

U n d e r g r o u n d
The Journal of
The London Underground Railway Society

Issue No 13

Volume 2 No 1

January 1963

OUR FIRST TWENTYFIVE

In societies such as this, meetings are of two kinds; there are those by which we exist - which keep the wheels turning, such as subcommittee, committee and general meetings, informal discussions between officers, and the like; and then there are the meetings for which we exist - the varied events arranged for the benefit of our members. At the end of November 1962, the latter type of meeting had reached 25; as a score of a quarter-century seems as good a point as any to take stock of our achievements, this review is presented for the record.

The first pleasure meeting of the Society actually took place before the inauguration; on the 30th September 1961, while arrangements were being made for the formation of the Society, Joe Brook Smith planned an Informal Meeting of LT modellers at the Model Railway Hobby Show in Westminster Central Hall. This meeting was attended by about half a dozen modelling enthusiasts - most of whom subsequently joined the Society - and TLURS was launched, even if only unofficially at that stage.

The Inaugural Meeting on the 17th November 1961, at The Railway Tavern in Liverpool Street, was followed by an Informal Meeting at which quite a few acquaintances were made which have since developed into friendships, and this opportunity was followed by another on 16th December, when a stand was mounted at the 1961 Transport and Travel Exhibition, held by the Norbury Transport and Model Railway Club in St Stephen's Church Hall, Thornton Heath. Our display on this occasion was modest in the extreme, having been arranged at very short notice, but it provided useful publicity, a popular meeting place, and we were honoured by a visit from Mr J.G. Bruce, Mechanical Engineer, Running - Railways, LTE, who had previously opened the exhibition.

The 1962 programme commenced with our first visit - to the Museum of British Transport at Clapham. The large exhibits, not then on view to the public, were shown to us by the Curator, and the visit was extremely popular with members, who turned out in force and brought numerous visitors with them.

On February 10th, the Programme Machine Regulating Room at Leicester Square was visited, this being in substitution for an advertised visit to Central Control which had to be abandoned. Later the same month, on the 23rd, an evening of Ten Minute Talks by members took place in St Bride's Institute; there were not many talks offered, but the discussions which took place successfully filled the gaps. March 10th saw a visit to the Signals School at Earls Court, which provided a good opportunity for members to learn something of the training of LT's signals staff, and on the 24th, at the close of the Annual General Meeting held in the Stephenson Locomotive Society headquarters, another Informal Meeting took place. Here, among other things, maps were auctioned and photographs sold.

A very full afternoon on April 14th showed us the Waterloo and City Line in considerable detail, including the depot and the inner workings of the trav olator, and ended with a visit to the main Waterloo Signal Box, still one of the largest and most interesting in the country.

At the very generous invitation of the Model Railway Club, a stand was put on at the 1962 Model Railway Exhibition, held in the Central Hall Westminster from 24th to 28th April; this was invaluable publicity, and many new members were obtained by it; among those, already members, who dropped in to see us on the stand, were some whose homes are hundreds of miles from London - once again proving what valuable meeting places stands at exhibitions provide!

On 19th May, we were helped by many organizations and individuals to arrange a most successful walk over the abandoned Brill Branch - the only lack of co-operation on this occasion came from the weather, and even that could have been worse - though not much! A week later, another grey day on the 26th was appropriate for a farewell visit to British Railways' Neasden motive power depot, then on the point of closure. We were back in Neasden on June 16th, for a very enjoyable visit under blue skies to the LT depot, and the opportunity was taken after this visit to arrange a farewell trip by T stock.

July 15th saw us visiting the Bluebell Railway with our wives, children and sweethearts (as appropriate!); this line provided a full day of great interest, and was notable for the fact that, on the return journey, the Chairman, Treasurer and their respective families covered the length of Haywards Heath Up platform in record time!

August was a full month; Lillie Bridge depot was visited on the 11th, a highly successful tour of the Great Western lines formerly worked over by trains powered by the Met from Bishops Road to Aldgate followed on the 18th; this took us to Uxbridge,

Windsor and Reading, and included visits to the three other Uxbridge stations past and present. One week later again, on the 25th, came one of our most popular visits to date, when we went over Smithfield Goods Depot, WR, which had been closed a few weeks before.

