

ROADS & ROAD TRANSPORT

HISTORY CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

September 1995

Issue No.8

Chairman : Professor John Hibbs OBE
University of Central England,
Perry Barr,
Birmingham B42 2SU

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

Treasurer : Roger Atkinson OBE
45 Dee Banks
Chester CH3 5UU

Research Coordinator : Ian Yearsley
97 Putney Bridge Road
London SW15 2PA

Newsletter Editor : Ron Phillips
16 Victoria Avenue
Grappenhall
Warrington WA4 2PD

THIRD NATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

Saturday 14 October 1995

at the National Motor Museum

Theme : "THE PRIDE OF THE ROAD"
THE EARLY DAYS OF THE OMNIBUS

Fee : £10, including morning coffee,
afternoon tea and museum admission.

Bookings, with cheque made out to Roads
& Road Transport History Conference,
should be sent to Theresa Godwin, The
Library, National Motor Museum,
Beaulieu, Brockenhurst, Hampshire
SO42 7ZN, accompanied by sae 8½" x
4½" for receipt and map. Please also say
whether you wish travel on free vintage
King Alfred bus from Brockenhurst
Station at 09.40, returning from Museum
at 17.30

EDITORIAL

Grahame Boyes announced his
intention to resign at the last Conference
and we must thank him for launching the
Newsletter and establishing it so
successfully.

This Newsletter is interim in nature in
that its format differs from the previous
issues, but the next edition may well
differ again. This is not because I intend
to resign so soon, but because the
computer used and the method of
production employed are "interim" and
will be replaced before the next issue.

This Newsletter will appear at the
Conference on September 16th and I hope
to be able to discuss the contents and
format of future Newsletters, as well as
the best dates of publication for our
magazine then. If you were not at the
meeting and wish to express any views or
concerns about the Newsletter or future
ones, please write fairly soon upon
receipt of this edition. Any resolutions
passed at Conference will be sent on an
accompanying slip.

I would like to conclude by inviting
contributions (as many as possible,
please) for consideration for the next
edition. These do not have to be original
historical essays; our aim is to encourage
readers by showing each other what we
are interested in and where we have
found the answers to our questions.
Short items are just as welcome as long
ones. It is also valid to write about what
you need to know and have been unable
to find, or what you found on subject X
when you were seeking information on Y.
Such a find on a famous Lancashire
coaching inn will be the basis of a future
item from my pen.

ARP

The Transport Ticket Society in 1994-5

The first of a series of articles on the subject of our Corporate Members' current activities

The monthly *Journal* published by the Transport Ticket society (TTS) caters for the interests of a diverse membership, interested in railway tickets as well as bus and tram tickets. More than 10% of the membership live overseas - though others have no interest in overseas tickets at all. There is a significant presence among the membership (with a tendency to be "ex-directory") of ticket printers, ticket equipment manufacturers and bus operators. Among collector members, many have a cut-off date for their interest - sometimes (one suspects) the date that they last used public transport, or it may be one related to electronic ticket issue, or to the formation of the PTEs (c1969-70), to decimalisation of the currency (1971) or to bus deregulation in 1986, matters of which they have not wished to take cognisance or which they see as a suitable finite point. Thus, some readers of TTS *Journal* seek current news of new developments, whilst others avidly look for illustrations of tickets of twenty, thirty, forty, or even a hundred years ago.

But as history is being made all the time, cut-off dates themselves become curiously outdated. Forty-odd years ago, there were members claiming that the formation of the L.P.T.B. in 1933, had been the end of their world, there being no conceivable interest to be found in LPTB buses or trams or their tickets. TTS *Journal* does try to break down these self-imposed barriers and to encourage its readers to heed what is taking place now, in Europe as well as in the British Isles; not least because it will be history in a very short time. In the past year the *Journal* has reported the widespread appearance of multi-colour promotional advertising on the backs of bus ticket rolls, of a print quality unimaginable on a throw away item like a bus ticket, even a few years ago; the ability of bus operators to set up their own text in some of the electronic machines to advertise on tickets their services and excursions (e.g. Hyndburn Transport, a service to Skipton); the adoption by the Stagecoach Group of "Stagecoach" as the first name on tickets (e.g. Stagecoach Ribble, Stagecoach Grimsby-Cleethorpes); the appearance of other new titles as control in the bus industry rapidly changes (GMS, MTL Trust Holdings, WM Townlink,); the now very rapid computerisation of coach tickets (Harry Shaw, Berry's, Elseys),; the continued growth of guided town tours by bus, frequently under the auspices of Guide Friday (e.g. in Llandudno); new Park & Ride schemes, with varied ways of dispensing tickets and encouraging usage (Winchester, Aberdeen, Paisley, and Meole Brace, Shrewsbury).

