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express bus

winter 73 ridership
report

june, 1973
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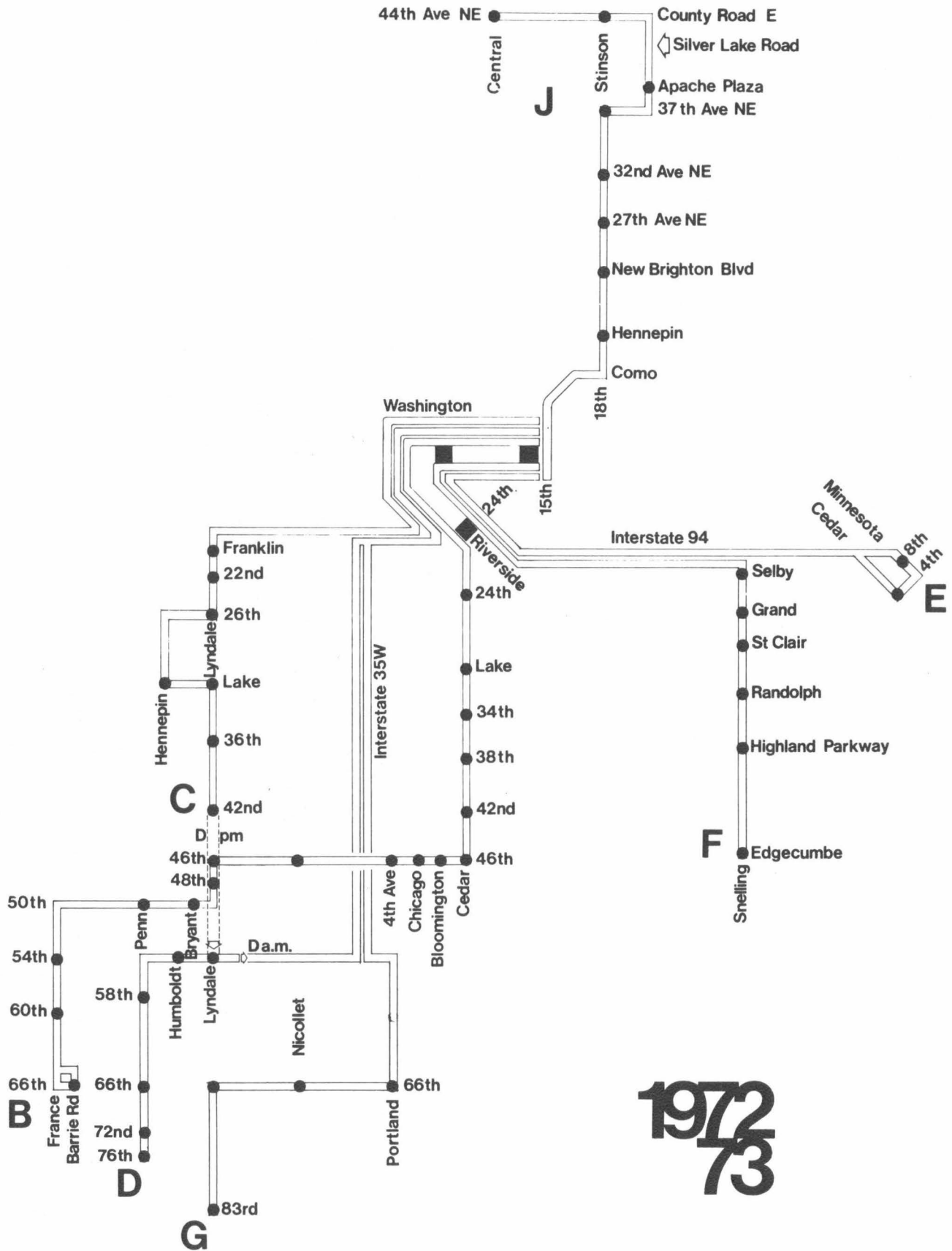
The following report is a brief summary and analysis of Express Bus ridership for Winter Quarter, 1973, which covered the period from 3 January 1973 through 16 March 1973.

Since the Express Bus System was basically unchanged from Fall Quarter, the analysis will center on comparisons between Fall and Winter Quarter ridership patterns.

v

introduction

route map



1972
73

University Express Bus Routes

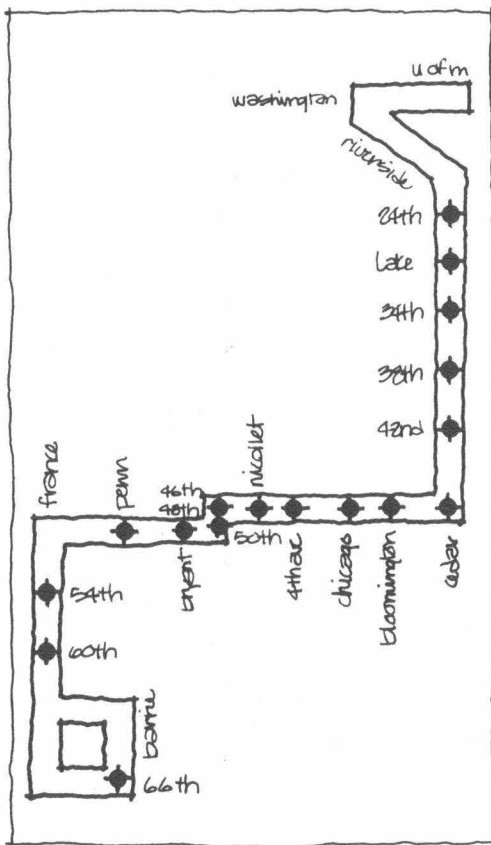
- Collector Stop
- Campus Stop

ridership data

ALTHOUGH TOTAL RIDERSHIP ON ROUTE B DECLINED SLIGHTLY FROM FALL QUARTER, AFTERNOON RIDERSHIP INCREASED BY 6 PERCENT. A GREATER NUMBER OF USERS WERE APPARENTLY PATRONIZING THE ROUTE ON A ROUND TRIP BASIS.

Route B has three morning and two afternoon trips. Winter Quarter ridership characteristics on Route B were similar to those observed Fall Quarter, insofar as the student-oriented morning trips were better patronized than the Civil Service trip; while in the afternoon, the reverse was true. Ridership levels were again, however, more stable on the Civil Service-oriented trips.

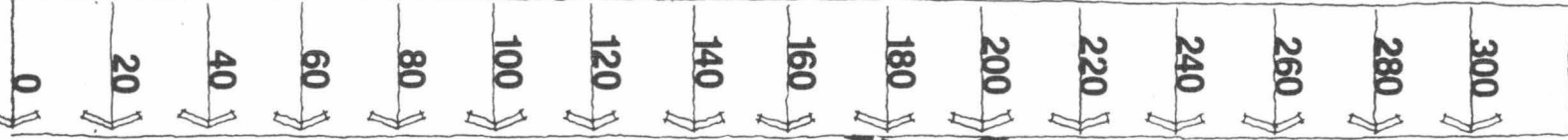
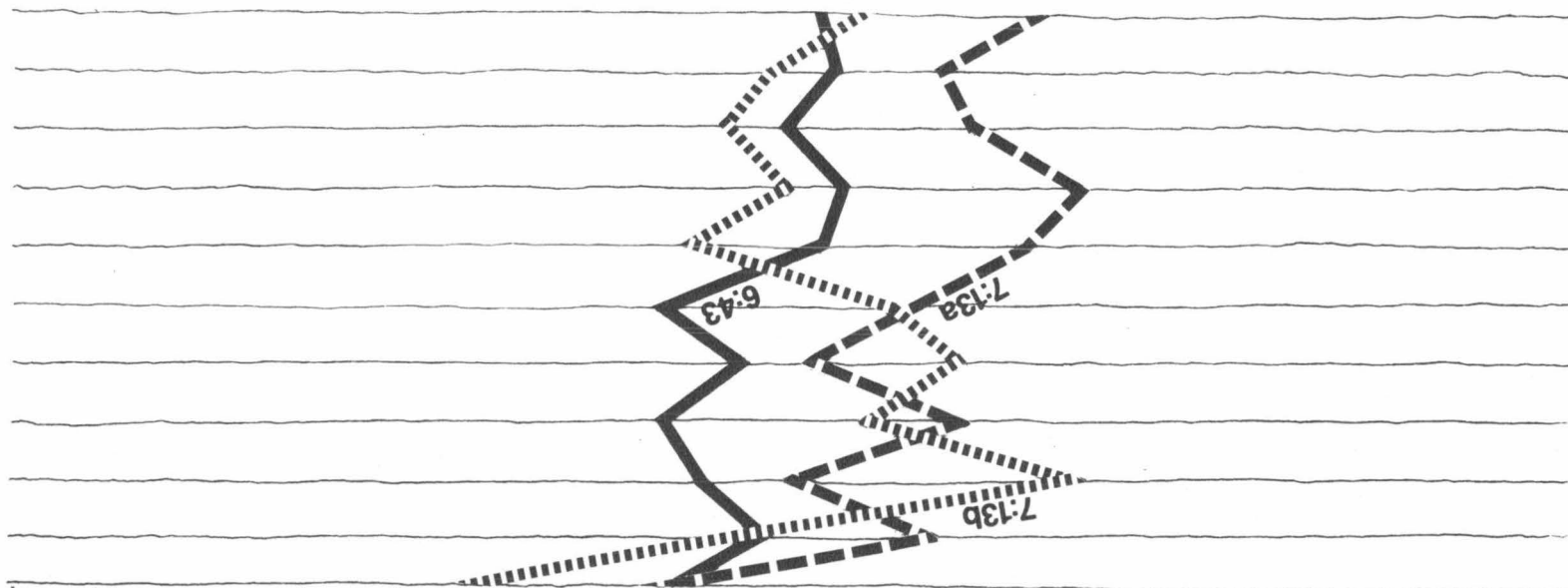
The most significant difference between the two quarters centered around total morning and afternoon ridership. During Fall Quarter total morning ridership was considerably higher than the comparable afternoon figure. That the afternoon figure was lower reflected a basically student-related transportation pattern. Due to irregularity in class schedules, off-campus employment, etc., many students utilize the Express Bus in the morning only. Although this pattern and a differential between morning and afternoon ridership existed Winter Quarter, the ridership gap narrowed substantially. Whereas total morning ridership declined 12 percent from Fall Quarter, afternoon ridership increased 6 percent. A proportionately greater number of users



