

LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS SHEET 204

MARCH 2021



FORTHCOMING LTHS MEETINGS & EVENTS

Meetings are currently held online, using Zoom conferencing, starting 1930 hrs. and lasting around two hours. Although this is a temporary arrangement, it has meant members from a wide geographical area, even overseas, have been able to take part. It's worth getting a computer and internet just to join in! The programme from June onwards will be planned so that we can easily revert to meeting at the Leeds Postal Sports Association Club, which is off Beecroft Street, Kirkstall, Leeds, LS5 3AS, 1900 on for 1930 start.

- Mon. 8 Mar. **Trolleybus photos from the Camera of Roy Brook**, presented by Mel and Simon Reuben (Note a change from the previously advertised programme)
- Mon. 12 Apr. **THE SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** followed by Images from the LTHS archives.
- Mon. 10 May **Yorkshire Railways in the Beeching Era** John Holmes
- Mon. 14 Jun. Meeting details will be given in the June *News Sheet*.
- Mons. 12 Jul. & 9 Aug. This year we hope to continue face-to-face meetings throughout the summer to compensate for the loss of our normal winter programme. Some may be outdoor meetings.

A future joint meeting to be arranged

LTHS & LRTA **West Yorks. Combined Authority Transport Plans (Q & A)**
Coun. Kim Groves

OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS & COMING EVENTS

March

Mon. 15 (LRTA) **Halifax Trams from the camera of Stanley King** Mel Reuben

April

Mon. 19 (LRTA) **Leeds Trams from the Jim Soper photo collection** Malcolm Hindes

May

Mon. 17 (LRTA) tba

Groups, Regular Meeting Places & Times

LRTA Light Rail Transit Association, Leeds Area.
Zoom meetings, Monday morning 10.00.
All LTHS members are invited - joining information from Melvyn Reuben on melreuben@hotmail.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

12 April

The official notice of the meeting and relevant documents accompany this News Sheet. Accounts will be presented at the meeting and will be available from the Hon. Treasurer or Secretary afterwards.

The meeting will be held by Zoom conferencing. Joining details follow for the benefit of those members whose email addresses we do not have.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9302934120?pwd=R0FqM1RqcGs2SmJWUEtKMhdDcS9PZz09>

Meeting ID: 930 293 4120, Passcode: L33ds2

The existing Committee members are all standing for re-election. Nomination of additional members for election to the Committee is invited and can be made at the meeting but the member's agreement to stand should be obtained beforehand. If possible please advise the Hon. Secretary.

The new post of Online Sales Manager is to be created, with Simon Reuben nominated for the job.

Following the business of the AGM there will be a presentation of images from the LTHS Archives. As usual, it promises to be an entertaining evening.

MEMBER NEWS - John Holmes - new address

Our Hon. Secretary, John, is moving house. His new address, to which all communications should now be directed, is 4 Shepcote Close, Leeds, LS16 6SB. His mobile telephone number remains unchanged, but landline and internet may be unavailable for a short period.

FROM THE EDITOR

M.H.

In *LTHS News Sheet* No.1, October 1961, Brian Parkin wrote "*This News Sheet has been prepared to enable subscribers to the Leeds Tramway Historical Society to learn what progress has been made to the two tramcars owned by the Society, i.e. 'Beeston Air Brake' No.399 and 'Convert' No. 345.*"

Clearly, the purpose of the News Sheet, as of the Society, has changed somewhat since then, so does "*News Sheet*" remain a relevant title? Should we have something more appropriate, snappier maybe? Many societies' journals have relevant titles - why not ours? Your opinions (and suggestions) are welcome.

Several members kindly contribute articles and snippets for inclusion. If you have something to offer, why not give it a try? If contributing electronically please try to keep to plain text - iconic symbols such as boxes often fail to convert and have to be retyped; pictures are particularly welcome but should be sent as attachments - you can indicate in the text where they should go. If handwritten, please print in capitals for the benefit of Optical Character Recognition software.

