

Newsletter

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The Roads & Road Transport History Association

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MAKING AN EXHIBITION OF YOURSELF

by Philip Kirk

It is a source of considerable amusement to some of my acquaintances that my transport enthusiasm covers all of seven square miles, within an area in south-east County Durham. Forty years ago, the area was one of great contrasts: attractive countryside between (sometimes grim) mining villages which had been created in the nineteenth century. The collieries are now gone, leaving behind villages which can no longer be described as grim, but which sadly now lack a certain economic vitality.

In public transport terms, County Durham was one of those areas which fostered a large number of 'independent' bus operators, similar in many ways to South Wales. Alan Townsin has pondered why, in an area which embraced wholeheartedly the trades union movement and where Co-operative stores flourished, the local inhabitants often preferred to travel by their local independent rather than with the 'area agreement' company which would pay its staff union rates etc. But that is a debate for another time.

My direct connection with these independent operators began twenty years before I was born, when my father started work with Gillett Brothers of Quarrington Hill (one half of the "G&B" partnership) during World War II. He stayed in buses less than ten years, but his interest never waned and was in due course passed on to me.

It is difficult sometimes to analyse an interest, but I think mine centres on two issues: the first is the tremendous sense of community which was generated, both within the companies themselves and between the staff and the passengers. And because the fleets

were relatively small, it seemed that each bus had a personality of its own and so became an integral part of the story. The second issue is that all this went on within the context of operating even headway, high intensity inter-urban services – these were no market day operations with a Bedford OB! In many respects, the image portrayed to the customer was as good as that of the British Electric Traction or Tilling operators.

For a number of years I have been collaborating with Peter Cardno, Chairman of the Northern Branch of the Omnibus Society, in research on the independents lying within my admittedly narrow field of reference. The aim is to record the history of these companies whilst those who knew them are still around to tell the story. Incidentally, Peter's frame of reference is much wider and takes in Huddersfield, his home town.

Problems and a possible Solution

In researching these independent companies, however, there are some disadvantages. The first is that none of them now survive: the last one, Trimdon Motor Services, succumbed to United Automobile in 1990, as had many others earlier. Second, the companies tended to revolve around a family, the head of which has deceased (hence the sale of the company) and the descendants may be scattered far and wide. Third, internal records will not have been kept to the same standard as 'area agreement' companies and were probably discarded when the company was sold anyway. Finally even if the company was incorporated, then Companies House procedures for destroying or weeding their records may have made their files incomplete or even non-existent.



Jimmy Seymour, Roger Paul, and Joe Grundy - the founders of Trimdon Motor Services (Tom Seymour Collection)

Ironically, in some cases the largest chunks of written information have been gleaned from the records of the 'area agreement' companies which filed an objection to the independent's plans to change a service!

There can, therefore, be a dearth of information sources on which to build a comprehensive history of these operators. Peter and I seem, however, to have stumbled upon a research aid which has worked for us and may have potential for other applications: a library exhibition.

Libraries are very supportive of local history projects, and some have large boards on which to display material, which can be hired at a very small fee. This was offered to us initially at Sedgefield library, as part of the research into the Wilkinson company which was based in that village until its sale to United in 1967. We accepted the offer as an incidental way of publicising the eventual publication of a book on Wilkinsons, and populated the board with a variety of photographs featuring people as well as just vehicles, timetables, tickets, a list of major events etc. In addition, we composed promotional A4 flyers and distributed these in the village and surrounding area, and particularly on the line of route of the old services.

To say that we were taken aback by the response is a gross understatement. The original plan was merely to run the display as a static exhibition, to drum up interest, but word had gotten around and it seemed that just about everyone in Sedgefield had some connection with Wilkinsons. Either an ancestor was a former employee or they were themselves, or they had photographs and anecdotes about their experiences travelling with the company. Peter Cardno manned the exhibition on its launch day and it turned into something of a staff reunion. On this and following days, a large number of photographs and other artefacts were loaned or donated, many of which would not have been available through other research methods.

As if to prove that the Sedgefield experience was no isolated incident, the same approach was taken with an exhibition in Trimdon Grange library, as we repeat the exercise for Trimdon Motor Services. Again, there was a similar response, in fact better, in that we attracted Bob Lewis, the last owner of TMS from his home in Jersey especially to see the exhibition.

Typical ingredients

It is important to include those elements which will appeal to the general public (however well informed) rather than enthusiasts *per se*:

- Photographs showing people as well as buses
 - I am assuming here that you would already have some material before embarking on such a project.
- Examples of old tickets and timetables
 - The cost of bus fares 'in old money' seems to be fascinating!
- A list of significant events
 - Company creation, dates when local towns were first reached etc.
- A visitors book where addresses and telephone numbers of visitors with something to contribute can be left
 - You can't always be there.
- Have something for people to take away to stimulate thoughts and memories.
 - Perhaps a photocopied sheet of photographs
- Have an album of photographs or something similar based on the exhibition material to take out to people who can't get to the exhibition.

Tips

- Have a nominated person who is the contact name and address.
 - Inevitably, many people who have something to contribute will be elderly so don't confuse: keep to a single contact. Be prepared to drink a lot of tea!
- Ensure that all leads are followed up:
 - People get disappointed if they are 'ignored'.
- If possible, have some means of copying photographs
 - A portable scanner and laptop computer are ideal (but expensive) in that you can then copy photos in someone's house without the photos leaving their sight.

Conclusion

The exhibitions have certainly flushed out memories, photographs and anecdotes which otherwise would have lain buried, or possibly have emerged only as a result of a book being published – when it is too late. Such was the success of the Wilkinsons, one that Sedgfield library asked us to repeat the exhibition at other branches: they had never had a response like it.

The two photographs which illustrate this piece show the power of the exhibitions. One shows the three founders of Trimdon MS, Jimmy Seymour, Roger Paul and Joe Grundy, in a view taken when they were each driving a private hire to Whitley Bay in 1931, obtained courtesy of Tom Seymour, son of Jimmy. The 1934 line up of Wilkinsons staff is even more interesting – a number of visitors to the exhibition put names to the faces and we ended up by knowing all 23.

For the Trimdon project, we have been contacted by descendants of each of the owning families: stretching from Aberdeen to Jersey via Hertfordshire and Teesside.

Quite how transferable our experience is to other projects I just don't know, but the use of local exhibitions has made our research and the subsequent publications more complete.

Of course, I have a *general* interest which extends a lot farther than the seven miles, but I still value the opportunity to study and conduct

research in a narrow, specialised subject. For some reason, it gives me satisfaction to know who is related to whom from a list of TMS drivers and conductors in 1928!

Philip Kirk has worked in the bus industry for 26 years, and in contrast to the narrow geographical focus of his research, he has run buses in a variety of places from Dundee to Dartford (and even some places not starting with a "D"). He is now Managing Director of Oxford Bus Company.

"Wilkinsons of Sedgfield" is published by Oakner Clough Publications (120 pages, A5) and copies can be obtained from 22 Welldale Crescent, Fairfield, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 7HU. Price £10.50 including postage



The Impact of the Motor Bus

David St John Thomas in his article "Vital, Yet Neglected" (*Newsletter No.39*) dwells on how unrecorded the impact of the motor bus has been in local histories.

The following extract from *The Clitheroe Advertiser & Times* of 16 January 1925 is from a long report of a contentious meeting of Bowland Rural District Council to decide whether money should be spent on widening a bridge over a stream in the village of West Bradford. It highlights another aspect of the impact of the rural motor bus; in the 1920s, the motor bus, not the motor car, led to growth in the hinterland of towns.

" Mr J Hargreaves (Grindleton) proposed that the scheme be proceeded with West Bradford was near to Clitheroe and with the motor 'bus services now being enjoyed, it was likely that the village would grow, increasing to the size of Waddington "

► Annual General Meeting

The closing Meeting of the old Association and the first AGM of the Roads and Road Transport History Association Ltd (a company limited by guarantee) will be held on

Saturday, 19 March 2005

at the

Coventry Transport Museum.

Agendas will be issued in two or three weeks time and will hopefully also include details of any member(s) presentation(s) in the afternoon. All members are welcome. The sessions in Coventry are usually interesting and well worth attending – and so is the Museum itself. We hope to be meeting in the "spacious new board room" again [see *Newsletter No.39*, p.4].

Tea or coffee in the morning at 10-30, with the AGM starting at 11-00.

Editorial

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The Editor is now on internet. His e-mail address is:
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This is a big issue of *Newsletter*, but with no promise that 20-page issues will become the norm. Not only has there been a great deal of good material coming in from members, its range has been wide. *Newsletter*, and the R&RTHA itself, seek to appeal to a membership with "Wide Perspectives". This is not entirely easy; a balance needs to be achieved between catering for known particular fields and stimulating interest in topics far wider than the individual specialisms. This issue may have some members wondering "What on earth has this to do with the R&RTHA?" – some emphasizing the word "roads", some "road transport" and some "history". Well; you can always write a Letter to the Editor.

Philip Kirk's "Making an Exhibition of Yourself" has lessons for historians over a very broad field. Sue Buckley's article on the setting up of "Bowland Transit" is – to the mind of your Editor – an excellent counterpart to it; showing another practical application in community involvement. OK, modern, not historical – until you read on and find that it represents a splendid example of history repeating itself, and a new generation finding out the same worth in involving the users in the promotion of bus services.

Sir Peter Baldwin's inspirational talk at our Symposium in October (which we shall be publishing shortly, in a booklet

along with the other Symposium papers), has a strange counterpart in this issue, in an article with the title "How Wars Improve Roads". Sir Peter emphasised the bringing together of teams with a great variety of knowledge and skills to construct our Motorways. The article on the effort to provide and maintain roads to the Western Front, provides, in an utterly different context, an earlier – and to your Editor's mind – somewhat parallel example.

Compare and contrast the three retired stagecoach drivers in *Newsletter* 39, p.14, with the three working proprietors of Trimdon Motor Services fifty years later, in this issue. Both seem to be entirely fitting to their circumstances, and their occasion.

In considering the life and achievements of Walter Henry Gaunt, this issue diverges into the development of Letchworth and the garden city movement. We may have readers who could find this interesting.

"News from the 21st Century" looks at aerodynamics in truck design; and some items in "Work and Play" are more 2004, than 1904; nonetheless, hopefully thought provoking. John Edser's Letter in *Newsletter* 39, on the growth in the numbers of overseas lorries in the UK, has brought a thoughtful letter from Bill Taylor in this issue.

