

# Newsletter

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## Caterpillar

Regarding the piece on the back page of Newsletter 42 about the Caterpillar at work in Blackpool, I think that the 1925 press report was taking a shortcut in firmly relating the Caterpillar to the tank. The Caterpillar can be traced back to Ruston and Hornsby of Lincoln and the Holt Tractor.

Prior to World War 1, Benjamin Holt, who was founder of the Holt Manufacturing Co, Stockton, California purchased the patents from Ruston and Hornsby for their large, tracked tractor. From these patents a huge machine was built for use on the American agricultural prairies and by the outbreak of war, dealers had been appointed in Germany, France and England.

The winter of 1914/15 highlighted the shortcomings of both horse and steamer for hauling heavy loads over ground that had rapidly become a quagmire, and in early 1915, the War Office purchased a Holt Tractor for trials at Aldershot. Following these trials, a total of 2,100 were purchased before the end of the war as gun-tractors.

Their ability to 'crawl' over soft ground and traverse the increasing number of trenches quickly earned them the nickname of Caterpillar, or Cat. Intended solely as a gun-tractor for 6" Howitzers, the Holt was also much in demand by recovery crews who borrowed and scrounged them whenever possible.

The performance of the Holt caught the attention of Colonel E.D. Swinton, who put his ideas for turning the Holt into a fighting vehicle to the Landships Committee. Although the Holt was ultimately rejected, it was Swinton's idea and Holt's principle that resulted in the development of the tank.

Holt components also provided the basis for the only German tank, the A7V, to see active service during World War 1.

In 1925, the two Californian pioneers of tracked vehicles, Holt and the C.L. Best Tractor Company, merged and the new company became the Caterpillar Tractor Company, known world-wide for its tracked vehicles.

Roy Larkin

## Centenary

*In a career in road transport journalism beginning in 1958 John Aldridge worked for Motor Transport for some 30 years. Here he looks at some aspects of that paper and its close rival, Commercial Motor, both of which recently celebrated their centenaries rather quietly.*

Early motor vehicles attracted lots of attention and many enemies. In Britain what might be termed the establishment was often against them and while the development of steam power had made progress, on road vehicles it was heavy and slow. The wealth of small firms that sprang up in the early 1900s shows that many entrepreneurs had great faith (or hope) in the internal combustion engine, even if few of them knew much if anything about its durability or reliability. Some names were to emerge as better than others, such as Dennis and Leyland, but in the early days there was little to suggest or confirm that they were any better than the next make. Then, of course, there was no distinction mechanically between a lorry or a bus apart from the bodywork, though arguably bus use, with its frequent stopping and starting, made more demands on its mechanical parts.

The year 1905 was a key one in the development of the commercial vehicle for whatever use, because the issue of the Heavy Motor Car Order actually eased some of the most onerous restrictions previously imposed. Until then what *Commercial Motor* termed "the folly of our legislators in the closing years of the previous century and for the first few years of the new had barred the way to progress with motor vehicles, and meanwhile foreign countries were going ahead." This belated change in the law spurred two rival publishing houses to launch weekly magazines which are both – amazingly – still with us one hundred years later: they are, of course, *Motor Transport* (then named *Motor Traction*) and *Commercial Motor*. Both were pioneering publications because the total road passenger and goods transport industry in 1905 consisted of a few thousand steam traction engines and wagons, plus a small minority of petrol-engined vehicles: many of the latter were crude and unreliable.

MT claims to have been the first of the pair and began as "The Autocar Industrial Section" in the February. It was intended to publish monthly, but after just two issues it became a weekly supplement and then, in June, blossomed as a separate magazine, *Motor Traction*. The title changed to *Motor Transport* in 1921 as the term by then was in general use, whereas before World War I it had had military connotations. CM claims to be older because it began as a separate magazine, in March 1905, whereas MT had first appeared as a supplement, rather than as a completely separate entity. CM was produced by Temple Press, and MT by the Iliffe Press. Both businesses already had a small family of magazines, others in the Temple Press stable being *Cycling*, *Motor Cycling*, *The Motor* and *The Motor Boat*. The two groups were to continue as rivals for nearly 50 more years, with similar products. Iliffe had *The Autocar* against Temple Press's *The Motor*. Later Iliffe had *Flight*, whereas Temple Press has *The Aeroplane*. Each publishing house watched the other like a hawk, the only exception to what might be called the copying habit coming in 1929 when Iliffe began the

monthly *Bus & Coach* to enhance its coverage of the, then growing, passenger-carrying industry. The main reason for adding this new title was that the general recession of the time had hit the goods-carrying industry particularly hard, while it was also under sustained attack by the railways. It was felt that the bus industry had a better long-term chance of growth, whereas the sustained attack by the railways was likely to inflict long term damage.

In those days propaganda from one side or the other was grossly biased and misleading in a way that would be unacceptable today. For example, the Southern Railway displayed posters at its stations in 1933 urging the public to travel by rail and send donations to King's College Hospital because it handled 1,400 patients a year injured in road accidents. MT described the poster as "hitting below the belt and in deplorable taste." That was true, and Southern's poster was also slightly surprising given that it was already buying shareholdings in bus companies. But MT could be biased, with full-blooded attacks on rival forms of transport. In its earliest days it reserved particular venom for trams: they caused considerable congestion, while their overhead lines were not only unsightly but dangerous. The latter pronouncement followed an incident in East London when a live overhead wire came down, hitting and burning (but not killing) a motorist. But then, in 1919, one Aubrey Llewellyn Coventry Fell, the manager of the London County Council's huge tramway system, had been foolish to say that "20 years hence motor buses will be exhibited as curios in museums." Rather fewer than 20 years later it was the tram that was in decline.

Horses and horse transport came in for surprisingly over-the-top criticism from the two magazines. Defending a charge in 1905 that the motor vehicle was "noisy and smells most foully" CM claimed that "the worst fumes from a motor vehicle are preferable to those that exist, but of which many are – happily – unconscious for the most part, on every road and which arise from the excreta of the horse. From infancy they have breathed this nauseating smell, until it is an absolute fact that, excepting under certain conditions, they are unaware of its presence. Now, when they find a different smell, but one which is not everlasting, some people begin to get alarmed."

There was a huge task for both magazines (MT actually became a newspaper in the 1930s) in educating and informing the readers, most of whom had no technical knowledge or understanding. Among those who ran early motor vehicles, business failures and bankruptcies were common and even the giant London General Omnibus Company got itself into such a loss-making situation with its early motor buses that if it had not merged with rival operators in 1908 it might have gone under. Colonel Frank Searle (who was later, with WJ Iden, to design the famous B type) had been appointed garage superintendent at the LGOC's new Mortlake bus garage in 1907, and later described to MT his experiences there. "...I found the most colossal disorder that it has ever been my lot to witness... Out of 70 or 80 buses (all de Dion Boutons) only 25 per cent were in regular service... The old policy of robbing Peter to pay Paul had run rife, and buses were

standing in rows minus gearboxes, back axles, front axles, etc. These had been taken out to make others run and unfortunately no arrangements had been made to replace or repair the defective parts." So successful was he at Mortlake that within months he was quickly moved to the chief depot, the problem Dollis Hill (Cricklewood) premises, where no fewer than 28 types of motor bus shared the premises with a stud of 300 horses and a fleet of horse buses. So desperate was the management shortage that the LGOC promoted him to be chief motor engineer, but with responsibility also as manager at Dollis Hill.

With such widespread ignorance of technical matters even in apparently large, well-managed companies, it is not surprising that, as well as hard news, the pages of both journals included numerous features explaining basic technicalities such as how a carburettor worked, and how to adjust one. Both magazines were producing cost tables at an early stage and MT still continues this tradition today. An early enterprise, undertaken annually from 1907 to 1914 by MT, was a census of London traffic, with vehicle counts at Putney Bridge and other locations. These were not just counts but contained hourly flow charts and other information and were unique – there was then no Ministry of Transport or other official organisation collecting such information.

A feature of both journals in their early days was the detailed news coverage when there were an incredible number of small operators and small manufacturers. For historians these now provide almost the only information on long-forgotten firms. Take an obscure make like the Granton, produced for just a few years by the Scottish Motor Engineering Co, of Granton, Edinburgh. It built some petrol-engined tramcars, three or four double-decker buses, three goods wagons and some cars. Pickering, of Tweedmouth, was another small maker probably producing just a few vehicles in all, yet exporting three of them to Italy. In those days overseas developments were considered within the scope of both publications, albeit sometimes in somewhat naïve fashion. An example is a report in a February 1915 MT about some new vehicles apparently operating in Vienna. The original report came from the USA, and was obviously written before the outbreak of war.

By the end of the war the editorial content slowly began to change. The war had helped vehicle development, particularly in terms of reliability, while road transport itself received an enormous boost from the availability of cheap secondhand former military vehicles and ex-servicemen with gratuities able to buy them. By the late 1920s there was a new and continuing topic for news and analysis – controlling legislation. It ultimately resulted in the 1930 Road Traffic Act and the 1933 Road and Rail Traffic Act, which were preceded by and have been followed by numerous high powered committees of investigation. Both CM and MT were powerful voices on behalf of the industry, though their voices were not always heard.

But a strange aspect of the 1930s was the lack of a voice for transport engineers. For all the continuing improvements that there were in vehicle design and reliability there was no effective liaison between operator

and maker. CM's outspoken (and some would say, opinionated) editor of the day, G MacKenzie Junner and MT's technical expert, PMA Thomas, became the leaders behind the formation of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers in 1944: today it is a sector within the Society of Operations Engineers. The IRTE originated from a series of lively lunch meetings to discuss the design and suitability of goods vehicles for their operations: Junner floated the idea of something more ambitious in CM's pages, with the theme of 'let the operator advise the maker.' Junner was editor of CM for a record 31 years, from 1929 to 1959. Ian Sherriff was another, later, CM editor in a similar mould while MT has tended to have less noisy, but still able, people at the top. Philip Edwards, MT's editor at the time of the Suez Crisis in 1957, achieved a certain notoriety when angry MPs wanted to call him before the Bar of the House of Commons for the paper's 'sin' in revealing the country's fuel reserves, information that had actually been passed to him by a senior MP. He would have revelled in appearing, had the threat been carried out.

Starting in the early 1930s the development of the diesel engine was a continuing topic of interest and success. In its early days it was sometimes referred to as the oil engine, and somewhat pedantically CM continued to prefer this archaic term well into the 1960s. But then all respectable publications used to have their own individual styles that were often rigidly enforced on staff. The first Commercial Motor Show, by which was meant a show exclusively for commercial vehicles, took place in 1907 and since then both papers have assiduously reported on such shows. Coverage later included Continental shows, certainly since the early 1930s. The high costs and relative slowness of Continental travel then, meant these were expensive assignments.

