated under negligent conditions; the charges were dropped, as the trolley was found to be in good condition and the car was not under lease of the Asheville Street Railway Company at the time.⁷⁰ Also, a collision caused by conflicting trolley car schedules in route to Weaverville caused the death of A. L. Ballew, a motorman employed by the Asheville Street Railway Company.⁷¹ A sharp bend in the track just South of Woodfin could only accommodate one vehicle at a time. When the inbound trolley was running roughly thirteen minutes behind schedule, the conductor of the outbound trolley proceeded to move along the track instead of waiting for the other to pass by. As both vehicles approached the bend, neither conductor could see the other, resulting in tragedy and countless injuries.⁷² Another wreck, in 1930, injured four people. One of the passengers injured sued the company for \$10,000.⁷³

⁶⁸ “What it Costs to Run Electric Railways in Other Towns,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 8 September 1891. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn91068076/1891-09-08/ed-1/seq-2 (Accessed November 23, 2014)

⁶⁹ Fortune, 16.

⁷⁰ “Dunn vs. Asheville & C.M. Ry. Co.,” *Street Railway Reports*, 1908, 784-787.

⁷¹ *Asheville Times*, May 12, 1922, Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

⁷² *Asheville Times*, May 12, 1922, Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

⁷³ Bailey, Canfield, 30.

The 1920s brought increased popularity of cars, which further added to the dangers of the electric trolley.⁷⁴ As more and more cars traversed Asheville's roads, with the trolley line in the middle of the street, "if the fellow coming down the street on the right hand side didn't happen to stop his car and you stepped off the street car, you got hit by an automobile." Automobiles were more than just cheaper modes of transportation, their use also required less road maintenance. Since the electric railway companies were required to pave eighteen inches from their tracks and in between their lines, and the old ties constantly caused pot holes, the companies were constantly repaving the roads. They also constantly replaced the wires and tracks, especially since the severe curves in Asheville caused the trolleys to wear the tracks down faster. Bus systems were the proposed replacement, as they required less maintenance and performed better on Asheville's streets.⁷⁵

The prevalence of cheaper, more reliable modes of transportation, coupled with the rapidly increasing costs to operate the trolley lines ultimately lead to the downfall of the system. On Labor Day, 1934, the electric trolleys took their last run in Asheville.⁷⁶ Before they were "retired to the junk pile," the electric street cars carried 500 passengers, who were encouraged to make a voluntary donation, to West Asheville and back to the depot. As the trolley cars pulled away from the station, a quartet sang *The Last Roundup* by Gene Autry.⁷⁷ One article in *The Asheville Times* described the scene:

The passengers sang songs and on a few of them musical instruments were played. All along the route were clusters of observers at street intersections and the lawns of residences were occupied by parties watching the final parade of the familiar yellow cars.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Chase, 93.

⁷⁵ Fortune, 17.

⁷⁶ *Asheville Times*, 7 September 1934, Microfilm Collection at Pack Memorial Library.

⁷⁷ "500 Passengers Take Last Ride on Street Cars," *The Asheville Citizen*, 7 September 1934, Microfilm Collection at Pack Memorial Library.

⁷⁸ "Trolleys Join Other Things as Memory," *The Asheville Times*, 7 September 1934, Microfilm Collection at Pack Memorial Library.

All proceeds collected at the closing event were donated to the children's funds. \$174.71 was collected in voluntary fares and a total of \$30 in concessions was collected by the Rotary Club.⁷⁹ The ceremony was somber, but still reflected the deep respect for trolley systems and what they had meant for Asheville despite their costs and inefficiencies.

The popularity of the electric street car grew from the prestigious nature of the electric industry in the late 1800s. It was boasted that "no scientific body in the country [had] so many millionaires as the American Institute of Electrical Engineers."⁸⁰ This reputation, coupled with Asheville's growing need for a unified system of transportation to support its increasing population, resulted in the establishment of the Asheville Electric Street Railway Company in 1889. The citizens were excited about the implications of having the second system of this kind in the nation and supported the intentions of the founders who wanted to see Asheville thrive in the mountains of Western North Carolina. However, because "the grades in [the] mountain city were so heavy, some powerful means of propulsion [were] necessary."⁸¹ This had not been an issue in other cities where the trolley lines had been tested, as Berlin, New York, and Richmond were all relatively level compared to Asheville. Since the trolley companies were also required to maintain the streets that their lines ran right down the middle of, expenses increased steadily as pot holes caused by old track ties created more of an issue when cars began sharing the roads. For its time, the electric trolley system in Asheville was an innovative asset to the city and its visitors, but the rising cost of maintenance and changing industrial climate made sustaining the systems impossible, especially with the economic devastation of the city in 1931.⁸²

