

# Kithead News

Newsletter of The Kithead Trust



*A snowy scene outside the Cross Gates premises of Charles H. Roe on 22 December 1938, showing an Albion CX11 newly completed for Hebble of Halifax. (Roe P580).*

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## Website Relaunch

**After bit of a delay, the revised Kithead website is now online at [kitheadtrust.org.uk](http://kitheadtrust.org.uk).**

This is now the website for the non-road passenger transport elements of our collection. The road passenger elements – bus, coach, tram and trolleybus – will be catered for by separate Bus Archive website which is due for launch early in 2018.

The Kithead Transport Archive will hold railway, canal and haulage material along with UK government statutes, and details of vehicle registration records held both at Droitwich and with other repositories across the UK.

The new website has significant upgrades:

- an easy tracer for surviving vehicle registration records;
- a dedicated newsletter page where visitors can sign-up for future editions and download back copies;
- a searchable catalogue of over 8,000 railway books from our reference library.

The railway books have been painstakingly catalogued by volunteer Tony Jones over several years and our deep thanks go to him for his dedication to the task.



HOME ABOUT US NEWSLETTER TRACE A REGISTRATION MARK MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS  
RAILWAYS, CANALS AND OTHER HOLDINGS THE BUS ARCHIVE CONTACT

### Home

The Kithead Transport Archive is part of The Kithead Trust, an educational charity set up to collect and preserve material from the transport industries and to make these freely available to researchers and enthusiasts.

The majority of our holdings are for the bus industry (encompassing buses, coaches, trolleybuses and trams) and are contained in [The Bus Archive](#).

This site is dedicated to our holdings for other aspects of transport, mainly [Motor Vehicle Registrations](#) and [Railways, Canals and Other Holdings](#).

