

## **The Rambler Sidebar: Bicycles and Automobiles in Central Park**

*A while back, the Highway History Web site asked the Rambler to see if he could find anything interesting about General Roy Stone, first leader (1893-1899) of what is now the Federal Highway Administration, on the free archives of The New York Times. He wrote General Roy Stone and The New York Times, an article that goes above and beyond the call of duty, and possibly sanity. He then submitted this article as a sidebar. The Highway History Web site pointed out it has nothing to do with General Stone. The Rambler replied, "I am not known as the Rambler for nothing." The Highway History Web site had to admit, if you hire the Rambler, you better be prepared for rambling.*

### **Central Park**

As the population of New York City increased in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the desire for a place of refuge from congestion and noise grew as well. In 1853, the legislature designated a 700-acre area from 59<sup>th</sup> to 106<sup>th</sup> Street for Central Park. Designed by the great landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his partner Calvert Vaux, Central Park opened in 1859.

In a history of Fifth Avenue, Jerry E. Patterson commented:

Once it was agreed that there was to be a park, the pace became astonishingly fast: the land was purchased in 1856; in 1857 Frederic Law Olmsted and Calvin Vaux were chosen, after a competition, to design the park and construction began; and the park was opened to the public in 1859. A schedule like that for one of the largest and most important public projects ever carried out in New York City is astounding and enviable in the twentieth century, when public works can easily take decades. [*Fifth Avenue: The Best Address*, Rizzoli International Publications, 1998, p. 157]

Unlike today, when Central Park is surrounded by the city, the park was built in an isolated, desolate area inhabited mainly by low income and minority individuals who couldn't afford to live anywhere else:

Before Central Park was built, the streets above Fifth-ninth were mere tracks. Upper Fifth Avenue was described by one commentator as "a muddy dirt road which ran alongside a bog." [*Fifth Avenue*, p. 118]

Moreover, the opening of the park did not start development of the area:

The completion of Central Park would, it seems, have immediately opened the area to the east for residential development. In fact, there was a gap of decades before the fifty-one blocks between Fifty-ninth and 110<sup>th</sup> streets filled with

buildings; there was no residence north of Seventy-ninth Street, for example, until 1876 and few buildings of any sort. [*Fifth Avenue*, p. 161]

In *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*, Professors Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr explained that in its early years, the park “was largely inaccessible by public transport.” They explained:

Olmsted prohibited omnibuses and express wagons from entering the park, as well as “any cart, dray, wagon, truck, or other vehicles carrying goods, merchandise, manure, soil, or other article,” reserving its roads for those who could afford stylish horses. In its opening years conflict developed between Central Park gatekeepers and what the *New York Times* called “our wagon-owning citizens,” who were aggrieved that they could not take a drive in the park on Sunday with “the respectable vehicles which do duty during the week in transporting legs of mutton, or cans of milk, or kegs of crackers, or boxes of candles from their shops to the customers’ houses.”

The result was that, “The ostentatious display of horses and carriages was well demonstrated in the first years of New York’s Central Park . . . when, as Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar observe, ‘wealthy New Yorkers defined the new public park as their own.’” In the early years, “a substantial majority of the park’s regular visitors arrived by carriage or horse to take advantage of the nine or so miles of carriage drive and the park’s bridle paths.” Professors McShane and Tarr continued:

Central Park, observe Rosenzweig and Blackmar, was “both effect and cause of a growing enthusiasm for carriages among the upper classes,” as it stimulated a “revolution” in New York society. “Owning a carriage and riding in the park” identified one as a member of the city’s upper class. Entrance into the carriage elite, however, rested entirely on the possession of money, since Central Park’s carriage drives had no restrictions based on family background, origins of wealth, or religion. This new social world was dominated and shaped by women who served as “emblems of their husbands’ wealth and judges of their own and others’ status.” [This is a reference to Rosenzweig and Blackmar’s book, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park*, Cornell University Press, 1992]

Patterson described the scene:

Every afternoon from three o’clock to six, fine equipages drawn by well-groomed horses drove slowly through the park, “the procession of wealth, beauty and fashion in Central Park,” as newspapers delighted in calling the scene. [*Fifth Avenue*, p. 158]

Although men also rode horseback through Central Park, horseback riding “was beyond the pale of respectability for society women.” This prejudice began breaking down in the 1890’s, when as *Rider and Driver* magazine pointed out, “the girl who can ride horseback is the one who gets the fellows.”

McShane and Tarr explained that, “The acme of the fashionable display of carriages was the coaching craze of the late nineteenth century. This involved driving a four-horse coach of the kind made obsolete by railroads, especially on a long intercity run.” The fashion was reinforced in 1875 when New York’s Knickerbocker Club founded the Coaching Club:

Members included Manhattan socialites with such famous names as Belmont, Cassatt, Gerry, Havemeyer, Roosevelt, Schermerhorn, Tiffany, Vanderbilt, Whitney, and Woodward. All spent in excess of fifteen thousand dollars a year on their pastime, and each owned five or more carriages. Thousands often gathered to watch the club’s parades on Fifth Avenue [the most fashionable address in Manhattan] and through Central Park. Its 1876 tour to Philadelphia [for the Centennial celebration] was the first of many annual distance runs . . . . New York’s sidewalks were packed for the departure of the wealthy owner/drivers.

Gradually, Central Park yielded to the popular impulse. By 1870, “Central Park’s gatekeepers counted more park visitors arriving by foot than by horse.” Others arrived by public conveyances (omnibuses or horsecars) or rented a horse and carriage:

On weekends, especially Sundays, the horsecar lines often carried their heaviest passenger loads. Central Park attracted one-quarter of its visitors on Sunday. Working-class visitors constituted only about an eighth of the total of annual visitors to Central Park but furnished a much higher proportion on Sundays, the most popular day for park visits.

Additional recreational attractions appeared in the area’s separate jurisdictions (not yet joined into the five-borough New York City of today). Brooklyn opened Prospect Park in 1868, designed by Olmsted, along with Ocean Parkway (1874), a 6-mile route from the park to Coney Island. Riverside Drive (1879) and the Harlem River Speedway (1897) became additional sites of country drives and informal races, “with Riverside Drive serving more for display and the Harlem River Speedway for informal racing.” The Bronx also had Olmsted-like parkways. [McShane, Clay, and Tarr, Joel A., *The Horse in the City: Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007, p. 84-95]

And then came the bicycle.

### **The League of American Wheelmen**

The wealthy saw Central Park as an opportunity for them to promenade along the drives, like their counterparts on the boulevards of Paris, to see and be seen by other promenaders. That the hordes would invade the park was probably inevitable, but did not happen because of the egalitarian impulses of the wealthy social elite.