But there have also been historical articles in TTS *Journal*: the centenary of the June 1894 fire at the Tabernacle Street Works of the Bell Punch Company, the limited extent of municipal concessionary fares in the 1950s; research on the Setright ticket machine; the unsuccessful prosecution of a Warrington tram conductor for the embezzlement of 2d in 1913; and the origins of National Transport Tokens in a scheme pioneered by Droylesden U.D.C. in 1967. Indeed, the encouragement of historical research is a TTS objective. But, as RRTHC members may comprehend, demand for sound historical articles written by someone competent to do both the research and the writing, exceeds the supply.

RA

Particulars of the TTS and a specimen copy of TTS *Journal* are available from the Membership Secretary: J C Haydon, 4 Gladridge Close, Earley, Reading, Berks RG6 7DL

History Begins Yesterday

Alan A. Jackson writes a letter to the Editor on a current trend in bus transport

Turnpikes and early motor buses, the growth of road freight transport between the wars....these are all legitimate subjects for the attention of historians, but it is pertinent, in my view, to ask whether enough is being done to record quite recent developments in the history of road passenger transport whilst the evidence is fully accessible? Things have of course to be put into a proper historical perspective and this requires a due lapse of time, but contemporary recording, research and comment - however tenuous the conclusions drawn - will be invaluable to the historian of 2050. I have no doubt that those with a "narrow" interest in the vehicles are doing their bit (it was ever so, as much with buses and trams as with railway locos), but what about the wider aspects? In particular, we are living through the age of the commuter coach and bus, a phenomenon born of deregulation which has seemingly diluted considerably railway loadings in areas around London. Its first decade has already passed, yet one does not read about it. But perhaps I have not looked in the right places.

I was reminded of this one evening when I found myself in London, walking along the Victoria Embankment between Hungerford and Waterloo Bridges, at 17.00-17.30. I witnessed a remarkable spectacle which at first I assumed to be a political demonstration, so great was the sense of common purpose. But there were no banners. The pavements were thronged with homegoing commuters who were being picked up by a series of buses and coaches, appearing as if from nowhere, and apparently bound for a variety of destinations in the outer metropolitan zone. The passengers, who showed no queue discipline, appeared to know exactly where to stand for their vehicle, although there were no signs to help them. In the few snatches of speech overheard, there was evidence of shared knowledge, and a close affinity with the drivers....."He's late tonight"...."I can't see him yet"...The crowd seemed to be mainly female and of the younger age group, an indication perhaps that financial status plays some part in their selection of transport, with its cheaper fares. Cheaper than a railway season ticket, because the operators pay nothing for their terminal (the pavement) and little for their tracks (the public road).

My interest was aroused, prompting a whole range of unanswered questions. Where do these vehicles park during the day? Are they used for other purposes, such as tourism, between the rush hours? Some certainly seemed unduly luxurious for commuter transport. Were two birds, one fat and one not quite so tasty, being killed by the same coach and the same driver?

I wondered whether anyone was recording and researching this quite significant piece of transport and social history, its beginnings, its development, its economics, its successes and its failures, the way it is organised and operated, its speeds, fares, and convenience compared with the railway alternatives, its effect on residential settlement in parts of the metropolitan area. Just how much traffic have the railways lost to it? Is it just a London phenomenon? It would be interesting to know what work has or is being done on this subject, what articles or theses have been written, or are in preparation.

AAT, Dorking, Surrey

All together now

Alan A. Jackson's article on the previous page shows awareness of the importance of recording the present moment. The following pages aim to raise this awareness in the reader by choosing key items from a current edition of the long-standing road haulage journal "Commercial Motor". The items chosen may well be as useful in fifty years time as they are now.

"Commercial Motor" is, however, a specialist publication, written by journalists knowledgeable in road transport. What is there in today's local press (influenced it seems by national tabloid habits) for the future historian? The cuttings selected on the subject of the "Bus War" at Warrington may well present a misleading picture, and require that the reader understands that a plain fact has been embroidered by "tabloidism" (a desire to present simple facts in a sensational way, sometimes also known as the "shock, horror syndrome." This desire leads to over-concentration on trivial matters, and failure to see the main point)

What can we do about this?

Should we aim to set aside contemporary documents on matters that concern us? Should we aim to record personally, in the knowledge of what future historians will want, contemporary events and practices? In this age of fleeting TV images, is sufficient being recorded by the still image? And if we do make records, how will they be preserved for the future?

