

LEEDS TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS SHEET 182

AUGUST 2015



FORTHCOMING L.T.H.S. MEETINGS & EVENTS

The 2015-16 Programme of Meetings not yet being finalised, it will be issued direct to members at a monthly meeting and e-mailed out direct. Others will receive it with the November News Sheet.

Meetings are held at Richmond Hill Community Club, Railway Street, Leeds, LS9 8HB, 1930 for 2000

Mon. 14 Sept. **Australian Tramway Films**

Melvyn Reuben

Mon. 12 Oct. **More Leeds buses from the 1960s and 1970s**

Ian Dougill

Sat. 17 Oct. **Society visit to Nottingham** (see separate article)

Sat. 31 Oct. - Sun. 1 Nov. LTHS Sales Stand at **Leeds Model Railway Society Exhibition**, 1000-1700 (1630 Sun.) Grammar School at Leeds, Alwoodley Gates (volunteer numbers limited - please contact Stephen Longthorpe)

Mon. 9 Nov. **Railways at Night** Peter Holden

OTHER LOCAL MEETINGS & COMING EVENTS

September

Tue. 1 (MRT) To be advised

Tue. 15 (LRTA) **Trams on Video** Charlie Watson
(note move to third Tuesday)

October

Tue. 6 (MRT) **A little piece of this and a little bit of that** Martin Plumb & Ian Hodgson

Thu. 8 (NGRS) **Narrow Gauge in Ireland**
Ray Wilkinson

Tue. 13 (SLS) **Social gathering and former Ledgard staff reunion**, Rose & Crown, Bondgate, Otley from 7.30pm. All welcome for nostalgic evening over a drink and a sausage roll plus a free bus ride. Details from: Barry Rennison e-mail; rennison@cc-email.co.uk or phone 0113 2363695

Tue. 20 (LRTA) **Adverts on Trams** Mel Reuben

Sat. 31 (SLS) **11th Annual Transport Collectors Fair** at Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Admission £1

November

Tue. 3 (MRT) Kevin Tattersley

Thu.12 (NGRS) **Czechoslovakia 2** Mike Swift

Tue. 17 (LRTA) **Leeds Trams Remembered**

Ian Dougill

Groups, Meeting Places & Times

MRT Middleton Railway Trust, The Engine House, Moor Road, Hunslet, 1930. No charge, refreshments on sale.

LRTA Light Rail Transit Association, Committee Room No. 5, Civic Hall, 1900. collection £1.

NGRS Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Yorkshire Area, The Epicentre, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, 7.15 for 7.30. Collection £2. Refreshments (and fresh eggs!) on sale.

SLS Samuel Ledgard Society. Times & places as published - all welcome

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A. Cowell, Hon. Treasurer

The yearly £10.00 membership subscription is due from all members on the 1st September 2015.

If you require a receipt by return, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope, otherwise a receipt will be sent out via the News Sheet. The postal address is: A.Cowell, 3 Windmill Rise, Aberford, LEEDS, LS25 3EW. Alternatively, acknowledgement can be sent electronically via an e-mail.

It is now possible to claim Gift Aid, collectively, on all small donations of £20.00 or less.

I would like to thank the members who have already renewed without any reminder.

Members should note that details of membership are held on a data base. Anyone, should they so desire, can be removed from the list. The status as a member will, of course, remain.

SOCIETY STATUS UPDATE

Jamie Guest

Following the vote at the AGM to move all the Society's assets to the newly constituted Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the assets have now been transferred. On Monday 27 July we had the final Committee Meeting of the old Society and it is now to be de-registered as a charity. We then had a Committee Meeting for the new Society to conduct all our normal business. We now have to finalise the accounts for the old Society and then get them examined to finish the procedure.

In practice this will make no difference at all to what we do but we have had to go through all the correct legal procedures. You will see however that the charity number at the end of this News Sheet is now the new number of 1160466. and that we refer to ourselves as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO for short) instead of a Registered Charity.

To emphasise that this is a continuation of the same Society we have started to number the Committee Meetings at 501 (can't remember why ☺) and likewise the Minutes are numbered from 2099, this of course being the highest fleet number ever carried by a tram in Leeds.