GORDON BROOKE

We are sorry to report the death of non-member Gordon Brooke in hospital on 29 December, having been admitted a couple of days before Christmas. He had been in poor health for some considerable time. Gordon was a loyal subscriber to the Metro Transport News from January 1977 and, following the death of Brian Parkin, took over as Editor from August 2015 until April 2020, when ill health forced his retirement. Happily Dave Hodson was able to succeed him, ensuring MTN publication continued seamlessly. Gordon was also involved over the years in preservation, greatly enjoying driving his ex-Yorkshire Woollen Leyland PS1 to appropriate events.

MORE LEEDS TRAM TRACK REAPPEARS

Work to pedestrianise the lower part of Cookridge Street has revealed some track of the Lawnswood tram route, disused since March 1956.



This area will be recalled as the starting point for the Ledgard's and West Yorkshire bus services to Otley and Ilkley, predecessors of today's X84 service. Thanks to "IKB" for the photographs.

JOHN'S A-Z CHRISTMAS QUIZ John Holmes

Nobody claimed to have spotted the deliberate (?) mistake in the last *News Sheet*, namely that there were 21 letters in the answers but only 20 red squares in the clues! (typesetting error, I'm afraid - see previous page). Ironically, the missing "Red Square" also appears in Moscow!

All these cities, towns or locations have had trams. The letters in red gave you anagrams of two other places also served by tram.

A place on the Dumbarton Tramway

ALEXANDRIA

Gardener's transport in a hot sounding place

BARROW - IN - FURNESS

A jacket on a crossing over a river

COATBRIDGE

Tramway System North West of Edinburgh

DUNFERMLINE

Dad's Army place on Leeds System

EASTGATE

Scottish system place with a boat lift

FALKIRK

Route to West Edinburgh place

GOGAR

First part of a children's outside game

HYDE

Great Coates used to be on this tramway

IMMINGHAM

Richard I's brother followed by 14lb

JOHNSTONE

Coastal tramway in Scotland

KIRKCALDY

Was the most easterly system in the UK

LOWESTOFT

Tramway ran into the large bird on water city

(Swansea &) **MUMBLES**

Tramway town on the North East of the Wirral

NEW BRIGHTON

Bat and ball place in Andy Burnham's city

OLD TRAFFORD

A pattern on cloth

PAISLEY

Get on an Ealing tram to see Rangers

QUEENS PARK

Northerly place on tramway in tailless cat place

RAMSEY

The system that Churchtown was on

SOUTHPORT

The Lord who was a "speaker" in the Commons

TONYPANDY

System ran into "high countries" in South Wales

(Swansea) **UPLANDS**

Street between Hyde Park & Cardigan Road

VICTORIA ROAD

"Timber Chairs"

WOODSEATS

Bovine getting wet feet

OXFORD

This system ran on Haxby Road

YORK

A tram system in the West Midlands went to

Ashby de la **ZOUCH**

SWADLINCOTE

A town in Derbyshire

CHELTENHAM

Has a racecourse

PUZZLE PICTURES

Before we get to this month's puzzle pictures, here's some news about a previous one. September's pictures included one of a series taken on North Lane, Headingley, to test a camera, and we had lots of feedback about it. Member Tony Wilson, proprietor of Travel Lens Photographic owns the actual negatives and is having copies professionally restored to remove the scratches and enhance the images. He has offered to provide several sets of the edited pictures for sale to LTHS members in aid of Society funds. More news later.

Meanwhile, Ian Dougill has this print of an incident on Woodhouse Lane when Horsfield car 170 suffered



A steam tram engine with a single-deck trailer. Location?



a broken axle and caused a major hold-up. Ian asks if anybody has a decent copy of this photograph that he could scan. Contact him direct on ian.dougill@gmail.com (Note revised email address).



A tram on a hill. But where?

PUZZLE PICTURES FOR THIS MONTH

A big job in recent months has been identifying some of the many photographs acquired from Jim Soper's vast collection. Inevitably there are many that were used in the volumes of *Leeds Transport*, but others that we haven't seen before.

Here's a small selection that we want to identify.



First off, a well-loaded horse drawn charabanc outside the King's Arms, W.C.Tempest (presumed proprietor). But where is it? Is it even Leeds?



Another hill, another tram.



This lovely shot of an open-balcony car in City Square

has "35" written on the back. However, according to Jim Soper, car 35 was a 1904 Brush car with "normal" staircase whereas this car clearly has reversed stairs. A photo of 35 in *Leeds Transport, Vol.3* clearly shows the normal stairs. Any suggestions?