This item is a series of questions without answers. If you wish to further discuss the issues raised, please write to the Editor.

for Action

COMMERCIAL MOTOR

7-13 SEPT 1995

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What's Euro-2 going to do to your trucks? CM took 10 Euro-2 engined trucks out on the road for a three-day workout. There are some surprises.

VIEW

Transit through time

It hardly seems like 30 years ago that the Hawk was invited to Langley to see the first Ford Transit roll off the production line. The two-month wait before the van went on sale seemed like an eternity—but the intervening 30 years and 3 million units have come and gone in the blink of an eye.

The Transit went on sale on 8 October 1965, replacing the 400E, and the rest, as they say, is history

AND HERE IS TODAY'S HISTORY

"Commercial Motor" is now up to Issue No 4636 !

We include 4 pages of items to illustrate where today's road history is up to !

M25 slow-down could be pattern for M-ways

■ The 50mph speed limit being tested on the M25 could be the first of many restrictions to hit busy stretches of motorway, warns the RAC.

RAC campaign manager Richard Woods says a situation could arise when the limit would drop further to combat increased traffic flow.

"The idea that reducing speeds will increase traffic flow is a sound one," he says, "but in theory that means the current limit of 50mph could be reduced even further."

The restrictions will be in force for 12 months on the south-west section of the M25. If successful they will be extended to other busy stretches of

motorway around the country.

The Highways Agency hopes the restrictions, which have received wide ranging support, will increase traffic flow on the busiest section of motorway in the UK. It has not ruled out more reductions.

The agency says: "The aim is to get the best traffic flow from the optimum speed; at the moment we believe that to be 50mph."

Laser traps beat radar detectors

■ Laser-guided speed traps that can outsmart radar detectors and book thousands of speeding drivers a day will soon be used by UK police forces.

Thames Valley police will be able to catch three speeding vehicles every second when they introduce laser-guided video cameras early next year. The cameras will send the infor-

mation to Banbury, Oxfordshire, where the police national computer will automatically issue £40 tickets to drivers.

Police believe the system will net many more speeders because it cannot be detected by cab-mounted radar detectors and requires fewer officers to operate it.

Thames Valley's roadside cameras have trapped 53,000 drivers and raised £2m. And fatal accidents have decreased by 37% since they were introduced three years ago.

□ Although it is not illegal to sell a radar detector in the UK, it is illegal to use one. If convicted the courts can impose a fine of up to £5,000.

Volvo cuts prices

by Lee Kimber

■ Owner-drivers and small operators are expected to gain most from Volvo's decision to cut its list prices by 15% in a bid to end rampant price discounting.

The company claims the move will take the mystery out of list prices and discounting, which it says have become irrelevant to truck purchase negotiations. "All sides lose a lot of time getting down to the nitty gritty," says Volvo's Trevor Longcroft. "If you can eliminate the hot air everyone will benefit."

Cutting list prices is expected to be of most use to smaller operators with less clout and knowledge of where manufacturers will yield on price. But Volvo says its prices will still be negotiable and will ultimately depend on the exact specifications of the trucks.

Make sure your bridges don't collapse, says EU.

Weak bridges to lead to detours

■ Hauliers face years of disruption because thousands of bridges may have to be taken out of the British road network for repairs. Under new EU regulations up to 7,000 bridges might have to be strengthened or upgraded by 1999 to handle heavier trucks.

Don McIntyre of the Freight Transport Association says: "Local authorities don't have enough money to upgrade all bridges within the time so inevitably weight restrictions will cause lorries to be diverted."

The Department of Transport is less worried about the big repair programme. "We are obliged to open all roads to heavy lorries but realistically a lot of small bridges wouldn't be used anyway," it says.

The Cats are back

by Colin Sowman

Foden is reintroducing a Caterpillar engine option starting with its 3000-Series multi-wheelers and lightweight tractive units.

From November it will offer 325 and 365hp charge-cooled Euro-2 variants of the 10.3-litre 3176B Caterpillar engine.

Other versions will be offered in the 4000-Series next October. These will include the 14-litre 3406E which is the electronically controlled version of their line six engine previously on offer from Foden.

SPECIFICATION

Caterpillar 3176B six cylinder in line DI diesel, turbocharged and charge cooled with electronically controlled/mechanically actuated injectors.