World War II again brought obvious problems for MT and CM, including loss of staff and paper rationing, as well as the need to acquire new engineering knowledge about the workings (or non workings) of vehicles powered by what was usually termed 'producer gas'. Publicity had to be given to the introduction of all manner of restrictions such as the need for official permission (after the inevitable form-filling first) to order spare parts. A great bureaucratic process was also necessary before a vehicle could be disposed of. That became another of those theoretical schemes which did not really work: larger operators found it easier to push into a corner unwanted or un-repairable vehicles until the war would be over and the system abolished.

An interesting side effect of the onset of World War II was that it killed draconian proposals to restrict hire-or-reward road haulage that could have led to the imposition of set mileage rates for all work – the four main line railways were still actively fighting road hauliers although they now owned a number of them. The late 1940s saw the Labour majority in Parliament bring in nationalisation of hire-or-reward road haulage (with certain exceptions) and the formation of British Road Services despite vigorous opposition by most of the industry and its trade press. The railways themselves were also nationalised. There were plans for the bus industry to be similarly treated through a series of area schemes, but this did not happen, ironically at least partly because of strong opposition by

local Socialist politicians who did not wish to lose control of their own individual municipal bus operations. However, a change of political control in the 1950s saw large parts of BRS denationalised with many depots and vehicles (and their all-important licences) sold off to a variety of large and small purchasers - with resultant benefits to the circulation levels of CM and MT.

Strangely the most significant benefit to the road haulage industry was the work of Socialist Transport Minister, Barbara Castle. The 1968 Transport Act abolished the requirement to prove need before a hire-or-reward operator could obtain a licence for even one more vehicle. It ended all those dreary traffic court cases where almost every application was opposed by rival operators and by British Railways, and fought out in the traffic courts and often duly reported in the pages of CM and MT. It also meant that an operator's licence was no longer of value if he sold up: the worth of the business was now judged on goodwill, the property and the vehicles. Future traffic court hearings would centre on maintenance (or lack of it), adherence to driving hours and rest requirements, and - later - environmental issues. But for CM and MT a major and unexpected change had come some ten years earlier. Cecil King, then the proprietor of *The Daily Mirror*, had decided to diversify and had been attracted by the growing success of women's weekly magazines and bought the publishing house of one of them. Flushed with this success he went on to buy more publishers and in the process competing women's weeklies. He then bought both Temple Press and Iliffe and again a host of competing titles. In the fullness of time Mirror Group Newspapers became separated from what is now Reed Elsevier, while the latter produces an enormous number of titles. Many of the conflicting titles have been merged or vanished: for example you can still buy *Autocar*, though not from Reed Elsevier, but *Motor* is no more. *Bus & Coach* ceased to have

a separate existence in 1970 and later MT gave up covering passenger industry news altogether. CM also gave up passenger coverage a few years after that. Happily CM and MT are both still with us, though they have taken rather different directions. MT became a controlled circulation paper some years ago, aimed at fleet operators while CM has recently targeted the buyers and sellers of secondhand vehicles. For both to have survived for over 100 years in an ever-changing market is no mean achievement.

Earlier years under common ownership had not been so happy, with pirating of ideas from one journal to the other, while salary scales became less generous. Once a mention in the editorial pages of a staff vacancy would bring up to 90 applications for the job, but no longer. A strange result of the denationalisation of BRS had meant that many skilled staff faced an uncertain future and both CM and MT gained valuable staff members as a result. It had been customary for their staff to be a mix of journalists who were learning about road transport and road transport experts learning journalism. More recently most recruitment has been from journalists within the Reed Group, so that in theory somebody may be writing about hairdressing one day and about transport the next, a situation that is not without its critics. But back in the early years of the last century LM Meyrick-Jones, first editor of *Motor Traction* (as it then was), found himself called out from time to time to help out on *The Autocar* or *The Motor Cycle*. Perhaps some things never change, even in a hundred years.

- In publishing this article by John Aldridge, the R&RTHA would add its own congratulations to both *Motor Transport* and *Commercial Motor* on achieving their centenaries (in this year of rather notable centenaries and anniversaries).

## Education & Training in Transport ~ Some more opinions

Following on from articles published in Newsletters 41 & 42, may I be permitted to express some more opinions on the subject? Training (or lack of it) is a subject that has occupied my thoughts for some considerable time, and especially more recently as I have decided to take a brief sabbatical from the day to day involvement with managing a large fleet of refrigerated lorries engaged on supermarket Regional Distribution Centre (RDC) deliveries for Turners (Soham) Ltd.

There are several issues to pursue, but I suggest that worrying about academic course availability is putting the cart before the horse. What is needed foremost is the means to attract students to these courses, and that will only be achieved by promoting road transport as a worthwhile career in schools and colleges. Academic studies can then be tailored to the needs of the industry and students.

But first we need to go back one stage further, and that is to promote the necessity for road transport to the general public. I read a few months ago that MI5 has calculated that this country is but four meals away from anarchy. In

other words, if road transport ceased to function for three or four days the supermarket shelves would be empty. As anyone involved with the food supply chain knows, it all relies on just-in-time deliveries, because supermarkets and their supplying RDCs hold virtually no stocks. Every so often newspaper correspondents, or opinionated broadcasters, complain about lorries causing environmental damage and congestion and advocate a return to rail freight. These well intentioned but misguided pundits, like the vast majority of the general public, have no idea how supermarkets are stocked. They seem to think that their contents are teleported onto the shelves by some futuristic transporter beam! I fully agree with David Lowe FCILT (*Newsletter 42*, p.2) about intermodal freight transport and every resource should be used to its maximum potential, but such changes will not happen overnight. For the foreseeable future road transport will remain the only viable option for keeping the wheels of industry turning and the population fed and clothed.

So, if we are dependent on the lorry to maintain civilisation, as we know it, we must have drivers. Picking

up on the points raised by Dave Bubier (Newsletter No.42 p.5) I can add more from personal experiences at Turners. At present there is little to attract a young person in their early twenties into the LGV driving profession. Roadside facilities for drivers are abysmal, the hours are lengthy, and whilst the wages can be good, high earnings are dependent on working "anti-social" shifts. That is either night work, or weekends. And that is not even thinking about the stresses caused by driving on congested roads with a time sensitive delivery on board. Oh yes, and to enjoy the dubious privilege of entering this restricted lifestyle will cost about £1,000 to obtain the licence.

One of the East Anglian based LGV driving schools has held 'taster' days for the last couple of years. These are aimed at potential LGV drivers and I have been invited to address them. They are amazed and even appalled when I have "told it as it is" and no doubt I have put more off the job than I have ever encouraged; but if they are keen to become drivers they must realise from the outset what it entails. There has been no realisation that weekend and bank holiday working is regarded as the norm, not only with supermarket work, but also now within many other sectors of the industry. One woman was firmly convinced that she could obtain a truck driving job that accommodated her taking her children to school each morning and collecting them each afternoon! At Turners I could give a driver a starting time, but never a finishing time. The advent of Sunday trading has destroyed any vestiges of normal family life for those involved with the supermarkets, to the extent that Sunday is now their second busiest trading day.

Even if some take the plunge and pass their LGV driving tests to become Class C + E licence holders (licensed to drive artics), the majority are still woefully ill equipped for the job. To become a competent lorry driver requires experience, not only of driving but also of how to supervise loading, and securing that load. Not many newly passed drivers can couple and uncouple trailers satisfactorily; most have scant geographical knowledge of how to get to a destination, nor do they have the common sense to purchase a decent road atlas. They also have absolutely no idea about truck technology and even its basic workings of engine, gearbox, and braking system. Yet a newly qualified driver can be entrusted with a refrigerated articulated outfit worth £100,000, and some loads are valued at £50,000. Which other industry would allow an inexperienced worker to take charge of such assets and also give him or her the potential to cause carnage with up to 44 tonnes travelling at 56 mph?

I can recall four recent rollover accidents with fully laden artics from Turners' Newmarket depot. Three were driven by inexperienced agency drivers, with the fourth being handled by a former rigid driver who had recently moved up to full licence. In a modern lorry its driver is insulated from noise, and air suspension gives far less feeling of weight than old-fashioned steel springs. With powerful engines and ABS / EBS braking systems there is little sensation of being heavily laden. Modern technology can do nothing about the centre of gravity of a truck, because if it is driven badly in the wrong place it will overturn. Since the increase to 44 tonnes gross weight I am convinced there have been far more incidents of lorries falling over, and this in many cases is due to inexperience.

Yet in some quarters we have calls for a further increase in weights. Whilst I can support a cogent argument for higher weights to reduce vehicles on the roads, and therefore help to ease congestion, let us at least first train people how to drive 44 tonners correctly before lobbying for heavier lorries.

I do not blame the driving schools for this situation, they teach pupils how to pass the test, not how to become professional, competent drivers. In the larger companies such as my previous employer, nominated driver trainers can rectify shortcomings. Even so they can only correct obvious faults and cannot provide experience. That will come with time, and the sensible, responsible novice will realise his inadequacies and learn, given the right support and guidance. Years ago such knowledge was imbued into young men who moved up from being trailer boys, drivers' mates, and van boys into drivers in their own right. Nowadays these job categories are non-existent in road haulage, as is the once common scenario of sons riding with lorry driving fathers in school holidays. Health and safety and insurance issues have eradicated such lines of succession.

To a great extent at present, the reported driver shortage in many areas has been alleviated with the influx of Eastern European drivers from the countries that joined the European Union in May 2004. Do not believe the figures you read in trade magazines. There are far more here than reported. At Turners I recruited over sixty, mainly Polish, but with a sprinkling of Hungarians, Czechs, and Slovaks. In addition, at other company depots there were at least the same numbers in total. They have solved a difficult problem but I believe it to be a relatively short-term solution. There are only so many available who are willing to uproot from another country, whilst others would like to come but do not have the essential language skills. Their work ethic is excellent, but they are here for one reason only, and that is to earn money. No doubt some of these young men, who have already brought here girlfriends, or partners, or wives and children, will settle permanently, but many more will eventually return home.

The driver shortage will certainly worsen again in a few years time as an ageing workforce reaches retirement. For drivers you can also substitute mechanics and maintenance workshops staff. We have got to attract young people into what are regarded as menial, but nonetheless essential jobs. There are ways that it can be achieved and my suggestions will be given after I have discussed transport management recruitment and training.

For many, the first step along the path to management has been from the driver's cab into the traffic office. This will still happen and should be encouraged because first hand knowledge of a driver's job will always be important. But there does appear to be some reluctance now to swap staring at the traffic on the M25 for a job gazing at a computer console all day. Many potential traffic office recruits from the driving pool will be unable to achieve acceptable computer literacy unless help and training is provided.

Because road transport is so diverse it is impossible to



state categorically what levels of management skills must be achieved. Smaller firms will require less sophisticated systems and more basic management skills than the giants of the industry. However, any transport contractor, irrespective of size, must have the ability within its organization to be run as a viable business. Long gone are the days when a solely enthusiastic lorry owner can hope to make a success of his venture. Knowledge of all the legal requirements, job pricing, cost control, vehicle specifications, man management techniques, are just some of the prerequisites for viability.

