

Traffic Department

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Traffic

FROM A BADLY EQUIPPED OFFICE TO A MODERN TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT IS THE 1919 HISTORY RECORDED BY TADLOCK

A splendid record of achievements in rate reductions, improvement in transportation; and advantages gained for El Paso and Southwest.

Transportation

On the 24th day of March, 1919, A. U. Tadlock assumed the management of this department. At that time there was no such thing as a Traffic Department of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce in the true sense of the term. There were only a few tariffs in the office and such as were in the office were incomplete and useless. There was no organization whatever. In short, we had to start from the ground up and build an organization and equip it. In order to ascertain just what organization was necessary, our first step naturally was to make a survey of the El Paso situation. Our next step was to procure part of the equipment necessary for operation. This, among other things, included a file of tariffs.

A Traffic Department without a good file of tariffs is helpless. It is like an engine without fuel. After assembling a fairly good file of tariffs, we began to build up the organization. Several things mitigated against the prompt perfection of the organization necessary to properly handle the work of a traffic department, such as we have today. Lack of money was the principal handicap. It, therefore, was not until July that we were able to complete the good organization which we now have.

Bulletin No. 1.

After completing the preliminary survey previously referred to herein, we made the following announcement in bulletin No. 1:

"This department is going to serve you in a general way. It will also serve you in a direct way if you will permit it to do so.

"In a general way we are going to serve you by doing all we can to improve the transportation service into and out of El Paso where such service has not heretofore been satisfactory and where, under present conditions, it is possible. We are also going to serve you by endeavoring to bring about better rate adjustments where they are needed and where, under present conditions, it is possible. We are going to bend our every effort toward the accomplishment of these things, and while we feel confident that we shall accomplish considerable, still we realize that it is not going to be possible to do as much as could be done if conditions were as they used to be in the railroad world. It is believed that shippers in El Paso appreciate (as they do in other sections of the country) this fact and that they consequently do not expect, or even anticipate a revolution of things. This is a plain, straight forward statement of what we intend to do in a general way, and in it we have endeavored to avoid making any statement, either direct or by implication, which we do not fully intend to live up to.

"So much for the general service which we propose to render you. Now let us turn to the direct service which we want to render you.

"What we may do for you in a direct way lies with you and you alone. We are here to serve you and will serve you if given an opportunity. We are reorganizing this department, endeavoring to obtain a complete file of tariffs and preparing ourselves to render you a direct service by checking your freight bills in an earnest endeavor to detect errors which result in your paying the railroads more money for the transportation of shipments than you should pay. This is a direct service because it will mean "CASH" money saved for you.

If you will call us, it shall be our pleasure

to quote rates for you and otherwise assist you and your traffic men in the conduct of your business. We shall gladly trace your shipments for you, so that you may be relieved of the worry and trouble which you encounter in dealing with numerous persons, as you now have to do when you attempt to trace your shipments yourself. In other words, we want to arrange it so you need call only one place when you desire to start a tracer behind any of your shipments. We want that place to be this department.

When tracers are placed with us we shall follow them up, transmit to you such information as is received from time to time, and keep right in behind your shipments until they are delivered to you. It is believed that this service will be considerable help to you and it will be appreciated by you. It will be necessary to charge back to you the cost of telegraph service in connection with each tracer handled for you, but this cost will not be any greater than that which you will necessarily incur should you handle your tracer yourself.

As quickly as possible, we propose to compile the figures for and have published a "Rate Book" somewhat similar to the one published for you once in the past. After this book is published, we will, whenever necessary, issue supplements to it and in these supplements we will give you information concerning any changes which might have been made in the tariffs of the railroads. To be brief, we are not only going to issue a "Rate Book" but we are going to keep it right up-to-date. This bulletin will be issued once a week, and in it we shall endeavor to furnish you information pertaining to all traffic and transportation matters in which you might be interested."

We have more than lived up to the promises made in the announcement hereover quoted. This is conclusively shown by the following:

Transportation Service.

Thru our efforts the transportation service into and out of El Paso has been greatly improved. It is not yet quite as good as it might be under different conditions. That is, it is not as good as it would be under private operation of the railroads. The "old time" service cannot be hoped for until after the railroads revert to private operation. In addition to being instrumental in the improvement of the service generally, we secured for our jobbers this past summer special refrigerator service from El Paso to the principal points in this territory. This made it possible for a majority of our jobbers to do a greater business in perishable goods. Jobbers not included within the term "majority" are those who, because of volume of goods sold, could have shipped their goods in special cars iced by themselves. There are only a few of these. And even they could not have obtained in the manner mentioned, the regular refrigerator service which we procured for them. Furthermore, every individual car which they might have loaded would of necessity under the tariffs been iced by them at their own expense. They did not have to pay for icing the cars used in the special refrigerator service secured by us.

In addition to greatly improving the freight service, we have also improved the dining car service both on the T. & P. and on the G. H. & S. A. The G. H. & S. A. dining car equipment is up-to-date. Our efforts in connection with their service were therefore confined to improving the service rendered on their cars.

The T. & P. equipment is not up-to-date, and our efforts consequently were directed in two directions. First, the improvement of the service on the cars which they now have in use; and second, the procurement of up-to-date cars. The cars which the T. & P. are now using as diners are old pullman cars converted into diners. These cars did not have sufficient equipment on them to enable the crews to properly serve the public. For example: On one trip slightly more than 700 meals were served on one of these cars with only a little more than 500 napkins. The water bottles and the cars and everything in them generally were dirty.

Thru our efforts, additional equipment has been put on the cars and the cars and their equipment have been given a general cleaning. They are now being kept clean and so is their equipment. We are informed by Mr. Max Thelen, Director, Division of Public Service, U. S. Railroad Administration, Washington, and by the officials of the T. & P. that new, up-to-date dining cars have been contracted for and as soon as they are delivered, they will be substituted for the old diners which are now being used. Anyone who has ever ridden on the T. & P. between El Paso and Ft. Worth, can very readily appreciate what this means.

Rate Adjustments.

Government operation of the railroads has seriously handicapped us in our efforts along these lines, yet we have made a very creditable showing. I am sure that this will be attested by more than one of our business men. A majority of the rate adjustments which we have undertaken are mentioned hereunder and the present status of each case is shown.

Prevented the local freight houses from closing their doors at 4 o'clock instead of 5 o'clock as they are now doing.

Compelled the railroads entering El Paso to accept less than carload non-perishable freight daily.

Secured a reduction of 23½ cents per 100 pounds on solid rubber tires, etc., in carload quantities, from certain Ohio points to El Paso.

Secured a reduction in the rate on glassware from certain Ohio points to El Paso.

Secured special passenger fares to Cloudcroft, N. M., and return.

Secured a special order from the Treasury Department at Washington, which exempts export shipments from the 3% war tax, and which means a saving of from a few dollars to seventy-five dollars on each and every shipment our shippers send to Mexico.

Procured the appointment of a new El Paso Sub-Committee on LCL Freight, which Committee has been and is now actively working for the improvement of freight service in and out of El Paso.

25% Reduction in Class-Rates.

We secured the publication of rates, on October 25, from El Paso to Arizona and New Mexico west of El Paso, which approximate something like a 25% reduction in the class rates previously applying from El Paso to that section. This reduction in these rates was the final outcome of a case filed before I came here by former Traffic Manager A. W. Reeves, in which the class rates applying from El Paso to points in Arizona and New Mexico west of El Paso on the E. P. & S. W., Southern Pacific and Phoenix, Globe and Cochise Divisions of the Arizona Eastern, were attack-