

Kithead News

Newsletter of The Kithead Trust



A magnificent photograph of a Roberts-bodied Tilling Stevens B10A2 for the Leeds-Newcastle Omnibus Company Limited of Northallerton, North Yorkshire. This view is part of the official Roberts photograph collection which has been donated to us from The Geoff Lumb Collection. There will be a major feature on Geoff and his collection in the first edition of our successor publication, Bus Archive News.

In this issue:

- The Bus Archive
- The Kithead name lives on
- Derek Potter looks back
- A Capital interlude
- Railway Matters
- A Big 'Thank You'

Tree-Lopping London style

This edition of the newsletter has a bit of a London flavour.

London Transport was clearly very proud in 1963 when it put into service five new Ford Thames Traders. The special bodies were designed by its own "department of the Chief Mechanical Engineer (Road Services)" and built by Marshall of Cambridge. They replaced a similar number of units which had been converted from front-entrance AEC Regent STL types.

The new units had compartments for staff and wide rear doors "to discharge the branches and foliage". All very laudable – but we aren't sure that working on open raised platforms would be allowed today.



Press information

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28.3.63

TPN.1796

NEW TREE-LOPPING VEHICLES FOR LONDON TRANSPORT SPECIALLY-DESIGNED BODIES SIMPLIFY WORK

London Transport has recently taken delivery of five new tree-opping vehicles. Mounted on Thames Trader 5-ton chassis, the specially-designed bodies of these new units are planned to simplify the work of lopping tree branches which might be a danger to double-deck buses and their passengers. They replace five units, 27 years old, which were converted from STL-type front entrance double-deck buses.

The bodies of the new vehicles were designed in the department of the Chief Mechanical Engineer (Road Services) and were built by Marshall's of Cambridge. Immediately behind the cab is a compartment for the crew and behind that is an open well to carry tree cuttings and foliage. The exterior of the body is panelled in aluminium alloy and the interior in steel. At the rear are large double doors for discharging the cuttings.

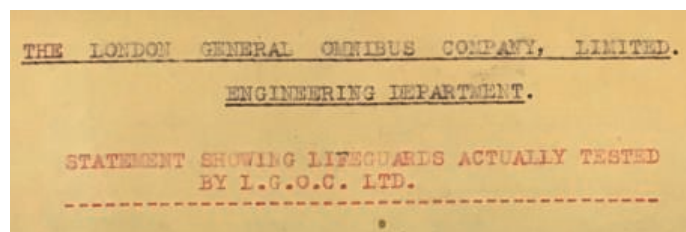
The old buses used previously had their roofs removed and the upper-deck sides cut down to waist level to form a working platform. The crew travelled in the lower saloon, reaching the upper deck by the original stairway behind the driver's cab. The crew of the new vehicles reach the working deck on the roof by an aluminium ladder from their compartment to a waterproof hatch in the roof. The open working deck extends over the driving cab as well as the crew section and can be continued, by removable walkways, over each side of the open well.

Two drop platforms at working deck level on the nearside allow the operators to get nearer to a tree and are spaced sufficiently far apart to enable them to be lowered on opposite sides of a tree trunk so that

Things to Come

The coming together of The Kithead Trust and The OS Library & Archive is prompting the re-examination of a number of collections as we move towards a comprehensive catalogue of our holdings.

One such collection is that of the late Reg Westgate, a stalwart of the OS and a particular enthusiast for the London scene. The extensive collection includes some splendid original records going back to the Victorian and Edwardian eras, such as this table which was compiled by the London General Omnibus Company when it was testing for the best design of lifeguards to prevent injuries to people dragged under the side and front of high-bodied omnibuses. Witnessed by officials which include Superintendent Bassom and Assistant Commissioner Bruce, the 'results' column is particularly revealing, with 'dummy ripped open' and 'flap doubled back, useless' as two of the entries.



