

London Bus Magazine

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Spring 1985



London Omnibus Traction Society

Capital Transport

LONDON BUS HANDBOOK

LAWRIE BOWLES



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Cover: February saw the return of the route number 59 to the Brighton Road after an absence of seven years when the route was withdrawn as part of Busplan '78. The number has been associated with the area for over 70 years and this month we follow the history of the route until 1934. The route now provides a daily operation as part of the omo conversion of the southern end of the 109, but on Sundays an extension to Chipstead Valley restores the number to the same roads which lost the route in 1970. Here at Thornton Heath we see DMS2391 heading for the Sunday extremity. *Paul Carpenter*

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Around and About



The first of the Cummins-engined Metrobuses were quickly pressed into service at Brixton garage in November, and here at Brixton soon after Christmas we see M1094 working on the 95.
Colin Fradd

More recently, the first of the Dennis Dominators entered service on the 170 at the beginning of February, and here at Putney Heath we see H2. These are the first Dennises in LT ownership for some 45 years. *Geoff Rixon*



LRT's Business Plan

London Regional Transport's first annual business plan was published in January and describes how it proposes to provide the best possible service within Government set financial limits. The key points are:

- 1) Major reorganisation of work areas into separate companies;
- 2) fewer staff and higher productivity (around 3,000 jobs will disappear by 1986);
- 3) fares rising in line with inflation;
- 4) no Underground line or station closures (although where high expenditure is required to preserve lightly used facilities the position may need to be reviewed); and
- 5) little change in service levels, but greater reliability (on the buses, mileage in the Greater London area is expected to fall by 3 million to 167 million in 1985-86, and one-man operation will rise from 54 to 66 per cent by the spring of 1986).



The February service changes brought Titans to the 25 for the first time. On Sundays, the service brought one-man operation into the West End, and here in Holborn T398 heads for Ilford. *Paul Carpenter*



V3 finally entered service on 18th March, and here at Putney Heath on the 77A we see the bodywork clearly showing the door arrangement. *Geoff Rixon*



Another Sunday-only omo conversion in February was that of route 48, and no doubt the weekday service will follow in due course. As Leyton garage has no omo double-deckers, the service had to be reallocated to Walthamstow garage on Sundays, and T318 picks up market passengers at Liverpool Street Station. *Malcolm Papes*



The withdrawal of the 255 necessitated the diversion of the 97A to Hackney Central Station in replacement. Here in Lea Bridge Road we see LS84 soon after the changes. *Paul Carpenter*



February also brought more omo into central London on Mondays to Saturdays with the conversion of three routes serving Ludgate Circus. The 76 and the 141 were already omo on Sundays, but new to Metrobuses was route 4 and here we see M1135 showing an older blind which still carried the name 'Holloway'. *Colin Fradd*

Newham Council to sponsor experimental service

On 2nd March new route 299 commenced between Stratford and Eastway Sports Centre running by way of the North East London Polytechnic and the Clays Lane Estate at Temple Mills Lane. Buses run every 40 minutes during Monday to Friday afternoons and evenings, and all day on Saturdays. There is no peak hour service. The service will run experimentally for six months at a cost of £12,500. Receipts will be deducted from this amount, with Newham Council paying the balance to LRT.

The new route 299 is worked by West Ham garage and the first journey posed specially for the photographers *inside* the Sports Centre grounds. Mr Ron Brewer, District General Manager (Forest), shakes hands with the Sports Centre Manager in front of T436 which shows the rather interesting blind arrangement. *Paul Carpenter*



LRT fails to win 5-year O-Licence

A check on 255 LRT buses carried out by the Department of Transport's vehicle examiners between October and December last year resulted in more than half, 129, being taken off the road. Faults included loose steering, fuel and oil leaks, and balding tyres, and partly as a result of the check LRT has only been granted a two-year operating licence instead of the expected five years. The last time LT applied for its O-Licence, at the the end of 1981, it also failed to get the full five years.

Preserved Buses on route 307

On 27th January RT4777 ran a special service over the 307 between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn (running as 377A!) and it is understood that this will be repeated on the last Sunday of each month along with an RF working as a 307 through to Harpenden.

Bus Garages to close?

A report in the *Guardian* in February announced the closure of five London bus garages over the coming year – Battersea, Edmonton, Poplar, Southall and Walworth – planned to eliminate excess garaging capacity. LRT plans to cut its scheduled mileage by 2 per cent (see page 3), and long-term forecasts suggest a decline in passengers of between 1 and 1.5 per cent a year for the foreseeable future.

New Streatham Garage under way

Work has started on the reconstruction of Streatham Garage at a cost of £6½ million. The new building, due to be completed by February 1987, will rise on the now levelled site of the former 74-year old garage and will house 90 buses – an increase of 23 over the old 'shed'. Modern engineering facilities will include enclosed dock and coachmaking areas, chassis repair and cleaning pits, and a brake-testing machine. The buses, crews and engineers are temporarily located at Clapham Garage.

The extension of the 153 to the West End was coupled to the change of blind which now shows conventional 'via' points rather than 'BARNSBURY LOCAL SERVICE'. Seen here passing the Thames Water Authority offices in Rosebery Avenue is M1058 bound for Tottenham Court Road Station on the first day. *Ramon Hefford*





Recently, there has been an increased use of Titans on the 261 prior to the route's conversion, and T1108 leaves Bromley garage bound for Lewisham at the end of last year.
Ramon Hefford

Not previously illustrated in London Bus Magazine are the two special Christmas Shoppers' services ran by Forest District last year. Both running to Romford Market, the 697 served Cubitt Town, Poplar, Canning Town, Plaistow and East Ham, while the 699 came from Walthamstow, Leyton and South Woodford. It can be no coincidence that the route numbers were not newcomers to the areas, and in trolleybus days the 697 and the 699 served Plaistow and Walthamstow respectively. Here we see T514 from PR and T389 from WW.
Ramon Hefford



Corrections to LBM51

Page 6 – The new Edgware Garage opened for service on 13th October, not as stated.

Page 10 – The photograph of T1097 was taken by Colin Fradd.

Green Line Coach Development

by David Stewart



One of the new BTL class coaches in Jetlink 747 livery. BTL3, is seen here at Gatwick showing the dot-matrix destination display. *Ramon Hefford*

The new BTL class of 25 Berkhof 'Everest 370' bodied Leyland Tiger coaches recently went into service, and for a small class exhibit many different liveries further revised from that carried by the leased Berkhof-bodied DAF coach (A832NTW) which was hired from Ensignbus in March 1984 for evaluation on private-hire duty. The new Green Line livery is similar to the TD, TP and TPL vehicles delivered from 1983 with light and dark green stripes at the front, but the lower body panels are now in light green rather than white. Their planned allocations and liveries are as follows:

- BTL1, 12** carry the standard Green Line livery described above, and after a few weeks of operation on National Express work they moved to Staines garage to act as spare coaches for the Jetlink 747 and National Express services.
- BTL2-9** are assigned to the Jetlink 747 service and have suitable titling in yellow on green on the body sides and rear. The striping is yellow and green, but the body side panels are in cream. The 'Green Line' fleetname is carried in dark green on cream below the front windscreen. All are allocated to Staines garage.
- BTL10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20** are at Crawley for the Flightline 777 service and although they carry the yellow and green 'airport' striping, the body side panels are light green. The 'Flightline 777' legend is carried below the windscreen.
- BTL14, 16, 18** entered service in December in standard National Express white livery with red and blue striping, but are destined to spend only a couple of months in this condition. They are soon to be redeployed to a special contract operation between London and Dover on behalf of Hoverspeed, and will adopt a special livery accordingly.
- BTL21-25** are allocated to Dunton Green for contract operation on behalf of Town & Country Tours and the associated Insight International. BTL21-23 are white with green and blue lines on the sides for Town & Country, while BTL24-25 are in an all-over Insight colour scheme of blue, yellow and grey.

As would be expected, the arrival of the BTLs has helped the withdrawal of 1979 model RSs and RBs, mostly by re-allocation of other coaches. However the redundant Jetlink Duple-bodied Tigers (TD29-38) are being repainted during the winter into white National Holidays livery in time for this year's summer season. The removal of BTLs from their short-lived National Express workings has prompted the acquisition of two Plaxton-bodied Tiger coaches from the National-London fleet at Catford. They arrived in January, classified NTL1-2 (SMY629-630X), and are expected to be allocated to Slough. A repeat order for 35 Plaxton 'Paramount 3200' bodied Leyland Tiger coaches began to arrive in January as follows:

TP61-65 49-seat standard Green Line coaches in the new livery with green lower body panels. They are replacing older RBs, but three are to enter service on the Flightline 767 service (worked by Addlestone) enabling the older DLs to replace further RBs.