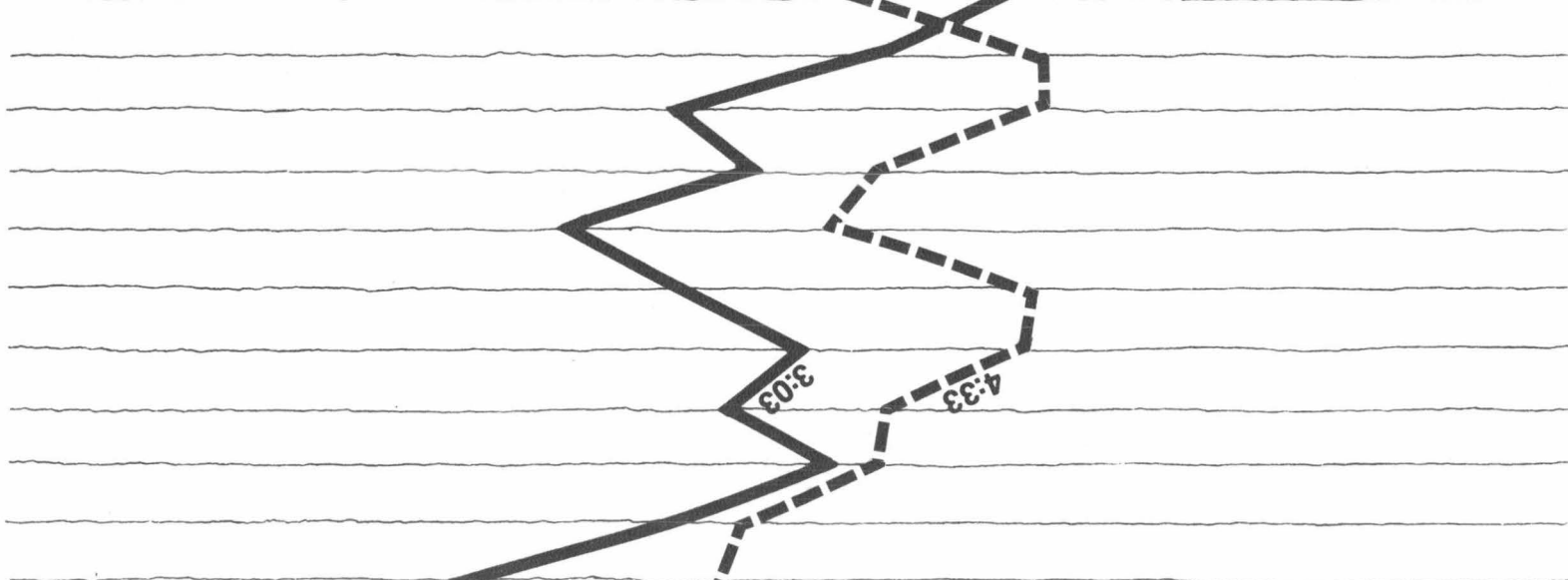
route b

morning

3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



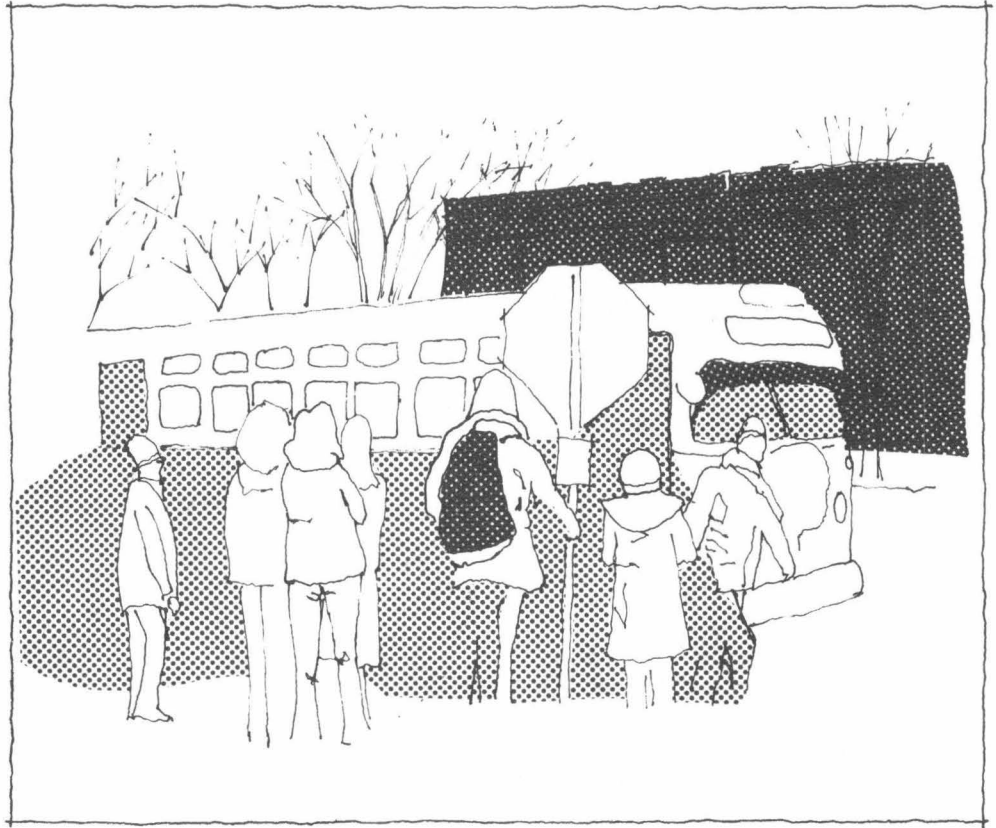
3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



afternoon

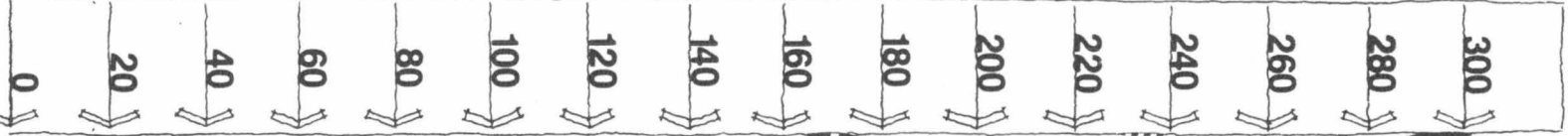
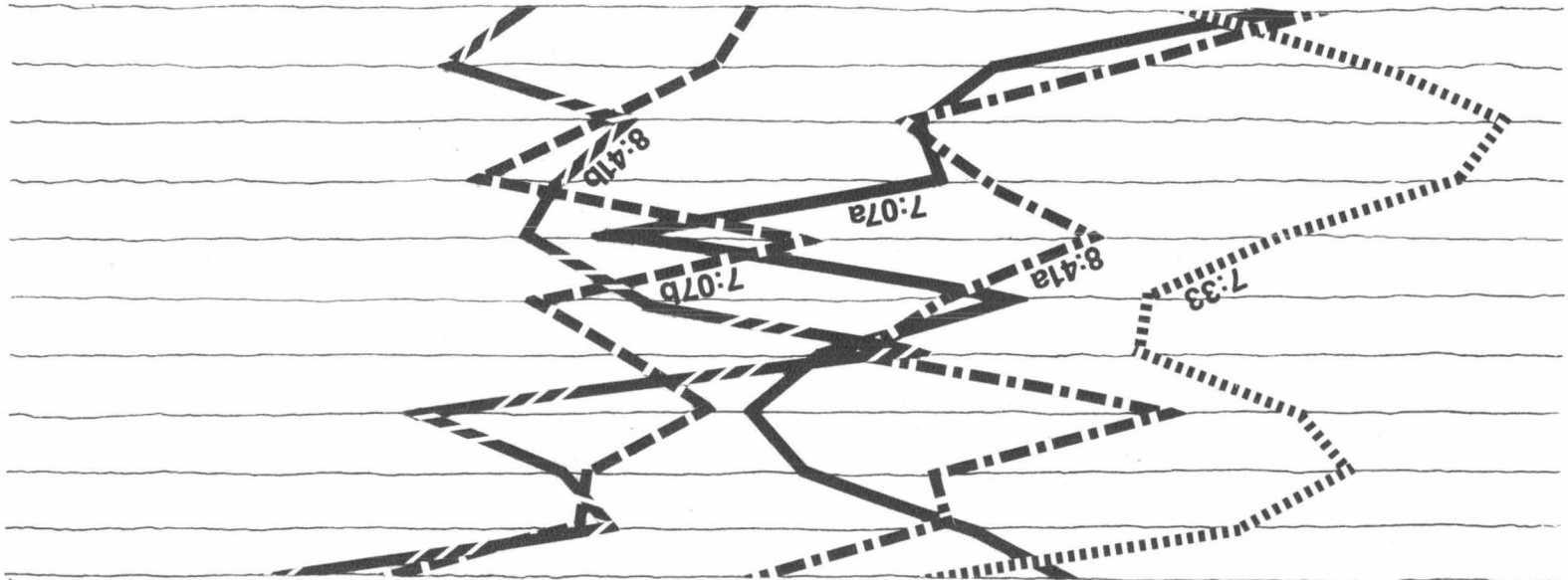
apparently patronized the Express Bus on a round trip basis.

