

# The Decline of the Incline

## An Elegy for Cincinnati's Inclined Plane Railways 1872 – 1948

The “Age of Inclines” in the “City of Seven Hills”  
Was filled with laughter, vistas and thrills  
Seventy-six years of (mostly) smooth ascents and good cheer  
Fueled by pulleys, cables, wedges and beer

Atop Mount Auburn, the view was simply divine  
They came for fireworks and hot air balloons  
Now you are three-hundred and fifty-four steps  
Mount Auburn, Mount Auburn, you left us too soon!

Price Hill was steepest, but also bone dry  
Five minutes up for milk or lemonade, but no rye  
Bears, panthers, wolves roamed the hill at this time  
Up people came to escape damp, smoggy climes

Bellevue was the longest, highest rail of the five  
In 1901, its resort burned to the ground  
No more singing, no dancing and no sauerkraut  
But for twenty-five more years it went up and down

Mount Adams lived to the age of seventy-two  
A different way up than the worshipful route  
It fell out of fashion by the end of its days  
From Oregon Street upon its ruins we gaze

Last on the scene, first publicly built  
Fairview, or the “Crosstown” was no frills transport  
The steps that traced this path have been torn out  
And we're left with nothing, not even a resort!

The inclines are gone, but many steps remain  
(Be glad you're not climbing these stairs of Main)  
Always worth walking, though sometimes hard to find  
This route leads to the bar, let's go have some pints!