TPL76-84 53-seat standard Green Line coaches, of which four are at Hemel Hempstead on normal coach work, the other five being allocated around the fleet as private-hire vehicles.

TPL85-90 50-seat coaches in white National Express livery, fitted with toilet.

TPL91-95 51-seat coaches in white National Holidays livery.

Again, the allocation of these new coaches will supplant RSs and RBS, mostly directly, and by April only the later batches of these classes (RB121-135 and RS136-150) are expected to be left in passenger service. All others will be returned to the Kirkby organisation from whom they had been leased.

Finally, five more double-deck Olympian coaches (LRC-10) arrived in March, and were allocated to St. Albans garage for work on the Flightline 757 service displacing several TLs for further service elsewhere. Thus, by April all four prestige 'Airport' services (747, 757, 767 and 777) will be worked by new coaches with suitable signwriting.



Only two BTLs carry standard Green Line livery, and BTL12 is seen arriving at Bristol on National Express service 625 from Gatwick. *Edward Shirras*



The National Express livery is well illustrated here by TPL58 leaving Reading on the 625 to Cardiff. *Edward Shirras*



By way of contrast, TPL46 from Slough garage in Green Line livery was caught here leaving Birmingham Digbeth on National Express service 808 to Aberdeen, a working intended later for BTL operation. *Edward Shirras*

London's Sightseeing Tours

London became a colourful place last year with so many operators starting up Sightseeing Tours. Many of the operators use ex-London Transport DMSs painted in their own colours, along with other non-London type buses giving added variety. We illustrate here some which have been regular performers over the last year.

London Transport's own Round London Sightseeing Tour has adopted the slogan 'official' since the new Metrobuses took over from DMSs. The interesting arrangement of the front blinds does, however, require some care to avoid making nonsense. M1050 is seen here at Parliament Square in July. *Ramon Hefford*





While LT may regard its own vehicles as official, there is of course no reason why another operator should not adopt the same feeling. Here on Ludgate Hill we see Ebdon's *official* Round London Sightseeing Bus, ex-DMS853, which was converted to a 'Photobus' by removal of the glass from the upper deck windows. The open-top variety is represented by ex-DMS813 at the Law Courts. Their livery is dark red with grey waistband and orange signwriting. *Ramon Hefford*





A particularly interesting performer was the Ebdon's Regent 3 (second-hand ex Morecombe) which ran daily throughout last summer. Originally, the signwriting was very plain as seen at Grosvenor Gardens, but since the move of one of the pick-up points to Regent Street, it carried extensive promotion as seen here at Hyde Park Corner. *D. Trevor Rowe/Colin Stannard*



Cityrama offer tours which give a commentary in eight languages by means of headphones. Ex-DM1029 has added colour by the flags of the nations being painted between the deck, otherwise their livery is mainly blue and white. *Ramon Hefford*
An open-top version, ex-DMS1939 is seen here pausing on London Bridge. *Colin Fradd*



We have illustrated Culturebus DMSs before, but a newcomer was open-top Atlantean LLH6K (named Charles Dickens), seen here at Trafalgar Square. *Ramon Hefford*



London Pride Sightseeing operate DMSs both with and without roofs. Closed top varieties carry a white/pink/orange livery as seen on ex-DMS648 at Parliament Square, while the open-toppers are all-over white as on ex-DMS816 near the Tower.
Colin Stannard



Working on the London Transport tour, Ensign's DMO1691 carries the 1933-style livery as previously applied to LTs DMS1933. It was caught here at Sloane Square.
Colin Stannard



London Crusader continue to run their ANs, AN10 now having been converted to open-top as seen at Minorities.
Colin Stannard

The 59 Story

Part One: 1912-1934

Compiled by Malcolm E. Papes from
material supplied by
George Robbins and the late Albert McCall

It was pleasing to see the number 59 restored to the Croydon area with the changes on ^{2nd} 4th February 1985. Now running daily between Purley and Brixton, with a Sunday extension to Chipstead Valley and early morning trips round the Embankment, the 59 has been associated with the Croydon area for nearly three-quarters of a century. It has spawned a number of offspring, the most important being the 159 which still runs from Thornton Heath through the West End and on to West Hampstead. Croydon routes today which owe at least part of their history to the 59 include the 166 south to Chipstead Valley, the 190 to Old Coulsdon, and even the 197 to Caterham Valley.

The original route 59 was introduced as a Sunday and Bank Holiday service on Easter Sunday 31st March 1912, running between Oxford Circus and South Croydon *Red Deer* via Charing Cross, Westminster Bridge, Kennington Road, Brixton Road, Streatham Hill, Streatham High Road, London Road (through Norbury and Thornton Heath), West Croydon, North End and Brighton Road. At the time it was a Sunday variation of route 3, and in those pre-First World War days the LGOC ran a number of special summer Sunday services which numbered on from the daily routes. In 1912 these fell between 51 and 64.

Route 59 was worked by General B-type buses from Old Kent Road (P) made spare from weekday services. During June 1912 the 59 was extended to Camden Town Station via Great Portland Street and Albany Street over route 3 which was withdrawn on Sundays at the same time. The Sunday buses previously used on the 3 from Albany Street (A) and Norwood (N) were switched to the 59 alongside those from P. A weekday service appeared on the 59 between Oxford Circus and South Croydon from Thursday 12th December 1912. Just over a month later route 59 became a joint working between General and the British Automobile Traction Company who operated a number of green Daimlers from their garage at Rochester Road, Camden Town (AQ). In May 1913 part of route 3 was extended to Crystal Palace, bearing the number 3A, and this ran to Camden Town paralleling the 59 on Sundays.

In order to follow the evolution of the 59 family, it is necessary to speak of many other routes, the numbers of which have long since disappeared from the Croydon area. The first of these was the 61, which appeared as a Sunday and Bank Holiday service on 16th June 1912 between Brixton *White Horse* and Whyteleafe *Whyteleafe Tavern* following the 59 as far as South Croydon, then continuing on via Purley and Godstone Road. The 61 was diverted to Stockwell Underground Station at the start of the spring season 1913, on Good Friday 21st March, being renumbered 100 at the same time.

Streatham Garage (AK) opened officially on 26th June 1913 although it had been in use some time previously, and as it was on line of route 59 it took over from the N allocation. The buses supplied to AK were all B-type but painted in the dark blue livery of the MET, whose full title was The Tramways (MET) Omnibus Company Limited. In a few months route 59 had been worked by both red and blue B-types as well as the green Daimlers of 'British'. However, late in June 1914 the latter were transferred to route 24 where they were a familiar sight for many years, being replaced on the 59 by additional MET buses from AK.

In the meantime there had been some changes to the other routes which served the road between Brixton and Croydon at weekends. On 14th June 1913 route 100 (Stockwell - Whyteleafe) was introduced on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings as, by this time, the customary mid-week half-day for shop assistants and the Saturday half-day for office workers had been introduced, and they now had the extra chance for trips to the countryside. A few weeks later, on Sunday 20th July, another new route was introduced on Sundays and Bank Holidays from Stockwell Station, the 116 which, like the 100, followed the 59 routeing to South Croydon, then on to Purley and along the Brighton Road, continuing through Coulsdon, Hooley and Merstham to Redhill *Market Place*. Short workings to Merstham *Feathers* were numbered 116A. Unfortunately, the buses were far from welcome by the local inhabitants who did not like their Sundays so rudely disturbed by the invasion of hearty



B1470 is seen here on Sunday route 61 at Riddlesdown *Rose & Crown* working from N. Malcolm E. Papes collection



348, a Daimler of the British Automobile Traction Company Ltd, works a Sunday duty beyond Oxford Circus to Camden Town. Malcolm E. Papes collection



Another 'British' Daimler, at South Croydon, shows the simplified livery and the code AQ for Camden Town Garage taken during 1913. Malcolm E. Papes collection



B1481 trundles along Streatham High Road to South Croydon working from its base at Norwood Garage in 1913. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

Londoners. Their own local bus service by East Surrey Traction Company did not operate on Sundays! Also, the LGOC failed to obtain licences to operate from Reigate Borough Council who were the local authority for Redhill, and Arthur Henry Hawkins, the autocratic Secretary of East Surrey, was most vociferous in his complaints to the Town Clerk. As a result, route 116 was withdrawn between Merstham *Feathers* and Redhill from Sunday August 10th, and all journeys were renumbered 116.

