



# *Historic Gloucester*

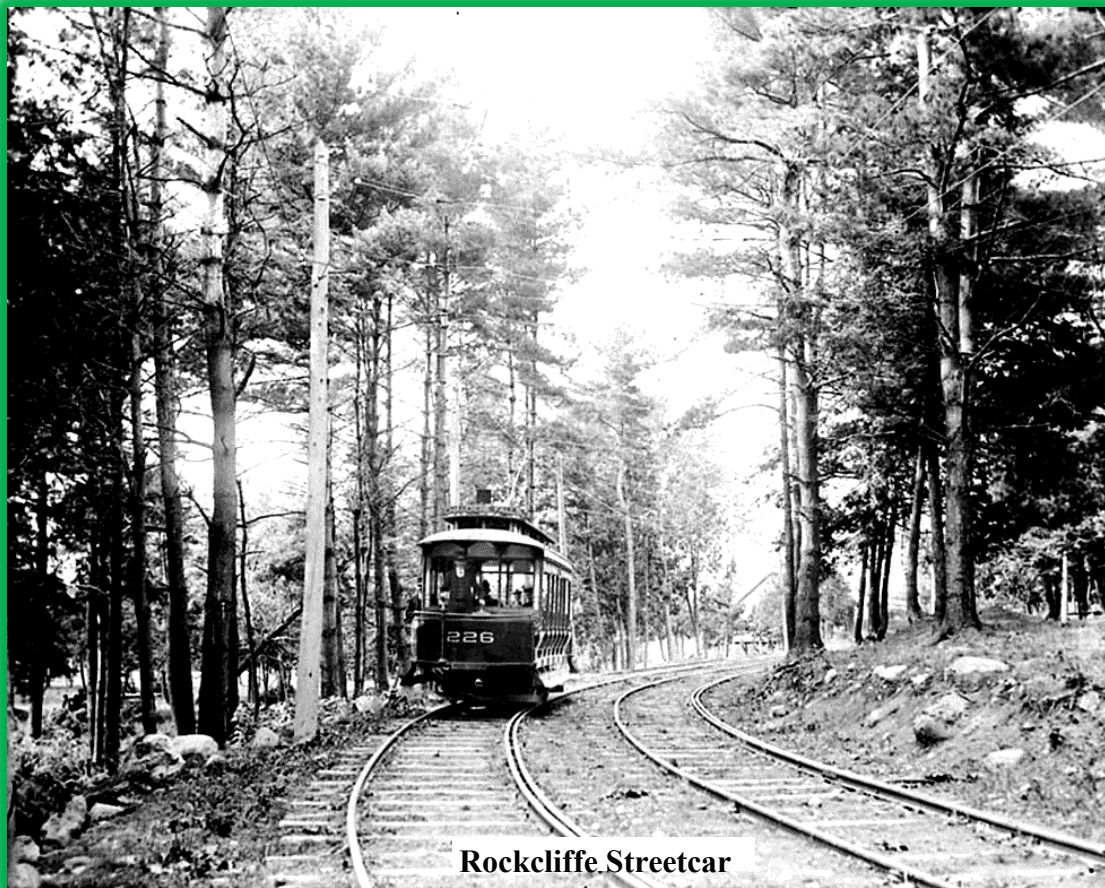
Newsletter of the

**GLOUCESTER  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

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Rockcliffe Streetcar



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## President's Report

By Glenn Clark

Almost to the day of the second anniversary of pandemic, on March 10, 2022, I finally contracted Covid, despite my ongoing precautions and being triple vaxed. I always felt this would be the outcome but, in the end, it will likely give me the best future immunity. Thankfully, the symptoms were relatively mild, and I am now recovering. Please remember that the pandemic is not entirely over and from the experience of acquaintances, family, and friends, Covid is still spreading through our community. Please take care of yourselves.

I am pleased to make two announcements. First, this edition of Historic Gloucester provides an in-depth study of the Rockcliffe Streetcar that operated from 1889 to 1953. From a seasonal horsecar service, it reached its apex between 1900 and 1912, before gradually fading away, step by step, as losses mounted, and service was cut. In the end, the Village of Rockcliffe Park could not support any sort of transit service and today, buses only run around the periphery of the community.

My second announcement is about our Annual General Meeting, which is scheduled to take place on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the Overbrook Community Centre. The event celebrates the centennial of the incorporation of Overbrook as a Police Village in 1922. We will be presenting a video interview of memories of Overbrook in the 1930s and 1940s. There will be other presentations as well covering various aspects of Overbrook history. Plan on joining us for our first in-person presentation since September 2020. The details appear later in this newsletter.

## Russell Clifford Johnston (November 24, 1952 – January 29, 2022)

I am sorry to announce the passing of our Vice-President, Russell Johnston, who succumbed to a complexity of illnesses including Covid, which he acquired in the hospital.

Russell joined the Gloucester Historical Society on April 17, 2011 and was a dependable volun-

teer and supporter of the Society, always representing us at a wide variety of public events. He will be difficult to replace.

Russell had previously served on the board of the Osgoode Township Historical Society and Museum and was heavily involved in Ottawa's theatre community. He was a frequent volunteer at the Ottawa Fringe Festival, the Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival, the Ottawa Little Theatre, Ottawa Arts Court, the National Arts Centre, The Gladstone, and the Great Canadian Theatre Company amongst other organizations.

Russell was born to Richard Sculthorpe and Rita Donovan and was adopted son of Clifford Johnston and Allaine Sculthorpe. He was raised in Eastview (Vanier) and attended J.O. Swerdfager Public School, Eastview High School, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier High School. He spent his career in the federal public service.

Russell often commented on how he was related to half of Ottawa, but I joked on how sadly I was amongst the other half as far as we could tell. He will be missed.







# The Gloucester Historical Society

Presents

## “One Hundred Years of Overbrook Memories”



*(Overbrook Public School)*

**Sunday, May 1, 2022, 2:00 p.m.**

**Location: Overbrook Community Centre**

**33 Quill Street, Ottawa**

**Open to the Public, Free parking and admission, Bus Route 9 and 18 nearby  
A brief Annual General Meeting will precede the presentation**



The Gloucester Historical Society acknowledges financial assistance of the City of Ottawa

## **The Rockcliffe Streetcar - Ottawa's Most Scenic and Unsuccessful Car Line**

By Glenn Clark

When we think of the Rockcliffe streetcar, we think of a far-gone era, before we had automobiles and most city residents didn't even have a horse and buggy. Before the advent of the streetcar, most city residents were left with only one option, to walk.

But beyond this, we think of romantic ideas of 'Persian Nights', summer picnics, rock gardens, horse-back riding, field naturalist walks, campgrounds with new fangled electric lights, merry-go-rounds, skiing, and ski jumping and for the men, target shooting competitions. All of these were associated with the Rockcliffe line.

### **The Founding of the Ottawa City Passenger Railway**

It all began with the development of a new Ottawa suburb, New Edinburgh, which was considered too distant from the centre of the city for comfortable commuting on foot. The bill for incorporation of a street railway was presented to the Canadian legislature by Joseph M. Currier, a resident of New Edinburgh, in 1865 and the perpetual charter was granted on August 15, 1866. So was the Ottawa City Passenger Railway (OCPR) founded.

At about the same time, the Ottawa and Prescott Railway, Ottawa's only intercity railway ended up in bankruptcy, which left the city with no rail access. The losses from this bankruptcy caused a reluctance to support another rail venture. This was particularly the case with the City of Ottawa, which had assumed sizable losses from the bankruptcy. On September 24, 1867, Thomas Coltrin Keefer was introduced as a director, and he soon became President of the OCPR. Mr. Keefer was a pre-eminent engineer and the ideal candidate for establishing a street railway. But he could also be belligerent in his dealings with the city and their relations were strained for the duration of his control over the rail line until 1891. Mr. Keefer was intent on preserving his railway charter rights which ran in perpetuity, something the city made sure never happened again.

### **The Horsecar Line**

The power struggle continued for a few years and delayed construction of the line. The railway charter gave the right to build a two-track line, but the city argued that Ottawa's narrow streets would not allow

enough room for parking in front of businesses as well. In the end Mr. Keefer conceded and construction of a one-track line began in 1869. The rail line opened for service on July 21, 1870, but the western portion was delayed until August 26<sup>th</sup> pending completion of upgrades to Pooley's Bridge. Mr. Keefer had also chosen 'U' rails, another sticking point with the city, which considered them a hazard to regular traffic and pedestrians. This disagreement lasted for years.

The line ran from just short of the Suspension Bridge at Chaudière Falls to Wellington Street, Bank, Sparks, Sappers Bridge and then Sussex Drive to John Street in New Edinburgh where the railway offices, car barn and horse stables were located. Service operated every 15 to 20 minutes and 10-minute frequency during peak hours. Service hours were from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. There was no Sunday service. The federal government had refused a crossing of the Union Suspension bridge, the only Ottawa River crossing at the time.

One of the challenges with horse car operations was Ottawa's snowy climate. There was no modern snow removal and snow accumulated on downtown streets and was packed down by vehicles and pedestrians. Sidewalks were cleared by store owners to add to the mountain of snows on the streets. Under these conditions, rail transport was not feasible, so horse cars were converted to sleighs during the winter months. This was further challenged by the transition seasons when early Ottawa streets were known to become an almost unnavigable quagmire of ruts and mud. It was during this period, that the OCPR ran Omnibuses. Omnibuses resembled horse cars except that they had large carriage wheels. One can imagine how uncomfortable they were as they hurled passengers around amongst the ruts.

### **The Competing Line**

By 1884, the City of Ottawa became interested in expanding its street rail network. They chose to look elsewhere as a result of their difficult relationship with Mr. Keefer, so they decided to engage with another entity, the Metropolitan Street Railway headed by Henry Newell Bate. Following 5 years including two sod turning ceremonies, the city had nothing to show for this venture.