Although total Express Bus ridership declined slightly from Fall to Winter Quarter, the activity on Route B seemed to indicate that the route has a strong, well established core of daily users.

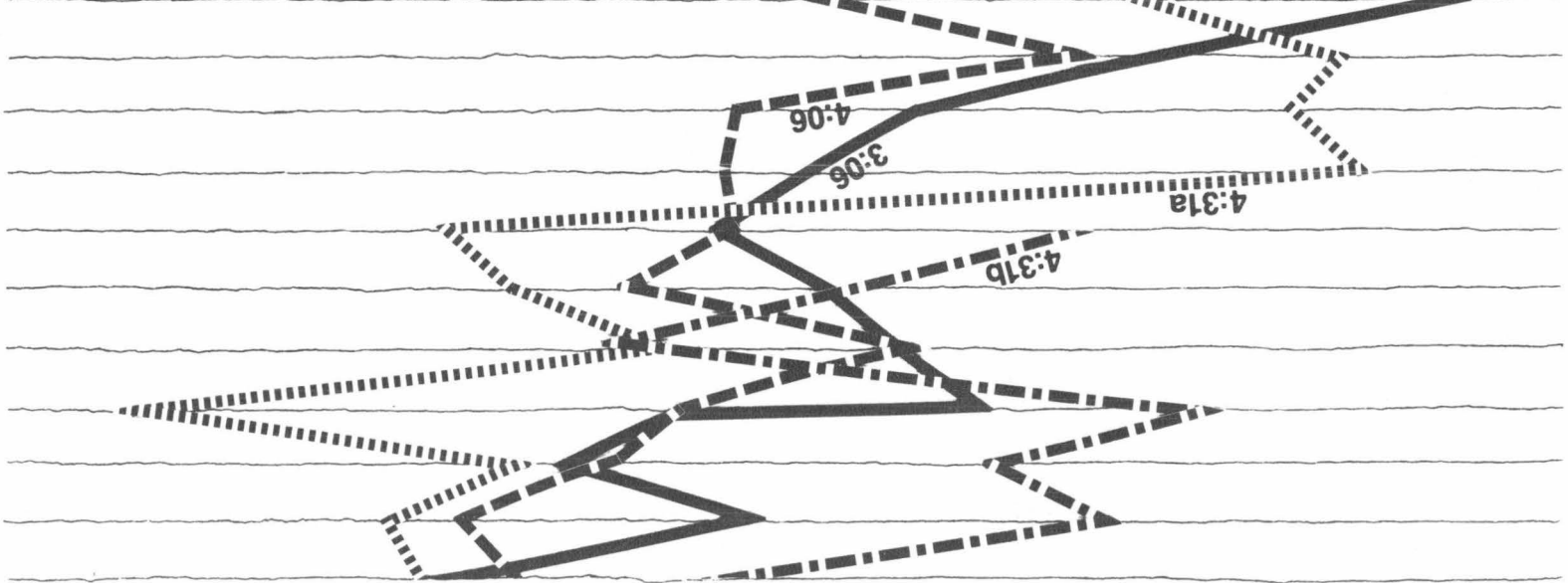


morning

3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



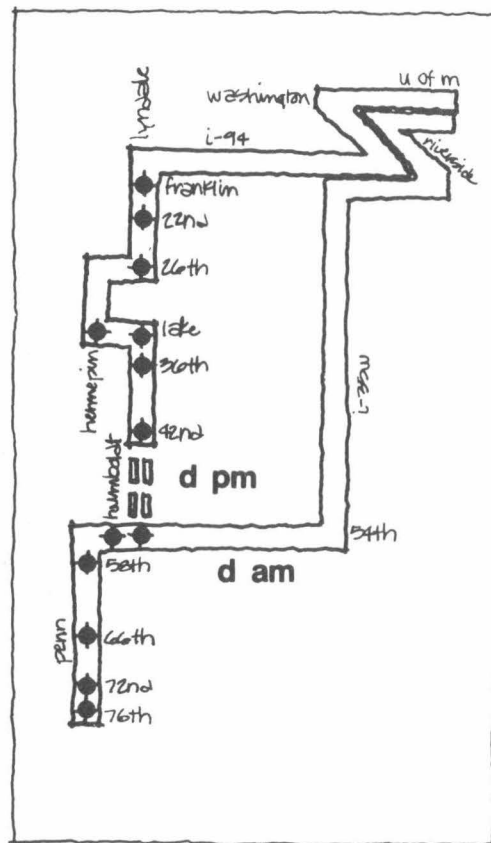
afternoon

ROUTE C CONTINUED TO BE THE BEST PATRONIZED ROUTE IN THE EXPRESS BUS SYSTEM. IN ADDITION, THE ROUTE WITNESSED A MODEST PATRONAGE INCREASE OVER FALL QUARTER, WHILE THE MAJORITY OF OTHER EXPRESS ROUTES RECORDED A SLIGHT DECLINE.

Throughout the existence of the Express Bus System, Route C has been the largest and strongest route. During Winter Quarter Route C continued to grow with the addition of another morning trip (8:41 am) on the first day of classes and another afternoon trip (4:31 pm) at the beginning of the fifth week. At the end of Winter Quarter Route C had five morning and four afternoon trips.

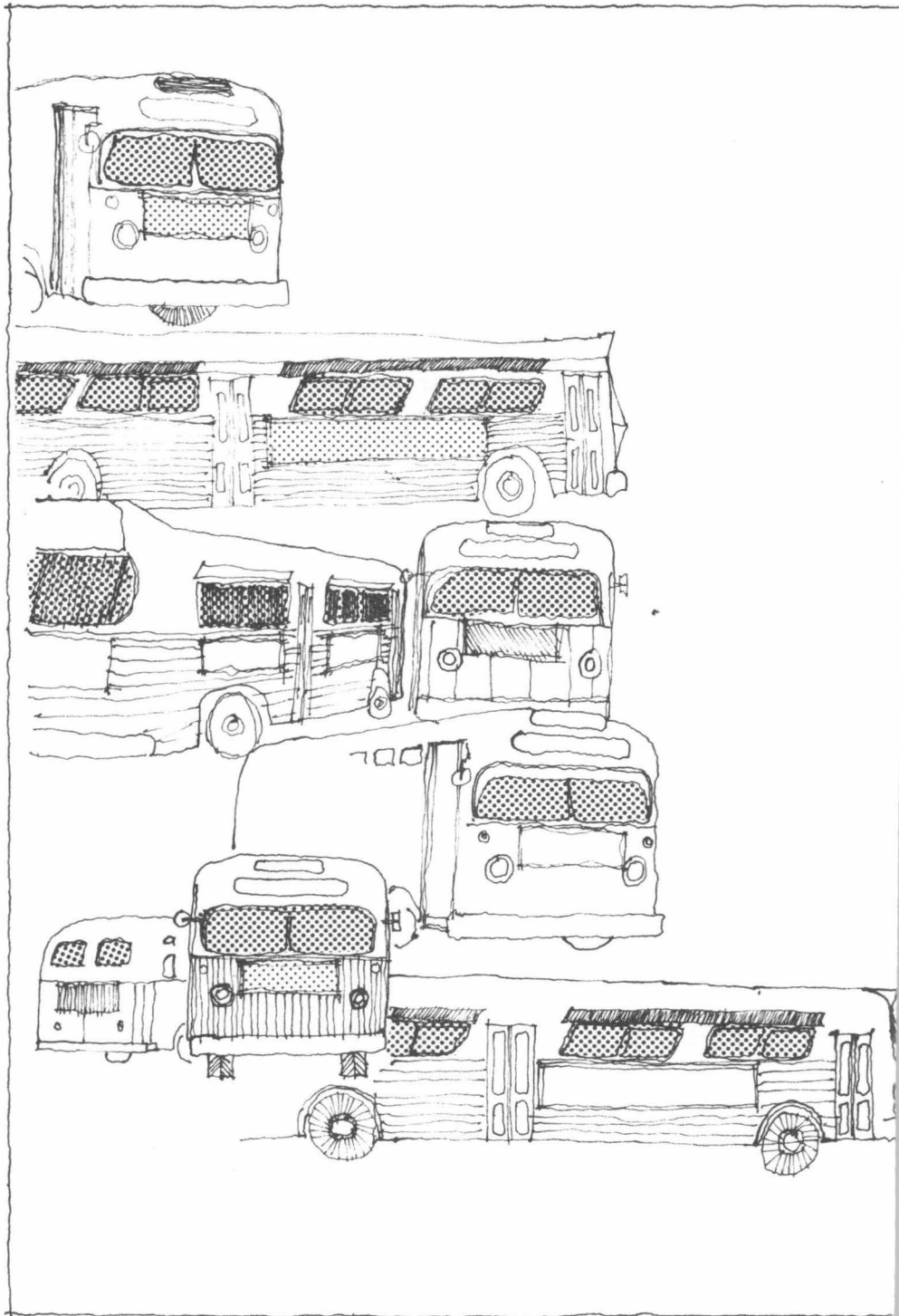
Among the morning trips, the two early trips (7:07 am) and the two late trips (8:41 am) each carried about 35 percent of the total morning ridership. This represents a fairly significant shift from Fall Quarter, when the two early trips carried nearly 40 percent of the morning ridership, while the late trip carried only 31 percent. During both time periods the 7:33 am trip carried roughly the same number of passengers.