Contributions to *Newsletter* from old contributors and new, are always welcome.

Converting the Association into a Company Limited by Guarantee

Your officers have completed the application forms and provided the necessary information required to convert the Association into a Company Limited by Guarantee. We have been successful and the Association has been registered by the Registrar of Companies, our number is 5300873. This now means that every member of the old Association, both Corporate and Associate, will receive a new application form to join the Company as part of the subscription renewal form for 2005. We all are obliged to complete this new application; membership is NOT automatically transferable. It will contain an agreement that the member will be bound by the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, these will be available for inspection at the AGM, a copy can also be obtained by written request to the Secretary. The completed applications will have to be formally agreed by the Board and will form the official register of members that we are obliged to keep.

The completed forms and in this instance the subscription cheques - made out to Roads and Road Transport History Association Limited - are to be returned to the Secretary who is sending them out to all members. Any new member who joined in the last quarter of 2004 will, as usual, not be asked to pay a further subscription for 2005, but the application form will need to be completed. Neither will any member who is paid up at 31 December 2004 be required to pay a joining fee, which will however apply to all new members from 1 January 2005.

The last AGM to wind up the old Association will precede the first AGM of the new Company and will be held at the Coventry Transport Museum on Saturday 19th March 2005. A formal notice will be sent out not later than 21 days before the AGM.

Gordon Knowles, Company Secretary

► NEWSLETTER No.41

The target date for issue of No.41 is
7 April 2005

Contributions by **5 March**, please

► Provisional target date for No. 42 is **23 June, 2005**

Contributions by **21 May**

► The 2005 subscription will cover Nos.41 to 44

In No.41 it is hoped to include:

- Several contributions on the topics of Education and Qualifications in Transport, at various levels
- "Promenading in Hyde Park" by Tony Newman
- One or two items held over from No.40

And hopefully, you, the readers, will keep up a steady flow of Letters, Introducing our Members, and a range of articles.

Walter Henry Gaunt (*Newsletter 38 p.3*) ... and the Development of Letchworth Garden City



Aspects of the earlier life story of Walter Henry Gaunt, recruited by J Lyons & Co Ltd in 1919 as their Distribution Manager, have indeed proved to be interesting. *Roger Benton* of the Tramway Museum Society looked up the 1881 Census, establishing with reasonable certainty that he was the eldest child of William and Rachel Gaunt, that he had been born in Bradford and that he was seven years old at the date of the Census. His father was a commercial traveller in Bradford Stuffs. By 1881, the family was living in Rusholme, (legally "Lancashire", but in practice a part of Manchester).

Relaying this back to *Peter J Bird*, (who had posed the question about Gaunt's early career), produced a prompt response based on the 1891 and 1901 Censuses, (accessed via internet). By 1901, Gaunt was an Estate Manager, living with his wife Kate, a Mancunian, at 27 Skerton Road, Stretford. Then, from another source he discovered the date of birth, in Bradford, to have been 13 January 1874. From an obituary in *Lyons Mail*, the house magazine of J Lyons & Co, there came the clinching evidence:

"His early years were spent as assistant to Marshall Stevens at the great trading estate at Trafford Park, Manchester, after which he became one of the founders of the first Garden City at Letchworth"

Ian Yearsley, the R&RTHA's Hon. Research Co-ordinator, needed only to be told this by phone. "I think that you will find Trafford Park is dealt with in Edward Gray's book".¹ Indeed, at that source, in the section of Chapter 7, dealing with the Trafford Park Tramways, the importance of Walter Henry Gaunt emerges.

Trafford Park, situated alongside the docks of the Manchester Ship Canal, and also with potential access to the railway lines of the Cheshire Lines Committee, became Britain's first industrial estate. The initial development of the estate, from 1896 onwards was gradual, although in a few years, it had grown into a huge one, full of heavy industry employing many thousands of workers. Even at the start, Marshall Stevens, who headed the Trafford Park Estates Company, sought to persuade some tramway company to lay down tramway lines internal to the estate. He found the British Gas Traction Company willing to do

so. But its operations from 1897 to 1899, with the estate still largely undeveloped, were a financial disaster. Sources differ on the status of Walter H Gaunt at this point, either placing him as the gas tramway manager who evidently remained in post under the Estates Company,¹¹ or crediting him with being already the Resident Manager of the Trafford Park Estates, having been appointed in 1896, at the age of 22.¹²

Gaunt bought second-hand horse buses in 1900 as a stopgap measure to provide a workmen's service on the Estate. Then, still unable to secure through tramway services to Manchester or Salford, the Estates Company commissioned its own internal electric tramway. A difficulty preventing through services was that ownership of a crucial few yards of roadway at the entrance to the estate lay in Stretford Urban District and relations with Stretford were not cordial, so the Estate's lines remained, for a time, a Trafford Park Estates operation unconnected to either the Manchester or the Salford systems.

One of the factories on the estate was that of the British Electric Car Company. Trams were ordered from that company. (As a digression, readers are recommended by Ian Yearsley to a book by the late J H Price on the *British Electric Car Co Ltd* for details of the development, but early demise, of that company. The company's factory then became the British base of the Ford Motor Company, assembling Model 'T' cars shipped from the USA).

One high capacity tramcar trailer, specially ordered by Gaunt from the British Electric Car Company, accommodated 100 passengers, and was fitted with self-registering turnstiles, supplied by the Salford firm of Sir W H Bailey, Sir William Bailey being a director of Trafford Park Estates Company. The two or three minute journey gave the conductor little time to collect all fares and issue tickets. Gaunt was dissatisfied with the functioning of the trailer and the time that it wasted at the terminus, so he had it converted to a motorised car, with a capacity of 132 passengers + standing passengers, the highest-capacity tramcar ever used in Britain. It entered service in this form in May 1904, with no turnstiles, but with two conductors, one for each deck.

Eventually, by negotiation, through services from Manchester and Salford were achieved from the end of October 1905, and Manchester Corporation took a 21 year lease of the Estates Company's lines, but granted Salford Corporation Tramways running powers over them. Workers from the Estates Company's electric tramway were, under an agreement made by Gaunt, taken on by Manchester or Salford Corporations, a consideration not without importance at a period when job protection was scant.

Gaunt himself departed to Letchworth, in Hertfordshire. The development of Letchworth, the first garden city, was the concept of Ebenezer Howard, and an immensely influential idea in and beyond the Edwardian period. In 1905, the town was still at a very early stage of development, but was being well promoted and was attracting journalistic, and what one might term "progressive", interest. The parallel for Gaunt, between his arrival at Trafford Park in the earliest stages of its

development, and his arrival in Letchworth was clear. He had proved himself in Trafford Park; now he was to prove himself in Letchworth.

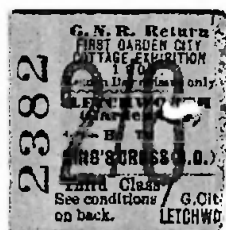
As an aside, it may be interesting to dwell for a paragraph or two on the scale of promotion that Letchworth managed to achieve for itself – though it must be conceded that the connection with road transport history is tenuous. Keith Romig of the Transport Ticket Society has produced the two railway tickets illustrated here.



Ticket 104 was a Great Northern Railway issue for a Press Party on October 6 1903 from Kings Cross to Letchworth (near Hitchin). Letchworth had no proper station at that stage – merely a platform, on the Hitchin – Royston – Cambridge line, used by construction workers. A report in *The Times* on 7 October tells of the press visit:

First Garden City Ltd. As reported in *The Times* of 29 August, an estate of about 3,800 acres, which includes the villages of Norton and Letchworth and the greater part of the village of Willian, has been acquired

Yesterday, a large party left Kings Cross Station to view the estate, but owing to the bad weather, they were only permitted to see a small portion of it..... They were entertained to lunch



Ticket 2382, issued on 30 September 1905, shows that there was now a proper station, known as Letchworth Garden City, and promotional activity was continuing apace, with the First Garden City Cottage Exhibition. And that was the scene at approximately the time that Walter Henry Gaunt arrived to take up his new post.

Just as had been the case at Trafford Park, things moved rather slowly at first. *The Times* of 1 February 1907 reported that the Annual General Meeting of First Garden City Ltd had considered the accounts to 30 September 1906. Little had yet happened. Too many people working on the estate did not live on it, and there was urgent need to build more cottages. At the similar meeting two years later, *The Times* report (29 January 1909) shows the emergence – if not already self-evident – of some distinctive traits of Letchworth life and its citizenry. It was pointed out that the only two public houses on the estate were not of easy access (being presumably the old pre-existing inns in Willian and Norton, at the extremities of Letchworth). The directors and shareholders at the

meeting were divided as to whether further licensed houses should be encouraged. (When this came up again a year later, it received even shorter shrift).

And so with that background, in 1910, — the year in which the number of motor buses in London overtook the number of horse buses, and by when electric trams were running in towns (admittedly a good deal larger than Letchworth), all over the United Kingdom — First Garden City Ltd felt that the time had come for Letchworth to have a local bus service.



The Citizen ~ 10 December 1910

The Report of the company's 1910 Annual General Meeting includes:

The omnibus service you see referred to is not in itself an important adventure, but as it may entail some loss at first (like most of our enterprises do) I should explain that we felt that the town was now too big to have no means of communication across it except occasional cabs, and in fact so many of our residents are town dwellers by habit that they soon miss a public conveyance. There are several reasons for and against motors, but we decided on horse traction for some time at least. The number of people who have used it during the first few days shows it supplies a want; in fact one resident is so pleased that he has burst into verse in the local paper. It will certainly improve our residential lettings.

The Report of the 1912 AGM included the following exchange:

Mr Oppé (Shareholder): I should like to know why the Omnibus service was carried on at a loss. It seems to be a convenience to the inhabitants, but no opportunity appears to have been given for private enterprise to take it up.

The Chairman: It has been found necessary to work the Omnibus Service ourselves before private enterprise could afford to do it. No private enterprise would like to take it up or we should let them do it, as, at present, it is not a paying proposition.



The Town Omnibus at Station Place, c1910¹⁴

suburban housing development. The population of Hendon Urban District, which included Golders Green, was 22,450 in 1901, 56,041 by 1921 and 115,682 by 1931.¹⁴ Birch Bros., under contract to the Charing Cross, Euston & Hampstead Railway, provided a horse bus service between Golders Green Station and Hendon until 1912. It is not unreasonable to assume that the horse bus which was sold to First Garden City Ltd in April 1913, had, a year or so earlier, been plying Golders Green Road, crossing the River Brent and climbing into Hendon.

