

London Bus Magazine

Summer 1986

Number 57



London Omnibus Traction Society

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THE LONDON BUS REVIEW

1985



London Omnibus Traction Society

The London Bus Review 1985.

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Front cover: London Country took over Mole Valley route 1 from 29th March and renumbered it 264. MBM5, a Mercedes L 608D with Reeve-Burgess 20-seat bodywork, was drafted into Addlestone for this purpose and looks thoroughly at home in the well healed setting of Hersham on 9th April. *Ramon Hefford*

Back cover: A nostalgic look back at what could be expected on a Loughton area route in the sixties. Unfortunately the garage, the bus and the route with LT vehicles are now but a memory. Saunders bodied RT 1837 stands at Ilford Station while the crew have a quick cuppa. *Alan B. Cross*

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Around and About



Ex- West Midland PTE T1129 appears at Greenwich on the ordinary version of the 177, complete with four-track number box and WMPTE blind boxes, on 20th February. Also deprived of its express duties on the 177, TE112 is seen on route 272 on 1st May at Woolwich. R.J. Waterhouse/Colin Fradd

Increased Fares on LCBS Services . . .

Most London Country and Green Line Fares were increased with effect from 23rd March 1986 due to rising costs. Fares within Greater London and Kent, with a few exceptions, were however unchanged having already been adjusted in January. The size of the increase differed from county to county, reflecting the various different levels of county council support, but the basic minimum fare on most graduated fare bus routes was increased from 16p to 17p. Flat fare services now vary between 36p in Stevenage, 40p in Hemel Hempstead, 41p in Crawley and 42p in Harlow; Clippercard tickets allowing twelve rides for the price of ten are now available in all of these towns.

The standard daily Golden Rover ticket was increased from £3.50 to £3.75 (£1.75 to £1.88 for children) and a new Seven Day Rover ticket was introduced priced at £10.00 (£5.00 for children). Other innovations include a daily Family Rover ticket for two adults and up to two children at £7.50, and Period Return tickets being made available all day on all services outside Greater London at twice the single fare; previously Return Tickets had not been available on most services until after 0900 Monday-Friday.

Explorer tickets and National Express Student (and YTS) Coach Cards are no longer accepted, but persons under 24 can obtain a Young Persons' Faresaver card for £3.00 (valid for one year) enabling half fare travel between 0900 and 1800 Monday-Friday. However, this is subject to a minimum payment per journey of £1.00 Single or £1.50 Return. The minimum fare restriction does not apply after 1800 on Monday-Friday and at weekends and Public Holidays.



Left: From 21st June route 256 (Romford-County Park Estate) will be withdrawn and partly replaced by an altered 193. On the same date Eastern National double-deckers on the latter route will give way to 25-seat midibuses. Representing the dying breed is T14 seen in Romford on 23rd January. *Colin Fradd*. Right: On the same day the South Park Drive shuttle on route 148 between Ilford and Barking Garage will be withdrawn and replaced by extensions to altered routes 66A and 139. T202 photographed on 23rd January makes it doubly clear that it is the shuttle that is being worked. *Colin Fradd*

. . . and on Out-County LRT Services

In line with the London Country fares increase, certain fares on LRT bus services outside Greater London were also adjusted on 23rd March. The opportunity was also taken to introduce the following alterations from the same date:

- 1) The maximum off-peak fare was revised to 60p on most Out-County routes, together with the removal of the evening peak restriction on Monday-Friday except on route 128 where peak fares still apply between 1600 and 1900.
- 2) Travelcards, Capitalcards and Bus Passes covering a minimum of two Zones (except Zones 1 and 2) were made available for additional travel on most routes outside Greater London.
- 3) The Outer Zone boundaries at Hertford Road/Bullsmoor Lane (routes 217, 217B, 259, 279, 279A and N90) and Hampton Court/Vrow Walk (route 131) were extended to Waltham Cross (Queen Eleanor Statue) and Hampton Court Station respectively.

Left: This view of RM2210 taken at Marble Arch on 20th January did little to dispel the criticism that is sometimes heard about London's bus network being confusing to visitors. Greater flexibility has however been achieved at Bow for routes 8 and 25 where similar posters merely indicate common points served without mentioning one or other route. *Colin Fradd*. Right: SNB483 is seen in red and white National London livery at Brixton on 14th March on tendered route P4. It is a pity that the comprehensive blind display is not particularly legible. *Colin Fradd*





Left: RM850 is seen here on Lambeth Bridge on 15th April resplendent in its almost "original" red, cream and gold livery whilst operating "The Original London Transport Sightseeing Tour". *Ramon Hefford*. **Right:** RM90 is one of several RMs which have been decapitated for use on "The Original London Transport Sightseeing Tour", and is seen circumnavigating Trafalgar Square one fine spring evening. *Ramon Hefford*

Routemasters on London Sightseeing Tour

A total of 50 Routemasters (39 RMs and 11 RCLs) have been refurbished by LRT Bus Engineering Ltd. (BEL) at Aldenham for operation on what is now termed as "The Original London Transport Sightseeing Tour". All have been repainted in red livery with a cream band and gold lettering in the style current in the 1960s, and fitted with a public address system. 20 of the RMs have been converted to open-top.