Afternoon ridership patterns were similar to those observed Fall Quarter. Ridership levels fluctuated substantially on the early, student-oriented trip, yet were higher on the average than those recorded on the later student trip (4:06 pm). However, the



route c

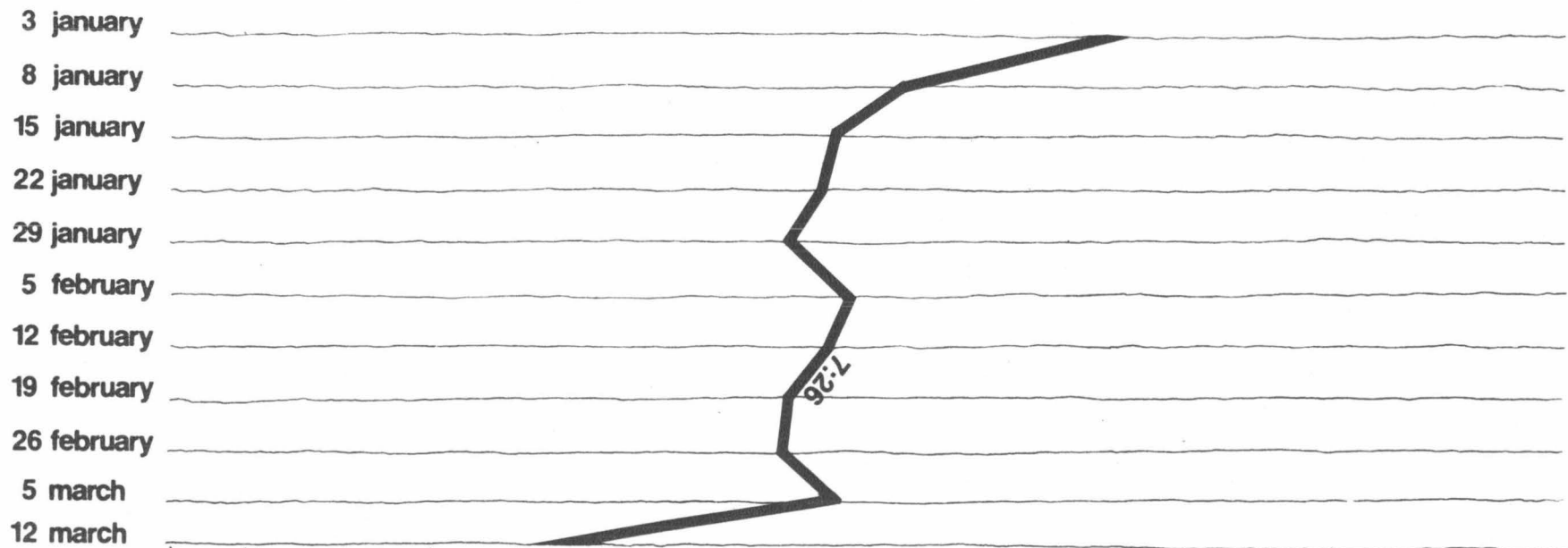
4:06 pm trip did show an increase in total ridership from Fall to Winter Quarter. The two late trips (4:31 pm) were again the best patronized among the afternoon trips. Difficulties in identification of



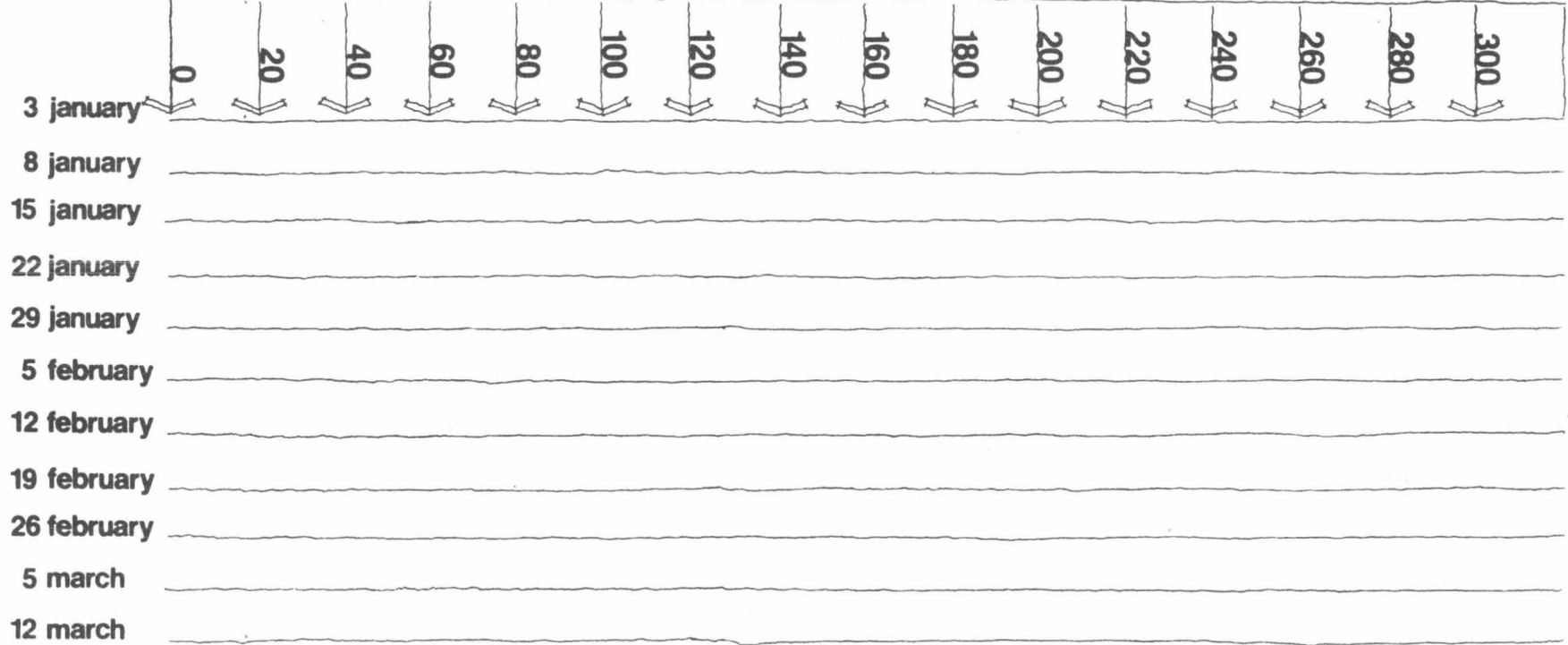
the two 4:31 buses did result in an uneven distribution of the passenger load on numerous occasions.

While most Express routes recorded a slight patronage decline Winter Quarter, ridership on Route C increased 3.6 percent. Morning and afternoon ridership increased at approximately the same rate. This increase, although modest, is indicative of the overall strength of the route and the constantly expanding ridership market.

morning



afternoon



WHILE WINTER QUARTER RIDERSHIP PATTERNS ON ROUTE D WERE BASICALLY SIMILAR TO THOSE OBSERVED FALL QUARTER, TOTAL RIDERSHIP WAS SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER.

