

## Highways and By-Ways of Lil' Ol' New York

By RAYMOND CARROLL  
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NEW YORK, May 10.—Central Park, the most beautiful and the most famous of New York's many parks, at last has been opened to all the public, those of slender purses as well as those with fat bank accounts. It has taken sixty-three years of New York to rise to the importance of giving persons who cannot afford their own motorcars or private equipages full opportunity to see the park by riding through it for a five-cent fare.

Week-end, "through-the-park" municipal bus service was duly installed with fifty busses operating between Fifty-Ninth street and 110th street, after a preliminary trial. The service will operate Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The starting of these five-cent fare busses suggest the releasing of a ruthless finger that has been pressing at New York's throat. It is quite unnecessary to indicate directing the forces the pressing finger all these years. After the finger is lifted one cannot escape seeing the blessings resulting, one simply has to marvel at the tolerance of a public which patiently waited so long for its rights upon its own property.

I recall when Mayor Gaynor opened Riverside Drive to the ten-cent busses; it was the sensation of the hour. I should now like to see any interest attempt their removal. And what a boon they have been, not only to strangers sightseeing, but to flat dwellers, who found their only moderate-priced relief from the heat on summer nights atop these same busses! The opening of Central Park to five-cent busses by Mayor Hylan is quite as notable an event to the people who haven't on the East Side as was the opening of Riverside Drive by the earlier mayor, who also came from Brooklyn.

Along with the "great unwashed"—a favorite name for the people of the East Side among the dinner-dance set of Park avenue—I took two nickel rides in Central Park this morning, up and back, respectively. It was also surprisingly interesting for instead of a silly chatter about the latest divorces or what boat somebody was sailing on for Europe, I heard real informative conversation upon what was actually taking place in

Europe—at Genoa, at Rome, at Moscow, at Berlin, at Paris, and at London.

And the comments were made from a distinctly American standpoint. Imagine a Russian Jew reading aloud what Lenin had said with regard to the breaking down of socialism. He gladly translated from Russian what purported to be Lenin's verbal wailing of his subordinates, calling them inefficient and worse.

"You see, the death knell has been sounded for Bolshevism," said my bus neighbor. "It must break up from within Russia, and it would have done so long ago but for the armies the allies sent against the Reds."

I was indeed surprised to hear Attorney General Daugherty discussed, not for what he had done, but for what he had not done in getting after the war profiteers. A slender lad, who said he was a student at New York University, called attention to Mr. Daugherty's reported sending of Department of Justice agents to shadow members of Congress who were demanding of Daugherty action against the men who had enriched themselves out of the National Treasury while these same Congressmen were in the Army.

It was a solid, sensible talk one heard upon all sides of the bus, flavored now and then by expressions of delight at some object in the park. A 2-year-old boy came within an ace of falling out of the window in his eagerness to arouse appreciation from his tired-faced mother at a flock of her sheep gamboling on the green grass. Everybody seemed to be friendly and optimistic, many having brought with them their favorite morning newspaper. Here and there a bus rider would carry a big tree with spreading branches over an inviting empty bench, and, signaling the driver-conductor, take departure for a realization of the promised enjoyment.

Instead of boasting of what they had seen at the theater or cabaret or relating the possession of an ideal bootlegger, of dilating upon "my new car," the women observed in the municipal busses were whispering to each other of some

little Johnny's success at the public school, or the name of some shopkeeper in whose store the prices were right, or the plans of some father for a family outing at Coney Island, or what good wages some Adeline, a clever daughter, was getting in a waist factory. Their talk pivoted entirely upon work, the satisfying progress of an offspring or some better way to squeeze the most value out of a dollar. It was really refreshing—the reflection of a brave struggle to make the best of what little they had.

Fortunate in the possession of an intimate knowledge of the park through previous taxicab and hansom-cab trips along the West drive and the East drive, which are the main arteries of the public playground, I was enabled to answer most of the questions asked as to the identity of buildings and statues. It was pathetic the hungry eagerness with which the information was received. Inquiry developed what most of the bus passengers did know of the park was confined to small areas, portions they had walked in at some time or other. For them to get the whole park for the small sum of

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two nickels was a joy that thrilled one to observe.

In reality Central Park is a treasure land and well filled with suggestions that direct the mind to all that is great in art, music and history. The park was completed in 1858 and represents an initial cost of \$415,000,000. Its dimensions are two and one-half miles in length and one-half mile in width, containing 843 acres, of which 286 are occupied by lakes and reservoirs.

There are nine miles of drives, six miles of bridge paths and thirty miles of walks; there are thirty-six bridges or archways and twelve tunnels and seats on the benches for more than 25,000 persons. There are twenty-three gates to the park, and the park's chief charm lies in the suddenness with which one comes upon the silver surface of a lake, the entrance of a sylvan dell or a vista of shaded lawn. The northbound bus trip started from

the Scholar's gate at Fifth avenue and Fifty-Ninth street, following the East drive, returning from 110th street down the West drive to the Artisan's gate and Seventh avenue and Fifty-Ninth street. Through the foliage of the trees bordering Fifth avenue one was able to point out the marble palaces in millionaire's row. At the entrance and inside the park are statues of General Sherman, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, Columbus, Beethoven, Shakespeare, General

Bolivar, Schiller, Daniel Webster, Alexander Hamilton, Mazzini and others. Cleopatra's Needle, which originally was in Cairo in front of the Temple of the Sun, was a present from the Khedive of Egypt, and it has stood where it is for forty-two years. In the center of the esplanade is the beautiful Bethesda fountain, representing St. John's story of the Pool of Bethesda. The mall is a spacious avenue for pedestrians, bordered with arching elms.

The rhododendrons in the park were a gift from Mrs. Russell Sage. The menagerie, a miniature zoo, is replete just now with a new generation of lions, goats and deer. The upper reservoir has a path around it, frequented early mornings by pugilists in training and actors and others taking their exercises. Enough! All this and more is now made quickly get-at-able for a nickel—and I am sure you will agree it was about time.



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