No. of test.	Photo to No.	Invention of	Date Tested.	Witnessed by.	Result.
11	380	A.E.C.	Jly.'13	-do-	Dummy ripped open & device noisy.
12	377 378	A.E.C. Tramway Type.	Jly.'13	Mr. Iden " Shave Asst. Comm. Bruce. Supt. Bassom.	Satisfactory, but expensive to make and maintain.
-	-	A.E.C.	Never built.	-	-
13	381 NS	Messrs. Law & Smith	Jly.'13	Mr. Iden " Shave Supt. Bassom Asst. Comm. Bruce.	Flap doubled back, useless.

Derek Potter Looks Back

As 'The Kithead Trust' comes to an end, we look back with trustee Derek Potter, who has been there throughout. As a trustee from the first day but also present in the period even before Kithead existed. Here, he takes in his own history and that of the Trust.

I was born in April 1939, some weeks before World War 2 and brought up in the Handsworth Wood area of Birmingham. My house was on the west side of the Tame Valley with fields beyond our back garden and the River Tame at the valley bottom, Hamstead Road leading to Hamstead village was next.

Adjacent to the village was Great Barr station and the railway line from Birmingham to Walsall. Hamstead Colliery with its pit mound was to the far left of the valley. The colliery had a cable railway to take the coal up to the canal wharf and also sidings from the railway used for the trucks that took the coal away to various destinations. An aerial ropeway with tipper trucks took the coal waste across Hamstead Road on a lattice viaduct to a worked out quarry to be tipped.

On most Sundays the railway line was used as a diversionary route when the Trent Valley line (Lichfield - Tamworth) was being maintained. This was very exciting for a young lad, as all the large powerful named locomotives on the expresses went through Great Barr station at this time.

In the 1940's, my aunt was Manageress of the Hare and Hound public house at Rednal, which was in the shadow of the Lickey Hills. Visiting my aunt meant using the 16 bus to Birmingham city centre then the 70 tram along the Bristol Road to Rednal. Most of the route was dual carriageway with the tram lines in a central reservation and the trams travelled at quite a speed along this route. 40 mph has been known. The Lickey Hills at bank holidays and weekends were a well-known Day Out for the Birmingham folk particularly as not many people had cars, also petrol was rationed. One of the highlights at the Hare and Hounds was the visit of a steam driven dray wagon bringing a consignment of beer.



The Bristol Road tram routes were taken over by buses in July 1952 and I made sure that I visited my Aunt that day for a last ride. The last Birmingham tram ran on 5 July 1953.

I left Technical College in 1954 and became a GEC apprentice in the radio and television department, the building was in the centre of Birmingham. Hamstead Colliery closed down in 1965, as the remaining coal seams were too difficult to work.

In 1956, I joined the Light Railway Transport League (LRTL) and the Stephenson Locomotive Society (SLS) and started to attend the monthly meetings; I met Peter Jaques at these meetings who had similar transport interests and we became friends.

I also met other transport enthusiasts as result of these meetings and we used to visit tramway systems which were closing routes during the late 1950's. During the 1960's I also visited trolleybus systems that were closing routes.



Derek at Lichfield Trent Valley station cattle siding in 1951, aged 12.

Derek Looks Back *(continued)*

In 1963, several transport enthusiasts decided to meet and discuss the assembly and eventual publication of a comprehensive transport history of Birmingham, becoming the Birmingham Transport Historical Group (BTHG). Peter Jaques, Paul Addenbrooke and I were members of the group.

In 1969 the West Midland Passenger Executive (WMPTE) was formed to take over the transport systems of Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Walsall and West Bromwich. In 1973, Midland Red bus routes in the WMPTE area were taken over and in 1974 it was Coventry area bus routes. In 1986, all the WMPTE bus routes were transferred to West Midland Travel.

From 1969 to 1986 the BTHG with permission amassed a large collection of archive items from the offices of all the original undertakings. Because of my job travelling around the West Midlands, I was in the fortunate position of being able to collect a large portion of this from the various offices. However, there was the problem of storage; some items were kept at members' homes and by courtesy of West Midlands Travel we also used rooms at two bus garages.



Derek is noted for his superb photographs, such as WMPTE 2859 on route 28 climbing Days Road in Birmingham.