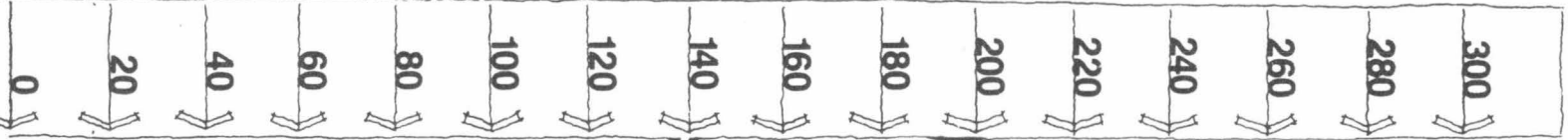
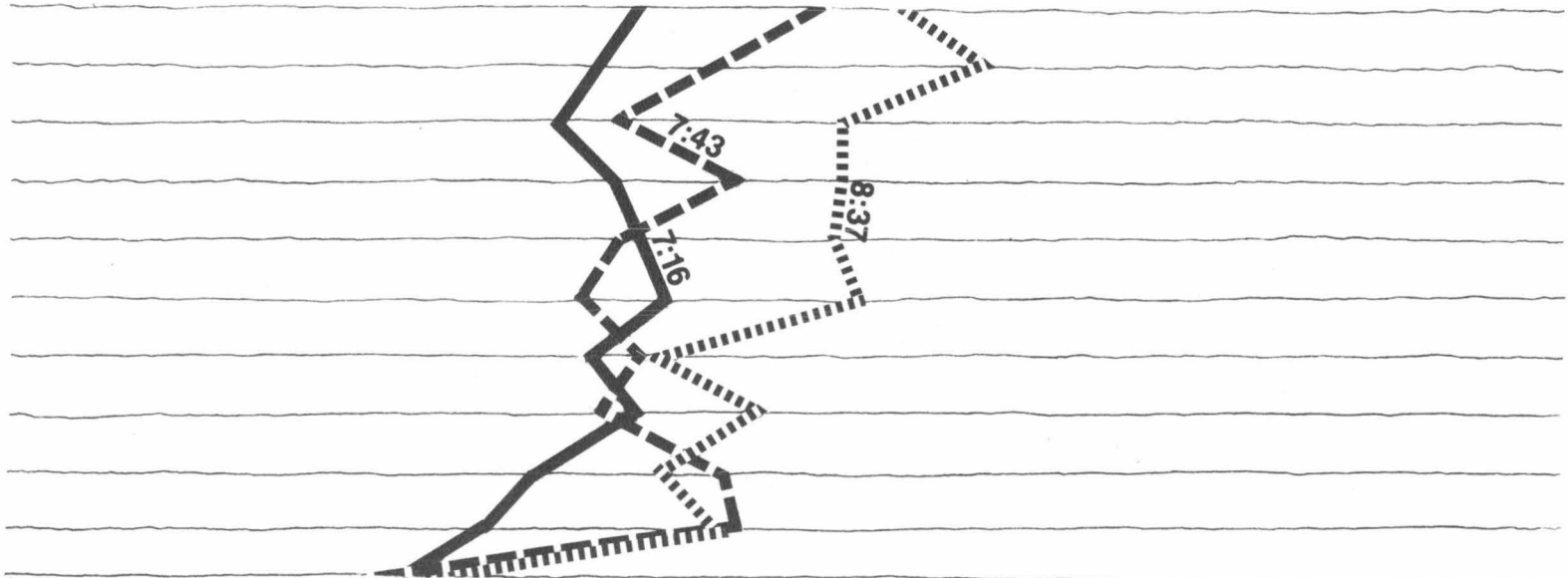
Route D has only one, basically student-oriented trip. In the afternoon, Route D patrons are served by an extension of Route C (3:06 pm trip only).

During Winter Quarter, ridership patterns on Route D closely paralleled those of Fall Quarter. By the third week of classes average daily ridership had stabilized and remained at approximately the same level until the last week, when it decreased by nearly one-half due to the greater irregularity in student schedules at that time.

Although the patterns of ridership were similar, total ridership was substantially lower Winter Quarter. With minor exceptions, this reduction in ridership was evenly distributed over the quarter. Each week during Winter Quarter, ridership was generally from 10 to 20 percent lower than for the corresponding week during Fall Quarter. The most plausible explanation for the decline was the mild winter and hence, the greater willingness of the student to depend on the automobile rather than public transportation.

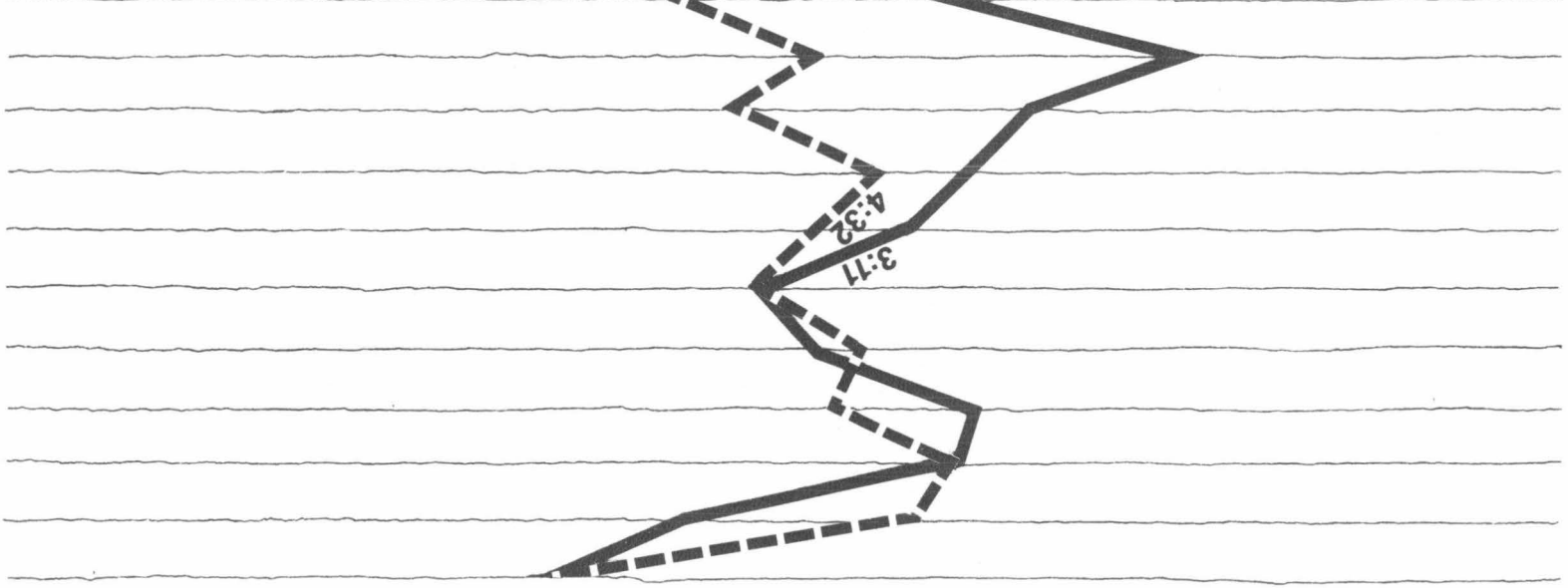
morning

3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



afternoon

3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



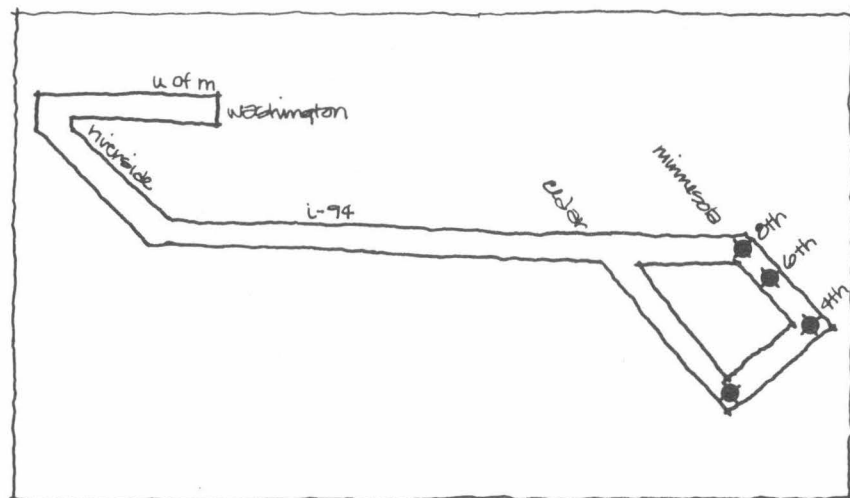
ROUTE E HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN MORE ATTRACTIVE TO STUDENTS THAN CIVIL SERVICE PERSONNEL. ALTHOUGH THE STUDENT-ORIENTED TRIPS REMAINED THE BETTER PATRONIZED DURING WINTER QUARTER, RIDERSHIP GENERALLY DECREASED ON THE STUDENT TRIPS, WHILE IT INCREASED ON THE CIVIL SERVICE TRIPS.

Route E has three morning and two afternoon trips. Patronage levels were reasonably stable on all three morning trips throughout the quarter. However, the distribution of ridership among the three trips differed from Fall Quarter. Ridership on the early trip was still the lowest, although it showed a slight increase over last quarter. In contrast, the second trip, oriented chiefly to the student, recorded a 24.4 percent decrease in ridership. The later student trip, on the other hand, posted a nearly 15 percent gain in ridership. This shift may be in part due to the tendency among students to schedule their first class later in the morning during the winter.