#### RECENT COMMENTS

#### ARCHIVES

#### CATEGORIES

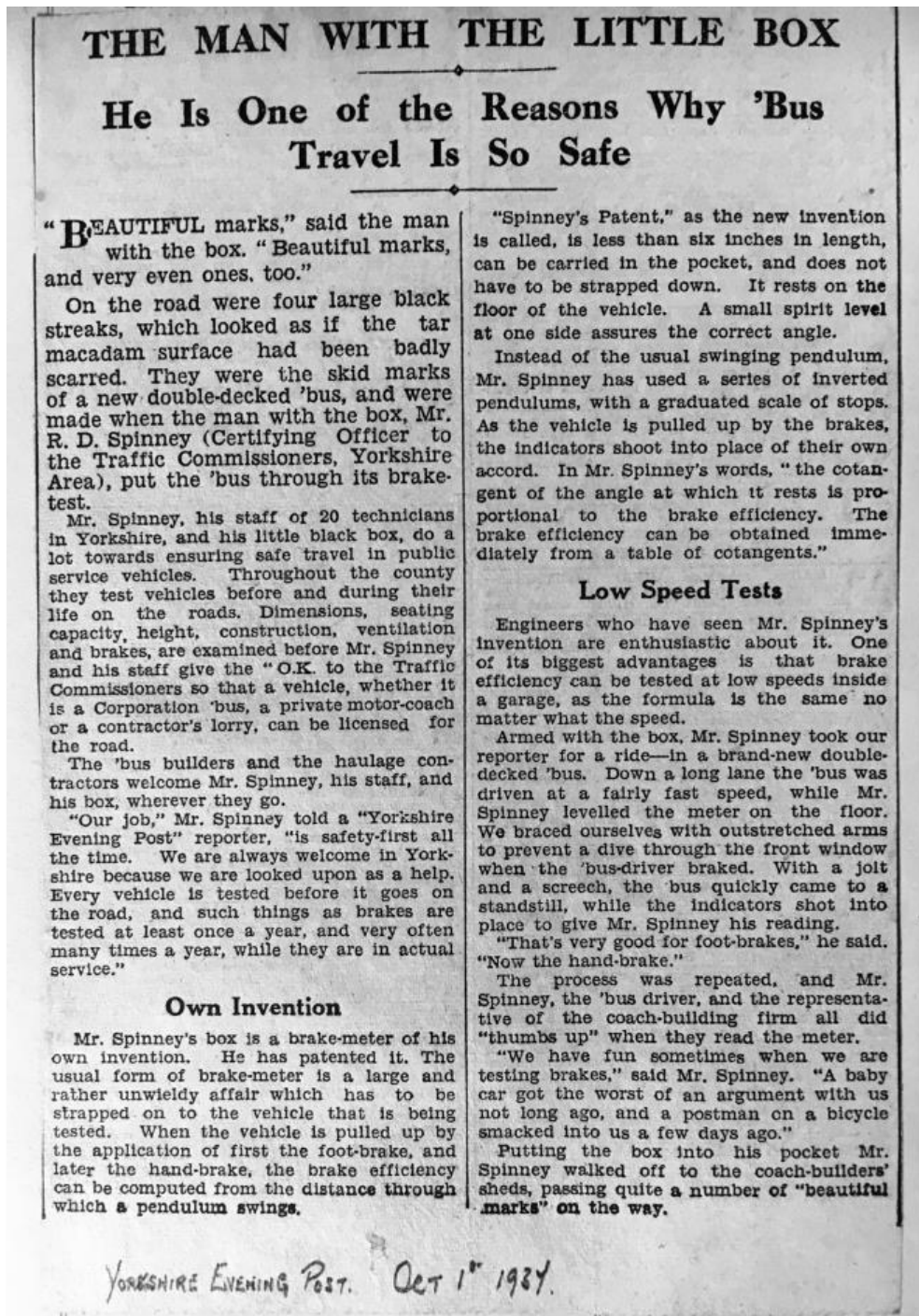
No categories

## From Our Collections....

### Mr Spinney's Little Black Box

This article comes from a scrapbook compiled by bodybuilding company Chas. H. Roe of Leeds and was taken from the Yorkshire Evening Post on October 1, 1937. Mr Spinney was the Certifying Officer to the Traffic Commissioners, Yorkshire Area

and had devised an ingenious miniature brake meter – a little black box. The article states that Mr Spinney and his staff are greeted “wherever they go”....





## Bus Archive

Over the last 18 months, The Kithead Trust has been in discussions with the Omnibus Society to merge the OS Library and Archive with The Kithead Trust into a single new charitable entity, The Bus Archive (BA).

Non-road passenger transport material currently held by Kithead will be retained by BA as a subsidiary archive, named The Kithead Transport Archive (KTA).

This will form one of the principal collections of records and published material on the road passenger transport industries – bus, coach, tram and trolleybus – in the UK. The material will be kept to professional standards and it is the aim of BA/KTA is to gain Service Accreditation from The National Archives. Access to BA/KTA will be free.

### Governance & Legals

BA will have seven trustees:

- nominated by The Kithead Trust:
  - David Beaman
  - Brian King (who will be chairman)
  - Philip Kirk (who will be director and archivist)
- nominated by The Omnibus Society:
  - Tony Francis (who will be secretary)
  - Julian Peddle
  - Pat Russell (who will be treasurer)

There will be one independent trustee, Leon Daniels, currently managing director of surface transport at Transport for London and a notable transport enthusiast.

BA/KTA will operate solely as a library and archive; it will not be attached to a museum or a multi-faceted membership organisation. The trustees, management and volunteer staff will be able to concentrate solely on developing and providing an archive service.

### Finance

BA will be a free-standing and independent organisation, not being financially dependent on any other body.

### Research Centres and Access

BA will operate three main Research Centres

- Droitwich Spa, for original records
- Walsall, for publicity material and published material
- Acton, for material (mainly publicity) on London Transport and London General

There will be a website ([www.busarchive.gov.uk](http://www.busarchive.gov.uk)) which will give full details of BA and have interactive catalogues of original material and published books, to encourage use of the library and archive.

Under a special arrangement with Classic Bus, BA will have a regular 'From the Archives' feature. Ray Stenning is providing all design and advertising work for BA on a *pro bono* basis.