### **The Rockcliffe Horsecar Line**

Thomas Keefer was a well-known resident of Rockcliffe and as the son-in-law of Thomas McKay, he was responsible for the McKay estate, which in-

cluded most of land north of Beechwood Avenue and as far east as today's St. Laurent Boulevard. His street railway was well patronized but traffic on the eastern half of the line was lagging. The easterly terminus in New Edinburgh was mostly residential as compared to the expansive industry at Chaudière <sup>1</sup>.

Mr. Keefer had an idea of making Rockcliffe a recreation destination and to connect with the Gatineau Point ferry to generate extra traffic for the eastern half of his horse car line especially during the summer months. The plan had been in the works since 1872 but for various reasons did not become a serious project until 1889. The new one track horsecar service commenced operation on August 5<sup>th</sup> of that year. The route terminated at Mushroom Lodge, a relic of pioneer Duncan McNab. Today, this is about the location of the Rockcliffe Lookout (built in 1923 <sup>76</sup>). Although service was being offered with a single ticket all the way from Chaudière, there ended up being a 400-foot gap between John Street and the start of the Rockcliffe extension. This was part of the ongoing spat between Keefer and The City of Ottawa. The new line could not run west of the Ottawa-Gloucester boundary which fell east of Rideau Hall <sup>2</sup>. This segregated line also needed access to a horse stable and this was built on a tract of land near the intersection of today's Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Parkway (then Limekiln Road) and Princess Avenue. This later became the approximate location of the Rockcliffe Car barns.



**Rockcliffe Lookout built in 1923**

### **The Beginning of Electric Cars**

While the Rockcliffe line was being built, already the trend towards electric traction was becoming apparent and following a tour to Boston in 1890 to witness electric streetcars in action, city officials knew that horsecars were a thing of the past. Following the failure of the Metropolitan plan, it was time to get someone else involved. In July 1890, this was

W.H. Howland, former Mayor of Toronto. He was given the exact same conditions as the Metropolitan group, which included a 30-year charter.

The proposed routings included a main line from Rideau and Wurtemberg to the Broad Street CPR station via Rideau, Wellington, O'Connor, and Albert, a Bank Street line as far south as the Exhibition grounds, an Elgin Street line to Catharine Street and the Canada Atlantic Railway Station, and a New Edinburgh line via Rideau, Dalhousie, St. Patrick and Crichton. Other lines were to be added later. In order to minimize interaction with Keefer's OCP, a controversial route was chosen downtown, via Dufferin Bridge and Wellington Street. Both were being maintained by the federal government, which did not want an electric tramway on 'their' road and bridge. This risked the special maintenance agreement that benefited the city.

Again, dealing with Thomas Keefer, always protecting his interests, was going to be a problem. The proposed new line required three diamond crossings of the horsecar line. The alternative was to share track crossing Sappers Bridge. Both required Mr. Keefer's agreement.

The deadline for opening the new electric system was August 1, 1891. As part of the agreement with Mr. Howland, a \$5,000 good faith cheque was to be deposited with the city by October 16, 1890. When the nature of fulfilling this requirement was disputed, the deadline was extended to October 30<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. This deadline was also not met, and a crisis arose at City Hall on what to do. Mr. Howland did make the deposit after the deadline, but another bid had been quietly submitted behind the scenes accompanied by the expected \$5,000 cheque. This came from Thomas Ahearn and Warren Soper. Following a tense debate and a close vote, the contract was awarded to Ahearn and Soper, a similar circumstance on how Ahearn and Soper won the city electric light contract in 1885 <sup>3</sup>.

### **Ottawa Electric Street Railway**

Ahearn and Soper were men of action and moved forward immediately to begin construction. They worked with Mr. Keefer on gaining track sharing or diamond crossing rights and the city attempted to gain his cooperation by offering to close the gap at Rockcliffe and giving him access to the Broad Street CPR station. Mr. Keefer recognized however, that electric service would directly compete with his horsecar line and would negatively affect ridership and revenue. As a result, cooperation was minimal, but

he eventually agreed to the diamond crossings.

The new railway charter was granted on February 13, 1891, under the name of the Ottawa Electric Street Railway. Construction moved quickly and the Bank Street line was officially opened on June 29, 1891. As the electric service expanded to other lines, Mr. Keefer's prediction of falling ridership on his horsecar line was realized. He knew the writing was on the wall and his rail company was now a depreciating asset. He had been on the first electric streetcar run to the Exhibition grounds and could see the advantages of electric traction. He put his interest in the Ottawa City Passenger Railway up for sale on October 9, 1891, which was quickly purchased by Ahearn and Soper.

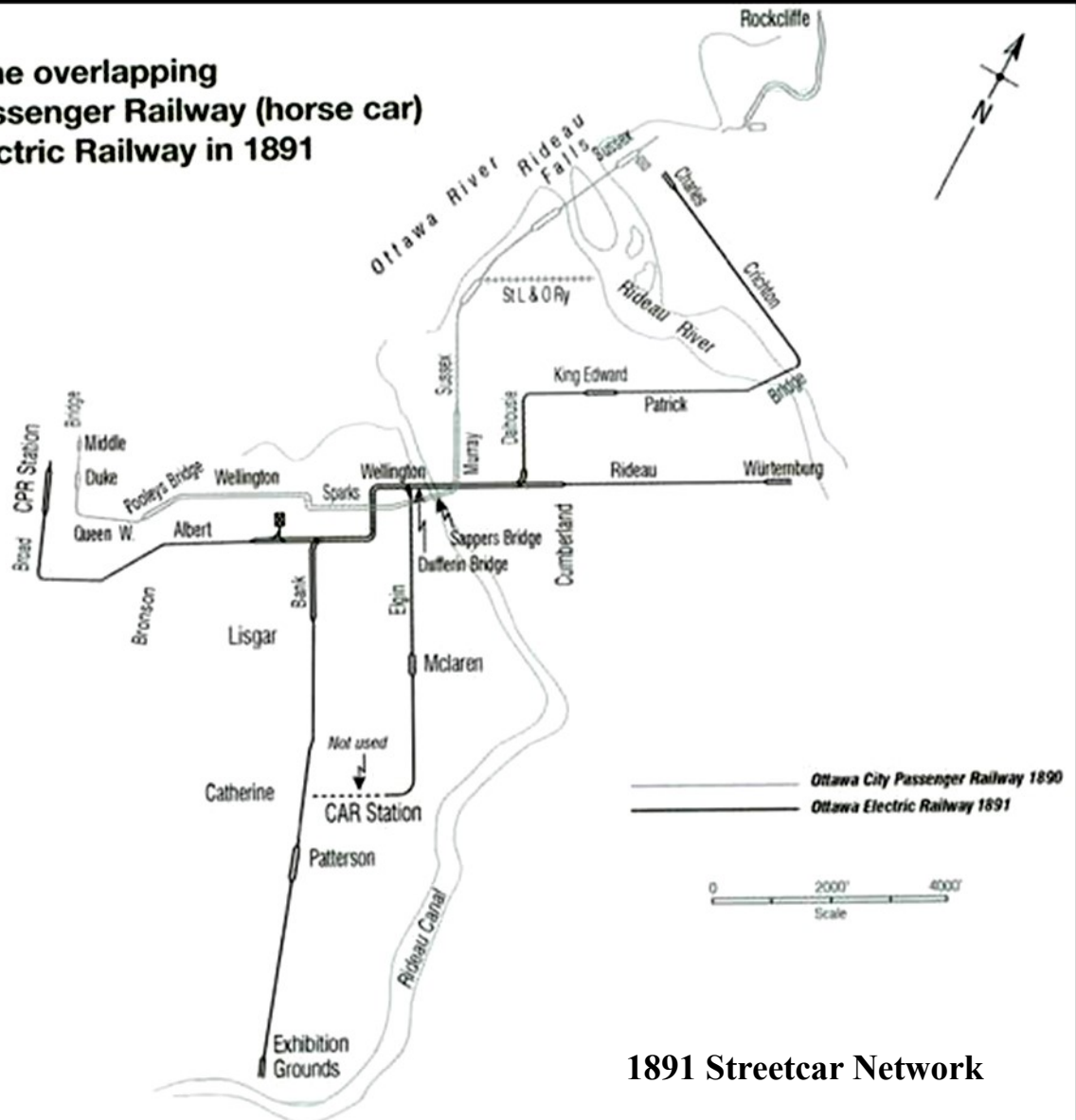
The pieces of the puzzle for electric service to

Rockcliffe were gradually falling into place. New iron bridges had been built on Sussex to connect to New Edinburgh in 1886 <sup>4</sup>. A new iron bridge was built over the Rideau River at St. Patrick's Street in 1889 <sup>5</sup>. The Ottawa Electric Street Railway had opened its New Edinburgh line as far as Beechwood Avenue on August 4, 1891, <sup>6</sup> and full service via Crichton Street (then known as Creighton Street) opened on October 7, 1891 <sup>7</sup>.

### The Rockcliffe Line Conversion to Electric Cars

Work on conversion of the horsecar line to electric service began in earnest in 1893 with the first switchover occurring on the Rockcliffe line. The new double-tracked line opened on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, which also eliminated the previous gap <sup>10</sup>. Initially, this operated as a jigger service with a transfer required to the New Edinburgh line.

**Map showing the overlapping  
Ottawa City Passenger Railway (horse car)  
and Ottawa Electric Railway in 1891**





The big switchover took place on August 3<sup>rd</sup> when the horse car line between Rideau and Sussex and Bank and Sparks was electrified <sup>9</sup>. The Sussex Line was switched the following day as far east as Green Island <sup>11</sup>. The existing New Edinburgh Bridge was not considered strong enough to handle two track electric service but was quickly twinned. The missing link between Green Island and the Rockcliffe and New Edinburgh lines opened on August 30<sup>th</sup> <sup>12 13</sup>. All Horse Car service east of Bank Street had been converted by this date.