One factor was the coming of the bicycle, one of those transformational inventions that appears to be simple now that we know what it looks like but proved complex in its impacts. The “Ordinary” with its large front wheel and small rear wheel, was patented in England in 1869. Americans got their first look at the Ordinary in 1876 when several English bicycles were displayed during the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Colonel Albert A. Pope of Boston secured rights to manufacture them in the United States. He began manufacturing the Columbia Ordinary bicycle in 1878.

Pope’s bicycle set off a craze that grew even more widespread with the introduction of the “safety” bicycle in the mid-1880’s— the one with equal sized wheels. Its comparative ease of operation caused millions of Americans to join the worldwide Bicycle Craze. The craze included dozens of bicycle manufacturers, bicycle clubs in every city, bicycle clothes (including clothes that made the sport easier for women to enjoy), bicycle racing, velodromes for indoor riding, and hundreds of products for bicyclists.

Early on, Central Park beckoned the bicyclists. On May 2, 1880, the *Times* published an article titled “A Walk in Central Park.” It began:

We will start out bright and early this morning, if you please, and take a walk in Central Park, early enough to hear the birds getting their voices in tune for the day and to see the sun brightening up the waters of the lake. Half past five will be a very good hour for the start, so as to be in the Park by 6—an unreasonably early hour for a New-Yorker, do you say? Ah, but you will not think so after you have tried it once.

Early as the unnamed author was, he was preceded by the bicyclists:

The broad plaza in front of the Fifth-avenue entrance to the Park is dry and smooth, and even at this early hour half a dozen fresh young boys are whirling their bicycles about it, coming down, to be sure, occasionally, with a thump, but soon up and off again, none the worse for a fall. An airy and graceful thing the bicycle is, fleet as the wind, though an ugly creature to meet on the sidewalk; and a good investment this is for those boys’ fathers, that stirs them out in the morning and sends their blood tingling.

On July 8, 1880, the *Times* reported on the business the Park Commissioners transacted during their meeting the day before. One item of business:

It was resolved that no bicycles or tricycles should be allowed to run through Central Park.

(During the 1880’s, the tricycle was being perfected mechanically to rival the Ordinary. The tricycle looked nothing like the tricycle of our childhoods. Historian David V. Herlihy described it:

The most popular design featured a small central guiding wheel in front, with rack-and-pinion steering, and two large driving wheels in the rear, connected by the balance gear and driven by rotary pedals and a chain.

The rider operated the tricycle with two handles, one of which turned the front wheel. The other applied the brakes.

(It had several advantages over the more popular bicycle. Unlike the Ordinary, it was easy to mount and ride. It also eliminated the header-over-the-handlebars crash that made bicycling so dangerous. It included storage room and so was suitable for touring, deliveries, and other practical applications such as conveying country doctors to their patients. And most important, the tricycle could easily accommodate the conventional women's clothing of the era, designed to cover the legs. According to Herlihy, "By 1885 tricycles were increasingly in demand in America . . . especially among society women." Tricycles also were popular with older riders, touring cyclists, and people using the vehicle in trade. The arrival of the safety bicycle and the growing willingness of women to wear clothes, such as bloomers, more suited to bicycling doomed the tricycle in the early 1890's. [Herlihy, David V., *Bicycle: The History*, Yale University Press, 2004, p. 210-215, 226-228, 251])

Two months earlier, in May, bicycle clubs from around the country met in Newport, Rhode Island, to form the League of American Wheelmen (LAW) "to promote the general interests of bicyclists, to ascertain, defend, and protect the rights of wheelmen, and to encourage and facilitate touring."

The LAW decided to hold its second annual meeting on May 30, 1881, in Boston, rejecting New York as the site. The *Times* explained:

The six bicycle clubs of this City were very anxious to have the meet in the Metropolis, and a committee called on the Park Commissioners some time since with a petition asking for permission to parade in the Central Park. The Commissioners finally granted the league one hour in the morning, from 9 to 10, and one hour in the afternoon, from 1 to 2. Armed with this permission the New-York Directors did their utmost to have this City made the scene of the meet, but the Board of Directors, after a long discussion, decided upon Boston. The reasons for rejecting New-York were that an hour was too short a time in which to give a creditable parade in Central Park, and the bicycles of members coming from a distance would have to be transported to Fifty-nine-street, it being impossible to wheel them through the crowded streets from the ferries.

The Park Commissioners took up the issue on June 1, as the *Times* reported the following day. "Commissioner Wales reported in favor of the passage of bicycles through Central Park from Eighth-Avenue and Fifty-ninth-street to Seventh-avenue and One Hundred and Tenth-street. The report was not adopted."

The LAW, along with its local affiliates, would soon take up the cause of opening Central Park to bicyclists. On July 14, 1881, the *Times* reported that bicycle clubs and manufacturers would contest the right of the Park Commissioners in court:

They claim that the law under which the Commissioners are acting is unconstitutional, and they proposed to tests its constitutionality in the courts.

Attorneys for the clubs and manufacturers already had their test case. The *Times* reported the following on June 26, 1881:

William M. Wright, of the Mercury Bicycle Club, and S. Conant Foster and H. M. Walker, of the Manhattan Bicycle Club, were arrested by a Park policemen at One Hundred and Tenth-street and Sixth-avenue yesterday. Walker, mounted on a bicycle, and the others on tricycles, were about to enter Central Park, when warned by a policeman that their action was in violation of a City ordinance. They persisted in riding into the Park and willingly submitted to arrest, wishing to test the legality of the ordinance. They were afterward arraigned at the Yorkville Police Court, and fined \$5 each by Justice Murray. This they refused to pay and were committed to prison. Their counsel, who was on hand, it is supposed by preconcerted arrangement, at once started for the Supreme Court, where a writ of habeas corpus was obtained from Judge Lawrence.

Judge Arthur R. Lawrence chose a referee, Edward L. Parrish, to consider the test case. He would take testimony for several months, but as reported by the *Times*, most of the discussion was on whether bicycles frightened horses and could lead to dangerous runaways if admitted to the park.

On July 14, 1881, the Park Commissioners called their first witness before referee Parrish. Samuel G. Hough, general manager of the Monarch Steamship Line, said “that he had seen the effect produced upon horses by the bicycle, and that he was prepared to speak very feelingly upon the subject.” Two years earlier, he’d been driving his team of gentle horses (who were not frightened even by locomotives) on a public street in Chicago when a bicycle “came from a sidewalk, and without looking to see whether any vehicles were coming . . . dashed across the street.” When the bicycle collided with one of Mr. Hough’s horses, “the team gave a start, and then ran away, overturning the buggy and throwing Mr. Hough out.” He sustained a broken right arm and left forefinger. “I was in the hands of the surgeon for three months,” he told Parrish, “and during most of that time I was utterly helpless.” He added:

My buggy was smashed to pieces, and one of my horses died. The horses had seen bicycles before, but they were always afraid of them. I have seen other horses besides my own that were almost crazy at the sight of a bicycle, but I have no personal knowledge of any serious accident except the one described. I consider the bicycle to be the most dangerous thing to life and property ever invented. The gentlest of horses are afraid of it.