There followed a period of quiescence until the autumn when the Wednesday service on the 100 was withdrawn, followed by the Saturday service on 26th October, leaving just the Sunday operation once again. Route 116 itself was withdrawn between Coulsdon *Red Lion* and Merstham from 1st February 1914. At Easter 1914 activity restarted when, on Good Friday, route 100 was again renumbered, to 152, and extended from Caterham to Godstone *The Bell*. It remained a Sunday-only service, and the route number was again at the end of the main weekday sequence, thus reflecting the expansion of the LGOC network over a short period of time. On the same day the 116 was re-extended beyond Coulsdon to Merstham, and also renumbered to 160. Both the 152 and the 160, like the 100 and 116 before them, were operated by AK using MET B-types.

By Sunday 12th April 1914 an agreement was reached between LGOC and the East Surrey Traction Company with the result that Mr Hawkins supported the applications to Reigate Council, and from that date the 160 was extended from Merstham to Reigate via London Road South, Gatton Park Road, Wray Common, Croydon Road, Church Street and Reigate High Street to terminate at The Red Cross Hotel. From 13th May the service was introduced all day on Wednesdays and Saturdays, while on the remaining four days a new route 160A was started between Brixton *White Horse* and Merstham *Feathers* commencing on 11th May. This proved to be short-lived, as from 30th May, a daily service on the 160 was provided to Reigate. Returning to 11th May, a weekday service was also introduced on the 152 between Stockwell and Caterham *Old Surrey Arms*, and strangely these workings did not acquire a suffix to differentiate them from the Sunday working to Godstone. On 16th November 1914 the Sunday service was curtailed at Caterham to conform with the weekday pattern.

War was declared on 4th August 1914, and although large numbers of buses were withdrawn almost immediately to help with troop movements, the first effects were only slight reductions in frequency, but by December routes 152 and 160 were only operating on an hourly headway.



Above left Tilling's 246, a Tilling-Stevens TTA1 with Renault-type front, is seen on route 75. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*



Above B2447 from AK stands outside the Red Cross Hotel at Reigate in Tramways (MET) livery on the Sunday-only route 160. *Photomatic*

Left B1448 from N, also at Reigate, is seen at the start of the First World War being overtaken by a troop of war-bound soldiers. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

The next changes to the 59 occurred on Good Friday 2nd April 1915 when alternate buses on Sundays were extended from South Croydon to Caterham via Purley, Kenley, Whyteleafe and Godstone Road numbered 59A. These journeys replaced the 152 on Sundays which now ran only on weekdays at half-hourly intervals. Route 59A ran every 10-11 minutes throughout the summer, but when the winter programme was introduced in November, the frequency dropped to half-hourly.

During 1915 a new bus garage was being built in Brighton Road, South Croydon for the LGOC, but when completed it was handed over to Messrs Thomas Tilling Limited. It opened for traffic on 23rd January 1916, and a number of Tilling TTA1 petrol-electric buses with their unusual sloping fronts, and radiators behind the engine, were transferred to the Lewisham garage from Tilling's premises at Victory Place, Elephant & Castle and forty of Lewisham's TTA1s with crews then moved to Croydon. The vehicles were put to use on three routes serving Croydon, one of which was the 59. On the same date, the 59 was withdrawn in South Croydon between 'The Swan & Sugar Loaf' and 'The Red Deer', and the 26 blue B-type MET buses from AK were replaced by a similar number from 'C', as the new Croydon garage was coded. The 'T' (for Tilling) was added to the code in 1924 to differentiate it from LGOC's Athol Street Garage which was also coded C. The letters 'TC' will be used for Croydon in this account to avoid confusion although they were not carried by the buses until 1924. Shortly after, on 16th April, the 59 was extended on weekdays from Oxford Circus to Camden Town via Great Portland Street and Albany Street as on Sundays.

On 13th August 1916 both the 152 and 160 were withdrawn, or more correctly, suspended, as they were to reappear four years later. Route 152, which had latterly run on weekdays only, was replaced by a daily operation on the 59A from Caterham to Oxford Circus, using eight buses from TC on weekdays, continuing on Sundays to

Camden Town. The 160 was covered by a new daily route 59B from Reigate to Oxford Circus via Wray Common, Gatton Point, Merstham, Hooley and Coulsdon, linking up with the 59A at Purley and the 59 at South Croydon. Ten TTAIs from TC were required for the 59B. These changes started on Monday 14th April, but from the following Sunday the 59 ceased to run and was replaced by an increased frequency on the 59A and 59B. One week later, both the 59A and 59B were extended daily from Oxford Circus to Camden Town. Coincident with the introduction of the winter programme on Sunday 19th November, route 59 was reinstated using 11 buses from TC.

Bus operation was much more difficult during the First World War than the Second because there was less forward planning, and supplies of petrol in particular varied from week to week. 1917 was the most difficult year of all, and the number of buses on the 59 was reduced, with an allocation of MET buses from AK replacing those from TC. For the two weeks from 19th to 31st March, routes 59A and 59B were withdrawn and replaced by two new services. The 94 commenced between Thornton Heath *Prince of Wales* and Caterham via Kenley, while the 95 ran from Thornton Heath to Reigate via Hooley and Merstham. Both the 94 and 95 were operated by MET B-types from AK; five on the 94 and six on the 95. This was evidently unsuccessful as, from 1st April, the 59A and 59B were reinstated daily running between Camden Town and Caterham (59A) or Reigate (59B), and no further changes were made until the winter programme when the 59B was withdrawn south of Coulsdon. TC took charge of these operations. On 24th March 1918 the Sunday service on the 59 ran for the last time, but the introduction of the summer programme on Good Friday 29th March resulted in the re-extension of the weekday 59 from Coulsdon to Merstham, and an increased frequency on both the 59A and 59B. The Sunday 59 reappeared on 8th December, only to be withdrawn once again on 6th April 1919. By 1919 the petrol situation was improving, and on Monday 10th February a daily service to Reigate was resumed on route 59B, although operation was transferred to AK again using 11 B-types.

On 13th April 1919 route 43 (Muswell Hill Broadway to London Bridge) was extended on Sundays to Kenley *Kenley Hotel* via Streatham Hill, London Road and Brighton Road. From Monday 7th May the weekday service on the 59 was also extended from South Croydon to Kenley, thus supplementing the 59A. The 59 extension disappeared on 2nd December but from 3rd December 1919 the Sunday operation on the 59 was resumed, the work being shared between 18 TTAIs from TC and eight B-types from AK. In the meantime, a new Sunday 118 was introduced on 5th October from Elephant & Castle *Tarn Street* to Godstone *Bell*, following the 43 from Newington Butts to Godstone Road and continuing along Eastbourne Road. The 118 lasted only until 30th November, and the 43 itself was withdrawn from the Croydon district on 28th December, although its summer re-extension was a feature of the area until 1933 albeit under the number 144 from 1929. These extensions had terminated at Caterham *Old Surrey Hounds* from 14th April 1922.

From 10th December 1919 the 59 group was affected by the first of many traffic schemes in central London, being diverted intermediately away from Haymarket and running instead via Regent Street, Waterloo Place and Pall Mall to rejoin normal route at Cockspur Street.

