



Additional Notes continued. . .

income by cruising streetcar stops and picking up impatient commuters at a nickel ("jitney") a head. Streetcar companies retaliated by persuading municipal authorities to outlaw the jitneys, arguing that these largely uninsured cars were a hazard to life and limb.

However, the jitneys refused to die. They banded together and reinvented themselves as legal, cut-rate cab or bus services and continued to compete with both the streetcar companies and conventional taxicabs. Their cooperative strategy served as a model for small cab companies and individual owner-operators who later used it to compete with big companies (page [16](#)).

Taxicabs were allowed to charge extra for passengers above a basic number (usually two), but three matchbooks (pages [19](#), [44](#), [66](#)) advertise no extra charge ("5 ride for the price of 1").

This may be a response to jitney competition, since early jitneys charged a nickel (or "jitney") a head and jammed as many passengers into the car as they could. Taxicab passengers could therefore ride in comfort for not much more than a jitney fare.

The "we go anywhere" selling point may be another response to early jitneys, which preferred to cruise back and forth on streetcar routes.

Veterans. A special selling point after World War II was the claim that cab companies were owned and/or operated by veterans. Our gallery includes ten

companies named "Veteran" (pages [10](#), [28](#), [33](#), [34](#), [42](#), [45](#), [84](#), [92](#), [98](#)) and two more owned by veterans ([26](#), [85](#)).

Because of the negative effects of cut-throat competition during the 1920s and 1930s (see Safety, p. [131](#)) some municipalities put a cap on the number of taxi licenses. Restrictions tightened during World War II when the need to conserve rubber and gasoline for the war effort led to rationing of taxi travel (page [93](#)).

As a result, soldiers returning from overseas found that opportunities to own and drive a cab were severely limited. Angry veterans organized protests, one of which was documented by a [1946 newsreel](#).

In the end, most jurisdictions relaxed restrictions on the number of available taxi licenses. For example, [Winnipeg](#) increased the number of licenses by sixty.

Canadian Excise Stamps. From 1940 to 1949 Canadian matchbooks were required to display a small circular "stamp" indicating that tax had been paid on the matches (e.g., 1/5 of a cent for a book of 20).



See [page 120](#). Also, Christopher D. Ryan, [An Illustrated Chronicle of Canada's Excise Stamp Tax on Matches – Part 2](#)

Also, Mike Prero, [Canadian Tax Stamps](#).