

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

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Charley on the MTA

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SOURCE:
Bob Pfeffer

SOURCE'S SOURCE: Will Holt

COMMENTS: Written by Jacqueline Berman (now Steiner) and Bess Hawes as a campaign song for Walter A. O'Brian, the Progressive Party candidate in Boston's mayoral election. When Will Holt recorded the number as a pop song for Coral, the record company was astounded by a deluge of protests from Boston because the song made a hero out of a local "radical". The record was hastily withdrawn and a new version recorded which eliminated O'Brien's claim to musical fame. In the later Kingston Trio release, Walter A. was changed to George to avoid advertising Commies on the air. RG

AIR: The Ship that Never Returned; also The Wreck of the Old 97

TEXT:

C F
Let me tell you the story of a man named Charley
C G7
On a tragic and fateful day
C F
He put ten cents in his pocket, kissed his wife and family
C G7 C
Went to ride on the MTA

CHORUS: Did he ever return, no he never returned

And his fate is still unlearn'd

He may ride forever neath the streets of Boston

He's the man who never returned.

Charley handed in his dime at the Kendall Square Station
And he changed for Jamaica Plain
When he got there the conductor told him, "One more nickel."
Charley could not get off that train.

Now all night long Charley rides through the tunnels
Saying, "What will become of me?
How can I afford to see my sister in Chelsea
Or my cousin in Roxbury?"

Churl's wife goes down to the Scollay Square station
Every day at quarter past two
And through the open window she hands Charley a sandwich
As the train comes rumblin' through.

Now you citizens of Boston, don't you think it's a scandal
That the people have to pay and pay
Vote for George O'Brien and fight the fare increase
Get poor Charley off the MTA

CHORUS: Or else he'll never return, no he'll never return

And his fate will be unlearned

He may ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston

He's the man (Who's the man) He's the man (Oh, the man)

He's the man who never returned.

Recorded by Will Holt, Kingston Trio etc.

DT #634

RPf