

Newsletter

No.41
April 2005

The Roads & Road Transport History Association

In this issue

Researching the Northop Turnpike...	1
Academic Qualifications in Transport (History)/Qualifications in Transport Competence	4
Announcements	9
Letters to the Editor	10
Promenading in Hyde Park	12
Sources of information	13
Buses in Kashmir	14
Welcome to new members	14
The Bus Information Bureau - 85 Carlton Place	15
Government and Road Haulage ...	16
Memories	18
People to Remember - Tom Atkin ..	20
Editorial	20



President:

Professor John Hibbs O.B.E.

Chairman:

Garry Turvey C.B.E.
139 Imberthorne Lane
East Grinstead,
West Sussex,
RH19 1RP

Secretary:

Chris Hogan
124 Shenstone Avenue
Norton, Stourbridge,
DY8 3EJ

Treasurer:

Gordon Knowles
7 Squirrels Green,
Great Bookham, Surrey
KT23 3LE

Research Co-ordinator:

Ian Yearsley
97 Putney Bridge Road,
London SW15 2PA

Academic Adviser:

Professor John Armstrong
Thames Valley University
London W5 5RF

Newsletter Editor:

Roger Atkinson O.B.E.
45 Dee Banks, Chester
CH3 5UU
rogeratkinson@f2s.com

RESEARCHING THE NORTHOP TURNPIKE

by Sue Copp

Writing about turnpikes for my dissertation was entirely accidental. Originally I planned to do a study on bridges, aqueducts and crossings of one sort or another. Bridges have long been a source of fascination to me because I like to think of them symbolising man's endeavours to conquer land and water. In order to make the work practicable, I confined the study to my own area, North East Wales. However, it took only one visit to the Record Office to discover the difficulties with this plan, namely the abysmal lack of information on the subject. I might have done any amount of fieldwork, photographing and generally admiring these beautiful, symmetrical creations, but without concrete evidence it would have been a pointless exercise.

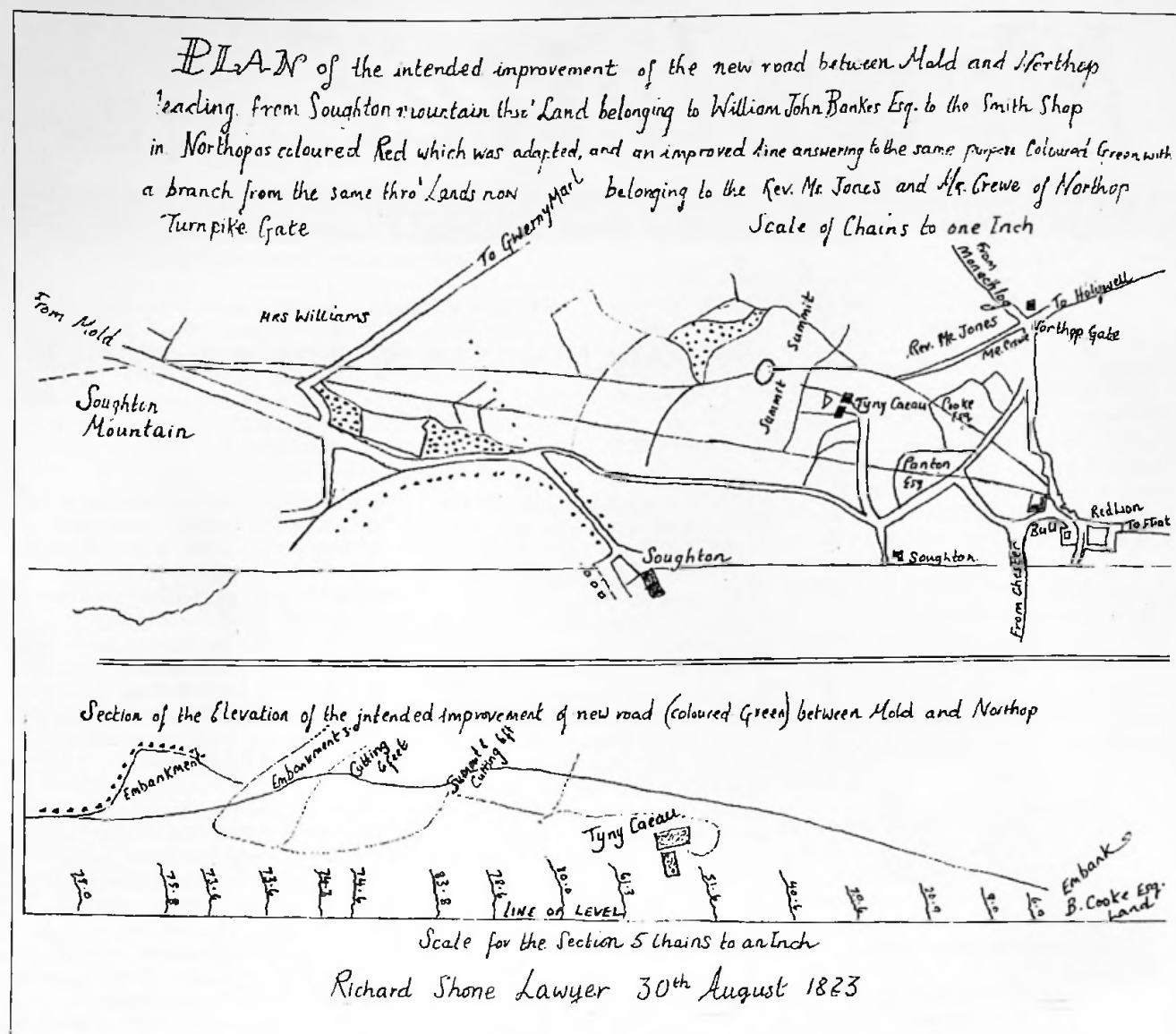
Sadly, I abandoned the Bridges of North East Wales. But as one door closed, another one swung open immediately when it dawned on me that the documents I had been casting aside in my feverish search for bridges were actually quite interesting. They were all about that other essential construction that enables people to go from A to B, roads. The gem of the material, as far as I could see, was a map. Quite a beautiful map of an almost childlike simplicity – see page 2. When I looked at it closely, I found that it was of a road in the village of Northop quite near to where I live. It was drawn up in 1823 and I recognised the names of some of the farms and landowners inscribed upon it. This fact stirred my interest. In the days before Ordnance Survey, most maps were made by people for private reasons so the information on them is, essentially, of local significance. The map had turnpikes marked on it and I knew something about Welsh Turnpikes and the

infamous daughters of Rebecca with their long and violent campaign to destroy the hated Toll Gates. But that was in another part of Wales. Did Rebecca operate in North East Wales? It was that question about Rebecca and the Toll Roads that validated the study for me. I had found a subject of a local nature but with links to other well documented historical events of a national and, I later discovered, international significance.

I took the new plan to my tutor, Steve Roberts, at NEWI (the North East Wales Institute), and he suggested that I look at the Turnpike Minutes and Cashbooks. Before I could do that, however, I had to find the right title and this became my main preoccupation. For weeks, I turned up at tutorials with a small sample of writing, each bearing a different title, each one longer and more convoluted than the last. Steve kindly endured my agonised indecision until finally, the unwieldy, 'History of Late 18th and Early 19th Century Roads and Transport in North East Wales', became simply, 'The Northop Turnpike'.

Using 1823 as a starting point, I searched for similar material and found it in great quantities. That map was just the first of many that turned up in the Quarter Sessions Rolls in the Record Office. Most of them were detailed plans to stop up or divert existing roads in order to create new turnpikes. This enabled me to fix my study to a specific area and time; the roads going through Northop in the first quarter of the 19th century.

Why there was such a profusion of them at this time did not occur to me immediately, but I later realised that there were links with the general Enclosure of land, the commutation of



tithes and expansion of industry. The village was situated upon the Flintshire coalfield and it was at the centre of three highways from Chester, Flint and Holywell. One of them linked with the main London to Holyhead Mail route, and after the Union with Ireland, the numbers of travellers on this 'Great Irish Road,' increased. All of the maps were still tightly laced together and tied up within the Rolls. They looked as if they had not seen the light of day for 200 years, so unrolling them and finding information on them was quite difficult. They were highly brittle and discoloured with age, and because of their condition could not be photographed or photocopied, so I obtained permission to copy them out, laboriously, by hand and spent a long time doing so. Everything was drawn upon one sheet of paper; the topography of the area, the written proposal and the job specifications.

To see how these plans were given the go ahead, I looked at the framework behind 19th century roads. It seemed to be largely unchanged since the time of Elizabeth I. Traditionally, the responsibility of the Parish, the able-bodied among the village inhabitants were obliged to give six hours statutory work a year towards their maintenance. But this system could not keep pace with new develop-

ments and there was urgent pressure from King and Parliament to improve road communications. The business generated by the Industrial Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars demanded it. Moreover, Mail had to be delivered, so general traffic increased and heavier loads ruined road surfaces. A new force emerged in the shape of Turnpike Trusts, made up of groups of people who took over responsibility for road building and maintenance.

The map of a road plan through a village in North East Wales opened up a line of enquiry that took me into areas of social and political importance that I would never have imagined. Through investigating a road I learned how people used it and also, something about what was happening on either side of it. The mineral wealth of the surrounding fields had to be transported to the roads in ever-increasing quantities. Strings of packhorses gave way to wagons, and bridle paths upgraded to cart roads to accommodate this. The rural population diversified from farming and began digging for coal, and there was an influx of people from England and Ireland seeking work. The future looked promising at that point. Flintshire was close enough to Lancashire to be affected by the heady, phenomenal growth of the cotton industry. It was rich in

Mold and Flint Road

Distance along the present road to the Red Lion Inn at Northop 2150 yards

Along the Red Coloured Line 2059

Difference 91 Red Colour shorter

Along the Green Coloured Line 2101

Difference 49 yds Green Line shorter

Mold and Holywell Road

Distance along the Present Road to the Northop Turnpike

Gate is 2238 yards

20 along the first adopted Line

Colour red to said Gate 2128 yds

Difference 115 yds Red Line shorter

along Green coloured Line 2002

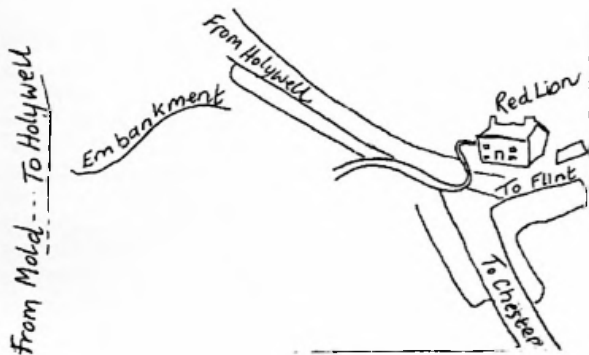
Difference 2361 yds Green Line shorter

Note The Length of the Hill on the Red Coloured line
being of one Elevation 286 yards to the Summit rises 67
feet at 27 inches per yard or 1 in 13

The Length of the Hill on the Green Coloured Line

from Mr. Cookes Meadows to the Summit above Tyny
Craeu is 495 yards rises 70 feet 3 inches at an

Elevation of 170 Inches per yard or 1 in 21



coal, iron ore and lead, and one sign of its lively economy is in the evidence that in the first quarter of the 19th century, the county experienced both the greatest and the fastest growth rate in Wales, according to settlement and population statistics.

Maps led to plans, to Acts of Parliament, to house, land and timber sales and gave a fascinating glimpse of the way local landowners planned their grand schemes of annexing common land and of changing road access so that villagers were compelled to use the new Toll Roads. These roads were a source of misery to many poor local people and sometimes caused discord among the rich with unneighbourly disputes about rights of way. The Turnpike Trusts had many regulations that were deemed unfair to locals.