The remainder of the horsecar line westward to Chaudière was converted by the end of summer and all the horses were sold by early September. By October 28<sup>th</sup>, the New Edinburgh horse stables had been converted into a paint and maintenance shop for the electric railway <sup>14</sup>.

With electrification of the Sappers Bridge and Sparks Street route, the controversial route crossing Dufferin Bridge and running along Wellington Street was abandoned.

The Rockcliffe extension offered only a seasonal service from April to December with year-round service terminating at Sussex and John and later at the gates of Rideau Hall.

### Keefer's Pleasure Park

The Rockcliffe Line ran through the McKay estate managed by Thomas Keefer. As his Ottawa City Passenger Railway had originally brought horsecar service to the route, he saw an opportunity in developing a 'pleasure park' at the terminus of the line.

With the new electric line to open in 1893, which would bring many more people to his park, he erected a pavilion measuring 30 feet by 60 feet. The pavilion had a platform suitable for band concerts and dancing and was strung with electric lights. There was seating and tables for picnicking both at the pavilion and around nearby trees. Ice water and hot water were both available from a refreshment booth. He also developed separate walking trails for gentlemen and ladies with the ladies walkway described as 'rustic'. It was a great success.

The Ottawa Electric Street Railway also thought of another attraction at least in part for Rockcliffe visitors when they began purchasing open-air streetcars in 1891. These were available for the start of Rockcliffe service in 1893 and were ideal for riders on warm summer days. However, there were

problems, as open-air cars were not comfortable on damp evenings or on cool days. Sometimes they were kept in service too late in the season and many chose to wait for the next car rather than sit in an open-air car and shiver.



**The Second Rockcliffe Pavilion built in 1917 <sup>78</sup>. The original was built in 1893 <sup>10</sup>.**

### Ottawa Electric Railway

With the Ottawa City Passenger Railway and Ottawa Electric Street Railway becoming a shared operation, a merger was formally ratified on June 28, 1893, with the starting date of the 30-year franchise set as August 23, 1893. Upon passing of Acts by the Ontario Legislature and the Canadian Parliament in 1894 the service was officially merged under a new name, the Ottawa Electric Railway Company.

The Rockcliffe line opened on April 19<sup>th</sup> for the 1894 season, first as a jigger service with transfer connections to the New Edinburgh and Sussex lines. Direct through service to Rockcliffe via the Sussex Line commenced on May 3<sup>rd</sup> with new attractions at the terminus. The pavilion now had a full refreshment counter including a soda fountain. There was a public telephone and the grove had been cleared of undergrowth and strung with arc lights. The biggest new attraction was an electric Merry-go-round brought in from Tonawanda, New York, which was also strung with incandescent lights and music provided by an organ <sup>16 17</sup>. Some have said it was the first electrically powered and lit carousel in the world.

Rockcliffe Cars operated from the Exhibition Grounds all day and in the afternoon and evening from Hull providing a combined frequency of 5 minutes <sup>18</sup>.

How long did the merry-go-round last at Rockcliffe? There is no clear answer, but it is known that it was operating during the 1894, 1895 and 1896 seasons and it was dismantled and stored each winter.

### **Keefer's Park Purchased by the City of Ottawa**

As Keefer's pleasure park developed, the City's Park Board became interested in it as a public park. They made an offer to purchase it in 1893 without consulting City Council. A contract was signed, and this was followed by a four-year controversy between all three parties including threats of lawsuits. The city did not see the value in spending the agreed price for the park. However, as the park developed and more patrons arrived by streetcar, its value became apparent. In the end, City Council consented to proceed with the purchase in 1897, and the land transfer was completed on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 19.

### **Rockcliffe Line Extended to the Rifle Range**

The next development to eventually impact the Rockcliffe Line was the closure of the Rideau Rifle Range on the site of today's Strathcona Park at the end of the 1897 season 20. A new larger range was needed, and the site chosen was located at the north end of today's St. Laurent Boulevard. It became known as the Rockcliffe Rifle Range. The new site was officially opened on August 29, 1898 21. However, the Ottawa Electric Railway had long announced that they would not extend car service to the site, to the bitter disappointment of riflemen 22. Only because of a cost sharing arrangement with the Militia Department 23 did the extension to the Rifle Range get built with the opening date on August 18, 1900 24. The route extended from the Rockcliffe Park terminus near the pavilion and more or less followed today's parkway (the old Limekiln Road). At Acacia Avenue, it followed the Rockeries pathway, then Hillsdale and Sandridge Roads to a St. Laurent Boulevard loop and terminus. The fact that construction was subsidized, and potential revenues were suspect, would eventually lead to abandonment of this extension.

### **Sunday Car Service**

In 1898, another contentious issue arose, Sunday car service. While most Canadian cities already offered Sunday service including the Hull Electric Railway on the opposite side of the river, Ottawans were more conservative. The debate surrounded religious issues and a variety of groups opposed the potential new service.

A plebiscite was included as part of the December 1898 municipal election and 61% of voters

were in favour 25. An amendment was required to the railway charter and was to be passed by the Ontario Legislature before Sunday Service could be implemented. The new service was finally launched on July 23, 1899. On that first Sunday, the conservative estimate of attendance at Rockcliffe and the military camp (Rifle Range) was 7,000, an overwhelming success in generating more passengers for the Rockcliffe line 26.



**Rockcliffe Station near the Lookout**

### **A Touch of Europe**

Following the grand illumination of Parliament Hill, Major's Hill Park and the Princess Alexandra Bridge during the Royal Visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in September 1901, the Ottawa Electric Railway thought of another venture, to bring a bit of European festivities to Ottawa and to generate more patrons for its service. This began as an event named 'Venetian Night' which was held on Tuesday, July 21, 1903, at Britannia-on-the-Bay. This event was to be like none other ever held in Ottawa. Colourful Chinese lanterns were strung in the park, boats were electrically illuminated in the bay, there was a fireworks' display and the Governor General's Foot Guard band played throughout the event. It was an overwhelming success with an estimated crowd of 20,000 except the electric railway underestimated the potential crowd, did not have enough streetcars in service and there was a serious track failure that interrupted service. Thousands were left to walk the seven-mile distance back to the city following the conclusion of the event, and thousands more were never able to reach Britannia in the first place. 82.

The success of that evening spurred the Hull Electric Railway to create its own event at Queen's Park in Aylmer. It was named 'Parisian Night' and was held on August 20, 1903. Again, enormous crowds wanted to attend, but Hull Electric's modest



fleet of streetcars were not up to the task even when steam trains supplemented service to Aylmer. Again, the event itself was a grand success and 7,000 eventually reached Queen's Park, but many more were never able to leave the Ottawa terminus or arrived so late, that they remained on the trains for the return trip. With not enough cars to handle the crowd, many were stranded and returned to Ottawa at a very late hour. Thankfully, the Ottawa Electric Railway had some foresight and had streetcars ready for the returning Aylmer crowd, even well after normal service hours had ended. <sup>83</sup>

Rather than being deterred by the failings of the Venetian Night event, and focussing on its enormous popularity, the Ottawa Electric Railway planned more similar evenings closer to the city at Rockcliffe Park. These evenings were named the 'Persian Nights'. Rather than a single evening, it held this festival of lights over three consecutive nights, August 11, 12 and 13, 1903 in hope of spreading the crowd out to make sure that its streetcars could handle the passenger traffic. Again, these were grand events and without the previous crowd control problems. It was such a success that it was repeated on Saturday, August 22, 1903, with a special invitation to the delegates of the Chamber of Commerce of the Empire who were meeting in the city at the time.

#### ***"Delegates at Rockcliffe Park***

*Greatly Delighted with the Illumination Which Excelled the Persian Night*

*Beautiful as were the illuminations in Rockcliffe park during the recent Persian nights entertainment, those on Saturday evening in honor of the visiting delegates of the Chamber of Commerce were still more beautiful, and a sight which delighted the visitors and which they will long remember in connection with their visit to the Capital City.*

*The trees were again hung with thousands of colored lights, casting a subdued glow over the grounds. The roadway from Buena Vista to the Pavilion was also decorated and the pavilions prettily illuminated the whole, presenting a charming appearance from the river. A large crowd was present, and the delegates were taken to the park in two of the large Britannia-on-the-Bay cars. The car service was excellent, and the crowd handled in good shape. The Guards' Band was again present and gave an excellent program of music. The thousands of varicolored lights swaying in the breeze, and the subdued light of which the people wandered about, and the*

*music made the park seem like a veritable fairyland. It was, however, a splendid reception, and one which greatly delighted them."* <sup>81</sup>

The Persian Nights Illumination Festival was repeated again in 1904 from September 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***"A Persian Night***

*Rockcliffe Robed in Garments of Light and Laden with Sweet Music.*

*Rockcliffe – beautiful, airy Rockcliffe, resplendent in its wealth of autumn foliage, was a blaze of light and glory last night when the Ottawa Electric railway inaugurated the first of its free series of four Persian Nights. The evening was cool: just a little on the chilly side and this probably affected the patronage somewhat, but as it was over two thousand people were down there admiring the spectacle of grandeur that was presented.*

*Suspended from the trees and up on the branches like bunches of ripened fruit were thousands of Chinese lanterns twinkling, scintillating, illuminating the darkness of the night. The display commences at the curve in the park and continues down to the pavilion and the arrangement is very artistic. From the hill opposite Buena Vista Road, the spectacle last evening was exceedingly picturesque and delightful to lovers of the esthetic. All over the park the limbs are laden with fantastic illuminants which shed their soft radiance and shine in the gloom like flowers of fire. The display is very similar to what took place in Major's Hill Park on the occasion of the Royal visit.*