The medium sized transport companies will always be the training grounds for some ambitious managers who become constrained, or wish to improve their prospects. These and small firms will need to encourage former drivers, or suitable school leavers who do not want to embark on further full time education courses. It is very difficult for a small operation working on slim profit margins to provide training for young people, but a potential source of future managers for bigger companies is not being tapped at present.

Because road transport is so fragmented in its structure there will be hostility to the thoughts of the largest firms picking off the best people from the smaller ones. But that is the root cause of many of the problems within the industry. It has never tackled its difficulties collectively and with consensus; there is a massive role here for the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and Road Haulage Association (RHA) to play if they were so minded.

The giants of the industry, both privately and publicly owned, are in far better positions to attract graduates and other academically qualified students. They can provide defined career progression if abilities warrant it. However, it is not all milk and honey working in the traffic office of these large concerns. The hours culture is long, with the vast majority of large traffic offices on shift work. Road transport is becoming more and more a 24/7 operation. The favoured shift patterns are a 'four on – four off' system, which is four working shifts of 12 hours, and then four rest days on a rolling pattern. This results in at least one day at a weekend being worked in five weeks out of every seven. Obviously, such a working pattern can be difficult for family life, but it is becoming more common.

There can be more diversity of jobs in traffic offices now than hitherto. For example, at my previous employer years ago, the customer ordered the numbers and sizes of trucks needed each day and the traffic planner allocated work to his drivers. Today, with primary distribution for the supermarket chains it is far more complex. Suppliers notify daily pallet figures for every RDC and traffic operatives now have to consolidate these into loads. If one realises that there can be as many as thirty different suppliers within that haulier's designated geographical area, load-planning efficiency is vital to the success and profitability of the company. In addition all collections, consolidations, and deliveries are time controlled. Some supermarket chains have arrangements whereby pallet figures can change later in the day from those notified earlier. For example, at 5.00 pm it is possible to have planned work for the following day, but come 10.00 pm when daily trading figures have been analysed, orders can be changed resulting in everything having to be re-

planned. Coupled with this, suppliers can ask for emergency 'specials', if for instance, they have had goods rejected for either quality or incorrect temperature reasons. Those goods must be replaced. All this adds pressure onto traffic office staff and that is not forgetting the variations in total loads daily. The daily shopping patterns of the population dictate that if the quietest trading day is regarded as 100, then the busiest day rates 150 and the differences are reflected in vehicles and drivers' availability, which must be factored into the equations.

Inevitably now large traffic offices are highly pressurised places. More and more they need younger staff, not only those who have mastered computer skills, but who are quick thinking and positive. To become a successful operations manager you need to have a variety of skills, and academic qualifications will assume greater importance. If I have described a difficult working place then I do not apologise, because it is. But also, I believe, ultimately fulfilling and rewarding in terms of job satisfaction. If a young operations manager can make a success of it, then he can progress with confidence to the most senior of positions within an organisation.

Even in the last decade the requirements for transport staff has changed dramatically, whether it be drivers, office workers, or management. These demands will not lessen, so recruitment will assume even greater importance. As an industry road transport must promote itself more, both to the general public and into schools and colleges. This opinion has been aired many times in the trade press, but still nothing has happened. Road transport is vital to the well being of everyone.

I mentioned earlier the two main trade associations, namely the FTA and RHA. I sincerely believe that the lead has got to come from these organisations with the full backing of their members. Successive governments have done nothing to encourage the industry, and a measure of how little politicians know or care is the relatively low importance given to transport (in its widest meaning) during the recent general election.

Then, when we recruit, we must provide training and support. Company bosses complain about low profit margins and poor returns on capital. Could it be that with better trained drivers fuel economy would improve? Yes it would; it is a proven fact. Better driving would also translate into lower servicing and repair bills. Fewer accidents would reduce insurance premiums. More competent traffic office staff would plan work more efficiently, reducing empty running miles. If they felt fully up to the job, stress levels would be lower. A modern lorry utilises more computing power than NASA had to put a man onto the moon in 1969, yet it is often managed by a chap sitting at a desk with a telephone, scraps of paper, and a pencil. We must move on from that. Better-trained traffic operations managers would manage their entire resources better. These are just a few of the benefits possible, and collectively the cost percentage points saved must all add up to improved profitability.

If the will to do it is there, it can be done. There are transport professionals like myself with years of practical experience who would be willing to go into schools and

colleges with suitable visual aids to promote the industry at all entry levels as a worthwhile, interesting and rewarding career. We could talk to career advisors and to academics, helping them plan relevant courses and curricula. Could a fully equipped articulated lorry (or several of them) become a travelling road show for the transport industry? It could visit educational establishments, the major shows such as Truckfest, and county agricultural shows. Such a showpiece could be

used for everything from driver recruitment upwards. We can raise the profile of this industry and the people working within it, but it will not happen unless the impetus is provided by the industry itself. And for that we need the company owners and the trade associations to be prepared to proactively take their own fate into their own hands.

Graham Edge,  
Swaffham Prior, Cambridge

## Letters to the Editor

I fear that the *Newsletter* will become an educational journal, but I hope that I can make three points about transport education before the matter is abandoned. The first is that the market for higher education in Britain has changed radically in the past thirty years. In 1970 fewer than 8% of the 18+ age cohort attended full time higher education; now the figure is 40%, but public expenditure per student has fallen drastically. In 1970 Newcastle Polytechnic made a handsome profit from home students taking a transport sandwich course. By 2000 only overseas students created a reasonable profit on undergraduate courses, so the market had changed, and so too had the university's requirement to generate income from commercial sources.

The second point is that just as lectures to science students are far cheaper than the provision of supervised lab work, so the practical aspects of transport education (such as sandwich placements and "live" case studies) are far more costly than straight lectures based on theory.

Finally a promise- the way in which David Holding, Derek Millward and myself generated links with family firms in road transport during the 1980s would I think

make a useful article or paper for the R and RTHA. Firms featuring would include Prestons of Potto, Stampers of Penrith, Elldis of Consett and Sims of Boot in Eskdale. [Yes, please. Ed]

For the time being I am having a sabbatical in Belgium, noting, inter-alia, the industrial relations problems of Groupe TEC, the bus company in Wallonie, (the French-speaking part of Belgium).

David Stewart-David

### 2003 Symposium and Swift Transport Services

Thank you for sending me the Symposium papers. I was pleased that you had a copy left of 2003, because the presentation by Nigel Watson covered a haulier local to my home – Swift Transport Services of Skegness. I have several photographs of the Swift fleet – though not too many many it was running Ford Thames Traders and later Ford D series of the Ford spares distribution contract. It was a sad day locally when they were sucked into the Salvesen conglomerate, although everyone realised that they had long ceased to be a local company.

Bill Taylor

## Association Matters

### ► New Members

Institute of Transport Administration  
(corporate member)

T.K. Dobson, Edinburgh  
A.M. Lambert, Emsworth  
N.V. Martin, Worthing  
A.J. Whittington, Stanford-Le-Hope

### ► Recruitment of new members

Our Chairman, Garry Turvey, does wish to reiterate that, even though we are steadily gaining new members, the Association still needs more. There is a delicate financial balance between income from subscriptions and the services that it can offer – *Newsletter*, the Coventry Meetings, liaison with our corporate members, the services of our Research Co-ordinator (Tony Newman), the extensive work going on behind the scenes on the proposed *Companion to British Road Passenger Transport History*. More subscription income would ease the tightness in this balance.

Quite apart from the financial aspects, there is surely scope for each member to encourage some friend or acquaintance with similar interests to join us. There are plenty of ways of contacting us. Primarily, approach

Christopher Hogan, the Company Secretary, at 124 Shenstone Avenue, Norton, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 3EJ; or e-mail him at [RoadsandRTHA@aol.com](mailto:RoadsandRTHA@aol.com). Or visit our website at [www.rthia.org.uk](http://www.rthia.org.uk).

If you think that a specimen copy of *Newsletter* would be an encouragement, just phone the Editor, Roger Atkinson on 01244 351066, or e-mail him at [rogeratkinson@f2s.com](mailto:rogeratkinson@f2s.com). Even use a time-honoured means of communication — send him a postcard. Or bring your friend along as a guest to one of our Coventry Meetings; or persuade him or her to sign up for this year's Symposium (see below).

### ► Symposium 2005

The programme is a very good one, with some fine speakers on interesting subjects, though there is one change from the announcement on p.14 in *Newsletter* 42, Geoffrey Hilditch will not be able to make it. But another outstanding figure from the bus industry has stepped in, Giles Fearnley, Chairman of Blazefield Holdings Ltd, with a family background in trams and buses going back a century.

As we go to press, we have learned that we shall have the honour of at least three or four of the seven Traffic

Commissioners attending in person. The history of the Traffic Commissioners, with Geoffrey Jones as speaker, is one of the major features of the day; but do not overlook that Bert Morris will be talking on the centenary of the Automobile Association and Ian Yearsley on 'Unhorsing the Edwardians'. We would be delighted if our corporate members would sponsor attendance by one of their own members, or at the very least give encouragement to some of their individual members to book up and come along.

Please do not be deterred by price; not expensive when you consider what you are getting. £36-00 [including lunch] for the Saturday; £48-00 covers both the Saturday and the Friday evening presentation of highlights from the Mitchell & Kenyon Collection. And afterwards, when the Symposium papers are published, you will be sent a copy free of charge. A lot of thought and organisation go into the Symposia.

Why not have an autumn break in Chester? For your partner on the Saturday there is the City Sightseeing

open-top bus – including a river trip up the River Dee if desired. Lots of good shopping, a Museum or two, Chester Zoo and other attractions. The Symposium venue is the very centrally situated Moat House Hotel. Convenient, but not cheap. Other central Chester hotels are within fairly easy reach on foot.

If you have mislaid your programme-cum-booking form, please apply to the Company Secretary, Christopher Hogan (see item above), or download one from the website [www.rtrtha.org.uk](http://www.rtrtha.org.uk) Please make your booking soon; for practical reasons, both we and the hotel need to have a fair estimate of likely numbers.

► **Correction** (with apologies)

In our report of the Tour of Coventry Transport Museum (*Newsletter* 42, p.13), the paragraph on Thrush shamefully mis-named this wonderful creation. It was Thrust 2 (not Thrush 2), with its Rolls Royce jet engines that broke the sound barrier.

## Editorial

A simple, readable, not too technical survey of a wide subject is frequently called for in many fields. "Why doesn't somebody write a simple introduction to ....?" But in fact, it is very difficult to write. John Aldridge's "Centenary" in this *Newsletter* is just such a survey, and much welcomed by, at least, your Editor.

There are only two Letters to the Editor in this issue; but each one raises a topic worthy of mention. David Stewart-David wanted to get in his thoughts on education and qualifications in transport – a subject already running in *Newsletters* 41 and 42 – but he need not have feared that the time had yet come for the dire editorial formula: "Correspondence on this subject is now closed". Not yet. In fact, you have, as well as David Stewart-David's letter, a major contribution from Graham Edge on this same subject.