Bore x stroke: 125 x 140mm

Capacity: 10.3 litre

Version	325hp	365hp
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Rated power

@ 1,900rpm:	325hp (242kW)	365hp (272kW)
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Peak power:	341hp (254kW)	383hp (286kW)
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@ 1,650rpm	@ 1,700rpm
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Torque:	1,250lbft (1,695Nm)	1,350lbft (1,830Nm).
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@ 1,200	@ 1,350rpm
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EURO-2 GROUP TEST

The main feature item of the magazine was a test of ten lorry tractor units fitted with EURO-2 engines, which become compulsory one year hence on all new vehicles of this type. The units that were tested were ERF EC11, ERF EC12, ERF EC14, Foden 4380, Leyland-DAF 85, MAN 343, MAN 463, Mercedes-Benz 1838, Volvo F10 and Volvo FH12. And the winner was....(based on data relating to speed, fuel economy and payload)..Leyland-DAF 85.

ROADS AND ROAD TRANSPORT HISTORY CONFERENCE

Associate Members
revised to 30 August 1995

<i>Associate Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Interests</i>
Roger Bailey	57 Victoria Court, Allesley Hall Drive, Coventry CV5 9NQ	Local transport in the Coventry area. Video-tape interviews with retired coach operators/drivers
Roy Percival Stanley Bevin	4 Orchard Close Mickleton, Chipping Campden Glos. GL55 6TA	Road Passenger Transport Royal Mail transport
Christopher Michael Borland	3 Axe View, Axe Road, Drimpton, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3RJ	Clerical and ticketing procedures; operating control procedures
Richard John Buckley	The Vicarage, Church Drive, Wentworth, Rotherham S62 7TW	The history of tramways, with particular reference to their economic history
J M Burrows	Flat 7, 87 Sussex Place Slough Berk SL1 1NN	London bus, tram + trolleybus routes from 1934 Destination blinds
Christopher Paul Byers	29 North Street, Stoke sub Hamdon Somerset TA14 6QS	All aspects of the hackney carriage/taxi industry
Roger Cragg	8 Claverdon Road, Mount Nod, Coventry, CV5 7HP	Road traffic /road construction Railways, Archaeology of civil engineering
John E Dunabin	2 Hinton Crescent, Appleton, Warrington, WA4 3DF	The history of bus services; where and how that history has been recorded.
Jonathan M Ellis	28 Wheelers Lane, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 7SA	
Anthony William Higgins	"Enfield Lock" Main Street, Fordingbury, Rugby, Warwickshire CV23 8EL	Road transport in Coventry and Warwickshire

Dr Martin P Higginson	96 St George's Avenue, Tufnell Park, London N7 0AH	Road passenger ; bus/tram, business/economic aspects
David Michael Holding	6 The Dene Chester Moor, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham DH2 3TB	History of the bus industry, particularly in Wales, East Anglia and the North East.
Laurence Edward Hughes	14 Westbury Close, Hitchin, Herts., SG5 2NE	Turnpike Trusts and the coaching era
Arthur Ingram	11a Pound Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire PE16 6RL	History of British Goods Vehicle Industry. Author of 14 books
Derek M Jones	Flat 1, 7 Second Avenue, Hove East Sussex BN3 2LH	History of PSVs and operators in Kent and East Sussex; development of bus services in Kent and East Sussex. History Thomas Harrington Ltd, coach- builders. Topographical changes affecting public transport; photographic records of these changes
Stephen Laing	31 Leicester Street, Leamington Spa Warwickshire CV32 4TD	Royal School of Mines Motor Club – veteran and vintage vehicles, especially commercial vehicles.
G Langley	22 Percy Avenue Cullercoats, North Shields Tyne & Wear NE30 4PE	Research project, started 1982, History and Development of Construction Mechanical Plant and Equipment
Richard E McLeish	6 Windmill Rise, Holgate, York YO2 4TX	
Ronald Harold Miller	Woodlands Farm, Aylesbury Road, Aston Clinton, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP22 5AG	Restoration of commercial vehicles History of Carter Paterson and of rail-associated road transport
Andrew Millward	18 Brookside Avenue, Kings Heath, Birmingham B13 0TJ	
Corinne Mulley	Accounting Division, School of Business Management, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU	

Gordon Mustoe	4 Sutton Lodge Blossomfield Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1NB	Road Haulage industry, specifically, parcels and smalls carriers and Royal Mail contractors
A G Newman	30 Old Eaton Road, Rugeley, Staffs., WS15 2EZ	Research into the records and sources of bus history.
A R Phillips	16 Victoria Avenue, Grappenhall Warrington WA4 2PD	Road transport — buses, trams, trolleybuses (particularly pre-1945 and British vehicles in that period, either in N W England or overseas
A M T Pomeroy	182 Kings Hall Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1LJ	
Graham Reeve	72 Tagwell Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcs. WR9 7AQ	Road Transport freight vehicles
William D'Arcy Ryan	19 Hill View Road, Garstang, Preston, Lancs, PR3 1JU	Road passenger transport and tickets in the United Kingdom
Desmond Southgate	261 Station Road, Balsall Common Coventry CV7 7EG	Pre-1940 manufacturers of passenger and goods chassis in the West Midlands and and Scotland
Richard Storey	32 High Street, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1LZ	Archivist Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick Library interested in : archives of road transport history of road haulage archives of the motor industry smaller psv operators and coachbuilders
Terry Strange	2 Grasmere Gardens New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5HZ	Transport planning and history Industrial Archaeology Walking & Dinghy sailing
K W Swallow, JP	1 Cinder Lane, Liverpool L18 2HD	The Chartered Institute of Transport, The Omnibus Society PSV Circle and Merseyside Tramway Preservation Society member