The puzzle is where – on what route – First Garden City Ltd used the horse bus; the same route as before, or a different one. Evidence so far is limited to

But, in 1912, Road Motors Ltd of Luton, started a Luton – Hitchin – Letchworth motor bus service, soon extended beyond Letchworth to Norton. Throughout, from Letchworth Corner, via Letchworth itself, to Norton, this traversed the route of the horse bus. The first impression gained in researching these notes was that the advent of the motor bus had brought the horse bus to an end. This could still be true in respect of the original route of the horse bus, though even that is far from proven.

However, the First Garden City Heritage Museum, (which has been exceedingly helpful) has produced from its archives, a copy of a letter, written nearly twenty years ago by our member Reg Westgate, in his then role as Hon. Secretary of the Omnibus Society. He had found among the papers of Birch Bros. Ltd, the Kentish Town horse and motor bus operators, correspondence in the period February to April 1913, showing that £26-0-6 was paid by First Garden City Ltd to Birch Brothers, early in April 1913, for the purchase of a redundant horse bus; moreover, the letters from First Garden City Ltd were written by a Mr Gaunt. Whilst that brings us back to the main subject of these notes, Walter Henry Gaunt, and shows him, as he had done at Trafford Park in 1900, buying a second-hand horse bus, it still leaves us with one by-way to pursue and with one puzzle, unsolved at present.

The by-way is where Birch Bros. themselves may have used this horse bus. The writer is no expert on Birch Brothers, and readers should take with caution what is written here – or, better still, rush in, to authoritatively correct it. Golders Green developed at very much the same time as Letchworth. The Underground railway reached Golders Green in 1907, and stimulated attractive



The Luton, Hitchin and Letchworth bus of Road Motors Ltd at Station Place, c1913¹⁵

entries in the company's Accounts at successive dates. The 1914 AGM considered the Accounts to 30 September 1913 and mentioned:

Railway and Traffic Facilities. — The advantage to the town of the commodious new station, opened last May, is very apparent. The town is now also connected with the Bedford and Luton districts by regular motor omnibus services. The Company's local omnibus service, though not directly profitable to the Company, is a distinct convenience to the town.

Roads and Public Services. — The Parish Council continues to assist the Company in many local matters, and with their co-operation improved lighting of the central streets by electricity has been installed.

A motor fire engine has been provided by private subscription.

The overbridge and the new piece of road where Norton Way passes under the railway have been completed, costing £8,000. It will be remembered that this was jointly provided by the Local Authorities, the Railway Company and First Garden City Ltd.

In the Balance Sheet there was an item "Omnibus, Horses and Equipment". This continued, year by year, changing to "Horses, Carts, Omnibus and Equipment" for the years to 30 September 1916 and 1917. There, the trail peters out; but it leaves us with Letchworth having a local horse bus for more years than one might have expected. Also a recognition that this, and other developments in this pioneer garden city, were largely overseen by Mr Gaunt. Walter Henry Gaunt in fact remained a resident of Letchworth for the rest of his life. He served on the Urban District Council from 1923 to 1947, he was elected a member of Hertfordshire County Council and he was a Justice of the Peace. He served his country in both wars. In the First World War he was Distribution Superintendent at the Board of Trade in connection with coal, gas and electricity rationing; and an advisor to the French government on reconstruction of devastated areas after the war. In World War Two, he was transport advisor to the Ministry of Food. In *Newsletter No.38* we have already learned of his career as Distribution Manager for J Lyons & Co Ltd. Lyons had wisely spotted a man with an outstanding track record.

Walter Henry Gaunt, CBE, JP, MInstT died at the end of October 1951. A report of his funeral at St Michael's Church, Letchworth, not only reflected his status in the

community, but is noteworthy (for R&RTHA readers), in finding it worthy of record at that date, that certain dignitaries were "among the hundreds who arrived on foot and in more than 40 cars, which, when parked, stretched along Norton Way from Station Road to Leys Avenue".^{vii}

Roger Atkinson

- i *Salford Tramways Part One* (Foxline Publishing, Romiley, 1997), pp.73-78
- ii *ibid.* pp.73-74
- iii Letchworth local newspaper, *The Citizen*, 2 November 1951
- iv This is one of two posed pictures – both good – of the First Garden City Company's horse bus. The other, (not shown here) is in postcard form, taken in Leys Avenue. The same bus, and probably the same driver and conductor; but with a noteworthy board on the side: THE BEST ONE HOUR VIEW OF THE TOWN. Certain seaside tramways – Hastings, for example – operated circular tours of the town; Hastings by 1906. But this is the earliest example of an open-top bus tour, horse or motor, that the writer has encountered. Presumably aimed at those who came to view "the first garden city".
- v This postcard, and that of the horse bus referred to in Footnote 1v, are available from First Garden City Heritage Museum, contactable by post to at 296 Norton Way South, Letchworth Garden City SG6 1SU, tel: 01462 459012; e-mail fgchm@lethworth.com. The postcards cost 30p each + postage (or s.a.e.)
- vi *The Face of London* by Harold Clunn, 7th edition, 1937 (Simpkin Marshall & Co Ltd), p.393
- vii Newspaper report (newspaper unidentified), 4 November 1951

Sources and Research

MITCHELL AND KENYON FILMS

(*Newsletter No.39*, p.5)

The Mitchell and Kenyon collection of more than 800 films dating from 1900 to 1913, restored in a major project by the British Film Institute and the University of Sheffield, includes some street scenes with tramways, and a selection of these will be shown at the National Film Theatre, South Bank, London SE1, at 6.20 pm on Tuesday 22 February with Ian Yearsley as one of the presenters. A book about the films has been published with the title 'The Lost World of Mitchell & Kenyon, Edwardian Britain on Film' and two of its eighteen chapters make extensive references to trams and tramways: Ian Yearsley writes about traffic in the streets and Patrick Keiller about townscapes filmed from moving tramcars. The book is published by British Film Institute and is available in paperback price £15.99. ISBN reference 1-84457-046-0

There will also be a three-part series on BBC2 television on Saturday evenings 15, 22 and 29 January at 9 pm, but this is expected to concentrate on family history in the films. Other showings of the films are expected to take place in various parts of the country, and selections of the films will subsequently be made available on DVD or video. Bookings for the NFT show on 22 February should be made through the NFT box office, 020 7928 3232, making it clear that you want the Mitchell & Kenyon Transport in the streets film show in NFT2 (there are three auditoria in the NFT and there may be other quite different films being shown on the same evening). The programme is still under discussion but it is hoped to include electric trams in Nottingham, Sheffield, Lytham, Bradford,

Douglas Head Marine Drive, horse trams in Belfast, Glasgow and Manchester, steam in Wigan, and the 1907 opening of electric tramways in Accrington, with visiting cars from Blackburn and Darwen. Much horse-drawn traffic but no motor cars!

The whole Mitchell and Kenyon series covers sporting events, processions, factory gate scenes, promenades and piers at the seaside, military parades and school playgrounds, also several journeys by steamer. The National Tramway Museum assisted with the identification of many of the tramway scenes. A complete list of the M&K films will be produced by the BFI in March 2005.

Ian Yearsley

SCIENCE MUSEUM LIBRARY

As a result of a report in *The Times* in late October suggesting that substantial changes were envisaged in the retention of library material and archives, I wrote, in my capacity as Chairman of the Association, to the Librarian to express concern and to seek reassurance regarding access by scholars and researchers. In December, I had a lengthy reply from Ian E D Carter, Acting Manager of Library Services at the Science Museum. Mr Carter acknowledged that a major review, forced on them by insufficient funding, was in progress. But he held out the hope that a potentially satisfactory solution had been found, involving transfer of material to two other major (and not remote) libraries, with suitable guarantee of public access. This still required adoption by the Board of Trustees, perhaps at their next meeting, in March.

John Hibbs

Bowland Transit

*Its Creation (2002 – 2004) by Sue Buckley
Its Ancestry (1920s to 1990s)
by Roger Atkinson*

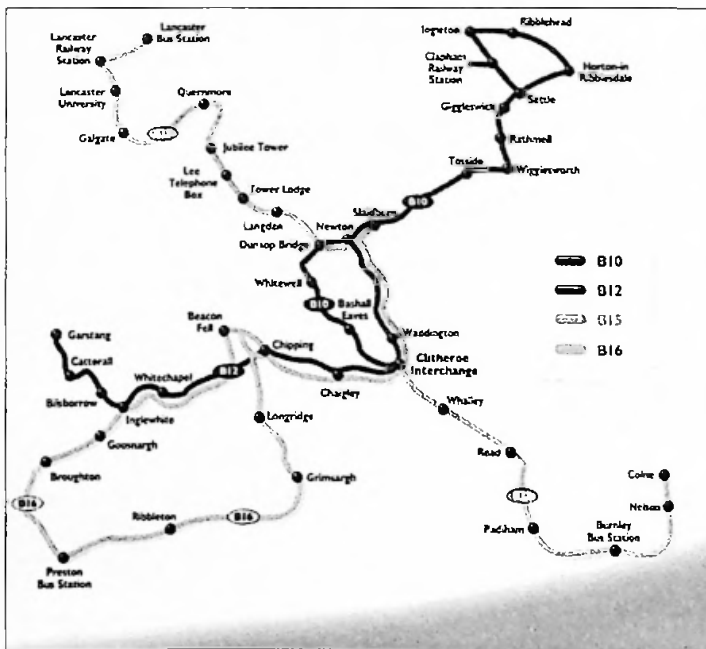
Situated in the Northwest of England, the Forest of Bowland covers 802 square kilometres of rural Lancashire and Yorkshire. An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) with a scattered population of 16,000, the area consists of steep upland valleys, the rich green lowlands of the Ribble, Hodder, Wyre and Lune criss-crossed with dry stone walls and dotted with picturesque stone-built farms and villages.

Bowland Transit replaces Service 110 of Tyrer Tours, Nelson, that trundled daily along the winding roads between Clitheroe and Slaidburn. Subsidised by Lancashire County Council (LCC), the service ran a special route on Tuesday morning, extending Clitheroe to Slaidburn journeys to Settle market, returning a couple of hours later. Although patronage was low, Lancashire County Council and other community bodies were keen to improve and keep the service. In 2002, LCC commissioned a consultancy firm, Travel for Leisure, to investigate ways of revamping public transport in the Forest of Bowland. It was clear that any service provided was never going to be self sustaining, but it was important to consider the needs of tourists who contribute a great deal annually to the area's economic well being.