In 1984, the PSV Circle was considering how to improve their publications and Peter Jaques as chairman was very much involved in this. One of the ideas put forward was to set up a printing company to carry out the printing. The result was Kithead Limited, a company with shareholders who put up the money to build a property and purchase the necessary printing machinery.

A plot of land was found at the Hampton Lovett Industrial Estate near Droitwich. Peter and I were employed to run the company, although the main customer was the PSV Circle printing was also carried out for other societies. Printing commenced in March 1987.

The new building was also able to accommodate the BTHG archive material. With the dissolution of NBC, John Birks was involved with housing a considerable volume of archival papers and approached Peter to see if Kithead could assist. The result was a first extension built on to the existing building to house around 20 tons of paper. The cost was raised by the PSV Circle, the Omnibus Society and BTHG members.

With archive material arriving on a daily basis, thought was given to a second extension to the building and funding was provided by BTHG and the Department of Transport who were donating their book stock. The major funding was by David Beaman and Arthur Townsend and the Trustees agreed that the extension be named the Townsend - Beaman archive and work was completed in 1995.

A further extension was completed in late 1999 and was funded by Andrew Vernon and Garry Charles and was named the Vernon - Charles archive.

At the Trustees meeting in September 2001, John Birks announced that he would not seek re-election as Chairman and was succeeded by Brian King. John Birks passed away unexpectedly in February 2003.

It was decided to cease the printing operation from the end of March 2004 as the current staff would be at or past retiring age by this date. There was also a need to replace ageing equipment with computer based input and with the growing demand for full colour publications substantial capital investment would be required with no guarantee that extra revenue could be obtained to finance these changes. From April 2004 the printing machinery was gradually disposed of and the space used for additional shelving for the Trust.

In October 2014, Philip Kirk became the Trust's first archivist.

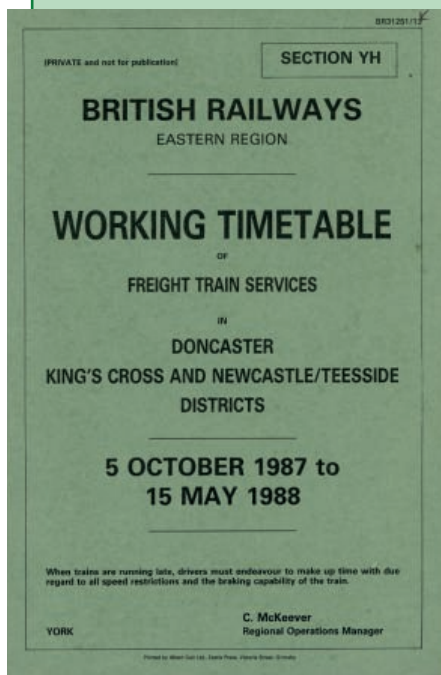
In 2018, with the setting up of the Bus Archive, Kithead Trust will cease to exist and the remaining two original Trustees, Paul and I will 'bow out'.

Railway Matters

Railway Working Timetables

Having completed the listing of 8,000 railway books the main focus of activity now is the cataloguing of working timetables information - there are approximately 7,500.

These fantastic books are a boon for railway enthusiasts as they give a detailed "behind the scenes" view of train movements in a standard timetable format - although the timing points are quite often signal boxes or indeed individual signals. The books themselves typically cover a six-monthly period - coinciding with the dates of the passenger timetable - and the earliest one we have is a North Eastern Railway edition from 1861. All are available to consult in our railway library.



Going forward items covering railways, haulage, canals and vehicle registrations will be carried in Bus Archive as "News from The Kithead Transport Archive".