*The car service was augmented greatly and there was an abundance of accommodation, while souvenir buttons were distributed. At the park the Guards' band furnished a program of popular airs that was much appreciated.*

*The Persian Nights will be continued tonight, Thursday and Friday."* <sup>84</sup>

#### **Camping at Rockcliffe**

Camping became a popular activity for city residents to get away from the summer heat in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. A favourite destination was Hog's Back, but Rockcliffe's picturesque location made it also a top choice. Colourful campsite names were chosen by their owners including 'Tramp's Rest'<sup>92</sup>, 'The Ramblers' Rest' <sup>85</sup>, 'Camp Pretoria' <sup>88 91</sup>,

'Phivanswansvich' <sup>90</sup>, 'Ingoagamig' <sup>90</sup>, 'Iogoowag Wigamig' <sup>91</sup>, 'Camp Strathcona' <sup>91</sup> and others. As access to hydro became easier, some of these camps had electric lighting and other conveniences <sup>90</sup>. Campsites were along the riverside in various locations from Bronson's Point below the lookout <sup>91</sup> and as far east as the Rockcliffe Speedway (Mile Circle). The camps had easy access to Rockcliffe streetcars facilitating day trips into the city. As the area was developed by the Ottawa Improvement Commission, the camps were forced to relocate away from Rockcliffe in 1905 <sup>86 87</sup>. Camp Pretoria moved to River Park in Nepean <sup>89</sup>.

### Rockcliffe Car Barn and the Fires

The Rockcliffe Car Barn was located at the corner of the Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Parkway and Princess Avenue, just beyond Rideau Hall. When the present traffic circle was built, streetcar rails were unearthed and put on display through the centre of the circle. Those tracks point directly to the location of the old car barn.

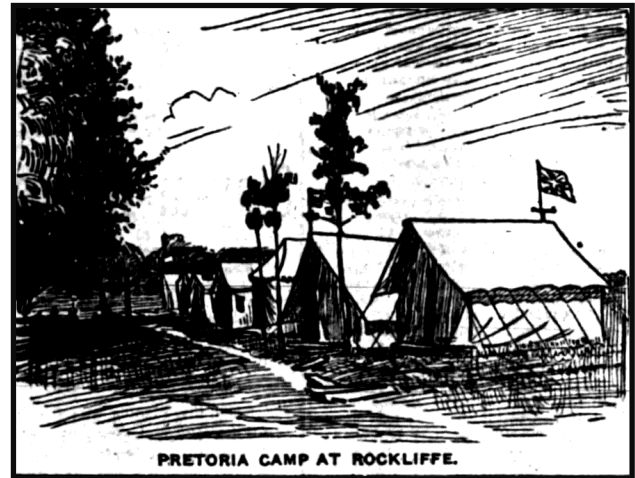
As mentioned earlier, this was originally the site of a horse stable used for the Rockcliffe Horsecar Line from 1889 until the electric line replaced it in 1893. At that time, the old horse stable was abandoned and was eventually demolished.

In 1900, plans were quickly moving forward to build the Britannia Streetcar Line. This increased the number of streetcars needed for the entire network. From the inception of electric service in 1891, the car barn was located on Albert Street, but it had reached capacity by the time that new cars were being purchased for Britannia. A new car barn was needed. With the Rockcliffe site previously used for horse stables, this was the logical location for a new streetcar barn.

The first phase of the Rockcliffe Barn consisting of 5 tracks was built in the spring of 1900 <sup>27</sup>. This was followed by two 4 track additions in 1907 <sup>28</sup>.

The car barn was used for many years but was vulnerable to vandals, vagrants, and arsonists. It was also not close to city fire hydrants. There were three major fires

The first occurred on September 25, 1927, which caused \$200,000 damage and the loss of 27 streetcars, including many of the remaining open cars. This brought an end to seasonal open car service. The fire affected the 1900 5 track structure,



**Located below the Rockcliffe Lookout near Bronson's Point, all the camps were forced to relocate away from Rockcliffe by the Ottawa Improvement Commission in 1905. <sup>91</sup>**

while the other two 4 track buildings were protected by fire walls. The destroyed section of the car barn was re-built <sup>29</sup>.

The second blaze took place on September 18, 1932. This affected the same section of the car barn as the 1927 fire. On this occasion, there was \$30,000 in damage, and the loss of six 800 series cars (the most modern), one full size green car, the remaining open cars and other equipment. Fire was sourced to a location just inside the front doors <sup>30</sup>. The damaged structure was again rebuilt.

The final fire occurred on June 23, 1937. On this occasion, the two 1907 barns were destroyed. Losses were estimated at \$75,000 including the destruction of 40 older streetcars not in regular service. Most were single truck wooden cars or partial steel 500 series cars. It was this fire that destroyed the Royal cars from the 1901 Royal Visit. Workmen were able to save just three cars from the blaze before being forced back by the heat. The section destroyed in the previous fires was only slightly damaged.

The Ottawa Electric Railway was unsure whether the barn would be rebuilt and eventually chose not to do so. Transients were suspected in the last fire as they had been found inside the barn on a number of prior occasions leading up to this fire <sup>31</sup>.

With the remaining structure considered an eyesore, the Federal District Commission encouraged demolition, which began on October 1, 1940 <sup>32</sup>.

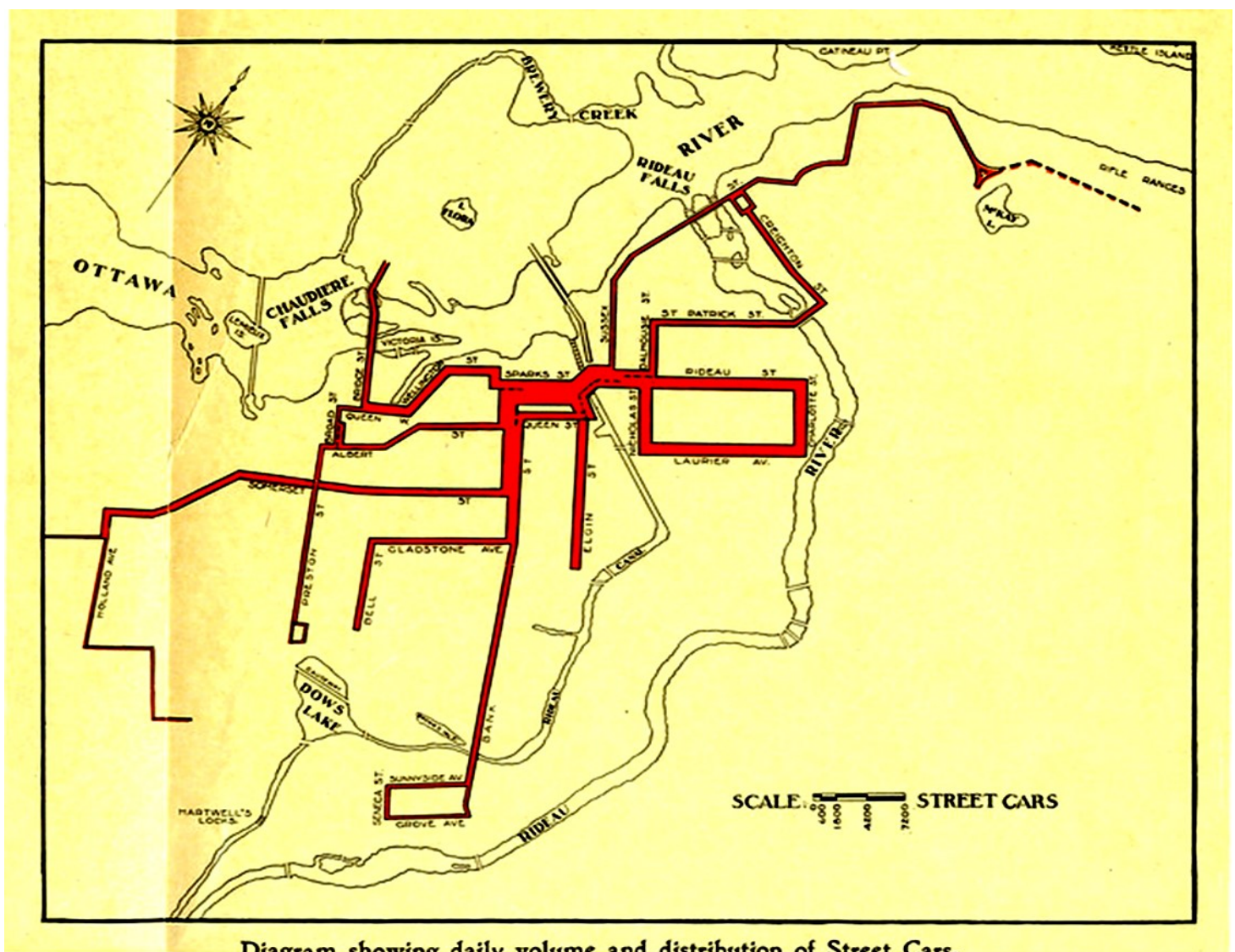
## Service Levels

Although not well documented, year-round car service was likely implemented following the 1900 Rifle Range extension. A 1910 news ad mentioned 15-minute frequency on the Rockcliffe line <sup>33</sup>.

Carleton County incorporated the Police Village of Rockcliffe Park on January 31, 1908 <sup>34</sup>. In the years leading up to World War I, Rockcliffe Park was being developed with new subdivisions such as Connaught Commons and Dundonald Estate. Meanwhile, further east in Gloucester Township towards the Rifle Range, other subdivisions including Manor Park, Rockcliffe Annex and Trafalgar Park were being marketed. All

offered the possibility of additional customers for the streetcar line but what became a feverish real estate boom soon fizzled out in 1913. The Gloucester subdivisions in particular failed, few houses were built and much of the land was taken over by the township for tax areas.