The other Letter to the Editor, from Bill Taylor, may seem rather minor, but it was editorially very welcome. There has been strong danger, or even concept, in the past that the Symposia and the *Newsletter* are two totally divorced activities of the Association. A result has been that some fascinating deliveries and discussions at the Symposia have, at best, been encapsulated in the published Symposium papers – reaching perhaps one third of our membership. Members who attend this year's Symposium are specifically invited to comment to *Newsletter* on what they heard. All four of the speakers could be saying contentious things; discussion time has to

be brief. Members who could not attend, may learn (from the to-be-published 2005 Symposium Papers, or otherwise) what was said, and muse "If I'd been there, I'd have said ....". (Subject always to the Editor's decision being final), *Newsletter* could offer you the opportunity to say it.

Two items in this *Newsletter* rely heavily on newspaper reports of one hundred or of ninety years ago. Readers who adopt the 'wide perspectives' that the R&RTHA seeks to foster, may find food for thought in both of them. "Traction Engine Accident" praises the presence of mind of the Police Inspector; yet by modern standards he might be judged rather remiss in letting the incompetent traction engine team proceed on their way; leaving behind a trail of damage to property, and going forward to inflict a gorily described fatality.

"Anti-German Manifestations" draws attention, in passing, to the impact of the War, in terms of loss of local lives, on Liverpool and on Accrington. In Northampton, the reflections by 'Jupiter' on local politics again require readers to have 'wide perspectives'. Was it irrelevant that Mr Gottschalk managed the Tramways? Would such agitation have arisen had he been Manager of the Corporation Waterworks or the Parks and Cemeteries? Municipal pride in electric tramways had hardly passed its zenith by 1914.

RA

## Introducing our members ~ Andrew Waller

For me the daily journey to school over Hampshire's chalk hills in a Bristol L5G saloon touched off a lifelong love of travel. Air raids caused mayhem not far away and fevered preparations for D-Day filled woodlands and fields nearby. But a six-year-old was more taken by packets of chewing gum that American soldiers threw to him as their APCs rumbled past the bus stop. They were on their way

to the fearful voyage to Omaha or Utah Beach.

I don't know why the bus ride spawned such an interest in all modes of transport around the world. It was just one mode of communication, and communication has dominated my life and livelihood. Another particular interest is language and languages – how different



peoples communicate in different ways.

Work was all about communication too. I was a Reuters correspondent in places like Moscow, Cairo, Beirut and Brussels. By the time I left the company after more than 30 years I was responsible for internal communications across a worldwide organisation of some 17,000 people.

Perhaps I was lucky that a low bridge on the local branch line restricted my bus route to a single-deck, whatever the loading. Though it was a Tilling company, the 31-seater had the friendly nature of a country bus. It waited while somebody dropped off a package at a house by the bus stop, and people chatted to one another. Sometimes the conductor would let schoolboys rummage through the contents of the used ticket box, and on summer days the roof slid open.

Travel on public transport is a great way to observe all conditions of humanity; the Glaswegian holidaymaker fulminating at a Blackpool tram driver who "didn't understand English"; the passengers melting to the far ends of a Moscow trolleybus when an ill-kempt man, much the worse for vodka, loudly proclaimed "I am Vladimir Ilyich Lenin"; the little Uzbek boy cheating on the honesty-box in a Samarkand tram; the Albanian mathematician cleaning tables in the buffet at Calgary Greyhound so he could support his family in Canada; or

the Palestinian who kept me amused with Syrian political jokes on the coach ride from Damascus to Amman.

I did not brave the overcrowded buses in Cairo, but once counted 45 men sitting on the roof of a decrepit blue and white Hungarian bendibus as it limped across a bridge over the Nile; finding no space inside they climbed through the tatters of the concertina join between the two parts of the vehicle.

I joined the R&RTHA to learn, to situate my own particular interest in the wider context, its impact on society, and the effects of government policy and regulation, of the market and management style. Bus operations in southern England remain my special interest. For me the companies, those who run them and those who use their services, the operations themselves, the vehicles and the fare-collection systems are each part of the same story.

By the time I had enough leisure hours to write about transport, the company histories had mostly been written, but I found a niche in the history of ticket systems. They too form part of social history. Just compare today's electronics with the "confetti analysis" of 70 years ago, counting out tiny circles of paper punched from different-coloured tickets to confirm that a conductor had indeed taken the fares his waybill said he had.

## Obituary ~ Reginald G. Westgate

With the passing of Reg Westgate our corporate member, the Omnibus Society, lost one its longest serving and most loyal members. So also did the considerably more recent body the R&RTHA, whose Meetings Reg attended for as long as he was fit to do so.

Reg will be best remembered for his great store of information on London's buses, back to the horse bus era, but in particular his accumulated knowledge of the independents of the 1920s, and embracing the period of their absorption by the London Passenger Transport Board.

A considerable part of his researches were embodied in the first two volumes of the monumental work 'London's Buses', of which he was one of the three joint authors. These volumes were published by HJ Publications (effectively, Reg himself) in 1977 and 1983. Work had proceeded on the third volume, planned to cover the

north western segment of the 'Country Area', but sadly (and to Reg's known regret, as he was more the researcher than the writer), this volume and others needed to complete the circuit of the Country Area has languished now for 20 years.

However, Reg was also an original and major contributor to 'Motor Omnibus Routes in London' which is an ongoing project of the Omnibus Society's London Historical Research Group, and which has maintained successful progress. Above all, Reg was always willing to delve into the many well ordered filing cabinets at his home to provide the relevant piece of information required by fellow researchers.

One of his Omnibus Society friends, on hearing of his demise, said 'he was a gentleman' - an old fashioned phrase perhaps but somehow it summed up Reg.

## Deserted Highways

Your picture in *Newsletter* No 42 of a deserted Hounslow High Street made empty by changing modes of transport in the nineteenth century reminded me of the opening pages of Thomas Hardy's *The Woodlanders* dating from 1886.

Hardy's contemporary description captures the ambience and atmosphere of a once-busy inter-city highway now deserted but for the local carrier's cart, which he brings vividly to life together with its motive power (before the

unhorsing years), its driver and, equally importantly, its passengers. *Newsletter* readers may be interested to see the passages I have side-lined.

There is a similar short paragraph in Laurie Lee's *Cider With Rosie* (1959) describing the Plough Inn at Sheepscomb "built as one of the smaller stages on the old coach road to Birdlip; but by Mother's time the road had decayed and was no longer the main route to anywhere. One or two carters, impelled by old habits, still used the

lane and the inn, and Mother gave them ale and bacon suppers and put them to sleep in the stables. Otherwise, few travellers passed that way, and the lane was mostly silent."

#### Extracts from *The Woodlanders*, Thomas Hardy

THE rambler who, for old association's sake, should trace the forsaken coach-road running almost in meridional line from Bristol to the south shore of England, would find himself during the latter half of his journey in the vicinity of some extensive woodlands, interspersed with apple-orchards. Here the trees, timber or fruit bearing as the case may be, make the wayside hedges ragged by their drip and shade, their lower limbs stretching in level repose over the road, as though reclining on the in-substantial air. At one place, on the skirts of Blackmoor Vale, where the bold brow of High-Stoy Hill is seen two or three miles ahead, the leaves lie so thick in autumn as to completely bury the track. The spot is lonely, and when the days are darkening the many gay charioteers now perished who have rolled along the way, the blistered soles that have trodden it, and the tears that have wetted it, return upon the mind of the loiterer.

The physiognomy of a deserted highway expresses solitude to a degree that is not reached by mere dales or downs, and bespeaks a tomb-like stillness more emphatic than that of glades and pools. The contrast of what is with what might be, probably accounts for this. To step, for instance, at the place under notice, from the edge of the plantation into the adjoining thoroughfare, and pause amid its emptiness for a moment, was to exchange by the act of a single stride the simple absence of human companionship for an incubus of the forlorn.

At this spot, on the lowering evening of a bygone winter's day, there stood a man who had thus indirectly entered upon the scene from a stile hard by, and was temporarily influenced by some such feeling of being suddenly more alone than before he had emerged upon the highway.

It could be seen by a glance at his rather finical style of dress that he did not belong to the country proper; and from his air, after a while, that though there might be a sombre beauty in the scenery, music in the breeze, and a wan procession of coaching ghosts in the sentiment of this old turnpike-road, he was mainly puzzled about the way.

He looked north and south, and mechanically prodded the ground with his cane.

At first not a soul appeared who could enlighten him as he desired, or seemed likely to appear that night. But presently a slight noise of labouring wheels, and the steady dig of a horse's shoe tips became audible; and there loomed in the notch of sky and plantation a carrier's van drawn by a single horse.

The vehicle was half full of passengers, mostly women. He held up his stick at its approach, and the woman who was driving drew rein.

.....

Who could have foreseen then that in the second half of the twentieth century many of the all-conquering railway lines would themselves fall silent and abandoned?

Paul Jefford

He mounted and sat beside her, with his feet outwards, where they were ever and anon brushed over by the horse's tail.

This van was rather a moveable attachment of the roadway than an extraneous object, to those who knew it well. The old horse, whose hair was of the roughness and colour of heather, whose leg-joints, shoulders, and hoofs were distorted by harness and drudgery from colthood - though if all had their rights he ought, symmetrical in outline, to have been picking the herbage of some Eastern plain instead of tugging here - had trodden this road almost daily for twenty years. Even his subjection was not made congruous throughout, for, the harness being too short, his tail was not drawn through the crupper, and the breeching slipped awkwardly to one side. He knew every subtle incline of the ten miles of ground between Abbot's Cernel and Sherton - the market town to which he journeyed - as accurately as any surveyor could have learnt it by a Dumpy level.

The vehicle had a square black tilt which nodded with the motion of the wheels, and at a point in it over the driver's head was a hook to which the reins were hitched at times, forming a catenary curve from the horse's shoulders. Somewhere about the axles was a loose chain, whose only known function was to clink as it went. Mrs. Dollery, having to hop up and down many times in the service of her passengers, wore, especially in windy weather, short leggings under her gown for modesty's sake; and instead of a bonnet a felt hat tied down with a handkerchief, to guard against an ear-ache to which she was frequently subject. In the rear of the van was a glass window, which she cleaned with her pocket-handkerchief every market-day before starting. Looking at the van from the back the spectator could thus see, through its interior, a square piece of the same sky and landscape that he saw without, but intruded on by the profiles of the seated passengers, who, as they rumbled onward, their lips moving and heads nodding in animated private converse, remained in cheerful unconsciousness that their mannerisms and facial peculiarities were sharply defined to the public eye. This hour of coming home from market was the happy one, if not the happiest, of the week for them. Snugly ensconced under the tilt they could forget the sorrows of the world without, and survey life and discuss the incidents of the day with placid smiles.

The passengers in the back part formed a group to themselves, and while the newcomer spoke to the proprietress they indulged in a confidential chat about him, which the noise of the van rendered inaudible to himself and Mrs. Dollery sitting forward.

## Delving (*Newsletter 42*, p.19)

There is more to be said about the Pikes.