'Curlew' at Dunsop Bridge

Timetables were devised in co-operation with local employers in the Forest, who agreed to adjust work timings to coincide with the bus timetables. Families and schools were also consulted to create a demand responsive service, together with existing bus and taxi operators, community transport and minibus brokerage schemes. The idea was to encourage the public to consider the use of public transport before reaching for the car keys.



Summer 2004 map of Bowland Transit services

The community was widely involved in the design and development of the service. A "bird" theme for the buses was chosen by children from seven primary schools within the Forest of Bowland in conjunction with the Royal Society for Protection of Birds' Community Education Officer. The buses that Bowland Transit introduced were 'Lapwing', 'Curlew', 'Merlin' and 'Sky Dancer' - the local name for the Hen Harrier.

Armed with these results, over £634,000 was ploughed into the three year Bowland Transit scheme from the Government's Rural Bus Challenge Fund, in co-operation with Lancashire County Council, the East Lancashire Partnership and the Countryside Agency. In January 2003, the service was unveiled by HRH Prince Charles, who boarded



Prince Charles on the bus, holding his ticket

'Lapwing,' before travelling on the route of the B12, Clitheroe to Chipping via Chaigley with fellow passengers. The first service, B10 Clitheroe to Settle via Slaidburn, commenced service on Saturday April 19, 2003. All the routes operate according to a split seasonal timetable, from April to October, and October to March, in line with the local Rail companies. By the summer of 2004 you could travel on: -

- B10** Clitheroe to Settle via Slaidburn. A route following the main corridor of the Bowland Forest, serving Bashall Eaves, Whitewell, Dunsop Bridge (the centre of the United Kingdom), Newton and Slaidburn, before traveling on through Tosside into Yorkshire via Wigglesworth and Rathmell to Settle. The service runs five times daily, Monday to Friday, and is able to deviate off route to the local secondary school in Settle or tourist attractions, notably Cocklet Hill for the cycle and walking pathways around Stocks Reservoir. On Sundays the service runs three times daily.

The most popular of the Sunday routes is the Three Peak Circular, launched in Winter 2003. It runs from the Clitheroe Interchange into Settle, Horton in Ribblesdale, Ribble Head and Ingletton Community Centre before returning via Settle to Clitheroe. The service has been a great hit with tourists and ramblers alike and often only standing room is available.

- B15** Colne to Lancaster via Clitheroe, the Trough of Bowland and Galgate (Sundays only) takes passengers as far as Lancaster bus and rail stations from Colne, in line with the timetable of the Dales Rail,
- B16** Clitheroe to Preston via Chipping & Beacon Fell Visitor Centre (Saturdays only). This route was devised in response to requests of young people from Whitechapel and Inglewhite and also met the requests of ramblers and families travelling from Preston and Manchester to the Beacon Fell Visitor Centre.
- B12** Clitheroe to Garstang via Chipping (Thursdays only). The service attracted fewer travellers at first but by the summer 2004 was a well-used and thriving route.

The routes are serviced by two second generation, thirteen-seater Aleros and two twenty-five seater Solos from Optare, with low floor easy access and provisions for pushchair and wheelchair users. These have become affectionately known through the Forest as 'the Bubble Buses.' All the buses are equipped with rear cycle racks for up to two bikes and the Solo buses have wall straps for securing cycles on the inside too. Mobitec LED information display pods (in less technical parlance, destination indicators) are located at the front, near side and rear end of the buses, controlled via a computerised control panel and McKenna Brothers, Manchester, software.

In February 2004, Bowland Transit was amongst the first bus services in Lancashire to be fitted with the new Wayfarer TGX 150 ticket machines. Individual driver modules are updated daily via a base reader when the

driver is logged on. A central computer at LCC can amend information overnight that the driver requires for his duty the next day. All fares, journey information and ticket details are downloaded back to the central computer when the driver logs off. This information has been vital for researching how the service was progressing. Various types of tickets are accepted on the Bowland Transit services. As well as the usual range of adult, child, concession, group and dog tickets, the Ribble Valley Day Ranger Ticket covering bus travel throughout major segments of Lancashire and North Yorkshire is also accepted. A Bowland Transit Weekly ticket was launched in celebration of the service's first birthday. A Clitheroe Combi ticket is available, which incorporates rail use into Clitheroe. There are the electronic Nowcard smart cards, which have been very popular amongst senior citizens.

In the first year alone the Bowland Transit services ferried nearly 20,000 passengers around The Forest of Bowland. In its second year the service was nominated for two categories in the Bus Industry Awards, November 2004. And we were extremely pleased when Bowland Transit was announced as the Winner of both those two categories: 'Bus in the Countryside' which is awarded to schemes that encourage or promote the use of bus services by countryside residents and 'Buses for Pleasure' - which is awarded to bus operators, local authorities, tourist attractions, National Parks and other bodies for schemes that promote the use of registered local bus services by tourists or visitors, to areas of attraction. Our success and achievements recognised by the industry!



*Bus Industry Award presented by Sir Bill Morris, November 2004
- with Sue Buckley (centre). Photograph by Andrew Dunsmore.
Acknowledgments to www.picturepartnership.co.uk*

The community continues to be actively involved in the service. Our first children's competition coincided with the service launch in May 2003. It was entitled, "Draw a Bird of Bowland Transit". The winners and runner-up were displayed at the Bowland Festival and in the buses themselves. A second competition asked school children to write a short story or poem on the theme 'Buses in the Bowland Forest'. This competition was funded by the Ribble Valley Arts Council and local Borough Council and was supported by local writer, Maureen Fenton, through Forest workshops. They are being published in Bowland Transit's first book, "Buses in the Bowland Forest", funded by the Area of Outstanding Beauty, Lancashire

Environment Action Fund and Craven District Council, due to be formally launched in January 2005.

The Bowland Transit service itself has become an essential component of Forest community life, servicing passengers throughout and community events such as the Clitheroe Sheep Festival, Chipping Steam Fair and Hodder Valley Steam Rally, to name a few. Demand Responsive Services (DRT) are booked locally at Clitheroe Interchange or negotiated through community consultation depending on the seasonal needs identified, such as school children to return home after extra curriculum lessons to help them pass their SATS or students to attend college courses. A "Bowland Transit Newsletter" containing updates and information on the Bowland Transit is delivered to over 1,000 homes once every two months. Together with Ribbles Valley Tourism, Bowland Transit has implemented joint promotions with Yorkshire such as a Familiarisation Day, where civic dignitaries are invited to view the Settle to Clitheroe route through the eyes of a tourist. Bowland Transit was also involved in several regional historic landmarks such as the launching of the new Countryside Code in summer 2004 and the status of Open Access granted to the Bowland Forest in October 2004. Bowland Transit works in conjunction with local countryside rangers to devise walks along its service routes. Four of these walks were launched in Summer 2004. Walkers and families are encouraged to park their cars in designated village car parks and catch the Bowland Transit bus to the furthest walking point and heading back to the car past picturesque beauty spots and 'watering holes'.

Bowland Transit was a demanding service to put together, and the hard work is continuing to make the service adaptable to the changing needs of the Bowland Forest community. The continuing challenge is to provide a community service that nevertheless provides for the needs of the individual, important for the Forest of Bowland's small and localised population.

Whoa! Whoa! This is all 21st century, up-to-the-minute material. What is its relevance to the *Newsletter* of the Roads and Road Transport History Association? A good question – to which there is an Editorial reply on page 4.

Now, turning to the setting up of Bowland Transit; Sue is being very modest. She told me of a meeting she held in Slaidburn at the outset of the project. She was a "local", and accepted by her audience; but she was accompanied by a "foreigner", a Yorkshire lass, which took some smoothing over. Then, as the meeting drew to a close, a man in a cloth cap, sitting at the back said "How do I get to t'doctor's surgery in Settle if your damn buses only run once a week?"

And this threw up an unrecognized transport need that had been thought of as "cross-boundary" (i.e. into Yorkshire), and almost wholly ignored. It led to buses to Settle five times a day, — now sufficiently used to be justified.

One of the drivers, Richard, told me that now that the buses carry cycles, cyclists have rapidly learned that they do not have to make an out-and-back cycle ride. They can extend their outward ride to fresh scenery, and then come back all the way on the bus.

When it was arranged that Prince Charles should ride on the bus – believed to have been his first bus ride, and quite a long one – he had asked for other passengers to be genuine bus users drawn from the Forest of Bowland. So, it fell to Sue – who else? – to find a bus-using farmer, shopkeeper, housewife, student, agricultural mechanic, barmaid, etc. And she did, with the solitary exception that her wheel-chair-using bus passenger had to be "imported" from an adjacent part of Lancashire. And Prince Charles' trip with this cross-section of Forest of Bowland bus users, was a great success.

And, as a final aspect of Sue's community contacts, she has, just as we go to press, unearthed a great granddaughter with transport-orientated family archives, back to the 1920s. We are holding our breath.

Historically, the Slaidburn – Clitheroe service was operated by the Hodgsons' Hodder Motor Services and Walker's Bounty Motor Services. Murray Walker claimed to have been the first, in the 1920s, and it was the Walker family who were still operating it into the mid-1960s. My own first experience was in 1941/2. It was then jointly, rather than competitively, operated by Hodder and Bounty; no doubt a condition imposed either before the war by the Traffic Commissioners or, with the coming of the war, by the Regional Transport Controller. Saturday was, by a huge margin, the peak day. One bus would be full, if not from Slaidburn, then certainly before it reached Newton, where it would simply head straight over the Fell to Waddington and Clitheroe, leaving the duplicate to pick up Newton passengers and travel by the full route via Dunsop Bridge, Whitewell, Cow Ark and Bashall Eaves. Decline came, as for other rural bus services, from the

SB



Bounty bus outside the "Hark to Bounty" in Slaidburn

* An advance, pre-launch copy of *Buses in the Bowland Forest* has now been seen. One of the children's contributions is reproduced on page 12 of this *Newsletter*.