Left AK-based B2534 is seen during 1916 on route 59B at the Red Cross terminus at Reigate. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

Right This rear shot of B2531 in MET livery was taken outside its home garage (Streatham) in 1917. *F. Merton Atkins*





Number 202 of Thomas Tilling Ltd stands here at Caterham Village on the 59A. This TTA1 is working out of the newly-opened Croydon Garage. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

Tilling's 881, a new TS3 class vehicle, pauses outside Kenley Secondary School to pick up passengers on the 59A. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*





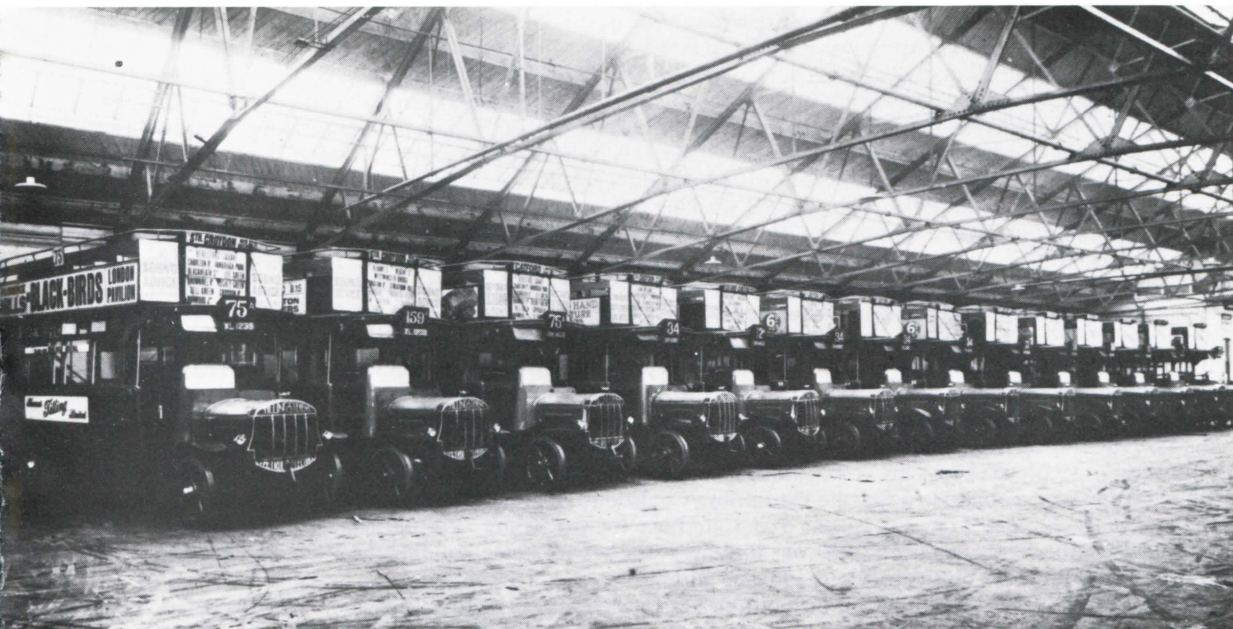
Tilling's 396 was a modified TTA1 (sometimes called a TTA2) with a rebuilt front which was to become standard on the TS3A. It had spent some time working for Tilling in Brighton.
Pamlin Prints

Below B2594 from AK passes through West Croydon (London Road) en route to Caterham in 1920. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

By the time the first part of the Summer Programme was introduced on Good Friday 2nd April 1920, Tillings were able to increase their fleet to the pre-war maximum which allowed for the Sunday extension of the 59A from Caterham to Godstone every 15 minutes, thus replacing the shortlived 118 of the previous autumn. Once again, the Sunday 59 was withdrawn for the summer, and Tillings took over the operation of the 59B to Reigate. In those far off days Sunday pleasure traffic was very buoyant, and it became clear that the 59A and 59B could not cope with the throngs. Thus, after four years, both the 152 and 160 were resurrected from 23rd May. The 152 provided a 15 minute Sunday frequency between Stockwell and Caterham via Purley and Whyteleafe using 13 Tilling buses from TC. Also every 15 minutes, the 160 worked between Stockwell and Reigate using 16 B-types from AK and supplemented the 59B. Both routes were again withdrawn after their last journeys on Sunday 3rd October.

The operation of the 59A on Sundays helped to create a demand for a weekday service, and from 11th August 1920 certain journeys were extended from Caterham to Godstone to meet this demand. These journeys were to run for the last time on Tuesday 3rd May 1921, and from the following day a new route was introduced in replacement. Numbered 58, it provided an hourly service between Clapham Common Underground Station and Godstone via Balham High Road, Tooting Bec Road, Streatham High Road, Norbury, Thornton Heath Pond, North End, Croydon High Street, Purley, Kenley, Whyteleafe, Caterham, Godstone Road, Godstone Hill and High Street, to terminate at 'The Bell'. Worked by four B-types from AK, the route lasted just five months.





This line-up of Tilling-Stevens Petrol-electric TS3As in Croydon Garage shows buses on routes 75, 159, 34 and 12. *Pamlin Prints*

Right Tilling's 891, a TS3A, passes along St. James's Road, Croydon on a diversion during tramway construction. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*

Below Sunday route 43 is here worked by a B-type, stopping outside The Swan & Sugar Loaf Hotel bound for Caterham. *Brian Bunker collection*



The first bus in the Tillings new post-war fleet made its appearance on the road on Saturday 9th July 1921. It was a 48-seat open-top double-decker on a Tillings-Stevens TS3A chassis. Bearing the fleet number 805 and registered XB9960, it entered service on the 59B between Camden Town and Reigate, the route on which the first 15 of this new type operated. More appeared soon after, working the 59A to Caterham, but the parent 59 had to be content with the older TTA1 type for some time yet.

On 19th October 1921 there was a complete reorganisation of the 59 group. The 59, which had operated only on Mondays to Fridays since 30th April, was introduced on Saturdays from Camden Town and diverted at Thornton Heath Pond to run via Brigstock Road to Thornton Heath *Prince of Wales*. Twelve buses were required from TC. Route 58 was replaced by the resumption of the daily operation of the 59A between Camden Town and Godstone via Purley, Kenley, Whyteleafe and Caterham using 19 buses from TC. The weekday service on the 59B was withdrawn between Coulsdon and Reigate for the winter season, although the route through Hooley, Merstham and Wray Common was not left uncovered as the East Surrey Traction Company introduced route S5B (West Croydon to Reigate) on weekdays, with the 59B working the Sunday service.

The next round of changes took place on 31st May 1922 when the East Surrey S5B was withdrawn and LGOC introduced the 59B daily for the summer months. The weekday service on the 59A was curtailed at Caterham, as East Surrey had announced their intention to start a service from West Croydon to East Grinstead with alternate buses continuing to either Hartfield or Chelwood Gate. This service ran hourly via Purley, Stoats Nest Road, Old Coulsdon and Upper Caterham to Caterham Station. But despite the fact that it followed a different route to that used by the 59A, it was considered prudent by LGOC to curtail the 59A in order not to compete with East Surrey who had become an associate of General. However, the first East Surrey bus on this route, numbered S9, did not reach Croydon until 9am, and in order to provide an earlier journey from Godstone to Croydon, one early journey on the 59A still started from Godstone using the normal routeing through Whyteleafe. The winter programme saw the 59B withdrawn on weekdays between Coulsdon and Reigate from 11th October with East Surrey's S5B being reinstated from West Croydon to Reigate via Purley, Coulsdon, Hooley, Merstham and Wray Common. From 15th October the Sunday 59A was curtailed at Caterham for the winter. Further changes took place on 6th December when the frequency of the 59B was increased, the service being renumbered 59 at the same time, the Thornton Heath journeys on the previous 59 being withdrawn.

Easter was early in 1923 and on Good Friday 30th March the summer Sunday and Bank Holiday operation on the 59A was once again extended from Caterham to Godstone. The 59 was reinstated between Coulsdon and Reigate on Sundays, but from 16th May 1923 a daily operation started to Reigate with East Surrey's S5B being withdrawn the previous day. The winter programme on 21st October saw the 59A withdrawn between Caterham and Godstone once again, but the 59 continued to run to Reigate all the year round. The allocation of the 59A was now shared between Tilling (17 buses from TC) and LGOC (nine buses from AK) until Good Friday 18th April 1924 when the 59A was once more extended to Godstone, and TC took over sole responsibility with 27 buses.

The route number 59B appeared once again on 11th June 1924 when a new daily service was introduced between Camden Town and Coulsdon *Red Lion* following the 59 to Norbury Station, and then diverting via Melfort Road, Thornton Heath High Street and Whitehorse Road to rejoin the 59 at West Croydon. It was worked by 32 LGOC K-type buses (23 from Q and nine from CF) and replaced a short-lived route 86 which was one of the earliest routes to serve Melfort Road. In the spring of 1923 Croydon Corporation relaid the tram tracks to Norbury, and southbound traffic had been diverted via Melfort Road. So many extra passengers had been generated that, on 23rd May 1923, a new route 86 had been introduced between Liverpool Street and South Croydon *Swan & Sugar Loaf* via Melfort Road, being further extended in South Croydon to 'The Earl of Eldon' on 12th March 1924. The replacement 59B was withdrawn between South Croydon *Swan & Sugar Loaf* and Coulsdon from 3rd November 1924 when the allocation changed to 15 K-types from Old Kent Road (P) with CF increasing to twelve buses.