### Developing the Collections

BA/KTA will develop its collections by the donation of further original records, through its close relationship with the bus industry, the enhanced profile which will come from the arrangement with Classic Bus, its website and the publication of a number of specialised leaflets. Once Accreditation is achieved, then further opportunities may come through peer-to-peer arrangements with other professional archives including local authority archives.

### Summary

This development is a significant step forward for archives for the transport sector, taking the collections of both Kithead Trust and the Omnibus Society and raising these to a professional level, as well as making them more visible and accessible.

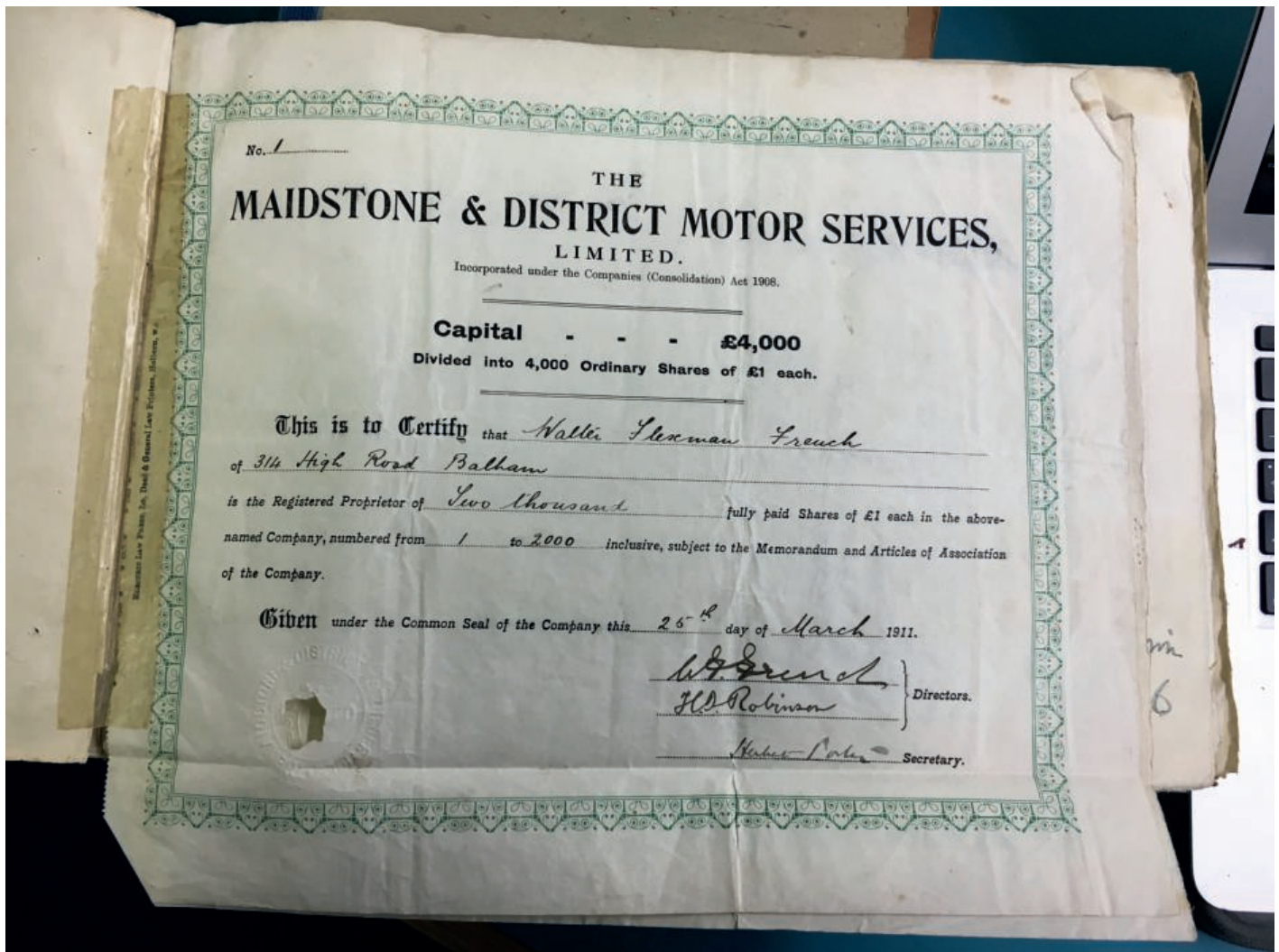
## Maidstone & District ledgers

As part of the forthcoming arrangements for The Bus Archive, there are some items which will switch from Droitwich to Walsall and vice versa, and we are starting to preparing for the transfer now.

