Newsletter

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The Roads and Road Transport History Association
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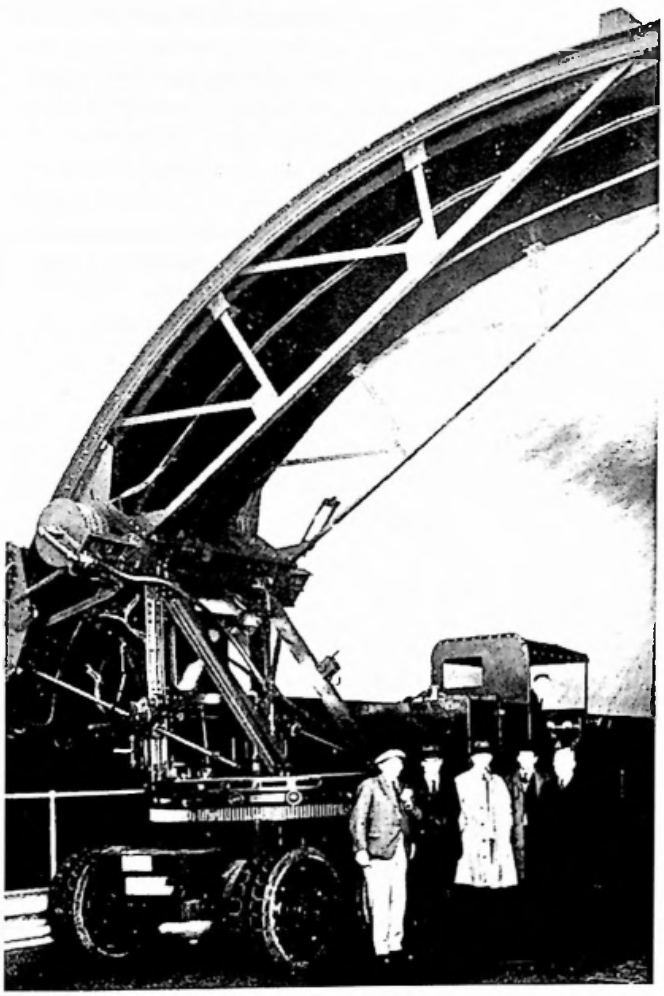
Walker Bros and the Mersey Tunnel

Roy Larkin



Pagefield mobile crane chassis carrying the Mersey Tunnel cleaner - Chris Salaman

Born in 1842, John Scarisbrick Walker founded Walkers in 1866, producing nuts, bolts and pit tubs in Queen Street, Wigan. His brother Thomas joined the business in 1869 and in 1904 Walker Brothers Ltd was formed. By then the business had moved to larger premises at Pages Fields, Wigan, hence the 'Pagefield' lorry.

With Thomas' mine engineering background, the company patented a 'V' shutter for the Belgian Guibal fans, thus providing a constant airflow. Larger 'Indestructible' fans were developed with Walker anti-vibration shutters, which were supplied to the Severn railway tunnel, Central London Railway and the Mersey railway tunnel, amongst others.

Initially axial fans were considered for the Mersey Tunnel, though these were rejected in favour of the unrivalled reliability of the larger Walker fans. Walkers fitted 16 of the 33 29 ft diameter fans required to provide the ventilation needed for the 2.6 miles of tunnels. Air was fed under the roadway to exit through ventilation slots along the kerbs. Foul air was exhausted through the roof.

The air quality was monitored constantly at the main control station at St Georges Dock, where a galaxy of instruments provide the information about carbon monoxide content, visibility, mechanical condition of the fans, etc. The fans, which had a capacity of 10,000,000 cubic feet per minute, were adjusted using this information to suit the conditions.

Walkers supplied and fitted 44 Weight Registers to automatically check axle weights at each toll booth and provided the raising mechanism for the curtains that concealed the tunnel entrances prior to the official opening. King George V opened the tunnel by pressing a button that raised the curtains on 18th July 1934.

A Pagefield Mobile Crane was used as the chassis for the roof cleaning apparatus. The machine could only operate between midnight and dawn and had to be capable of cleaning 14 acres of roof per fortnight. As the cleaner moved slowly through the tunnel, large worsted flails travelled up and down a convex shaped former to follow the tunnel's various roof curvatures. The chassis moved forward at 10ft per minute and carried 1,000 gallons of water to feed the 6ft wide sweep of the flails. The cleaner was eventually replaced in 1964, by a more modern chassis costing £25,000, even though the original design was basically unaltered.

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Editorial

Welcome to the March edition of your newsletter, I hope you all enjoy it and find something in it that is just begging you to put pen to paper.

Thank you to John Dickson-Simpson and Ian Yearsley for their contributions. Thank you, also, to everybody who contributed to Members' Forum and Letters to the Editor.

Time and time again we hear that 'they were the good old days', or 'the job isn't what it used to be'. I remember old hands telling me 30 years ago that the 'job is rubbish now to what it used to be'.

It seems that every generation had it better than the current generation. But how do we know that? Only by word of mouth stories passed down the line.

Too much history exists only in people's memory. Because it seems current, it isn't history and being recorded. Our own working lives aren't important enough to be history, are they?

Well, they are. Everybody's working experiences are important in piecing together both industrial and social history. But, only important if recorded.

The R&RTHA is the perfect place to be recording people's experiences in its newsletter.

Make 2009 the year your memories are recorded in print for future generations to be able to research from.

David Allen has done a marvellous job in recording Bill Baines' memories. We all owe it to future generations to follow Bill and David's example.

Finally, it's your newsletter and 20 pages take a lot of filling. I need your contributions if 20 pages are not to become 16 pages.

Association Matters

The Association extends a warm welcome to new member, Bernard Nield of East Yorkshire and to all old friends who renewed their membership for 2009.

Contents

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Soul Searching

John Dickson-Simpson

Written for the Transport Engineer souvenir issue in celebration of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers Golden Anniversary, 1944-1994.

By the time the IRTE was formed, motor transport of freight and people had reached adolescence with all the vigour of a young industry with an exciting future. It was, after all, effectively less than 40 years old in 1944. Men who could remember how it started were still alive.

The enthusiasm of those who pushed the cause at the turn of the century was so infectious that it became a traditional trait of the transport people's attitude through successive generations - still evident today. Certainly it is an enduring reason for the success of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers.

To relive the optimism of the beginnings is to understand the soul of the road transport industry - to understand why it is a well co-ordinated fraternity of users and suppliers.

A clue to this tradition of mutual understanding was revealed in the recollections, in the January 1966 Leyland Journal, of William Sumner, the founder of Leyland before it was called Leyland. He wrote it a year before he died in 1947. His reminiscences of building, with his brother, James, the first steam lorry (as distinct from traction engine) in 1884 at their small engineering works and foundry in Leyland, revealed that it was built for their own transport.

So, the Sumners were operators as well as manufacturers. That first steamer began life hauling coal from Ecclestone pit to Stannings bleach works in Leyland. Four years later, it began working own-account, collecting sand from Ormskirk for the Sumner foundry - at walking pace because the crew had to take it in turn to precede the truck with a red flag.

But, the vehicle's first own-account journey was also its last. As a result of a sudden surge over a canal bridge, when the boiler's safety valve stuck and 'the finger of the steam gauge was on its second journey round the dial', the studs of a driving wheel sheared. The lost wheels mystery would seem to have begun in 1888! The failure earned the Sumners a summons and, since it was followed two days later by a differential gear failure, the Sumners lost heart for the time being and the prototype steam wagon was dismantled.

Not until 1892 was a venture into road transport revived - with a steam powered tricycle. That, together with a steam lawnmower, was a commercial success, and in 1895 it attracted investment from the Spurrier brothers. One of whom, Henry, had been involved with American railway development. He pushed through the introduction of a steam van nicely coincident with the lifting of the red flag regulation in 1896.

Manufacture of road vehicles was then focused into a separate company, the Lancashire Steam Motor Company. It faced swelling competition that, by the turn of the century, brought load-carrying versions of the traction engines already established by many makers, of which Foden emerged as a prime player. But, it was an event in Liverpool in 1898 that inspired transport men to take lorries seriously.

Development of commercial vehicles was spurred by the formation in 1895 of a ginger group of users and makers under the presidency of Sir David Salomons - the Self-Propelled Traffic Association. Their go-ahead Liverpool centre, under the presidency of the Earl of Derby in 1898 took a positive hand in stimulating progress by inventing comparative road testing.