The London Traffic Act (1924) came into operation on 1st December 1924 and the Metropolitan Police then controlled the numbering system on London's bus routes. The Bassom Scheme, named after the Chief Constable who devised it, called for all short workings to be distinguished by using a suffix letter with the main service number. The Chief Constable lacked the imagination to see what complications such a system would lead to in a rapidly evolving route network, and after ten years the scheme was abandoned. It might be apposite to mention here for the benefit of younger enthusiasts that the Metropolitan Police had such far-reaching powers at the time that, as buses also had to be licensed by them, Londoners had to suffer open-top double-deckers, and drivers had to put up with unglazed windscreens, long after their provincial cousins had come to regard these as things of the past. This obstructive attitude by the police was allegedly for reasons of safety, but it certainly made for conservatism of bus design within the capital. Returning to the Bassom system, the 59 group were renumbered as follows:

Old Number	New Number	Terminals
59	59	Camden Town Station – Reigate (via London Road)
59	59A	Camden Town Station – Coulsdon (via London Road)
59A	159	Camden Town Station – Godstone (via London Road)
59A	159A	Camden Town Station – Caterham (via London Road)
59B	58	Camden Town Station – Coulsdon (via Melfort Road)
59B	58A	Camden Town Station – South Croydon (via Melfort Road)



896 waits outside 'The Old Surrey Hounds' in Old Caterham on route 159A during 1926. Pamlin Prints

There were also many independent operators who had entered service on these routes during the period starting from 1923. Few, if any, ran the full length of the route, and so their variations had to be registered as well. The following were the most common:

58C	Oxford Circus – South Croydon <i>Swan & Sugar Loaf</i>
58D	Oxford Circus – Coulsdon <i>Red Lion</i>
58E	Oxford Circus – Streatham Common <i>The Greyhound</i>
59B	Camden Town – South Croydon <i>Swan & Sugar Loaf</i>
59C	Oxford Circus – South Croydon <i>Swan & Sugar Loaf</i>
59D	Charing Cross – Coulsdon
59E	Charing Cross – South Croydon <i>Swan & Sugar Loaf</i>
59F	Camden Town – Thornton Heath Pond
159B	Oxford Circus – Caterham
159C	Charing Cross – Caterham
159D	Oxford Circus – South Croydon <i>Earl of Eldon</i>

Over the years between 1923 and 1933 (the year in which the London Passenger Transport Board took over), quite a number of independent buses were to be seen on the 58, 59 and 159 routes, and these included:

British Lion	Fleet	K.B.B.	Pirate
Cambrian	Fleur-de-Lys	Mercury	P.L.
Cambrian Landray	Frost Smith	Newstead	Regal
Carlton	Havaride	Nulli Secundi	Regent
City	Holliday & Bangs	Pembroke	Shanghai
Clarence	Imperial	Peræque	South London Coaches
Drake	Independent	Phoenix	Venture
Empress	J.H.	P. H. R. H.	Westminster

These operators provided a great variety of fleet colours and vehicle types, although they were not all on the routes under study at the same time, and some only cashed in at weekends to cream off the lucrative Saturday

shopping or weekend outing trade, preferring to spend most of the week on the goldmine routes such as the 11, 14 or 73. Others only worked morning and evening peak hour journeys, and some only operated for a short period of time. Although there were both good and bad, many were unreliable – ‘cowboys’ would be the modern expression for them, but in those days the term ‘pirate’ was used especially for the undisciplined operation prior to the rigid licensing under the Act. At first, the LGOC tried to combat this competition by placing extra buses on the affected routes with instructions to chase off the intruders. A number of supplementary schedules were in force between 1922 and 1924 when competition was at its height. Additional 59 or 59A buses were provided by Chalk Farm (CF), Holloway (J), Merton (AL) and Camberwell (Q) garages in addition to extras from the more usual TC, AK, P and, to a lesser extent, N.

A variety of vehicle types were used by the independent companies, although most of those on the 59 group were Dennis 45 h.p. open-top buses seating 48 passengers. Others included Leyland, Straker-Squires and Thornycroft chassis, whilst Cambrian Landray had five Tilling-Stevens buses which had started life as coaches. This company tried out a variation of the 59 group numbered 532A running from Oxford Circus to Upper Warlingham *Leather Bottel*, competing with East Surrey route 403 on the way. The experiment failed and the route was withdrawn in January 1925, and eventually Cambrian Landray worked short journeys on the 59 between Oxford Circus and Coulsdon. The Bassom numbering system had already got itself in such confusion that the Public Carriage Office had used up suffixes A to F, and so these journeys were numbered 459. Both the Cambrian Coaching and Goods Transport buses, together with Cambrian Landray, were taken over by LGOC in 1926, whilst Regal, J. H., Pirate and Red Rose were absorbed by the London Public Omnibus Company in 1927. The ‘Public’ operations of the 58, 59 and 159 passed to the LGOC in 1928 who continued them for a short time using K-type buses from AL and AK, and only a few others survived to be taken over by London Transport. Readers interested in this colourful period of London bus history in detail should consult “London’s Buses: Volume One – The Independent Era 1922-1934” by Ken Blacker, Ron Lunn and Reg Westgate which gives a comprehensive and well illustrated account.

It will be recalled that the 59A (now renumbered 159) had worked an early morning journey on weekdays to Godstone to provide a facility before the first East Surrey bus on route S9 (now renumbered 409). This situation was altered from 20th January 1925 when East Surrey introduced an earlier journey on the 409, and the operation of the 159 was curtailed at Caterham and consequently renumbered 159A.

Tilling petrol-electric buses continued to work exclusively on routes 59 and 59A, but the 159 and 159A were shared between Tillings and LGOC, the latter now working S-type buses from P. At this time the 58 was worked entirely by the LGOC and had been extended from South Croydon to Coulsdon daily from 10th April 1925. During Saturday afternoons and evenings a few buses worked short journeys between Thornton Heath *Clock Tower* and South Croydon *Swan & Sugar Loaf* via Thornton Heath High Street, Whitehorse Road, West Croydon, North End and Croydon High Street bearing the number 58B.

Below An East Surrey PS-type advertises ‘Dow’s Port at 6 shillings’ (30p) as it waits at West Croydon for its departure to East Grinstead one September day in 1929.

Right A nearside view of a similar East Surrey vehicle, also at West Croydon, taken as it prepares for a journey to the southernmost outpost of Uckfield in Sussex.

W. Noel Jackson



Traffic management schemes began to affect the line of routes during 1926, especially through central London. On 4th January northbound routes were diverted at Bridge Street (Westminster) to circle Parliament Square clockwise rejoining the line of route in Parliament Street. On 26th April southbound buses were rerouted at Pall Mall to run via Pall Mall East and Trafalgar Square (north and east sides) to Whitehall. Lastly, on 26th July, southbound buses were again diverted, this time at Piccadilly Circus, via Haymarket to Pall Mall East. The allocation of buses working at 16th June 1926 was as follows:

Route	Terminals	Garage	Number of buses		
			Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
58	Camden Town – Coulsdon (via Melfort Road)	AK	12	21*	—
58B	Thornton Heath <i>Clock Tower</i> – South Croydon <i>Swan & Sugar Loaf</i>	P	20	17	—
		CF	—	—	15
		Q	—	—	16
59	Camden Town – Reigate (via London Road)	TC	20	35	34
59A	Camden Town – Coulsdon <i>Red Lion</i>	AH	—	1†	—
159	Camden Town – Godstone <i>The Bell</i>	TC	19	7	36‡
159A	Camden Town – Caterham <i>Old Surrey Arms</i>	P	16	27	—

* – includes route 58B

† – working ex 'Clarence'

‡ – route 159 operated only on Sundays and Bank Holidays during the summer using a joint allocation with the 159A.