A set of Maidstone & District ledgers, along with similar volumes from Autocar and Chatham & District, are some of the first being boxed up. The 'Daily Book' records each transaction and that from 1913 details the company's activities in both passenger and haulage.

Date	Description	Amount
October 1913	Horse-drawn A.C. Spitzbrook, Maidstone. To conveying 27 pockets hops to the Borough @ 1/10½ d per pocket	11 1 7½
October 1913	White A.C. Shenton. To conveying 27 pockets hops from Paragon Lane to the Borough @ 1/10½ d per pocket	11 1 7½

Bulk transportation of pockets of hops at 1/10½ d per pocket seems to be a particularly popular cargo.



There is also a full set of share certificates, issued to individual shareholders but then returned when the shares were bought out.

This one shows that issued for shares 1 to 2000, to Walter Flexman French, one of the company founders.



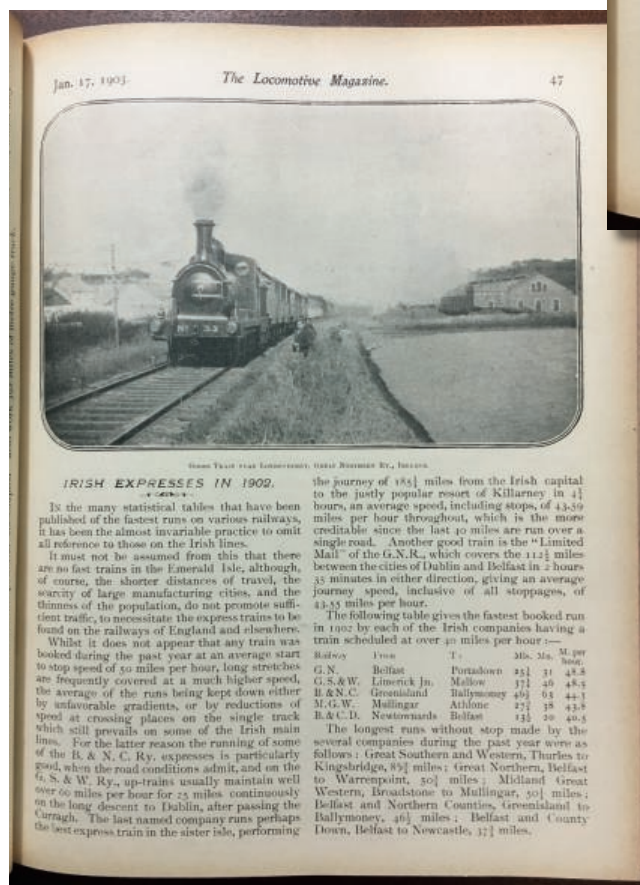
## Railway Matters

The main development this time is the appearance of the catalogue of our railway reference library on our refreshed website – some 8,000 books are listed, any (or indeed all) of which can be accessed at our Droitwich centre.

We also have significant runs of periodicals (not yet on the catalogue), many from the Victorian and Edwardian periods. This front cover from the 'Locomotive Magazine' of January 17th, 1903, shows what it describes as a 'Singular Railway Accident at Carlisle' with full illustrations.

A feature in the same edition is an analysis of express services in Ireland:

We have a run of 'Locomotive Magazine' from 1896 to 1959.