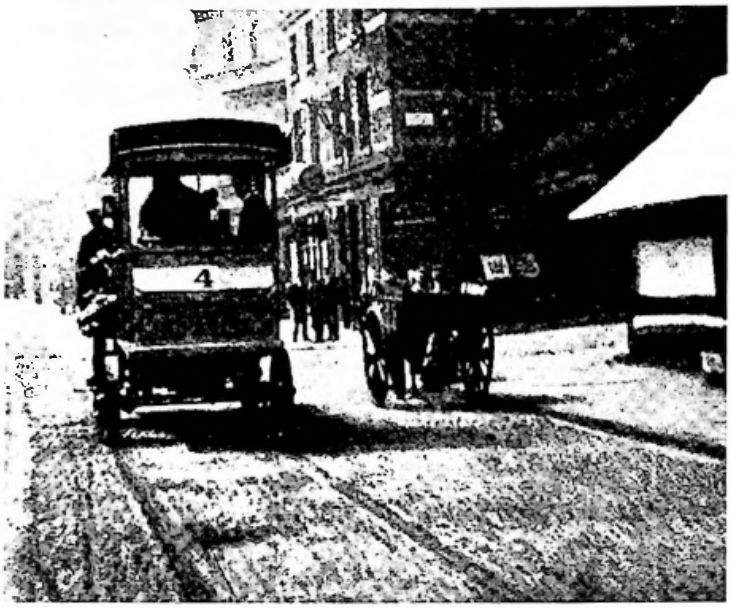
The report of those historic trials was published in a book. Henry Spurrier's own copy has miraculously survived, rescued by one of Leyland's own progressive engineering directors, Joe McGowan.

14 hp forward control Leyland 4-tonner, weighing 3.15 tons attracted much interest when entered in the 1898 Liverpool Trial.

It is not surprising that the book was precious to Henry Spurrier, for the Leyland 4-tonner of the Lancashire Steam Company won the competition against a Lifu 2-tonner, a Thornycroft 3-tonner and a Thornycroft 5-ton artic. All, except the Lifu, were full forward control - an arrangement that didn't enter ascendancy until the 1930s.

The Lifu, which, like the Leyland, had an oil-fired boiler,

made by the Liquid Fuel Engineering Co. Ltd., whose factory was on the Isle of Wight. The Thornycroft was a product of the Steam Carriage and Wagon Co. Ltd., headed by John I Thornycroft with the works in Chiswick.



Thornycroft 3-ton rigid, weighing 3.62 tons on the Prescot Road, Liverpool

The competition's organisers were a bit disappointed at first by the number of dropouts. Ten vehicles had been on the entry list. Two were to have been battery-electrics, but were not finished in time. Entries of T. Coulthard and Co., Preston, Robert Cooke Sayer, of Bristol and the L R Syndicate Ltd., Chancery Lane, London, were withdrawn. So were steamers from France, simply because their unladen weight was above the 3-ton limit imposed by the 1896 Locomotives on Highways Act.

Two 35-mile eastward test routes started and finished at the Prince's Dock of Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. The organisers' disappointment with the number of competitors being cut to four was soon followed by their elation when they saw the crowds that turned out to witness the historic event - to say nothing of the very important, car-borne personages who tracked the steam lorries.

Said the 1898 report: 'Representatives of large undertakings, railways, shipping companies, tramways and omnibus companies, parcel delivery companies, carriers, brewers and others concerned in haulage were present in large numbers.' The die of road-transport enthusiasm was cast.

The stated object was 'to arrive at a type of motor wagon capable of economically taking the place of horse haulage and of competing with the existing railway rates.' From that therefore stemmed the Canute-like opposition of the railways to road transport that has pervaded the whole 20th century.

The Liverpool trials, prepared after talking to the Automobile Club de France in 1897, were far more than a mere road test to measure performance and fuel consumption. Operating costs were estimated from the results. And there was concern for the environment, even in those early days, with assessment of 'noise, smell, visible vapour, dust or other nuisance'. The intention was for the competitors to receive no en-route maintenance and to be free from breakdown.

Hopes of avoiding mechanical troubles were not fulfilled. The first day of rumbling over granite setts saw the steel tyres of the Thornycroft artic and Leyland working loose. A boiler tube of the Thornycroft 3-tonner split, and rear wheel skidding when the brakes (only at the rear) were applied caused a spin. That lesson was not properly learned until 50 years later, when the significance of front brake power for avoiding tail-slides at last began to be acknowledged.

The Lifu caused some embarrassment to the officials because it kept travelling too fast (the speed limit was 5 mph) and even more embarrassing when it was told to brake and an observer's car ran into the back of it, puncturing an oil tank. Then a cylinder head was blown off hydraulically because someone forgot to open the drain cock after a long stop. The vehicle continued on one cylinder.

With commendable resource, a new cylinder was

Thornycroft artic which caused embarrassment for its driver during the manoeuvrability trials - possibly stalling artic development until the 1920s

The crew of the Lifu pause at the Swan Hotel, Aughton

delivered overnight from the Isle of Wight. Rail presumably to the rescue. On the last day, the Lifu earned a black mark for blowing unburnt oil vapour out of its funnel. On the last day, too, the Thornycroft suffered boiler leaks and loose tyres.

Everything went well with the Leyland until a condenser pipe breakage within sight of the finishing post.

A manoeuvrability test gave the first hint of the driver training problems to come with articulated lorries. The driver of the Thornycroft artic could not seem to get the knack of reversing, and the judge, a professor, was unmerciful. With hindsight, he was somewhat insensitive. Drawing attention to the special driving skills required of an artic caused market resistance to the concept, which, in keeping with the way of the world ever since, had legal advantages in gross weight and therefore payload.

Reliability was thrust into the forefront of the engineers' minds by the Liverpool trials and it has remained so ever since. What a vast advance has been made. On the basis of the 1898 trials, the judges estimated annual maintenance costs at 30 per cent of a vehicle's initial price. In the truck operating costs survey by Transport Engineer in January 1994, maintenance costs were 7 per cent of initial price.

The judges of the 1898 competition gave the first prize to the Leyland because it had the best fuel consumption and the lowest cost per mile. And that, with reliability, is what has been the measure of commercial success ever since.

Estimated pence per mile cost of the Leyland. The estimated cost for the other competitors was, 6.66 for the Lifu, 6.84 for the Thornycroft rigid and 7.16 for the Thornycroft artic.

22 MILES LADEN, AND 22 MILES LIGHT, PER DAY.

Prime Cost, £375.

ANNUAL EXPENDITURE.

Interest at 5% per annum	£18	15	0
Depreciation at 15% per annum	56	5	0
	£75	0	0
FUEL.—0.528 gall. Kerosene per vehicle-mile; 0.528 × 22 × 260 = 30,202 galls. at 4d. per gallon	50	6	9
Two-thirds of this consumption for light running	33	11	2
0.75 gall. per day for raising steam ...	3	5	0
Shavings for warming burner	0	5	0
WATER.—3.413 galls. per vehicle-mile; 3.413 × 22 × 260 = 19,522 galls. at 1/- per 1000 galls.	0	19	6
Two-thirds of this consumption for light running	0	13	0
WAGES.—Driver at 35/- per week	91	0	0
REPAIRS.—Material and Labour	103	2	6
Lubricating Oil and Waste	10	0	0
Rent, Rates and Taxes	5	5	0
Insurances	7	10	0
Total per annum ...	£380	17	11

Work done = 4.06 (Tons Load.) × 22 (Miles.) × 260 (Days.) net ton-miles per annum.
= 23,223 " " "

Cost = (£380 17 11) ÷ 23,223
= **3.94d.** per net ton-mile, @ **4.45** miles per hour.

Early Days on the Buses

David Allen

The continuation of Bill Baines' recollections of his time with B&S Motor Services of Wakefield:

Part 3 - Split Shifts to Split Pins

Garage Initiation

I can't remember the exact date on which I reported to the garage, but it was before the move to a new garage further along Saville Street. The only clue is that it was just before the first Leyland double-deckers arrived in 1931. These replaced three PLSC Lions on the Wakefield/Castleford route and I never conducted on them.

In 1928, nine PLSC3 Lions arrived. Three of them were chassis only and had bodies built by Carl, the company coachbuilder.

Since starting with B&S, I had never ventured beyond the office door until 'reporting garage 8.00am'. With little opportunity for conductors to communicate, I was unaware of what 'report garage' fully meant, except as a form of standby in the event of absenteeism. When arriving and leaving for a changeover at the garage office, I'd noticed conductors on 'report' seated in a bus, halfway up the garage. Also, on occasion, there appeared to be conductor activity in the vicinity of the water butt.

Compared with conductor hours, which varied from 6.00am to midnight, garage hours were akin to office hours, i.e. 8.00am to 5.30pm, break 12.00 to 1.00pm, with alternate Saturdays and Sundays at reduced hours.