On 25th May 1927 route 58 was extended from Coulsdon to Chipstead Valley Road *Howe Green Lane* in order to serve the new rapidly growing housing estates. With the introduction of the summer programme a year later on 23rd May 1928 came changes to the allocation of the 58. The whole of the Monday to Friday service was allocated to P using 34 buses, supplemented by two K-types from AL covering the London Public Omnibus Company workings taken over by the LGOC. On Saturdays 41 buses worked the route comprising 23 from P, 16 from AK and two from AL, while on Sundays 20 buses were supplied by AK along with twelve from Q. The 59 and 59A were still mainly worked from the Tilling fleet with 17 buses from TC on Mondays to Fridays, 32 on Saturdays and 34 on Sundays. The LGOC supplied extra buses from AL (five), AK (one bus on Mondays to Saturdays) and CF (two buses on Saturdays only). These vehicles represented the workings taken over from the 'Public'. On the 159 and 159A on Summer Sundays when the 159 ran through to Godstone, 35 Tilling buses were supplied by TC. P had withdrawn from the route on Mondays to Fridays when the TC allocation was now 25. The LGOC were represented by ten buses from AK along with three from AL, the latter replacing the 'Public' operation. On Saturdays, the service required 34 vehicles, seven from TC and 27 from P.



LGOC's K851
on route 159D
passes Croydon
Tramways' 1142
near Thornton
Heath Pond.
*Malcolm E. Papes
collection*



Phoenix's Thorneycroft with Dodson body represents an independent working on the 59. Malcolm E. Papes collection

Sunday 14th October 1928 was a notable day for the 159 as it ran through to Godstone for the last time, but the daily 159A continued to Caterham for a few months longer. These changes resulted from the 'Restricted Streets Order' for the Croydon area which was due to come into force later in the winter, on 20th February 1929 to be precise, but for some reason it was delayed until Wednesday 27th March. The order was designed to reduce the number of buses working over the main route of the Croydon Corporation Tramways. Route 34 (Liverpool Street to South Croydon) was withdrawn from London Road between Norbury and Thornton Heath, and diverted instead via Melfort Road and Whitehorse Road in place of the 58 which, in turn, joined the 59 and 59A on London Road and thus replaced the 34 and 159. In the original plan, it was intended to retain the number 34 for the Melfort Road service; but in the event it was renumbered 133, running only on Mondays to Saturdays. On Sundays route, 143 (Hendon Central to South Croydon) was also diverted along Melfort Road.

Left Holliday & Bangs Ltd worked this 4-ton Dennis on what was really route 59F, seen at Thornton Heath Pond on 26th November 1927. This bus eventually became LPTB D187. **Right** Another Holliday & Bangs vehicle, a 56-seater Dennis HS type, was destined to become LPTB DH6. J.F. Higham



The following table shows the allocation at 6th February 1929:

Route	Terminals	Garage	Type	Number of buses		
				Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
58	Camden Town – Chipstead Valley Road	P	K	34	23	—
		AK	NSc	—	10	16
		CF	NSc	—	—	8
58B	Thornton Heath <i>Clock Tower</i> – South Croydon	AK	NSc	—	6	—
59	Camden Town – Reigate	TC	PE	17	10	10
59A	Camden Town – Coulsdon	TC	PE	†	22	14
159A	Camden Town – Caterham	AK	NSc	10	—	—
		TC	PE	25	7	25
		P	S	—	27	—

† – buses ex route 59

It will be noticed that closed-top buses had just started to appear on weekdays on the 159A from AK.

On 27th March 1929 a revision to the 159A took place. The 159A was withdrawn between Streatham *Strathbrook Road* and Caterham, and diverted via Green Lane and Parchmore Road to Thornton Heath *Clock Tower* on Mondays to Fridays and Saturday mornings. This service was numbered 159A. The Saturday afternoon and Sunday service was further extended from Thornton Heath via Whitehorse Road, North End and Brighton Road to South Croydon *Swan & Sugar Loaf*. The Saturday afternoon service started from Camden Town and was

Robert Hawkins used a covered-top Leyland TD1 which later became TD86 after the LPTB takeover. This view was taken on the North side of Trafalgar Square. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*





Left PHRH (Harris) used this single-deck Dennis which has just arrived at Camden Town on route 59A. Right NS217 from B, still with open-top, is seen waiting at Camden Town. Battersea Garage only occasionally provided buses for the route as in August 1926. W. Noel Jackson

numbered 159 while the Sunday service started at Oxford Circus and became 159C. On Mondays to Fridays the allocation of the 159A was 11 buses from AK; on Saturdays the combined 159 and 159A required 13 buses from P with five from AK; and on Sundays 11 buses worked on the 159C. To cover the withdrawal of the 159A from Caterham and Godstone route 75 (Woolwich to South Croydon) was extended to Caterham Valley on weekdays as 75D, and to Godstone on Summer Sundays. During the winter the 75D ran daily. Tilling now worked exclusively on the 59, providing 40 buses on the 59 and 59A, along with a further 15 buses working peak hour short journeys between Camden Town and South Croydon. The LGOC now used K and S types on the 58, 159 and 159A, although the Sunday service on the 58 was exclusively Tilling. From 15th May the Saturday service between Streatham and South Croydon was augmented as 159B using the five NSs from AK previously found on the 159A.



As the LGOC owned most of the TS7s, they were classified as O-types although operated by Tilling. Croydon's O72 looks sadly old-fashioned. D. W. K. Jones



963 of the TS3 family in South Croydon during September 1929 represents the 75 working to Godstone. *W. Noel Jackson*



S262 from P is seen in South Croydon one September Sunday in 1929 and prepares for the lengthy run on route 144 through to Boreham Wood. *W. Noel Jackson*



NS1265 (P) passes Hamptons in Trafalgar Square on a 159A journey to Thornton Heath. *Malcolm E. Papes collection*



NS230 in London General Country Services livery is seen on the 459 at Reigate. *E. G. P. Masterman*

Below One of the old Petrol-electrics, 930, passes a new AEC Regent (later to be classed with the LPTB's STs) at Purley tram terminus. *Malcolm E. Papas collection*

The 59 group of routes were comparatively late in getting covered-top buses, particularly on Mondays to Fridays. The first had been the 58 at weekends, and the 159A from AK on weekdays. On 5th January 1930 the Tilling Sunday operation on the 58 had been reduced from 15 PEs from TC to nine, with the remaining six being supplied by Catford (TL). On 28th May TC withdrew entirely, the whole allocation then coming from TL, and then on 8th October AK, which had been using 15 NSs, withdrew from the route with TC returning with 20 PEs, TL reducing to ten. Thus, from 5th November TL was able to supply new covered-top AEC Regents – the ST class, made spare from other routes, and it was not until 6th December that the first of these new vehicles with open staircases worked the 59 from TC. Thereafter, the Petrol-electrics were gradually replaced, although for a while there were not sufficient Regents to enable a full allocation for the 59/A and so a few, more modern, TS7 PEs came to TC to replace the elderly TS3As. The TS7s lingered on right up until the formation of London Transport, eventually being fitted with pneumatic tyres.





Left P's NS now has a roof as it waits at the bleak Howe Green Lane terminus in Chipstead Valley Road on route 58. *E.G.P. Masterman*
 Right STL115 from TC on route 58 is caught in heavy traffic in Tilling's last days. *Brian Bunker collection*

In the meantime the 59 continued to run to Reigate all the year round although the service was reduced to hourly during the winter. However, on 7th October 1930 the Monday to Friday visits to Reigate ceased and, on the following day, a new East Surrey route 459 started (no connection with Cambrian Landray's use of the number) between West Croydon Station and Reigate via Purley, Coulsdon, Hooley, Merstham, Gatton Point and Wray Common. The service ran on Mondays to Fridays with the 59 continuing the Saturday and Sunday service until 28th March 1931 when the Saturday service also fell to the 459. The 459 now ran daily supplemented by the 59 workings to Reigate on Sundays and Bank Holidays during the summer. The 59A now ran daily between Camden Town and Coulsdon. The summer Sunday operation of the 59 to Reigate continued through 1932 and 1933, and ran for the last time on Sunday 2nd October 1933. The London Bus interests of Thomas Tilling Limited were acquired by the London Passenger Transport Board on 1st October, and so the central buses of the Board actually ran to Reigate for just one day before withdrawal.

Returning to 25th March 1932 an alteration at Camden Town caused the terminus to become Camden Gardens, buses reaching there by way of Kentish Town Road and departing via Camden Street and Camden Road to Parkway.