On November 24, 1913, the Preston Streetcar line opened to service. This re-arranged streetcar routes with the Rockcliffe - Albert - Broad Street Station route changed to the Rockcliffe - Preston route. <sup>47</sup> This remained the routing for the Rockcliffe line until the end of service.



1915 Streetcar Network



## Rockcliffe Park and Skiing

This subject was covered in detail in the Winter 2017 edition of Historic Gloucester. It mentions how skiing was introduced at Rideau Hall in 1887 and how the various slopes in the Rockcliffe area were ideal for ski enthusiasts as well as tobogganers. A ski jump was built in 1910 and especially during the 1910s was a popular sport and spectator attraction. The final ski jump was demolished in 1937. As a winter playground, it had wonderful access for city residents via the Rockcliffe streetcar line, especially after the introduction of all year service.



**The Rockcliffe Streetcar gave people access to Rockcliffe ski hills**

## The Rifle Range

The new 1898 Rifle Range at Rockcliffe was a distinct improvement over the previous Rideau Range in Sandy Hill, but it also had limitations. The site was still not big enough and there were many neighbouring farms, mostly facing Montreal Road. Although a ridge backed onto the range to the south and was expected to capture gunfire, stray bullets occasionally hit nearby homes creating a serious risk. As a result, additional farms were expropriated to expand the range, but the risks remained.

In 1912, the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association with the help of the federal government identified a new site at Shirley's Bay in Nepean, which became known as the Connaught Rifle Range. Great progress was made in laying out the new range with an expected opening date in 1914 but the Great War intervened. This delayed the completion of the new range for the duration of the war and into the years following.

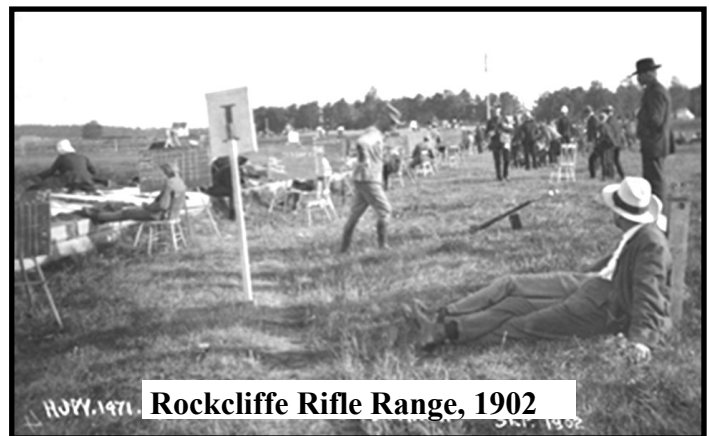
Finally, the Connaught Rifle Range opened on August 15, 1921,<sup>35</sup> and the days for the Rockcliffe site were numbered. The final competition took place

at Rockcliffe on September 29, 1923, and the range closed at the end of the 1923 season<sup>36</sup>.

While the Rifle Range did generate customers for the Rockcliffe Line, it tended to be highly concentrated on competition days with few if any customers during the winter months. That section of the line was a big money loser. In order to control costs, the Ottawa Electric Railway constructed a wye at Cloverdale Road in 1912<sup>37</sup>. This allowed cars to be short turned at that location. Following this, car service to the Rifle Range was reduced, or was offered only as needed. There was no service during the winter months. Often, only a jigger service was offered

37 38 40•

The reduction in service did not eliminate losses so the Ottawa Electric Railway began looking at zone fares with an additional 5 cent fare applied to those travelling beyond Cloverdale Road. The first proposal was made public in the fall of 1918<sup>39</sup>. The fare increase was finally approved by the Board of Railway Commissioners on April 19, 1920<sup>41</sup>. Regular fares were 5 cents and 10 cents after midnight. The new standard fare beyond Cloverdale Road was 10 cents.



**Rockcliffe Rifle Range, 1902**

## The First Abandonment

With the closure of Rockcliffe Rifle Range in the fall of 1923, the status of the car line beyond Cloverdale Road was in doubt. It was noted that service was withdrawn during the winter of 1923-1924<sup>42</sup>, but, resumed in the spring of 1924<sup>43</sup>. But the writing was on the wall when the Cloverdale wye was replaced with a loop allowing for routine turning of streetcars at that location<sup>44</sup>. As expected, the line was abandoned on August 20, 1924<sup>45</sup>. Although there are a few newspaper references to the Rifle Range line after 1924, there was no indication that service was ever resumed. The track remained in place for several years following the end of service.

## Open Cars

Riding open cars was a memorable experience on warm summer days but the operation of these cars were not without risks. One early safety measure implemented in the mid 1890s had a chain run along the left side of the cars. This was designed to prevent passengers from exiting the car into traffic and particularly into the path of streetcars running in the opposite direction. Following the death of Frank Helman, a child, on August 5, 1911, who had been leaning out of an open car and struck by a car travelling in the opposite direction, the Ottawa Electric Railway quickly installed two or three bars on the left side of its open car fleet.<sup>93</sup>

The open cars were a sign of spring and after our typical long cold winters, Ottawans looked forward to their return to the streets. Depending on the weather, they could return to service as early as April, but May was more typical timing. When the weather was nice, there were often complaints that open cars were not running on 'their' route.

All open cars were made of wood, and most were single truck cars. A few double truck open cars were built for the Britannia line. These single truck cars were vulnerable in accidents and perhaps the most serious accident occurred on May 24, 1908, on the Britannia Line when twenty were injured. The open car had rear ended a much heavier double truck car that had stopped when returning to the city from the Britannia terminus<sup>46</sup>. Other problems involved passengers (and OER employees) falling off the cars while in motion or while trying to exit before the car had come to a full stop. The manufacture of open cars was eventually banned.

Open cars remained in service going into the 1920s, but their use was gradually curtailed. The season was shortened, and they became mostly extra cars, often put into service during the Central Canada Exhibition. In 1927, fourteen open cars remained, and their last noted use was on July 2, 1927, to address the enormous crowds who came to Parliament Hill for Canada's Diamond Jubilee and particularly to see Charles Lindbergh. The end of open car service came when most of them were destroyed in the Rockcliffe Car barn fire of September 25, 1927<sup>29</sup>. Any remaining open cars were lost in the subsequent fire at the same location on September 18, 1932<sup>30</sup>.

## Cost Saving Measures

The question of profitability of the Rockcliffe line remained despite the 1924 abandonment. The



**Rockcliffe Open Cars**

Ottawa Electric Railway was looking at other cost cutting measures. Since the beginning of electric streetcar operations, the cars were run by two people, the motorman, and the conductor. The motorman ran the streetcar while the conductor collected fares. There had been a brief experiment with one-man operations on the Rockcliffe line. At that time, the motorman was also responsible for collecting fares, but this was during the days prior to dead man controls. The motorman collected fares while the streetcar was still moving!! One can imagine the fear this created amongst passengers with 'nobody at the controls' on the winding Rockcliffe route that sometimes followed near the edge of cliffs. This experiment did not last long.

However, the need to move towards one-man operations was an obvious cost saver as the technology improved. The next experiment began on Sunday, April 19, 1925.

This experiment was initiated when the network was the least busy, on Sundays and on the Preston-Rockcliffe and Elgin-Gladstone routes<sup>48</sup>. Ottawa's well known red streetcars were introduced at this time to designate one-man cars and front door entry. Earlier streetcars had been green, and passengers entered by the rear door where they were greeted by the conductor. This experiment was a success<sup>50</sup> and one-man operations became system wide on August 13, 1933<sup>49</sup>. All streetcars remaining in service had been re-painted red and reconfigured for one-man operations by that date.

The Rockcliffe – Gatineau Point ferry had been a source of passengers for the Rockcliffe streetcar from the very beginning and there were stairs next to the Rockcliffe streetcar station (near the lookout) where passengers could access the ferry dock below the cliff. This story was covered in detail in the summer and Fall 2019 editions of Historic Gloucester. In

1925, this arrangement was formalized with a joint arrangement between the Ottawa Electric Railway and the ferry operator.

*“A seven-cent fare from the village of Gatineau Point to any point within the limits of the city of Ottawa, covered by the Ottawa Street Railway System will be the vogue within a week or so, following arrangements which Major F.D. Burpee, general manager of the O.E.R. has just concluded with Mr. J. Seguin, proprietor of the Gatineau Point ferry.*

*The present bus fare on the round about trip via roadway is two tickets for 25 cents.”*<sup>80</sup>

During 1926, the track between the Rockcliffe Pavilion and Cloverdale Road was replaced with heavier steel<sup>52</sup>. While under re-construction, a 6-minute stub service was offered between Cloverdale and Rockcliffe car barn<sup>51</sup>. A 1927 news story reported that there was a waiting room at the Cloverdale loop but was in poor condition<sup>53</sup>.

However, despite the track renewal, the end of car service into the Village of Rockcliffe Park was approaching when a January 1930 proposal suggested the replacement of streetcars beyond the Rockcliffe barn with buses<sup>54</sup>. Rockcliffe car service was curtailed on April 22, 1930, with 7-minute frequency between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. and 14-minute frequency during other hours<sup>55</sup>.