He had considered legal action for compensation, but his attorney advised him that the bicyclist wasn't worth 5 cents "and that he rode the bicycle to save his horse-car fare."

Several other witnesses described incidents where bicycles frightened horses, although with less serious consequences than Mr. Hough's accident.

"The celebrated bicycle case," as the *Times* called the test case, continued on July 25. "The Referee exhibits great courage in keeping his court open at all in such [hot] weather; and it is not to be wondered at that the sessions are few and far between, and marked principally by long recesses." The July 26 article pointed out that the hearing would drag on for some time if "all the people whose horses have been frightened by bicycles, and who can be found, are given a chance to tell their experiences." In addition to several such witnesses, Assistant Superintendent Munckwitz of Central Park, "exhibited a map of the Park, showing the sharp angles of the drives, and explaining that two vehicles cannot approach each other at a high speed without great danger, no matter whether they keep to port or starboard." The implication was that the narrow drives and heavy traffic left little room for bicycles.

More witnesses testified on August 2 about the danger of mixing horses and bicycles. For example:

Charles A. Cushman, of No. 419 West Nineteenth-street, testified that on June 12 last he was driving with a young lady in a top buggy at Madison, N.J. A bicycle suddenly appeared, and, the horse taking fright, overturned the buggy, and the young lady was painfully cut on the head.

Parrish had not completed taking testimony when the Board of Park Commissioners held its first meeting in several months on August 15, 1881. Among the actions reported the following day in the *Times*: "A number of protests against permitting bicycles in Central Park were received and placed on file."

More witnesses appeared before Parrish on August 24. A woman from New Brunswick, New Jersey, and her sister were severely injured when they were thrown from their carriage "as a result of meeting a bicycle." A Broadway merchant reported that his horse had run away in Yonkers after such a meeting, while a third witness, John F. Dawson, ex-Superintendent of Central Park, "expressed the belief that it would be dangerous to allow the free use of bicycles in the Park."

On August 31, Parrish accepted the testimony of Virgil G. Southwick, one of the Commissioners of Patents in Washington. He had given a statement a few days earlier that "he had been accustomed to driving fast horses in Washington, and had seen many bicycles on the fashionable streets in the capital. His horses were never frightened at the appearance of the machines."

On September 9, 1881, with the issue still not resolved, the *Times* stated in a humorous editorial that:

No matter how many witnesses may depose that they have known horses to take fright at the sight of bicyclists, the number of witnesses who have never seen a bicyclist, and can, hence, swear that they never knew one to frighten a horse, is practically inexhaustible.

The question could be discussed for years, even decades. “By the time all witnesses have been examined Central Park may be a dreary desert, and the manufacture of bicycles will doubtless become a lost art.”

That horses had “a peculiar dread of the bicyclist” was not in doubt. “It is because this fact is so perfectly well known that it is difficult to prove it by legal evidence.” But just why horses should so dread bicyclists is unknown. All sorts of other animals looked on the bicyclist with disinterest. “We may, therefore, assume that the terror which the horse experiences is due not so much to the terrific nature of the bicyclist, but to a mental idiosyncrasy of the horse.” In short, the bicycle “cannot be distinguished by any ordinary horse from a cart-wheel,” so it must be the bicyclist who causes the terror.

According to a *Times* article on April 1, 1882, Parrish “completed his task some time ago,” although the Rambler has been unable to locate an article describing the resulting report. However, the outcome of the LAW’s test case did not turn on Parrish’s report or whether bicycles and tricycles frightened horses; it would turn on city ordinance.

On March 31, Edmund Wetmore, counsel for the three bicyclists, appeared for final arguments before Judge Lawrence in the Supreme Court Chambers. Mr. Wetmore moved, “on the report of the Referee, for their dismissal from custody.” The *Times* summarized his argument:

Mr. Wetmore admitted that some horses may start upon seeing bicycles, but he argued that the present unfamiliarity of such animals with the appearance of the vehicles was not a good ground for excluding bicycle riders from the use of Central Park. Their exclusion, he insisted, was an oppressive violation of the common right of his clients, and therefore, illegal.

Assistant Corporation Counsels Dean and Townsend represented the Park Board:

They argued that the Park Commissioners have plenary power respecting the management of the parks, that the ordinance is not unreasonable, that the court should not interfere with the Park Commissioners unless they manifestly used their discretion improperly, and, finally, that the testimony afforded no ground for the interference of the court.

Judge Lawrence ruled on July 18, 1882, in support of the Park Commissioners’ decision to restrict bicyclists. The *Times* explained his reasoning:



The power of the Commissioners, he says is derived from section 83 of the City charter, which vests in them all the powers of their predecessors under the Tweed charter of 1870, and which authority gave them the widest discretion for the proper government of the parks. No court, he says, would, in his judgment, be justified in setting aside a provision made by them for the regulation of the parks, except in the clearest cases.

Judge Lawrence indicated that if he were a Park Commissioner, he might allow bicyclists in the park, but the actual Commissioners' ruling was "not in a legal sense so unreasonable a prohibition as to warrant him in substituting his judgment for the judgment of the Commissioners."

In arguing the case, Mr. Wetmore had pointed out ("much stress was laid") that bicycles were permitted in the parks in Philadelphia and in the streets of Boston and London. These facts were irrelevant because "precisely what are the powers of the authorities in those cities did not appear in this case":

If they had the same powers as the Park Commissioners here have the not uncommon spectacle was presented of two bodies having similar discretionary powers differing in judgment as to the mode in which that discretion should be exercised. But in any court it is a sufficient answer to make here that the Legislature has vested power in the Commissioners for the management of the parks, and that with their determination, in the absence of fraud or collusion, the courts cannot interfere.

The LAW and New York City bicycle clubs, having lost their test case, continued to press the Park Commissioners for the right to ride in Central Park. As a *Times* editorial pointed out on March 22, 1883, Judge Lawrence's decision did not "pass on the merits" of bicycling in the park; it turned on whether the commissioners "have a right to make and enforce such a rule." The editorial continued:

Hundreds of machines are owned in this City now, and every pleasant day some of them are used among the choicest and most skittish horseflesh which is speeded on the roads above the Park. The first accident is yet to be recorded.