John Pike, who was not involved with the W J Pike Co. but was a family member, was one of three partners in the Claremont Omnibus Co. which ran buses in London from November 1924 until September 1927. One of his partners, F J Wood, was a native of Burnley and he took control of the Claremont Co., moving its head office to Burnley, though operations in London also continued until 1930. From Burnley he started a Burnley-Clitheroe service and soon had a network embracing Preston, Chipping, an hourly Clitheroe-Manchester service and Manchester-Burnley services via both Accrington and Todmorden.

Meanwhile, quite separately, John Pike started a 'Claremont Luxury Coaches' service between London and Liverpool in March 1929, providing a level of luxury superior to that given by the other operators on the route. Two Dennis F chassis capable of seating 30 passengers were provided with only 20 individual seats. The publicity went on to say 'Every passenger has an independent armchair seat, writing table, ash-try, electric light, self-operating windows, newspaper rack and electric bell to the driver'. The fares were slightly higher - 17s.6d single and 30s. return, compared with 15s. single and 25s. charged by the others. The service started at the company's own coach station at 79/89 Pentonville Road, N.\*

In August 1929, John Pike became a consultant to Garlick, Burrell & Edwards, a Vestey company, who, in August 1929, started a local service between Bootle and Liverpool under the name Merseyside Touring Co; this expanded rapidly both with local and long distance services. This company took over Pike's London service in August 1930. Meanwhile Wood's quite separate Claremont company in

East Lancashire had expanded to 37 vehicles and was absorbed into the expanding Ribble empire

T B Maund

\* One thing really does interlock with another when one starts "delving". The June 2005 issue of the Omnibus Society's London Historical Research Group Bulletin has the first part of an article on the various Coach Stations that there have been in the vicinity of Kings Cross. It tells us that 78/89 Pentonville Road was next to Claremont Square. Then, turning to "London's Buses" Vol.1 (mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter in the Obituary of Reg Westgate), there is more to be found (at pages 149-153) on the Claremont Omnibus Company, on John Pike and on Francis Joseph Wood (known as 'Frank') of Burnley. And all this stems originally from Alan Shardlow's article in *Newsletter 41* (p.20) and its mention of Road Services (Caledonian) Ltd.

Ed.RA

Delving into a book "Grange-over-Sands" by W E Swale, published privately in 1969, I found a passage which touched on Frank Parker & Son, whom we met in *Newsletter 42* at page 11. They were evidently fond of "Support the firm ..." -style advertising. Their 1928 timetable said "Support the firm who give you a good winter service!" The piece mentions that Charles E Parker - who is commemorated on the plaque on a seat at Grange - learned road craft during the First World War by driving a horse-bus from the Grand Hotel to the Station. From the plaque, we know that he was born in 1901. Quite a youngster to have been driving a horse-bus; it adds another facet to the Parker story.

A G Newman

## Bicycling in Sherwood Forest



In *Newsletter 42*, p.9, we had "To Dinner - by Bicycle" Now, we have a picture from circa 1912 of a lady cycling in Sherwood Forest. As well as the approximate date, we know who the lady was - Miss Sarah Ellen ('Nellie') Marlow; she was your Editor's mother. But we do not know the make of bicycle. Do we have any expert who can identify it from this picture? We know that Miss Marlow supported local enterprise, so Raleigh (of Nottingham) seems likely; but definite information would be welcome.

## TRACTION ENGINE'S EVENTFUL JOURNEY A CHAPTER OF STARTLING ACCIDENTS DISASTER TO A TRAMCAR AVERTED — FATALITY AT BELL HAGG

*THE SHEFFIELD DAILY INDEPENDENT, Saturday, September 24, 1904*

The journey of a traction engine and two wagons from Tinsley Park to the Sheffield Corporation water tunnel at Rivelin on Thursday evening was remarkable for the number of incidents which took place. At one time it was thought that a catastrophe was imminent. As it was the journey was not finished before one man had been killed. The engine, which weighed 10 tons, and was of eight horse power, and the two wagons, weighing 6 tons 18 cwt. and 7 tons 7 cwt. respectively, were the property of Messrs. Smart and Capps, traction engine owners, engineers etc.. Pheasant Yard, Attercliffe common. On Thursday evening the engine and the two wagons; heavily laden with coal, left Tinsley Park, their destination being the Sheffield Corporation water tunnel, Rivelin. In charge were the driver, Frederick Smart (son of the head of the firm of Smart and Capps), of 9 court, 14 house, Attercliffe common, Fred Linley, fireman, of Carlisle street, and a labourer named Albert Bellingham. It was not until the top of Crookesmoor road was reached that the chapter of accidents commenced. The night was wet, and the rain had made the surface of the roads greasy. The acute angle formed by the junction of Crookesmoor road and Crookes road is at all times a rather dangerous one for traffic proceeding along the former thoroughfare and up Crookes road or vice versa, because of the steep gradient of both roads. The rain had made the surface at the corner of the two thoroughfares exceedingly greasy. In view of this fact the driver decided to leave one of the trucks and proceed forward with the other, and return for the former. The first wagon was safely taken into Crookes road, and was left standing at a short distance below the top of Roslin road. The wheels were "scotched," and the wagon was uncoupled from the engine. Smart intended to then return and bring up the second wagon from Crookesmoor road. The engine had scarcely been moved however, when the wagon broke loose, and proceeded by itself down Crookes road. Every moment its speed increased, until the heavy wagon was rushing at a tremendous rate down the thoroughfare. Its downward career was brought to a stop when it collided with a wall surrounding Oak Hill House. A breach was made in the wall, but a tree prevented the wagon going far into the garden.

The three men in charge of the traction engine thereupon commenced to extricate the wagon from the hole in the wall. They succeeded in this without further mishap, and the wagon was taken up Crookes road, a distance beyond the top of Roslin road and alongside the Hadfield reservoir. The engine was backed down to Crookesmoor road again to bring up the second wagon. This was successfully accomplished, the wagon being taken beyond the first truck in Crookes road. The men then prepared to couple the two trucks. They were in the act of doing this when the rear wagon released itself and commenced rushing down the thoroughfare at considerable speed. About thirty yards lower down it turned onto the footpath. It then crashed into the wall at the side of the Hadfield dam embankment. The wagon embedded itself

into the wall. In order to draw it out the engine was uncoupled from the second wagon. When this was done, however, that wagon also broke away, and commenced to rush down Crookesmoor road.

At that moment a man was driving a cart down the road past the first wagon, and the spectators were horrified when the second wagon was seen to be approaching the cart from behind. Inspector David Thomson, of the Broomhill police division, who was fortunately on the spot, promptly called out to the man to get out of the way of the oncoming wagon. The latter whipped up his horse, and though the animal at first showed signs of stubbornness he eventually got his cart out of the way just as the wagon passed. At the top of Roslin road there is a sharp bend in the road, and as the wagon was rushing towards this a tramcar appeared round the bend. It was at once evident that an appalling disaster was imminent. The collision of the wagon and the tramcar could only result in a catastrophe. Roslin road itself is extremely steep, and had the wagon continued its terrible career, and gone down that thoroughfare, the smash at the bottom could better be imagined than described. By this time a large crowd had collected, and what almost amounted to consternation prevailed. The greatest praise is due to Inspector Thomson, for it was undoubtedly through his effort that the accident was no more than eventually turned out. He rushed down the road and warned the motorman of the danger, for the car had not quite rounded the bend. The motorman immediately backed the car down Crookes road. When it became known that a collision was imminent the greater excitement prevailed amongst the passengers. Ladies screamed and a few fainted. It is also alleged that some of the men on the top attempted to leave the car by jumping over the side. The expected collision, however, did not take place and it was with heartfelt thankfulness that the spectators saw the wagon rush across the footpath and embed itself in the wall of the Hadfield dam embankment, not far below the other wagon. The tramcar was then enabled to continue its journey to Crookes, but a number of the passengers who had naturally got a thorough fright, decided to walk home.

Eventually the two runaway wagons were dragged from the wall, and securely coupled to the engine. The journey was then continued up Crookes road, Lydgate lane and along Manchester road. Here occurred the most startling as well as the saddest event of the whole evening. Bellingham was riding on the rear wagon, and he was seen several times by the driver Smart, when at Crosspool, to be in his usual place on the wagon.

Shortly before half past eleven o'clock Mr. Joseph Thompson, butcher, of 141 West street together with his son, was driving along Manchester road on his way to Ashopton. Just before he reached the Bell Hagg Inn he overtook the traction engine and wagons. As the latter

were proceeding along in the centre of the roadway Mr. Thompson was unable to get his horse past. He shouted and whistled several times to the engine driver to move to one side when suddenly the horse shied at something in the roadway. Upon looking to ascertain the cause of this Mr. Thompson was startled to see the body of a man lying in the road. He jumped from his trap, and ran towards the engine in front. He informed the driver of what he had seen, and the engine, which had now got about 150 yards beyond the body, was brought to a standstill. When Smart and Linley walked back they were horrified to find that the body was that of their mate, Bellingham, whose absence from the wagon had not been noticed. That he was dead was at once apparent. The unfortunate man's body was terribly mangled. His head was crushed almost beyond recognition, and his brains were littered about the

roadway. His hands had been burst open, and his right foot was smashed almost to pulp. How he came to fall from the wagon is a mystery which will probably never be explained. He had been stationed on the rear wagon for the purpose of looking after the rear lamps. The rear offside wheel of the wagon was covered with blood, and it is probable that this wheel passed over his head. Police constable (219) Barthorpe was informed of what had occurred, and the mangled corpse was removed to the City Mortuary, where the Coroner's inquiry will be held.

Bellingham, who was about 26 years of age was unmarried. He lived at Bright street, Carbrook. He has been in the employ of Smart and Capps only a few weeks.

Contributed by Roger Benton

## Transport Book of the Year

A book about one of Britain's most famous main road routes has won a prestigious award from our corporate member, the Railway and Canal Historical Society.

The three authors of *Thomas Telford's Holyhead Road: The A5 in North Wales*, published by the Council for British Archaeology, took the award along with £500 and a silver cup donated by the charitable trust set up by former publisher (and R&RTHA member) David St John Thomas.<sup>1</sup>

Despite its name, the Railway & Canal Historical Society has grown over more than half a century to cater for enthusiasts of all forms of transport. It set up the book award to mark its 50th anniversary last year "to encourage the writing of well-researched, interesting and readable books on transport history."

Jamie Quartermain accepted the award on behalf of his two co-authors, Barrie Trinder and Rick Turner at the RCHS's three-day annual meeting in Darlington. Pictured here, presenting the award is Grahame Boyes, who is Chairman of the RCHS and a member of the R&RTHA.

The panel of judges, all members of the society, said "it is a thoroughly original piece of work"

The RCHS covers the whole country with regular group meetings, lectures and site visits, in major provincial centres. There are also specialist sections within the society to promote the study of various forms of transport, including aviation and waterways, in greater

depth. The society is also a publisher in its own right with a string of books in print and it produces a Journal, under its Editor, Peter Brown,<sup>2</sup> with articles and book reviews three times a year. For details of membership of the RCHS, and its special interest group for road transport history, please send an s.a.e. to the RCHS Membership Secretary at 16 Priory Court, Berkhamstead, HP4 2PD.