Leyland PLSC 3

I duly reported Monday morning. George handed me cloths and a tin of Brasso polish saying, 'they'll tell you what to do'. 'They' being two fellow conductors already sat at ease in a Lion, armed with cloths and Brasso.

None of us were in uniform. Both my companions had been on garage report before and were familiar changeover faces.

Except Saturdays, there were always buses in the garage. It was a problem trying to put a shine on a Lion radiator, still damp from overnight washing. Having polished all radiators present, we started again, making a pretence of it.

There was nothing to polish inside a Leyland bodied Lion, they had a compressed air warning bell system with chrome-plated push buttons. Later Leylands (TS2 and LT1) nos. 95 and 96, bodied by Barnsley, were a Brasso bonanza. Chrome fittings were profuse, with lighting in the form of chrome-plated torches down each side.

Meanwhile, inside and outside our single-decker bus, the sound and movement of a working garage was everywhere. From the two inspection pits and workbench, there were both metallic and human noises.

Engine covers were tossed aside, probing fingers adjusted with spanners - a form of scalpel performance. But, no convalescence, just a disrespectful reverse from the garage, a drive past the Wakefield Asylum along Stanley Road, before returning to the garage, passed fit for service.

With no intercom, communication between the office and inspection pit was by verbal foot power. Mechanics in blue boiler overalls and cloth cap made infrequent visits to the stores. There was no storekeeper. Teddy Bullock, the garage manager, in full golfing rig, often seemed to take off and gather speed to confer with Jack Black, garage foreman, for whatever reason. Jack was a first class foreman - Lancastrian and ex-Leyland man.

From a seat in the bus, I watched, with envy, midday changeover crews come and go. There was no tea-making facilities for us, so I had no option but to eat my sandwiches and have a walk around town.

At 5.30pm, I returned my Brasso and cloths to the office and pedalled home at the end of a boring day. Fortunately my baptism in garage duty did not take place in winter, as the garage folding doors remained wide open.

Garage Routine – The Learning Curve

Another morning of 'report garage' routine followed. Brasso and cloths with colleagues chit-chatting. Teddy and Jack making an occasional appearance and Sam hosing down the concrete.

For me, another boring day until the arrival of a young mechanic hauling a four wheeled station type luggage cart. He came to a halt by the bulbous water tank and hose point. One of the polishers collected the Brasso and clothes, headed to the office and returned with a bundle of clean, unsoiled cloths. I could see activity by the petrol pump.

A large, galvanised rectangular tray about six inches deep was half-full with petrol. This was carried and deposited by the water tank without a drop being spilt. The trolley was loaded with various bus engine parts, much bigger in size than our Austin Seven parts.

The 'report' conductors now became cleaners. Every part had to be sterilised in petrol and those encrusted with a mixture of oil and road dust hosed with water.

By the end of the day, my trouser legs and shoes were saturated. No protective clothing was issued and the smell of petrol clung all the way home on my cycle. Out came the tin bath and my clothes were immersed in cold water prior to being washed.

The next day I arrived at the garage in winter boots, discarded trousers and coat with a khaki shirt and collar. I wore my uniform cap in case I was called on to conduct.

Apparently, Tuesday was programmed for engine parts washing. Wednesday,Thursday and Friday were Brasso days. Saturday was 'report 12.00 noon' to conduct a 'special' and Sunday (when on) was 'kicking your heels' duty in the garage from 8.00am to 3.00pm.

Mechanical Intuition

I was into my third week of 'garage report', there might have been other Brasso buff replacements, I cannot remember. But I do remember taking a particular interest in engine parts cleaning; having mastered hosepipe technique and therefore dry trousers.

My interest in the internal combustion engine began before leaving school. Knowledge of traction and friction was the basis of Meccano, a bicycle, Rex Acme two-stroke motorcycle and an Austin Seven. All contributed to my inherent and avid interest in anything mechanical.

There were occasions when conducting, when my driver would remove the engine cover and listen to the tick over. This was a golden opportunity for me to scrutinise a bus engine at close quarters.

Looking back, it was appropriate I was standing by a Leyland PLSC1 when Jack Black made his way from the inspection pits between parked buses to where I was polishing. He stopped and asked if I was Billy Baines. When I said, 'yes', he directed me to take that 'stuff' (polish/cloths) into the office, which I did and retraced my steps to the inspection pits.

Jack looked up and came to meet me with, 'get t'brush and give benches and floor a sweep'. When the staff were packing up at the end of the shift, Jack gave me orders for next morning. 'Come straight up here and see me'. On my way out, the next day's rota read, 'W Baines report garage'.

The Monday morning was my brief initiation into the hallowed precincts of bus mechanics. I arrived with mechanics already there, armed with hand carried toolboxes. Jack was allocating work. A PLSC1 was parked up to a workbench, another was over the central pit. For the moment, being my own boss as it were, I collected a sweeping brush, hand brush and shovel and went to work. Being freelance, gave me the opportunity to see and hear men working with buses.

It took me three weeks to assess my changed status within the Bullock dynasty. I never knew the real reason for my transfer. When I enquired, I was met with 'just do as you are told'. I served no apprenticeship - and proved it was irrelevant. I retired from the rota sheet, was given a clock card and my cap with its polished badge was never worn again.

Brushwork continued to be my priority and I suggested scraping the oil and dirt coating from the floor, which pleased Jack - point scored. The mechanics were from various backgrounds, ex-naval craft, ex-Western Front, ex-publican and a number of ex-conductors like myself. All specialised in certain areas, electrical, body repairs and building, an ex-Leeds conductor was a first class painter.

I was 'borrowed' one Friday night by the electrician to top up batteries. Non-stop through the night gave me an opportunity to see the cleaners at work with cold water, sponges, mop and brushes, then an unofficial break, in winter round a stove. The lubrication man, also an ex-Leeds conductor, was an authority on grease nipples with back axle lubricant warmed on a primus stove.

A full overhaul was carried out by six mechanics, three painters, an electrician and joiner. Priority was given to engine removal part by part with a block and tackle for the remainder. Four axle jacks anchored the bus (mostly Lions) clear of the floor with the removal of everything

else, wheels axle shafts, brake drums etc.

I was appointed Keeper of Engine Parts and the washing thereof. The parts were transported to the water butt, where 'report' conductors washed and hosed per my instructions.

Meanwhile my services were required where the action was. Cylinder blocks, heads, crankcase, shafts and connecting rods, valves etc, were not water butt material, but washed in trays of petrol. All these parts were prepared for further internal work or packed for shipment to Isles of Stanningley, the local Leyland agent for reconditioning.

It was at the petrol washing session that I became acquainted with Ron Brook, second in command and also a perfectionist. 'Now then Bainesy, have you got... .' I ignored him until I eventually, and respectfully, informed him that my name was Baines not Bainsey. He even apologised.

(Ron Brooke eventually moved to West Riding Auto. Did he become the Chief Engineer of the same name who played a major role in the Wulfrunian bus development?)

The Lion gearbox did not become part of my cleaning as it was left to the mechanics.

Some of my assignments took me out of the garage. Welding went to Barretts and brass parts to Arthur Ellis, a short distance away.

Meanwhile, my status as the new entrant into the mechanic hierarchy progressed. Every Monday I became guide and mentor to the parts cleaning department. My first bench job was grinding valves and I was later assigned to George Teal to assist in renewing brake linings.

When engine parts returned from Isles, I had the job of carefully returning them to the engine stands for reassembly by Jack and Ron. When the next delivery arrived, I was given the task of assisting Ron on the engine stand, and from then continued to do so.

My next task was stocktaking before the move to the new garage. I was asked if I had ever done it before and of course I had, at Egglestones, for a number of years. A clipboard and pencil was given to me. I began in the stores with its shelved compartments of nuts and bolts.

During my whole time in the garage, I never saw a works manual. Taking stock of the fleet, I entered Lion, short or long (PLSC1 and 3), and the fleet number. My stock take eventually complete, it was back to normality. With brushwork under control, there was more time for the spanners.

On The Move

The move to the new garage just up the road went smoothly and without interruption to daily servicing. Our new premises were a replica of the old garage, except they were more spacious with roof glass giving generous light and sun, but the old garage still remained in use.

There were two inspection pits. One took two buses, and the other three. Both had recessed electrical points. The floor space, compared to the old garage, was vast and would require sweeping - in which case who was going to be sweeper?

Leyland Tiger, which replaced the PLSC3s

About this time, the Wakefield B&S Sports Club was formed and a contribution of three pence was deducted from our wages. Teddy Bullock became the driving force behind this social enterprise. Soccer was first on the agenda with training on Heath Common.