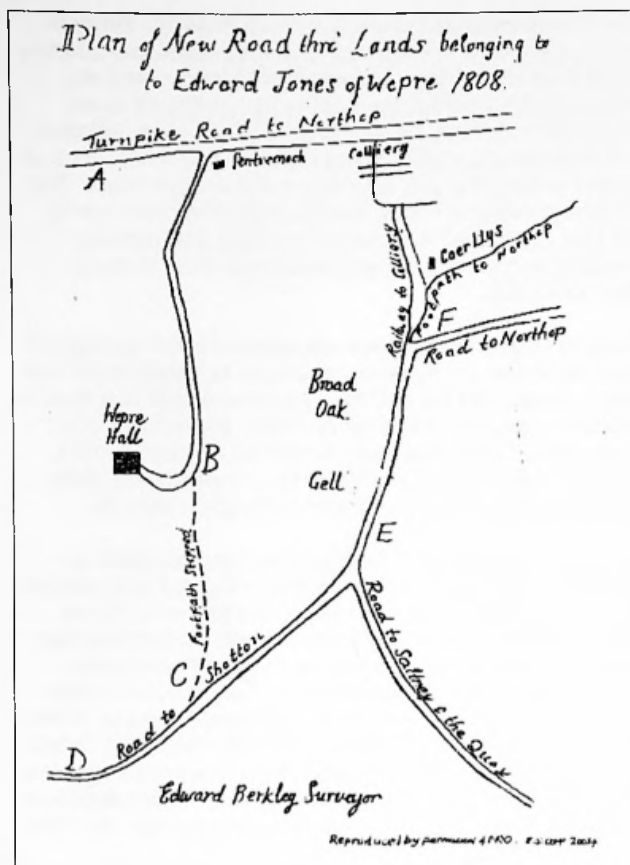
There were even strict rules about advertising. Farmers and carriers were fined for having their name and address painted upon the sides of their carts in letters over one inch high! Meanwhile, the road work continued apace. The plans and maps became reality. While some villagers mended existing roads, others strove to build new ones. A picture emerged about how they tackled these tasks. The stone was extracted from local quarries. I visited one in the area and found the ground was high and densely wooded, so transporting materials must have been an Herculean task.

However road building was remunerative and provided work for many people from craftsmen to labourers of both sexes. Despite all the building, roads were still in a terrible condition and dangerous to travel on. It was clear that many people still preferred to travel in the comparative comfort of the coastal ferries for the greater part of their journey and avoid being bounced along in carriages.

It was at this point that I encountered bridges again in reports of accidents where they had collapsed and washed away, sending travellers plunging into torrential rivers. One account laid special emphasis upon the fact that the mail was saved as well as human life and that furthermore, it was still delivered on time! Such was the reverence for the Mail that post routes determined many of the new roads in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. While local Turnpike Trusts developed roads to serve their industrial interests, the government had quite a different reason for intervening in the road building programme - the Irish Mail.

The Flintshire coalfield never realised its full potential. Although the South Wales coalfield is bigger, it did not develop until the second half of the 19th century. In the early 19th century, industry in North East Wales was already established, while Cardiff was still a township as late as 1851. Two vital decisions helped to tilt the industrial balance; the Government policy to take control of the North Wales Turnpikes in order to complete Telford's road, and the Admiralty's decision to give their order to South Wales. Flintshire would never have reached the production levels of Glamorgan, but its ascendancy was curtailed prematurely. Some mine owners said that transport problems strangled development and insulated them from the markets. There were certainly many forces pulling in different directions. In 1808, the Northop Colliery had one of the first iron roads in the country built to take coal down to the quayside, yet when the railway did arrive years later, this facility was not improved. (Another very simple map of 1808 is illustrated overleaf). Instead, railways competed with the new Turnpikes to take over the Irish Mail. The Mail, not industry, was the first consideration.

After 1830, there was general depression and unemployment. Historians agree that industry in North Wales declined, as that in South Wales increased, from 1830 onwards, although it did revive at the turn of the 20th century. The transport system of Flintshire was a contributory factor to this decline, as it failed to provide enough good roads in time. Manufacturers found the high ground and fast flowing rivers ideal for powering mills but problematic for transporting goods. Canal development was limited by high ground and the railway network was still a pipedream. So while Turnpike companies were opposing the development of railways, canal schemes were abandoned and coal companies closed. Railways did not



impact on Flintshire industry until 1849, and during the preceding 20 years industry had declined.

The reason for the new roads, 19th century industry, is long gone from the village of Northop. The 'Northop Turnpike' still exists and the diversions created from the 1823 map are travelled upon to this day, but now they run through quiet countryside. Where the new road plan was part of a much larger, busier picture in 1823, it has dwindled now to a very minor road.

The dissertation was part of my last year at NEWI, in Wrexham, where I had been studying History with English full time. A fellow student was looking at coach travel in the 18th century and we had some general discussions but did not work together. Our interest was from opposing

viewpoints. She was interested in vehicles and journeys whereas I was keen on road building and the effects on society. She was dashing off with her coaches and I was watching them go by. I found all of the primary sources that I needed in the Flintshire Record Office in Hawarden. Although I could have used archives in the record offices at Ruthin and Chester, I found myself with more material than I could handle in Hawarden. One manuscript always led to another and there were many different aspects to look at and endless possibilities. As well as the Quarter Sessions Rolls, I looked at Estate papers, Trade Directories and contemporary newspapers, which were a very productive source of information. Advertisements for house and land sales often mentioned the proximity of a Turnpike or the promise of one to be built soon, as a selling point.

So I travelled alone along the highway of early transport study and felt a strong sense of identity with the place I was writing about. I actually passed through it every day on my way to college and that gave it a certain piquancy. If I had to name a useful quality for historical research, I would say intense curiosity. In my case I wanted to know how roads were used and I was more interested in the people that lived with a road than those who travelled through. I never did find out if the Daughters of Rebecca had been active in Northop, but by sticking with the local traffic angle, I discovered much more than I ever believed would be possible.

Sue Copp December 2004

Sue Copp was awarded a BA (Hons) in History with English by the University of Wales last summer. She is a library assistant for Flintshire Libraries and has been able to fit in a 'full time' course at the North East Wales Institute in Wrexham, with her employment hours. She has now enrolled for further studies at NEWI with the aim of achieving an MA. She has joined the R&RTHA.

Your Editor thanks Steve Roberts, her tutor at NEWI for introducing Sue Copp; her article provides an excellent prelude to the debate, on the next few pages of this *Newsletter*, on the present state of education in transport and transport history and the allied subject of qualifications in transport competence.

Academic Qualifications in Transport (History) Qualifications in Transport Competence

These two topics are different, but their paths sometimes cross. The views which follow have been collected by invitation, but there is no Editorial attempt to weld them together or to reconcile those that are plainly different. They are presented for readers to mull over and, if they wish, comment upon.

John Edser's views were among the earliest to come in. Some of the academics have had the opportunity of seeing what John Edser had said, and to counter-comment. We start with John Edser:-

Turning to education and transport, there is not much to

shout about, as far as I am concerned.

I am one of six people whom I would describe as "transport professionals", all West Midlands Region members, who have collectively raised the whole question with our professional body, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, as we all see problems ahead.

There seem to be three basic problem areas:

The first is that logistics, transport and the supply chain are barely, if at all, mentioned in the school curriculum. With the tremendous pressure of all the other subjects and

initiatives that secondary schools are bombarded with, the normal reaction is that "If it ain't in the curriculum, we don't teach it" This leads to 14-18 year-olds having no ideas of the huge range of career opportunities the industry has to offer – apart from HGV driving, airline pilot, air steward or train driver. As a result, when transport etc careers appear on the UCAS undergraduate course list, they are almost completely ignored. If the new 14-19 year-old mixed vocational / academic route proposed recently by Tomlinson is adopted by the government, it would give us a chance to put modules into this area.

The second problem is that, even if they are interested, finding the appropriate course is not easy, because they appear under so many different subject areas. I do not have the undergraduate details, but the *Education Guardian* publishes a list of the post-graduate two or three times a year. The March 2005 edition gave details of 82 logistics / transport / supply chain courses, in nine different subject areas.

Built environment	2	both Transport Planning
Business and Management	13	modal
	18	general
Civil Engineering	} 14	general (including several
(non-engineering courses)	}	Transport Planning)
Economics	1	
Environmental Studies	3	
General Engineering	} 3	modal - all shipping
(non engineering courses)	}	general
Leisure, Management & Tourism	1	
Logistics and Supply Chain Management	14	
Mechanical /Aeronautical &	} 3	air
Manufacturing Engineering	} 1	general
Social and Policy Administration	1	shipping
Town & Country Planning	10	including 8 Transport Planning

Of these, only one – in Civil Engineering – was specifically "road" orientated – perfect support for my argument.

The third point largely concerns the profession itself. Unfortunately, unlike the Civil Engineers, Chartered Accountants and some other professional bodies, there is no "glass ceiling" that people in the industry cannot get through unless they have both academic and practical qualifications. This, in turn, means that although the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport has various levels of membership, with their own academic and practical levels of attainment, they are not binding within the industry, which can, in theory, employ anyone they like in a managerial role.

The Institute is trying to raise its profile, but the lack of this "ceiling" makes it a slow and uphill struggle. It also means that anyone entering the industry does not necessarily have to be a member of its professional body. So, in a way, we return to the first point – no need for a qualification in Logistics / Transport etc.

I hope that readers may find this useful – and not too depressing!

John Edser has a university degree in Mediaeval History. In the course of his long career with British Rail, he lectured in Management & Training Courses at the BR School of Transport, where he found trainees with degrees ranging from archaeology to zoology.

Next, Professor Colin Divall :

From transport history to the history of transport, traffic and mobility (T2M)

Transport history in British universities is far from a lost cause, although its present form might not be familiar to anyone brought up on the diet of social and economic history propounded in this country from the 1960s by distinguished scholars such as Derek Aldcroft, or the late Theo Barker and Michael Robbins. It's all too tempting to see the late 1960s and early 1970s as the Golden Age of transport historiography. The publication of textbooks or synthetic works covering several modes of transport, such as Dyos and Aldcroft's *British Transport* (1969) and Bagwell's *The Transport Revolution from 1770* (1974) suggested a field both alive with new ideas and possessing the means to convey these to a new generation. Certainly, as a quick glance through back issues of the *Journal of Transport History* shows, significant numbers of doctoral students were then at work in the field. I can only assume (as one who was very firmly still at secondary school) that

undergraduate courses, either focussing entirely on transport or incorporating significant elements of it, were available, at least in those universities and polytechnics employing the key academics. It would be good to know more.

What then of the present?

Clearly there is a feeling in some quarters that educational opportunities are not what they were. My inclination is to suggest that detractors should be more open-minded about what is to count as transport history. As the recent founding of the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility

(T2M) (www.t2m.org) suggests, there is plenty of interest elsewhere, particularly, although not exclusively, in North America and continental Europe. Several large-scale research programmes concerned with the history of transport are being, or have recently been funded, by the European Union in its various guises; notably COST 340: Towards a European Intermodal Transport Network: Lessons from History (the final conference of which is due to meet in Paris next June) (www.cordis.lu/cost_transport/src/cost_340.htm), and the mobility strand of the European Science Foundation's massive Tensions of Europe inquiry into the role of technology in the making of twentieth-century Europe (www.histech.nl/tensions/). At a more modest level, here in York we are about to embark on a joint venture with the Family and Community History Research Society, mapping the growth of public-transport networks in Britain between the world wars. Roads and road transport play a large part in these and similar projects, although as with the best of transport historiography these days, they tend to feature more as part of a wide-ranging mode of analysis treating transport in the round than as stand-alone objects of inquiry.