⁷⁹ *Asheville Times*, "500 Persons to Ride Street Cars on Their Last Trip," 1934. Archives of the North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

⁸⁰ "Money in Electrical Engineering," *The Roanoke Times*, August 30, 1891, final edition, in Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* (Accessed April 7, 2014). <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>

⁸¹ "The Asheville Improvement and Street Railway Company – Lake View Park – A Grand Addition to the Attractions of our Metropolis," Accessed October 12, 2014)

⁸² Starnes, 89.

Primary Sources

“500 Passengers Take Last Ride on Street Cars.” *The Asheville Citizen*. September 4, 1934. Archives of the North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

An article detailing the closing day of the Asheville Street Railway Company, written on the day of the ceremony, the article offers a first-hand account of the proceedings and feelings among the people.

“500 Persons to Ride Street Cars on Their Last Trip,” *Asheville Times*, 1934. Archives of the North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

Another account of the closing day of the Asheville Street Railway Company, written in a different newspaper, this article offers another perspective on the proceedings of opening day.

“An Ordinance Concerning the Asheville Street Railway Company.” *Asheville Daily Advance*, 21 September 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/61576660 [Accessed October 5, 2014]

A document outlining the privileges granted to the Asheville Street Railway Company by the Asheville City Board of Aldermen. This is one of the first documents the clearly displays the relationship between the city government and the Street Railway Company.

“Asheville’s Car Fares Increased from 5 to 6 Cents.” *The Asheville Citizen*, 1919. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

A newspaper article accusing the Asheville Street Railway of overcharging its passengers, this represents the first sign of decline in the public’s perception of the trolley companies.

“Asheville Citizen.” *The Mountaineer*. 12 May 1883. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/61612232/?terms=asheville%2Bpopulation> (Accessed February 1, 2015)

An article discussing the growth of Asheville in the 1880s, a survey taken by E.D. Davidson gives the population for the city, which is claimed as underreported. The overall estimate is that there were over 4,000 people in Asheville at the time.

“Asheville City Board of Aldermen, An Ordinance to the Asheville Street Railway Company.” 1 November 1886. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

A document outlining the privileges granted to the Asheville Street Railway Company by the Asheville City Board of Aldermen. This is the second of two ordinances after the original one was rescinded.

Asheville Daily Citizen, 13 August 1886. www.newspapers.com/image/59199369

This article offers insight to one of the many issues surrounding the installation of the street railway system in the city. The streets were not originally made wide enough to handle such large equipment, so the city must address the issue before they can move further along in the project.

“Asheville’s Future,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 16 February 1892.
www.newspapers.com/image/65267409 (Accessed October 12, 2014)

This article explores the bright future that lays ahead for Asheville due to a plethora of money in its banks as a result of booming business in the area. The article calls for proper allocation of this money to projects that will help improve the city’s reputation as a resort destination and further improve its economy.

“The Asheville Improvement and Street Railway Company – Lake View Park – A Grand Addition to the Attractions for our Metropolis,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 29 April 1887. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020682/1887-04-29/ed-1/seq-1 (Accessed November 20, 2014)

An article announcing the plans for a new street railway in Asheville and praising the company’s goals to make the city a resort destination, the author is strongly in favor of the potential revenue that this company could bring and praises it as a symbol of the city’s modern ways.

Asheville Times, February 1, 1889, Microfilm collection at Pack Memorial Library.

An account of the opening day of the Asheville Street Railway Company, written on the day of the ceremony, this article offers a first-hand account of the proceedings and demonstrates the favorable reputation the company held when it opened.

Asheville Times, May 12, 1922, Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

An article describing the Asheville Street Railway Company in reflection, the author depicts the company in a positive light, though it was operating under less than favorable conditions at the time the article was published.