Established in our new working quarters, life took on a different format. There was a whiff of new timber, a feeling of unlimited space, dissipating the odour of used oil and petrol. In due course there grew a feeling of isolation from the old garage office, except for clocking in/out.

For me, drivers and conductors known and unknown, became strangers. Jack discarded his cap and brown overall in favour of collar and tie complete with trilby. The office claimed more of Jack's time as the fleet increased.

Jack called me to the office and told me to work with Ron who was regarded as the senior mechanic. Ron greeted me at the engine stand - obviously prearranged. Had Ron found me receptive, fertile ground for further technical planting?

Work at the engine stand began with the return of engine parts from Isles, including crankshafts etc. Ron taught me the ins and outs of everything, which included the bedding of main bearings.

As time went on, Lions and the new Tigers from Leyland came and went through major overhauls.

When the engine and components had been fitted, other people installed the engine back into the chassis. My services were directed elsewhere, either a solo commission or as assistant. Work included servicing autovacs, cleaning or renewing spark plugs, taking up brakes or checking rocker to valve end clearance.

to be continued

Crich Golden Jubilee

Ian Yearsley

Village pub at the National Tramway Museum - National Tramway Museum

Fifty years ago, the Tramway Museum Society obtained, first a lease, then purchase of the then disused quarry site at Crich, Derbyshire, which is now the National Tramway Museum.

Now, in 2009, the TMS will be celebrating its jubilee on this location with various events, particularly the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of 23-24th May.

By then, the reconstructed library with roller shelf systems to accommodate the 9,000 books donated from the Winstan Bond collection will be open for inspection.

Until this reconstruction is completed, the library will not be available for research, but in the meantime, R&RTHA members who have particular queries for tramway history research are invited, in the first instance, to get in touch with Ian Yearsley on 0208 874 0168. Ian will then do his best to answer questions from his own resources or suggest other possible sources of information.

National Tramway Museum Website (Review)

Found at www.tramway.co.uk the National Tramway Museum website, Crich Tramway Village, proved to be a very interesting way of spending more time than I'd anticipated.

Quick and easy site navigation tells the visitor all they need to know when planning their trip to Crich. Indeed, casual thoughts of Crich being a place to visit one day, soon turned to Crich being a place on the 'must visit' list. Certainly the Events Calendar provides plenty of variation and interest to suit the whole family.

Of particular interest to R&RTHA members will be the Tram Fleet, the Postcard Library, the Photograph Library and the Library Databases, all easily found from the links on the Homepage.

The Tram Fleet lists over 50 trams, with brief details and a link to a photograph. There are 7 various 'Works Fleet' vehicles listed, also with photographs. It's possible to follow the progress of trams currently in the workshops undergoing restoration through a limited number of photographs.

The Postcard Library opens a search facility for the 11,405 items and the Photograph Library provides a search facility for the 19,738 items listed. The Library databases allow visitors to search the library catalogue and Journal indexes. All very quick and easy.

The Shops and Refreshments link reveals some real gems, from the re-located Red Lion Public House from Stoke-on-Trent, Barnett's period sweet shop and Scothern & Williamson's model and souvenir shop.

A useful Links page provides a wide choice of local places of interest and accommodation, as well as a host of related websites for tramways, steam railways etc., which makes planning a holiday in Derbyshire to take in the museum very easy.

With no real interest in trams, I found the website far more interesting than expected and far better designed with better quality images than many. Well worth a visit.

RL

Members' Forum

Dave Bubier:
The horse drawn village carrier is almost invariably thought of as being a local man, often as diversification from an established related trade. Sometimes, when based in a larger town, it could become a substantial 'Jobmaster' business with more than one route served and to an almost network status. Nonetheless, proprietors can usually be expected to have been born locally, or at least not so very far distant from their ultimate place of business.

It therefore comes as rather a surprise to unearth an instance of what appears to be someone buying in to an existing carrier business in a village with which he had no connection whatsoever.

This appears to be the case as regards George Wakelam, b-1870 Brewood, Staffs, and eldest son of another George who was the longtime carrier to Wolverhampton from Brewood. By 1901 George Jnr. was a 'Domestic Coachman' at Stifford Grays, Essex, having picked up a wife in Ashby de la Zouch on the way. In about 1908 he succeeded a Samuel Wright as the local carrier, into Sittingbourne, from the small village of Frinsted, Kent, settling there and continuing until at least 1926.

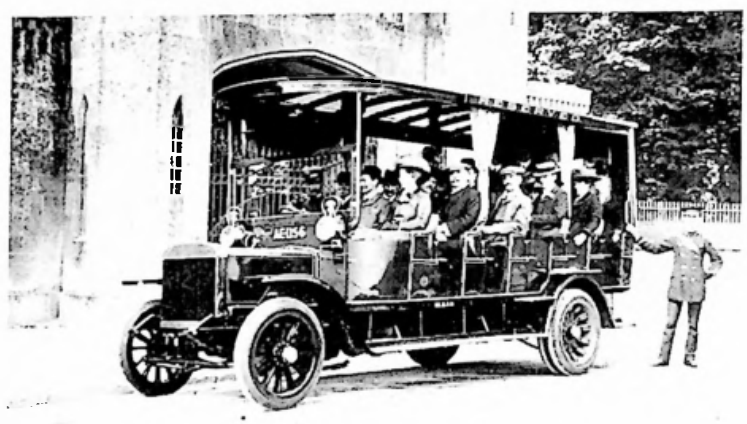
Although it was not unknown, common almost, once the motorised era commenced for the entrepreneurial minded to set themselves up in business by buying out someone far from where they had previously been associated, had this always been the case? It would be interesting to hear if anyone else has come across other such cases back in the horse drawn era.

Carriers are, of course, very often associated with a particular inn or public house but the name thereof rarely reflects that presence. Noting by chance an extant Dover public house actually named the *Carriers Arms* and seemingly of an age and location where incoming carrier services might well have once congregated prompted a quick search to see how common this name was.

Uncommon it certainly was not, examples exist in places as diverse as Bude, Foulsham, Leeds, Swindon and Watlington. Whether all are genuinely places once associated with carriers or are of some modern creation would need more research. Certainly not all *Wagon & Horses* establishments can truthfully be ascribed to the broad wheeled, heavy haulage, trade of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The thought that occurs is whether there is, or was, an actual 'Arms' associated with the Carriers. Many trades do in fact have them, some even registered with the College of Arms, but what would have comprised that of a Carrier? Those of the Waggoner usually depict his whip and broad brimmed hat, carried (worn) at hiring fairs to indicate the position being sought in the same way that a shepherd carried his crook. The tools in trade of a carrier seem rather harder to quantify.

R.J. Williamson:
Mr Williamson has sent a photograph which he found in a non-fiction book, possibly used as a bookmark. Mike Sutcliffe has identified it as a Bristol C45 of 1911. It carries a Bristol registration but can anybody throw any light on the operator or body builder? It carries fleet number 73 on the side of the front seat.



Mr Williamson's Bristol found as a bookmark

Tony Beadle:
Tony, who is editor of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain newsletter is looking for any information regarding a Hayes company, the Army Motor Lorries and Waggon Co. Ltd. The company was involved with building lorries, pontoons, artillery gun tractors, armoured cars for the Belgian Army during the Great War.

However, it seems the three directors - Willy Vanden Plas, Max Matsui and Theo Matsui - were accused of fraud. A report in The Times of 18th March 1916 records the court proceedings, stating that the defendants had obtained contracts from the Belgian government totalling over £750,000 and were paid £170,000 which they divided amongst themselves and misappropriated. The three were arrested, deported at the request of the Belgian Government and imprisoned, charged with defrauding the Government.

I look forward to receiving any information that members can share, and to any questions that members can pose. RL

A Reluctant Sideways Move

Ken Swallow

The North Western Traffic Area road service licence files deposited with the Omnibus Society after deregulation have been well weeded and very little remains from before the 1950s. However, there are one or two small pieces of earlier material that have survived pruning. One such file is CM1/C14 for Manchester Corporation Transport. The file has been examined by ***Ken Swallow*** *and additional interpretation provided by* ***Michael Eyre****. Relevant files at TNA (MT50/130, MT55/366 and MT55/367) have also been examined by* ***John Howie****.*

The Standing Passengers (No 2) Order 1680/41 of 1941 allowed a Regional Transport Commissioner (RTC) to authorise the carriage in 'specially converted' single-deckers of a number of standing passengers equivalent to the number of seats up to a maximum of 30.

They could qualify their permission in terms of specific services and times of day. The general ministerial policy seems to have been that route length should not exceed 10 miles – and rear entrance buses were to be preferred. 'Specially converted' meant in effect perimeter seating, and the order assumed an allowance of 16 inches per passenger.