Our winter session of indoor meetings commenced on the 21st September, when Chris Cooch presented a black-and-white slide show at Ealing Town Hall - and a very fine selection of slides they were too. On the 6th October, another Society walk and tour in Buckinghamshire was held, this time over the abandoned line of the Aylesbury and Buckingham Railway between Quainton Road and Verney Junction, with a trip on the railcar from Verney to Buckingham to round off the day.

October 18th provided one of the highlights of the year, Acton Works being visited - and toured exhaustively (and one might say exhaustingly) in the care of very patient and knowledgeable guides. On the 26th at Caxton Hall, one of our members, J.R. Bates, gave an erudite address on The New Tube Across London, clearly illustrating the history of the Victoria Line project to the date of its authorization, and giving much information on other proposals for new tubes which have not yet been authorized.

For the period 1st-3rd November the Society went north, a stand being put on at the Leeds Model Railway Exhibition in the Corn Exchange. This exhibit was entirely due to the enterprise of Eric Cope, one of our Yorkshire members; it aroused much interest, and undoubtedly helped to boost our name in that area.

On the evening of the 15th, Mount Pleasant station of the Post Office Railway was visited, and gave an absorbing picture of what goes on in the tube line very few seem to know about, while event no. 25 was reached on 23rd November 1962, when, at a meeting in the Bishopsgate Institute, an address was given by Ron Ledger, M.P. on Free Passenger Travel on the Railways; a good attendance of members was treated to a thoroughly entertaining exposition of his subject by Mr Ledger - and given considerable food for thought as well.

It is hoped that the next twenty-five events will provide as much variety and enjoyment as those recorded above; the 1963 programme, published in outline last month, would seem to assure this, but the support of members is essential to the success of any programme - and it must not be forgotten that the events referred to would have been impossible without the help and co-operation of officers and staff of the London Transport Executive and other organizations. We are greatly indebted to them, and tender our sincere thanks for all they have already done for us.

K.R. Benest

Of 142 vehicles of the long-bodied type constructed for the Metropolitan between 1863 and 1868, five, all originally supplied by the Oldbury Carriage Company, were rebuilt with more modern bodies on the original underframes, though the latter may have been modified insofar as the suspension was concerned. These new bodies were 40'0" long by 8'3" wide, with an all-round three-inch turnunder below the waist. Three of them received the standard round-topped doors in place of the square-topped type with which they were equipped in the '60's. With these vehicles also were initiated the "new-look" of the period, panelling being provided above the quarter-lights in place of the hitherto ubiquitous top-lights, while the waist-panels were diminished in depth also. Electrical lighting was still to come, however, and the Pintsch high-pressure oil-gas system remained the standard illuminant.

The evidence for the date of reconstruction is, admittedly, slender, for we have only a Stores Committee minute of October 24th 1894 approving the purchase of $\frac{3}{8}$ " whitewood in place of papier mache "for the panels of a carriage being rebuilt" to indicate that any such work was going forward. Although the matter was almost certainly ventilated before the entire directorate, they have left no record to suggest why the work should have been undertaken. It seems likely however that John Bell, the managing director, was deeply dissatisfied with the existing stock, and was desirous of establishing new standards. There were prospects of the early extension of through trains to destinations beyond Aylesbury, and for such a distance the "Jubilees" had proved disappointing, while the employment of the "rigids", with their highly concentrated discomfort unrelieved, was calculated to cause a public outcry. Possibly, therefore, these reconstructions were regarded as being in the nature of an experiment to determine whether or not the "rigids" were capable of successful development and to "test public reaction", though the thought that the old stock could be given a new lease of life in an economical manner, utilising the facilities of the Neasden works, can never have been far away.

Early in the following year we find the Stores Committee authorising the purchase of six panels of a special millboard "for the first class coach to be rebuilt at Neasden". Although the records show that a third carriage was also rebuilt, there is nothing in the minutes, either then or later, to show when this was done. It must be assumed, therefore, that all material for this vehicle was taken from stock, and no purchasing authority was required.