17

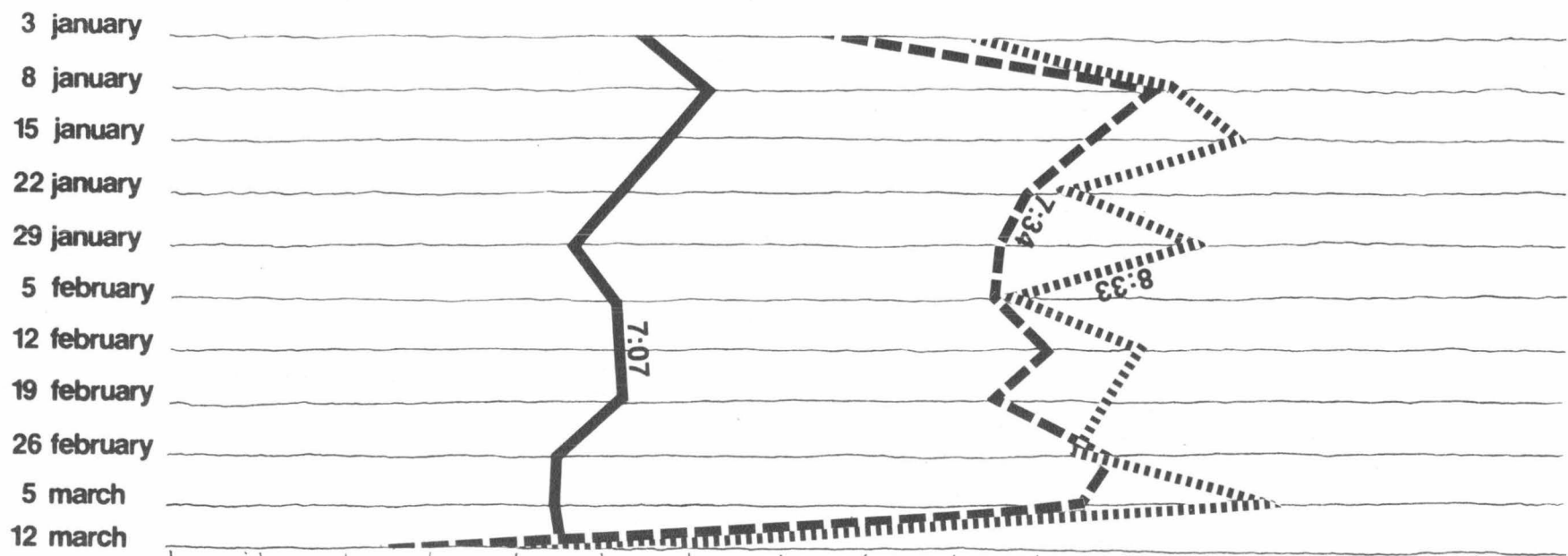
As was the case in the morning, the distribution of ridership between the two afternoon trips differed markedly from Fall Quarter. Again, the student trip declined in total ridership, whereas the Civil Service trip increased correspondingly. However, due to the relatively sharp decline in ridership at the end of the quarter on the late trip, it is reasonable to assume that it received some student patronage.

The slight ridership decline during Winter Quarter on Route E was generally a factor of lower patronage among the student population. Similar to Route D, this occurrence was most likely related to the mild winter.

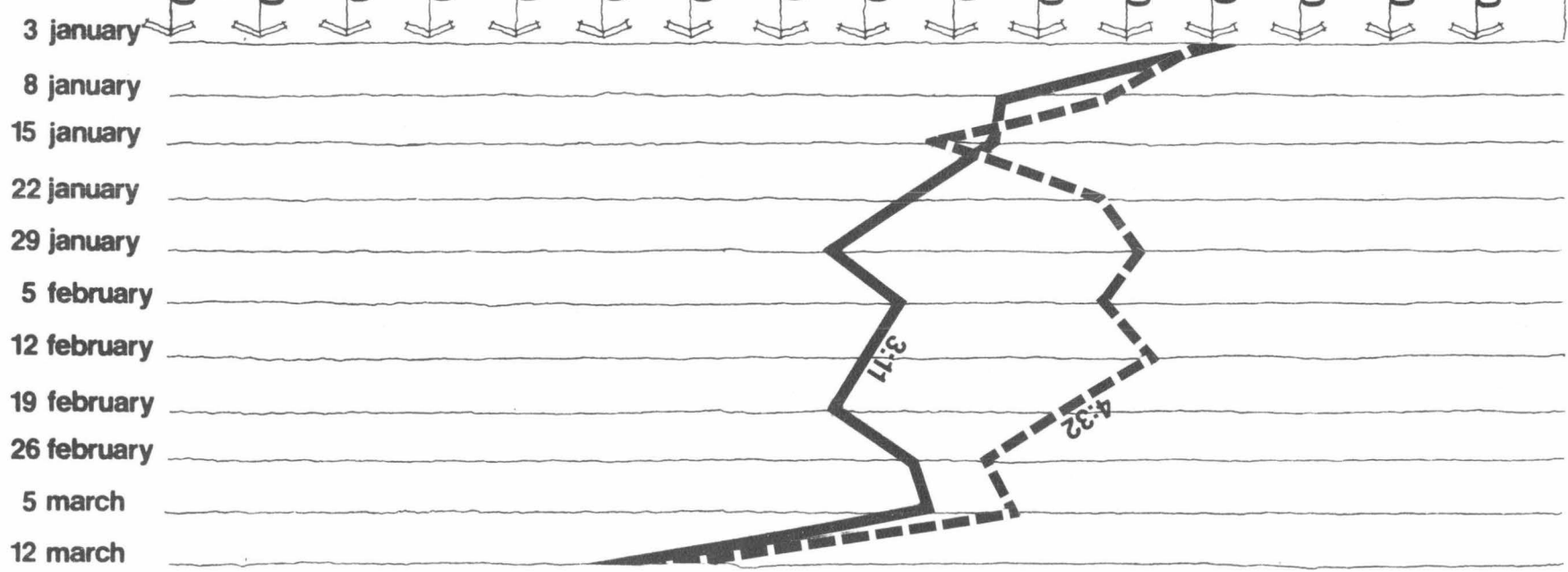


route e

morning



afternoon

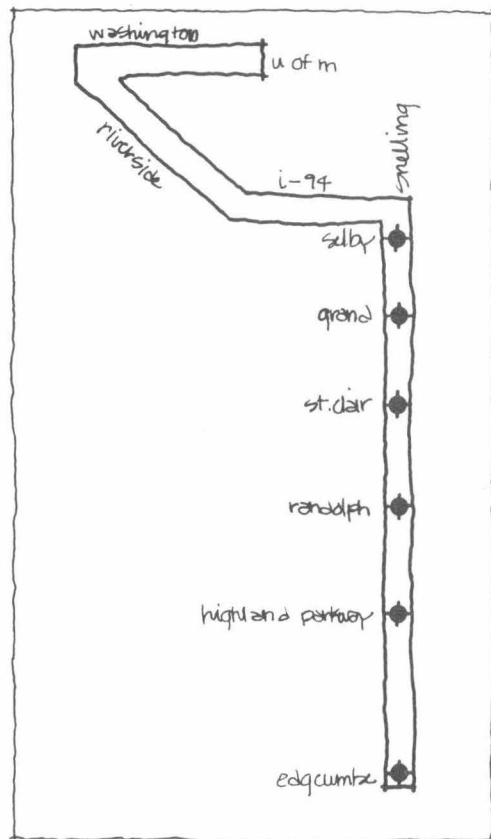


WINTER QUARTER RIDERSHIP PATTERNS ON ROUTE F WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE ON ROUTE E. HOWEVER, TOTAL RIDERSHIP ON ROUTE F SHOWED A SLIGHT INCREASE OVER FALL QUARTER.

Route F has historically been a strong, student-oriented route. From its inception, patronage has grown steadily. Along with Route C, Route F was the only Express route to record an increase in patronage during Winter Quarter.

Route F has three morning and two afternoon trips. Similar to Route E, the later morning, student-oriented trip showed an increase in ridership over Fall Quarter, while ridership declined slightly on the two earlier trips. Likewise, in the afternoon, the reverse was true: patronage declined on the student trip and increased on the later Civil Service-oriented trip. Again, however, the decline in ridership at the end of the quarter on the late trip indicates some student patronage.