1950s onwards, and the crisis arrived in the summer of 1965. Hodder had already disposed of their share of the service to R & M Walker in 1957. In 1965, Mr. Walker decided to retire. The service was not making money; there was no goodwill to sell. A couple of years later, the writer of "Country Diary" in the *Clitheroe Advertiser & Times* of December 30, 1967 wrote:

I guarantee that if you were to mention Murray Walker or the Bounty Bus in any part of the British Isles, someone, sooner or later, would come forward with a happy memory of the unique service which, in all sorts of weather, linked the Hodder Valley with Clitheroe. It has, however, done far more than provide a link through the decades. It has, in fact provided an image and a standard, which is fast disappearing in an age of rush, bustle and regimentation. And it has undoubtedly left an impression on hundreds of people, not only in our own countryside, but in every county in the British Isles.

The demise of the Bounty service, in fact, gave rise to a situation that, before Transport Act 1968, was occasionally being mooted, but hardly ever effectively acted upon. Namely, local action to preserve the bus service. A report in the *Clitheroe Advertiser & Times* on 23 July 1965 opened thus:

Half the adult population of the upper Hodder Valley rallied together in the barn-like meeting hall at Root Farm, Dunsop Bridge, on Wednesday night and pledged their support for a new bus service to replace the Bounty service which terminates tomorrow week. More than that, the villagers guaranteed that should the new 'communal' bus fail to pay its way they will meet the deficit out of their own pockets.

The meeting cheered as garage proprietor, Mr Jim Leedham, of Dunsop, agreed to try to operate the new service. Together with brewery director, Mr James Kay, of Newton Hall, he yesterday went to Leeds to persuade the Traffic Commissioners to rush through permission for the

new service to start operations.

The meeting, the most keenly attended for many a year in Bowland, was the climax to a week of uncertainty, beginning with the announcement that Walkers of Slaidburn, bus pioneers who founded the Bounty Motor Services 40 years ago were to cease public service operation. Ribble were not interested in running an alternative service.

The *Omnibus Magazine* of October 1965 gave the names of the Committee elected to run the enterprise. Mr James Leedham, Mr Norman Kay, manager of a Blackburn brewery [note the different forename], Mr Norman Haslewood, the local grocer and Mr Gerald Walker, formerly of Bounty, but since the cessation of operations, a Ribble bus driver.

The OM report added that the number of daily trips had been reduced from four to three, and the fare increased from 1/6d to 2/2d ... "very reasonable" in the opinion of the dear old lady of 83, who traveled on the first run by the new operators. Before Bounty had commenced the service, she traveled in the postman's horse and trap at a cost of 2/6d.

After the 1968 Act, the service received County subsidy, and after bus deregulation (October 1986), a succession of operators secured the service under tender to the Council. But with the formation of the Bowland Transit project, the substantial injection of Government money, and the hard work put in by Sue Buckley and her team into re-awakening the community, one has had history repeating itself. "Half the adult population of the upper Hodder Valley" attended the meeting at Root Farm, forty years ago, to save the service. And they achieved three buses a day. Now they have – taking into account the Settle extension – the best bus service that the Forest of Bowland has ever had. May it still be preserved when the government's Rural Bus Grant money comes to an end.

RA

"Buses in the Bowland Forest"

(see p.11 of the Newsletter) A contribution from the Age 10+ age group

One sunny August morning John decided to go for a walk he got out his map and planned his route. He decided to take the 10.30 AM Tosside to Slaidburn bus.

As John packed his bags to go on his first trip on a Bowland Transit bus, he started to wonder what it would be like, then the B10 stopped outside the Dog and Partridge bang on time 10.30 AM he climbed on and off he went.

On the way he could see the hills and the fields, the sheep, the cows and the kestrels. The B10 soon pulled up in Slaidburn it was now 10.40 AM and he and another person climbed off and away it went. John took out a bottle of orange then off he went too.

He wandered off into the hills of Slaidburn. On the way he could see the grouse flying out of the in-flower purple heather. After a scenic walk he eventually dropped into the small Whitendale valley. John looked at his watch it

was 12.30 he had been so engrossed in his walk he had lost track of time. As he sat down to eat his lunch a buzzard soared overhead in search of a rabbit or a vole. John wandered on and over down into the Brennand valley the centre of Great Britain. As he plodded off in the direction of Dunsop Bridge he tripped and sprained his ankle, but luckily a car was coming and he got a ride to Dunsop Bridge. Time had flew, it was 16.30 and the bus was on its way.

John got on the bus and asked the driver to radio for an ambulance to meet them at Tosside. At Tosside the very kind driver helped him off the bus then the ambulance people looked after him.

Next day John told all his friends about his walk and ride and they all agreed it was so good they would go for a ride when John got better.

Robert Walker, Aged 10
Thorneyholme RC Primary School

Book Notices

Wheels and Wings

Motor Coaching in Sheffield and the development of Sheffield United Tours
Trevor Weckert and Michael Baines MCIT MInstTA
Lancastrian Transport Publications
8¼" x 5¼" softback; 43 pages; 23 pictures;
ISBN 1 899450 106; £7.00

This book gives a brief, informative and entertaining history of "a household name in Sheffield and a prestigious company throughout the UK and abroad" from its origins in the early part of the 20th century up to 1973. The book captures well the flavour of the city (I lived there for fourteen years).

As befitted a company in the British Electric Traction Co fold, SUT used quality vehicles and maintained them well, standardising heavily on AEC chassis in the post-war years. There are quite a few pictures, but very little else about the fleet, because the history of Sheffield-based motor coaching is seen as the story of the people who ran it and the people who rode.

The book describes quite a few of these people at differing levels; details of services run over the years - tours, excursions, private hire, express services, contract work; fares; drivers' wages; operating conditions; road service licensing; coach rallies; and some SUT "firsts", including the first 36-foot coach in the UK: October 1961, AEC Reliance/Plaxton.

£7.00 seems expensive for a slight volume with rather poorly reproduced photographs. But recommended nonetheless.

Paul Jefford

Women at work on London's Transport 1905-1978

Anna Rotondaro.
Brimscombe Port, Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2004.
127 pp.; multi-illustrated; ISBN 0 7524 3265 6; £12.99

This excellently-captioned illustrated book benefits from the high standard of photographs commissioned by London Transport and its predecessors, especially in connection with the introduction of women in what had been men's jobs in both world wars. Many of these jobs were on the Underground railway or behind the scenes, rather than on road services. A woman bus driver does not appear until p.118 (1971), although close reading reveals a woman timetable-servicing van driver in the Second

World War (p.74) and that women sometimes drove empty buses around or between garages during the same conflict. However, as tram and bus conductors, women entered the road transport labour force from October 1915, heavily garbed against the elements for service on vehicles with open upper decks and staircases. A 'Farewell Social Gathering' marked the end even of the role of 'clippie' on 21 October 1919. Workshop, canteen and office jobs for women continued, but it took the Second World War to bring women back on to the platform.

Richard Storey

Transit. The 40-year Story of Britain's best-loved Van

Graham Robson.
Sparkford, Haynes Publishing, 2004.
144 pp; index; multi-illustrated;
ISBN 1 84425 104 7; £16.99

Is a type of van worth a hard-back book to itself? If the van itself is the Transit, which has passed five million units since its launch in 1965, and is into its third generation, the answer is definitely 'yes'. The author has had full co-operation from Ford and access to their photo archives. Particular strengths of the book are the narrative detail from the inside on the evolution, development and technical specification of the Transit and its smaller stable-mate, the Transit Connect (from 2002). The Transit began as the 'Common Van' programme in 1961, a joint project of Ford UK and Germany (with UK leadership into the 1990s), before Ford-of-Europe became an organisational reality. The text is supplemented by a table of annual production figures, arranged by site (from Langley to Turkey, and further afield) and three pages of illustrated specifications of the three Transit generations (plus facelifts) and the Transit Connect. What the reader missed was detail on (as opposed to a few photographs of) Transit-derived models, such as minibuses and parcels vans by Carlyle, Dormobile, Strachans and others, as well as 'replica' vehicles like the Asquith range. (The Asquith example on page 46 appears to be a courtesy coach with roof luggage-rack, rather than an open-top bus, as the caption states). A section devoted to large fleet orders and users, such as BT and White Arrow, with some statistics, would also have been welcome.

Richard Storey

In the Police trap

From the Clitheroe Advertiser & Times ~ 6 February 1925

As a result of a police trap on the Clitheroe Whalley road on January 19th, three drivers appeared at Clitheroe County sessions on Monday, summoned for exceeding the speed limit of 12 miles an hour. In each case, the speed was given as over nineteen miles an hour over a measured mile, PC's Harrison and Waters giving evidence of checking the speed with the aid of stop watches, the officers following the vehicles in a motor cycle combination.

Harry Parker of 21 Higher Walton Road, Walton-le-Dale was fined £3, this being his first offence, whilst penalties of £4 were imposed on Fred Parkinson, 21 Henry Street, Preston, and Robert Guy 68 William Hopwood Street, Blackburn who were stated to have been convicted previously. When stopped, Guy told the policemen that they would never make him believe that he was travelling so quickly.

Letters to the Editor

FRIENDS FROM ACROSS THE SEA

(Newsletter 39 p.10)

I am writing in response to the article by John Edser, under the "News from the 21st Century" feature in *Newsletter No 39*. With my interest in modern road haulage, I found this article to be of great value. Firstly, John acknowledges that there may be Government statistics which show the extent of the 'invasion' of foreign-operated lorries into the UK. Indeed, that is so. Both *Motor Transport* and *Commercial Motor* carry regular reports whenever new Government statistics are published showing the number of foreign lorries reaching our shores. However, what these statistics do not show is what these lorries are doing, and what impact their arrival has had on UK operators. I can relate some examples from my own experience which I hope will illustrate the changes which have occurred in just one sector, the packing and delivery of fresh (and some not-so-fresh) vegetables to the shops and supermarkets.

I suspect that most members will know that the fertile soils of East Lincolnshire are the source of many of the fresh vegetables to be found on the shelves of supermarkets. However, vegetable production is a seasonal activity and fresh cauliflowers and the like are not available from Lincolnshire in winter. Whilst the Cornish crop comes on stream earlier in the year than Lincolnshire, in the depths of winter the supermarkets rely in imports from other countries, in particular Spain. As a result, from before Christmas time each year, fleets of lorries bring fresh vegetables into the country. Many of the products, such as cauliflower, cabbage and calabrese, are hauled up to Lincolnshire to be put through the specialised pack houses using the expensive plant and skilled staff which would otherwise stand idle until the next home-grown crop became available.

