



MENU

THE CABLE CARS OF SAN FRANCISCO

IN SAN FRANCISCO, city of thrills for resident and visitor alike, no adventure can be more thrilling, more romantic, more informative, than a ride on one of its several cable car lines.

These little cable cars, really jaunting-cars with their side-wise seats, some enclosed and some open-air, are a unique attraction. San Francisco, first city to introduce them to the world, still operates many miles of cable lines for the use and pleasure of some 18,000,000 passengers a year. Thousands of visitors who come to the City by the Golden Gate invariably exclaim: "*Oh, I had a ride on the cable car today!*"

The cable cars, with their jangling bells, often converted into the semblance of a tune, are more than a utility, more than a means of climbing up and down the storied hills of the city. They are a tradition of the olden, golden years . . . *a beloved carry-over of yesterday*, linking the present with the now distant past of clipper ships and of the millionaires of the Comstock Lode and the railroads.

Ulysses S. Grant was president when the first successful test of the grip car was made. *The place:* Clay Street Hill. *The date:* August 1, 1873. The mechanical wizard who achieved this success and followed it through was Andrew Smith Hallidie, a Scotchman, born in London. As told by Edgar M. Kahn in his "*Cable Car Days of San Francisco*," the story of how Andrew S. Hallidie adapted wire rope first used in mine tramways to cable for practical street railway transportation is a veritable romance of invention and vision.

The next great personality to enter the cable car picture was Leland Stanford, railroad financier and founder of the university that bears the name of his son. To him must be given the credit for the California Street Cable Railroad undertaking. This line traverses the present financial district and ascends Nob Hill where Stanford, Hopkins, Huntington, Crocker and other railroad men built their mansions.

On the way, the line passes old St. Mary's Church at the gateway to Chinatown. From the earliest days the Chinese have been faithful patrons of the cable cars. "*No pullee, no pushee, allee samee go,*" was the way the older Chinamen described them when the "*hay-burners*" became obsolete.

Intimately connected with the cable cars are many features, including the antiquated turn-table at the Market Street terminus of the Powell Street line, the sharp turns, when the gripman shouts: "*Look out for the curve!*", and the car barns where the miles of endless cable wind and unwind on giant drums.

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By riding the cable cars, which glide along in a leisurely way, one gains matchless impressions of the color, life, beauty and historic flavor of the city. Then, from the hill tops, are views of towering buildings, and sweeping vistas of San Francisco Bay and the two great bridges, with the Marin and East Bay hills forming a magnificent backdrop. The night ride, when the city is revealed in all its sparkling glory, is *spectacular*.



★ THIS YEAR SEE SOME, IF NOT ALL, OF THE OLD WEST!