Even in Brooklyn and Washington, where pavements were better suited to bicycling, "a bicycle accident is precisely the one thing least frequently heard of." The editorial suggested:

By way of compromise, suppose bicycle riders were to be admitted to the parks, or to parts of them, on probation for a month; then the merits of the case could be learned as they cannot in any other way.

This suggestion would not be adopted, but the commissioners were beginning to relax their restrictions. On May 28, 1883, when the LAW, with a total national membership of

2,131 bicyclists, met in New York City for its third annual meeting, a parade through Central Park was an approved highlight:

It was expected that 1,000 men would be in line, and there were about 750. The line was formed on the west side of Fifth-avenue, the head of the column being at Sixtieth-street. The Seventh Regiment Band was stationed at this point, and played a number of lively airs while the procession was passing by. The procession was divided into three divisions, and presented a great variety of [bicycle club] uniforms. About 10,000 people were gathered along the sides of the avenue, and they were rewarded by seeing a pretty picture . . . .

Before starting the line was reviewed by the President [Mr. Beckwith] and his staff. The line of march was around the grass-plot at the Fifth-avenue entrance to Central Park, up the avenue to One Hundred and Sixteenth-st., to Seventh-avenue, to Central Park, down the west drive to Fifty-ninth street, back to Seventy-second-street, the Riverside drive, and up to Mount Tom. Arriving there, the wheels were stacked, and the forces formed in a group on the hill-side to be photographed.

While the bicyclists were organizing for the photograph, “Mr. Oliver, the staff bugler, did some difficult work, which drew forth rounds of applause.” He went to the nearby home of one of the Park Commissioners, General Egbert L. Viele, and convinced him to join the group for the photograph. [Viele was an engineer who had been named engineer-in-charge of Central Park in 1856.]

About 500 bicyclists then attended a dinner at the Metropolitan Hotel, where a letter from President Chester Arthur was read in response to the toast “America.” (The *Times* did not quote the letter from the President, who was in New York City and was reported to have enjoyed a carriage ride through Central Park the following day.)

By April 1884, the Park Commissioners had allowed bicyclists in Central Park on restricted hours. A letter published in the *Times* on July 4, 1884, observed that after “a long and persistent struggle,” the Commissioners allowed bicyclists to use the park at certain hours, “and, although those hours are anything but the pleasantest and most convenient, nevertheless that they are very universally enjoyed no one who is present in Central and Riverside Parks will deny.”

A *Times* editorial, published on April 24, 1884, lamented, “The servility with which Park Commissioners pander to the worst prejudices of horses is disgraceful.” As in the past, the *Times* tried to understand why horses had such a problem with bicyclists. After all, were horses really frightened by bicycles? The evidence was not clear:

The horses pretended that they were afraid of bicycles. This was a mere pretense. Horses are afraid of stray pieces of paper, for the reason that they firmly believe that paper is animated with a deadly hatred of horses, and often lies in wait on the roadside in order to rush at an approaching horse and tear him in pieces. The bicycle, on the contrary, is always under the control of a rider, and has never yet

been known to attack a horse. Moreover, the bicycle is not in the least terrific in its appearance. It is not, like a crumpled newspaper, a vague and shapeless object, moving before the wind with awful celerity, and suggesting by its appearance and movements something unearthly and uncanny . . . . There never was a more shallow pretense than that horses are put in bodily fear by the sight of harmless, peaceful bicycle.

A more likely explanation may have been that the horses have “dreaded lest the day should come when no one would care to ride a horse in the Park, and every one would ride the bicycle.” This was the horses’ real secret fear, the editorial suggested, and it had kept bicycles out of the park until recently.

The bicycle had finally been admitted, but in yet another concession to horses, the tricycle was still banned. “Of course, the reason why horses dislike tricycles is that the tricycle is designed mainly for women, and hence it is feared that women will cease to drive in carriages drawn by horses, and will take the air in—if the expression is a proper one—tricycles.” The editorial could not explain why the Park Commissioners yielded to such apparent fears:

If the horse possessed the long ears and the sonorous bray of professional politicians we could understand their influence with the Commissioners, but as they have neither votes nor political influence, it is inexplicable that they should, so to speak, carry the Commissioners in their holsters.

On December 1, 1886, the New York City Bicycle Club appeared before the board for one last appeal to lift all restrictions. “Because of the opposition of certain members of the Board,” historian Philip P. Mason said, “the proposals of the wheelmen were defeated.”

Blocked again at the park level, the New York Division of the LAW turned to the State Legislature:

The Division sent Isaac B. Potter, chairman of the State Division’s Committee on Rights and Privileges, to Albany to direct the legislative battle. The bill which the wheelmen presented stipulated that the bicycle was a carriage and hence subject to the same rights and restrictions as other carriages; that the bicycle should not be excluded from any roadway where pleasure vehicles were admitted; that the bicycle might be reasonably regulated, as were other carriages, with respect to speed, lamps, bells and the like; and finally, that all acts and parts of acts inconsistent with the above should be repealed. [Mason, Philip P., *The League of American Wheelmen and the Good Roads Movement, 1880-1905*, Ph.d Thesis, University Microfilms International, 1957, p. 53-55]]

The bill, known to bicyclists as the “Liberty Bill,” progressed through the legislature in May, as detailed by the following *Times* coverage on May 3 and May 18, 1887:

Bicycles and tricycles are recognized as “vehicles” and are entitled to half the road, the same as other wheeled structures, by the terms of the Cantor bill, which passed the Assembly to-night [May 2] without a dissenting vote. Mr. Shea wanted to amend the measure so as to exclude them from Central Park, but was unsuccessful.

The Senate to-night [May 17] passed Mr. Cantor’s bill, which gives bicycles and tricycles all rights on highways which carriages have, and prohibits Park Commissioners from passing ordinances excluding these vehicles from parks. Mr. Daly tried to exempt Central Park, at the request of the Park Commissioners, but was beaten, and the bill goes to the Governor. As the tricycle vote is large and especially active in the Autumn months, it will be signed.

On June 2, Governor David B. Hill announced he would hold hearings in the Executive Chamber on some of the bills passed during the session, including the bill on bicycles. Two days later, Mayor Abram S. Hewitt of New York City and heads of municipal departments announced their views on pending bills. The *Times* reported their conclusions on June 5, including opposition to the bicycle bill allowing bicycles and tricycles in Central Park. The article summarized their view:

It has never been shown that riding bicycles and tricycles in the Park is any more dangerous or objectionable than riding anything else, but on principle the matter ought to be left to the control of the local authorities.

The hearing took place on June 14, with Potter and Charles D. Pratt of Boston speaking in support of the bill:

They said there were 2,500 wheelmen in New-York who were hanging breathlessly upon the fate of the bill. If it became a law, then they could roll through Central Park with the same freedom as the companies of wheeled vehicles generally. The prohibition against them was based, they claimed, as much on prejudice as anything. Mr. Pratt cited ancient history to show what difficulties encountered 250 years ago by owners of carriages in securing recognition and rights on the highway [sic] of Bonnie England.