YH22 WEEKDAYS		DONCASTER TO BERWICK UPON TWEED											
		6N62	4S64	6E64	6N95	6E30	6N90	6N90	4N61	6D27	6L42	6S46	6N96
		M.G.R. to South Dock T.C.	20 52 SX COY Morris Cowley to Bathgate T.C.	19 20 SX SLK from Sep. Trd. Jn. to Bathgate T.C.	02 22 COY Lindsay Oil Ref. to Laidonry Hendon Jn.	17 18 SX SLK Eastleigh to Hutton Hill Ex S.	00 20 SLK from Whitmoor N.Y.	00 20 SLK Whitmoor N.Y. to Tyneside T.C.	23 39 SX Freightliner Stockton F.L.T. to Stockton F.L.T.	SLK to Heck Pleasor PS	04 08 COY Lindsay Oil Ref. to Leeds D.R.T.	SCN	M.G.R. to South Dock T.C.
DOWN													
TIMING LOAD		D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
		MX	MX	MX	MSX	MX	SO	MSX	MX	MX		MO	MSX
DONCASTER DOWN DECOY..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BELMONT DOWN YARD..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BELMONT UP RECEPTION..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DONCASTER..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Doncaster Sig D275..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Arksey Loop..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Arksey Loop..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Shaftholme Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Joan Croft Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Temple Hirst Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hambleton South Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hambleton West Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Selby Canal Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Selby..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Selby Storage & Frgt Co..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Selby West Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hambleton East Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hambleton North Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Colton Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
YORK HOLGATE..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
YORK HOLGATE..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
YORK SIG Y168..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
YORK SIG Y168..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
York Yd Sth S.B..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
York Yd Sth S.B..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
York R.S. (Down Dep)..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
York R.S. (Down Dep)..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Skelton Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Skelton Bridge Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tollerton S.B..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Thirsk..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Longlands Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NORTHALLERTON..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Boroughbridge Rd. L.C..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TEES N.Y..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Castle Hills Loop..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Darlington South Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Darlington North Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DARLINGTON UP S.S..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DARLINGTON UP S.S..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Raisby Quarries..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Thrislington Steelery..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ferryhill T.C. Old Yard..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ferryhill T.C. Old Yard..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ferryhill Sth. Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tursdale Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Durham..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Durham Sig Y958/7..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ouston Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TYNE N.Y..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TYNE N.Y..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Low Fell Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
King Edward Bridge S. Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
King Edward Bridge N. Jn..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NEWCASTLE..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NEWCASTLE CENTRAL P.M.Y..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NEWCASTLE CENTRAL P.M.Y..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Heaton Sth. Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Heaton F.D..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Morpeth..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Morpeth..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Morpeth North Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chevington S.B..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Wooden Gate Jn..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alnmouth..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chathill..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Belford S.B..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Crag Mill Loop..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Beal L.C..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tweedmouth F.D..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BERWICK-UPON-TWEED..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BERWICK-UPON-TWEED..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Signal E.G. 403..... dep		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MILLERHILL S.S..... arr		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Message from Brian King, Kithead Trust Chairman

The start of next month sees an historic moment for The Kithead Trust, as it marks the transfer of its assets to the new charity, The Bus Archive; the Trust will be closed down later in the year.

Whilst in some ways we are sorry to see the end of the Trust, the non-road passenger elements of the collections will be marketed as The Kithead Transport Archive, with its own dedicated website, and so the name will live on.

It is also a very exciting time, with the combination of our collections with those of the Omnibus Society Library & Archive to create The Bus Archive. This will offer a single point of reference to those who want to research and study the industry in all its forms.

Derek Potter, in his article for this edition, has described the Trust from its antecedents with the Birmingham Transport Historical Group through to the creation and expansion of the Trust.

Individuals such as Derek, Peter Jaques and Paul Addenbrooke have been ever-present, and we owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for having collected the archive material in the first place, and also assisting in its preservation. As we take the next step on our journey, we say "thank you".

Message from the Birks Family

On behalf of the Birks family, I am delighted to say a few words as The Kithead Trust gives way to The Bus Archive. As you will read elsewhere, my father was involved in the Trust as chairman from its creation in 1989 until shortly before his untimely death fifteen years later. John Birks was a life-long enthusiast for transport in all its forms. He was always a man of vision, and I believe that he would have been delighted to witness how the Kithead project has rightly evolved to this next phase, all down to the volunteer team there.

John's widow, my mother Margaret, lives quite locally to Droitwich and likes to keep up-to-date with developments. We agree that "JAB" would have been very pleased to give his endorsement to the Trust's collections being combined with those of the Omnibus Society to form The Bus Archive. It is also pleasing that the Kithead name is being retained for the rail, canal, haulage and registration elements of the organisation.