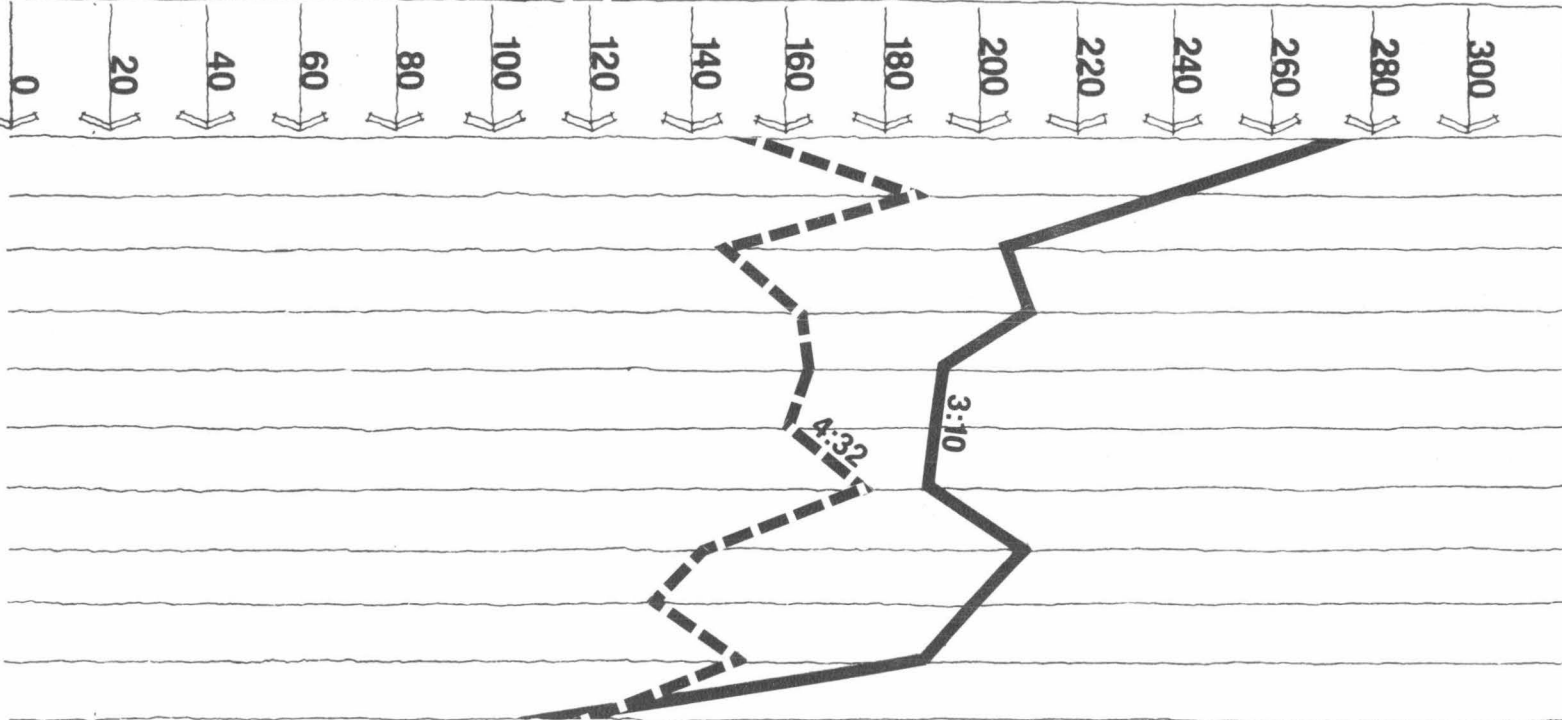
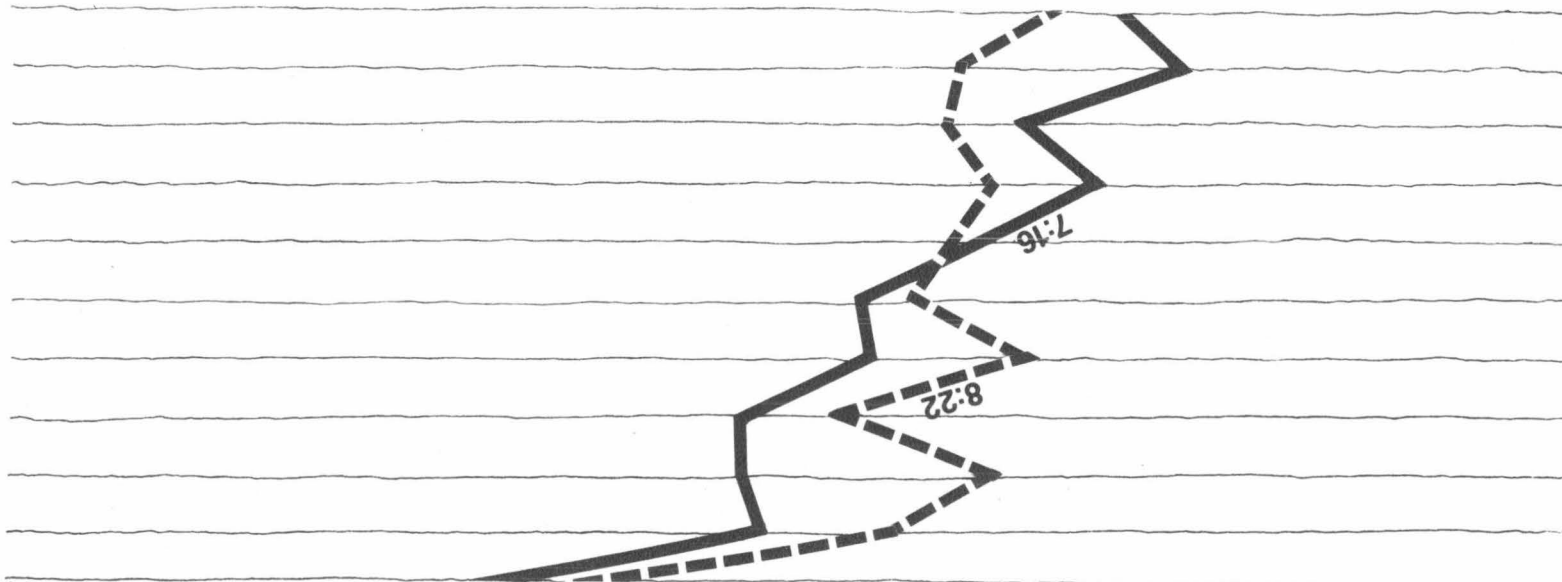
In view of overall Express Bus activity during Winter Quarter, as well as the fare increase that was instituted on Route F last fall, even the small gain in ridership from Fall to Winter Quarter underlines the basic viability of Route F.



route f

morning

3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march



afternoon

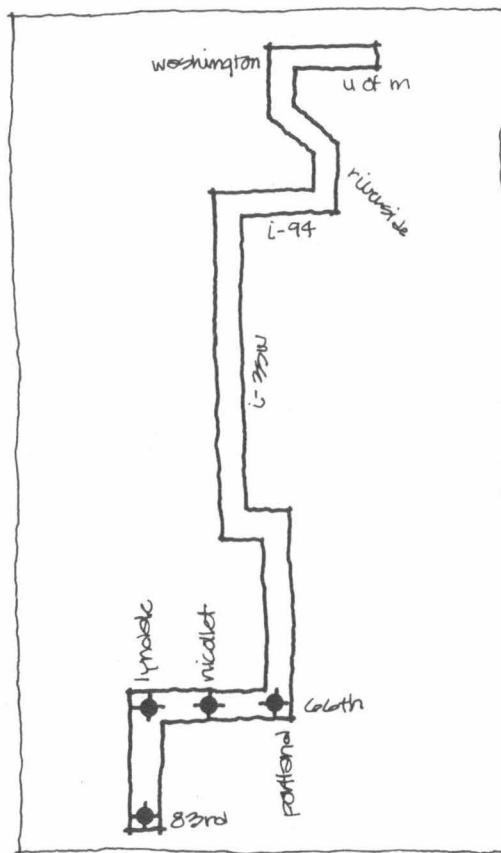
3 january
8 january
15 january
22 january
29 january
5 february
12 february
19 february
26 february
5 march
12 march

ALTHOUGH TOTAL WINTER QUARTER RIDERSHIP ON ROUTE G WAS SLIGHTLY LESS THAN THE FALL QUARTER TOTAL, AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP REMAINED FAVORABLE AND REASONABLY STABLE.

Route G, which is operated by the Bloomington Bus Company, was the only Express Route that experienced a ridership decline Fall Quarter, as compared to the previous fall. This decline was largely attributed to the substitution of school buses for transit-type coaches and the failure to record transfer patronage. Data collected during Winter Quarter substantiated these claims. Bloomington officials have estimated transfer patronage at approximately 10 people per day. This would account for the majority of the Fall Quarter decline. On the basis of complaints from patrons, it is reasonable to conclude that the remainder of the decline was a factor of the type of transit equipment used.