Alfred Alan Townsin

5 Wheatleys Close,
Steventon,
Basingstoke,
Hants

Bus history, with emphasis on
the vehicle side, though this
is by no means exclusive

Malcolm Wright, BA FRGS

RG25 3BQ
c/o Roadmaster Publishing,
PO Box 176,
Chatham,
Kent

ME5 9AQ

Currently researchin a critical,
analytical and evaluative bibli-
ography of British road commer-
cial and passenger transport
since 1900.

Author and publisher of over 60
books on transport and local
history.



HISTORY ON A POST-CARD

Period depicted	c1905-1910
Date sent by Post	6/9/1943
Date of purchase	1995 (£3-50)

SUBJECT Morecambe Promenade, with horse tram & two
***** horse drawn 16 seat wagonettes. No motor
traffic. Of Special Interest is the tram
stop in sans-serif lettering for WEST END
CARS, and the ability to read the seating
capacity of horse tram 6.

2/3/95

BUS WAR

SHADOW Transport Minister Michael Meacher stepped right into the middle of a fierce "bus war" when he spoke at a conference at Warrington on Monday.

Mr Meacher was addressing the conference called by Warrington Borough Council on "the way forward" for municipal bus companies.

Nearly 80 delegates attended the event, representing almost every local authority in the country which runs its own bus company.

It took place against the background of a

no-holds-barred "bus war" between council-owned Warrington Borough Transport and the giant North Western Road Car Company who have launched rival services in the town under the name Warrington Goldlines.

Councillors are worried because a similar war at Darlington some time ago led to the municipal bus company

there going into liquidation.

Goldlines are attempting to lure passengers away from WBT with free travel offers and cut-price fares. But Warrington claims it is winning, with revenue holding up well despite the free offers.

George Hurst, WBT's managing director said: "Anyone who thinks free travel can last forever is deluding themselves. If we went to the wall, fares would soon go up."

North Western claim they have "rescued"

services axed by Warrington and were launching more new services in the town from this week.

Mr Meacher told the conference that a Labour Government would "re-regulate" buses to undo Tory legislation which allowed bus wars to break out.

Other speakers included Euro MP Brian Simpson, Labour's transport spokesman in the European Parliament, and Coun John Gartside, leader of Warrington Borough Council.

Five weeks into the Bus War, and Warrington Town Council organised a conference to which all the existing municipal bus operators were invited. This item tells little, although the tone is one of gravity: another paper reported the same item under the front page headline of

" BUS CHIEFS' SECRET PLOT "

which suggests that it was the municipal (and not the big companies) who are the villains.

5/9/95

Bus chaos

BUS company bosses have been accused of causing chaos on a busy "rat run" by launching a new service.

People living near to a new Warrington Goldlines route running through Grange Avenue, Latchford, Warrington, are angry they were not consulted over the new service and have protested to the town's council.

Coun John Taylor said: "Residents in the avenue are concerned it is already being used as a rat run and the new service will only increase traffic prob-

lems in the area."

"Any company which wishes to do this kind of thing should liaise with local residents who could be affected before it acts."

Safety

There could also be road safety problems with children crossing the road to get to the nearby Bolton Council School, said Coun Taylor.

The road is very narrow at its junction

with Knutsford Road where it has always been difficult to manoeuvre because cars are parked on both sides of the street, he added.

A placard protesting against the moves was put up next to one of two new bus-stops in the road — but it was mysteriously ripped down during the night.

A Warrington Goldlines spokesman said: "It is impossible to speak to every resident on this issue.

We have to focus our attention on the local

authority when setting up a new bus route.

"It is a little unfair if we are being blamed for existing traffic problems.

The cars parked on either side of the road are, causing the obstructions.

Review

"We will review the situation closely and assess the need and demand for the route. If it is not sufficiently used we will re-consider.

But we should not be held responsible for existing congestion."