“Asheville to the Front,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 26 June 1886.
www.newspapers.com/image/59199246 (Accessed October 15, 2014)

This article asserts that Asheville will surely form an electric street railway system. This is one of many articles detailing the positive reception that the company felt in its early years.

“Brains and Good Looks Very Prominent at the Meeting-Some Railway Projects-the New City Hall-Bill and Permits,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 9 May 1891.
www.newspapers.com/image/73442069 (Accessed November 13, 2014)

An account of the proceedings at the weekly meeting of the Board of Aldermen, this details plans for two new trolley lines to be built in the area and details where they planned to construct these lines.

“Buncombe Democracy: The County Convention Last Saturday.” *The Asheville Democrat*. 24 July 1890. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/62229853/?terms=C.M.%2BMcloud> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

An article illustrating the position and authority that C.M. McCloud, the founder of the Asheville Electric Railway Company, held in the city.

“Capt’n McCloud,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 21 October 1886.
www.newspapers.com/image/59022338 (Accessed October 15, 2014)

An article discussing McCloud’s plans for the Asheville Street Railway Company since the city rescinded the ordinance.

“The Committees: Committee On Finance.” *The Semi-Weekly Citizen*. 10 June 1880.
<http://www.newspapers.com/image/63416218/?terms=C.M.%2BMcloud> (Accessed January 10, 2015)

This article illustrates McCloud’s civic involvement in the city and gives credit to claims of his influence in the city.

“Death of Capt. M.J. Fagg,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 1 February 1894.
<http://www.newspapers.com/image/73494115/> (Accessed December 12, 2014)

The obituary of M.J. Fagg, this article offers information on his life and involvement in the city of Asheville.

“The Development of Asheville Electric Street Railways,” *The Asheville Citizen* April 29, 1887.
 Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library.

This article discusses how the electric trolley system came to Asheville. It is a brief history of the electric street railway.

“Doings of the Board of Aldermen at the Regular Meeting,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, March 26 1898. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/76062255> (Accessed November 23, 2014)

This article describes one of the regular meetings of the Asheville city Board of Aldermen. Part of the meeting included settling a claim with the Asheville and Biltmore Street Railway Company for owing the city money.

“Dunn vs. Asheville & C.M. Ry. Co.,” *Street Railway Reports*, 1908, 784-787.

A court case dealing with a collision between a horse cart and an electric trolley car, it sets a precedent for settlements between the public and electric street car businesses. In this case, the company was not liable for damages as they had leased the trolley involved out to a third party.

Fortune, Bob. Interview by Bruce S. Greenawalt. Oral History. October 12, 1979.

This oral history accounts the development of the street railways by an individual who worked for the company.

“Getting Ready for Work,” *The Asheville Democrat*, 16 January 1890.
www.newspapers.com/image/62229294

This article offers information on E.G. Carrier’s plans for the Sulphur Springs Railway. It describes the location and quality of the resort.

“Handsome New Cars and Improved Equipments,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 31 June 1889.
www.newspapers.com/image/74223222

This article talks about improvements made to the street railway lines and additions to the trolley fleet. The article shows the cities pride in these new updates.

“How Asheville is Illuminated,” *Asheville Daily Gazette*, 30 April 1899.
<http://www.newspapers.com/image/60446995> (Accessed November 23, 2014)

This article discusses the advent of electricity in Asheville. Since electricity was so closely tied with the establishment of the railway companies, the article also expounds upon the history of the street car lines.

“How the Trolley Cars Came: As Told To The Editor Of AERA By John H. Barnard,” Asheville, NC, 1930. Clippings File 127.4 at Pack Memorial Library North Carolina Room.

An account of the development of the Asheville Street Railway Company, told by one of its founders.

“In Uniforms of Gray,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 16 June, 1889.
www.newspapers.com/image/73371810

Discusses changes made to the uniforms of Asheville city police officers so that they were no longer confused with trolley conductors. At one point, both professions were outfitted in navy blue.

“Money in Electrical Science,” *The Roanoke Times*, August 30, 1891, final edition, in Library of Congress’s Chronicling America.

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86071868/1891-08-30/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=1890&sort=date&rows=20&words=Electrical+Engineers&searchType=basic&sequence=0&index=19&state=Virginia&date2=1892&proxtext=electrical+engineering&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=3> (Accessed April 7, 2014).