The two remaining vehicles were rebuilt in 1896, for we learn that variously-sized teak planks were ordered "for alterations to the long 1st class carriages to match the saloons" (15/1/1896 Stores Committee Minutes). There survives a tracing of the arrangement of the bodies of these vehicles, signed by J.S.Raney, the Carriage Superintendent, and dated 8/3/1896, as further evidence of this reconstruction. It is curious that, although they were, properly speaking, five-passenger-compartment 1st/brakes, they should have been referred to, then and later, as "composites". The guard's/luggage compartment had double doors, one with a droplight, and contained the usual brake equipment, etc. These, and the saloons, were the only passenger carrying vehicles to be constructed for the Company subsequent to 1867, with straight-topped compartment doors, and, incidentally, the only 1st/brakes that they ever possessed.

Official records include the following:-

No.	Built	Rebuilt	Type	Seats	
				Smoking	Non-Smoking
41	1866	1907	3rd/brake		50
44	"	1902	1st	24	24
45	"	1907	3rd/brake	40	10
72	"	1903	3rd	30	50
89	"	1903	3rd	-	70

Tentatively we may equate No. 44 with the 1895 vehicle and Nos. 41 and 45 with the saloon train, noting in passing that these three carriages were actually built in 1865, and that No. 72 was rebuilt from an existing 3rd class carriage of 1866. No. 89, now reconstructed with seven compartments, poses a problem in that it would appear to have originated as a 6-compartment 1st class carriage (if an attempted reconstruction of the stock list is correct) and no net change is reflected in the half-yearly returns. A possible solution is that only one of the brake/1sts was equipped in part with 2nd class accommodation.

Save for their appearances in the saloon train little is known of the regular duties of these oddities: they would seem at one time to have been coupled with odd "Bogie" coaches, but by 1925 Nos 41, 72 and 45 were working week-and-week-about with a set of "Dreadnought" stock on the Chesham branch, by which time the two brake-ended vehicles had been demoted to 3rd class. At some time thereafter these two graduated to the Brill branch, which they served faithfully until the end of its (and their) working days in November 1935, No. 41 being repainted as recently as July in that year with "LONDON TRANSPORT 41 METROPOLITAN LINE" on the waist. Probably not later than 1921, when the last travelling gas-holders were taken out of service, Stone's

6 24 volt lighting system replaced the old Pintsch installation - at any rate on the vehicles here mentioned.

It has been too-readily assumed by earlier writers in referring to these carriages that the date, e.g. 1879, cast on the axle-boxes was indicative of the true age of the entire vehicle. On this false hypothesis has been erected a legendary class of new eight-wheeled stock, intermediate between the four-square "orange-boxes" of 1863 and the "Bogie stock" of 1898, in which body construction had outpaced undercarriage design by some 30 years. The legend is demolished by the early date assignable to the serial numbers of the coaches involved, and by a photograph, taken c.1930, of No. 295, one of the last batch of "rigids" constructed in 1884: save in the possession of arched doors and a slightly modified underframe it differed in no way from those of 20 years earlier.

It will be observed that if the scheme here presented be accepted, then the official rebuilding date must be rejected: it may well be asked how such divergencies could have arisen. There is no question but that errors have been made in recording these dates, for Nos. 41 and 45 appear in a photograph, published in 1904, of the Uxbridge branch inaugural train. The other dates, also, are immediately suspect, for what railway company, busily engaged in preparation for wholesale electrification, would concern itself with an elaborate reconstruction of obsolescent equipment which had already borne the brunt of 35 years intensive service?