Until the 1990s it was quite usual for the imported vegetables to be hauled into the UK on British-operated lorries. These lorries would then return to France, Spain or Italy, some of them carry empty vegetable containers or other export traffic, before returning with more vegetables. However, as UK fuel and road tax costs rose to levels much higher than those on the Continent, many UK operators found themselves at a significant financial disadvantage, being forced to charge higher rates for their work. Market forces then took a hand and with pressure from supermarkets for costs to be cut, vegetable importers quickly transferred their work from UK to foreign-operated fleets.

Thus, by the end of the 1990s, the roads and lay-bys of South and East Lincolnshire became home to lorries from a wide range of overseas operators. Typical of the more prolific Spanish fleets to be seen around Boston and Spalding over the last few years are Comotrans, Tranportes Caudette, Castillotrans and Tommy Trans. We should not forget also that for many years vegetables have been imported from the Netherlands, and lorries from the likes of Tunderman and Tudefrigo are almost as common in Lincolnshire as those from locally-based companies. Indeed, a subsidiary of Spalding-based Fowler-Welch runs a large fleet of Dutch-registered vehicles, which make daily runs to the company's home territory.

Typical of the UK-based operators to be affected by this situation has been Ralph Davies International, based in Cheltenham. From humble beginnings as an owner-driver on international refrigerated haulage, Ralph Davies has built up a fleet of roughly 40 vehicles, now almost all

Volvo after starting with Scania products. The distinctive black and red Ralph Davies lorries would regularly visit Lincolnshire, especially between March and May, hauling cabbage from the Murcia region of Spain. Outbound, the Davies lorries would often carry high-value cargoes such as computers or whisky. These products perhaps seem unusual for carriage in a refrigerated trailer (in the case of Ralph Davies, usually made by French manufacturer Chereau) but the thick, insulated walls and bam doors of the 'reefer' offer excellent security for high value loads, a factor much favoured by the insurers of goods in transit. This was a very important factor in securing work, with Ralph Davies' lorries regularly travelling as far as Moscow and, on one occasion, all the way across the Soviet Union to the border with China.

Because its work was dominated by international haulage, all of the Ralph Davies lorries were specified with left-hand drive. However, following the squeeze on rates, even high profile companies like Ralph Davies were forced to concentrate on haulage within the UK. This brought its own crop of problems, especially in terms of minor damage to the vehicles caused, in part, by the problems of driving left-hand-drive vehicles on UK roads. With the majority of its work now in the UK, for the last few years all new lorries on the Davies fleet have been right-hand drive.

It seems clear to me that, because of Government policies, UK-based hauliers will always be at a financial disadvantage to their near-Continent cousins and the foreign-operated lorry will remain an increasingly common sight on UK roads. Here I have illustrated just one facet of the way foreign lorries have become an accepted part of our food supply chain - I am sure that there are many more examples of the phenomenon. Moreover, there are a number of other issues to be considered, including the growth of cabotage, which I have studiously avoided. I hope that this information has helped members to understand better what is happening today inside just one specialised sector of road haulage.

Bill Taylor

THE WILLEBREW (Newsletter No.38, p.7)

On page 7 of *Newsletter No. 38* there is a reference to Willebrew tickets and I thought that members might like to hear about the origin of the name. The design was thought up by Ribble Motor Services who wanted to obviate the need for the company to hold large stocks of individually-valued tickets, which on long routes caused the conductors to carry two ticket racks. (Crosville continued to endure this problem for many more years).

The name is made up of three parts:

Will	Williamson, the ticket printer of Ashton-under-Lyne
Eb	Ebrey, the Secretary of Ribble at the time
(B)rew	Brewer, the head of Ticket Audit Department at Ribble.

When a conductor paid in, the punch, which was sealed at the depot, would be opened and the pieces of ticket bound with string and folded up in the waybill. At Ticket Audit Department, at Frenchwood Avenue, Preston, 39 girls were employed in analysing the waybills. This involved recording the values of the pieces on an adding machine and balancing this against the cash paid in. It took three

months to train these girls as they had to learn not to record the amount shown on the pieces, but the value below it which remained on the ticket.

On some busy routes a conductor needed to take two punches as the first one was liable to become full. When I was at Blackpool depot this applied to the 171 Kirkham-Lytham route on Saturdays. When the Willebrew was finally replaced by the Setright Register, the 39 girls were reduced to six as the conductors analysed the waybills by route. The changeover was achieved on a depot by depot basis over a couple of years, so there was no mass redundancy at Frenchwood Avenue, natural wastage taking care of the problem.

T.B. Maund

POLICE ATTITUDES TO COVERED-TOP DOUBLE-DECK BUSES

Thank you for the notice on the R&RTHA's 2004 Derby Symposium. I was particularly sorry to have been unable to attend, as there was a question that I would have liked to put to one of the speakers, whom I expect must have touched on the antagonistic official reaction to covered-top double-deckers in London, as late as 1925.

I have in draft an article for *Buses Worldwide* on four foreign buses bought by Allgemeine Berliner Omnibus Aktien Gesellschaft (ABOAG) in Berlin in 1925/6. Two of them were open-top, but of the second pair, one was a covered-top AEC (or ACLO in Germany) and the other a Yellow Coach of the semi-open-top type used in New York, etc.

Our researches have not thrown up any evidence as to why the first two were open-top but we suspect that ABOAG may have decided to play safe and not prejudice their trials with foreign buses by inviting unwelcome attentions from the city's police! As it was, once the imported buses had appeared in Berlin, locally-built covered-top double-deckers were not far behind. Nationalen Automobil-Gesellschaft (NAG) produced just one, as part of an order for 15 buses delivered in September 1925; but there seem to have been some lingering doubts about the new idea as a further 100+ open-toppers were still being delivered in 1926, in parallel with small numbers of the covered-top versions of the same types.

Am I justified in suspecting that the Berlin police may have been thought likely to be cautious in licensing covered-top buses on which the London police were still frowning? Indeed, perhaps not only the Berlin police; I have just found a reference to the fact that fully covered-top double-deckers did not appear in New York until 1927.

Geoffrey Morant

AN ARCHIVE OF MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES / TRANSPORT SCENES ON POSTCARDS

David St John Thomas' leading article in *Newsletter* 39 set me thinking. The R&RTHA membership covers a considerable portion of the British Isles, and I am sure – with a reasonably "older" age profile – that many of us have memories of road-based experiences in the various places/regions we have lived in during our lives. Is there a case for getting as many of these gathered together and put into some format, not necessarily for publication, but as potential archive material, that could be indexed or catalogued, and deposited in an appropriate place?

My "Lyons' Cakes Van-Boy" piece (in the R&RTHA

Chairman's Bulletin issued in January 2004) might be put forward as an example; but there could also be far briefer, less clearly defined, "memories" that might still be worth recording. For example, I remember my mother recalling that everyone in the village of Holmwood remembered the special occasion when the Dorking – Horsham stage coach-type service was replaced by a motor bus about 1910.

What do members think; as I am sure there is an untapped fund here?

Next, an allied subject, sparked off by Richard Storey's note about Charabancs and Postcards on p.5 of *Newsletter* 39. As well as my slide collection, I have quite a collection of postcards covering all sorts of transport, including buses and trams. While a substantial proportion are what you might call "enthusiast" shots – with tram or bus as centre-piece or only item – some are cards that show the vehicles in their "natural" surroundings – with shop fronts, people and other vehicles on the card as well. Some are uncredited copies, others are coloured and obviously by commercial publishers.

Amongst the black and white trams, there is one of Botchergate, Carlisle, another of football fans – boys in caps, coats and short trousers; men in long coats and hats or caps – boarding Blackburn and Darwen trams off to the "Football Ground". Another is of Northampton car 35, with a policeman standing in between the rails of an adjacent track – the street is unidentified.

Typical of the coloureds are two or three of Blackpool Prom – pretty obvious – but also one showing most of a toast-rack tram on Rothesay Esplanade; another of a tram in Osmaston Road, Derby, and another one at the Post Office, Chatham.

The bus side of the collection is almost all black and white, but includes a card of a bus damaged in a Zeppelin raid; another, in South London, marooned in a flood surrounded by floating wood block paving, and one of Marble Arch about 1930 showing a gent with a bowler hat, in riding clothes, on a horse – well clear of about six buses. Indeed, many of the black and white cards have a human audience, particularly where there has been an accident or unusual event.

Is this another source worth following up? Or does the National Tramway Museum at Crich already cover the tram side? (But only the tram?)

John Edser

- On the question of postcards and photographs, it is appropriate to think back to the R&RTHA's 2001 Symposium, "The Preservation and Disposal of Personal Collections", reported extensively in *Newsletter* No.28.

Certainly some of our corporate, and probably some individual members, are already creating major photographic archives of passenger, freight, vehicle manufacture or road construction and engineering relevance, in some cases orientated to a particular locality or to particular manufacturers. An example recently cited in the *Chairman's Bulletin* (of January 2004) was the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust Archive Collection. And London's Transport Museum's archive goes (almost) without saying. But are there yet any archives of "memories"?

Please do not take offence if your own corporate or personal efforts are not quoted here; instead, use *Newsletter* to make them known, or to remind us of them. Ed RA

BIRMINGHAM DESTINATION BLINDS*(Newsletter No.39, p.13)*

Bob Williamson mentions the Birmingham practice of showing the outer terminus in both directions. You might like to know about the inconsistencies of this practice. For example 'HARBORNE & QUEENS PARK 3' meant from the City to Queens Park via Harborne, whereas HIGH-FIELD ROAD & KINGSTANDING 29 meant from Highfield Road to Kingstanding via the City centre (or vice versa). This service and its partner 29A showed the same number in both directions, but other cross-city links had different numbers each way. There is a story about a man who went to Portland Road on a 7 and waited in vain for a 7 on the way back. Eventually he stopped a 5A (Perry Common) and asked the conductor when there would be a 7. "This is a 7" was the reply!

In tram days there were some displays that must have been totally confusing to strangers, in particular the display both ways of DUDLEY 74 on the long interurban route from Birmingham through West Bromwich and Great Bridge. Also OLDBURY & DUDLEY 87 for the more direct but still lengthy service via Smethwick.

T. B. Maund

HORSE BUSES IN BURFORD *(Newsletter No.39 p.15)*

Regarding the item about whether, after the coming of the railway to Lechlade and Witney, and the presumed disappearance of the stage coach services through Burford in the mid- and late nineteenth century, horse bus connections were put on between Burford and its nearest railway stations, I have had a look at notes I have made from *Kelly's Directories for Oxfordshire*. (I have not had an opportunity to revisit the directories themselves).