JULY ACTIVITIES

Malcolm Hindes

Members will recall that this year we broke new ground by having activities in July.

Middleton Light Railway Walk, 13 July

Led and masterminded by Eric Smith, some 30 hardy individuals met up at the junction of Bodmin Road and the Ring Road, despite the threat of showers.

First of all we set off up a leafy track which was once Balkcliffe Lane, a "lost" road between Gipsy Lane and Middleton village mostly obliterated by construction of the Ring Road and the Westwood housing estate.

Reaching Gipsy Lane we turned uphill to strike the tramway trackbed. A slight detour to avoid a fallen tree brought us to the central section of the tramway, Eric pointing out fascinating relics such as occasional sleepers, rubble from a section relaid in mass concrete and even the stub end of an overhead pole.

All too soon we reached the point where the tramway left the park, the route beyond this having been destroyed by open-cast mining. Woodland paths took us to the John Charles Sports Centre where half the party split off down Middleton Grove for an early finish or caught the 481 bus back to town.

The remaining walkers ascended to the road bridge over the Middleton Railway and then took a path alongside the railway. Eric pointed out a branching path which once led to the "Cuckoo Steps", the footbridge over the GNR Hunslet East branch line, and very soon we were back on the route of the tramway, passing the distinctive row of poplar trees which once lined Parkside rugby ground. Reaching the M621 motorway and the disused former railway branch line to Clayton's and Robinson & Birdsell's we were very close to the site of the famous tramway/railway crossing and turned left along the path used by so many rugby supporters. Passing the site of the field where Double Cab 2 and ex-Hull 6 had been stored and where Horsfield 160 and Feltham 517 met their sorry fate, we turned up Parkside Lane to reach Dewsbury Road at The Crescent cinema, now named "Winston's".

Very many thanks to Eric for his work providing a fascinating and highly enjoyable evening's ramble.

Heaton Park Visit, 21 July

Not a new activity, of course, but a shared venture with the Leeds Area LRTA previously organised by Leeds Transport Touring Group and part of the "dowry" the LTTG brought with them.

Following last year's problems with a very unreliable (and possibly inadequately insured) heritage bus, it was agreed some more secure means of transport was needed. Unfortunately approaches to local preservation groups failed to produce a suitable bus at an affordable price, so car-sharing was the fall-back solution.

A good-sized group met up at the usual location, Kirkgate near the "Duck and Drake", and the small fleet of vehicles set off for Heaton Park, Mel Reuben detouring to pick up Tony Wilson, now looking much fitter following his major heart surgery. Others had gone direct and were waiting with the Manchester Transport Museum Society members when we arrived. The usual evening of jolly tram riding and driving

ensued, with refreshments paid for by the LRTA and we were even able to have a longer session than usual without being unduly late back to Leeds.

Grateful thanks to Manchester TMS for their hospitality and to those members who contributed to cover drivers' expenses and make a donation to LTHS funds.

SOCIETY OUTING, 17 OCTOBER **Jamie Guest**

This year we have decided to have an outing to Nottingham to ride their newly expanded system. At the time of writing we do not yet have a firm opening date for the two new lines but it is imminent. In fact the first section to Nottingham Railway Station opened at the end of July.

All being well we are going to go on Saturday 17th October. We will be going by service train from Leeds at 09.05 which gets us to Nottingham at 11.00. We will then ride the system from the new Station stop, which is above the platforms of the Railway Station. We should be able to ride the whole system and then hope to catch either the 16.17 train home or the 17.17.

If the extensions don't open in time we will know by the evening of the October meeting. If it isn't possible to go to Nottingham we will decide on an alternative at that meeting; Sheffield or Manchester are both possibilities.

As on the previous trip to Manchester, buy your own ticket, turn up and enjoy the day.