The writer offers a possible explanation of these peculiar discrepancies. The year is 1930, and the Company, overshadowed by the London Transport Act, determines on a comprehensive survey of its assets in order to secure the best terms possible. In due course Mr Hally, the reigning C.M.E., decrees the production of a new diagram book of the Company's rolling-stock. The junior draughtsman delegated to this end works rapidly through the electric stock - which is well documented - then faces the problem of these old coaches. Of these he can find no record - down then to the shops to seek the aid of the "oldest inhabitant". This worthy volunteers the information that it all happened more years ago than he cares to think about, but he does recall that the two with the brake-ends were rebuilt for the saloon train, and that the others were done a year or so earlier. Our friend thanks him and returns to the drawing-office, where he finds the saloon dated to 1907, and a "Bogie stock" tracing dated 1903 - "If they ran together those rigids were probably rebuilt at the same time" he muses, "We'll say 1902-3 - can't be far out". Little does he dream that the saloon had existed

eleven years as demi-entities before taking its 1907 form on a single underframe, and that it was to these first manifestations that his informant had referred. Lacking the knowledge he has no reason to suspect that the other bodies are equally - and in fact more - venerable.

There is the story: clearly a duality of reconstruction is not excluded - though the absence of reference to other rebuilt coaches makes it unlikely. Even less acceptable is the probability of the same coaches twice undergoing drastic treatment in the short space of 12 years. In view of the incomplete and circumstantial nature of the evidence, any further information bearing on the enigma would be welcomed by the writer.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE METROPOLITAN

A century ago, on the 10th January 1863, the first trains ran in public passenger service on the Metropolitan Railway, between Bishop's Road and Farringdon. Thus began the first underground railway in the world, and from that small beginning, covering a route only 3 miles 60 chains in length, has grown in a hundred years the vast system we know today - the largest and most intensively worked underground network in existence.

It would have been possible to devote this issue of Underground to a "potted history", either of the Metropolitan itself or of the whole system it originated; but justice could not have been done to either project in the space available, and, in any case, it will be done in extenso elsewhere. Let it suffice that, neither by the Society nor by the magazine, has the centenary been overlooked - and hope that by 2063 the Society will be wealthy and enthusiastic enough to publish an authoritative history of the first 200 years of the Underground!

By way of tribute, the contents of this issue are slanted more towards the Metropolitan than usual, and, by way of a special tribute to that Company and its railway, we publish, by very kind permission of the author, John Betjeman's well-known poem named after the company and subtitled to its main station. We are grateful to Mr Betjeman for his generosity in allowing us to reproduce this work, for it is so wonderfully evocative of the line as it was half-a-century ago, and might well serve also as a lament for the passing of the company - whose demise is so much regretted by many of its devotees.

Some members might say that there has been a Metropolitan bias ever since the Society started - not only this month. If this is so, it has been partly deliberate, with the centenary in mind, and partly accidental, in that the Met enthusiasts are more vocal and more willing than others to put pen to paper. Devotees of other lines please note!

THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY

Baker Street Station Buffet

Early Electric! With what radiant hope
 Men formed this many-branched electrolier,
 Twisted the flex around the iron rope
 And let the dazzling vacuum globes hang clear,
 And then with hearts the rich contrivance fill'd
 Of copper, beaten by the Bromsgrove Guild.

Early Electric! Sit you down and see,
 'Mid this fine woodwork and a smell of dinner,
 A stained-glass windmill and a pot of tea,
 And sepia views of leafy lanes in PINNER,--
 Then visualise, far down the shining lines,
 Your parents' homestead set in murmuring pines.

Smoothly from HARROW, passing PRESTON ROAD,
 They saw the last green fields and misty sky,
 At NEASDEN watched a workmen's train unload,
 And, with the morning villas sliding by,
 They felt so sure on their electric trip
 That Youth and Progress were in partnership.

And all that day in murky London Wall
 The thought of RUISLIP kept him warm inside;
 At FARRINGDON that lunch hour at a stall
 He bought a dozen plants of London Pride;
 While she, in arc-lit Oxford Street adrift,
 Soared through the sales by safe hydraulic lift.

Early Electric! Maybe even here
 They met that evening at six-fifteen
 Beneath the hearts of this electrolier
 And caught the first non-stop to WILLESDEN GREEN,
 Then out and on, through rural RAYNER'S LANE
 To autumn-scented Middlesex again.

Cancer has killed him. Heart is killing her.
 The trees are down. An Odeon flashes fire
 Where stood their villa by the murmuring fir
 When "they would for their children's good conspire."
 Of all their loves and hopes on hurrying feet
 Thou art the worn memorial, Baker Street.