Under 'Job Masters', marked with a symbol to to

indicate that they are Omnibus Proprietors, I found two based at Burford. They were William Frederick Matthews and T Paintin & Son. Both Job Masters appeared from 1891 to 1903 and Paintin was also in the 1907 edition. Matthews' address was shown as Priory Street, while Paintin was given as High Street in the 1891 edition, and Sheep Street from the 1895 edition. As Birmingham Library have these directories only at 4-yearly intervals and, as you know, the directories are extremely imprecise for dating of events, these instances can serve only to suggest these two job masters as possible horse bus operators, connecting Burford with the local Great Western Railway stations during the period in question. Further searching of the directories might reveal a mention of the operators under entries associated with Lechlade or Witney, under 'Conveyances'

Tony Newman

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY ROAD MOTORS*(Newsletter No.39, p.15)*

Far from the GWR Road Motors originating in 1928, as your text seems to imply, the first service started on 17th August 1903, between Helston and The Lizard. From 1919, services were developed in Devon and Cornwall, South and West Wales, Central and North Wales, the Midlands and Southern England; in other words, everywhere the GWR ran. They had no specific powers and this 'oversight' may have influenced the move to draft the Railways (Road Transport) Acts, 1928. The standard work on railway buses is *Railway Motor Buses and Bus Services*, in two volumes, by John Cummings (Oxford Publishing Co.) 1978/1980.

T B Maund

People to Remember

G J PONSONBY MA FCIT*A writer who should not be forgotten*

Gilbert Ponsonby (1904 - 1981) was Sir Ernest Cassel Reader in Transport at the London School of Economics from 1959 to 1964. Though the number of his publications was not large, they made an important contribution to the debate on transport policy, despite being sometimes contrary to the conventional wisdom of the day - and of our own time too. The influence of Hayek, Robbins and Popper, all of whom were at the School while he was there, is plainly to be seen; not least in the rigour of the argument. He will also be remembered by many of us as a teacher and supervisor who was also a mentor, and Michael Bonavia in an obituary notice in the *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, referred to his "complete integrity, his passion for academic truth and his deep concern for every student who passed through his hands".

Ponsonby's economics was far from the model-building and supposedly significant forecasting that is already losing its reputation today. His work seeks to identify the principles that are to be seen in the processes of the industry, and to apply theory to their better understanding. But he had a deep distrust of the unquantifiable - I once, and once only, made a loose mention of 'the public interest' in a tutorial paper, only to be firmly reproved. "What is 'the public interest', Hibbs?" he said. "How do you measure it?"

I list his papers below, including two which are

specifically concerned with railways, one of which could have been used by Dr Beeching to great effect. My own feeling is that three of them are important today because they deal with particular issues that are still to the fore. These are *Depreciation with Special Reference to Transport*; *The Problem of the Peak*; and *What is an unremunerative transport service?* Then there are the papers on road policy, which are still relevant; and finally there are two from the 1960s that could be read to advantage today, which take a broader view. I would want students of the industry today to read and reflect on *The Structure and Organisation of the Transport System*, and the Hobart Paper for the Institute of Economic Affairs, *Transport Policy: Co-ordination through Competition* (which harks back to Sir Arnold Plant's article *Competition and Co-ordination in Transport*, *Journal of the Institute of Transport*, January 1932).

Whether or not the reader agrees with Ponsonby's argument, the clarity of his writing and his insight into the nature of the industry must bring many of the issues being debated today into better focus. To the historian his papers offer a valuable snapshot of the industry at the time he was writing. Gilbert asked me to be his literary executor, and some years ago I tried to find a publisher for a collection of his articles, but with no success. He was minded to contribute a paper on the subject of *Economies and Diseconomies of Scale in Transport*, but sadly he did not live long enough to prepare this, or to write his planned 'big book', to be called *Transport: An Economist's Approach*.

However, his articles in the journals are accessible through library services, (though the Hobart Paper is no longer in print).

John Hibbs

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A H SCAMMELL

The younger brother to Alfred George Scammell, Allan Howard Scammell's contribution to history might easily be overlooked. He left the Scammell family business immediately after World War I and took further part in Alfred's development of Scammell Lorries Ltd at Watford.*

Born in 1883 in Hampstead, London, he married Mary Jane in 1906 and joined the family firm of G Scammell & Nephew, Fashion Street, Spitalfields.† Here, it would appear, he always took a more junior role than Alfred until the outbreak of War, when Alfred rejoined the army to spend the war years in France, returning as Lt-Col A G Scammell in 1918 to manage the Commer Cars franchise at Luton.

G Scammell and Nephew was regarded as an essential industry, and Allan was made Managing Director. During the war years, the company was mainly employed preparing new vehicles for delivery to the War Department, particularly fitting WD specification bodies to Foden steamers.

The workload during the war years, which kept the company busy 24 hours a day, seven days a week, took its toll on Allan's health and in 1920 he retired to Bournemouth on doctor's orders and took no further part in Scammell as a company.

At this point, Alfred returned to Fashion Street, and formed Scammell Lorries Ltd when he moved the manufacturing part of the business to Watford, leaving the bodybuilding and repairs at Fashion Street.

In 1922, Allan had recovered sufficiently to be bored and determined to return to business. This his doctors only allowed if he did not return to London. He persuaded Alfred to send one of the Scammell six-wheelers to Bournemouth with the idea of starting a Scammell agency. At this point it would appear that Alfred's opinion of Allan was not good and that he regarded Allan as a shirker, or 'retired early'. Alfred also considered Bournemouth to be a provincial resort, with little potential for the big Scammells. In this, Alfred was proved to be at least partly right, as sales proved difficult, with only a couple or so sold.

Allan was undeterred and formed Southern Roadways Ltd to use his unsold Scammells to transport loads from the West Shore Wharf in Poole, just along the coast. By 1925, Southern Roadways was handling 6,000 tons per annum from the wharf, using four Scammells and two Thornycroft 4-tonners, and Southern Roadways had taken over the entire wharf.



Recognising the potential of coastal steamers to provide work for the increasing fleet, the wharf was expanded, a £20,000 Arrol-Timperley transporter installed for the rapid unloading of the steam tramp boats, and large dry stores built. The rapid turn round times this achieved for the boats increased the port's popularity and by 1930 Southern Roadways fleet had grown to 70, and handled 150,000 tons for the year.

With the port steadily expanding, Allan looked towards diversification and took over the handling of milk from Mr Ernest Debenham's farms and dairy in Dorset. This grew to transporting 20,000 gallons of milk daily, and Debenham joined the board of Southern Roadways as part of the arrangement.

Most of Southern Roadways work came from the development of the wharf, and it became necessary to move cargo quickly from the wharf if its potential was to be maximized and not become log-jammed. To this end,



* see *Companion to British Road Haulage History* (Science Museum, 2003) p.346-348

† ibid. p.346

Southern Roadways took over Hack & Co of Liverpool and merged with Mayhew & Co of Edgbaston, Birmingham. With additional branches in London and Manchester, bulk loads could be delivered to these branches, which effectively were the parcel hubs of their day.

These acquisitions and mergers increased the fleet size to such that 1,000 tons per day were needed to keep it fully utilised. To help provide this tonnage, Allan formed Worth Quarries Ltd, which provided 25,000 tons of Purbeck limestone per annum for the Southern Roadways fleet to transport.

The war years having taken their toll of his health, Allan died aged only 49 in 1932. Whilst his brother's

achievements at Scammell Lorries are more obvious, the growth of Southern Roadways and its associated businesses, in what was essentially a rural area, is also deserving of recognition. Apart from the obvious employment created, the Southern Roadways business was expanded by using road and sea in partnership – 'intermodal' is the modern term – and with strategic branches – 'hubs' in modern parlance.

Maybe the introduction of lorry charging and the decline of the fishing industry will allow coastal trampers to make a comeback?

Roy Larkin

News from the 21st Century

Fuel Saving Aerodynamics

Even after the publication of the *Companion to British Road Haulage History*, the editors are continuing to collect information for a possible second edition at some future date. One of the articles which will need to be updated is that on air management (p.27).

Over the past two years, Piper Designs have been developing a technique called Fuel Saving Aerodynamics (FSA), which turns goods vehicle aerodynamics from an art into a science, by applying the knowledge gained during development of Formula One racing cars; or — to use the phrase coined by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers' magazine, *Professional Engineering* — by transferring technology from the fast lane of F1 to the slow lane of the M1.

My own interest in this comes through my son-in-law, who, as chief engineer of Piper Designs, is leading the project. I have thus been able to follow the project over the past two years, as the modifications, first to a tractor unit and then to a complete articulated vehicle, were taken through wind-tunnel tests, comparative prototype trials and finally extended fleet trials. Until now Piper have been working exclusively with the general merchandise (i.e. non-food) division of Marks & Spencer and its haulage contractor, Joint Retail Logistics (which, since the take-over of Tibbett & Britten, is now wholly-owned by Exel). About half of the Marks & Spencer general merchandise fleet of DAF tractors has now been modified and, when running with modified trailers, is achieving a 40% reduction in drag and a 14% reduction in fuel consumption, with payback on the investment in just over one year, compared with standard DAF tractors fitted with DAF's factory-fitted aerodynamic kits and standard trailers. About half the savings come from the tractor modifications and half from the trailer modifications. These are very significant savings in both financial and environmental terms; spin-off benefits are reductions in wheel-spray and in the tendency for a speeding lorry to suck-in overtaking cars.

Talks are now taking place with other tractor and trailer manufacturers and fleet users. Meanwhile, if you want to look out for the Marks & Spencer vehicles, apart from



some very discreet lettering on the cab, they are completely white. (This may change following changes at the top of M&S.) The most obvious visual differences are: the roof deflector and collar that close the gap between tractor and trailer; enclosure of all but the steerable wheels; and a collar around the rear doors of the trailer. Less noticeable are the deflectors on the 'a-pillars' (the front vertical corners of the cab), the air-dams used to smooth the airflow underneath the vehicle, and the small vortex generators at the back of the trailer roof.

Grahame Boyes

Milk Delivery in the 1950s or How I became a milk float buff

Although I was not knowingly interested in milk floats until the early 1970s - it is the childhood memories which produce the nostalgia upon which the hobby is fed and developed.