### SINGULAR RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT CARLISLE.

SHORTLY after 11 a.m. on December 24th a mishap of a very unusual character occurred in the Denton Holme goods yard of the Glasgow and South Western Railway at Carlisle. A train of wagons was being marshalled, No. 100A, being used in connection with the shunting operations, and when the mishap occurred the engine was running tender first with three wagons attached, and was being shunted into what is known as the "back shunt road," at the end of

which buffer stops are placed. The engine was proceeding in the direction of the bridge carrying the road over the river, when becoming unmanageable it immediately dashed into the stops. As will be seen by the photograph, a roadway runs parallel to the line, and into this the tender was precipitated vertically and at right angles to the engine. Had the tender not turned in this way the results would have been disastrous, for the private houses are very close; if the fall had been on the other side of the embankment the engine and train would have rolled into the bed of the River Caldew. Owing to no steam travelling crane being kept at Carlisle much time was lost

Price, TWOPENCE.

Subscription, 2/6 per Annum, post free.



The magazine mast head from the front cover of the June 1897 edition

## Paul prepares to bows out

*With the forthcoming creation of The Bus Archive (see page 4) one of the longest-serving Kithead trustees, Paul Addenbrooke looks back on an industry career underpinned by a lifelong interest in transport.*

A native of the West Midlands, I was born in 1933 into a sporting family. My grandfather was one of "The Three Jacks" who developed a local football team into Wolverhampton Wanderers; he became the third longest-serving manager in Football League History. Like many youngsters, I had an early interest in bus and rail timetables and as we lived only a mile from the Midland Red headquarters at Bearwood, this was an obvious first choice when I left school after A levels.

I was lucky enough to be given a place on the three-year training scheme which took me across all departments, including Central Works – where Midland Red were of course designing and constructing their own vehicles – and the traffic department, both at Head Office and in the Divisions. After this excellent scheme, I was appointed Clerical Assistant to the Traffic Manager and his deputy (Messrs. Brandon and Cope). R K Cope was a keen railway enthusiast, and we got on very well; he helped me with several useful contacts in the enthusiast world.



A typical BMMO bus from Paul's early career – an S15.



Paul as District Manager, Leicester with Midland Red.

My next step was as Timetable Officer for Sutton and Tamworth garages, just at the time when the postwar boom in bus travel was starting to decline. The first step was to achieve mileage pruning without affecting passenger levels. I was still keen to develop my career and so I took the leap of successfully applying for the BET Federation Senior Training Scheme. This saw me sent to Southdown for two years followed by a short stint at Ribble, and what a revelation this was. I found that other companies did things differently to Midland Red and in some cases actually better – particularly in the Traffic department. My nine months at Portsmouth were to prove particular useful in my later career – it was the time that the area agreement was being introduced with the municipal operator.

After that, I returned to Midland Red at around the same time as the arrival of Derek Fytche and James Issac, with their brief to modernise its traffic operations. After a reorganisation, I was promoted



## Paul prepares to bows out (continued)

to Assistant Divisional Manager (North West) – i.e. Black Country and Shropshire – and then Divisional Manager Leicester. Here I was able to bring my experience to bear and through improved use of resources, the division was made profitable, but only just! More change was around the corner, with the creation of the National Bus Company and the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority/Executive. This was particularly felt at Midland Red with the the disposal of its operations in West Midlands to the PTA. I was unhappy with the situation, which left the company as a much less profitable “doughnut”. So when the opportunity arose, I moved across to become Planning Manager at the PTE.

The Planning Departments were tasked with producing forward-looking Development Plans, covering both bus and rail. I was responsible for liaison with local authorities as well as steering through the PTE's own planning applications for infrastructure projects. For rail services, we were able to strike agreements with British Rail on frequencies and fares as well as upgrading station facilities. An example of this was the demolition of the fine but derelict GWR Snow Hill Station, a new one was later built on about one-third of the footprint.

The biggest scheme was the Cross-City Line, originally Longbridge to Four Oaks, which had three new stations and three others totally rebuilt. A second phase saw electrification from Redditch to Leckfield, with some imaginative accounting employed to justify the scheme to the Department of Transport and the Treasury. At the same time, we were upgrading bus stations and providing bus/rail interchanges at key points like Solihull. Bus garages were included in the redevelopment work – at Birchills, Walsall we had to pump thousands of tons of concrete into caverns below the garage and workshop!