Whilst there are few, if any opportunities for students below the doctoral level to become involved in projects such as these, it is still possible to take university courses in the history of transport. Indeed, with the development of distance-learning packages at graduate Certificate level at the University of York (www.york.ac.uk/inst/irs) over

the last few years, initially in railway history and now, from January 2005, in the history of transport, traffic and mobility, it is arguably easier than it has ever been for a would-be student to follow her or his interest. Here again roads are treated as part of the transport system as a whole, although recognizing the desire of some to specialize, we intend to offer an optional module covering the history of road transport as soon as resources allow. An option on the history of urban transport (generously funded by The National Tramway Museum) already exists. Postgraduate work, either through a taught-MA programme or by research to MA level or beyond, does require some attendance at the University, but as successful students have lived as far away as Penzance and north of Inverness, distance is not necessarily the object it once was. Nor are undergraduates neglected. Most years we offer final-year history students a 'special subject' with a transport theme, and generally it is both fully subscribed and very favourably received. It is gratifying, to say the least, to have around 20 twenty-year olds, half (and sometimes more) of them women, choosing to spend a whole term learning about the history of transport and enjoying it. The trick — if trick it is — is to recognize that the subject is likely to be appeal to the present generation of students if transport is used as a prism through which to view the development of society in the round, and perhaps too as a way of exploring present-day difficulties and challenges associated with apparently ever-increasing levels of personal mobility. Whilst this can, and does mean, using some of the ideas developed by earlier generations of scholars, it also involves drawing upon more recent approaches, such as cultural history and histories of consumption. It would be going too far to suggest that the history of transport, traffic and mobility currently enjoys the reputation it had in the 1960s and 1970s as an intellectually cutting-edge subject, but the potential is there.¹

Professor Colin Divall
Institute of Railway Studies &
Transport History, York

1. C. Divall and G. Revill, 'Cultures of transport: representation, practice and technology', *Journal of Transport History* 3rd ser., vol.26(1) (forthcoming, March 2005).

Dr Corinne Mulley:

Transport history, (treating history as from yesterday backwards), is scattered all over the country as we know.

What you are perhaps unaware of is that the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) held a conference last year in Cardiff - called an Audit for Change - which looked at and synthesised information on all transport undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, as well as professional routes that someone interested in transport could take.

David Stewart-David, (who is an R&RTHA member - see *Newsletter No.38* p.7) ran the conference as part of his responsibilities in the CILT and Margaret Everson (in the CILT Cardiff Office) managed it.

To include a wider view you should also be aware of the growing Centre for Transport Research on the more social science side at the University of the West of England (UWE), in Bristol, as well as the more traditional centres which have grown out of civil engineering and economics, such as the Institute for Transport Studies (ITS), University of Leeds. With the movement of Steve Glaister

to Imperial College, London, Imperial have a much wider brief than one might have previously thought relevant etc.

Perhaps the widest view of what is done in Universities is provided by University Transport Study Group (UTSG), which has a membership of about 60 UK (and Eire) higher education institutions. There is a UTSG website but if you want more information on this, please come back to me.

Dr Corinne Mulley, Senior Lecturer in Transport Economics, Transport Operations Research Group, School of Engineering and Geosciences, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU

Professor Margaret Walsh:

I have read Colin Divall's splendid and sensible piece and have also read John Edser's pessimistic view. I don't think I am suitably equipped to answer your query, which is probably why I delayed the first time round. I now teach in American Studies, which at Nottingham is a School dominated by literary and cultural approaches. I have been researching long distance bus transport in the USA for a long time and have published in this area, both in book form and in many articles,* but this is not my only research interest. As an Americanist in the UK, I have to be flexible rather than very specialised and so I have researched and written on the American West and on American women's history.

In order to obtain a full account on transport studies in higher education you really need a researcher to do a survey. I am even uncertain that you have approached the full range of persons to contact. I am particularly surprised to see that you had not contacted anyone at Loughborough University, where they have a transport department, but I am uncertain into what aspect they specialise. I do, however know, that if I wish to do some work on British transport I go to Loughborough University Library.

John Edser may be correct in what he says, but he is coming at transport studies from a particular angle, namely logistics and transport. Someone ought to do a survey of Civil Engineering Departments to see what they are doing. I assume that they are still turning out transport engineers (I come from a family where the males were civil engineers and all happened to be in roads). Then someone ought to check out economics departments to ascertain whether transport economics is on the books or whether that is now in Urban Planning. Then of course there are the geographers who consider that space is their area and they can hardly cover space without dealing with communications and mobility.

I know that the historians are not currently involved with transport, as I rarely meet anyone who calls themselves a transport historian at professional conferences, other than at the newly founded T2M (Transport, Technology and Mobility) who will be having their 3rd international conference at the National Railway Museum in York in October this year.

I wish I could be of more help, but I fear that the views of 5-6 persons who have been or are connected to universities will NOT give you a correct feeling for what is ongoing. It will give you a sample of views and these are not a random sample. Rather they are people who currently belong to R&RTHA. There are many others who

should be consulted, but because I move in professional circles which are primarily Americanist or economic/labour history, I can only talk from my experience, which I know is not typical.

*Professor Maggie Walsh
American & Canadian Studies
University of Nottingham*

- * See Newsletter No.37 p.14, for example, for a review of the book "Suburbanizing the Masses" which contained an article by Maggie Walsh. Ed.

Professor John Armstrong

I have not got much to add to this debate, but one or two thoughts occur.

Firstly, we need to distinguish between transport studies - what John Edser is discussing - and transport history, about which Colin writes. I know nothing about, and therefore cannot comment on, the former. On the latter, there are some Master's programmes in maritime history (at Exeter, Greenwich and Hull at least). I am also aware of one or two papers in transport history at Liverpool John Moore's University in their degree in history, as I was external examiner there.

I know of no undergraduate degree in transport history, or any of its components. There may be other papers at finals level - perhaps at Leicester or Bournemouth - depending on the interests of individual scholars. I believe there is at least one paper at Nottingham on history of tourism, which has some elements of transport in it.

We might see an allied discipline in business history. I suspect that would throw up some transport-related history, such as on the railways or shipping, but I am doubtful that it would add many undergraduate courses of study in transport per se.

Sorry if this adds next to nothing. If someone had the time, an e-mail questionnaire could elicit some data that might be interesting. I do not have the space to do any such thing in the near future, but would be willing to guide anyone with some spare hours.

*Professor John Armstrong,
Thames Valley University*

Professor Armstrong was the supervising Editor of the *Companion to British Road Haulage History* published by the Science Museum in collaboration with the R&RTHA in 2003.

- To summarise at this point: we have John Edser - a pessimist; the academics distinctly more optimistic. Maggie Walsh validly saying that this survey is conducted on a very limited base. But, independently of all the foregoing, readers are recommended to refer back to Sue Copp's opening article in this Newsletter. Hopefully, they will see that road transport history, in the right hands, can be an interesting and inspiring subject, even achieved at institutions that broadcast no pretensions to offering transport studies.

However, John Edser is not really a lone voice crying in the wilderness. He gets a lot of backing when we look at lower-level practicalities, and glance at lower-level qualifications. Our next item takes extracts (by kind permission) from an article in the February 2005 issue of "Freight", the magazine of the Freight Transport Association

Where Have All the Truckers Gone?

An interview with Rebecca Jenkins,
Managing Director of Lane Group Plc

The situation that freight transport finds itself in is, quite frankly, scary. With the average age of drivers now well into the fifties, recruitment in the industry could fall off the proverbial cliff "in two or three years time"

The organisation Skills for Logistics is now gathering momentum, with, for example, a new website available to give school leavers and their careers advisors a place to go to find information. Meanwhile, there is a huge amount of work to be done. "Careers advisors have no comprehension of what this industry is about; it's not even being discussed as a career option. However, you can't necessarily blame the advisors. Where would they get information? It's only recently that we've had the Sfl website - at long last"

At the Lane Group, great emphasis is placed on offering employees a complete career structure, and one or two other companies are adopting the same approach. "But there is still such a poor perception of this industry. The image is still one of pot-holed yards and Alsatian dogs".

The irony of it all is that the freight business is now very sophisticated - IT whizzkids will find all the outlets for their talents they could possibly wish for - and it actually has a very good record of promoting people from the 'shop floor' (Rebecca Jenkins herself started, at the age of 21, as a lorry driver delivering frozen chickens).

There could, though, be a glimmer of hope. "One really great thing is that the government has finally agreed to vocational training in schools, which will be a massive step forward, and to rate them equally with academic qualifications".

Really, all that is happening is that the education system is putting back that middle layer of training that used to be called apprenticeships, back in the days when the UK still had factories, shipyards and coal mines.

The pity is that when the industry does reach out to youngsters, the results can be very encouraging. "Like, for instance, when we got 200 youngsters together at the Commercial Vehicle Show. We asked them before what their image of the industry was, and it wasn't very positive, with only two of the 200 saying they'd consider a career in the industry. At the end of the show, it was up to 90%. And talking to careers advisors - their eyes open as well"

But the problem is that this outreach work is not happening at anything like the scale and speed it needs if it is to have an impact on the industry's gathering recruitment crisis. "Yes, I know we are competing with IT, computers - sexy things like that. But that perception gap has got to be changed somehow".

Getting quality, specialised logistics management is not easy either. "If you ask for a finance director, the recruitment agency gives you a thick file of potential candidates. But finding a logistics manager - it's damned hard". More people are studying logistics or supply chain management at university level than before, "but it just isn't moving at a quick enough pace".

People need to think more widely about transport issues.

"Take where we are here in Portbury (Lane's Bristol base and HQ). The infrastructure here is great, except for one thing - everyone needs a car to get to work, because we just don't have good, reliable public transport" Other European countries manage to run regular and reliable bus services through major industrial estates. For instance, there is a bus stop right outside Exel Logistics HQ in the small Belgian town of Mechelen. So why can't the fourth largest economy in the world do it?

Finally, two 'shop-floor level' items to show that the attainment of qualifications is a goal that can yield a sense of pride in participating in the road transport industry. Whether qualifications bring either financial reward or advancement is not so clear, but even pride in the job can help the image of transport work.

Firstly, an illustration of the back of a Stagecoach East Midlands bus ticket issued in August 2003, advertising vacancies at the Workshop depot.

TRAIN TO BE A BUS DRIVER

Joining our friendly team of Bus Drivers couldn't be easier. Right now we need both men and women at our Workshop depot. All we ask is that you're aged between 21-60, in good health, well presented, hold a full clean driving licence and that you're friendly - and most importantly, punctual!

WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN HEARING FROM BOTH WOMEN & MORE MATURE PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HOLD A PSV LICENCE.

- £5.75 per hour on completion of training rising to £6.66 after 1 years service.
- Lots of overtime opportunities.
- Industry leading pension scheme after qualifying period
- Free uniform and opportunities for promotion
- 20 days' paid holiday & Sick Pay Scheme
- Travel concessions & opportunity to gain NVQ

Find out more. Call for an application form
Stagecoach 01909 473421

TRAIN TO BE A BUS DRIVER

Joining our friendly team of Bus Drivers couldn't be easier. Right now we need both men and women at our Workshop depot. All we ask is you're aged between 21-60, in good health, well presented, hold a good clean driving licence and that you're friendly - and most importantly, punctual!

Among the incentives cited: - Opportunity to obtain NVQ. So, the opportunity to obtain a National Vocational Qualification is felt to be a job incentive.

Secondly, it was announced last December by the training organisation Edexcel that they were offering a qualification in a road transport associated job:

WHEEL CLAMPERS MOVE FORWARD WITH NEW AWARD. Up to 1500 wheel clampers will improve their customer service skills over the next year, with a course launched by Edexcel.

Trainees will start by studying the history of vehicle immobilisation. They will learn where to find vehicle registration marks, and where, and where not, to clamp. If they attain at least 70% in unit one, they will move on to unit two which "requires vehicle immobilisers to know how to minimise conflict in aggressive situations".