An article expanding on the history of trolleys and the impacts they had on the original creators and inventors.

“Notes and Items,” *The Street Railway Journal*, v.1 (August 1885): 225.

<https://archive.org/details/stretrailwayjou1188newy> (Accessed March 2, 2014)

Offers a brief blurb about the operation of the electric trolley system in Asheville.

Obituary of David Bailey, *The Asheville Citizen-Times*, December 3-4, 2013, (Accessed April 5, 2014)

Provides information regarding the qualifications and achievements of David Bailey, one of the authors of *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky*. As *Land of the Sky* is used as reference material, it is necessary to establish his potential biases and qualifications.

Obituary of Joseph Canfield, *The Asheville Citizen-Times*, September 28, 2012 (Accessed April 5, 2014)

Provides information regarding the qualifications and achievements of Joseph Canfield, one of the authors of *Trolleys in the land of the Sky*. As *Land of the Sky* is used as reference material, it is necessary to establish his potential biases and qualifications.

Profile of Harold E. Cox, Wilkes University Faculty and Staff,

<http://www.wilkes.edu/pages/969.asp?pidm=17565> (Accessed April 5, 2014)

Provides information regarding the qualifications and achievements of Harold Cox, the publisher of *Trolleys in the land of the Sky*.

“Random Notes,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 16 Jul 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/73371810

A brief paragraph about the failure of the Asheville Street Railway Company to fix a road that it damaged while working on the trolley line.

“A Southern Electric Railway Started,” *Electrical News* 13 (1 February 1889), 80-81.

www.jstor.org/stable/1762708

Not only does this article explain how the trolley car systems worked, but it also offers some information on the start of the Asheville Electric Street Railway Company. It also describes opening day for the trolley line, list important attendees, and describes the public's reaction.

“The Street Railway,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 1 October 1886.
www.newspapers.com/image/59022287

This article illustrates the excitement of the public to receive a street railway. It also shows how deeply angered they were when the board of Aldermen overturned the ordinance they had originally given to the street railway company.

“Sunday Schedule,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 22 March, 1890.
www.newspapers.com/image/64004481

An article describing one of the many changes that the street railway company had to make to fit in to Asheville's daily life. In this instance, Sunday service of the trolley lines shifted to allow their employees to attend church service.

“Trolleys Join Other Things as Memory.” *Asheville Times*, September 7, 1934, Microfilm Collection at Pack Memorial Library.

An account of the closing day of the Asheville Street Railway Company. Written three days after the event, the article in question recaps the day's event and offers an even more detailed narrative of the proceedings.

“Western Carolina Bank,” *Asheville Citizen*, 9 November 1889.
<http://www.newspapers.com/image/61431436/?terms=western%2Bcarolina%2Bbank>
 (Accessed January 10, 2015)

An advertisement that illustrates the involvement of the founders of the Asheville Street Railway Company in the local Asheville economy. Beyond their establishment of the electric street railway company, they were active, powerful citizens.

“What it Costs to Run Electric Railways in Other Towns,” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, 8 September 1891. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn91068076/1891-09-08/ed-1/seq-2 (Accessed November 23, 2014)

This is a crucial article that expands on the cost to run an electric railway. In response to a raise in the fare for riding the trolleys, another trolley line owner justifies the raise based on the expenditures of the Asheville Street Railway Company.

“Work on Extension will Begin at Once – The New Cars Nearly Completed,” *The Asheville Citizen*, 14 June 1889. www.newspapers.com/image/73371227 (November 23, 2014)

This article explains improvements and adjustments to be made in the continuation of building the electric street railway. It describes the size of the trolley cars and the location of the rail line.

Secondary Sources

Bailey, David C., and Joseph M. Canfield. *Trolleys in the Land of the Sky: Street Railways of Asheville, N.C and Vicinity*. Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 2000.

As the most comprehensive work on the history of the Asheville electric trolley line, this book also focuses on the development of the trolley lines in the areas surrounding Asheville as well as other parts of Western North Carolina. It focuses mainly on the development of the trolley companies within various communities and their challenges. Published privately, the authors lay out a loose timeline for crucial events in the history of the electric trolley line in Western North Carolina.