Under the Transport Act 1985, WMPTE buses were transferred to an “arms length” commercial operator as West Midlands Travel; I stayed with the PTE as Chief Planning and Services Officer with responsibility for all bus stations and shelters, subsidised contracted services and railway services.

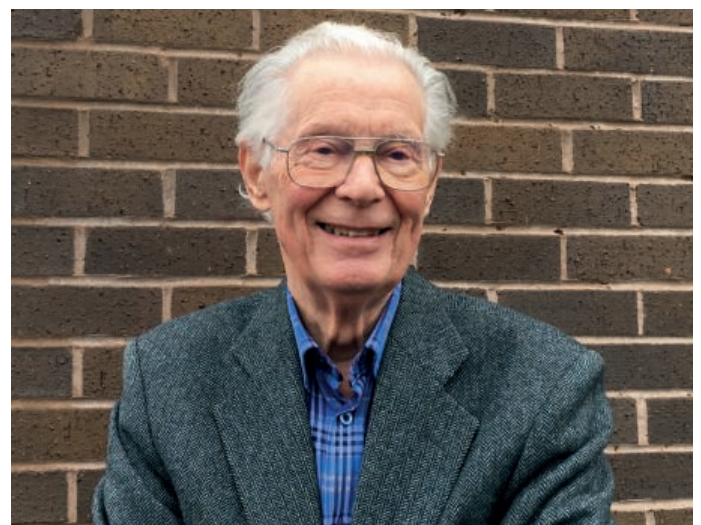
When I retired in 1992, a colleague estimated that since 1974 we had spent around £40 million but had got a lot for the money – a lot of the infrastructure is still in use today.

I was a founder member of the Birmingham Transport Historical Group, formed to collate the work of historians such as Ray Coxon, Peter Hardy, Alec Jenson and Stanley Webb, to add to this and finally publish the work. I have served as Treasurer and latterly Chairman. This proved useful as when PTE garages were being rebuilt or demolished, inevitably historic material was discovered and we were able to save this. When The Kithead Trust was created, the BTHG West Midland Transport Archive was placed on indefinite loan with the Trust, and I have been honoured to serve as the BTHG nominated trustee of Kithead. Now that a fresh agreement has been struck with The Bus Archive which secures the long-term future of this material, I will be standing down.

My other passion is USA railroads and I have a large library of books on the subject – as well as two display model railroad layouts for my collection of locomotives and rolling stock.

I look back at my career in the industry with satisfaction, and also that I have helped the Kithead Trust in becoming what it is today – I am greatly enthused by the forthcoming changes.

*Speaking of Paul's forthcoming retirement from the Trust, Chair Brian King said “Paul has been an invaluable part of the Trust for many years. I have appreciated his tremendous experience in guiding us and wish him all the best.”*





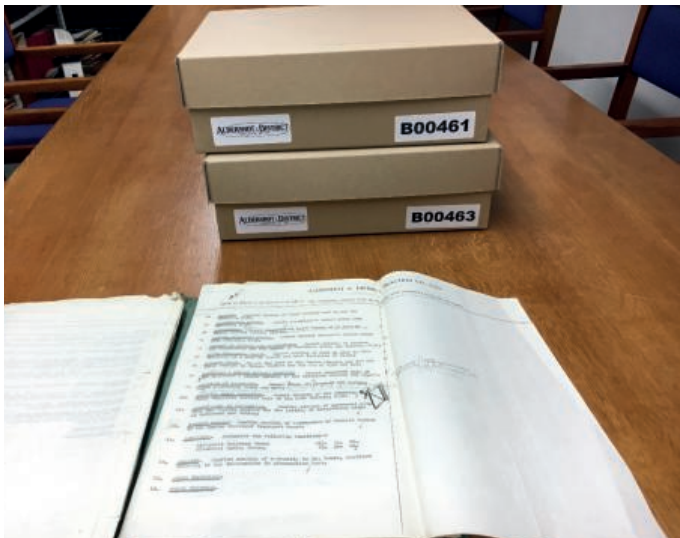
## The Tale of the Table

We were delighted to be donated a magnificent antique table for the Search Room at our Droitwich centre, through Sir Peter Hendy, chairman of Network Rail. Peter was previously Commissioner of Transport for London and before that a career LT man and lifelong enthusiast. And it turns out that the table carries with it something of a story, so if you are sitting comfortably, we will begin...