Now for some interior shots.



Is this a Leeds tram, and does anybody know the smartly dressed "passenger"?



A different top deck, partly stripped. Any ideas?

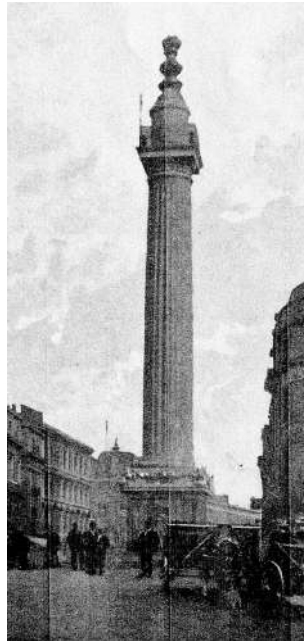


Finally, a lower deck. This looks like a more modern car. Clues - upholstered seats, driver's cab and the apparent intrusion of quarter turn staircase into the saloon. Almost certainly not Leeds, so where?

CHARLIE'S COLUMN Testing Times

Charlie Watson

For many people, a holiday means lying on a beach getting a sun tan and watching the tide go out. Now if I want to watch the tide go out I'll go to Hornsea. There are better ways for me to spend my holiday time!



At 10:40, June 26 2019, Manx Electric Railway 9 & 42 left Derby Castle for Ramsey with me and my stopwatch on board. Not including stop time, the journey took 74 minutes. At Ramsey I had some dinner and a pint (or three), then boarded the No.3 bus back to Douglas. This mostly parallels the M.E.R. and the journey back to St. Ninian's (roughly in line with Derby Castle) was 31 minutes. Two days later I repeated this timing (M.E.R. 32 & 44). The M.E.R. took 69 minutes, while the No.3

took 36 minutes.

Now for the Isle of Man Railway and the No.1 bus. The No.1 from Port Erin to Douglas, Peel Road (Brown Bobby Filling Station) took 43 minutes. I left the bus, walked down Peel Road to the Railway Station and caught a train back to Port Erin. Again not counting stop time or the 15-minute wait at Ballasalla for the northbound train, the train got there in 51 minutes. After beer and dinner in Port Erin I reversed the trip. This time the train took 48 minutes but the 1A bus only took an incredible 38 minutes.

This proves that the buses are faster than the rails - but anyone on the Isle could tell you that! The locals use the buses - there are no speed limits outside the villages and they're all modern, not 100-year-old technology. Also from personal experience, having waited in plenty of bus shelters in unpleasant Manx weather, even a Citaro is better than a draughty tram or train.

If you round down the journey times to the nearest ten minutes, my 2019 holiday was:

Routes 1/1A/2/12 rounded down to 40 minutes, 11 trips - 440 minutes.

Route 3 rounded down to 30 minutes, five trips - 150 minutes.

M.E.R. rounded down to 70 minutes, eight trips - 560 minutes.

I.M.R. rounded down to 50 minutes, two trips - 100 minutes.

Other journeys - 14 trips, no timings.

Cost of 7-day Go card - £49.00

Journeys undertaken - 40.

Add good food, good beer (Bushy's) pleasant scenery and (mostly) friendly people, why would I want to lie on a beach, getting a sun tan and watching the tide go out?

THE BUS COMES TO SNYDALE

Snydale, in the year 1922 was a mining village of thirty six domiciles including a school, off-licence and a grocer's shop and owed its existence to the coal seekers. The school, shops and houses were built in line on the south side of the A645 Wakefield/Pontefract road parallel to a towering slag heap running from one end of the village to the other - and still being extended. The villagers of Snydale, living as they did with a coal mine and by-product complex on their doorstep (thankfully shielded by the slag heap), were fortunate in that to the south of the village there remained the unspoilt panoramic green acres of Nostell Priory and gorse clad common land. However, they were not so fortunate when it came to public transportation. Therefore, when the West Riding Automobile Co Ltd. chose to route one of their new services through Snydale it offered an alternative to walking a mile to Sharlston Railway Station (actually located in Streethouse half a mile off the A645) for Wakefield, or one and a half miles to Featherstone for Pontefract.