John Betjeman

E.J.S.Gadsden

The Aylesbury & Buckingham was never a particularly busy line, and it had no pretext of prosperity, for it was single track throughout and quite lightly laid.

This was hopelessly inadequate for the Metropolitan, with its visions of a heavy main line traffic, and it immediately set about making the necessary improvements. The line was doubled throughout, earthworks strengthened and new stations built. At the Aylesbury end, connection was made with the new extension from Rickmansworth, and a new joint station, with the Great Western, opened.

Five miles from the county town, a new station named Waddesdon Manor was completed, although some distance from the place it purported to serve. This fact was evidently appreciated by the Metropolitan, which had intended to call it Lapstones, after Lapstones Meadow in which it stood, but who appear to have submitted to pressure from the Rothschild family, who no doubt formed an influential proportion of the potential traffic. Opened on New Years Day, 1897, the station was re-named Waddesdon on 1st October 1922.

The original station at Quainton Road was on the Verney side of the road, and consisted of a single platform, facing a goods loop and cattle dock, with a trailing connection from the Wotton Tramway. The new station was built on the London side of the crossing, and incorporated a platform for the Brill branch train, with a facing connection and a more extensive goods yard. The powers to purchase land for further developments at Quainton were never exercised.

The road bridge at Quainton, and the junction with the new London extension, were the responsibility of the Great Central, and are not to be confused with the general reconstruction plan.

The stations at Grandborough Road and Winslow Road, as their names suggest, were not actually at the places they aimed to serve; in fact, both settlements were more than two miles distant, but no doubt most of their customers possessed horse carriages anyway. Both stations were situated beside a level crossing, and were rebuilt as part of the improvement scheme. Goods facilities were provided at Grandborough, but not at Winslow or Waddesdon, as far as can be discovered. It appears that Grandborough was also involved in the spate of renamings, and as from October 6th 1920, lost its 'd' to become Granborough Road.

The station buildings were typically Metropolitan, and perhaps unnecessarily large, considering the traffic was a

fraction of that handled by other stations of similar size. With the exception of Waddesdon, the main building was on the Up side, a substantial brick structure, with a full length awning. Down passengers had to be content with a small timber shelter with a semicircular roof, but were at least provided with a lattice girder bridge to cross the tracks. Quanton Road survives as an example of this design, only the platform and bridge abutments remaining elsewhere.

At Verney Junction, the Metropolitan platform remains, although the station there is entirely LNWR in design and construction. On the footbridge, a sign still points to the Metropolitan Line platform, although more than a quarter of a century has passed since passengers were dispatched for all stations to Aylesbury and Baker Street. The original layout appears to have permitted through running on to the Buckingham branch, which was not possible after the improvement scheme; this included the construction of a marshalling yard for interchange traffic, and a separate signal box, giving complete control of the Met tracks, the only connection with the LNWR being a crossover at the Oxford end of the station.

The Metropolitan to Verney Junction was a fully-fledged railway, providing the same facilities one might have expected nearer to London; its broad cuttings and substantial bridges survive today to prove that this was much more than a country byway - a part of a scheme to reach Buckingham, Towcester and who knows where else, in its efforts to expand its domain.

THE LONDON TRANSPORT PHOTOGRAPHIC LIBRARY

Information Supplied by the Publicity Officer

The Photographic Library is situated at 55 Broadway, and is open on Mondays to Fridays between 9 am - 1 pm and 2 - 4.30 pm (4.15 pm on Friday); it is closed on Saturdays. The Library contains some 125,000 photographs covering almost every facet of London Transport, including rolling stock (rail from 1860's), stations, depots, garages, works, ancillary equipment of all types, traffic scenes, town and country scenes, construction works, etc.

Prints may be ordered either at the Photographic Library or by post from the Publicity Officer, LTE, 280 Marylebone Road, London, N.W.1. The cost of wholeplate prints varies between 4/- and 6/6d, depending on the photographer. All photographs are taken by outside agents.