Specially constructed (we think) in the 1930s as the board room table for Aldershot & District Traction, it was transferred to Reading when Alder Valley was created in 1972 through the A&D merger with Thames Valley. Nine years later, Alder Valley HQ was moved to Aldershot and the table 'went home'. Alder Valley was split back into two companies in 1986, although by the end of 1988 both parts were owned by Len Wright's Q-Drive. A new HQ for that group was set up in Bracknell in 1991, and the table moved there.



## The Tale of the Table (continued)



*The table is reunited at Droitwich with our substantial collection of A&D records, including the board papers from the 1930s and the official Head Office nameplate.*

The Bracknell part of the Q-Drive business was sold to CentreWest in 1996 and the table was then shipped to Paddington where Peter Hendy had a set of chairs specially made for it due to the higher than usual height of the tabletop. Up until this point, it had served consistently as a board room table, but after CentreWest was acquired by First Group in 1997 it suffered something of a decline in fortune, eventually being housed by Tower Transit (who bought First's London operations in 2013) at its Lea Interchange depot in its training room.

Tower Transit had to remove a window at Lea to get the table out – although it actually collapses into



three sections – and it was collapsed further at Droitwich to get it into the search room. It was expertly reconstructed there by resident DIY man Bernard Davis.

And so the table can now enjoy a well-earned retirement in an environment where it will be appreciated. In many ways, its story is a microcosm of the bus industry. It carries as much history as many of the files in our collection, and of course it is now reunited with the considerable archive of Aldershot & District records we already hold. Who knows what decisions have been taken around it!



## Odds and Ends

### A New Volunteer

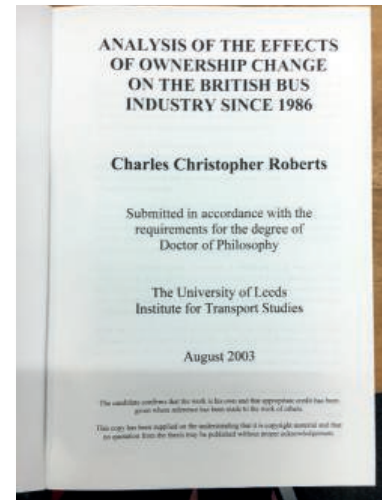
We are very pleased to welcome a new volunteer to our ranks. Paul Jenkins was, until his retirement earlier this year managing director of Thamesdown Transport, a post he filled for the last ten years. He began his career as a National Bus Company trainee and held posts at a number of companies including East Kent.

Paul posed us a challenge on his arrival – he had donated some posters to the Trust several years ago, and Lead Volunteer Bob Carr was able to trace these in a couple of minutes through our catalogue and produce them. Their authenticity was proved by still having faint marks from blue-tac (now removed of course) on the reverse, which once held them on the wall of Paul's student accommodation all those years ago!



### Embargo Lifted

When an item or collection is donated, the donor sometimes places on it a 'closed period' before it can be released for inspection by visitors.



One such item has recently come to this point – a PhD study carried out by Charles Roberts of the University of Leeds. The transcripts of the interviews were embargoed until 2017 and so it is now open for inspection.

### Good Advice

Thomas Knowles commented on our piece last time about Jim Skyrme:

*I was interested to see the piece by Philip Battersby on the Skyrme family. Unfortunately the piece referring to Jim Skyrme omitted his first general managership which was at PMT. It was he that offered a job to a young Thomas Knowles.*

*Mr Skyrme gave me an excellent piece of advice which reflected how things were in those days. I saw him in the Easter holidays and indicated that I was keen to start as soon as possible after the summer term. However Jim Skyrme said to me "wait and have a good long holiday because in all your working life you will never get an opportunity to have such a long holiday again." I started at PMT on 3rd October 1960.*

*What good advice that was and even now I still have collections of bus photographs that I took from that period!*

Finally, a couple of last-minute Christmas ideas. First, how about an investment in your local bus company? That was the idea of the brothers Harrington (of coachbuilding fame) who jointly applied for £1000 in shares in their local Southdown Motor Services, in 1926.