The West Riding Automobile Co. Ltd. launched their passenger bus operation on Easter Monday 1922 from depots (extensions of the existing tramway depots), at Wakefield and Castleford, but the West Riding Bristol was not the first fare paying vehicle to ply for custom through Snydale as the village elders had been heard to vaguely refer to a solid tyred double decker (ex-London Western Front veteran?), opening up a short lived service after World War I. However, at the time of the West Riding operation John Bullock, an ex-miner living in Featherstone ran a Sunday only morning and evening trips service between Wakefield and Pontefract with a char-a-banc, either a Karrier or a Maudsley complete with Fleet No.3, and in due course, Fleet No. 10 to follow, a twenty seater open top Lancia. [J. Bullock & Son, later B & S Motor Services. Ed.] The char-a-banc service was withdrawn following the Easter Monday West Riding operation.

It was obvious that when the West Riding Auto. Co. took to the road that a great deal of planning had taken place beforehand to ensure that the travelling public received a high standard of service. Fare stages appeared to have been planned on a cost effect basis not, in some cases for passenger convenience. Under no circumstances were drivers allowed to pick up or set down between stops. The bus fleet was kept in an immaculate condition both inside and out with passengers subjected to a noticeable odour of disinfectant, and a sealed box of tools was carried on each bus to be opened only in case of emergency.

Drivers were allowed four minutes engine warm up in the garage before leaving for the stand. Good timekeeping on service was paramount, drivers being issued with a watch, value five shillings and deducted from their wages to be returned on leaving the Company. In 1922 there was no legal limit to the number of hours worked by platform staff, and it would appear that rotas were based on morning and afternoon shifts with every other Sunday off following a morning shift. There were no meal breaks. On joining the Company drivers and conductors were fitted out with a uniform - dark blue with mid-green cap band, "choker" double hook and eye collar and mid-green piping. White cap covers were to be seen in summer. On joining the Company drivers and conductors would be put on "spare", reporting every morning at 4.30am in readiness to take over in the event of any rota crew failing to turn up for duty. Transfer to rota duty depended on crew turnover. Payment was by the hour with extra rates for overtime, with the Company providing a continuous service of 365 days throughout the year.

The conductor's "tools of the trade" were a ticket punch and money bag, the latter consisting of two half circles of thick black leather stitched at the edges to a curved leather band complete with shoulder strap. These bags were made in Horbury and were so hard and tough that feeling for change played havoc with finger nails! One of these bags can be seen in Wakefield Museum. A tin box for bundles of tickets, ticket rack, tin waybill holder pencil (no biros) to record rack ticket numbers at designated fare stages whistle and, on joining the Company change to the value of three shillings and sixpence, the change to be handed in on leaving the Company. In the initial stages of the Snydale route it became apparent that crews were conforming to rules based on a dual purpose - first class service and the establishing of an amicable passenger relationship within the rules. The first two drivers were Ted Whitty and Harold Fisher. Harold defected to the B & S some time later

At the same time there was a code of discipline laid down by the Company to ensure that crews were made aware that, to a great extent, the success of the service was in their hands. Strict adherence to fare stage changes was essential, applying also to the standing passengers rule - except when waived by the police. A reprimand, suspension or dismissal could result for: a conductor punching the wrong stage number in a ticket, or sitting or standing alongside the driver. "Twisting" or embezzling, i.e. re-issuing used tickets to passengers, was the ultimate in the conductors rule breaking book with a definite point of no return. Smoking on duty was absolutely taboo and no bus was left standing at a terminus without either the driver or conductor in attendance. And there was always an inspector just around the corner.

To operate the new bus service the West Riding purchased 22 Bristol solid tyred four tonners to seat thirty passengers. The seats were made up of wood latts varnished in pine with the floor lined with spaced battens adding to the comfort in wet weather of both passengers and conductor. As bus design progressed, the battens were replaced by lino with no means of drainage, uncomfortable for passengers and utter misery for conductors doing a fifteen hour non-stop shift. The entrance door was at the rear with no door and an exit door at the front opening onto the driver's platform

which was fully exposed to the elements on the nearside. Communication between driver and conductor was by means of a tram type pull cord and bell.