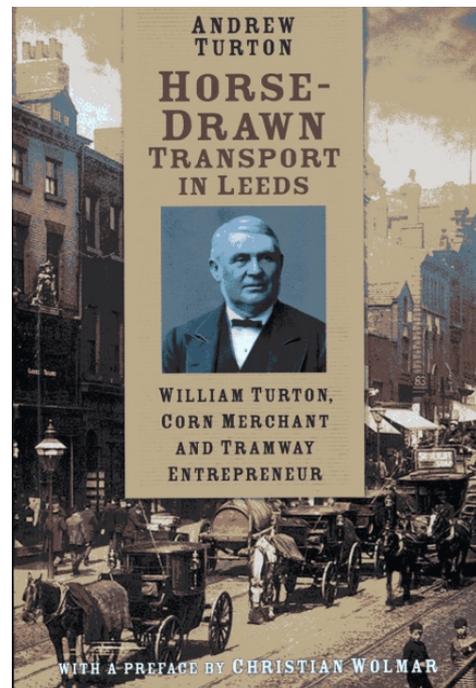
BOOK REVIEW

Malcolm Hindes

Horse-Drawn Transport in Leeds

by Andrew Turton

published by the History Press, £16.99 (see below for a special offer)



Readers of "Leeds Transport" Vol.1 will be familiar with the name of William Turton and possibly with his great-great-grandson Andrew, who visited us on the occasion of the "launch" of horse tram 107.

This is a book which started as research

into Dr. Turton's ancestor but which developed a much wider remit as he uncovered more about 19th century Leeds. Consequently the title is somewhat misleading, and anyone wanting a transport history would be far better served by Vol.1, from which much information was drawn (and is acknowledged).

The book starts off with a vividly drawn picture of Leeds in early Victorian times. Forget the fine buildings of the time such as the Corn Exchange and Town Hall. This is a scene of unimaginable poverty and squalor. Not for nothing is Chapter 2 subtitled "Unhappy Abodes of Filthy Misery". Compared with living conditions at the time, the slums cleared last century were palatial.

Dr. Turton then moves into family history, detailing the humble origins and tribulations of William's parents and his upbringing in the East Street area. Responsibility was thrust on him at an early age due to his father's death and subsequently taking over running of his mother's provisions shop. Diversification into coal and horse-feed supplies proved profitable, and slowly William moved up the social scale.

William's involvement with horse-drawn transport in Leeds is well documented elsewhere by Jim Soper, but led to his eventual ascent into the elite of Leeds worthies. He became Chairman of the Leeds Tramways Company and partnered the Busby brothers in founding several other towns' tramways. He had a fine new house built on Chapeltown Road - Hayfield House (latterly the notorious Hayfield Hotel; Dr. Turton was disappointed to find it had just been demolished when he visited the location). Ironically, the only external photograph of the house shows white-overalled police and incident tape!

The book rounds off with inheritance and heritage, bringing the family story up to the present day.

The depth of Dr. Turton's research is indicated by a nine-page bibliography of his sources. If anything, the extent of detail in the book makes it hard going in places, but the best part is probably the early chapters on Victorian Leeds. There are a few mistakes with place names, but they could be missed typos.

If your only interest is horse-drawn transport history then frankly this book isn't for you; but for a graphic picture of the origins of our modern city you will be hard pressed to find better coverage

Members of LTHS can take advantage of a special offer on the book, valid up to the end of September.

Special Offer

For 20% off (and free UK P&P) contact the History Press at www.thehistorypress.co.uk or telephone 01235 465500, quoting offer code HPTURTON20

SPOT THAT TRAM (or bus)



As promised, here are some more photos from Chris Spring's collection. Once more, it's not the vehicles that are in question, it's the location. No prizes, but we will credit you with any solutions.

First off, one of Bob Mack's photos, Horsfield 184 and an unidentified Feltham. York Road?



Followed by a shot of AEC Regent 277 on learner duty, so not necessarily on a regular LCT route. I have an idea where this is. [Photo A.B.Cross]



"Lance-Corporal" (Headingley Streamliner) 274 on 25 Hunslet, but where? [another of Bob Mack's]



Finally, PD2/11 203 on a former tram route. Tony Wilson will no doubt be pleased to have this location identified. [Travel Lens photographic]

CHARLIE'S COLUMN **Wolverhampton Wanderings**

I've just spent the day riding the Midlands Metro. It's a long time since I was there - the last time I took Brian Pickup with me so that tells you how long it's been.