### **Final Road and Streetcar Right of Way Improvements**

1930 also brought about a major improvement project for Rockcliffe Park by the Federal District Commission. The project included improving the scenic roads between the gates to Rideau Hall and the Rockcliffe streetcar station near the lookout. It was intended to improve the safety of the narrow and winding Limekiln Road and to better integrate the road with the streetcar line. Previously the road awkwardly crossed the streetcar tracks at a number of locations. The project relocated 900 feet of streetcar track, replaced the Rockcliffe station building with a new stucco structure, installed new decorative street-lamps, removed Federal District Commission (FDC) buildings on Pine Hill with a new building to be constructed at the corner of Carling and Cambridge Avenues and relocated the FDC nurseries also on Pine Hill to a new site just east of Acacia Avenue<sup>56</sup>. The roadway upgrade brought it to today's standards.

### **The Second Abandonment**

Finally, streetcar service was replaced with

buses on December 14, 1931, east of the Rockcliffe car barns. Buses ran on a similar frequency as the previous streetcars and circulated through the village of Rockcliffe Park as far east as Acacia Avenue. Buses did not operate to the previous terminus of Cloverdale Road. The new replacement service allowed transfers to both the Sussex and New Edinburgh car lines at the intersection of Sussex and John. The Rockcliffe streetcars looped at the Rockcliffe car barns and then returned to the city<sup>57</sup>.

The replacement bus service did not last long. Because of the lack of patronage and continuing losses, the new bus service was cancelled on April 30, 1932<sup>58 59</sup>.

But a degree of reprieve was offered on the same date, when it was announced that a new streetcar loop was to be built at Buena Vista Road and in the meantime, a stub streetcar service was to be offered between the Rockcliffe car barn and Buena Vista Road<sup>60</sup>. All transit service beyond that point was cancelled, although the city attempted to restore bus service later in the year<sup>61</sup>.

In an April 1, 1950, newspaper interview, Horace David Seguin, owner of the Rockcliffe – Gatineau Point ferry explained:

*“The ferryboat business, like many others of a past era, is feeling the pinch of modern travel.*

*Ten years ago, when the operators of the Rockcliffe streetcar decided that the terminal at the Rockcliffe ferry slip was not necessary and moved it closer to the city, the decision had the effect of cutting off some of the Seguin trade.*

*That was the first blow.”*



**Rockcliffe Streetcar right of way between Princess Avenue and Buena Vista Road. Now a multi-use pathway follows the right of way here.**



*The most recent has to be felt yet. Last fall the line of the Gatineau bus was rerouted past the Seguin dock at Gatineau Point and the ferry owner feels that this might be a new drain on his business."*

79

The right of way between Buena Vista Road and the old Rockcliffe Rifle Range was turned over to the Federal District Commission for \$1 on January 17, 1934. Presumably all the rails had been lifted by this time <sup>62</sup>.

A news story from July 30, 1937:

*"Old Tram Route Being Improved*

*FDC Providing Bridle and Foot Paths*

*Federal District Commission employees are improving the old Ottawa Electric Railway right-of-way in Rockcliffe, from the top of the hill leading down to the lower driveway circuit for about half a mile to Cloverdale Road.*

*The tracks have been removed from this section and under supervision of Alex Stuart, superintendent for the commission, a 10-foot bridle path and a five-foot walk for pedestrians is being laid out.*

*The bridle path will connect with the one now passing through the FDC nursery and joining the one on the river side of the driveway.*

*When the tram service over this route was abandoned, the right-of-way reverted to the township of Gloucester and from the township passed into the possession of the commission*

### **Post-War Service Cuts**

After a number of years of service stability, the Rockcliffe car line service was again cut substantially in late 1947. At this point, most cars were short turned at the Sussex and John loop with only a few cars continuing to the Buena Vista loop <sup>63</sup>. By this time, the Rockcliffe car barn and its loop had been removed. This service cut took place just before the end of the Ottawa Electric Railway franchise. There were a number of complaints from Rockcliffe riders but as always, the lack of ridership settled the matter.

*"Nothing will be done to improve the streetcar service to Rockcliffe, T.F. Ahearn, president of the OER, told The Evening Citizen this morning when asked to comment on complaints, aired at last night's meeting of Rockcliffe Village Council, that*

*transportation facilities provided by the OER to that municipality were inadequate.*

*'We are not going to pay any attention to the protests of the Reeve of Rockcliffe,' Mr. Ahearn said.*

*'After all, only a very few people use the streetcar service to Ottawa outside of the morning, noon, and evening rush periods, and we are not going to run a car a mile into the woods for the sake of these few.'*

*'Besides' Mr. Ahearn observed, 'Rockcliffe is not in Ottawa, so we have no obligation to provide a service there under our franchise.'*

*David N. Gill, general manager of the OER, declined to comment on the Rockcliffe situation.*

*'The first consideration of the OER is to provide service for the taxpayers and the people of Ottawa. By turning the street cars at John Street, we improve the service in Ottawa. This policy will continue.'* Mr. Ahearn added. <sup>63</sup>

On August 13, 1948, the new Ottawa Transportation Commission (OTC), took over from the Ottawa Electric Railway, but the interest in Rockcliffe service remained unchanged. When the January 1, 1950, annexation took place, the focus on new transit service shifted towards the many new suburbs that had been absorbed from Gloucester and Nepean Townships. The wealthy enclave of Rockcliffe Park was not a priority. The new OTC continued to allow streetcar service to Rockcliffe Park to languish.

### **"Rockcliffe Car Service**

*Editor, Citizen: The order in which the streetcars are run between Ottawa and Rockcliffe Park Village is completely disgraceful. The Rockcliffe cars are eliminated in favor of the Sussex and John cars. Many is the time that I have waited for nearly a half hour for a Rockcliffe car, when five or six Sussex and John cars go by. I am not joking. That is why the residents of Rockcliffe say, 'Are streetcar owners human?' All Rockcliffe agrees with me. Streetcars should be run properly, and none of the Sussex and John cars taking up the time which should be given to the Rockcliffe cars. I certainly hope the streetcar owners read this letter and run the streetcars right.*

*Miss Lauren Maclaren, Rockcliffe, Ont., July 13 (1949)*<sup>74</sup>

## Final Abandonment

The federal government through its National Capital Plan was also focusing on cleaning up Ottawa and one of those areas of concern was the industrial properties surrounding Green Island and Rideau Falls. The iron bridges also had reached the end of their lifespan and were to be replaced. This was an ample excuse to eliminate streetcars including the remainder of the Rockcliffe Line.

The Rockcliffe streetcar was abandoned on October 19, 1953, with service cut back to the Sussex and John loop on that date. News stories suggested that streetcars operated on a 10-minute frequency at the time of abandonment. <sup>64</sup>

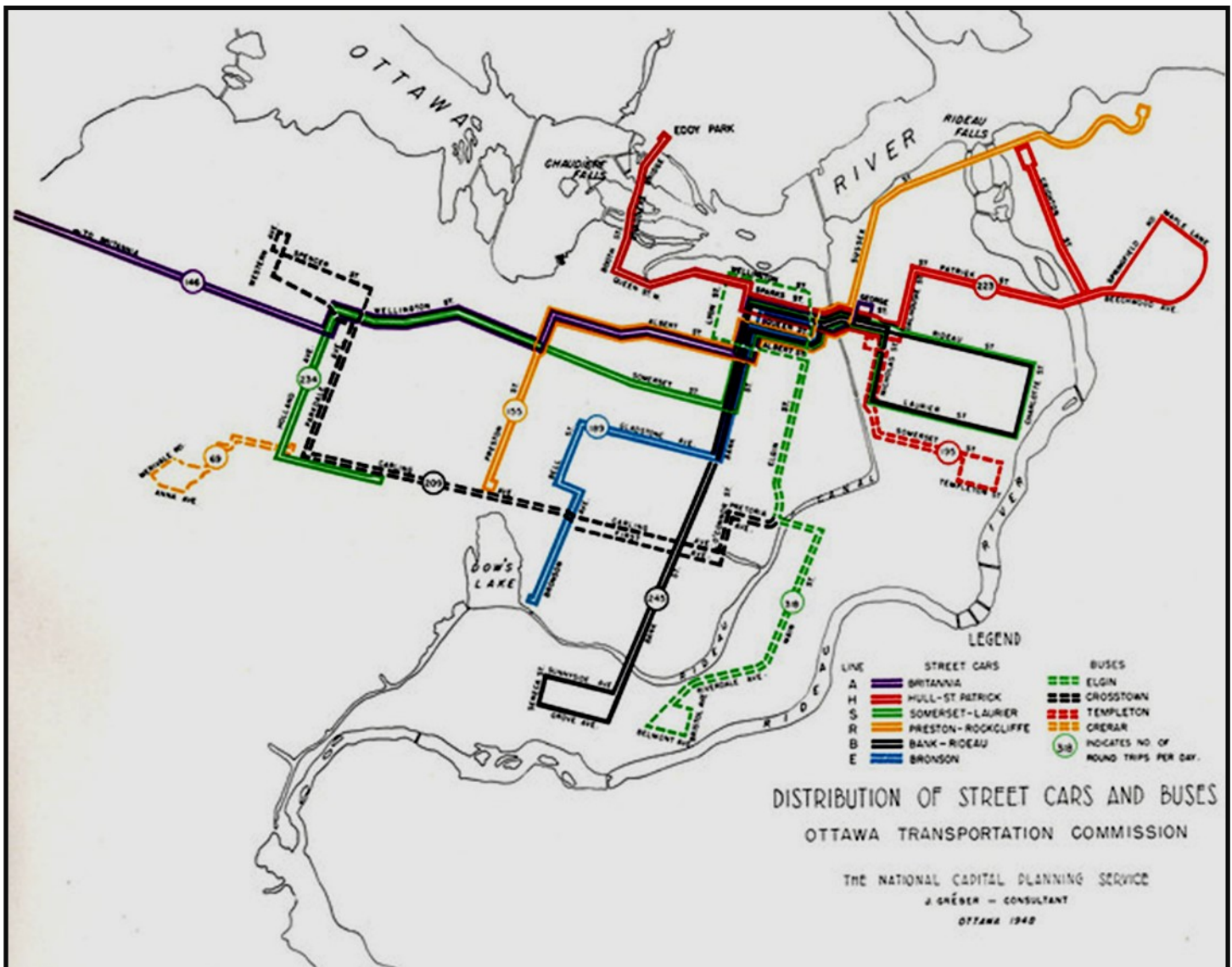
*"Over their breakfast this morning residents of Rockcliffe Park pondered the departure of an old,*