Park Commissioner Crimmins unrolled a petition signed by 7,000 people “who own their carriages, move in the upper world, and roll through the Park behind their bays and blacks.” Assistant Corporation Counsel Scott spoke on behalf of Mayor Hewitt and other city officials opposed to the bill:

[He] argued that its provisions rob the Park Commissioners of all power of restraint over the Park, and are a clear violation of that principle of home rule for which the Governor had so stoutly contended. If it became a law then baby carriages, junk carts, and wheelbarrows, which are also moved by “manual or pedal force,” could use any roads in the Park in spite of the Park Commissioners.

In an ominous summation, the *Times* said, “The Governor, by his questions, seemed to lean toward the view presented by Mr. Scott.”

In the face of local opposition, the LAW worked on convincing the Governor, as Mason described:

Prominent League officials, including New York Division and National officials, visited Governor Hill and urged him to approve the bill. In order to insure its passage, the chief consul of the New York Division made a deal with Governor Hill whereby the wheelmen promised to support the Governor in his campaign for re-election in return for his approval of the bill.

Governor Hill signed the Liberty Bill on June 25, 1887. (He won reelection, although the influence of the bicyclists would be hard to measure.)

On July 8, 1887, Corporation Counsel Morgan J. O’Brien, who had taken office on July 1, rendered his first opinion. The Park Commissioners had asked whether they were bound by the new law. “Mr. O’Brien,” the *Times* reported, “says that the intent and effect of the act is such that the Commissioners may not prohibit the use of bicycles and tricycles upon any road in Central Park where other pleasure carriages are permitted.” He added that the commissioners may approve ordinances limiting speed or requiring the use of lamps, bells, or other safety appurtenances.

O’Brien reiterated this view during the board’s July 20 meeting. The commissioners informed the park police that lamps, bells, and other safeguards must be used while bicyclists and tricyclists are in the park.

The expected carnage did not occur. On March 26, 1888, the *Times* said:

Yet nothing published since every park in New-York was opened to wheelmen has justified the extravagant predictions of harm to ensue. The truth appears to be that the bicycle is most disliked where it is least familiar.

In December 15, 1892, the *Times* reported that “the records show that but one accident in twelve months had been caused by a bicycle.”

That is not to say that every horse appreciated bicycles. On October 21, 1895, a *Times* article on Central Park accidents reported:

Mounted Policemen McIntyre and Green were both disabled and Green’s horse was severely injured in an accident which happened [yesterday]. Walter Snow, twenty-seven years old, of 228 Duffield Street, Brooklyn, was riding a bicycle at Sixty-seventh Street and the East Drive, when a horse driven by Dr. C. P. Martin of 29 Lexington Avenue, became frightened, ran away, and struck the bicycle. Snow was thrown to the roadway and received severe injuries to his shoulders and

body. Dr. Martin and his companion were thrown out of the wagon, but escaped without injury.

The horse ran on. Policeman Green gave chase, and caught the runaway by the bridle. In doing so he was thrown from his horse, and the animal which he rode was so seriously injured that the services of a veterinary surgeon were required. Policeman Green was taken to his home, where his injuries were dressed. Mounted Policeman McIntyre then gave chase to the runaway, succeeded in getting hold of one of the reins, and had his right arm sprained before he succeeded in bringing the runaway to a standstill.

Although the Park Commissioners would have to abide by the law requiring bicycles to be treated as other vehicles in the park, they, or at least the park police, found that strict adherence to the law they had opposed had its little pleasures, as evidenced by an incident reported in the *Times* on July 25, 1893. The previous Thursday, July 20, Dr. Myer L. Rhein and his wife traveled by bicycle to Fort George. On the return trip to their “handsome brownstone at 104 East Fifty-eighth Street, a few doors from Park Avenue,” they found the Central Park drives crowded with vehicles. They took the east drive:

[They] had no trouble until they reached the hill at about Seventy-ninth Street. About half way down this hill they encountered a stretch of road over which it was simply impossible to push their wheels.

This stretch of the drive was covered “several inches deep with loose stones and gravel, which extended to the edges of the grass on both sides. They dismounted to push their “wheels,” but as their feet sank in the gravel, Dr. Rhein became fearful for his wife’s safety. They moved onto the sidewalk to walk the few hundred feet to get past the rough stretch of drive. Park Policeman James A. Doyle, badge #256, was on hand to prevent this abuse of rules:

“Here,” said the guardian of the people’s pleasure ground. “What are yer doing? Get back on the road where yer belong!”

When the doctor explained the problem and his fear for his wife’s safety, Doyle replied, “Well, you can’t do it and you’ll have to keep in the road.” The doctor agreed, but asked Doyle to accompany them for safety’s sake. “That’s no affair of mine,” Doyle replied. “You can look out for yourselves.”

Just then, Mounted Park Guard John Murphy, badge #89, arrived. Doyle explained the problem, leading to this sequence of events:

“If that woman doesn’t come off the path right away, arrest her!” shouted valiant #89, and, jumping from his horse, he seized the doctor’s bicycle and shoved it and its owner, who retained his hold, out among the vehicles on the drive.

Moving down the drive again, Dr. Rhein, being nearsighted, asked his wife to check the officers' badge numbers, which she called out to him:

This did not escape the notice of the two brave public guardians. "Well, take them to the arsenal, anyway, said No. 89, and No. 256 thereupon went into the drive and arrested them for the high crime of taking a policeman's number.

Dr. Rhein and his wife went peacefully, but when he asked that his wife be allowed to ride ahead on her bicycle, his request "was met with another indignity." Doyle blew his whistle to summon another police officer. Doyle told him, "See that that woman doesn't get on her wheel." Sergeant Meany was the booking officer:

At the Arsenal a charge of "violation of Park ordinances, rolling bicycle along the walk," was made against both the doctor and his wife, but they were promptly discharged by the Sergeant at the desk. Dr. Rhein said he did not wish to be discharged, and insisted that he be held, but the Sergeant declined to hold him.

The incensed doctor reported the incident to the LAW's Chief Consul, Charles H. Luscomb, who intended to charge the two officers for their actions. Dr. Rhein also was considering a civil suit.

When the *Times* reporter sought comment from the officers, they were not available, but Sergeant Meany "spoke highly of them." He explained "that the park rules prohibited bicycles or other vehicles anywhere in the park but on the drives, and that the police had instructions to enforce this rule strictly."