The family wish The Bus Archive every good fortune.

Austin L. Birks

(Below) Kithead Trust chairman Brian King (left) says a heartfelt thank you to Paul Addenbrooke, Derek Potter and Peter Jaques.



The Changes

On 1st April 2018, the collections and assets of The Kithead Trust and the Omnibus Society Library and Archive will pass to a new charity:

The Bus Archive,
charity number 1177343,
registered office 100-102 Sandwell Street,
Walsall, WS1 3EB.

The Bus Archive will retain the three centres currently operated by the two constituents organisations:

- Droitwich – for bus industry records and railway records, books and publications;
- Walsall – for bus industry publicity, publications, books and photographs;
- Acton – for records and publicity of London Transport, its successors and its main predecessor, London General.

The non-road passenger transport collections (vehicle registrations, railways, haulage and canals) will be maintained at Droitwich under the name 'The Kithead Transport Archive' as a subsidiary of The Bus Archive.

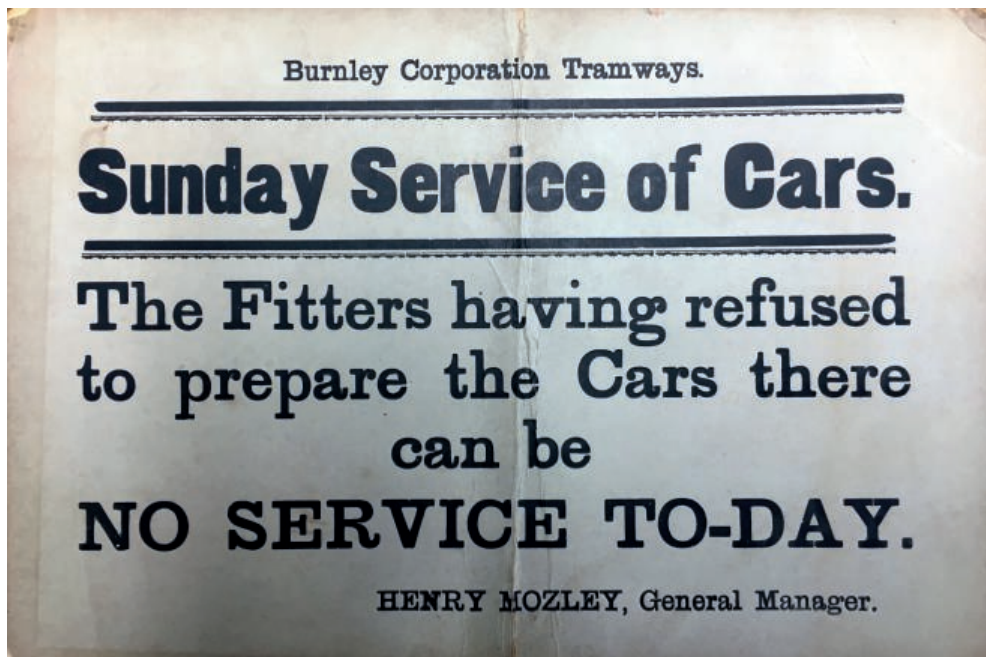
Full details will be available on our websites from early April:

www.busarchive.org.uk
www.kitheadtrust.org.uk

From the next issue, this newsletter will change to be Bus Archive News, and will retain a section for the holdings of The Kithead Transport Archive.

We will be able to address any queries at hello@busarchive.org.uk

See you in April!



General Manager Henry Mozley was clearly frustrated with industrial relations in Burnley Corporation Tramways, to the extent that he wanted everyone to know why there was no service that Sunday! The fact that the notice is printed could indicate either that this was a regular occurrence or some degree of forward planning. The poster is undated, but Mozley was General Manager from 1901 until his retirement in 1924.

This newsletter is published for the final time by The Kithead Trust, De Salis Drive, Hampton Lovett, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire WR9 0QE.

www.kitheadtrust.org.uk

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