**SOUTHDOWN MOTOR SERVICES LIMITED**

No. 103

**Form of Application**  
FOR  
**SIX PER CENT. FIRST MORTGAGE DEBENTURE STOCK.**

To the Directors of  
SOUTHDOWN MOTOR SERVICES LIMITED.

GENTLEMEN,

Having paid to your Bankers the sum of £ 50 , being a deposit of £5 per cent. on application for \*£ 1000 Six per cent. First Mortgage Debenture Stock of Southdown Motor Services Limited, + we request you to allot to ~~us~~ us that amount of Debenture Stock upon the terms of the Company's letter dated the 22nd April, 1926, and + we agree to accept the same or any smaller amount that may be allotted to ~~us~~ us, and to pay for the same in conformity with the terms of that letter.

Name (in full) *Thomas Reuben Harrington*  
(Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Address (in full) *Belmont, Maudale Road, Hove*

Description *Motor Coach Builders*

Signature *T.R. Harrington*

Name (in full) *Ernest George Harrington*  
(Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Address (in full) *Shottishrooke, Cornwall Gardens, Brighton*

Description *Motor Coach Builders*

Signature *E.G. Harrington*

Date *28 April* 1926.

\* Applications must be in multiples of £1 Stock.

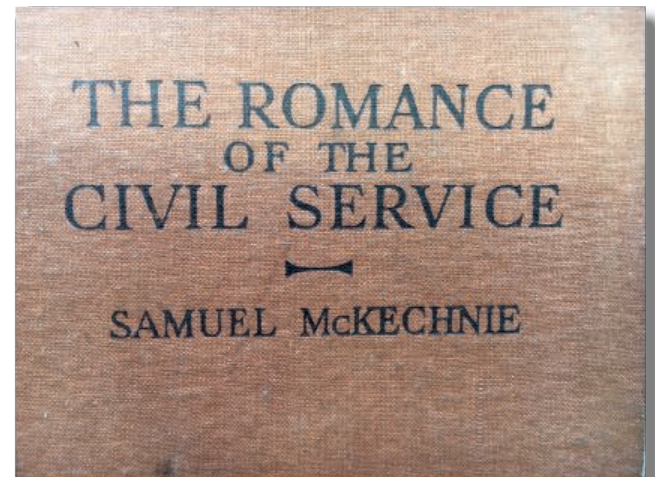
N.B.—All cheques must be made payable to Barclays Bank Limited or Bearer, and crossed "Not negotiable."

No receipt will be issued for deposit on application, but an acknowledgment will be forwarded in due course either by Allotment Letter or by return of deposit.

This Form, together with a cheque for the amount of the deposit, must be sent to Barclays Bank Ltd., North Street, Brighton, so as to arrive not later than the 28th April, 1926.

(51963)

or finally, the RomCom to beat all RomComs? Don't all rush to Amazon.



**WITH BEST WISHES  
FOR A VERY  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A  
HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL  
OUR READERS**

## Are You Signed Up?

If you didn't receive this direct from us and you would like to receive the newsletter on a regular basis, simply e-mail us at [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk) with "Newsletter Subscribe" in the subject line. We guarantee that we will only use your email address to promote the Trust and we won't disclose it to anyone else.

## Why not pay us a visit?

We are open Wednesdays and Thursdays each week from 10 am to 4 pm (and some other times by arrangement). Please book your place in the Search Room by emailing [hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk](mailto:hello@kitheadtrust.org.uk).

This newsletter is Published by The Kithead Trust,  
De Salis Drive, Hampton Lovett, Droitwich Spa, Worcs, WR9 0QE.  
[www.kitheadtrust.org.uk](http://www.kitheadtrust.org.uk)  
CHARITY NUMBER 328257