This incident was part of a pattern of petty annoyances that bicyclists were experiencing at the hands of authorities in the park and throughout the city. An article on "The Rights of Bicyclists" on August 3, 1893, began:

Since the Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance recently regulating the speed of bicycles within the city limits there have been many complaints by wheelmen of the treatment they have received from park policemen. It has been asserted that the wheelmen have been subjected to petty annoyances by the police which were in the nature of persecution.

The LAW's Luscomb had appeared before the park board on August 2 to ask "that as much protection be accorded to wheelmen as to owners of light vehicles." He cited examples of "petty tyranny" of the sort that should not be permitted, including the treatment of Dr. Rhein and his wife, by the park police:

Commissioner Dana said the bicycle had been legally declared to be a vehicle, and as such there could be extended to it no greater protection than to any other vehicle.

President Tappan said the park police had recently received instructions to enforce carefully the ordinance relative to the use of bicycles, but that he would see that the wheelman received fair treatment.

City and park officials continued to adapt ordinances and regulations to adjust to the growing number of bicyclists using city streets and park drives. On July 1, 1897, the *Times* reported on an ordinance the Park Commissioners had adopted to regulate the use of vehicles, especially bicycles, in Central Park and other parks and drives under the board's jurisdiction. The ordinance was reported to be similar to a proposed ordinance for city streets. Some of the rules applied to all vehicles. For example, all vehicles must carry a lighted lamp from 30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise. Vehicles must pass on the left, while vehicles moving at a walk or slow trot must keep to the right-hand side of the road. Some of the rules addressed bicyclists:

- Drivers, riders, and cyclists must not exceed a speed of eight miles an hour in the parks and on the parkways.
- Cyclists must not coast in the parks nor on the parkways or bicycle paths, and must keep their feet on the pedals and their hands on the handlebars.
- Cyclists must not mount or dismount except on the extreme right of the roads or bicycle paths, and in passing vehicles or horsemen bells must be sounded.
- All bicycles, tricycles, velocipedes, or other vehicles of propulsion must be provided with a bicycle bell, not to exceed three inches in diameter.
- Riding more than two abreast is prohibited.
- Instruction on the bicycle, tricycle, velocipede, or other such vehicle of propulsion, and all trick or fancy riding on the same is prohibited in the parks at all times.
- Wheelmen shall not ride on the paths in any park. Those waiting upon the park paths may push their wheels along such paths, but in no case shall the wheels be taken upon the turf.
- No bicycle or tricycle shall be allowed to be taken upon or remain on the Mall during the progress of a concert.

The article added, "The Park police have been directed to be vigilant in enforcing the rules."

No one involved in the long running debates over how to adapt the city's streets and park drives to the increasingly popular bicycles could know that the bicycle was soon going to be displaced as the primary concern. A new technological revolution was on the way.

### **The Automobile Club of America**

As the 1890's neared an end, the horse remained the dominant power source, with the automobile still a new device. The Duryea Brothers had driven America's first gasoline-powered automobile on the streets of Springfield, Massachusetts, on September 21, 1893, just 2 weeks before General Roy Stone opened the U.S. Office of Road Inquiry in the Department of Agriculture on October 3, 1893. (The Rambler recognizes that some



contrarians dispute the Duryea Brothers' "first," but everyone is entitled to an opinion, however wrong it may be. He doesn't want to hear from you.) The brothers established the Duryea Motor Wagon Company in 1895 to sell what they called the Buggyaut. Their first sale, and the first sale of an automobile in the United States, took place in early 1896.

Given the prevalence of the horse, "America's love affair with the automobile" had not yet begun when a meeting took place at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York City on October 16, 1899, to adopt a constitution and by-laws and select permanent officers of the Automobile Club of America. Planning for the club had begun in June, when temporary officers and an executive committee had been appointed, according to an article in *The New York Times* on October 17, 1899. Since June, the temporary officers had been in touch with Automobile Clubs in France, Great Britain, and Ireland regarding exchange of courtesies. The new club would arrange for storage houses, depots for the charging of electric vehicles, and a clubhouse for an exchange of views. It also would advocate good laws for automobiles and sponsor tours, runs, and contests, all activities it would have in common with the LAW.

The founders of the Automobile Club were wealthy, prominent individuals, giving the association an image it would never shake. Historian James J. Flink quoted *Motor Age* magazine as saying of the membership that "the millionaire and socially prominent contingent which gives the club its standing as an adjunct to sweldom enjoys membership in the Metropolitan, Union, and other leading social clubs." Flink added:

Through its membership roster of nationally prominent figures, the Automobile Club of America expected to transcend being merely another local organization of motorists. The New York club had ambitions to be the national voice and conscience of motorists. [Flink, James J., *America Adopts the Automobile, 1895-1910*, The MIT Press, 1970, p. 145-146]

### **Pleasure Vehicles**

One of the first issues the club addressed was securing approval for automobiles to operate in Central Park. The Park Board allowed horse-drawn "pleasure vehicles" to exclude trucks and wagons, and had been directed by statute to allow bicycles and tricycles, but was not willing to include automobiles within the definition of "pleasure vehicles." Board members were concerned that automobiles would scare the horses pulling the many other pleasure vehicles in Central Park.

When attempts over 2 years to secure an answer from the Park Board failed, two directors of the new club, Winslow E. Buzby and Whitney Lyon, both lawyers, decided to create a test case. The *Times* reported on October 28, 1899, that the previous day, Buzby, with Lyon and William Beatty, another lawyer, as a passenger, had driven his electric victoria-phaeton "horseless carriage" into Central Park despite efforts by the police to stop them. When Buzby persisted, the police arrested him.

At the station, Captain England was incensed by the attempt and placed Buzby under \$300 bond to appear in court on a charge of disorderly conduct and resisting the police. Buzby informed him that in the absence of a law prohibiting automobiles in the park, the police had no right to exclude them. The *Times* reported the captain's reply:

“Well, I will,” said he, “and I hope you’ll never get in. If I’m called to the stand I won’t say anything favorable to automobiles, you bet.”

Lyon posted bond for Buzby, who was promptly released despite Captain England’s misgivings about the automobile.

On October 30, the Board of Governors of the Automobile Club of America met at the Waldorf-Astoria to complete plans for a planned “run” and to discuss the arrest of Buzby. The board agreed to support Buzby and Lyons, who said that if the decision was upheld in court, “we shall procure a writ of certiorari to have the proceedings reviewed.”