*though not always well-acquainted friend and some of them cast a bleak eye on a future bereft of it.*

*From Monday morning onward, the R streetcar will no longer rollick past 24 Sussex Street and the gates of Rideau Hall out to the Buena Vista loop every 10 minutes from first light until after midnight.*

*Instead, villagers in the western area of Rockcliffe Park will have to be content for public transportation on a 'rush hour only' bus service that follows the Civil Service espousal of the five-day week.*

*On Saturday and Sunday, it will be Shanks' Pony or 'call a taxi' for all those who have no available private automobile." <sup>64</sup>*



### Failed Rockcliffe Bus Service

This was followed by a series of temporary bus service experiments. The first to commence service on the closing of streetcar service offered buses during peak periods only at a 20-minute frequency as far east as the Buena Vista loop <sup>64</sup>. In other words, buses were to run on the same route as the former streetcars, but service was being substantially reduced. This quickly failed to attract ridership, so at the insistence of the Village of Rockcliffe Park, the OTC agreed to offer a bus service that entered the interior of the village with 30-minute all day service and 20-minute frequency during peak hours <sup>65</sup>. This also did not survive its 2-week trial period.

One final attempt was made effective November 30, 1953, which offered 20-minute peak period bus service from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. <sup>66</sup>. Although this bus service lasted several months, the route continued to experience heavy losses and in one last and futile attempt to generate additional revenue, free transfers were eliminated as of September 15, 1954 <sup>70</sup>. Nothing could generate enough revenue and finally it was permanently cancelled on September 30, 1954 <sup>67</sup>.

This did not stop the Village of Rockcliffe Park from offering creative ideas including an early 1955 suggestion to re-route the nearby Manor Park bus route through the centre of the Village of Rockcliffe Park on its way to downtown via Sussex Drive. After all the previous losses, this idea was quickly rejected <sup>71 72</sup>.

This brought a final bitter end to the Rockcliffe Streetcar Line and its fast-spiralling replacement bus services.

### Other Related Streetcar Abandonments

In preparation for replacement of the Green Island bridges, the Sussex streetcar line was replaced with buses on January 18, 1954, and buses looped on the west side of the Rideau River. The temporary Rockcliffe bus service at the same time was extended via the Minto Bridges to meet the new Sussex bus line <sup>68</sup>.

On July 13, 1954, the New Edinburgh streetcar line was also replaced with buses. Buses ran from Beechwood Avenue where Lindenlea streetcars continued to operate and then northward along Crichton and across the Minto Bridges to connect with the Sussex bus route <sup>69</sup>.

### Memorial – “A Last Fond Look at the Rockcliffe Car Line” <sup>73</sup>

*“Take a last long look at the Rockcliffe car line, for it’s going, going, gone. The track is to be abandoned as of Monday, October 19 (1953). Actually, the Ottawa Electric Railway and its publicly owned successor, the Ottawa Transportation Commission, have done a kind of striptease with the line.*

*In the old, old days, the car line ran right through to the Rifle Ranges. Translated into terms that kids around forty would understand, this means that the tracks ran right down to Manor Park. It is one of the ironies of life that when the tracks were there, there were no people. And now they have the people, they have no car tracks.*

*On Saturdays, Sundays and while the old ‘DRA’ and now called the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association was on, the cars ran all the time. That was the old line’s finest hour. To get aboard an open car on Sparks Street and go clear through to the Rifle Ranges was a sparkling, stimulating experience that only the old timers can appreciate. The cars were full of men with hats turned up at one side, while holding a rifle in their hands. The real bloods got up in the front seat with the motorman, took off their straw lids, and let the breeze winnow their locks. You were a man if the motorman let your ride there. Women and kids had to take the shelter of the other seats.*

*Once I held a picnic there and invited all my friends. I remember Hazel Blackburn and Julia Duclos being among them. It was July the third, nineteen ought something. We were in the midst of my mother’s delicate confections, her tasty salads, her tempting desserts.*

*Suddenly the conductor yelled ‘Last car’.*

*We had to gather up our picnic stuff while the two-man crew obligingly waited. Then we went on to Rockcliffe where we ate the broken victuals with a lot of mournful munching.*

*Then began the striptease. The OER took off that end of the line as soon as the ranges were moved to South March. For some years the Cloverdale Wye was the eastern terminus and no less a person than the editor emeritus of The Citizen, Charles A. Bowman used to board his tram from there.*



*But even the lovely ride along the cliffs and down to MacKay's Lake failed to draw custom, and the loop was finally moved to Buena Vista Road, where it rested. But the Gypsy Rose Lee routine is on again, and they are taking off the rails to Sussex and John. Next year even these will be a memory.*

*Think what you like of cars, say what you choose of the trams, but it seems to me Ottawa lost something when the old bouncing, air conditioned, hand-braked cars stopped winding their way through the woods, their roofs caressing the leaves as they went by the trees, and as they sailed out toward the flat edge of the Rifle Ranges.*

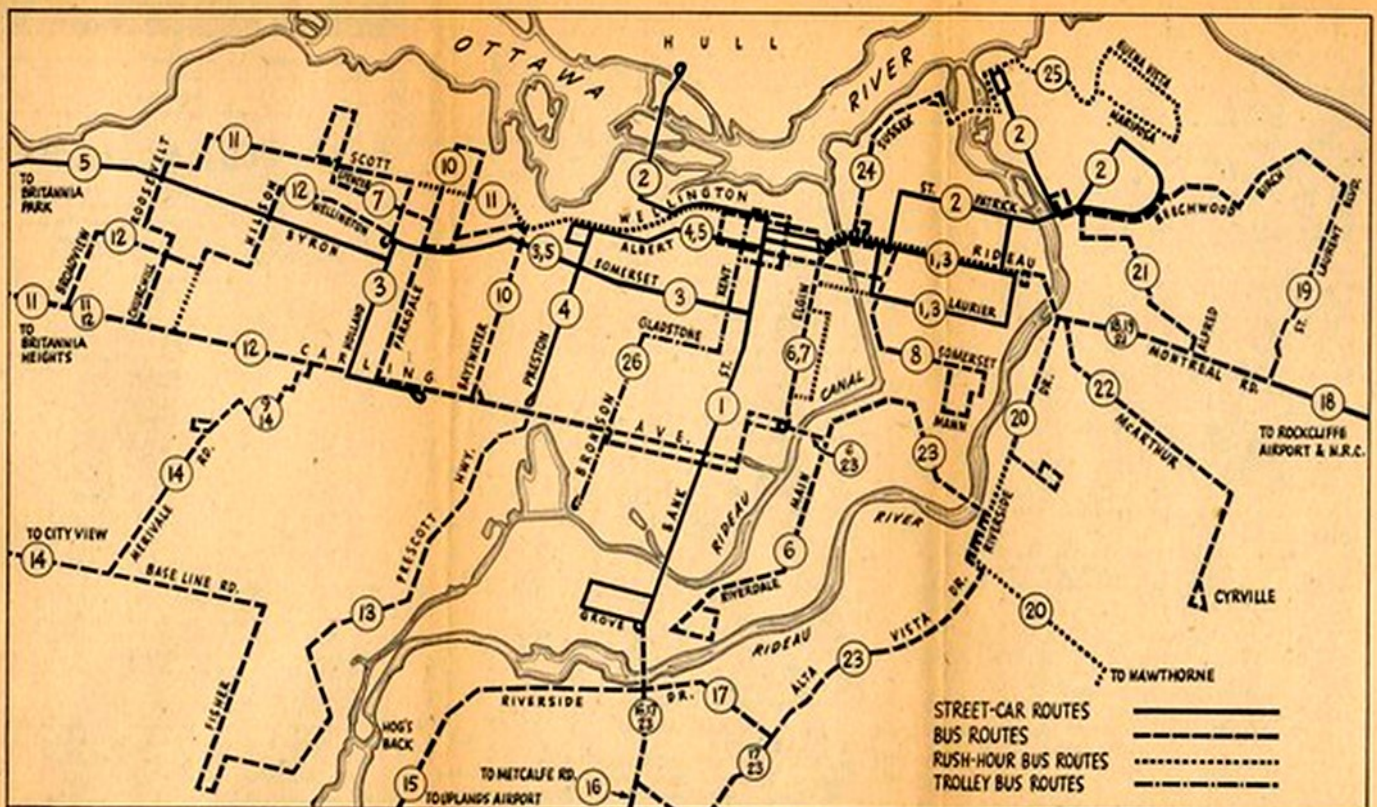
*When I write about those far off, all-but-forgotten days of the 1900's, I feel as if I am writing*

*for just three people. Dave Gill, Austin Cross, and Methuselah." (Written by Austin F. Cross)*

### What Remains Today

Not much remains of the Rockcliffe Streetcar Line today. As mentioned previously, remnants of streetcar track appear running through the traffic circle at the Parkway and Princess Avenue, just east of Rideau Hall. As you follow the Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Parkway going eastward, you can see remnants of the streetcar right of way which closely followed the parkway. Also, you will see stone archways periodically along the parkway, which formerly designated streetcar stops. The most evident section is the Rockeries trail that runs from Acacia Avenue to Cloverdale Road. The main trail was the Rockcliffe streetcar right of way from 1900 to 1931.