This misleading headline is an echo of other items carried earlier concerning a Hail & Ride service, which penetrated a housing estate. Here similar language is used for a service using a main road (hitherto without buses) and which has approved stopping places. The "chaos" referred to does not exist here on a ten minute service on a full width road.

Another paper took up the same theme: "HEADMASTER'S FURY AT NEW BUS ROUTE" Do buses arouse the same passion as steam trains?

SERVICES AXED/ 200 journeys slashed

24/2/95

Bus cuts hit list

SEVENTEEN bus services are to be axed in Warrington slashing 200 journeys throughout the town.

And a further 26 services are under threat if money cannot be found to fund them.

Warrington Borough Transport blames increased competition for the decision to stop the poorly performing contracts.

They will stop running from March 6.

Details were set to be announced at a special meeting of the Public Transport Liaison Committee today, Friday.

Other proposals are to axe Services 24, 25 and 27 Risley Employment Area Extensions; 47B Lymm to Little Bollington County Primary School; C30 Warrington to Runcorn Chester and 89 Gorse Covert to St Oliver Plunkett Primary School.

The cuts come after two other bus companies —

By JASON FARRINGTON

North Western Road Car and MLT — set up in the town against Warrington Borough Transport.

Now North Western Road Car with Warrington Gold Lines claims to have stepped in to save a number of the services.

They are: 17 Warrington to Dallam via Bewsey Road; 27 Warrington to Fearnhead via Orford Lane and 29 Warrington to Orange Grove via Howley.

Managing director Bob Hind said they will also replace service 10 Warrington to Cobbs Estate and provide an evening service under contract to Cheshire County Council on routes 1/2 Warrington to Westy, P2 Warrington to Penketh; 12 Warrington to Loushers Lane and 421 Earlestown.

Axeing, slashing and hitting 17 services here, and possibly 26 there....it looks as if Attila the Hun is in town! The truth is that some early morning/late evening journeys, hitherto supported from revenue, were withdrawn. They were put out to a short term tender, a number were taken up by the predatory Gold Lines, but after 13 weeks WBT regained the services on a three year contract. With minor exceptions all the services survived without a break.

OMNIBUS

SOCIETY

COPY OF LETTER TO THE CONFERENCE FROM THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY

Last year The Omnibus Society was able to establish its John F. Parke Memorial Library at Coalbrookdale. The premises are part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, and we are happy to have found such good premises.

The Library has a comprehensive collection of timetables from 1917 to date, there are many historical books and reference books, Notices & Proceedings, fleet lists, periodicals and maps. There is much to help those engaged in research.

The use of the Library is free to our members, but a small charge is made to others. However, Council has decided to extend the free use of the library to members of other societies which are members of the Roads and Road Transport History Conference.

The Library is normally open on the first and third Wednesday in each month. However, before calling, prospective users should write or telephone the Hon. Librarian, A.W.Mills, 4 Connaught Close, Walsall WS5 3PR (Tel: 01922 31867) If writing, a stamped self-addressed envelope should be sent.

E.B.H.Chappell (O.S.) 1/95

Getting Miners to Work 1908-20

Philip L. Scowcroft writes on early bus services in the Doncaster area

The collieries in the immediate Doncaster area were opened a decade on either side of 1914: Brodsworth (Woodlands) in November 1907, Bentley April 1908, Bullcroft December 1911, Yorkshire Main (New Edlington) October 1912, Askern September 1912, Hatfield Main (Stainforth) 1916, Rossington March 1917, Harworth October 1923, and Markham Main (Armthorpe) May 1924. (1) A village grew up around each colliery to house the workforce, but the construction of houses and infrastructure took time, and some of the men had to travel to work from Doncaster and other centres of population, and a few continued to do so even after the villages had been built up. Furthermore, the villages looked to Doncaster for some shopping and social facilities, so transport was necessary. In some cases the railway served well enough, though, especially after the miners' weekly fares were increased in September 1920 by up to 100% or even more, this was financially less attractive than road transport, which by 1920 was already in place, and beginning to expand significantly.

Doncaster Corporation Tramways had served Bentley since 1902, and under an Order of 1911 this route was extended in March 1913. (2) A second extension, on reserved track, served Woodlands, and, although very much at a distance, Bullcroft. Similarly Edlington was served at a distance by the February 1915 extension of the Balby route to the Cecil Hotel at Warmsworth, which was about three quarters of a mile from the pit gates of Yorkshire Main. A further extension down Edlington Lane towards the pit was a casualty of wartime shortages. Further extension of the tramway system to serve Hatfield, Rossington, Askern and Harworth would have needed huge capital investment. The possibilities of extending the tramways to Edlington and Rossington were explored in 1919, but no action was taken, and in any case, the places concerned were already linked to Doncaster by bus.