BOOK REVIEW

Trams, Trolleybuses & Buses And The Law

By Michael Yelton

Published by Adam Gordon,

Kintradwell House, Brora, Sutherland KW9 6LU

ISBN 1-87442251-6 Price £15

This book is a gem. Michael Yelton is to be congratulated on producing a meticulously researched and very readable volume on a subject that is incredibly complex. The book is intended to explain the regulatory landscape of the industry prior to deregulation. It is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter contains numerous plates which include copies of legal documents, statutes, timetables and faretables. These certainly add to the feel of the subject being covered, but would benefit from some form of commentary in the text.

Chapters one and two cover the legal forms of organization in road transport from independent sole traders to municipal and statutory undertakings, and the subsequent development of the industry. The wealth of detail is fascinating. Legal cases are explained and analysed in a style that is easy to comprehend, and at times gives a real sense of the drama of the day. The third chapter is devoted entirely to trams and trolleybuses, which of course operated under a set of regulations very different to those applying to bus services. Coverage of the law on buses is covered in four chapters, the first of which deals with the period prior to the Road Traffic Act, 1930, where the role of local authorities is once again to the fore. The next two chapters deal with Road Service Licensing from its introduction until abolition in 1985. The first of these deals with the situation up until 1947, the second with the period after the Transport Act, 1947 through to 1985. Self-evidently the period 1930-1985 is too long to be covered in one chapter, and whilst the 1947 Act had a profound impact upon ownership of the industry, the provisions relating to operation were never implemented in full. Perhaps a better division would have been either 1939 or 1945. The chapter covers the major adjustments to the system up to an including the Transport Act, 1980 and concludes by mentioning that the 'licensing maze' was finally abolished by the Transport Act, 1985. Whilst one accepts that the book is intended to deal with the period prior to de-regulation a brief outline of the system of registration introduced under this latter Act would be a useful addition. The final chapter deals with the licensing of bus services in London from 1930 until 1985, which have long been subject to separate arrangements. Much attention is devoted to the position of 'London Transport' and the interface between neighbours where a different regulatory framework applied. Explanation of the arrangement for franchise would complete the picture.

This book fills an important gap in the literature, and is an invaluable source of reference. It should appeal to general readers and enthusiasts as well as those who are engaged in academic research and deserves a place on the bookshelf of those fascinated by the history and development of public road passenger transport.

Kevin Hey, University of Salford

Announcements

Editor : Roger Atkinson, 45 Dee Banks,
Chester CH3 5UU
Tel:- 01244 – 351066
e-mail rogeratkinson@f2s.com

► NEW MEMBERS

At or since the R&RTHA Symposium in Derby last autumn, the following new members have joined the Association:

The Road Haulage Association
Mrs Sue Copp of Connahs Quay
Graham Edge of Swaffham Prior
John M Guttridge of Bromley
Mrs S N Hill (Sue Buckley) of Clitheroe
Dr E Keith Lloyd of Southampton
R J McCloy of Byfleet
T B Maund of Oxtun, Wirral
Geoffrey Morant of Beckenham
Graham Smith of Luton

► ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS

Contributors to *Newsletter* are very welcome to have their addresses and/or phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses published with their contributions – or not to have them published, if they do not wish. If no preference is expressed, contributors' names are likely to appear as name and town, in a manner similar to that used for the listing of new members (above)

► THE CLASSIC COMMERCIAL MOTOR SHOW 2005

Our very active corporate member, the Classic Commercial Vehicle Club, which celebrates its 40th birthday this year, is holding the Classic Commercial Motor Show at its usual location, the Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire, on 11-12 June 2005. On Saturday 11 June, from 12 – 6; Sunday 9 – 5. Admission £8-00 for either day £12-00 for a 2-day ticket. Children 5-16 £6-00, Seniors £7-00, £25-00 for a Family Ticket. This year, there will be a visitors' car park, but at some walking distance from the main entrance. The organisers are hoping to arrange for a vintage bus to shuttle passengers towards the show in the morning and back in the late afternoon – but at the time we go to press, this remains a hope, not a certainty.

The Show is a major event with a wonderful array of restored commercial vehicles and lots of stalls to look at. There is a cafeteria in the main building that can cope with the crowds; and various catering stalls outside as well. An event well worth considering for an outing; but if you would like more information, ring Malcolm Mortimer on 077906 87590. If your Editor's experience is anything to go by, you will find him a most helpful gentleman with general information for the potential visitor.

► R&RTHA SYMPOSIUM 2005

The full programme of speakers will be in the next *Newsletter*, No.42, due out in mid-June, but members may care to note that the venue and date for this year's Symposium have now been fixed. It will be at Chester on

Saturday 15 October 2005. It will be in the Moat House Hotel in the city centre, more or less behind the Town Hall. We hope to be in the same room that we had in 2003, with its view of the Clwydian Hills in Wales.

► SYMPOSIUM BOOKLETS

"Booklet" may convey the wrong impression, since these are full A4-size productions. The 2004 booklet is now out. It includes the papers presented by David Lowe on "Legislation of the 1960s & 1970s and its impact on British Road Haulage", two linked papers: "Road Service Licensing in context 1918-1929" by Kevin Hey and "Road Service Licensing in context 1930-1985" by John Hibbs. Then follows the verbatim record made of "What the past tells us about motorways of the future" by Sir Peter Baldwin and, finally, "'Checkpoint Charlie', the enforcement of road traffic legislation on the A1 in the 1960s" by Bob Kilsby.

A survey taken among those who attended the Symposium gave high praise to its content (but rather less praise for the room and catering at Derby). Re-reading the papers at leisure in their published form backs up entirely the view that they contained very sound and worthwhile material, with Sir Peter Baldwin's inspirational style of delivery also being brought out in the transcript of his talk.

The Symposium 2004 booklet is available at £4-00 post-free from:

Roger Atkinson, 45 Dee Banks, Chester CH3 5UU.

Cheques payable to R&RTHA Ltd, please.

Copies of the 2002 and 2003 booklets: "Learning from History" (Derby, October 2002) and "A Medley of Thoughts" (Chester, 2003), are also still available, at £4-00 and £2-50 respectively. Or 2002 and 2003 together £6-00; all three years, 2002, 2003 and 2004 together, £9-00 post free. (Fuller details of the 2002 and 2003 booklets were given in *Newsletter* No.37 p.6).

NEWSLETTER No.42

- The target date for issue of No.42 is

23 June 2005.

- Contributions by 21 May, please
- Provisional target date for No. 43 is

8 September, 2005

- Contributions by 6 August

- The 2005 subscription covers Nos.41 to 44

Letters to the Editor

MILK DELIVERY IN THE 1950s (*Newsletter 40, p.19*)



Roger de Boer's item roused some memories, but he has got it slightly wrong on Wacaden Dairies. They were Wathes, Cattell and Gurden—not as he recited them. At that time they were probably the main suppliers of sterilized milk, with exclusive wholesale rounds, as well as some 19 depots in Birmingham. They had two wholesale rounds serving Coventry, Monday to Saturday. They also probably took milk from what would have been Mr Ernest Debenham's dairy farms.* My knowledge on this source of supply only dates from the 1950s, by when milk was being supplied from farms on Ernest Debenham's estate through Bladen's Independent Dairy and delivered by their Foden rigid-eight tankers.

Gordon Mustoe, Solihull

* Sir Ernest Debenham's dairy farms in Dorset, at the beginning of the 1930s, were mentioned in the article on A H Scammell and Southern Roadways in *Newsletter 40, p.17*. The farm had been started on 14,000 acres in the Piddle Valley at Briantspuddle. This land was bought in 1914 with the intention of building a 'model farm' to prove that England could be self-supporting in food. And this was coupled with concern for the farm workers. It appears, that it followed the example set by Cadbury at Bourneville, Lord Leverhulme at Port Sunlight, and Sir Titus Salt at Saltaire etc, but was geared towards agriculture instead of industry. The farm had its own central dairy and produced 20,000 gallons a day in the late '20's/early '30's. It seems that Southern Roadways, in conjunction with Mayhew in Birmingham, ran a nightly trunk milk transporting service.

*Roy Larkin,
Northfield, Birmingham*

EXPRESS MOTORS CENTENARY – 2008

I was encouraged to write after reading the 'lead' article in *Newsletter No.40, 'Making an Exhibition of Yourself'*, about eliciting local information on the history of bus operators. I would like to seek assistance with a project to celebrate 100 years of a local North Wales bus operator. Express Motors, based at Caernarfon, will be celebrating its centenary in 2008, and the present proprietor, Mr Eric Wyn Jones, wishes to publish a book covering the company's history and development during that time. He already has a great deal of information, photographs etc, but is looking for an experienced person to do some research and collate the results.

The company has been operating in the Caernarfon area both as a stage carriage and private hire business, and is now, next to Arriva Cymru, the largest service operator in north west Wales.

May I, through *Newsletter*, ask either R&RTHA individual members or corporate bodies if there is anybody who would be interested in the work, fee to be negotiated, with a view to publishing a book for Express Motors centenary year?

Interested members should, in the first instance, contact Mr Jones on 01286 881108. I hope that this does raise some interest from *Newsletter* readers.

*Brian Bigwood FILT, FinstTA,
Bontnewydd, Caernarfon*

BOWLAND and THE BOUNTY MOTOR SERVICE (*Newsletter No.40, pp.9-12*)

Thank you very much for the latest edition of the R&RTHA Newsletter, a most interesting collection of items. The piece on Bowland Transit by Sue Buckley and yourself is of great interest to me and I am very pleased that such a modern development is recorded here.

You will be aware that Bounty, based at Slaidburn, was in the Yorkshire Traffic Area and thus were one of the fleets I wished to record. This led me to Gerald Emerton of Acton, Nantwich whom I had met in Shropshire a few years ago, when I mounted an exhibition on local buses in the Bishop's Castle area. Among his collection of preserved buses is one in Bounty livery, although it was not a member of that fleet. Gerald lived in the area during the war years and attributes much of his interest in buses to that time.

In addition to this, my uncle was vicar at Whitechapel until his retirement about ten years ago, but he is still very active in the churches in the area when clergy are on holiday etc; he now lives at Longridge, both places being on Bowland routes.

Finally I must comment on the excellent account by Philip Kirk of his exhibition in connection with Trimdon Motor Services. My own experiences of doing similar research allow me to recognise many of the points Philip makes, not least the amount of tea to be consumed, although that was never a problem to me! I suspect that the fascination with bus fares "in old money" has much to do with their relative cost when compared to the low incomes of many passengers.

*John P Bennett,
Loughborough*

► John Bennett introduced himself to readers in the *Chairman's Bulletin* (January 2004), and indeed, mentioned there his interest in operations around "Thirsk, Northallerton, Bowland ..." Ed RA

WALTER HENRY GAUNT and LETCHWORTH (*Newsletter 38, p.3; 40, p.5*)

I found the write-up on Gaunt very illuminating. It's amazing how much research people have done. I have used some of the Trafford Park and Letchworth material in an obituary which I intend to place on the J Lyons website www.kzwp.com/lyons/. You will see I have given the appropriate acknowledgements.

*Peter Bird,
Wokingham*

Many thanks for the *Newsletter* with the article on Letchworth. The horse drawn omnibus is very interesting, as you can see T. Brooker's Ironmongery shop clearly at the back. My father knew Thomas Brooker for years, and even had an account there. My father had a shop in Leys Avenue where Eaton's Fruit shop was. I do not remember Eaton's; they must have ceased trading by the 1950s.

I have just completed an undergraduate diploma (distance learning) with Exeter University. I hope to continue with my history studies, but may take a year off, as I have been studying for three years. I have recently returned from an investigative trip to Swaziland.