1. David St John Thomas is an R&RTHA Member. He wrote the article "Vital Yet Neglected" in *Newsletter* No.39, on the neglect of the history of roads and the wide social and economic impact of road transport.
2. Peter Brown, Editor of the Railway & Canal Historical Society's Journal, wrote an article on "Memories of West Suffolk 1970-1974" in *Newsletter* No.42.



## Book Reviews

### TRAMWAY MUSEUM STORY

By Ian Yearsley;

Published by The Tramway Museum Society

ISBN 0-949007-05-6

Available from The Tramway Museum Society, Crich Tramway Village, Crich, Derbyshire, DE4 5DP, price £7.50.

The Tramway Museum Society celebrates its first fifty years in November 2005. Ian documents in the fifty-four pages of this A4 format softback book a story of achievement, expressed most visibly in terms of restored and operating tramcars, and through a Museum welcoming thousands of visitors each year enabling visitors to understand the contribution trams and tramways made to this country's social and economic history.

The book is also the story of a great many people working together over the past fifty years; struggling against almost impossible odds to purchase, move and house tramcars to save them for posterity and to construct the tramway at Crich. We are taken through the 1970s when the crowds kept coming and the main task was to provide enough cars in service to carry them all to the present day when the challenges of legislation, funding and keeping the equipment available for service are chronicled in a very readable style. The many marks of excellence that the Museum has gained reflect their persistence and teamwork. The story is illustrated with fifty black & white and twenty-five colour photographs including one of the Association's first Symposium at the Museum with the sixty-eight delegates posed in front of Sheffield tram 510 and a preserved Trent single-deck bus. A listing of the passenger cars and works car that have operated or been displayed at the Museum completes the work.

My only criticism of the book is, as someone who has visited the Museum infrequently and hence has only a vague idea of the geography of the site, that a plan of the

Crich site would have been a great help in understanding the sections of the book dealing with the development of the tramway system and associated buildings and other works.

Even if your interest in tramways is only peripheral; at £7.50 this book is an inexpensive purchase with much of interest to the road transport historian.

CMH

### LORRIES ILLUSTRATED – Views from the North

Photographed by Roger Kenney

Published by Roundoak Publishing, The Old Dairy, Perry Farm, East Nynnehead, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 0DA.

ISBN 1-871565-45-6

Available from the publisher price £14.50 plus £2.00 post and packing.

Views from the North features working images mainly in the Liverpool/Manchester area from the 1960s and 1970s taken by Roger Kenney. The 140 black and white photographs are of lorries of over a hundred English, Scottish and Welsh road haulage and road transport operators. British commercial vehicle manufacturing and operation was then at its zenith and the pictures bring the era back to life. Roger Kenney died earlier this year and the book has been published as a tribute to him; the road haulage industry had few more dedicated followers.

Publisher Robin Pearson describes this 96 page softback book in landscape format as a "back to basics" book, but the evocative photographs are beautifully presented and come complete with comprehensive captions that highlight points about the vehicle or its operator that might otherwise be missed.

At £14.50, this book is certain to find its way onto the bookshelves of many road haulage historians.

CMH

## Book Notices

### THE TRAFALGAR WAY

*Commemorative map of the 1805 post-chaise journey from Falmouth to London.*

Ordnance Survey, Southampton, £6-25 (+ p&p £2-50)  
125 x 95 cm; ISBN 0-319-29034-4

Ordnance Survey and the National Trust have pooled their expertise to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar with a map showing how word of this historic event reached London. It reminds us, used as we now are to instant communication with the remotest parts of the globe, how recently our ancestors had to wait weeks, if not months, for important news.

It took 16 days for the Admiralty in London to learn of the British victory, and of the death of Admiral Nelson. Sixty years later, by which time ships were powered by steam, and cables were already beginning to criss-cross Europe, it still took 11 days for news of the assassination of

President Lincoln to reach London.

But in 1805 the 16 day time-lag was a remarkable feat. By implication its story, graphically recounted in the text that goes with the map, tells us much about the state of England's roads at the start of the 19th century, and what it took to move along them at what then counted for speed.

Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, Nelson's second in command, despatched the news with a young officer, Lieutenant John Lapenotiere. His schooner, HMS Pickle, took nearly 14 days to reach Falmouth. The map traces his 37-hour journey from the Cornish port to London.

It also shows Nelson's last journey on land, from his home in Surrey to Portsmouth. He travelled overnight by post-chaise, with occasional stops to change horses, to join his flagship off the Isle of Wight on 14 September 1805, five

weeks before Trafalgar.

The youthful Lapenotiere, who would certainly have needed to recoup his expenses, kept a meticulous note of what he spent on each change of horses between Falmouth and London. Altogether it came to £46.19s.1d, about half his annual salary of £91.5s, which is the equivalent of around £16,500 in today's money.

Against a background of today's road network, the map marks out the route of his 270-mile journey and each of the 21 stops to hire fresh horses. Inset maps show the streets he passed along through towns and cities along the way.

The text also tells the story of the Battle of Trafalgar. Ordnance Survey, which published its first map in 1801 when Britain feared invasion from France, sets the event in its historical context: "As a direct result the Royal Navy was able to develop and maintain domination of the world's oceans for more than 100 years, giving birth to Great Britain's worldwide maritime supremacy. The massive increase in international trade led to the pre-eminence of London as a world trading centre and of Lloyd's in the world insurance market – a legacy that endures to this day."

AHW

#### THE ROWE HILLMASTER. CORNWALL'S COMMECRICAL VEHICLE

Peter Tutthill  
Wadebridge, the author. 72pp; illustrated.

Between 1954 and 1962 120 vehicles (115 lorries and 5 psvs) were produced by a small west country garage and coach business. Narrower and less powerful than most contemporary rivals, Rowe lorries (mostly with a Meadows engine) were tailor-made for the roads of the extreme south west and the requirements of individual customers. (Interestingly, these included the National Coal Board, for 15 units.) Chassis frames were supplied by Rubery Owen and cabs by Jennings; W J Hooper & Sons of Liskeard produced tipping and cattle truck bodies for Rowes. Unfortunately a relatively small overdraft led to the calling in of a receiver in 1959 and the scaling down of production to its conclusion in 1962, leaving the company, M G Rowe Motors, with its garage and coach business.

This book provides a fascinating record or a minor, but highly interesting, commercial vehicle manufacturer (which was even an exporter). There are details of most individual production units and many photographs (including one, unattributed, by the present writer); almost as a footnote to a footnote, there is information on the CMT, three of which were made by another local entrepreneur, Richard Curnow, 1957-8.

Richard Storey

## Periodicals to keep in mind

### VINTAGE ROADSCENE

This is a bi-monthly magazine in the Ian Allan stable. It used to concentrate rather heavily on the vehicle preservation field; but it does so no longer. It has now turned to a wider historical coverage which may well appeal to R&RTHA members. The issue current as we go to press is No.85, September – October 2005. Price £2-95 (generally available at W H Smith).

Each of the last three issues of *Vintage Roadscene* has carried at least one article which has paralleled, or had a close bearing on, an item in Newsletter. Quite a way back, in *Newsletter* 28, Chris Salaman contributed a short article on "Buses in the Desert – Nairn Transport". At the end he asked for information on an allied topic, "The Canal Army Bus Service". Newsletter readers do not seem to have risen to the bait; but there was an article in *Vintage Roadscene* 83 on that very subject, with a follow-up letter in No.84.

Then, our member Roger de Boer, with his mildly off-beat interests – he introduced himself to members in *Newsletter* 38 – has an article in this Newsletter on buses to the Austin Works at Longbridge. *Vintage Roadscene* 84 had an article "Longbridge Lament", not on the same topic as Roger de Boer's article, but inspired by the same happening – the closure of Longbridge on the collapse of MG Rover in April 2005.

Then, bringing in Roger de Boer again, *Newsletter* 39 told us how, in the afternoon session of our September 2004 Meeting in Coventry, he told us that he was seeking a publisher for a book that he was writing on the Di Mascio ice cream family of Coventry. (He was, very helpfully, rewarded with a chorus of "Oh, oh, Antonio" from our assembled members). There is a lovely article, "The Cool Chimes of Summer", on ice cream tricycles and vans in *Vintage Roadscene* 85. Definitely, in its new form, a magazine of which R&RTHA members ought at least to be aware.

Ed.RA

### Newsletter No.44

- ▶ The target date for issue of No.43 is  
8 December 2005.
- ▶ Contributions by 7 November please
- ▶ Provisional target date for No. 45 is  
9 March 2006
- ▶ Contributions by 6 February
- ▶ The 2005 subscription covers Nos.41 to 44

### In Newsletter No.44 it is hoped to include:

- ▶ Discrimination in Bristol in the 1960s, by  
Dave Bubier
- ▶ Grand Opera - an article in the occasional  
series "Memories"
- ▶ One or two items held over from Nos.42 or 43
- ▶ And hopefully, you, the readers, will keep up  
a steady flow of Letters, Introducing our  
Members, and articles.

## Some notes on the Trade Press

~ in terms of historical research

Mr Editor, you asked me for some information on the trade press, based on my researches in the mid-1990s at the National Tramway Museum at Crich when I was creating the database that is lodged there of transport journals..

In his book *The Victorian Railway*, Jack Simmons observes that the earliest railway periodicals "were addressed primarily to shareholders". Engineering and operating management journals came later, and the enthusiast press only in the late 1890s. Although as early as 1845 "at least sixteen" railway periodicals were being produced, only three of them lasted beyond 1849.

The road transport press was similar, though the evidence for it before the 1890s is somewhat scanty. Between 1993 and 1998 I was employed by the Transport History Research Trust to create a database index to main articles in twenty road passenger transport trade journals between 1880 and 1940; my remit did not cover freight.

Dates given are issues covered, dates in brackets are the whole life of the periodical, in some cases estimated or deduced from volume numbers. From the British Library (Colindale) came *Railway Record and Tramway Register* 1881, 1890 (1844-1901); *Limited Liability Review and Tramway News* (1874-1886); *Joint Stock Companies and Tramway Journal* 1879-1880 (ran to 1881)\*; *Traffic Times* 1874; *Metropolitan and Provincial Whip* 1875\*; *Cab and Omnibus News* 1870 and 1875 (1870-?); *Railway and Tramway Express* 1884-1886\*; *British Financier* 1892. All these are essentially shareholder periodicals. Those which are available also at the National Tramway Museum library are marked \*.

From 1881 to 1898 there was the Tramways Institute Journal\*, that recorded the proceedings of this association of managers which was the predecessor of the large trade associations. Its meetings included visits to tramways and demonstrations of inventions. *Electric Railway Review*\* 1896-1900 (1896-1904) and *Road Locomotion* 1899 move towards engineering; *Tramway News*\* 1903 is a British Electric Traction newspaper promoting itself as a candidate to work the Birmingham Corporation Tramways. Between 1880 and 1910 *Electrician*\* and *Electrical Review*\* contained much of tramway interest but this tailed off.