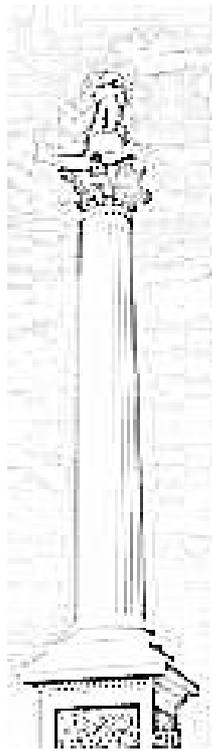
If you go by car, put it in the Oxford Street car park. This is on Bilston Road, right by the tramway and it only costs £1.50 all day and it's within walking distance of the tram stop at The Royal.

Old and new cars. The new cars are now coming into service replacing the old cars on a one out - one in basis. These CAF cars have flat floors, spacious gangways and - of course - seats that feel like they were chiselled out of granite. The old cars are really showing their age - assault-course floor layout, dark interiors, noise and (like Snaefell cars) the feeling that the car is trying to come apart round you, but they DO have comfy seats!

The Works. In Wulfrun, St. George's is closed and the line currently terminates at The Royal. Old mineshafts have been discovered in the area and these are being pumped full of concrete but the work should be finished by Easter. Then work can start on the Wolverhampton Extension.

Riding and Filming. An all-day ticket (tram only) costs £5.40 so I rode from The Royal to Wednesbury on car 26. As we sped on our way, 06 passed by, still in original livery. I filmed at Wednesbury then rode on 06 to The Hawthornes where I shot more film, then caught another modern car to St. Paul's to film trams passing under the multitude of bridges in the area. Then I walked to Snow Hill. Trams were filmed arriving and departing the miserable concrete canyon that is Snow Hill station, but I decided to concentrate on some of the less-used stops for filming, plus it gave me a chance to ride in many cars, so I got off at Jewellery Quarter, filmed a couple of cars, then moved on to Winson Green. The Depot at Wednesbury remained firmly closed and from the trackside completely unfilmable! However out of a passing tram it was possible to glimpse into the yard where among the

Charlie Watson



new cars was an old car (11?) Painted in blue and cream. By now I was feeling hungry so I rode back to Wolverhampton where a disappointing dinner was followed by a pint of Dublin's finest. Then it was back to filming.

Lodge Road has a staircase to get from the tracks up to the road, so perfect for some high level shots, and is quite a pretty stop, but Handsworth Booth Street is almost complete desolation. Winson Green is unusual in that it is an island stop with tracks both sides. It is the only time I managed to get a suburban train and a tram in the same clip of film.

Things took a bit of a downturn after this as the memory card on my camera was full and I'd forgotten the spare. People at Snow Hill reported a loud howling sound

(Isn't that normal in Brum? Ed.)

Riding back to Wulfrun, I noticed lots of passengers wearing black and amber scarves - Wolves were playing at home!

I'd driven past Molyneaux on my way in, but there was no way I was going to drive back through that lot! So I had another pint and rode back to Snow Hill again. By the time I got back the faithful would all be in the stadium and I could escape without any trouble; it also got more out of the ticket.

I rode on 26 and chatted to the conductor who told me that National Express were looking to get out of running the Metro. The likely bidders would be First and this explains the pink and white livery. Also that the old cars had only a few weeks left (they may be gone now). This confirmed what an Inspector had told me earlier.

For my final trip I waited until 05 appeared and enjoyed (almost certainly) my last ride in a first generation car. It would be nice to see one preserved. I escaped the Wolves throng and was making good time but an accident on the A38 meant a diversion through Derby - at 5.00 p.m. on a Saturday! I was stuck there for over an hour, finally getting back to Doncaster 13 hours after I'd left...

Thoughts on the Midland Metro. Once thought of as the least used modern tramway, this plucky little line has confounded the critics and is now part of the Midlands transport system. With new cars, extensions at both ends of the line and a possible new operator, the future of the line looks (a little) rosier than it once did. I shall return, but I won't leave it so long next time...!

Contributions of news or articles for News Sheets are always welcome and may be submitted to the News Sheet co-ordinator, Malcolm Hindes, at 34 Moor Park Villas, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 4BZ, e-mail malcolm.hindes@btinternet.com

All statements and comments are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent Society policy.

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