The mechanics of the Bristols were limited to the essentials - hand brake operating on the rear wheels and foot brake on the transmission. No front wheel brakes. Clutch operation was somewhat unorthodox as when travelling downhill the clutch pedal was depressed. With leaf springs all round, no shock absorbers and wood seats the ride was rather "hard" when empty, especially as some of the roads in 1922, in surface terms were little different to many of our roads today. No press button starters - a case of swing the starting handle and be ready to let go if the engine "kicks". The first Bristol to pass through Snydale had a road lamp positioned centrally above the windscreen. This was replaced by a destination box, illuminated at night and in addition to narrow black painted boards lettered in white and clipped to each side of the bus. The West Riding livery was green with white upper and top. Lettering and numbers were in gold shaded red and wheels Post Office red.

Snydale was part of the Dewsbury-Wakefield-Pontefract-Knottingley route starting behind the Town Hall in Dewsbury. The Wakefield stand was in Cross Square opposite Webster's the grocer. Below Webster's was the West Riding Bus Waiting Room and Parcels Office designed on the lines of a lean-to conservatory. The stand on the return journey was at the top of Cross Square outside the premises of Mathias Isaac Eggleston the draper. Mr. Eggleston senior was a City Alderman and voiced his displeasure with regard to exhaust fumes being wafted into his haberdashery department.

And so t'new Green bus service continued to service trundling back and forth through the village at the legal speed limit of 12 m.p.h. adding to the traffic flow of the milkman's horse and float, a shire horse harnessed to a cart delivering concessionary coal to miners' homes, horse-drawn farm traffic and the occasional RAF Leyland lorry and trailer loaded with wool bales bearing the legend *Henry Long & Son, Bradford*. The bus came as a Godsend to two elderly lady school teachers who hitherto had walked a three mile round trip from home to school. At eightpence single from Snydale to Wakefield with a doorstep pickup couldn't be bad for a Saturday shopping spree (brass available), although it meant standing room only when Featherstone Rovers played Wakefield Trinity. Former railway patrons in Streethouse forsook steam, wended their way to the station, walked the length of the platform to a cross country path to Old Sharlston to catch the bus, the "New Experience", with an added bonus of being transported right into the city centre.

In due course the Green Bristol became part of Snydale's daily way of life. Ted and Harry waved to the girls, who thought that they were the only girls that Ted and Harry waved to. Commuters commuted and miners, homeward bound and still in their "muck" kept to the back of the bus and smoked thick twist and Woodbines. There was little intrusion to tops being whipped, hopscotch hopped, shuttle cocks being shuttled and steel hoops being propelled with a fearsome velocity from one end of the village to the other until - round the corner of the road at the Featherstone of the village there appeared a single decker bus, not green but liveried in maroon with Motor B & S Service emblazoned on each side in Gold. Bus life in Snydale was never going to be the same.

WILLIAM BAINES, BINGLEY 4/5/91.

William Baines was born at 35, Willow Terrace, Snydale, and lived there until 1934. He was eleven years old when the first West Riding Bristol bus passed through Snydale on Easter Monday 1922.

The above has been compiled from memory, going back to the days when, up to leaving school at the age of fourteen, he became a regular commuter on the West Riding bus to Dewsbury and Wakefield. The rules etc., applying to West Riding platform crews were gleaned from ex-West Riding drivers, some of whom Mr. Baines worked with after joining the Motor B & S Service in January 1928. The maroon single decker bus appeared on the Snydale bus scene in the year 1923, and was Motor B & S Service Fleet No. 11, a 30 seater RAF Leyland with solid tyres. This bus ran between Wakefield and Pontefract, on a two hourly schedule, one hour before and after the West Riding service. The West Riding were furious, and put on a bus to shadow the B & S RAF Leyland, with the result that the straight stretch of road running through the village became a daily Grand Prix, with the Bristol and Leyland making a race of it from one bus stop to another. Eventually, this came to an end, possibly due to intervention by the Wakefield City authorities, after which both companies agreed upon each running a half hour service, giving the public a quarter hour service. The B & S sold out to West Riding in 1950.

C.Y.

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