Arranging the forward facing seats around the sides of the vehicle involved the loss of two seats but provided a central free space rather wider than twice the normal gangway. Using the existing seats along the sides, rather than the continuous bench seating of the tramcar, encouraged a more orderly placing of passengers and would obviate the need for conductors to ask passengers to move up to make room for others.

The Northern RTC went on record in an August 1942 memo to state the case against mixed sexes on converted vehicles!

Defence (General) Regulation 73A 961/42/10 gave the Minister of War Transport power to direct conversion to the longitudinal arrangement but he does not seem to have used this. It is assumed that in practice each case would depend on inspection by a Certifying Officer, having in mind not only the need to ensure adequate grab rails or strap-hangers were provided but also to see that steering gear, tyres, suspension and braking equipment were given frequent inspections.

Donald Smith writing in *Bus & Coach* in October 1941 suggested that 'in some quarters it was felt to be a mistake' to have 30 standing passengers 'herded' into the vehicle and that 'psychologically a limit of 20 to 24 would probably lead to a better feeling all round'. He said some RTCs had 'already intimated that they will not sanction the maximum number of 30 in any event'. This, therefore, was the climate in which Manchester agreed with its trade union officials a figure of 20.

The first letter on CM1/C14 is dated 25th September 1941 from R Stuart Pilcher, General Manager of Manchester Corporation Transport Department (MCTD) and much of the resulting correspondence is signed by Pilcher personally.

In it, he notifies Sir William Chamberlain, the Regional Transport Commissioner (and the pre-war North Western Traffic Commissioners' Chairman), that in conformity with the order the seating was being altered in single-deck buses to permit additional standing room. Could permission be given to use these buses on the following services, which were operated by single-deckers because of low bridges?

West Didsbury-Droylsden (19)
Levenshulme-Eccles (22)
Chorlton-Eccles (23)[1]
Heaton Park-Hollinwood (56)
Oldham Road-Newton Heath-Fallowfield (67)

(MCTD service numbers – the file quotes licence numbers of course.)

1937/8 Leyland TS8 - one of a batch of 40 that formed the mainstay of the single-deck Manchester fleet for 15 years. - MCT-GMTS Collection

The Bramhall service (31) was worked jointly with North Western but is not mentioned, although it had recently

been revised so that MCTD had one Parrs Wood single-decker on it.

Otherwise, apart from two other services that needed them because of roadside trees, the services listed were those requiring the use of single-deckers, although in practice they were also normally used on most of the limited-stop services.

Perimeter seating showing view taken from the rear towards the front in a Crossley - MCT-GMTS Collection

The 19 and 22 were very busy all-day services with even busier peak periods serving many factories, including the former Crossley Brothers works, by then a Shadow Aircraft Factory, and the neighbouring Fairey Aviation works near the terminus at Levenshulme.

On the other hand 67, which served the steel, railway and locomotive works in Openshaw and Gorton, was busy only in the peak hours, although it ran half-hourly from noon to evening. Service 56, besides also serving Ferranti at Hollinwood, also served A V Roe at Greengate, with additional custom being provided by Royal Army Pay Corps personnel billeted in the New Moston district, but needed only two buses. The level of duplication could be reduced by increasing the capacity of the single-deckers.

Next, however, comes a follow-up, dated 18th October, telling the RTC that the Transport & General Workers Union had now suggested the increased number should be permitted only on services to and from works during the peak periods, which seems very likely to be their national policy. In view of the fact that 'almost the entire fleet of single-deck buses have been converted and the inconvenience of having different regulations at different times on different routes, agreement had been reached that the maximum number of standing passengers at any time should be 20'. A hand-written endorsement on this letter dated two days later said the RTC had 'no objection'.

To cite 'almost the entire fleet of single-deck buses' was being a little economical with the truth. Only 49 had in fact been converted to perimeter seating (B28R or B29R), starting in the first week of September, out of an operational fleet of 128, comprising 40 Crossley Mancunians, 60 Leyland TS8s, 27 Leyland TS1s and TS2s and one Crossley Delta airport coach.

This large fleet of single-deckers was normally used on the limited-stop services, many of which were jointly operated, but of which only service 31 had low bridges. Nine of the TS1s and TS2s had been converted to ambulances and the other TS1s and TS2s, being petrol-engined, were little used and were either converted to ambulances or were out on loan to other operators, including twelve to Sutton Motors (Kidsgrove) for services to Radway Green ordnance factory. Two were being used for town gas experiments with huge gas bags on the roofs.

Despite the RTC's hand-written note, at a meeting on 30th October between the RTC, one of his officials and two T&GWU representatives, Messrs Dickie and Thomas, the RTC made it clear that he neither approved nor disapproved of the agreement they had reached for carrying only 20 standing passengers on re-seated single-deckers.

MCTD told the RTC's Chief Assistant, J E Woodford, who had been Chamberlain's Clerk pre-war, on 7th November that 49 buses had been converted to date and that it was 'not proposed to convert any more at the moment'. In fact we know that work had ceased during the second week of the month.

Manchester considered that to apply the Order to different routes and at different times of the day would make for confusion and it would be 'necessary to change notices on vehicles'.

The RTC suggested on 13th November that a 'moveable notice' would 'secure the maximum fluidity in working the vehicles on services' - an idea MCTD said two days later presented 'considerable difficulty', but which was not spelt out.

Meanwhile the Vehicle Examiner reported to the RTC on 14th November that MCTD's Assistant Bus Superintendent had told him that all the vehicles on which the seating arrangement had been altered 'are to be altered back to the original positions'. He said: 'It would appear the reason for this is some agreement entered into with the TGWU restricting the number of

standing passengers'. In fact, 27 out of the 49 were changed back to normal seating, starting immediately on the cessation of the conversion programme.

Perimeter seating apart, a sideshow running at the same time related to the more general 12 standing rule. On services specified by the RTC, Order 1680/41 also allowed, after consultation with the local trade union representatives, up to 12 standing.

A meeting of Manchester's joint operators had agreed that this should apply without restriction as to routes or times, although they said exceptions might have to be made, for example in the case of the Salford Dennis Lances with their nearside staircase.[2]

In support Stuart Pilcher wrote to Sir William on 21st November to say, 'Mr Thomas, General Manager *(sic)* of the London Passenger Transport Board, informed me yesterday in London that he had obtained consent to allow 12 standing passengers on all routes in London from 12.00 midnight to 7.30pm, the restriction after 7.30pm to be reviewed later. The notice is painted on each platform and moveable notices are not required'. The RTC agreed to the increase from 8 to 12 standing 'provided satisfactory arrangements are made with the trade union officials'.

In support of the resistance to the concept of perimeter seating, three plain clothes inspectors were sent out on 20th November to look at the problems on the road. Inspector Copestake travelled on the Eccles service, and Inspectors Lawless and Williams on the West Didsbury-Droylsden route.

The points they made, if predictable, included the lack of body support for the conductors ('guards' in Manchester) during fare collection 'causing them to fall on to the knees of sitting passengers', and the over-riding caused by passengers waiting until 'on top of the stop before making an attempt to leave their seat'.

Williams thought twelve was the number enabling fares to be collected 'in comparative comfort' and 'the majority agreed'. Copestake said passengers complained at 'the thought of being stared at and looked over through sitting face to face', and that passengers spread their knees and feet out, making walking down the bus dangerous.[3]

Perimeter seating viewed from front towards the rear. - MCT-GMTS Collection

Stuart Pilcher sent the Inspectors' reports to the RTC on 24th November stating, 'I am forced to the conclusion that this type of seating is only suitable in the main for munitions workers and similar kinds of traffic and in these circumstances I propose to revert back to the transverse type of seating on all except 23 buses which we will keep for special kinds of traffic'.

He understood that 'in some districts uprights have been fixed for supports but these appear to interfere with the conductor's work', which, bearing in mind that single-deckers already had hanging straps from roof rails, suggests how implacable his opposition was.

The covering letter insisted 'we have converted in all 49'. But, the same day, MCTD's S E Shallice had phoned to confirm the earlier Vehicle Examiner's report confirming that 'all except 25 had been altered back again – the reason for this action is that there has been some trouble since conversion and that this was the arrangement that had been agreed upon'.

Next day the RTC noted MCTD's 'intention' and said tactfully 'the reports of your plain clothes inspectors are very interesting and the facts are being reported to the Minister of War Transport'.

Next on the file is a memo from Mr Birtchnell, the Assistant Secretary at the Ministry of War Transport's Road Transport Division (RTD) at Berkeley Square House, to the RTC dated 23rd December, referring to a phone message to the effect that 'reconversion should be stopped at once'. Resources were 'likely to be strained to the utmost in the coming months' and the Minister was 'disturbed at the apparent lack of progress which is being made on conversion' - a general comment which he made to all RTCs on 27th December. Manchester 'cannot be allowed to reconvert'. The RTC was clearly having his knuckles rapped.

