

How My Grandfather Helped New York City Mass Transportation

By Chris Hirschhorn

A newspaper article hangs in a frame on a corridor wall in my sister's home. It is a copy of page 14 of the *New York Sun* newspaper and dated Feb. 3, 1932. This is the story of how our Grandfather and the city's Mayor and staff helped mass transit in New York City.

Thomas Mullaney, our grandfather, who had worked for the General Electric Company, was the private contractor engaged to install the motors for the trains of New York City's new 8th Avenue Subway.

Grandpa and his staff had plenty of work to do. Further, daily for months, there had been six nine-car trains making round trips from the car-barn at 207th Street south to the Hudson Terminal at Fulton Street in New York City. If the cars were not exercised, they would have been "gummed up" and in need of repair at the opening date of the 8th Avenue line. These trains were referred to as "Mullaney Specials."

My brother and I were children and rode with Mom and Grandpa before the public rode. We were very young, he three and me five years old.

Further: Grandpa, while employed by G.E., helped the New York City subway system by inventing the device that turned out the lights in the trains as they parked for the night in the train yard or 'car-barn' as the men called it. Previously, the lights were turned off by men one at a time. I wonder how many men lost their jobs because of this new technology, electricity, in the beginning of the twentieth century?

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