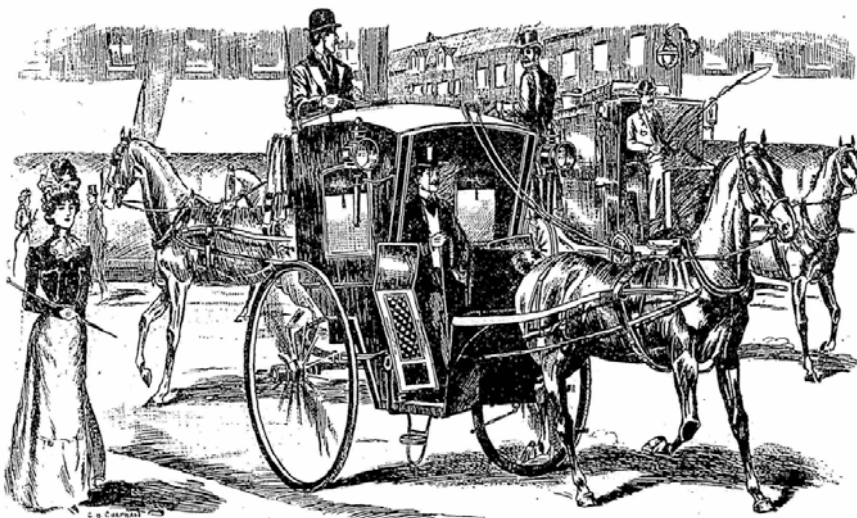




## Horse Cabs: A Convenient Conveyance in Victorian London

Huge numbers, superb speed, point to point service, options of fare charging, no fixed timetable, routes and stopping places, ability to tackle various tasks...being convenient to their passengers was such a distinguishing character of the horse cabs in 19th London.



Image

### Cab Traffic in London

Two drivers of London's Hansom cabs exchanged words to each other while a four-wheeler cab passing behind.

*Judy*, 06 June 1900

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When it comes to the horse cabs in Victorian London, Benjamin Disraeli once hailed the Hansom cab as 'the gondola of London.' Edmund Yates also noted that it was a 'primary matter of faith' to 'all people who have to catch trains, keep appointments, or do anything by a certain specified time, and who, following the grand governing law of human nature, have, in old ladies' phraseology, "driven everything to the last." Indeed, free from the restriction of fixed timetables, routes, and stopping places, with great speed and a huge number of vehicles plying for hire in the streets, the horse cabs were ready to convey their passengers to anywhere, at anytime. In addition, Victorian Londoners also used cabs to circulate messages and items, providing huge convenience to their customers at the time when coordination, punctuality and accuracy became much crucial than before. Thus, it is not surprising that when describing the distress caused by the cab strike, Karl Marx recorded that, 'There was not only a dearth, but an absolute famine of locomotion' in the capital. The indispensable role played by the horse cabs in Victorian London is therefore clear.

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