It may interest you to know that I put a modest collection of my railway tickets in the Talana Museum here in Dundee, and it was featured in the local newspaper. Talana Museum is right in front of Talana Hill where the first battle of the Boer War took place. The Boers opened fire on the British and they hit all the gum trees which still grow there. All the eucalyptus leaked out, making the air very aromatic.

*Robert Stevens,
Dundee, South Africa*

HORSE BUSES IN BURFORD

(*Newsletter* 39 p.15 & 40 p.16).

The meeting in Birmingham in January of the compiler/editors of the intended *Companion to Road Passenger Transport History* gave me the chance to go to the Central Library and take a closer look at Kelly's for Oxford, from 1903 to 1924.

The people of Burford seem to have been rather fickle in their choice of railway station. I found no evidence in the directories for bus connections to either Lechlade or Witney. This time I was concentrating in the directory on the town of Burford and the sub-heading 'Conveyances'. I did find regular connections from Burford to both Shipton and Bampton from 1903 to 1920. The details are set out below.

1903 Burford Conveyances

Omnibuses to and from Shipton station by William Frederick Matthews (GWR Carting Agent, Removals and Bus Proprietor) of Priory Street Burford, 3 times daily; and Thomas Paintin & Son (Temperance Hotel and Bus Proprietor) of Sheep Street Burford, 3 times daily

Conveyance to and from Bampton station by Wyatt daily

1907 Burford Conveyances

Omnibuses to and from Shipton station by Thomas Paintin & Son (Temperance Hotel and Bus Proprietor) of Sheep Street Burford, 3 times daily

7am, 10.50am & 3.15pm. [No mention of Matthews]

Conveyance to and from Bampton station by Wyatt daily 9am & 6pm.

1911 Burford Conveyances

Omnibuses to and from Shipton station by Walter Holloway & Son, 3 times daily 7am, 10.50am & 3.15pm. [no mention of Paintin and no address given for Holloway]

Conveyance to and from Bampton station by Wyatt daily 9am & 6pm

1915 Burford Conveyances

Omnibuses to and from Shipton station by Walter Holloway & Son, 3 times daily 7am, 10.50am & 3.15pm
[no address given for Holloway]

Conveyance to and from Bampton station by Wyatt daily 8.45am & 6pm

1920 Burford Conveyances

Motor Omnibuses to and from Shipton station by Jonathan Robert Wirdnam (carrier) of High Street Burford, 4 times daily 7.45am, 11.50am, 3pm & 6.20pm

Conveyance to and from Bampton station by Wyatt daily 8.45am & 6pm

[Address given for W. Holloway & Son (Forwarding Agents for GWR) as High Street Burford]

1924 Burford Conveyances

Motor Omnibuses to Oxford [no operator stated] at 9.45am, 4.40pm and 8pm
[no reference to Wyatt or Wirdnam]

*A G Newman,
Mold, January 2005*

POLICE ATTITUDES TO COVERED-TOP DOUBLE-DECK BUSES (N/1r 40, p.15)

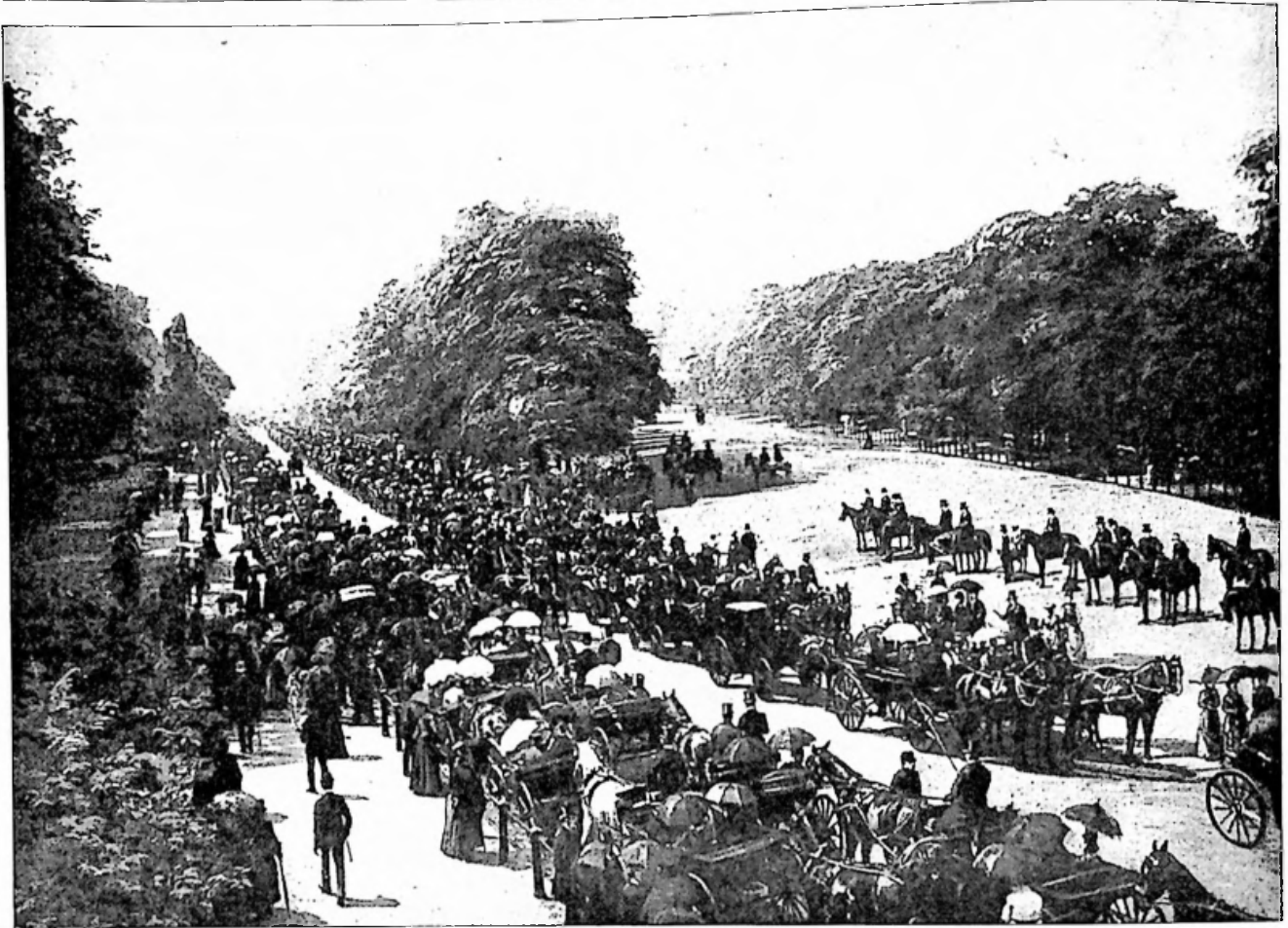
I enjoyed the latest *Newsletter*, with a good variety of material. If anyone in the Association who might comment on my letter about Berlin, then he will probably pick on one mistake I made, which only came to my notice very recently. The Yellow Coach imported at the same time as the covered-top AEC, was not of the semi-open-type, but was imported as a chassis and bodied as a covered-top in Berlin, and was thus the first of its kind in the ABOAG fleet.

*Geoffrey Morant,
Beckenham*

In Newsletter No.42 it is hoped to include:

- ▶ Follow-up items to the theme of Education and Qualifications in this *Newsletter*.
- ▶ "Rural Bus Subsidies" a paper written in 1971 by Peter Brown
- ▶ One or two items held over from No.41
- ▶ And hopefully, you, the readers, will keep up a steady flow of Letters, Introducing our Members (or Welcome to New Members), and articles

Promenading in Hyde Park



The picture of THE DRIVE AND ROTTEN ROW, HYDE PARK is from *The Queen's London* published in 1896 by Cassell & Company, London, Paris & Melbourne, "in the fifty-ninth year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria"

Its caption reads : Hyde Park is the largest breathing space which can fairly be reckoned as belonging to London itself. It was laid out in the days of King Hal, but was actually sold to private buyers by the Parliament. It was of course reclaimed at the Restoration. Charles II established the "Ring", a fashionable circular drive; but since the early part of the present century this has been superseded by the Drive and the Row. In the former are seen unbroken lines of sumptuous equipages drawn by the finest coach horses money can purchase, and occupied by some the best dressed and most beautiful women in the world, who drive here at stated hours. In the Row are to be found those from the same ranks of society who prefer horse-exercise; the ground being carefully laid down in tan and gravel for their use.

The fashionable habit by the wealthy London families of Promenading through Hyde Park in their carriages came under serious threat at the beginning of the 20th Century.

In the closing years of the previous century, both the bicycle and the motor car had emerged as practical alternatives to horse riding and horse-drawn carriages. By this time the bicycle had two equal wheels and the option of pneumatic tyres, while the reliability of the motor car was steadily improving. The admission into the stately precincts of Hyde Park of these two new forms of transport exercised the minds of the authorities greatly. What inconvenience might they bring with them? Some of the views of those involved are preserved in a file at the National Archives¹ entitled 'Hyde Park Traffic Offences', covering the period 1894-1906.

The perimeter of Hyde Park had a series of four connected carriage drives, designated by the four points of the compass. The circuit of about two and a half miles originally had eight gates; two at the North West and North East corners, Victoria and Cumberland (Marble Arch); two on the east side, Grosvenor and Stanhope, opposite the respective streets; two at the South East and South West corners; Knightsbridge (Hyde Park Corner) and Queen's-gate; and two on the south-side, Albert-gate and Prince's-gate. Alexandra-gate further to the South West appears to have been added later. For two or three hours every afternoon (except Sunday) in May, June and July (The Season), the section of the drive which happened that year to be "the fashion" was densely thronged with carriages moving round and round at little more than a walking pace, and every now and then coming to a dead stop. In no case did anyone think of extending their drive to any other part of the park.

In May 1894 Colonel Howard Vincent put a question in the House of Commons to the First Commissioner of Works urging him to bring before His Royal Highness, the Ranger, the possibility of allowing cyclists the privilege of access to the carriage drives at times which would not conflict with the carriage promenaders. Despite the forebodings of a local police Superintendent, who feared that instead of going out into the countryside these cyclists would soon become a very serious source of danger and annoyance in the park, it seems His Royal Highness gave consent. New regulations were drafted.

In 1895 the drive from Alexandra-gate to Victoria-gate was opened to Hackney Carriages, provided they did not loiter. Cyclists were also allowed over this section at all times, but on other carriage drives they had to be away by 10am. No racing was allowed and a speed limit of 8 mph was imposed. Once again a dubious police Inspector expressed concern about cyclists weaving in between promenading carriages.

The time restriction was relaxed in 1900 when cyclists were allowed on all carriage roads except between 3pm and 7pm. A contemporary report of a police constable² described how often by 11am the roadway was simply thronged with them and for carriage traffic or equestrians it was almost impossible to get through, and consequently they were often advised to proceed by other routes. At every crossing constables were posted to assist foot passengers over the roadway. It was no use putting one's hand up and having them stop promptly, like the ordinary carriage traffic. At the crossing directly opposite the Achilles Statue, the turning point of the track, the cutting and twisting and incessant tinkling of bells kept one in a state of constant watchfulness.

It seems that it was not long before the drivers of motor cars realised that the term 'carriages' in the Park regulations could be interpreted as including all forms of propulsion. Further tightening of regulations became necessary, but the boldness of the motor driver was generally hard to keep in check. The social season of 1905 followed the emancipation of the motor car the previous November and the story took a new twist with the additional problem of how to deal with electric carriages. The official Metropolitan Police view, written in November 1905 described the problems they were facing and how they were most reluctant to encourage another category of vehicle into the park. They had difficulties enough with 'motor cars that will not keep in line but at every opportunity break away and pass other vehicles immediately in front of them, much to the annoyance of the ordinary carriage occupants and to the detriment of the proper working of traffic'. It seems that during the

busy days it became necessary to run two lines of traffic on each side of the road and to keep the centre open for the passage of the Royal Family should they choose to venture forth. There were instances where electric broughams broke out immediately in front of the Royal vehicles and even called upon them to get out of their way by ringing their gongs. In this sadly reflective memorandum the police seem to recognise that while their preference would be to keep all motorised vehicles out of the park there is little chance of this happening and because it is the ladies principally who use electric carriages they may be granted some concessions appropriate to their sex.