### **Ossified Minds in Charge**

The *Times* sided editorially with Buzby, as explained in “Topics of the Times” on October 30, 1899:

All enlightened sentiment—all, that is, founded on appreciation of the present as it is, and of the future as it must be—will take the form of commendation and encouragement for Mr. Winslow E. Buzby in the campaign which he, a volunteer representative of the Automobile Club, has opened against the Park Board. However zealously the latter body may be assisted by Police Captains or other officials of ossified minds and prejudices, its conflict with the automobilers is absolutely certain to end in a defeat ludicrously complete. The new-fangled machines are undoubtedly disturbing to the nerves of horses and to the established habits of horse owners, but the circumstance is one of the most trifling and temporary importance, and in the very near future everybody except the writers and students of history will have forgotten that efforts were ever made to exclude self-propelled vehicles from any public highway.

The editorial urged the Park Board to get out of the way of “the irresistible Sequence of Events . . . for to remain in the way is to tempt Fate the Flattener.” It concluded:

Everybody to his taste, however, and if President Clausen and Capt. England are enamored of hopeless fighting, they probably couldn’t do better than try a fall with what is to be the almost universally used carriage of to-morrow. They can make quite a bit of bother for Mr. Buzby and several other people, and if there is any real satisfaction to that, who would begrudge it to them?

During Buzby’s trial before Magistrate Willard H. Olmsted, as reported in the *Times* on November 1, the park board’s attorney asserted that the Greater New York Charter empowered the park commissioners to make rules for use of the parks. (Olmsted was a

lawyer from Auburn who had become a journalist; he was a political writer for *The Sun* when Mayor William L. Strong appointed him a City Magistrate in 1897.) When the magistrate pointed out that the charter also required uniform application of the rules, Captain England “broke into the discussion with the remark that ‘the rules prohibit any carriage not drawn by a horse from being on the driveways.’” Buzby’s attorney pointed out that, “The rules do not say any such thing.” The park rules allowed use of the drives by “persons in pleasure carriages, on bicycles, or on horseback.”

Magistrate Olmstead found Buzby not guilty. The Magistrate stated that automobiles qualified as “pleasure carriages” and acknowledged that his ruling meant automobiles could use the park.

According to the *Times*, the park’s attorney was considering an appeal to a higher court, but Captain England needed no such appeal:

Capt. England said that he still would not allow automobiles in the driveways. President [George E.] Clausen [of the park board] gave special orders to continue the enforcement of the rules just as in the past.

Clausen explained England’s position:

My present position is that the introduction of automobiles into the Park would frighten teams and single horses, especially those driven by women and children; in other words, they would be a menace to the safety of those who already frequent the Park. The day of the automobile is coming, but it should come intelligently.”

### **A Hearing on the Issue**

The Park Commissioners held a hearing on the issue on November 9, 1899. The board room, according to the *Times*, was nearly filled for the 2-hour hearing, which “was good-natured, and ripples of merriment were frequent.” One of the key issues was whether automobiles frightened horses. The first speaker, Lawson N. Fuller, was a Washington Heights resident who had a long standing interest in public road and transit issues. He thought that most runaways were caused by the incompetency of the drivers, not the timidity of horses. “I have noticed that horses scare at baby carriages and papers in the road more than at anything else . . . . It’s the driver who gets scared, not the horse, and he communicates his fear to the horse.” The commissioners could see for themselves, he said, by a simple experiment of driving a carriage alongside an automobile.

Fuller was a Washington Heights who had a long standing interest in public transit issues. George F. Chamberlain, vice president of the Automobile Club, reported that he had driven 400 miles through New Hampshire and Vermont without scaring any horse except one unattended animal attached to an ice wagon. He hastened to add, “And that horse I heard was a chronic runaway.”

Albert R. Shattuck, an Automobile Club member who would go on to head the organization, told the commissioners that he had traveled thousands of miles in an automobile in the United States and Europe without causing a runaway. The *Times* summarized one of his observations:

In Paris, where automobiles are encountered everywhere, he insisted there was immunity from runaways due to their presence. The French plan, however, of examining and licensing automobile drivers, he believed should be adopted here.

No one should be allowed to operate a motor vehicle “who was ignorant of its machinery and physically incapable of handling it.”

Albert Bostwick, a horseman and member of the Board of Governors of the Automobile Club, said he had driven his automobile in Central Park without permission “and didn’t scare anything.”

Not everyone agreed with the automobilists. A livery stable keeper, G. E. Bailey, “was convinced that the automobile was a menace to the good conduct of horses even ordinarily well disposed.” He pointed out that automobiles could drive everywhere else:

Why, I know of many riders and drivers who will not go on Riverside Drive since the advent of the buzzing, rumbling, and choo-chooing machines.

The park should be for families. A father should be able to take his family for a drive in the park “without danger of having one or more of his loved ones killed in a runaway caused by the sudden appearance of these automobiles.”

Mrs. E. L. Ashman, “a pleasant-faced, middle-aged woman, tastefully dressed,” testified that she often went to Central Park for the drives on her own when her husband was occupied with business. “But if these automobiles are allowed to run around the Park I am afraid I shall have to give up my pleasure.” She acknowledged, in response to a question, that she took her horse and carriage through the streets to get to the park, but pointed out a key difference:

I have met automobiles on the way without accident, but it was when I was driving where there were no curves. There are too many curves in the Park driveways for safety. Coming suddenly upon one of these horseless carriages, I am afraid would frighten my horse.

James J. Fitzgerald, counsel of the Central Park Hackmen’s Association, also opposed entry by automobiles:

[He] argued against the automobile on the ground of danger and the fact that the machine was in an experimental stage. “They have to be followed around by a second one,” he said, “in case of accident.”  
 “Didn’t you ever hear of a horse breaking down?” interrupted Mr. Fuller.

“Yes, but I never heard of one blowing up.”

President Clausen indicated that the commission would consider the views and announce a decision soon.

A *Times* editorial on November 11 said of the Park Commission’s position that it would be “difficult to imagine an application more devoid of merit.” The editorial reminded the commissioners that just a few years earlier, it had wanted to exclude bicycles on the same grounds, namely that they scared horses. The few bicycles in existence did scare horses until the animals became familiar with them. “A horse which should now shy at a bicycle would incur the contempt of all other horses for being too green to go at large.” As for those whose horses were skittish at the appearance of an automobile, the editorial concluded that, “People who will not take the trouble to educate their horses should at least have the grace not to make the ignorance of their horses a matter of public complaint.”

### **An Automotive Experiment**

On November 14, the *Times* reported that Clausen had authorized one automobile, an electric, to ride in the park with himself as a passenger. They would be accompanied by police in case the automobile frightened horses and prompted runaways. In conducting this test, Clausen acknowledged that automobiles did not scare the “plebeian” horses on the streets. They were “used to anything,” including trolleys, elevated railways, fire engines, and ambulances. The horses in the park were “high-strung animals of nervous dispositions,” as the *Times* summarized Clausen’s views, “and the introduction of the automobile there might result in the decimation of the Four Hundred.” (The term “Four Hundred” referred to society’s upper crust.)