Bailey, David Coleman. *Fashionable Asheville: The Fascination Social History of a Famous Mountain Town, 1880-1930*. Charleston, SC: BookSurge, LLC, 2004.

Fashionable Asheville gives a social and architectural history of the city. It focuses on the development of Asheville as a center for wealthy elite and their business in the area. Most importantly, Bailey focuses on the electric trolley system as a modern mode of transportation in the city and its importance to the city's reputation as a resort town.

Chase, Nan K. *Asheville: A History*. Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 2007.

A concise and detailed history of the area, Chase illustrates both the development of industrialized economy and the cultural changes that overtook the area during the first half of the twentieth century. Her historical survey of the area serves as a strong support for the surrounding events of the trolley system.

Dalzell, Frederick. *Engineering Invention: Frank J. Sprague and the U.S. Electrical Industry*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010.

This recent publication offers the most up-to-date research findings on Sprague and his inventions, as well as detailed analyses on the system's faults as further exploration into the industry began to seep across the nation. Dalzell references the personal writings of Frank Sprague to clearly describe the designs and implementation of his original electric trolley car. This offers historical context regarding the development of the electric street car as well and structural information regarding their operation and maintenance.

Harshaw, Lou. *Asheville: Mountain Majesty*. Fairview, NC: Bright Mountain Books, Inc, 2003.

Harshaw's illustrated history of Asheville offers invaluable information on the development of the city. As a support piece, this history is a broad, unselective piece. In comparison to Chase's history, Harshaw focuses on a narrative of

modernization instead of people. Harshaw, who served the Asheville City Chamber of Commerce, has written multiple books on Western North Carolina, including: *Trains, Trestles, and Tunnels: Railroads of the Southern Appalachians* and *The Southern Appalachian Mountains: Places of discovery*.

Lee, James Daniel. "Sondley, Forster Alexander." *NCPedia*, 1994.
<http://ncpedia.org/biography/sondley-forster-alexander> (Accessed January 7, 2015).

This article is used to give credit to the author of *A History Of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, Forster Sondley.

"Oral History Register for Mitzi Schaden Tessier, University of North Carolina Asheville D. Hiden Ramsey Library Special Collections/University Archives."
http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/oralhistory/VOA/S_Z/Tessier_M.html (Accessed January 7, 2015)

As an information page, this offers information on the author of *Asheville: A Pictorial History*. It is used to clarify Tessier's credits and validity as a historian.

Reidinger, Martin. "Vance, Robert Brank." *NCPedia*, 1996. <http://ncpedia.org/biography/vance-robert-brank-0> (Accessed December 12, 2014)

This short article is used as a means of clarifying the importance of Robert Vance in the Asheville community as well as offering context surrounding the founders of the Asheville Electric Street Railway system.

Sandler, Martin W. *Straphanging in the USA: Trolleys and Subways in American Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Sandler explores the development of transportation systems and their impact across the United States. More importantly, he dedicates an entire chapter to the electric street car industry and describes the many variations of electric street cars and their uses.

Sondley, F.A. *A History Of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, 1st ed. Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Co, 1977.

Formally Forster Alexander Sondley, a civil lawyer in North Carolina who retired to pursue his interest in history, his extensive personal collection was donated and became the Sondley Reference Library at Pack Memorial Library. In this work, Sondley offers information on the progress of the development of the electric street car lines and how they affected city life. The authors closely examines early legal documents concerning the development of the Street Railway Company.

Starnes, Richard. *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Starnes' history of Asheville is the most comprehensive work on tourism in the city. It offers insight into the effects of tourism on the city's development economically, socially, and culturally. In regards to the electric trolley system, it offers invaluable information on its impact and effects in the area.

Tessier, Mitzi Schaden. *Asheville: A Pictorial History*. Norfolk, VA: Donning Company, 1982.

Tessier uses images from Asheville's past to thoroughly explore the life of its citizens throughout its development. Tessier also discusses factors that contributed to the growth of Asheville in the 1880s, offering nuance to the development of the electric street car in Asheville. Tessier, who moved to Asheville in the 1950s, also wrote *The State of Buncombe*. She was involved with the Pisgah Girl Scout Council and taught at Erwin High School. Her extensive civic involvements in Asheville lead her to write about the area.