Of the modern technical and management press, *Tramway & Railway World*\* began in 1892 and in 1934 changed its title to *Transport World*. *Light Railway and Tramway Journal*\* began in 1895, changed title in 1914 to *Electric Railway and Tramway Journal* and again in 1933 to *Passenger Transport*. Separate motor transport and bus sections became major features of both these two journals in the 1920s. *Railway Gazette* had a road transport section in the 1920s. *Commercial Motor* began in 1905 and had bus coverage from the start; after some heart-searching it also covered trolleybuses. The only trams it covered were petrol-driven

ones made by motor industry. During the 1920s it introduced various sections on agricultural vehicles and airports; the airport section eventually emerged as a separate journal, *Flight*. Bus coverage declined during the 1980s.

*Bus and Coach*\* began as an offshoot of *Motor Transport* in 1929 and continued until the 1960s when it was reabsorbed into its parent publication; it then continued as a distinct section until 1986. *City Transport*\*, an international public transport quarterly, was published 1986-87. *Urban Transport International* began in 1988, covered similar ground to *City Transport*, has twice restarted with different publishers and is now (2005) published in Paris. Although there are some highly successful and long-lived international railway publications such as *Railway Gazette International*, *International Railway Journal* and the French *La Vie du Rail*, public transport international publications have not had an easy ride. The American *Mass Transit* made a brave attempt to become international in the 1980s and the one ongoing success since the 1960s has been the Brussels-based three-language *UITP Revue*, now known as *Public Transport International*. I write with some feeling on international publications, having been assistant editor of one, editor of two, and UK correspondent of another.

Returning to the journals index project, the American publication *Street Railway Journal*\* began in 1884 and had good coverage of horse tramway technical questions, of which there was no UK equivalent; it also had a good UK correspondent although he did not always understand UK municipal finance. From mid-1908 it became *Electric Railway Journal* and changed its name in 1932 to *Transit Journal*.

We did not cover *Coaching Journal*, which began in the 1920s as a ticket agents' publication, *Motor Traction*, which was active in the early 1900s, or *Commercial Vehicles*. After bus deregulation in 1986 a whole new range of bus industry periodicals emerged, including *Bus Business*, *Transit*, *Bus and Coach Management* and *Bus and Coach Professional*. The last of these has recently included coverage of tramway matters. Since 1938 tramways have been covered from a campaigning and enthusiast viewpoint by *Modern Tramway*, which after several changes of title now appears as *Tramways and Urban Transit* with some degree of professional concerns.

From the 1980s there has been some coverage of the bus industry in local authority journals such as *Surveyor*, and in *Traffic Engineering and Control*.

I hope this is some use; a lot of research would be needed to find out precise dates of some publications and even more research on when they started and ceased coverage of particular topics.

Ian Yearsley

# Anti-German Manifestations in 1914-1915

## *And three instances connected with road transport*

In the early years of the 20th century, German economic migrants came to this country in numbers that were regarded as large at that time. They took up various occupations, but with four fields predominating: pork butchers and German bands widely, and prostitutes and waiters chiefly in London. Whilst the immigrants did make a bee-line for particular towns, their numbers were easily assimilated and they did not markedly segregate themselves.

However, when war was declared against Germany on 4 August 1914, anti-German feelings were quickly roused by strong propaganda, but particularly by what was reported as German army brutality against the invaded Belgians. Many Germans were promptly interned. (An unfavourable view of Belgian refugees who streamed to this country, was engendered in due course by their behaviour; but that followed a little later).<sup>1</sup>

Liverpool is where the most serious anti-German manifestations took place, although this was not until May 1915. No connection in Liverpool with road transport has been traced; but the rioting in Liverpool was so serious that it is mentioned as background. It was stimulated there by the loss of life among seafarers from what was then our greatest port. Losses of Liverpool-based shipping in the three months prior to the sinking of the "Lusitania" in early May 1915, were <sup>2</sup> :-

- SS *Western Coast* of Liverpool sunk off Beachy Head by a German submarine — February 24
- SS *Bengrove* sunk by a German submarine off Ilfracombe — March 7
- Pleasure steamer *Princess Victoria* sunk by a German submarine, when about 18 miles from the Mersey — March 9
- HM auxiliary cruiser *Bayano* of Liverpool sunk off the coast of Wigtownshire by a German submarine — 209 lives lost
- Statement by Admiralty that of seven merchant ships attacked by German submarines since March 10, three were Liverpool steamers.
- Florizan* (Liverpool Shipping Co Ltd) sunk March 11
- Headlands* (Sefton Steamship Co Ltd) sunk March 12 and the *Andalusian* (Ellerman Lines) attacked on same date.
- SS *Delmira* sunk by a German submarine in English Channel — March 25
- Liverpool steamer *Lizzie* rammed and sank a German submarine in English Channel, March 25.
- SS *Vosges* of Liverpool torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine off Trevoise Head. Chief engineer killed and several passengers and crew injured by shrapnel fire. March 27
- Yeoward liner *Aguila* (2,114 tons), sailing from Liverpool to Lisbon sunk by a German submarine off Pembroke. 23 of crew and three passengers lost. March 27
- Elder Dempster liner *Falaba* (4,806 tons) sunk by a German submarine in Saint George's Channel with a loss of over 100 passengers and crew. March 28
- SS *Flaminian* (Ellerman Line Ltd) sunk by a German submarine off the Scilly Isles. March 29
- Wayfarer* (Messrs T & J Harrison) torpedoed off the West Coast of Ireland and towed to Queenstown. April 11
- Harrison liners *Candidate* and *Centurion* sunk by a German submarine off the Irish Coast. May 6
- Cunard liner *Lusitania* sunk by a German submarine off the Old Head of Kinsale, with a loss of over 1,300 lives, including a large number of women and children. May 7 1915

It was this last which set the population of Liverpool on a course of three days of anti-German rioting. Pillaging of many pork butchers' shops was the most highlighted occurrence. The *Liverpool Weekly Post* of Saturday May 15 had a cartoon with this (carefully explanatory) caption:

Respectable gent seeing an urchin carrying ham upon his head: "Hello, lad, Where did you get that?"

Urchin: "There's plenty up yonder, mister. But you'll have to hurry up"

The first road transport example in these notes comes from the Isle of Arran.

Adolph and Ernest Ribbeck came to Arran in the 1860s, Both married Arran girls and Ernest became sub-postmaster at Brodick, and took over operation of the Corrie mail-run as well. In or by 1879, a mail-car or mail-coach — i.e. a passenger-carrying, as well as mail, facility — ensued. His son, Kaspar, took over in due course. Anti-German measures in 1914, excluded Kaspar Ribbeck from the post office in Brodick, (although he owned the building), and he was allowed to drive his own (still horse-drawn) vehicle on the Corrie route, with mail in it, only if he was accompanied by a postman solely engaged on that escort duty.<sup>3</sup> After the War, Ribbeck became one of Arran's principal bus operators.

In Accrington, there was actually a German-owned bus company.

Lobers Ltd, founded by Wilhelm Hermann Lober, ran bus services in the greater Accrington area from 1913 to early 1915. However, there appears to have been no anti-German reaction against William Herman Lober (as his name had been anglicised), nor was that in any way clearly the cause of the failure of the business in March 1915. Yet the town was not entirely devoid of anti-German feeling. A newspaper report in the early months of the war, told of a valiant policeman securing help at Accrington station, so that a German whom he was escorting to an internment camp, was tied from head to foot with rope, after he had made an apparent attempt to escape from the train. Then there was, by 1916, (but not earlier) more serious local reaction against the Steiner and Hartmann manufacturing families of Accrington. An original immigrant had come, possibly as long ago as the end of the eighteenth century. He and his fellows had had particular skills and had set up dyeworks, specialising in the application of turkey-red dye to calico. A thriving business had developed, with several works in Accrington and neighbouring towns. But by July 1916, Accrington, like Liverpool earlier on, had suffered terrible losses among its young men. The locally raised battalion, the Accrington Pals, sent 700 men "over the top" on 1 July 1916, in the Battle of the Somme, to try to advance 300 yards. By the end of that day, 235 Pals had died and 350 lay wounded.<sup>4</sup> The blow, to a town the modest size of Accrington, was fearful.

However, reverting to Lobers Ltd, This was an interesting company for several reasons; not least because of the

apparent absence of anti-German reaction to its buses. The company appears to have come to end in the Spring of 1915, following one or both of two events – but further research is still needed. The events were:

1. A serious accident to a overloaded bus taking miners to work at Altham Pit in mid-February 1915.
2. Demand by W B Richardson for repayment of £2,000 that he had lent to the company. The sum appears, in fact, to have been repaid with £70 interest. William Benjamin Richardson, is better known as the promoter of the London Central Motor Omnibus Co Ltd. He later founded the Wellingborough Motor Omnibus Co Ltd. He had been a director of Lobers Ltd from about May 1914.

Northampton produces the remaining and most important example. The affair of Julius Gottschalk.



**Mr. Julius Gottschalk.**

General Manager Corporation Tramways, appointed (to the original company) 1886.

"Tramway Review" No.128 (Winter 1986), p.233 :

"The first Corporation Tramways Manager was Julius Gottschalk, who had been manager of the horse trams from 1887, and transferred to the Corporation, supervising the electrification of the system. Unfortunately, during the hysterical anti-German outbursts of 1914, his German-sounding name led to his being forced to resign. His successor from 1914 was ....."

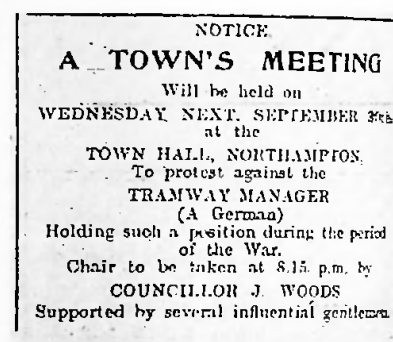
"The Enemy in our Midst" by Panikos Panayi<sup>5</sup>

"In Northampton, meanwhile, the manager of the Corporation Tramways, Louis Gottschalk, received attention in national newspapers, as well as in the town, partly because he had become naturalised after the outbreak of war." (Newspapers cited were *Globe* 22 October 1914; *John Bull* 17 October 1914; *The Times* 26 October 1914).

However, at this point please hark back to the opening paragraphs of these notes. The *Northampton Mercury* of 12 September 1914 carried a photograph of a gloomy group of Belgian women, described as "unhappy and innocent victims of the aggression of the Kaiser and the brutality of his soldiers"

Now, successive extracts from an another newspaper, the *Northampton Independent*, tell how the Gottschalk story evolved:

September 26th 1914 :



October 3rd 1914 :

Editorial by 'Jupiter' : "A Truce to Politics"

"The attempt of a few political hotheads to force municipal elections in Northampton next month, will I trust be frustrated by the friendly conference which has been arranged between the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal parties. The flood of partisan bitterness inevitable in a municipal election is bad enough in normal times, but at the present period it would be intolerable. The public would have very little patience with fighting over parochial politics when the nation is fighting for its very existence, and I am positive that the local press will not be able to devote much space or spirit to pumping up enthusiasm over electoral contests."