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June 1954 Transit Network including Rockcliffe Temporary Bus Route





**Several of these gates remain on the Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Parkway, which designated Rockcliffe Streetcar stops.**

## Epilogue

Many news clippings related to the Rockcliffe streetcar line are linked on the Gloucester Historical Society History page on our website. If you are interested in this topic, you may enjoy the extra detail offered by those clippings.

## Footnotes

- 1 Ottawa's Streetcars Page 15 to 29
- 2 Ottawa Journal, August 5, 1889, p.4
- 3 Ottawa's Streetcars Page 33 to 38
- 4 Ottawa Journal, March 19, 1886, p.3
- 5 Ottawa Journal, August 10, 1889, p.8
- 6 Ottawa Citizen, August 5, 1891, p.4
- 7 Ottawa Citizen, October 8, 1891, p.3
- 8 Ottawa's Streetcars Page 45 to 46
- 9 Ottawa Citizen, August 3, 1893, p.5
- 10 Ottawa Journal, June 22, 1893, p.7
- 11 Ottawa Journal, August 4, 1893, p.7
- 12 Ottawa Journal, August 25, 1893, p.8
- 13 Ottawa Journal, August 30, 1893, p.7
- 14 Ottawa Journal, October 28, 1893, p.7
- 15 Ottawa Streetcars Pages 52 to 53
- 16 Ottawa Journal, April 19, 1894, p.7
- 17 Ottawa Journal, May 2, 1894, p.1
- 18 Ottawa Journal, March 26, 1894, p.7
- 19 Ontario Land Records
- 20 Ottawa Journal, January 22, 1898, p.2
- 21 Ottawa Citizen, August 29, 1898, p.1
- 22 Ottawa Journal, May 23, 1898, p.7
- 23 Ottawa Streetcar's Page 78
- 24 Ottawa Citizen, August 18, 1900, p.12
- 25 Ottawa Citizen, January 20, 1898, p.3
- 26 Ottawa Citizen, July 24, 1899, p.8
- 27 Ottawa Citizen, April 9, 1900, p.1
- 28 Ottawa Streetcar's Page 129
- 29 Ottawa Journal, September 26, 1927, p.7
- 30 Ottawa Journal, September 19, 1932, p.7
- 31 Ottawa Citizen, June 23, 1937, p.1, 4
- 32 Ottawa Citizen, September 30, 1940, p.23
- 33 Ottawa Journal, October 8, 1910, p.19
- 34 Ottawa Journal, January 31, 1908, p.9
- 35 Ottawa Journal, August 6, 1921, p.24
- 36 Ottawa Citizen, October 1, 1923, p.5
- 37 Ottawa Citizen, May 1, 1913, p.2
- 38 Ottawa Citizen, July 31, 1920, p.3
- 39 Ottawa Citizen, November 2, 1918, p.14
- 40 Ottawa Citizen, May 19, 1920, p.22
- 41 Ottawa Journal, April 19, 1920, p.1
- 42 Ottawa Citizen, December 17, 1923, p.1
- 43 Ottawa Citizen, May 17, 1924, p.11
- 44 Ottawa Citizen, February 17, 1924, p.5





**The Rockeries – The main trail follows the former Rockcliffe Streetcar Right of Way from Acacia Avenue to Cloverdale Road**

47 Ottawa Citizen, November 21, 1913, p.13  
 48 Ottawa Citizen, April 16, 1925, p.1  
 49 Ottawa Citizen, April 20, 1925, p.3  
 50 Ottawa Citizen, August 9, 1933, p.2  
 51 Ottawa Citizen, July 5, 1926, p.3  
 52 Ottawa Citizen, February 8, 1927, p.1  
 57 Ottawa Journal, December 11, 1931, p.26  
 58 Ottawa Citizen, April 9, 1932, p.30  
 59 Ottawa Journal, April 18, 1932, p.1  
 60 Ottawa Citizen, April 30, 1932, p.2  
 61 Ottawa Journal, October 7, 1932, p.8  
 62 Ontario Land Records  
 63 Ottawa Citizen, December 3, 1947, p.16  
 64 Ottawa Citizen, October 17, 1953, p.1, 16  
 65 Ottawa Citizen, October 29, 1953, p.3  
 66 Ottawa Citizen, November 27, 1953, p.1  
 67 Ottawa Citizen, September 23, 1954, p.43  
 68 Ottawa Citizen, January 16, 1954, p.2  
 69 Ottawa Citizen, July 13, 1954, p.4  
 70 Ottawa Journal, September 13, 1954, p.5  
 71 Ottawa Citizen, January 4, 1955, p.3  
 72 Ottawa Citizen, March 24, 1955, p.1

73 Ottawa Citizen, October 17, 1953, p.2  
 74 Ottawa Citizen, July 19, 1949, p.26  
 75 Ottawa Journal, July 30, 1937, p.12  
 76 Ottawa Citizen, July 27, 1923, p.5  
 77 Ottawa's Streetcars page 137  
 78 Ottawa Citizen, June 20, 1917, p.3  
 79 Ottawa Citizen, April 1, 1950, p.3  
 80 Ottawa Citizen, April 24, 1925, p.2  
 81 Ottawa Journal, August 24, 1903, p.5  
 82 Ottawa Citizen, July 22, 1903, p.10  
 83 Ottawa Journal, August 21, 1903, p.4  
 84 Ottawa Citizen, September 7, 1904, p.2  
 85 Ottawa Journal, August 8, 1893, p.7  
 86 Ottawa Citizen, July 16, 1906, p.9  
 87 Ottawa Citizen, February 3, 1905, p.10  
 88 Ottawa Citizen, August 29, 1904, p.9  
 89 Ottawa Journal, August 14, 1909, p.13  
 90 Ottawa Citizen, August 2, 1904, p.4  
 91 Ottawa Journal, August 13, 1904, p.3  
 92 Ottawa Journal, August 8, 1893, p.1  
 93 Ottawa Journal, August 9, 1911 p.10  
 Ottawa's Streetcars by Bill McKeown 2004



## How Ottawa's Streetcar Routes Were Identified in 1921

*Ottawa Citizen, March 5, 1921, p.20*

Symbols appeared on the roof of streetcars to designate the route as well as a sign board.

### Line – Britannia - Rideau

**Route** – Britannia right of way, Holland, Somerset, Bank, Queen, Sparks, Rideau, Nicholas, Laurier Avenue East, Charlotte, Rideau, Sparks, Bank, Somerset, Holland, Britannia Right of Way.

**Route Identifier** – Maltese cross with a red centre. At night, the glass panels reflect red in the centre and white on the sides.

### Line – McKellar - Downtown

**Route** – McKellar loop, Britannia right of way, Holland, Somerset, Bank, Queen and return via Sparks Street.

**Route Identifier** – Maltese cross with a red centre (the same as the Britannia Line) except that a board reads “McKellar”

### Line – Holland – George Loop

**Route** – Holland, Somerset, Bank, Queen, Sparks, Rideau, George Street Loop, then return via Sparks.

**Route Identifier** – Maltese cross with a green centre and with a board that reads “Somerset”. The night sign is the same as the Britannia route.

### Line – Bank - Rideau

**Route** – Sunnyside, Ottawa South, Bank, Queen, Sparks, Rideau, Charlotte, Laurier Avenue east, Nicholas, Rideau, Sparks, Bank to Sunnyside.

**Route Identifier** – Sign board reads “Bank”, with a red diamond disc and at night a red panel is reflected along the top at the front end

### Line – Bank - St. Patrick

**Route** – Exhibition Grounds, Bank, Queen, Sparks, Rideau, Dalhousie, St. Patrick to the bridge and then return on the same route.

**Route Identifier** – Sign board reads “Bank and St. Patrick”, carries a red diamond disc with a green centre. At night, the red panel at the front is the same as the Bank route.

### Line – Elgin -Gladstone

**Route** – Foot of Elgin to Sparks, Bank, Gladstone, Bell to the intersection with Powell Avenue.

**Route Identifier** – Green triangle with a red centre and at night, the panel is the same colours.

### Line – Preston - Rockcliffe

**Route** – The south end of Preston to Wellington, Albert, Bank, Sparks, Rideau, Sussex to Rockcliffe.

**Route Identifier** – Green square and a green panel at night.

### Line – Hull -St. Patrick

**Route** – Bank of Montreal on the Quebec side, Chaudière Bridge, Booth, Queen Street West, Wellington, Bank, Sparks, Rideau, Dalhousie, St. Patrick, Creighton (Crichton), to Alexander and Sussex. (At the time, there was a Jigger service between Alexander and Sussex and the south end of Creighton)

**Route Identifier** – A green square with a white X and at night, a green centre with white on each side

### Line—Preston—Sussex

**Route**—South end of Preston Street to Wellington,, Albert, Bank, Sparks, Rideau, Sussex to Sussex and John.

**Route Identifier**—A green square with a round white centre. At night an all-green panel.

### Route—Holland- Experimental Farm

**Route** – Jigger Service between Holland Avenue and the Experimental Farm loop

**Route Identifier** – No distinctive sign

## Streetcar Route Identification Revised in 1931

*Ottawa Journal, December 21, 1931, p.4*

Effective December 21, 1931, streetcar routes were identified by a large, illuminated letter on the roof of the streetcars. This made route identification much easier from a distance and at night.

Bank – Rideau – Letter B

Holland (Somerset) – Rideau – Letter S

Britannia – Laurier – Letter A

McKellar – Nicholas – Letter M

Bronson – Elgin – Letter E

Preston – Rockcliffe – Letter R

Rush Hour Extra Service – Letter X

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**Donations are always welcome. We are a registered charitable organization and provide tax receipts.**

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