CONDUCTOR RAIL HEATING EXPERIMENT ON THE METROPOLITAN LINE

London Transport is experimenting with a system of clearing ice from conductor rails by passing through them a current heavy enough to heat them up. Ice on rails produces an insulating layer between rail and collector shoes which can cause operating trouble on the open sections of LT railways. The new method consists of short-circuiting positive and negative rails by means of a switch, and then passing a current through them large enough to raise their temperature as a result of their electrical resistance. The idea was first examined in theory in 1932, but this is the first time that practical tests have been carried out on track in regular use. The track being used is the northbound Metropolitan Line between Croxleyhall and Chorley Wood substations - Croxleyhall is at the junction of the main line and the Watford branch. This section is about 3m long and suffers severely from frost in winter. When experiments are being carried out, the conductor rails are short-circuited outside Chorley Wood substation, and the normal traction current is then switched on from Croxleyhall; in these tests, current supply has been maintained for an hour, and the rise in temperature recorded, together with the ambient temperature, atmospheric humidity and wind velocity.

During tests, the current flowing through the rails is about 4,000A, equivalent to power consumption of 2,400kW. In an hour, in fairly mild conditions, temperature rose from just above freezing point to nearly 70°F, and it thus appears that the current flowing would be sufficient to melt ice from rails even in really wintry weather conditions; to prove this, tests will continue through the winter, and apparatus is being installed to enable the short-circuiting to be carried out under remote control from the nearest manned substation - Northwood. The heating will be carried out for an hour before traffic is due to start for the day, and will be switched off $\frac{1}{4}$ hr before the first train is due to enter the section. Experience seems to indicate that the current rails should retain their heat long enough to prevent ice re-forming between the end of the heating period and the passage of the first train, but this remains to be proved in severe conditions.

Encouraging as the tests have been, the amount of current available from a given substation is not likely to be sufficient to heat in this way all the rails which it normally feeds with traction current.

THE TIMETABLE

Thursday 10th January 6.30 for 7 p.m. Metropolitan Centenary Dinner and Dance at the Metropolitan, Farringdon Road, London. Bookings are now closed for this event.

Saturday 12th January 10 a.m. Visit to the Science Museum, Exhibition Road, South Kensington. On this visit the exhibits relating to railways which are not on view to the general public will be seen - including the recently-acquired tube car. Everyone is welcome, but no photographs may be taken, nor any reports published. Numbers are limited, so names should be sent to the Secretary at 4 Southcombe Street, London, W.14, at once please. Members will not be notified if their applications are successful; meet in the Entrance Hall, on the left-hand side at 10 o'clock.

NOTICES

RAILS THROUGH THE CLAY. This book, by Alan A. Jackson and Desmond F. Croome (the former of whom is a member of the Society), will be published by George Allen and Unwin Limited on the 24th January. The book covers all aspects of tube railway history in London, from the earliest schemes of 1864 to 1962 - engineering, parliamentary, traffic, sociological, economic and financial, rolling stock, signalling, etc. Appendices give dates of opening, details of accidents and service interruptions, notes on tickets and ticket-issuing machines, and traffic results. Size - 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in; 406 pages, including 16-page index, 34 illustrations and six maps and plans; price 45/- Please order your copy through the Society, by sending a remittance for the above amount to R.E. Labrum, 134 Cranley Drive, Ilford, Essex. If you can collect your copy, please say so when ordering; this will save trouble and obviate the possibility of damage through the post - arrangements can be made for books to be collected at Society meetings.

METROPOLITAN TANK ENGINE PRESERVATION FUND. An appeal is in hand for funds to preserve L52, now stabled at Neasden LT depot. This is the last F class locomotive, used extensively on the Metropolitan Line. The type was introduced in 1901 for goods traffic on the Metropolitan Railway. London Transport Executive are willing to dispose of it on withdrawal for about £500. If the appeal succeeds the engine will be placed in the custody of the London Railway Preservation Society. Contributions in the form of crossed cheques or postal orders should be made payable to Met Tank Appeal, and sent to James Stringer, 2 Gibbon Road, London, W.3.

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