Further editorial comment (in same issue) :

"Should Gottschalk Go ?"

"This is the vexed question of the hour which is seriously exercising the minds of Northampton's citizens. It is also one which has split Northampton into two camps, and what the ultimate outcome will be it is difficult to say. Simply stated the question resolves itself into this. Should Mr Gottschalk be retained as manager of the Municipal Tramways in view of the fact that he is of German birth. He has lived in this country for 27 years, and for the greater part of that time in Northampton. Yet until a few weeks ago he did not apply for naturalisation papers. These have now been granted to him. That is the position, one which not unnaturally has provoked many a heated argument. The 'Anti's' have had the first shot, for at a crowded meeting at the Town Hall a resolution was passed almost unanimously protesting against the continued employment of Mr Gottschalk as Tramway Manager. There are naturally two opinions on this question, but the fact which is brought home very strongly to me is that all this bother would have been saved if we had been a little more patriotic in the past. It is all very well to cry England for the English just now, but this is a motto we ought to have put into operation years ago. I have always advocated the employment of Northampton men in Northampton, especially when they are paid out of the public purse, and I always



feel that when the man for the job is not to be found in the town we ought at least to employ an Englishman. That Northampton men have in the past often been passed over for an outsider must be admitted, and I hope that the present acute agitation, if it has no other result, will cause our civic fathers to search even more diligently for a Northampton man to fill a Northampton post in the future, before appointing an outsider. It is perhaps only fair to the Town Council to state that when they took over the old trams they took over the Tramway Manager, and so far as I am aware no fault can be found with the way he has managed the undertaking. To some extent, however, Mr Gottschalk is the victim of his own neglect, and the Corporation are not exempt in failing to satisfy themselves years ago that he was a naturalised subject".

10th October 1914

Further Editorial comment by 'Jupiter'

The developments in the agitation for and against Mr Gottschalk retaining his position as the Tram Manager, are beginning to menace the peace of the town somewhat seriously. All the parties on the Council are divided, and outside bitter differences are finding expression. Another town's meeting and a poll of the town is threatened. Rather than we should resort to that, I think that the Tramways Committee should endeavour to propitiate the rivals by adopting the middle course proposed by Coun. Wareing, that he should be suspended without salary during the period of the war. It is only fair to Mr Gottschalk to add that he has placed himself unreservedly in the hands of the Committee.

17th October 1914

Yet further Editorial comment by 'Jupiter'

The decision of the Northampton Town Council concerning the Gottschalk business does more credit to their hearts than their heads, for it threatens to place the peace of the town in serious peril. I foresaw the possibility of November elections being forced upon this issue unless some concessions were made to the anti-Gottschalkites. Consequently I advocated the advisability of accepting Coun. Wareing's amendment that he should stand off during the period of the war. I still adhere to that opinion. Had that course been adopted, it would have pacified the anti-Gottschalk party, although it was less than they demanded. Moreover, it would have saved us from the ferment of fierce municipal fights, upon a subject which will divide all the political parties, turn friend against friend, and inflame men's passions to a degree not exceeded since the stormy days of the Bradlaugh controversy.<sup>6</sup> We had a sample of what to expect at a political meeting this week, when one Councillor described the speech of another Councillor as 'despicable'. We acquired an unenviable notoriety during the riotous days of the Bradlaugh trouble, and we are now threatened with the unenviable distinction of being probably the only borough in the Kingdom where municipal elections are being fought at this crisis in our national history 7.....

The refusal of the Tramways Committee to make any concessions is leading to regrettable reprisals.

Already hurried preparations are being made to find candidates to fight those retiring candidates who supported Mr Gottschalk viz., the Mayor, Councillors Cowling, Kilby, Whitlock, Robinson and Rogers, gentlemen who by character and capacity we can ill afford to lose. Mr H W Williams, the solicitor, has consented to fight the Mayor in the Kingsthorpe Ward, and a candidate for the Castle Ward, against Mr Whitlock, has been found in Mr William Smith, a Member of the Board of Guardians, who like Mr Whitlock, is a Conservative worker. All this upheaval might have been avoided had the Tramways Committee acted differently. Mr Gottschalk placed himself unreservedly in their hands with a full and frank statement of his case. [However] ... the statement was held back by the Committee, open discussion discouraged, and in the meantime a newspaper agitation was fostered by the "Northampton Chronicle" and "John Bull", with the inevitable result that the minds of many people were too poisoned against him to pay proper heed to his reply.

24th October 1914

Yet further Editorial comment by 'Jupiter'

..... Among the local Socialists who have become the Ishmaels of the party for daring to think for themselves is Coun. Kirby, who now threatens to fight his quondam colleagues this November as an anti-Gottschalkite. Personally I welcome all these party splits as hastening the day when we shall choose our Councillors for their local patriotism and administrative abilities rather than their party labels.

31st October 1914

Eve of election cartoon in *Northampton Independent*

THE BURIAL OF THE GOTTSCHALK HATCHET.



MR SMITH DIGGING IT UP AGAIN

(At this stage, Mr Gottschalk had "retired" as Tramways Manager.<sup>8</sup> The Anti-Gottschalk candidates had withdrawn in all except the Castle Ward, where William Smith remained, and a contested election was required).

7th November 1914

Final editorial in *Northampton Independent*

The surprise of the week has been the result of the municipal election in the Castle Ward, where the anti-Gottschalk candidate, Mr Smith, triumphed over his

opponent, Mr Whitlock, by over 200 votes. His victory is all the more amazing seeing that Mr Whitlock had the advantage of the support of both the party papers, the official support of the Conservative, Radical and Socialist organisations, and moreover had a public meeting in his favour, while his rival had none. What is the inference to be drawn? Partly that the prejudices against Mr Gottschalk predominated over all party considerations. Whether it would have done so in other wards is open to question because the Castle cannot be accepted a criterion for other Wards in the town. To me the welcome significance of the result is that politics in municipal matters is a declining force. The electors elsewhere are beginning to resent being in the bondage of any party or sect in affairs concerning the best government of the town.

My thanks are due to the helpful and well-informed staff in the Central Reference Libraries of both Accrington and Northampton.

Roger Atkinson

- 1 H Webb, who was born in October 1880, was a long-time employee of Thomas Tilling Ltd with whom he started work in 1902. In his 80's, over the period 1961 to 1964, he wrote a series of intermittent, but very informative, articles about his work with Tillings in the "Omnibus Magazine" (the magazine of our corporate member, the Omnibus Society). By article No.15 (May 1964), Mr Webb was in Folkestone, where Tillings had started bus services in 1914. In article No.17 (August 1964), refugees from the Continent had come pouring into Folkestone and were compulsorily billeted upon local residents. They were not universally appreciated.

- 2 From "Annals of Liverpool" (at back of Gore's Directory for Liverpool, 1924)
- 3 Mitchell Luker's *Arran Bus Book*. (Kilbrannan Publishing Ltd, 1983), p. 58.
- 4 Details of the Accrington Pals from Hyndburn Borough Council in association with Accrington Central Library, where considerable further background is available, and the sacrifice of the Accrington Pals is not locally forgotten.
- 5 *The Enemy in our Midst* by Panikos Panayi (Berg Publishers Ltd, 1991), p.198.
- 6 Charles Bradlaugh (1833 - 1891) was a 'Radical' who was elected to Parliament as one of the two MPs for the Borough of Northampton in 1880. In disputes over the Parliamentary oath, he was not allowed to take his seat. Re-elected by the people of Northampton in 1881, he was ejected from the House by force, and expelled. Re-elected yet again in 1882, 1883, 1884 and 1885, he was finally allowed to take his seat in the House, following a change in the Speaker in 1886, and he remained an MP for Northampton until his death.
- 7 For the November 1914 municipal elections, local agreements were nationally advocated by the Conservative, Liberal and Labour parties, and achieved in almost all places, under which the candidate of the party currently holding the seat in each electoral ward would be returned unopposed.
- 8 Julius Gottschalk's only son had already joined the British army even before the Gottschalk troubles arose in Northampton in September 1914. Julius Gottschalk remained a Northampton resident until his death, aged 93, early in 1954, living in the same house in Devon Parade, Wellingborough Road, for over fifty years. He did not return to the tramways, but acquired an interest in the grocery business of Ringrose & Co after the War. He became a Freemason and one of the founders of the County Ground Bowling Club. He was accorded an Obituary in the *Northampton Independent* in its issue of 5 February 1954.

## "Austin" Works Staff Transport ~ late 50s/early 60s

(Brought to mind by the closure of Longbridge, on the collapse of MG Rover in April 2005)

Living on the A38 I had a bird's-eye view from the front bedroom onto the road and could see the variety of buses and coaches which took staff to the Longbridge 'Works'.

There was an ex-Barton Transport half-cab - a Leyland PS1 - with Superb Coaches, an ex-Alexander Foden half-cab (AWG 590) with F & M Coaches of Ladywood who also ran an ex-Northern Roadways of Glasgow Burlingham Seagull coach (JGE 424) scrapped at Manx Motors of Starchley in 1964. (Corgi did a model of this batch with Northern Roadways).

Some of the buses came from as far afield as Wolverhampton. Don Everall ran two ex-Newcastle on Tyne double deck Daimlers and Happy Times of the Scotlands, Cannock Road ran an ex-Lancashire United Guy Arab d/d (FTD..) plus Austin coaches - one of which was a minibus on K8 chassis and another coach with Willenhall Coachcraft body.

There were the Smethwick operators ; J E Morris (Bearwood Luxury Coaches) with two ex-Devon General Regents (JUO 551/2) and Manns Superlux Coaches with their ex-East Yorkshire Beadle-bodied Leyland nicknamed the "bomber" by the staff.

Black Country operator, Davenport's of Netherton, with its ex-London Transport RT - there were at least five of these used by others too - I particularly remember HLX 220 - and Price of Halesowen used ex-Southdown Arab JCD 510. Brown & Perrygrove (Rover Coaches) of Aston Fields, Bromsgrove had a Commer-Churchill coach and a rare Austin with Wadham coachwork which sported a K8 style grille - a full-front - both coaches were new to Rover Coaches - the fleetname and make of the latter appropriate to Longbridge - but the exception to the rule in that most works buses are second-hand vehicles at least. The Commer and the Austin had already seen some years service prior to their usage as staff transport.

Another "regular" was Duple Super Vega heart-shaped grille no.28 of Churchbridge of Cannock - although not owned by them - the new user had not bothered to repaint this coach.

It is appropriate that some of these staff buses were on Austin chassis - but ironically it was the motor car built at Longbridge that was to sound the death-knell of the buses and coaches, supplanted by the cars bought by the factory workers themselves who had previously been the passengers.

Roger F. de Boer