'Circulars 279/41 and 366/41 *(neither of which we have seen)* indicate in general terms the types of routes and services on which these buses should be employed .... If there is still a surplus of converted buses belonging to the Corporation after all suitable routes are covered you

should make arrangements for transferring such vehicles to other routes and services in your Region, if necessary on an exchange basis. If experience shows that to allow 30 standing passengers makes travelling impossibly difficult you may like to consider reducing the vehicles somewhat on specified routes or services' - whatever that meant. The RTC was asked to report in the near future 'on progress as regards to the question generally' in his region.

Now on the defensive, the RTC wrote to the RTD Assistant Secretary on 1st January 1942 (no bank holiday then!) asking him to 'appreciate that Manchester Corporation in converting all *(sic)* their single-deckers went beyond what your circular 279/41 dated 27th August 1941 evidently envisaged. You will remember that your fifth para stated: 'It is considered that buses adapted as indicated should be used primarily on factory services where there are heavy peak loads in preference to ordinary town services'. The Corporation now intend to conform to this. They have tried conversion on ordinary town service and found it quite unsuccessful for the reasons given. That being so they are now restricting the use of the converted buses to the peak time workpeople's services you had in mind when your circular was drafted. The T&GWU take strong exception to their unrestricted use on all-day-long ordinary town services. The number of standing passengers has already been reduced to 20 by arrangement between the Corporation and the T&GWU. You will see from the Corporation's memo that the reconversion of that portion of the fleet which was scheduled for reconversion has already been practically completed and there seems little point in holding it up. The Corporation ought not to be penalised because in their anxiety to be helpful they went further in conversion than the Minister expected and experience warranted.'

The response from Berkeley Square House, on 22nd January (by which time reconversion had ended), was grudging. 'While the Corporation may have used converted buses on services for which they were not wholly suitable, it is presumed that the routes in question were approved by you for operation with such buses and the Minister finds some difficulty in understanding why the converted buses were not transferred to more suitable services. The retention of only 23 converted buses appears to him to be a very small number for an undertaking of the size and importance to industry of Manchester Corporation Transport. While therefore he does not wish at this stage to take formal exception to the action of the Corporation he would be glad to learn if you are satisfied that the resources of the undertaking are fully equal to the demands upon it and that no difficulty need be expected in transporting all workmen needing to travel by its services. I agree that the Corporation in converting all their single-deckers went beyond what was contemplated in my Circular 279/41 and that in the circumstances there is no point in holding up the completion of reconversion of that proportion of the fleet which was wrongly scheduled for conversion. The Minister is not satisfied with the present progress as regarding conversion and wishes more energetic action taken. I hope that you are bringing pressure to bear on all undertakings operating on routes and services which seem to you to be suitable to convert to the maximum number of buses.'

The 23 converted buses that remained in their perimeter seated state are listed on the file as 25 and 58 (AXJ-registered Crossley Mancunians), 63/6/7, 75/6/9, 81-5/7/8, 95/6/9 (DVU/DXJ Leyland TS8s) and 126-30 (DNF Crossley Mancunians). One (76) was converted back to transverse seating in March 1944, another, 130, in December 1944, the rest, with the exception of bus 25 which became a towing vehicle, in 1945/46.

The RTC replied somewhat grumpily to Birtchnell on 30th January. 'I desire to refer to what I might term the 'you have been warned' part of the minute ('while therefore he does not wish ..... needing to travel by its services'). My passenger staff is engaged hourly in arranging and rearranging passenger services, particularly for workmen, and a large proportion of my own time is occupied in dealing with this complex problem'.

Birtchnell responded on 7th February, seeming to try to cool him down by referring to the slow rate of conversion in the country as a whole. (The North West Region had not been performing badly in fact, because by the end of February 1942 total conversions in that Region had reached 240, about one quarter of the total nationwide.)

Six months later, a letter from MCTD to the RTC, dated 13th July 1942, says: 'We are operating the converted buses on the following services . . . ' and the list is the same as that on the letter of 25th September 1941 plus a Forces service between Victoria Station and London Road. What is probably meant is 'rush hour extras'. It also said there were only three other services on which single-deckers were 'necessary' - those to Romiley, Stockport via Cheadle Heath which both had roadside trees, and Bramhall where there was a low bridge at Cheadle Hulme Station.

Official policy that the T&GWU 'must consent to the selection of routes and vehicles' had been supported by a statement we find emanating from the Ministry in June 1942. So, it is in line with that declaration to find that over a year later, MCTD were writing to the RTC on 19th October 1943 still saying 'we do not propose to alter any more buses from transverse to longitudinal seating largely due to the opposition of the trades unions'.

Further correspondence followed through 1944. On 28th June for example, MCTD wrote to the RTC's Chief Assistant, J E Woodford, asking to reconvert the remaining 23 buses: 'We have had considerable difficulty in enforcing the carriage of more than the agreed number of standing passengers' (which in Manchester had been reduced from 12 to 10 in May 1943).

Woodford responded somewhat unconvincingly on 6th July that 'the retention of the present seating arrangement avoids the use of labour and material in reconversion'.

Pilcher retorted on 10th July: 'We have the seats which were originally in the buses and their replacement is merely a matter of attachment to the body which would not involve the engagement of additional labour'.

He pointed out that 'the changing of seating reduced the capacity from 32 to 29 and, although the number of standing passengers is nominally equal to the seating capacity, in actual practice this is not being observed and the agreed number of 10 standing is in most cases the maximum. There is thus a loss of three on the total carrying capacity'.

Woodford was 'inclined to accept the logic' of that reasoning, but 'to give you this relaxation at this juncture might have an awkward repercussion in other parts of the Region where the unions and employees have been more accommodating in both senses of the word'. He referred to 'happenings in the South of England with the serious loss of road transport vehicles' - the V1 flying bomb raids on London had started a month earlier.

A letter of 5th October 1944 from Stuart Pilcher referred to '22 buses' (since bus 76 had reverted to transverse seating some six months previously) - and, as Chamberlain had died on 19th May 1944 this was now addressed to the new RTC, Major General C W McLeod.

Pilcher's next plea, in October, was referred to the Minister, who said it was 'much too soon to sanction reconversion'. He tried again, without success, in May 1945 with a letter to the Deputy RTC, Col Nugent. Two months later the standing passengers limit was reduced to seven up to 8.00pm and to five after 8.00pm – to which Woodford reluctantly agreed.

Finally, on 4th January 1946, Pilcher tried one more time, 'now that the munition transport is substantially concluded'. An internal Ministry memo from HCO(P) accepted there was now 'no point in continuing to withhold permission', and on 14th January, Woodford wrote: 'You may now revert to the standard seating plan'.

In fact MCTD had pre-empted this and had already started reconverting. Six had already been treated by the end of 1945, and after all the reluctance to make 'the sideways move' the last (85) was only done in August 1946. All that was left as a reminder of a wartime expedient was towing bus 25.

We will allow Stuart Pilcher the last word, in his handwritten note at the end of his letter of 10th July 1944: 'Manchester Corporation were the first to convert a sample vehicle and have done everything possible to make them a success. - RSP'.

1934 Crossley Mancunian - No. 58 ran with 28 perimeter seats from September 1941 until April 1946 - MCT-GMTS Collection

Footnotes

[1]Service 23 was subsequently withdrawn in November 1941 to save fuel and reinstated in 1946 as 22X. It is possible the number was used for Chorlton shorts until November 1942.

[2]In fact the Salford Lances had been in store and out of service for some time, and remained so for the whole of the war.

[3]According to Bus & Coach in November 1941, Crosville, ingenious as ever, had raised the perimeter seating height in one of their Leyland LT1s from 18in to 20in. 'This only just enables an average passenger's feet to touch the floor, so that there is a natural tendency to allow the legs to swing back under the seat, thus leaving the maximum of floor clearance'. Whether this was a one-off or not it would be interesting to know, for according to another note on the file Crosville had seemingly undertaken no fewer than 122 conversions, handsomely topping the list in the North West and representing well over 5% of the total number of conversions nationwide.

M6:50 Exhibition

Ken Swallow

It was the way he said it that caught my attention; 'our first Motor Way'. The Rt Hon Harold Macmillan, that 'good humoured spectator of contemporary affairs', as *The Guardian* once described him, was clearly enthused by 'the first road in this country exclusively designed for motor vehicles' when, on 5th December 1958, he officially declared the Preston by-pass open.