Left Croydon's STL111 on the stand at South Croydon one Sunday leads an LT from MH on the 144A. Right STL105 (TC) shows the rear view of a Tilling STL, passing through Croydon on route 59A. *E.G.P. Masterman*





STL104 (TC) waits at the Camden Gardens terminus for a journey to Coulsdon on the 59A, and shows the nearside number box which was to be removed by the LPTB and replaced by a stencil. *D.W.K. Jones*

In 1932 the NS type buses worked by the LGOC on the 58 and 159 had been replaced by STs from P, although AK retained NSs until 30th November when AK finally left operation of this group of routes altogether. P and TC continued with just the odd PE from the latter garage and the Sunday TL allocation on the 159C, introduced on 7th October 1931. This TL allocation, as in the case of the 58 previously, was interesting in that the long garage workings followed the 36 via Catford to join line of route at Kennington Church. The Tilling STL type bus came into service during 1932, the early examples going on the route 36, but on 14th February 1934 TL found itself with spare which were used on the 159C. This was to be shortlived, however, as on 28th March the TL allocation was withdrawn and replaced by AK once again. During the autumn of 1932 AK had been selected as one of the garages to operate the six-wheel LT class which directly replaced the NSs. They arrived second-hand on 5th October 1932 (mainly from AL and U) and on 2nd November from AL, T, AH, AM and AP, and included early open-staircase examples along with prototype Bluebird LT741. On 6th April 1934 a few more arrived including five from Athol Street (C), a garage not usually associated with the class. AK worked other routes, of course, but the LTs first appeared on the 59 family from 23rd August 1933 when they started on Saturdays only on the 159B. From 4th October they also appeared on the 58 on Sundays. On 11th April 1934 the 58E became established as the main service between Oxford Circus and Streatham Common on Mondays to Fridays, and nine LTs were introduced from AK. On Sundays at this time, route 58 acquired 13 LTs from AL while the displaced AK LTs moved on to the 159C. Returning to December 1932, STL62 appeared at TC working as TC1 on the 59A; unlike the LGOC, Tilling tended to allocate a specific vehicle to each duty for a long period. STL83/84 were allocated to TC during the following January and the slow arrival continued with STLs 87, 94 and 97 in February; 95, 96, 98-104, and 107-110 in March; 105, 106 and 111-113 in April; 116-118 in May; and 120 and 122-130 in June. When the 59A was complete, the 58 followed, and a few petrol-electric open-toppers only remained on the 59B until they were finally withdrawn on 1st November 1933. Over the following months the actual routes using STLs varied, but it was always necessary to use a sizeable number of Tilling STs as well.

When London Transport took over from the LGOC on 1st July 1933 there was not, at first, a great deal of difference in the operation of the 58, 59A, 159 and 159A, and even the 'GENERAL' fleetname continued for a while. When the Tilling fleet was acquired by the Board on 1st October, the Tilling STs were allocated fleet numbers and they and the STLs were gradually repainted into 'General' livery until later, when the 'London Transport' fleetname became standard.

Nothing further in the way of route changes took place until 3rd October 1934 when the opportunity was taken to abandon the clumsy Bassom system of route numbering. This caused routes 58, 59A and 59B to become plain 59, and routes 159A/B/C became plain 159. The following table summarises the position at that date:

Route Number			Garage	Type	Number of buses		
New	Old	Terminals			Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
59	58	Camden Town – Chipstead Valley Road (daily)	TC	STL	37	37	29
	58E	Oxford Circus – Streatham Common (Mon-Fri)		ST	10	5	—
	59A	Camden Town – Coulsdon (daily)	AK	LT	9	10	10
	59B	Camden Town – South Croydon (Mon-Fri)					
159	159A	Camden Town – Thornton Heath (Mon-Sat)	P	ST	11	8	—
	159	Camden Town – South Croydon (Saturdays)	TC	ST	10	10	15
	159B	Streatham – South Croydon (Saturdays)	AK	LT	—	7	—
	159C	Oxford Circus – South Croydon (Sundays)					

bus 59 via London Road, bus 159 via Green Lane

The subsequent operation from 1934 to the present day will form the second part of this article later this year.

As always, when dealing with the early days, it is necessary to issue a word of caution regarding dates, and even the precise name of some terminal points. The experts often disagree, and sometimes it has been necessary to remain deliberately vague when conflicting views each have their attractions. Generally, the details published in 'Southbound from Croydon' by J. T. King and A. G. Newman (Omnibus Society Publication 1965), and 'East Surrey' by 'Bell Street' (H. J. Publications 1974) have been accepted, including any amendments which have subsequently appeared in the London Historical Research Group Bulletins. Grateful acknowledgement is also made to 'Historical Notes and Itinerary in Connection with the London Study Tour of Route 59: Tuesday 13th June 1967' published by the Omnibus Society with acknowledgement to J. T. King and R. G. Westgate.

STL553 was one of a small number of vehicles taken over from Chas. Pickup. It was allocated to Croydon for route 254 (present day 64) which passed under a low bridge, but is seen here at Camden Gardens under LPTB ownership while working one of the last open-top duties on the 59. J. Higham



APPENDIX—TILLING BUSES

TTA1

This was the first major class. The engine drove a dynamo which fed an electric motor on the propeller shaft. The radiator was mounted behind the 30 h.p. engine which was covered by a distinctive sloping bonnet. The elimination of clutch and gear-box enabled many horse bus drivers to adapt quickly and there was a much smoother ride. First introduced in June 1911, Tilling 34-seat bodies were carried, and 174 were operated, initially in London, but later in Brighton too.

TS3A

The next class of petrol-electric built to replace the TTA1 with more power and greater seating capacity. The prototype, 805, entered service on 9th July 1921 followed by a second prototype in July and a third in August. 163 production models followed and all were in service by December 1922. Tilling 48-seat bodies were fitted.

TS7

These were also petrol-electrics, but were of a forward control. They were purchased by the LGOC and numbered as the 'O' class, but operated by Tilling. 54 were later sold to Tilling in a fleet balancing exercise in July 1929, and ten more followed in April 1930. Tilling 48-seat bodies were built; 121 at Lewisham and 47 at Lee totalling the full delivery of 166. Pneumatic tyres were later fitted to the remaining members of the class. Originally they were allocated to TL from 25th July 1923, and later to TB, from its opening in 1924, but they did not operate from TC until 1931. In 1932/3 45 were fitted with pneumatic tyres, 15 at TC and 30 at TL.

There were also ten singledeck TS7s fitted with Tilling 30-seat bodies to operate route 109 (Penge to Chislehurst). They replaced single-deck B-types and, although originally in LGOC livery, were painted to Tilling colours. All were converted to pneumatic tyres by early 1930.

Tilling Regents: STs

To replace the petrol-electrics Tilling ordered AEC Regents. The first twelve went to Brighton and then all but one of the next 124 came to London, the one later joining its fellows in the capital. They were fitted with 52-seat closed-top, open-back bodies built by Tilling at both Lewisham and Peckham, and also by Dodson of Willesden. Originally 26 passengers were carried on each deck, but later examples were 27/25, and earlier examples were modified. The first batch was delivered between June 1930 and January 1931. They were immediately followed by a batch of 62, all for London, arriving between January and March 1933. The remaining vehicles of this type were for use in Brighton, delivered in two batches in 1931; the first from March until June, the second from September until December. One of the first batch and four of the second were transferred to London during 1933 and may have brought Hove built Tilling bodies to London.

The first Regents had route boards only, but later ones along with early ones converted had front and rear boards for intermediate points, and a combined roller blind for route number and destination. The entire 191 became ST 837-1027 upon a acquisition by LPTB on 1st October 1933.

Tilling Regents: STLs

In 1932 Tilling ordered 102 long wheel-base Regents for use in London to replace the remaining TS7s. It appears that they were allocated fleet numbers STL51-52 by LGOC in anticipation of takeover, although STL 51 initially appeared with ST 837 on its dumb irons. The bodies were built by Tilling seating 56 (30/26) with closed backs, full roller blinds, and three-piece windows to the front upper deck. They were built at Lewisham, Lee and Hove, and entered service between October 1932 and June 1933. The last 22 were never built.

Tilling Regals

To replace the single-deck TS7s twelve AEC Regals were purchased by Tilling and delivered between August and October 1932. They had 28-seat, front entrance Tilling bodies. Upon acquisition by LPTB they were numbered T307-18, duplicating already issued numbers for Regal Green Line coaches.

(Appendix supplied by Brian Bunker with grateful acknowledgement)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Kingston Story

Sir,
First of all may I congratulate you and all your contributors for providing a first class magazine. It is good to see historical facts about bus services in London being put into a form that enables all details to be preserved for posterity. It is amazing though that even events as recently as 1963 can be queried, and here I refer to the date of introduction of RMCs into service on routes 716 and 716A. May I add the following information, the official variation in rolling stock returns give Stevenage receiving eight RMCs and Addlestone nine RMCs for service on 2nd January 1963. On the same date both garages lost RF coaches (SV 9 and WY 7, WY also losing two RFs the previous day) which would seem to indicate that the 716 and 716A were both converted at the same time.