But in the matter of bicycles some things hardly change, as this letter written in October 1905 by Sir Thomas Sanderson to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner show:

As I was walking away from the Foreign Office last night across the [Horse Guards'] Parade with my attention fixed on the road which I had to cross, a boy 'scorching' at break-neck speed on a bicycle with his head down knocked me off my legs, hit me in the face with his head and shot me violently on to my back. I was picked up too much confused to ask for the name of the boy, who, I am bound to say appeared a good deal frightened and I limped back to the office with the help of an arm. My face is bruised, but my spectacles luckily were not broken into my eyes and I have got off with a headache, general stiffness and a few cuts and a wrenched leg and knee, which will lame me for 2 or 3 days. I suppose nothing can be done to stop this kind of thing but it seems to me very dangerous that boys should be shooting about the Parade on bicycles not keeping to the recognised roads and not looking where they are going and taking no kind of care to warn people of their approach. It seems to be quite out of fashion that anybody should ring a bell or make the other ghastly noises which used to herald the approach of these infernal machines and on a dark night a small lamp moving at a rate of 20mph is scarcely noticeable before it is upon you. If I had been a heavy person the thing might have been serious.

This was not quite the result that had been expected when some eight years previously an earnest request had been made (and presumably granted) for gentlemen employed in the Treasury Buildings to go there across the Parade ground on bicycles.

Tony Newman

- 1 TNA/PRO File MEPO 2 / 698
- 2 Edward Owen, Hyde Park, Select Narratives, Annual Events, etc, during twenty years' Police Service in Hyde Park, 1906

Sources of information

RUMMAGING in a2a

Who would have thought of looking among the papers of a textile and packaging manufacturer to find personal records of involvement with a corporation tramway system? Yet that is just what has come out of a search in the www.a2a.org.uk site, as one of the many results I obtained by searching for 'tramways'. At the Derbyshire Record Office, Chesterfield, under Robinson & Sons Ltd - file ref.D5395/22/3/3/2 Philip M Robinson, official papers, Transport

Bristol Record Office has a huge store of the George White papers which include much original material about the London United Tramways. Who would have thought of looking in Bristol for them?

The record offices are really getting stuck into getting all their holdings on the the a2a site, and every month recently has been bringing new collections into the comfortable access point of home computer screens.

Tony Newman

Buses in Kashmir

How nice it was, about the middle of February, to see buses mentioned in the national press as an important, significant and welcome means of transport. Admittedly, it was not in the UK; the reference was to Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir was that Indian principality, in the foothills of the Himalayas, that was apportioned to India in the partition of 1947, but to which Pakistan has never relinquished its claim. For over fifty years there has been recurrent fighting and intermittent truces.

The news reports stated that India and Pakistan had made a joint announcement that a bus service would commence on 7 April 2005 between Srinagar, the capital under Indian control, and Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir, the segment of the country under Pakistani control. The bus would need to run for many miles along a rutted mountain road and cross the Line of Control. It would help to reconnect families separated for decades. More recent reports have referred to the 170 kilometre road being re-paved and de-mined and that the work was going ahead full swing. The Prime Minister of India will fly to Srinagar to wave off the first bus on 7 April, after 58 years of suspension of the service.

Nearly sixty years ago, the Omnibus Society published a paper read in November 1946 at a London meeting of the Society by the late A S Denton, A.M.Inst.T., "Bus Operation in the Garden of Asia". It dealt primarily with the bus services from Rawalpindi to Srinagar, a distance of 197 miles, over a road which began its climb into the mountains after the 17th milepost. The paper emphasised the precedence of the Royal Mail service – a point not lost on Sue Copp in her article on Toll Roads in Flintshire on an earlier page of this *Newsletter*.

The Mail service is operated by normal control Chevrolet buseswith accommodation for one First Class passenger alongside the driver, eleven Second Class passengers (on wooden seats with

slight padding and a leather covering), and a rear compartment for the mails. The vehicles are maintained in very good condition, and this is no doubt due to the prestige of the work upon which they are engaged. All over the world, "mail carrier" is synonymous with reliability, regularity and efficiency. The usual "cleaner" is carried, whose sole job is to deliver the mail to the various Dak or Post Offices along the route, although the drivers, who are generally from the Sikh castes, carry the keys of the mail compartment and do the sorting, where necessary. The 197 miles occupy between thirteen and fourteen hours, of which two hours is stopping time for meal breaks, tea and customs inspection.

First Class fare by Mail is 16 Rupees (approximately 24/-); Second Class 13 Rupees, 8 Annas (approx. 20/3d). Approximately half a hundredweight of personal luggage is allowed free and at passenger's risk. Pre-booking of seats and luggage is necessary and book tickets with carbon copies for operating purposes are used.

Nonetheless, the author pointed out that a faster and more comfortable journey was provided by Pindi-Kashmir Super Buses, running daily, and using Fordson normal control chassis with Ford V8 engines, and locally-built, but very comfortable coach bodies. It was commented that these had "twin tyres on the rear wheels, which was not usual on Eastern buses, especially during the war". The Super Buses charged 35 Rupees and 27 Rupees for First and Second Classes, and carried some Third Class passengers at 13 Rupees, 8 Annas. Stan Denton, the writer of the Omnibus Society paper, nearly 60 years ago, forecast that "road transport in this part of the world still appears to have a bright future".

RA

Welcome to new members

GRAHAM EDGE

My interest in road transport started in the early 1950s, when as a very young boy I was first taken for rides in the cabs of lorries owned by a small family haulage business in industrial Lancashire. Most weekends and school holidays were eagerly anticipated times, spent travelling throughout northern England and the Midlands. As I grew, I was able to assist with the loading and unloading, sheeting and roping. In those years lorry driving was a manual job. The first time I was deemed old enough to be allowed a night away is still remembered. I had a heavy cold but would not have missed it for anything and I went on a multi-drop run to the Thames Valley with regular driver John Cairns in a Seddon four-wheeler. We stayed the night in Oxford.

The fifties and sixties were fascinating for observing road transport. Then, of course, traditional British makes ruled the roost, but the far-reaching legislation of the 1960s and the coming Motorway age changed everything. But it is a period that is indelibly etched into my memory.

Being fortunate enough to have received an education at Farnworth Grammar School, a lorry-driving career was out of the question. My family's background was farming, but being tenant farmers in an urban environment had a limited future. Besides, my father had health problems and despite being a very hard worker he was eventually forced to give up farming for a living.

Being an average sort of student meant that a career choice was difficult, but in 1968 I joined Rank Hovis McDougall (RHM) as a management trainee. Subsequently I worked in the milling and baking division and I managed to retain my interest in road transport and cultivate it further with RHM, passing my transport management exams. In my spare time I was driving lorries for the family friends that began it all. After a few years I took what would now be called a "gap year" to go lorry driving, before re-joining RHM. After a total of ten years with RHM I left to join Spillers Milling at Cambridge. Eventually the lure of transport management in the hire and reward sector became too much and in

1993 I joined Turners (Soham) Ltd., which at the time of writing is the biggest family or privately owned road transport company in the country.

My secondary career as a writer began in the 1970s with occasional articles for club newsletters. I owned a few classic cars at various times and joined the relevant clubs and societies. Inevitably this led to other things in writing and vehicle preservation. My first articles were accepted for publication by special interest magazines in the mid-1980s, at about the time I started my first lorry restoration, which was a 1965 Seddon. Since then I have either restored or owned three AECs. Another Seddon is awaiting restoration, but it is a major project and it might have to be permanently shelved.

After articles came books, with my first hardback being published by Roundoak Publishing in 1994. Since then there has been a succession of titles, all road transport related.

Because the lorry book market is specialised and not very large I decided to launch Gingerfold Publications in 1997. It was set-up as a means of working in collaboration with the British Commercial Vehicle Museum Trust Archives at Leyland, to tap into their vast photographic archive. This was the start of my "Commercial Vehicles Archive Series", which is a fully researched, well produced, series of 72-page books about famous Leyland and AEC lorries. The format is now well established and popular, with a new title published annually. Eventually, other well-known British marques will be included in this series.

Alongside these smaller, budget priced books, Gingerfold Publications is now publishing premium priced hardback titles in its "Transport Archive Series". This series consists mainly of company histories, with John Corahs's acclaimed account of 'Harris & Miners, Brian Harris Transport' entitled "From Moorlands To Highlands" being typical of the subject matter. Other authors are now approaching Gingerfold Publications with manuscripts and 2005 could be a highly significant year for the business with a least a couple of major publications planned.

The biggest project to date tackled by myself, and also published by my company, is "L. Gardner & Sons Limited

– Legendary Engineering Excellence". This started as a series of articles for "Classic & Vintage Commercials" magazine, but to do this revered engine firm justice demanded a book. Those authors and researchers amongst you will know the amount of work such a topic entails, but with the assistance of Paul Gardner and former sales director Dion Houghton the project came to fruition in November 2002, some seven years after beginning. Like "From Moorlands to Highlands", the Gardner book is now out of print, but a revised edition will be published in due course. As with all such complex subjects no matter how diligent the initial research is, new and corrected information tends to come to light after publishing.

With still having to earn a full time living with Turners, lorry preservation, writing, publishing, and book selling, my spare time is non-existent. I am also very interested in industrial history, and indeed there is an overlap between this and transport history in topics such as the Gardner book. I have written occasional industrial history articles, mainly relevant to my native Lancashire. At the moment I am keen to encourage other authors to present their ideas to me for publishing consideration if they are commercially viable. With several thousand books sold since founding, Gingerfold Publications is an established and respected transport book publisher. I have no major books of my own in the pipeline because of time constraints. There are however, several meaty projects I wish to pursue in future. For example, more company histories of the important British commercial vehicles manufacturers, and the rapid decline and demise of the British commercial vehicle manufacturing industry in the final quarter of last century.

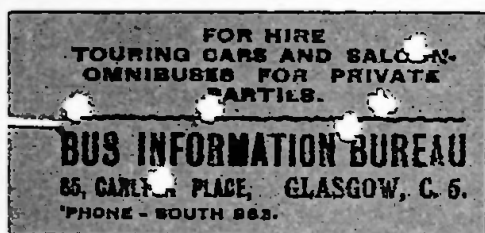
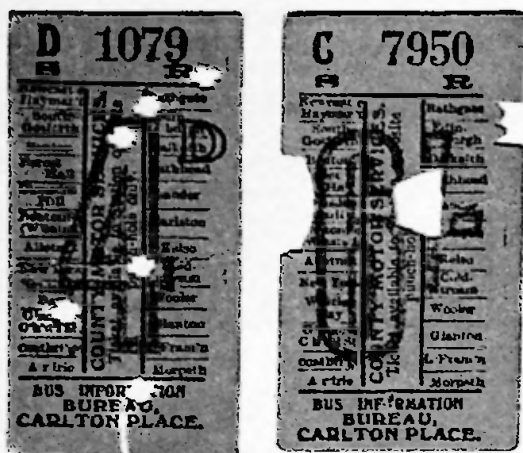
One other topic I would dearly love to research, or publish another author's work on the subject, is the role of road transport in the Second World War. Little has been written about the contributions and sacrifices made, and in particular those civilian drivers and their vehicles that were commandeered after D-Day in June 1944 to supplement the supply chain for the Army in France. Those actually involved become fewer year by year, so it is important to discover what we can whilst some are still living. This is of course, equally relevant to any research covering the mid-twentieth century.