Fortunately, the Sunday afternoon drive went well, without scaring horses. Unfortunately, the drive had to be cut short. The driver, R. A. C. Smith, was showing Clausen the many things an automobile could do when a pin broke during a “complicated evolution.” Smith and Clausen had to walk out of the park.

Pin repaired, Smith and Clausen returned that evening to test the reaction of the horses to the automobile’s lamps. Again, the horses were not affected, although Clausen said that the park did not have as many high-strung horses that day as he had expected. He would conduct additional experiments before deciding whether to change the policy.

The *Times* praised Clausen for taking the initiative:

Only the other day he professed a stern, unalterable determination to stand by that possibly noble but certainly imbecile beast, the horse, for a period as near to endless as circumstances would permit, and to show his loving sympathy with said silly beast’s prejudice against the novel and the mysterious by excluding from the Park all vehicles not dependent for motion on equine or human exertion. Already Mr. Clausen has abandoned this attitude, and he is obviously preparing to

make a voluntary and sufficiently graceful retreat from a position which, though not permanently tenable, could still have been long defended by a warrior of more obstinacy than wisdom.

Once he “recognized the inevitability of the inevitable,” the *Times* continued, Clausen had conducted an experiment that resulted in the discovery that horses had little more “than a natural interest in the machine which he had assumed would throw them into an agony of alarm or indignation.” The consequences were in no way comparable to the fear “excited in the equine mind” by a wind-blown newspaper:

This episode in municipal history teaches several things, among them that truth is mighty and will prevail, occasionally over even the official inclination to make delegated power felt by as many of the delegators as possible.

Clausen took another experimental ride on November 18, along East Drive, to Central Drive, to West Drive, with mixed results. At one point, he encountered Mounted Policeman McGill “on a green horse which he was breaking in to Park work.” The horse, clearly, needed more training:

The sudden appearance of the automobile on the animal somewhat frightened him. He reared and plunged and succeeded in shaking McGill off. The horse did not run away.

With help from Clausen, Officer McGill got to his feet and reported that he was not injured. Clausen proceeded on his ride, but told reporters later that he believed horses would be more surprised by automobiles in the Park than they would be on the city’s streets.

### **Automobile Allowed – Gradually**

After continuing his daily experiments a few more days, Clausen announced on November 20 that he had decided to allow self-propelled carriages in the Park gradually “so as to avoid disastrous consequences,” as the *Times* put it the following day. He had experimented with a naphtha-propelled carriage on November 20, and intended to continue driving through the Park in different types of motor vehicles. He would admit, first, those vehicles that were least likely “to terrify horses, and which, from our acquaintance with the owners, we can rest assured will be handled by careful and competent persons.”

Perhaps with Officer McGill in mind, he had been training the horses of the mounted patrol “to the sight and sound of the automobile, which I consider a very important matter, as much depends upon the steadiness of these horses.” He had decided against setting special hours for automobiles, which he would allow to use the Park at any time “subject only to the observance of our regulations.” He added:

The matter of rules for their operation has not yet been considered in detail, but I think that our existing driving rules will answer the purpose. It is probable that

some special rule will be required as to the method of signaling to a driver behind when the automobile is to stop or to a driver ahead when the operator of the machine intends to pass. We shall endeavor to make the signals as simple as possible.

As for Buzby, he finally received a permit on December 16, 1899, to operate his vehicle in the park. The permit specified that he may “enter upon and pass over the drives of the Central Park with an open electric pleasure carriage (phaeton) operated by an experienced motorman.” Noting that Buzby had been the first to test Clausen’s earlier prohibition, the *Times* added that Buzby was not entirely satisfied. He felt discriminated against, he said, because “he had had an application on file for two years to enter the Park in an automobile.”

The Rambler would like to think that Buzby, despite his initial irritation, enjoyed his jaunts through Central Park.

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*The New York Times* Archive  
The Rambler consulted the following articles:

#### Bicycles in Central Park

- “A Walk in Central Park,” May 2, 1880
- “Park Department Matters,” July 8, 1880
- “Bicycle Parade Arrangements,” March 23, 1881
- “Park Department Affairs,” June 2, 1881
- “Park Department Affairs,” June 2, 1881
- “City and Suburban News,” June 26, 1881
- “Bicyclists in Court,” July 14, 1881
- “A Test Bicycle Case,” July 15, 1881
- “The Rights of the Bicycle,” July 26, 1881
- “Testimony in the Bicycle Case,” August 3, 1881
- “City and Suburban News,” August 25, 1881
- “City and Suburban News,” August 31, 1881
- “The Bicyclist,” September 9, 1881
- “Bicycles and Tricycles,” April 1, 1882
- “The Bicyclists Defeated,” July 19, 1882
- Untitled (“The decision adverse to the admission of riders of bicycles”), March 22, 1883
- “Wheelmen on Parade,” May 29, 1883
- “Not Solely for Bicyclers,” August 5, 1883
- “Horse Pretenses,” April 24, 1884
- “The Wheelmen’s Humble Plea,” July 1, 1884
- “Bicycles in the Park,” July 4, 1884
- “The Wheelmen’s Humble Plea,” April 18, 1887

“The Albany Statesmen,” March 3, 1887  
 “The Subway Bill Passed,” May 18, 1887  
 “Executive Hearings,” June 3, 1887  
 Untitled (“The Mayor and heads of municipal. Departments”), June 5, 1887  
 Untitled (“Gov. Hill is to have a hearing to-day”), June 14, 1887  
 “Heard by the Governor,” June 15, 1887  
 “Bicycles in the Park,” July 9, 1887  
 “Park Board Interests,” July 21, 1887  
 “Horsemen and Wheelmen,” March 26, 1888  
 “Forced to Remain in Danger,” July 25, 1893  
 “The Rights of Bicyclists,” August 3, 1893  
 “Accidents in Central Park,” October 21, 1895  
 “News for the Wheelmen,” July 1, 1897

#### Automobiles in Central Park

“Automobile Club Formed,” October 17, 1899  
 “The Automobile Parade,” October 31, 1899  
 “Automobiles in the Park,” October 28, 1899  
 “Topics of the Times,” October 30, 1899  
 “The Automobile Parade,” October 31, 1899  
 “Verdict for Automobiles,” November 1, 1899  
 “Automobile Club’s Run,” November 2, 1899  
 “Automobiles in the Park,” November 10, 1899  
 “Automobiles in the Parks,” November 11, 1899  
 “One ‘Auto’ in the Park,” November 14, 1899  
 “Topics of the Times, November 15, 1899  
 “Automobile in the Park,” November 19, 1899  
 “To Admit Automobiles,” November 21, 1899  
 “Mr. Buzby Gets a Permit,” December 17, 1899