It was that event that was commemorated some 50 years later, by the opening of the M6:50 exhibition at The Museum of Lancashire in Preston by the Chairman of Lancashire County Council, Councillor Alan Whittaker, and the Highways Agency Area Performance Manager, Bob Baldwin on 29th November, 2008.

The exhibition commemorates the opening of that first stretch of the M6. It also shows the contribution motorways made to the Britain of the 1960s, highlighting the impact of the motorway building programme, both locally and nationally. In doing so it pays tribute to the late Sir James Drake (1907-1989), Lancashire's County Surveyor and Bridgemaster from 1945, widely acknowledged as the pioneer of the motorway age in the UK.

The embryo M6 was 8¼ miles long, with one intermediate junction at Samlesbury, now J31, featured in the exhibition by a 1/500 scale model. By November 2008 the M6 had stretched to 230 miles, from J1 at Rugby to J44 at Carlisle. But, with a nice sense of historical timing, on 5th December 2008 another six miles were added to join it to the A74(M), from Carlisle to Guards Mill. It was also a timely gesture that a plaque commemorating Drake was unveiled on the same day at J31.

A sequence of nine informative display panels, from 'The Dawn of the Motorway Age' through to '50 Years On', traces the development of motorways from mainland Europe (Italy was the first, in 1924, with Germany following). We can explore how the Preston by-pass was built through its phasing, details of its construction and the choice of materials.

There is archive film footage, some from the Ribble Film Unit, depicting the opening ceremony, with the iconic Gay Hostess double-deck coaches, and the queues of Blackpool-bound traffic on the adjacent 'A' roads. Another film demonstrates the role of the traffic officer on town centre point duty - no high visibility vests in those days! We can listen to the recorded voices of a number of the players and observers of the time, the then Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, being just one of them.

We are reminded that at first there was no motorway speed limit, nor restriction on the type of traffic that could use it. (Your scribe pedalled his bike along the Preston by-pass shortly after it opened and survived to tell the tale).

Amongst the incidental facts the displays contain, (always useful for pub quizzes!) we learn when the first speeding ticket was issued[1], when the white line was introduced to divide each side of the road[2], when driving tests became compulsory[3] and so on. We can examine Catseyes (did you know they were designed to be self-cleaning?).

Exhibits include an example of the locally built Bond Minicar Mk A. It's an early aluminium bodied model and one of the first cars on the new by-pass - later versions were built with glassfibre bodies. There's also H J Laurenson's splendid large-scale model of a 1951 Ribble Leyland-bodied Royal Tiger coach.

Looking north just north of Samlesbury - The Museum of Lancaster

There is a family-friendly activities room. Local folk are encouraged to tell of their memories of the construction and early days of the Preston by-pass. The Highways Agency and The Motorway Archive Trust have displays, and there is a touch-screen link to the Archive Trust's web site.

The exhibition will be at The Museum of Lancashire in Preston until 11th April and reappears at Lancaster City Museum on 2nd May, where it will remain until 29th August.

Footnotes

[1]1896 to Mr Walter Arnold – a fine of 1 shilling for doing 5 mph in a 2 mph zone

[2]1918

[3]31st June 1935 for all drivers who started driving on or after 1st April, 1934.

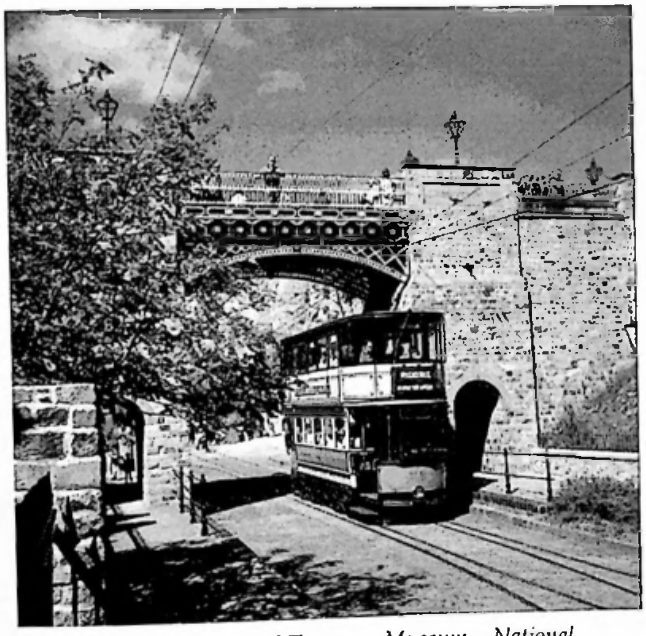
Winstan Bond

Ian Yearsley

Alan Winstan Bond, who died after a long illness on 5th December 2008, was a lifelong enthusiast for tramways and their history. He played an enormous part in the creation and development of the National Tramway Museum and its library at Crich, Derbyshire.

He saw tramways in the much wider context of transport history, urban growth, social and economic history. With this in mind, he amassed a collection of 9,000 books, not just on tramways, but transport in general, town planning, urban development and social history. Indeed any subject that could form part of the context in which tramways played a part.

This wide-ranging concern led him to organise, with Professor Colin Divall of the University of York, a conference in 1997 to bring together historians of transport and town planning. Its proceedings were published by Ashgate in 2003 under the title 'Suburbanising the Masses'. He also made extensive studies of transport patents; at an innovative transport systems exhibition, he left a trail of outraged inventors by naming all the antecedents of their inventions from the 1890s.



The bridge at the National Tramway Museum - National Tramway Museum

He is best known for his work over 36 years as treasurer of the Tramway Museum Society. With all the skills drawn from his financial and accounting career, he enabled the National Tramway Museum to thrive and remain free of debt.

Sheffield tramcar 330 carrying Winstan Bond's coffin - National Tramway Museum

He was also co-founder of the Grand Transport Extravaganza, an annual event, which attracted 25,000 visitors in two days in 1996 and began a tradition of buses and other road vehicles visiting the museum at Crich. The exhibition hall, funded by development debentures, overnight accommodation for the volunteers, developing good relations with other museums, providing amenities for visitors, all were part of his activity.

Above all, he developed the library and archives at the NTM as a resource, not only for tramway historians, but for wider research into urban and transport history. It is therefore entirely in keeping with his achievements that he donated his entire collection of 9,000 books to the John Price Memorial Library at the National Tramway Museum, together with provision for all the shelving and cataloguing that this will require.

His funeral on 15th December was attended by 155 people, who first lined the museum's Edwardian street as his coffin was carried on a wagon hauled by Sheffield tramcar 330, then walked in procession to Crich parish church.

Among the tributes was one from Andrew Scott of the National Railway Museum, who spoke of Winstan's contribution to the wider fields of historical research and museum development.

News Bulletin

From: The Commercial Motor - October 30, 1923

Endorsing Petrol Pump Accuracy
Apropos the recent Press controversy relative to the question of the accuracy of petrol pump installations, it is interesting to learn that the London County Council Weights and Measures Department are issuing certificates which guarantee the accuracy of pumps which their inspectors have examined.

A certificate of this description has recently been furnished to the Blue Bird Motor Co., Ltd., of Ebury Mews East, Victoria, London, S.W., after the Bowser pumps of the company's petrol and oil installation at their petrol station, 330-340 King's Road, Chelsea, London, S.W., had been tested. The pumps have been stamped as accurate.

The New Bridge Over the Severn
Mr. Felix Pole, general manager of the G.W.R. Co., has consulted with the representatives of local authorities in connection with the proposed road and rail bridge over the River Severn from Beachley to Aust, with the result that a definite agreement has been reached.

It was decided that the local authority and the G.W.R. Co. should act jointly for a bridge to be used by both road and rail traffic, the G.W.R. Co. to be responsible for the design and, when approved, its construction, and that Mr. W.W. Grierson, the company's chief engineer, and Mr. L. Forestier-Walker, M.P., form the deputation to settle details with the Ministry of Transport, which is acting as the representative of local government authorities concerned in the project.

The Way Out of Southend
Southend Corporation Highways Committee has considered the question of the placing of signs in suitable positions indicating the various exits from Southend to the main roads. The borough surveyor re-submitted the sketches of designs prepared by him for this purpose, which he suggested should be placed at Victoria Corner, the junction of Sutton Road and Southchurch Road, and at other main junctions, indicating the routes to adjoining towns and to London. He was directed to arrange for designs of the type suggested by him to be fixed in the positions proposed.

Traffic Congestion in Glasgow
Chief Constable A.D. Smith recently dealt with the question of traffic congestion in the centre of Glasgow, and pointed to the causes as being narrow streets, the unequal portion of the street space claimed for the use of tramcars, and vehicles standing on the street for the purpose of loading or unloading goods or waiting for passengers.