The Bus Information Bureau, 85 Carlton Place

Dr E Keith Lloyd of Southampton, a very long-term member of two of the R&RTHA's corporate bodies, the Omnibus Society and the Transport Ticket Society, became a member also of the R&RTHA at the Symposium in Derby last autumn. He has written a paper for the *Journal of the Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society* on "Mr Peter Nicholson: Architect and Mathematician". Peter Nicholson's dates are 1765 to 1844. He would not automatically seem to be a candidate for inclusion in this *Newsletter*, but there are two or three reasons for mentioning him. Firstly, he was a man of wide accomplishments and fields of interest, including what would now be called practical 'hands-on' town planning; secondly, he travelled to and lived in, different parts of England and Scotland and will have been an experienced user in the heyday of the stage coach; and thirdly, he was closely involved in the design and building of Carlton

Place, an architectural treasure on the South side of the Clyde, in Glasgow. Dr Lloyd, whose bibliography at the end of his paper, shows that he casts the net of his research very widely, has said that, even if not in the field of the R&RTHA, some aspects of Peter Nicholson's life and works may be known to some member of the R&RTHA – and any scrap of information would be welcomed by him.

Nicholson, for example laid out the town of Ardrossan for the 12th Earl of Eglinton, and had contact there with Thomas Telford, who was constructing the harbour. He was involved in founding the Glasgow Philosophical Society in 1802, and taught many eminent engineers including David Napier, the pioneer shipbuilder. After working also in London, Nicholson spent his final years in Carlisle, and there is a large monument to him in Carlisle Cemetery.



Eureka! (or almost Eureka!). Carlton Place does have a niche in road transport history – albeit a good hundred years later than Nicholson's own connection with it. Carlton Place was built in the period 1802-1813. In the late 1920s, when the area was distinctly more in decline than it had been a century earlier, there was, at 85 Carlton

Place, the Bus Information Bureau. From the front and back of two tickets illustrated here, the Bureau served as a booking office, and probably as a terminus, for some independent, long-distance services. The tickets illustrated were both issued by County Motor Services of Choppington, Northumberland, who ran a Whitley Bay – Newcastle – Morpeth – Wooler – Coldstream – Kelso – Edinburgh – Bathgate – Airdrie – Glasgow service; a rather remarkable, gruelling route, if you consider it carefully. This service was acquired by United Automobile Services Ltd and Scottish Motor Traction Ltd in January 1933.

Long-distance services by independents always suffered from the acute problem of securing publicity in, and obtaining originating passengers from, the remote destination. A precisely parallel problem to the 'return load' for the smallish, one base, haulier. Also, coincidentally, a recent issue of the *Omnibus Society Provincial Historical Research Group Newsletter* (No.114) made reference to the role of coach booking agents in the very early 1930s, referring to it as "... perhaps a little studied aspect of the development of long-distance coaching". It mentions a periodical that ran from March 1930 to September 1933, the *Motor Coach Booking Agents Journal*. (A full run is available at the Newspaper Library at Colindale).

- Can any reader throw more light, for your Editor on the Bus Information Bureau; or for Dr Lloyd (address below), on Peter Nicholson, please?

RA

Dr E Keith Lloyd, 1 Somerset Court, Somerset Terrace,
Freemantle, Southampton, SO15 3RU
Tel: 02380 630001

Government and road haulage

How traffic going over sixty miles is controlled

An (unsigned) article originally published in
"Road Transport – A Victory Review of Peacetime Problems"
(Staples Press Ltd, 1945)

Much has been heard in Parliamentary Questions of the Government Road Haulage Organisation and its efficiency or otherwise. What does this division of the Ministry of War Transport set out to do? The main objects, as set out in a Government statement, are these:

- a) to secure the maximum economy in the use of fuel and rubber which the general transport situation from time to time permits;
- b) to maintain in a state of readiness for use any long-distance vehicles which may be out of action for longer or shorter periods by reason of restrictions in the use of road transport imposed for reasons of economy;
- c) to ensure that in time of stress the fullest and most effective use is made of road transport as part of the general system of transport in the country.

Primarily applied to long-distance traffic going by road more than 60 miles, with exception of bulk liquids, abnormal indivisible loads, such as heavy machinery, 'smalls' or parcels traffic, all of which call for specialised

organisation, the scheme caters for the movement of traffic arising from all Government departments. The control by the Government of general road haulage is much more intricate than the Government control of the railways; this is due the greater number of small operators concerned in road transport.

Ministry Road Haulage Organisation

The first object set out above under (a) is secured by the employment of the organisation as a sort of nation-wide clearing house, marrying up surplus and shortage of traffic day by day and area by area. There is a centralised operating control, 12 divisional road haulage officers (one in each traffic area) and 55 area road haulage officers. Under the latter about 350 unit controllers are at work. The unit centres were chosen from haulage firms with premises suitable for use as headquarters, with telephone and servicing facilities. The firms concerned became controlled undertakings and the whole of their activities – long or short distance – are the responsibility of the Ministry Road Haulage Organisation. Other operators who had vehicles regularly engaged in long-distance work prior to November 2, 1942, were entitled to offer these lorries to the R.H.O. for hire; they are attached for working purposes to the nearest unit control. The vehicles remain under the supervision of their owners so far as staffing and maintenance are concerned. Our own investigations have shown that traffic offered is worked

expeditiously and surpluses are passed on to the area officer who, if necessary, obtains help from other areas or, in extreme cases, other divisions as required.

But to minimise fuel and rubber consumption by turning non-priority traffic to rail or canal, on the one hand, and to carry urgent loads on the other, involves apparent anomalies and sometimes empty running. Consider two towns, X and Y, 100 miles apart, between which in pre-control days, 150 tons of traffic were to pass, 100 tons from X to Y and 50 tons back. Since the war, under fuel rationing, the fuel would have been issued to urgent war traffic. In terms of ten-ton lorries, ten would have originated from X and five from Y on that basis, passing en route. Arrived at the other end, return loads would have been sought from traders or clearing houses among non-priority traffic. Some of the lorries might have travelled empty, but a proportion would have had loads that could as well have gone by rail, canal or coastwise. Under the Road Haulage Organisation, however, a probable method would have been for five 10-ton lorries to start from X and five from Y. These latter would carry the remainder of the 100 tons from X to Y; the former might return from Y to X empty. But the nation - despite

lorries turn a wheel or not, provided the vehicles are available for work.

At first the mileage payments to hired operators appeared too low and this was adjusted through the negotiating machinery, the Ministry at the same time agreeing to pay actual insurance figures and to supply tyres as required, thus removing the principal items in dispute from the realm of controversy. The reserve of vehicles in the scheme (covering in all some 20,000 lorries, many of the largest dimensions) is considerable. A test in a certain port area was given in the autumn of 1943 when the arrival of a number of unusually large Atlantic convoys caused a heavy and exceptional strain on the local railways. Hundreds of lorries were required to clear a serious overflow of traffic and for some weeks they provided a non-stop shuttle service to and from the congested area. During this period they moved over 120,000 tons of materials and equipment urgently needed by the factories and Forces. The emergency call was received late one night. It was passed by telephone from area offices to unit controllers, and from unit controllers to vehicle operators and crews. Drivers were roused from their beds and despatched on journeys, which took them, in many



The first lorry load under the Government Road Haulage Scheme was carried in this six-wheeled 12-ton E.R.F. diesel lorry of Southern Roadways, a haulage firm operating from Poole to Bristol, Birmingham and London. It was seen off on its journey by Ministry of War Transport officials.

the running of 500 empty lorry-miles - would have saved 33 per cent of the fuel and rubber that would have been consumed on the pre-control method. Such methods would not suit traders in peacetime, but they were justifiable during the war.

Vehicles ready for emergency

The second of the objects of the scheme is the maintenance of fleets of vehicles with their crews ready for emergency even if they are not at work every day. For this purpose the controlled undertakings are maintained at a standard of remuneration based on their pre-war financial results, while the hired operators are paid their standing charges (overheads, insurance, tax, depreciation) whether their

instances, well over a hundred miles. Lorries, which had been laid up to save fuel and rubber, were manned at short notice and put on the road.

Dealing with unexpected traffic

Mobilisation proceeded on similar lines to the mobilisation, of the Fire Service for a major outbreak. Surplus vehicles in adjoining areas were drawn into the congested area, while distant vehicles moved up into reserve, to replace those in the front line. Eventually tradesmen's vans 400 miles from the centre of the disturbance were called in to replace those acting in support. Vehicles with limited B licences were authorized to run long distances on special fuel allowances. Short-

distance vehicles in the Road Haulage Organisation were transferred to long-distance work, and local vehicles hired and substituted for them.

Within 12 hours of the first call being transmitted the first contingents of men and vehicles were streaming into the congested centre. The total number of vehicles normally based on the affected area was small, but by the time mobilization had been completed the fleet used in that area numbered nearly 800. Emergency offices were opened and traffic movement officers with clerical assistants drafted in to strengthen local staffs. At the same time a large municipal car park was taken over as a rendezvous, where lorries could be sorted out and allotted tasks according to their type and capacity.

A major problem was the billeting of crews. In one town *en route* it was necessary to find accommodation each night nearly 200 men. A partial solution was found by billeting many of the crews in the local infirmary - a decision which they received with mixed feelings. Some of the men came, as they thought, to make a single run. They remained, in many cases, to provide a non-stop service for a fortnight. Long-distance vehicles were despatched at an average of 280 a day, carrying some 2,200 tons; in addition, the dispatches of short-distance vehicles used on runs of under 60 miles, averaged 187 a day, carrying some 1,200 tons. In all, nearly 17,000 journeys were made, many of them for distances of up to 400 miles.

A 75,000-ton job

The situation at the beginning of the emergency was that some 75,000 tons of raw materials were awaiting removal, and that unless the means of disposal could be increased, the surplus might be expected to grow at the rate of 3,000 tons a week. In addition, transport was required for the removal of large numbers of cased vehicles from the docks and a growing quantity of general merchandise. In response to telephone calls, factory workers who had finished work for the weekend turned out to assist the lorrymen in loading and unloading.

The cased vehicles presented a more difficult problem, owing to their exceptional weight, and cranes were moved into position to deal with the loading. Here again, work proceeded throughout every weekend. The movement continued without a pause for several weeks. Each day reports were received at the Central Traffic Control Office, at the Ministry of War Transport in London, registering the progress made. In the light of these reports the control office regulated the flow of vehicles from other areas until the emergency was at an end. This incident effectively demonstrates the Ministry's object (c).

It must not be thought that the road haulage industry itself was quite incapable of similarly rising to the occasion. It did so during the blitz period in a most wholehearted way, while before the war Associated Road Operators organized the delivery of air-raid shelters and the Standing Joint Committee was associated with the setting up of a most successful pool of 1,600 meat and livestock vehicles, the lines of which were adopted for the first Ministry of Transport haulage scheme. The meat pool vehicles are now operated as part of the Ministry scheme and, in fact, one of the founders of the meat pool, Mr. P. J. R. Tapp, is director of the Road Haulage Organisation.

► A comment by Roy Larkin on the illustration

The formation of Southern Roadways Ltd by A H Scammell was mentioned in *Newsletter No.40* at pp.17-18. My information stops at the death of A H Scammell, in 1932. It is not known whether his son, Douglas Howard Scammell, played an active role in Southern Roadways; he probably did, but not in any senior role. Evidently, the company was - or perhaps for legal reasons had to be - restructured in 1936. Hence the name Southern Roadways (1936) Ltd. It then carried on a significant business through the war years.

The white rectangle on the cab door was probably a deliberate wartime measure to conceal the lorry's place of origin. It apparently covered the words WEST (before SHORE WHARF) and below that, POOLE.