I trust this will help to clarify the problem.

Yours faithfully,
Bob Palmer
Barkingside, Essex.

Summer Days Out in Days Gone By



K644 from Camberwell is seen in METROPOLITAN livery at Waltham Cross market on the 369B in 1929. The 69 family ran out into the countryside well beyond Turnford (the limit of the 192 which is due for withdrawal in April) to Wormley and Rye House. *W. Noel Jackson*



Leyton's LT858 leaves a crowded Victoria for Epping Forest in 1949, and makes the two-hourly summer Sunday extension of the 206 seem very insignificant by comparison. *Alan B. Cross*



Typical of the extension to Windsor in the early post-war period is Hounslow's RT3107 on the 81. The queue for the service can hardly be matched today by customers for the 116's quite popular extension to Thorpe Park. *Alan B. Cross*

Sevenoaks in the 'Seventies

Sevenoaks was once a very interesting place for the London bus enthusiast. This is not to say that the current day operations are any less so, it just depends where your own personal interests lie! Most people would agree however, that the Sevenoaks of 1985 is vastly different to that of ten years before. As is inevitable in this day and age, especially in rural areas, the County Councils are responsible for the provision of an 'adequate' public transport network. Suffice to say, Sevenoaks is a shadow of its former self.

From a purely enthusiast point of view the rot set in very early in London Country days when the last RTs left the area. Later, the untidy but practical reduced aperture RF blinds came into use. Routes like the 402 and 421 have disappeared, while others such as the 454 and 483 have been extensively reduced. And what about the once many works journeys on the 431B/C/D and 454A that linked the area to the highly secretive Fort Halstead? Just the occasional trips remain on the 431. The Green Line services now take the place of buses over many sections of route, themselves cut savagely in the march of progress.

The following selection of photographs by Steve Fennell shows some of the bus operations of Dunton Green garage as they used to be in those early days of London Country, when the route pattern resembled that of its predecessors—London Transport—and not that of the local county council.



Early omo conversions featured the RF and these vehicles were a familiar sight in Sevenoaks for many years. The 402 was converted during the late 'sixties and was once a trunk route running from Bromley to Tonbridge. In latter days it ran no further south than Sevenoaks, and here at the War Memorial we see RF548 bound for Bromley. Today the 402 is but a memory. What traffic remains has to be content with the Green Line coach.



In early London Country days, Dunton Green worked SMs on the majority of journeys on routes 413, 421, 454 and 483, other routes being regarded as 'strange visitors'. SM535 is shown working a school journey to Sevenoaks Weald on the 413.



The special service to the Ministry of Defence property at Fort Halstead usually took the 454 number during the 'seventies, and RF278 is seen heading there in the then new all over National Green livery.



The 431 succumbed to RFs during the mid-sixties which replaced RTs. The 493 in its crew days had been numbered 854, and remains the only London Country service to work wholly *inside* the GLC area. Here at Orpington we see RF548 and RF302 on the 431 and 493 respectively, although at the time this photo was taken the 493 was scheduled for Leyland National operation. It will be noted that the 493 is one of the routes which LRT have put up for tender, and perhaps we shall see a change of operator on this service over the coming months.



On Sundays, when Dunton Green garage had no scheduled bus work, the 493 service was worked by Swanley garage with journeys being provided by buses on the 477. As a result, these Sunday trips were crew-operated and here we see RMC1478 returning to Orpington after working round the large Ramsden Estate. Swanley garage provided much of the evening service under a similar arrangement.

Dunton Green was one of the first London Country garages to receive the new BL class. These vehicles were very rough riding and did nothing to endear themselves to the travelling public. They were also fitted with manual transmission which did nothing to endear themselves to the drivers either! Here we see BL1 on the 404 at Ide Hill on the first day of operation.



Due to the unreliability of the more modern types of vehicles, RPs often found themselves on bus work. Sometimes it was the fact that the RP itself was not quite in the finest condition and would have found the long Green Line journey rather taxing. Shown here is RP70 ready to work an evening peak journey through to Tonbridge.



During 1975 London Country hired from Western National a batch of Bristol MW coaches as one of a number of attempts to help ease the critical vehicle shortage of that time. These coaches were allocated en bloc to Dunton Green garage for use on most services in the Sevenoaks area as crew operated vehicles; most DG drivers were trained on manual gearboxes and spare conductors being available were the deciding factors. Two types of coach were employed and illustrated here is WN1402 on the 413 at Chipstead and WN1437 on the 454A at Sevenoaks War Memorial.



Colourful Grimsby!



Grimsby Cleethorpes Transport acquired ten DMSs in 1981-82. Seven of them were painted into their new livery of caramel and cream, the first vehicles so treated, which took over from the old colours of dark blue and white. No. 14 (ex-DMS934) was caught in Victoria Street on the 45 to Immingham Docks in October 1982. The remaining three DMSs each received different liveries to commemorate 100 years of public service transport. We see No. 17 (ex-DMS768) carrying the centenary livery of Great Grimsby Street Tramways (fluorescent green and white), No. 18 (ex-DMS778) in Cleethorpes Corporation Centenary livery (blue and silver grey), and No. 19 (ex-DMS782) in the more conventional maroon and cream centenary livery of Grimsby Corporation. *Steve Fennell (17/18)/Mike Harris (14/19)*



The Welsh Connection



The first DMSs to appear in Wales were purchased by CK Motors of Cardiff who provided cheap services at busy times to compete with City of Cardiff. This uncontrolled competition eventually resulted in CK Motors going out of business. Their livery was orange and white and ex-DMS1552 is seen here in Dumfries Place, Cardiff in December 1981. *Paul Carpenter*



Wrights of Wrexham have purchased DMS614 and repainted it into a livery of light blue, dark blue and white. On weekdays it works their service to Penycae as shown here in Wrexham Bus Station, but on Saturdays it can often be found on a free bus service to the Asda Superstore. *Mike Harris*



One of the vehicles leased by London Country from Kirkby's for their Green Line coach fleet, RB75, has eventually found its way into the fleet of Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council as number 240. It is seen in the bus station on their service to Cardiff. The livery is white with a maroon band. *J.L. Jones*



Rhymer Valley District Council have acquired a number of ex-LT BL vehicles which now carry their brown and cream livery. BL64 was caught here at Bargoed *J.R. Scragg* while BL/6 at Caerphilly shows the nearside carrying the English translation of the fleetname. *Martin Weyell*



The red and cream livery of Davies Bros. of Carmarthen is well-suited to the BL, and BL48 is seen on the service between St. David's Hospital and the Railway Station. *Ramon Hefford*

Routemasters for Further Service



RM1649 retains its LT livery, along with garage code and fleet number, and is now owned by T.T. UK Ltd (Grundomat) of Windsor Road, Bedford. It is seen here at their premises in March 1984.
Ramon Hefford





Above RM1878 has been sold to Hyper Hyper of Kensington High Street who use it, rather erratically, on a courtesy service between Hyper Hyper, Covent Garden and Antiquarius in Chelsea. It carries an all-over grey livery with pink splashes of colour. It was caught here in Whitehall in typically empty condition. *Ramon Hefford*



RM1288 has been converted to offside boarding prior to shipment to China where it is expected to demonstrate how versatile the Routemaster can be. It was caught here on trade plates at Sudbury Hill on 1st September 1984. *Colin Stannard*

More Two-man Operation Goes



To commemorate the end of crew operation on route 33, Cardinal District arranged for Norbiton's 'showbus' RM254 to be moved to Fulwell garage to work the last journey. It was caught here at Hammersmith during the early hours of 2nd February. *Paul Naylor*



At Leyton garage, local enthusiasm resulted in their last Saturday working on the 69 carrying a special 'via' blind as shown on RM972 at North Woolwich. *Paul Carpenter*

The Saturday-only RM allocation on the 86 by West Ham garage also ceased after 26th January, and the last journey worked by Leyland RM879 is seen near Forest Gate Depot on the garage run to Plaistow. *Paul Carpenter*

The end of two-man operation on the 'N' night routes was marked by the first working of an RM on the N29, a route which had been crew Metrobus since its introduction three years earlier. RM294, complete with a full set of correct RM blinds, is seen a few days before at the end at Enfield Town early on Tuesday morning 29th January. *Paul Carpenter*



£1.70