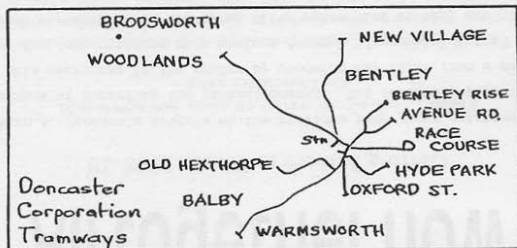
The first to be so served was Woodlands, Brodsworth Main's village. In May 1908, two Doncaster livery stable firms which ran excursions, public and private, and who had run horse bus services (Steadman & Son, and C.G. Steadman), each acquired a Dennis motor charabanc, which they used that summer for excursions. By 19th September 1908, C.G. Steadman's "Big Red Car", as its Dennis charabanc was styled, was taking miners to work from Doncaster, probably as a contract service. On that day, upon returning to Doncaster, it was involved in a fatal accident to a pedestrian, when its steering lever fractured and it ran out of control. From 5th October 1908, Steadman & Son announced an hourly service to "Brodsworth Model Village" by their motor charabanc, which was like the Big Red Car, given a top cover for the winter. At first the service was hourly, but this was cut back to five return trips on weekdays, with an hourly service only from 12 noon on Saturdays. This service appears to have been "stage carriage", and not a contract service. The charabancs carried 24 passengers, although the inquest on the accident of September 1908 noted that the vehicle was carrying 28 (3).

to operate a charabanc on this route in August 1915, Camplejohn's of Darfield were involved in a County court case heard on 7th May 1915 after their charabanc (5), which was operating a Doncaster - Woodlands service, ran into and injured a mare at the Sun Inn. Other operators on the route authorised in 1915 were G. Leach of Wombwell, S. Leason & Son of Barnsley, H. H. Bone, W. Booth and Jarvis Newton. Hather and Bone had been prosecuted for unauthorised plying for hire in October 1914, and were fined respectively 8/6d and 10/6d. Presumably, these firms ceased operating (officially at least) once the tram route opened. (6)

Other villages were now beginning to be served by bus. Yorkshire Main (Edlington) began cutting coal in 1912. In November of the following year, the Colliery Company advertised for 200 colliers, saying that a motor charabanc would run daily from Monday 1st December 1913 from Steadman & Sons premises in Cleveland St., Doncaster to New Edlington, at 5.20 a.m., 1.20 p.m., and 9.20 p.m., at a fare of one shilling per week. This may well have been a contract service: the timings doubtless were linked to shift starting times of 6 a.m., 2 p.m., and 10 p.m. This may not have run after the opening of the Warmworth tram extension in February 1915, - but Yorkshire Main advertised in 1917 a motor bus to carry miners to work at an (unspecified) "cheap rate" between Conisbrough and Edlington, for which there was presumably some demand.

Road services between Doncaster and Rossington predated the cutting of the colliery's first coal. In November 1915, Herbert Hancock proposed a service with a 28 seat motor charabanc. Refused at first, this was eventually allowed by the Corporation: on 9th June 1916, the Watch Committee decided that its Doncaster terminus would be in Waterdale - perhaps the start of this later very important Doncaster terminal point, although in 1917 Rossington - Doncaster services by others terminated in Silver Street. Even the license granted by Doncaster Corporation to Barnsley & District Electric Traction for a Goldthorpe - Doncaster service on 18th February 1914 was of a similar nature, as Goldthorpe was a pit village, though longer established than the others we have mentioned.

By 1920, the number of bus operators had proliferated, and services were running to Carcroft, Goldthorpe, Harworth, Rossington, Stainthorpe, Askern and Armthorpe - all colliery villages. Apart from the odd service to Tickhill, no non-colliery destinations appear to have been served by bus at the end of 1920. A majority of new bus services during the 1920's were similarly to serve collieries. The early connection between motor bus and coal in Doncaster is inescapable.



Notes:

- (1) The date given is that of the production of the first coal, but the date of the first sinking operations will be somewhat earlier.
- (2) In 1909 the Colliery Company offered Doncaster Corporation £200 in two equal annual instalments towards the costs of the tramway extension, which essentially served the new houses built for the miners.
- (3) The Big Red Car suffered a brake failure at 8 p.m. on 13th March 1909, and collided with Marshgate Level Crossing gates whilst carrying 24 passengers, who were obviously miners going to work.
- (4) Horse drawn vehicles, too, took miners along the Great North Road. In 1910 a car collided with two waggonettes laden with colliers.
- (5) Camplejohns were licensed for five charabancs, but could only use three at any one time!
- (6) Fuel and rubber shortages applied as much during the First World War as during the Second: withdrawal of sanction for supplies would play its part in bringing an unnecessary service to an end. But was there a First World War equivalent of the Regional Traffic Commissioners to channel road transport services for the war effort?