Memories

John Edser in Newsletter No. 40 suggested that readers should contribute "Memories". Your Editor has allowed himself the indulgence of the following:-

TROLLEYBUS SKATES (OR WHEELS?) / THE WOLVERHAMPTON "NEW ROAD"

My father had been severely wounded in France in August 1918, although he was still able to pursue his career. He died in Leeds, to which we had only recently moved, in August 1940. My Aunt Edna, a pillar of the Women's Voluntary Service (the WVS), in Bradford, visited my mother and me that winter. My Aunt Edna had, for an indiscretion in 1910 or 1911, been expunged from the family records; so I was wholly unaware that I had an Aunt Edna. Aunt Edna took in the situation rapidly; that my mother was seriously ill and unfit to look after me.

Aunt Edna consulted and found two other ladies who shared her concern, my cousin Lily, who disregarded the

family embargo on Edna, and Mrs Mann, the formidable wife of a colleague of my father's. Lily could do nothing at that stage; Mrs Mann, who lived in Barnt Green, Birmingham, stepped in rapidly on the legal side. She moved my mother to a nursing home in Wolverhampton, and found very temporary accommodation there for me as well. Then, in the first floor office in Lichfield Street of a Mr Page, a Wolverhampton solicitor, I spent an afternoon watching the skates of the trolleybuses glide past the window, in both directions.

I was familiar with the trolleybuses. We had lived in Wolverhampton before moving to Leeds. In fact, in winter 1939/40 I had spent several Saturday mornings in Queen Square pulling the handle that changed the trolleybus frogs for the Penn and Penn Fields buses that went down Victoria Street. The standard setting was for the Darlington Street routes, so one did nothing for a Tettenhall, Whitmore Reans, Finchfield or Merry Hill trolleybus, but pulled the handle for a 4 or an 11. This saved the conductor having to jump off and run to the front of the bus, pull the handle and watch till the skates

had safely cleared the frogs, and then run to jump on the platform of the slowly moving bus.

My interest may have been in trolleybus skates, but I was soon to learn that the meeting in Mr Page's office, had been highly important for my future. I was destined for admission in April 1941 to the Wolverhampton Royal Children's Home and Orphanage. Mr Page went to the High Courts of Justice in London and had both my mother and myself made Wards of Court. The Judge stayed my admission to the Orphanage. He ordered the Executors of my father's will, despite the provision in the will that the entire estate should pass to my mother, to return to the Court within five days with an annuity to maintain my mother in a good nursing home for the rest of her life, and to report back to him what sum then remained (after payment of the legal costs), for my maintenance and education. A modest sum did remain.

So, for summer term 1941, I was back at my old, familiar Wolverhampton Grammar School. I was lodged with a Mrs Hague in Merridale Road. Her son had recently been commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant, and was at an undisclosed location. Mrs Hague looked after me well. And on the summer nights I went to sleep to the sound of the trolleybus skates hissing past my bedroom window.

Bye the bye, I must insert at this point the qualification that memory can be so fallible. I have consistently used the word "skates"; yet at the back of my mind there is an instance when a trolleybus dewired in Merridale Road (as they occasionally did). The pole, propelled by powerful springs, flew skywards, but the trolley head itself fell into the road. No harm was done; there was little other traffic and no unfortunate pedestrian in the way. But my dim recollection now, is that the trolley head was a heavy brass wheel, not a skate. Did Wolverhampton retain the brass trolley heads in 1941 or had they converted to skates? Can any reader put me right?

Reflect, incidentally, on what a fol-de-rol that incident would cause nowadays. The Health and Safety Executive would be having C Owen Silvers himself in the dock.

It was over fifty years later that I was to understand why I was in bed so early that the trolleybuses were still running. There was a strictly enforced curfew, nationwide, by 1941, on buses and trolleybuses – possibly a little easier on trams. Last journeys from the town terminus at 9.30 pm. Wartime information is not easy to research, but I have long been totally disappointed at how many histories of bus undertakings pass over the whole wartime period with just banal observations mentioning only the engagement of conductresses and the deterioration of maintenance. The Wolverhampton history¹ shines out like a beacon. It tells so much about the wartime travails, and the aspirations of post-war reconstruction as well. Of the summer of 1941 it records:

To ease travelling conditions and aid evening leisure activities, it was arranged that all trolleybus routes would operate up to 11 pm for the summer of 1941, but because of the need to preserve fuel oil, some approved bus frequency enhancements on routes 10/14/15 and 17 had to be withdrawn.

The traumas of 1940/1941 had not improved my educational progress. Mrs Mann was aware of this and, to nurture my French, she arranged for me to have an hour, once a week after school, with a M. Ledoyen. But

Monsieur Ledoyen lived hard by the Hall of Memory, in Birmingham. So I had to catch a trolleybus into town, walk from Queen Square through to the Gaumont and catch a Midland Red bus, all the way via Dudley and the "New Road" to Birmingham. After an hour with M. Ledoyen reading books by Alphonse Daudet, like "La Belle Nivernaise", I caught the Midland Red back to Wolverhampton, and the trolleybus down to Mrs Hague's.

From time to time, on these journeys, I thought back to what my father had taught me c.1936/7. He had used the "New Road" to teach me that it exemplified 'ribbon development', through Oldbury, Tipton and Coseley. It also represented a very early example of road construction with three purposes: coping with the growth of motor traffic; dual-carriageway = segregated traffic streams; and major capital construction works for the relief of unemployment. (The road had been opened in November 1927 by HRH the Prince of Wales,² so it was a significant road, and it had retained an impressive aura of novelty even ten years later). By summer 1941, when I was riding regularly over it on the Midland Red, perhaps that aura was wearing off, but I did observe its features. And those long journeys were enjoyable and an education; even an adventure. The foundations of an interest in road transport, and roads, were being laid.

RA

1. *A History of Wolverhampton Transport, Volume 2 1929-1969*, by Paul Addenbrooke (Birmingham Transport Historical Group, 1995) ISBN 0 905103 12 2
2. *Black Country Tramways*, by J S Webb, Vol.2, p.84

REGENERATIVE SYSTEM
proves 30% saving
in **GUY**
TROLLEY BUSES



Important advantages are:

- Reduction of current costs.
- Considerable saving on brake linings.
- Saving in current consumption is equally effective on flat as on hills.
- Easier driving by stable position of power pedal at all running speeds.

GUY fleets of Trolley Buses are in service by the Wolverhampton Corporation, Hastings Tramway Co., The South Lancashire Transport Co., and the Corporations of Derby, Rotherham, Pontypridd, and Walsall, and also at Brussels, Milan, and Kyoto (Japan). Guy range of trolleybuses includes 4- and 6-wheelers for single and double deckers.

Write for illustrated booklet

GUY MOTORS LTD., WOLVERHAMPTON
LONDON OFFICE, SHOWROOMS AND SERVICE—PORTEUS ROAD, PADDINGTON, W.3

*Guy Motors Ltd advert c.1931
(brass trolley wheels, not skates, at that date)*

People to remember ~ Tom Atkin

In *Newsletter 38* readers were called on to turn their attention to people who developed transport. This aspect of transport history has already grabbed my interest and I am currently on a quest for biographical details of around a dozen individuals (none of whom was featured in the People to Remember item in *Newsletter 38*!) whose endeavours shaped the Scottish road haulage landscape.

My research activities are normally targeted to a specific purpose and I recently experienced one of those memorable moments of finding something when you least expect it. And the event was all the more thrilling because my discovery was related to a topic I was anxious to learn more about. What I came across was a snippet of information about Tom Atkin who was the first managing director of Road Services (Caledonian) Ltd, the largest privately owned Scottish haulage enterprise of the late 50s. Road Services (Caledonian) was born out of the denationalisation of road haulage. Many of the men behind the large fleets that emerged from the break-up of British Road Services (BRS) had previously been involved with family businesses that the British Transport Commission (BTC) had acquired, and some of them had gone on to hold managerial positions with the BRS organisation, usually in the same area where the family firm had operated. Names that spring to mind are William Wisely in Aberdeen, Andrew Dunn in Denny, William Russell in Bathgate and David McKinnon in Kilmarnock. But there is no similar trail of Tom Atkin's early career. Yet, as manager, in BTC days, of the Caledonian group covering south west Scotland, and subsequently becoming managing director of Road Services (Caledonian) Ltd, it seems reasonable to expect that he must have had some haulage credentials. But where?

The Caledonian group was formed from many businesses of varying size and type whose operations stretched across five counties. Among the family hauliers, around 25 vehicles came from the Hallidays of Palnackie (separate fleets belonging to James and George) while the partnership between James Agnew and Robert Lithgow in Stranraer contributed 10. On the north eastern edge of Caledonian's extensive territory was the former Youngs Express Deliveries depot in Abington where YED had been known to operate around 13 vehicles just before nationalisation. The biggest constituents to the Caledonian operation, measured by both the number of vehicles and depots, were Wordie & Co and the Caledonian Omnibus Company. My early thoughts on where Tom Atkin might have worked prior to nationalisation focused on Wordie, but the likelihood of this receded after reading the history of Wordie.¹ In the book Atkin is

never referred to as a Wordie employee, only as "a leading figure in the road haulage industry" and his observations about Wordie are expressed as if he were viewing the company as an outsider. So for some time finding out about Tom Atkin has been high on my list of matters to be investigated.

Meanwhile, other tasks that I had set myself were to investigate how the Wordie and YED empires had evolved. As both firms and their numerous subsidiaries would have been subjected to the same acquisition process whereby the BTC acquired the share capital and renamed the companies by inserting the letters "BTC" into their titles, I reckoned the records of such companies would be a useful source of information. Gradually working through the 26 Scottish-registered BTC companies, at the National Archive of Scotland in Edinburgh, I had by January determined that 25 of them were either prominent businesses or were owned by such a business. The 25 fell into four categories: the railway carriers: Wordie, Cowan and Mutter Howey (9 companies); the parcel carriers Youngs, Fisher Renwick and Holdsworth & Hanson (9); railway-owned companies (3); and members of the Transport Arrangement (TA) (4). The one remaining company – with the pre-nationalisation title of John Hadfield (Glasgow) Ltd – had no obvious link to any of these four groups and, moreover, was the smallest of the 26 firms: the A licence surrendered to the BTC authorised only 3 vehicles and 2 trailers.

Despite its apparent insignificance, I was bound to consult the file for this company. Incorporated on 10th November 1942 with a nominal capital of £100, its subscribers and first directors were John Hadfield and Thomas Atkin, whose occupations were given as haulage contractor and transport manager respectively. (Hadfield soon left the company and his directorship passed to Atkin's wife). While I have not yet found a clear link (such as a common address) between the two instances of Tom Atkin, to firmly conclude that they are the same person, I am optimistic that I have discovered a pre-nationalisation role for the Caledonian m.d. This revelation, however, immediately raises another question: why would the owner of one of the smallest businesses taken into state ownership be appointed manager of one of the largest BRS groups? The quest continues.

Alan Shardlow

Den Park, Collace, Perthshire PH2 6JB
01821 650324

1. Edward Paget-Tomlinson. *The Railway Carriers*. Terence Dalton 1990.

Editorial

A 20-page *Newsletter* again. The main theme has obviously been Education and Qualifications in Road Transport. A subsidiary theme, however, is transport in World War 2. It is asked for by Graham Edge in "Welcome to New Members" (page 15). The "Government and road haulage" article on pages 16-18, takes a look at this theme, and highlights a number of points that tend to be forgotten - the huge extent of government control of

transport during the war or the commoner ability to do mental arithmetic that then prevailed - have your pocket calculator handy when reading it. Redolent of wartime bureaucracy is the garb worn by some of the officials seen speeding the resplendent lorry on its way - heavy overcoats and Anthony Eden hats.

RA