In 1952 my Dutch grandparents visited the family at Northfield - there is a photograph of the three of us outside the house and a T.A.S.C.O.S. (Ten Acres & Stirchley Co-operative Society) electric float in the background. There was another milk float connection on this visit because my Oma inadvertently stepped on my toy plastic plane breaking it - and I was not to be consoled - a Dinky Toy milk float was given as replacement (an incident already related in *Newsletter No.38*, at p.8)

In the mid-'fifties, on return from the first Midland Red bus garage visited at Bromsgrove - now an established bus-spotter - I passed the Bromsgrove Dairies depot at Catshill and saw the weird-looking electric milk floats there. In the later '50s the school cross-country run took us past the Birmingham Dairies premises in Selly Oak Road, Bournville - and again these vehicles were encountered.

My English grandmother lived in Ribblesdale Road, Stirchley - the same street as the TASCOS Dairy was situated - and here horse-drawn milk floats were used until 1959.

By 1970 - buses - my first "love" - had become rather boxy and boring in design, so I was looking for a different transport form to follow. The merger of TASCOS with the

Birmingham Co-op in September 1971, and the disappearance of the battery electric dustcart from Birmingham's streets in January of the same year, directed me towards the study of electric vehicles before they passed into history. (Incidentally, I was able to observe the last of the electric dustcarts since they collected from the yard of the Birmingham Inland Rail Depot in Landor Street, where Customs & Excise also used premises).

Other milk memories come from the '50s when holidaying in the Netherlands - specifically on the Frisian Island: Ameland - the horse-drawn dray would arrive at my grandparents' door, and Oma would come with enamel jug to receive the milk ladled from the chum.

Since 1975, I have seen the electric dairy floats decline in their usage - partly through the supermarket - a rival to "door-to-door" delivery. When Wolverhampton and Birmingham Unigate areas merged by 1979 the electric vehicle fleet halved to about 850 floats. (Previously called Midland Counties Dairy).

Gone are Birmingham Dairies and Wacaden (Wattles, Cathes & Gurden) but I have been instrumental in getting some electric floats to museums - an ex-Unigate pair - one to Coventry in 1978 - another to Witton (via Patrick Motors in 1981). Another project to get an ex-Halesowen & Hasbury float to Avoncroft may have failed - but you cannot win all the time - that's life!

Roger F. de Boer

How Wars Improve Roads

An article from "Commercial Motor" ~ 13 January 1920

In spite of the many troubles and difficulties which follow a war of any considerable magnitude, it has been recognised in the past that there is nothing as advantageous as a war to open up and exploit the communications of any country. The wars of Napoleon left reminders in the shape of splendid national roads which stood up so well to their work during the recent world war. The latter is no exception to the rule, and though the present condition of the roads in France is not very satisfactory, yet thousands of miles have been improved by widening, and about 540 miles of new roads have been built.

Some very interesting notes on the work done on the French roads during the war are contained in the *Bulletin de l'Association Internationale Permanente des Congrès de la Route*, November 1919.

The French Army commenced the war with 6,000 motor vehicles, and terminated it with 95,000. On French soil the British Army had a total of 45,000 motor vehicles and 800 Caterpillars, and the American Army had a total of 40,000 motor vehicles, giving a total of nearly 200,000 motor vehicles. Such huge numbers of vehicles in constant circulation naturally threw tremendous work upon the roads, and it is surprising how wonderfully the old national roads survived.

The greatest tasks which fell to the lot of the road engineers were those of enlarging subsidiary roads in order to resist the continuous circulation of motor traffic, and the building of new ones where roads did not previously exist, or where they had been entirely destroyed by the enemy.

In the French Army alone, 78,000 men were employed on this work and their material consisted of 1,700 lorries, 2,500 horse carts, 425 motor and steam road rollers and 1,000 watering carts. As regards road material employed,

the work necessitated the production, transport and use of over 27 million tons.

Apart from the ordinary road maintenance, the engineers constructed 540 miles of new roads and widened 5,400 miles of road from single to double track. It must be remembered that the circulation over some of the roads averaged between 3,000 and 6,000 per 24 hours during active operations, and during certain periods when a special military effort was in progress the number increased to as many as 12,000 vehicles per 24 hours.

The first famous "Voie Sacrée", on which was maintained the motor service which prevented Verdun from falling into the hands of the enemy, was, at the beginning of the offensive, a second-class road 13 ft. wide; this was increased to a width of 24 ft., and throughout the whole course of the battle two columns of motor vehicles were kept in circulation. The circulation of motor vehicles on this road attained 6,000 per 24 hours.

It was proved during the war that when the circulation of vehicles is more than 1,000 per 24 hours, it is absolutely essential to limit the macadamized surface by lateral obstacles situated at short intervals and formed of banks of earth, fences of small logs or stakes or borders of stone, which prevent vehicles from debouching on to soft ground at the sides. If not well cared for, even these protections are soon damaged, when the roads spread and the sides are quickly reduced to filthy morasses.

The widths of the roads required for the various classes of war traffic were 26 ft., to ensure a passage of two currents of motor lorries, plus a current of other vehicles; 19½ ft. to ensure the passage of two currents of lorries; 16 ft. to ensure the free circulation of vehicles, providing that there were no long convoys of lorries; 11 ft. 6 ins. for circulation in one direction only. In the last case it

was found unnecessary to use lateral obstacles at the sides of the roads.

It was ascertained that the camber of the roads should be very slight, and those devoted almost exclusively to motor vehicles practically flat, in order to avoid throwing excessive weight onto the wheels on the near side – a condition damaging to both the vehicles and the roads.

As regards the foundations required for roads, it was found that though a road without a foundation became impracticable at the end of a few days, a foundation alone, without its wearing surface, could be used in cases of extreme urgency. The most successful roads were made with a foundation of blocks of stone with sides of between six ins. and 10 ins. width, hand placed, with their longest dimension vertical, and well rolled in. On this foundation was placed a covering of similar material, broken small, in order to fill the joints. Foundations were also made of

bricks or of the blocks of stone taken from stone hedges etc., and the same principle of construction was applied, except in the case of *débris*, which was simply dumped into position and rolled. In the regions of the Somme, where stones do not exist, chalk was used, and in this case the foundations were made of thicknesses varying from 12 ins. to 24 ins., the chalk being highly compressed.

For enlarging the roads, small logs of a length of about 12 ft. and a diameter of about 8 ins., were found to very satisfactory for extra widths up to 9 ft. Three or more logs were placed parallel with the road on each side, and across these were placed, side by side a couch of shorter logs.

As regards the roads in the British zone, it was estimated that at the end of 1916 their upkeep necessitated the use of 10,000 tons of road material per day.

Work and Play ~ sundry snippets

(see The Picture Bus, Newsletter 38, p.16, 39, p.12)

Work: Tunbridge Wells retains another relic from the past – a works bus service, but if this conjures up visions of a line of double-deckers waiting for the factory whistle ... well, it's not quite like that nowadays. A single minibus brings ladies (and a few gents) unaccountably all the way from Sheerness and Sittingbourne to Turners meat-pie factory in the town. It used to be a contract until about two years ago, when it became fully licenced as an ordinary bus route. A 1¼ hour journey to work (and an 04.05 start) do not sound awfully appealing. Maybe, they get free pies with their elevenses to keep them motivated ...

Hardly play, but not work except for the bus driver ... another type of bus service common at one time – the hospital bus, for visitors to draughty sanatoria or mental institutions located miles from civilisation. A more prosaic present-day equivalent in Tunbridge Wells shuttles between the Kent & East Sussex Hospital in the town and the Pembury Hospital, inconveniently situated outside. The operator of the bus reflects successive tinkering with the structure of the NHS. Firstly, the Hospital Management Committee ran it themselves. Then, the HMC became an Area Health Authority, and the bus was contracted out to the County Social Services, who by all accounts made a bish of it. They were quickly succeeded by a private firm. Now the AHA has become an NHS Trust, and they, once again, run it themselves ...

Play: A modern variation on the picture or theatre bus theme: Mr Gieseppe Cappellazzi is the proprietor of the High Rocks Inn, a large hostelry and jazz venue. The High Rocks is a local beauty spot which backs onto the half of the same name on the Spa Valley Railway. Some years ago, Mr C. began running courtesy minibuses to and from the town for his patrons. The 1967 Road Traffic Act, which paved the way for the drink-driving limit and the breathalyser* led to a flowering of this sort of service, usually run by pub landlords or taxi firms, but few lasted very long. However, Mr. Cappellazzi's venture came much later, and he now runs it with 'proper' buses (former Reading Optare Metroriders) under a stage licence.

Now, as Roger Atkinson says, one thing *does* tend to lead to another ... Recalling Mr. Cappellazzi's efforts on behalf of those on pleasure bent, somehow cross-pollinated in my mind with Roy Bevin's childhood disappointment at being refused a ride on the "Motor Tram" at Swanage (Newsletter 39, p.14). This unlikely union produced the following offspring:

David Kaye's earlier booklet on the Shelvoke & Drewry Freighters, "Freighters on the Front" (Author, Worthing, 1963), lists the known bus users of these, including the one at Swanage. PR 2802 was operated by the Studland Motor Co., owned by a Captain Dean of the Swanage Garage. The "Motortram" carried trippers along the promenade and connected with the paddle-steamers that plied the route across the bay from Bournemouth. The business later passed to Russell Parsons of the Station Garage, who also owned the Beach Cafe. The opening of the Sandbanks Ferry, or 'floating bridge' in July 1926, (which may have sounded the death-knell for the steamers) led to Hants & Dorset Motor Services acquiring the Studland Motor Co. and its S&D, sometime in 1927/8.

The spiritual successor to the S&D Freighter (and distant cousins, the Guy and Vulcan "Runabouts") must indeed be the Dotto train, or perhaps we should say *il treno di Dotto*, since they are made in Italy, at Castelfranco Veneto in Treviso. The Dotto family formed Giochi Dotto (Dotto S.r.l.) in 1962. The current catalogue† lists the *Muson River*, *Zeus*, *V87*, *P90* (all olde-tyme outline), and *TM970* (modern outline) locomotive plus various, matching *carrozze*. There are petrol, diesel and electric-powered versions, exported world-wide. In the UK, TM970 trains were used at the Millennium Dome; the other types can be seen at numerous, mostly seaside locations.

In Eastbourne, the Dottos run along the promenade until they reach the pier, whereupon they switch to the roadway. Along this section, the slow-moving trains, laden with holidaymakers, and stopping every now and then, are a bit of a nuisance to other road users anxious to be about their business. But, I suppose work and play rarely mix and 'twas ever so.

David Harman

* The History of Road Safety by Gerald Cummins
www.driveandstayalive.com/info%20section/history/
† www.dottotrains.com/