Route Archaeology

The Editor discovers an article from the past about things from the past as seen from the present

[The following item was written some 25 years ago, but is still of interest, even though it is somewhat of a relic itself]

As the era of the Industrial Revolution receded, and became "history", a "new science", known as industrial archaeology was born, to study and record the remains of early routeways, goods tramways, mineral railways, canals, engine houses and mills. The subject of this item is "route archaeology", and is concerned with the relics to be found along roads and streets that are connected with the means of transport, now gone, which once used them, or crossed them. The inclusion of such items in pictures of present day forms of transport adds an extra dimension to photographs of road vehicles.

Very common in our towns are bus routes which at one time were tram routes, and which had numerous fixed features - overhead, poles, feeder pillars, tracks, depots, and reserved rights of way. All of the latter usually survive a few years after abandonment, but then gradually disappear as roads are rebuilt, lighting renewed, and depots are demolished as unsuitable for the modern high capacity extra long one-man-operated bus of the seventies. However, there are exceptions, one outstanding example being the long stretch of exposed four foot gauge tram track in Ramsden Street, Barrow in Furness, which even includes the unusual feature (on street tramways) of catch points. These exposed tracks have remained undisturbed and uncovered for over 30 years of dis-use. What better background for a picture of a present day Barrow Corporation bus, especially if this can include the coloured route blinds still in use, and themselves a relic from the days of general illiteracy.

Other tracks which may be depicted are railways, particularly those at level crossings with the attendant and distinctive infrastructure of gates, lamps, footbridges and signal cabins, or, if modernised, the new style lifting barriers. Railway overbridges can form an excellent "frame" for a view of road vehicles, as do road bridges themselves. One nice use of disused railway infrastructure is for the background to pictures of rail replacement road services, which abound in the post-Beeching era. An example of this from an earlier age is a view, taken in the sixties, of a goods depot of the Glyn Valley Tramway, in use as a bus garage. For particular and exceptional examples of pictures showing "tracks", I quote a picture of a Crosville Lodekka from Caernarvon, at a point where it ran alongside the then disused four foot gauge tracks of the horse drawn Nantlle slate tramway (taken mid sixties), and a Devon General AEC Regent alongside Brunel's Pumping Station for the atmospheric railway, at Star Cross in Devon. A third example is of a Ribble bus out of Carlisle depot, crossing the former railway to Port Carlisle, which ran on what can clearly still be seen as the bed of an early canal.

Returning to tramways, former reserved tracks may be converted to roads (River, Dover, or Little Orme, Llandudno), obliterated by being built over (part of Kirkby route at Liverpool) or left fallow (Bodafon Fields, Llandudno). An outstanding "survivor" was at Platt Bridge, Lancashire, where the South Lanes tram reservation was in use as a private road for trolleybuses for nearly thirty years after the trams ceased. Platt Bridge is rich in "archaeology", possessing an extant steam tram depot, reached by thoroughfares entitled Car Street and Tram Street respectively. Another noteworthy example of a tramway turned into a reserved track for buses is the final section of the erstwhile Mumbles Railway at Mumbles Pier, which also retains tramway standards for lighting, and a short section of the same line at Oystermouth, where the station building also survives still in use by the South Wales Transport Company. The rarest form of tramway relic takes the form of a car, usually surviving as a passenger shelter. One well known example was the Cheltenham car at Cleeve Hill, but another, still extant in the sixties, was at Leasowe in Wallasey. This former double deck car became a shelter with a pitched roof added, but unlike its Cleeve Hill counterpart, did not stand at a former tramway terminus. Lytham St. Annes has a stone built tram kiosk dating from the pre-electric era, with the company title inscribed; this could well survive as a monument (1).

Monumental relics are the most likely to form the background to "then & now" photographs, depicting different modes of transport in the same location. Often the monument itself may have no connection with transport, but it is good if it is (Star Cross, for example). Southport has a railway station (2) converted for use as a bus station. Although not the section running into the building, a part of the line nearby has been converted into a road, along which Southport Corporation buses work. The straight and somewhat narrow configuration of this road reveals its origin. Many such conversions are less obvious, as the road bed is widened out for motor traffic.

[Many of the items mentioned above are now gone; of the monuments (1) remains, but (2) is demolished. If you know of any similar items, either extant or long vanished, please write to the Editor with details. The extract above omits mention of true road relics such as toll houses, ancient bridges etc.]