To accommodate modern traffic, the minimum width of a street, said the chief constable, would require to be 60ft from kerb to kerb, and this would permit three lines of traffic moving in the same direction.

Remedies suggested for overcoming the present troubles are that powers be given for the regulation of all vehicular traffic, more particularly tramcars in the central area, and that vehicles be prohibited from standing in the main streets during certain hours. A system of circular tram routes as a means of relieving congestion was suggested, and this would undoubtedly ease the situation to a considerable extent, for the same difficulty is fully apparent at all tramway dead-ends in London.

Book Reviews

STOCKPORT CORPORATION
Harry Postlethwaite
Venture Publications Ltd, 123 Pikes Lane, Glossop SK13 3EH
ISBN 978 190530 4172 176pp softback £17.95

Several books on bygone municipal operators have been reviewed in *Newsletter* over the past two years: Halifax and Todmorden in No.49, Rossendale in No.52, Bolton and Leeds (Vol.4) in No.53 and Birkenhead in No.55.

All six books had favourable reviews, and my review of the Stockport book which follows does not break this sequence. Apart from Rossendale Transport, which still survives, they have another feature in common, all these undertakings were absorbed by Passenger Transport Executives either in 1969 under Transport Act 1968, or in 1974, following the Local Government Act of 1972.

The creation of the PTEs was a major event in road passenger transport history. In the closing pages of Harry Postlethwaite's book on Stockport, he bemoans the passing of a well-run municipal undertaking to the sprawling Selnec PTE in 1969. (Selnec = South East Lancashire North East Cheshire; it was replaced by Greater Manchester PTE under local government reorganisation in 1974).

The whole concept of the PTEs and loss of both local municipal control and municipal pride, was a feature promoted as progress and a necessary dragging of parochial attitudes into the 20th century - and many potential benefits were pointed out. Even at the present day there is strong advocacy of greater regionalisation in public transport, and governance of it by a wise bureaucracy that can take a broad view and decide what is best for the area.

The Stockport situation immediately reminded me of water. Stockport Corporation had rested far too long on its laurels, having created one reservoir, Fernilee, in the Goyt Valley in 1937, but dilly-dallying over an intended second one. By autumn 1959, the water shortage had become so desperate that, under the authority of the Stockport Water (Drought) (No.3) Order 1959, supplies to households were cut off and there were standpipes in the streets. An agreement, at dire financial cost to Stockport, to draw up to 3.1 million gallons of water per day from Manchester had to be made. Manchester had built a pipeline from Haweswater in the Lake District. Stockport relied on Manchester until the second Goyt Valley reservoir, Errwood, opened in 1968. It was at this period that regional water boards evolved; and, in broad terms, the same happened with the police, the fire service and more recently it has happened with hospitals.

Yet, we have had this crop of books, obviously evoking nostalgia, but pointing to an era when, (if we ask Stockport Corporation's Water Committee to hide its head in shame), there was considerable local authority competence, actual local power and financial structure, and genuine municipal pride in such visible symbols as the trams and buses. For a historian, the subject has vast scope. All the books mentioned in my opening paragraph, and certainly this Stockport book as well, provide wonderful source material for what did once exist, how it was managed and what problems it faced. For the PTEs - well, Chris Hogan in his review of Leeds Volume 4, acclaimed the intention to continue the Leeds histories to the period 1974-1986 to embrace the years of operation by West Yorkshire PTE. Even the period of actual bus operation by the PTEs, which ended 22 years ago, is now comfortably in the realm of history.

Now, at last, turning to the Stockport book itself. Briefly, it is well-written and readable. Too much on the vehicles; too little on the personnel. Amply, and very well illustrated, with sensible captions to the pictures. The looming presence of the railway viaduct, a dominant feature of central Stockport, gets many mentions and some photographs. Governance by the County Borough's Transport Committee is properly covered, with the impression conveyed that Councillors did actually know about and use their buses and trams. The rather unhappy course of Stockport's early experiment with trolleybuses is obviously dealt with at sensible length. Overall a good picture of a straightforward, usually well-run undertaking in a medium-sized industrial town that had its own identity, and was Stockport, Cheshire, not yet down-graded to being Selnec, Southern Division or 'a part of Greater Manchester', I think, isn't it?

Roger Atkinson

Letters to the Editor

State-owned Bristol

A most interesting account of the BRS Bristols in NL56 - but I do wish folk would stop referring to the 'nationalisation' of the Tilling Group! It was a negotiated sale which, while it suited J F Heaton's aspirations for the unification of public transport and while it took place against the background of the Transport Act 1947, was not 'nationalisation' in the sense that that word described what happened, for example, to the railways.

Ken Swallow

The Internet Bookshop (NL 56)

In addition to sites such as AbeBooks and Amazon, there are some sites which search book sites. One I often use is AddALL (http://used.addall.com/ for Used & Out of Print Books, with a link to In Print Books). This searches the following 22 sites - but you can individually deselect any not of interest:

Abebooks.com, Abebooks.de, Abebooks.fr, Abebooks.co.uk, Alibris, Amazon.com, Amazon.ca, Amazon.co.uk, Amazon.de, Amazon.fr, Antiqbook, Biblio, Biblion.co.uk, Bibliophile, Bibliopoly, Booksandcollectibles.com.au, Half.com, ILAB, Livre-rare-book.com, Powell's Books, Strand Book Store, Choosebooks / ZVAB.

Searching under used books for 'motorway achievement north west', some 20 entries appeared all for 'Motorway Achievement: Building the Network - the North-West of England' by Harry L. Yeadon. This does not mean that 20 different copies were available, since some booksellers list on more than one book site but, allowing for this, there seemed to be at least a dozen different copies from which to choose. Some of them were described as 'new'. Prices ranged from about £19 to about £110. From the 'In Print' section, I find that the book, was published in 2005 at a list price of £33. There is no doubt that some booksellers overprice their stock, but pricing a book at £110 is not the same as actually managing to sell it at that price.

B.R.S. and the M50

The recent articles on B.R.S. and on motorways reminded me that in 1952 my family moved from rural Worcestershire to the more urban town of Malvern Link. We lived in a road off the A449 and, at that time, the main road from Birmingham to South Wales included this section of the A449. Every week, many B.R.S. lorries passed through Malvern Link, Great Malvern, Malvern Wells and over the Malvern Hills into Herefordshire (and, of course, in the reverse direction). I do not remember all the makes and models to be seen, but certainly the Leyland menagerie was represented by, for example, the Hippo and the 8-wheel Octopus.

In November 1960, the M50 Ross Spur Motorway opened and the Midlands - South Wales traffic transferred to it, considerably reducing the number of lorries passing through The Malverns. (Data from: http://www.iht.org/motorway/)

Keith Lloyd

The Internet Bookshop

'The Internet Bookshop' largely reiterates what I said in my 'Road Tomes' address at a Coventry meeting, however, I commend (as I said then) you to:- www.usedbooksearch.co.uk that enables just the one search to be made of Abebooks, Amazon, etc., UK and USA - far less hassle!

Dave Bubier

B.R.S. and ECW

As I have a deep interest in all things Bristol and Eastern Coach Works, I was particularly interested in the article in NL56 about B.R.S. Bristols. The full story of Bristol Goods Vehicles is told in the book written by Allen Janes and Phil Sposito (*who contributed the article – RL)* on the subject, so the article was necessarily a shorter version of that part of the book relating to Bristols supplied to British Road Services.

Whilst I have virtually a complete record of all Bristols supplied to the B.R.S. including registrations and initial and subsequent fleet numbers, without being too technical I would like to add a little more information on ECW's participation, although their involvement in the whole exercise was comparatively small.

As mentioned in the article, the first Bristol 'goods' chassis sanction was the 88th, consisting of 200 units. ECW built a prototype cab for mounting on chassis No. 88.001, followed by a further 49 cabs which were mounted on chassis Nos. 88.002/4-51. These were not given Body Numbers in ECW's normal series but were allocated the numbers G222-270, with the prototype cab seemingly allocated the number G221.

The flat platform bodies were, however, built at Irthlingborough in the premises formerly occupied by ECW, which closed on 31st July 1952 but which were subsequently transferred to B. R. S. Obviously, facilities still existed in the premises for the construction of the platform bodies but only 40 were built there, being mounted on chassis nos. 88.001/2/4-40/51, with the first chassis being the prototype and mounted on the chassis at Irthlingborough. The remaining 49 bodies were transported to Bristol and mounted on the chassis at the Bristol factory.

Maurice Dogget

Articles

There is a constant need for articles of various lengths to be able to continue providing your Newsletter with a varied content at the current size. Without your articles pages can't be filled, so no articles inevitably means blank pages and currently less articles are being received than being used! - RL

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