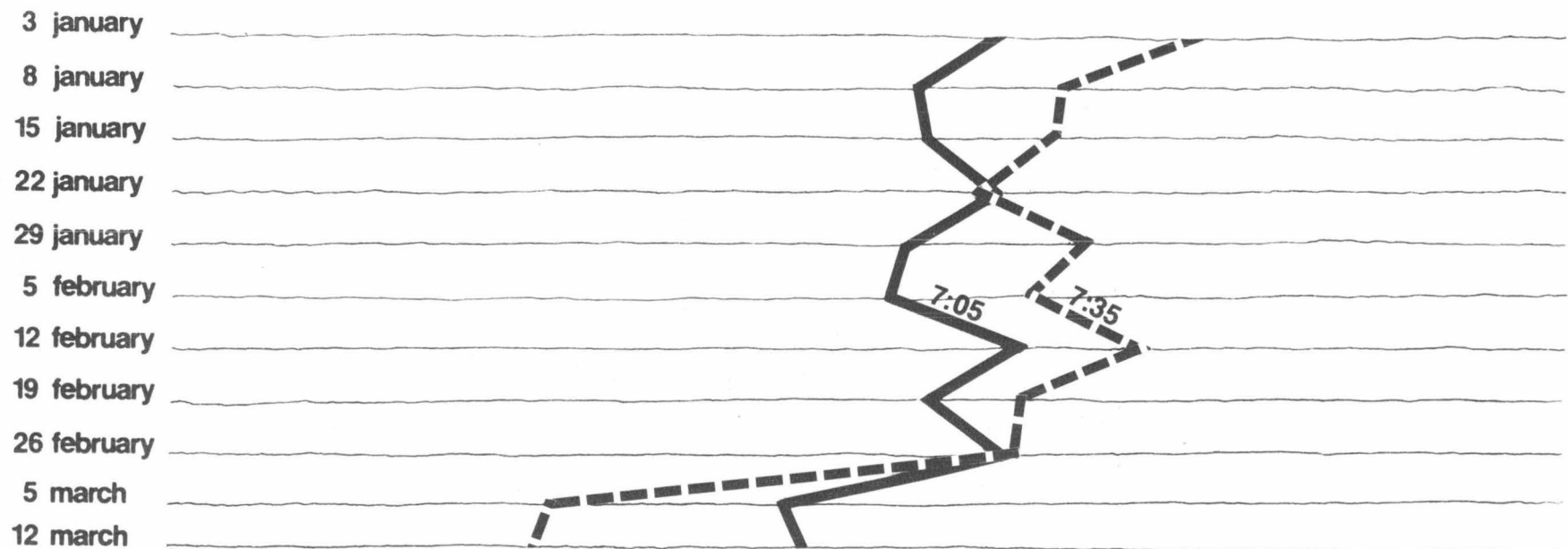
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During Winter Quarter ridership again dropped slightly on Route G, (transfer patronage having been considered). However, average daily ridership was still favorable and the figures indicated a high degree of round trip patronage. Since most other express routes experienced a similar patronage decline during Winter Quarter, it is difficult to determine whether the decline on Route G can be attributed to the continued use of school buses or whether it was more a factor of the mild winter.

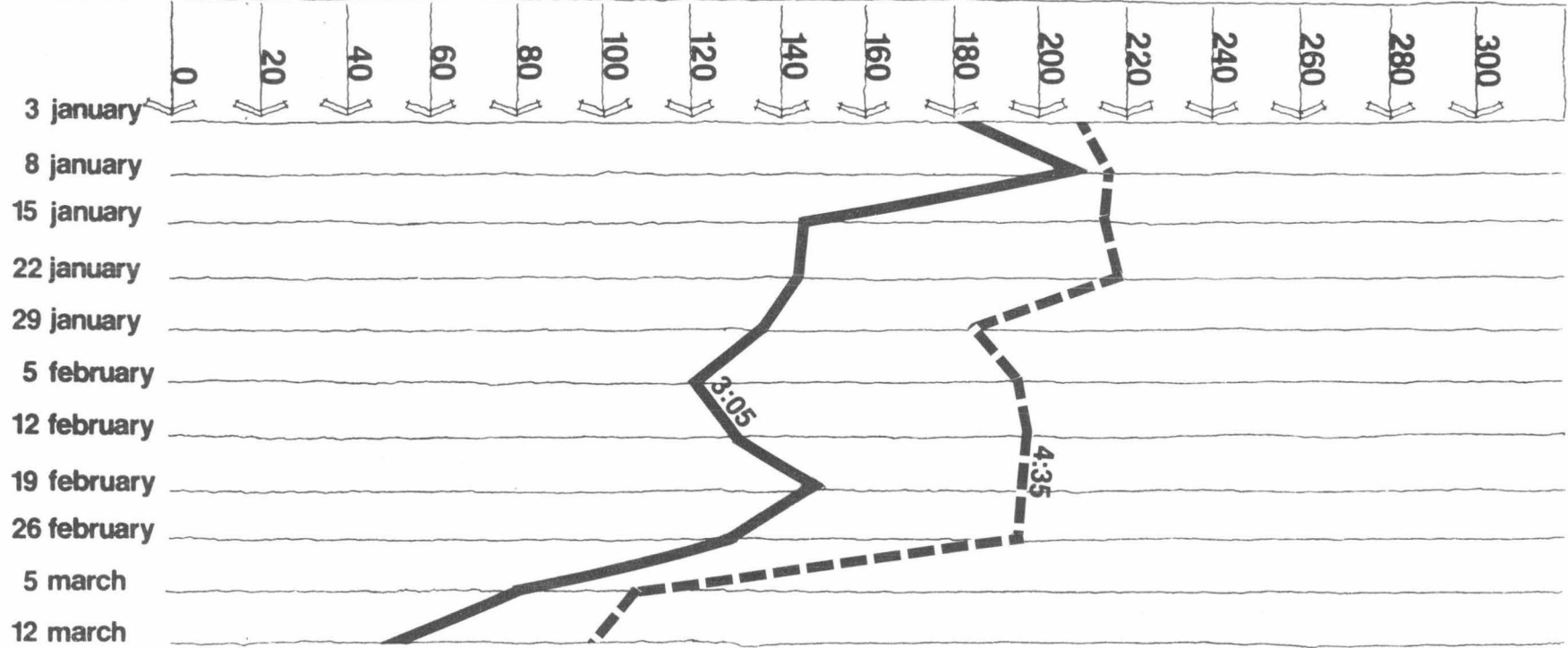


route g

morning



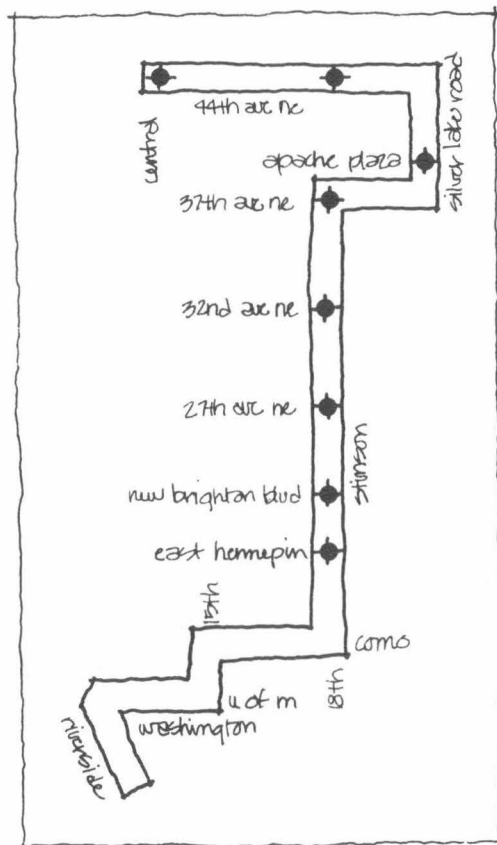
afternoon



AS WITH SEVERAL OTHER EXPRESS ROUTES, STUDENT RIDERSHIP PATTERNS ON ROUTE J DIFFERED SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THOSE OBSERVED FALL QUARTER. ALTHOUGH STUDENT PATRONAGE GENERALLY DECLINED, A GREATER PROPORTION OF STUDENTS WERE PATRONIZING LATE AFTERNOON, CIVIL SERVICE-ORIENTED TRIPS THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST.

Route J has two morning and two afternoon trips. In the morning, the early, Civil Service-oriented trip experienced a modest gain in ridership over Fall Quarter, whereas ridership on the student trip dropped more than 15 percent. This reduction in student patronage, especially on morning trips, was common to the majority of Express routes during Winter Quarter.

In the afternoon, both Route J trips posted a slight patronage decline. As was true Fall Quarter, the later trip was the better patronized. Unlike Fall Quarter, ridership did drop off somewhat at the end of the quarter, indicating that the trip received a certain amount of student patronage. An increase in student patronage on late afternoon trips was also observed on several other Express routes this winter.



route j

conclusion

Throughout the history of the System, the Express buses have always been the best patronized during Winter Quarter. This occurrence has been attributed to the greater tendency, especially among students, to rely on public transportation, rather than the automobile during the winter, due to low temperatures and snow.

Total Express Bus ridership for Winter Quarter, 1973 declined 2 percent from Fall Quarter. Since the System underwent no major changes, it appears reasonable to assume that the slight patronage decline was a factor of the extremely mild winter. Weather conditions normally not experienced until Spring Quarter, when ridership does begin to decline, were prevalent throughout the greater part of Winter Quarter. This assumption is corroborated by ridership patterns observed during Winter Quarter. Whereas ridership figures on Civil Service-oriented trips were generally the same or somewhat higher than comparable Fall Quarter figures, ridership generally declined on student trips, as compared to Fall Quarter. As alluded to above, weather conditions have historically had a greater effect on student, rather than Civil Service patronage.

conclusion

.On the basis of Winter Quarter Express Bus ridership patterns, it is recommended that ridership be closely monitored on all added trips during Spring Quarter. Since ridership is expected to continue to decline somewhat, it may be necessary to drop several of the trips added during periods of high patronage demand.

.To date, numerous loading problems have been encountered on trips where two buses operate in the same time slot. Therefore, it is recommended that an investigation be made relative to establishing a more efficient system of distributing passenger loads on these trips.

recommendations