The vehicles, which are based at Battersea, first appeared on the Circular Tour in March 1986 and they operate from the four traditional stands at Piccadilly Circus (Haymarket), Marble Arch, Victoria (Victoria Street) and Baker Street. The tour lasts for about 1½ hours and costs £5.00 (£3.00 for children).

Left: Route 7 was converted to opo on Sundays from 1st February. The blind is odd in that the 7 does not serve Russell Square. M1377 is seen passing under the West London Joint line near Wormwood Scrubs on 2nd March. *Colin Stannard*. **Right:** The yellow 'tourist' relief on the Titans operated on route 188 looks more striking than that applied to the Routemasters used elsewhere. T930 was photographed outside the Old Vic on 6th March. *Colin Fradd*





This view of RCL2248 at Baker Street Station taken on 13th April depicts the logo for the tour shown on the flag and shelter. The lettering resembles that used for the 'Shillibeer' publicity in 1979. Ramon Hefford

New Central London Coach Terminal recommended

Transport planning consultants Steer, Davies and Gleave, have produced a report recommending the development of a major new Central London 'hub' terminal from which coach services can radiate to all parts of Britain. This conclusion was reached following the consultants' engagement by LRT in September 1985 to examine current and future terminal requirements for express coach services in London.

Three possible sites have been shortlisted: Kings Cross (Freightliner Terminal), Paddington (Station Goods Yard) and White City (Uxbridge Road Depot). The possible site at Marylebone Station was considered to be ill-suited to the 'hub' terminal concept. LRT and its consultants are now examining in greater detail the three short-listed sites with a view to one of them being selected for development.

Meanwhile, the Department of Transport has published a consultation document ("Tourist Coaches in London") on parking and access for tourist coaches in London. Proposals include "more parking spaces convenient for coaches, a new type of parking meter using magnetic cards and longer term thinking by traffic planners".

The report asserts that long term solutions will only be found if all involved in the coach and tourist industries "play their part".

The Touristlink service linking the Zoo and Tower of London (weekends and public holidays only) resumed on 22nd March over a slightly different routing from last year and is now numbered T1 on which route M1234 was photographed on 13th April. The single journey from Lancaster Gate to the Thames Barrier is now numbered T3, the service having resumed on 4th May. Colin Stannard





On 22nd March Ls were introduced at Plumstead initially on route 178 and thereafter on other routes. L7 was photographed at Lewisham outside a shop where the sale of Bus Passes is advertised. A less welcome advertisement was that applied by the vandals who had speedily given their attention to L14 seen at Thamesmead. Its rear-facing wheelchair seats are clearly visible. *Ramon Hefford*



On 22nd March minibus operations were commenced by London Country in Borehamwood and marketed as 'Borehamwood Bustler'. Two routes are operated and are based at Scratchwood, an outstation of Garston. MBM3 is seen on 19th April in Aycliffe Road, Borehamwood. R.J. Waterhouse



Further closures announced by London Buses

London Buses Ltd. has announced that four more garages are to close during the financial year 1986-87 as a result of a further review of the garage capacity required to house its fleet. The garages affected are Bexleyheath, Elmers End, Hornchurch and Loughton. The Loughton closure has already been implemented (on 24th May) as a direct consequence of the LRT and Essex CC route tendering results reported elsewhere in this issue. Southall also will close on 8th August on the completion of the modernization work at Hanwell.

The TGWU reacted by recommending its members to vote for an all-out strike, commencing on 24th March, as a protest against the closure. A ballot subsequently took place on 7th March in which 3,907 members voted in favour of a strike and 2,728 against, but only 6,635 out of the 13,000 work force actually voted. Following the threat of a High Court Injunction being issued by the London Buses management, the strike was deferred for two weeks and was subsequently called off while talks between management and union officials were progressing.

The bus training school at Chiswick is also to close by the end of 1986. Its functions are to be devolved to the six bus districts although supervisory and management training is expected to continue centrally. The Chiswick training school first opened in January 1925 following its transfer from a converted stable in Milmans Street, Chelsea. At the time, it was reported that the transfer marked another step towards the LGOC policy of centralization.

Registration of Local Bus Services

In accordance with the 1985 Transport Act, the Traffic Commissioners have published details of those services (newly defined as "Local Bus Services") to be operated without subsidy with effect from 26th October 1986. Operators had been required to register these services with the Commissioners before 1st March 1986. Services wholly within Greater London are exempt from the Transport Act's provisions for the present.

The majority of registrations within the London Country operating area consist of existing routes but with altered timetables and some with revised routeings. There are, however, a significant number of routes that have not been registered. Their exclusion does not necessarily suggest that they will be withdrawn without replacement. It is for the appropriate local authority to determine whether to give financial support to a route that may otherwise be withdrawn. Some of these routes have already been put out to competitive tender, while other "missing" routes will continue as express operations (e.g. Flightline 757) or be replaced by variations of existing services. Cuts in evening and Sunday services are particularly noticeable and it remains to be seen whether local authorities would be prepared to support their continued operation.

New services registered are few and would appear to be mainly of a competitive nature; both London Buses and London Country have registered services that would directly compete with one another's existing (and registered) operations. The most noteworthy registration by an independent company is from a taxi firm for a network of services in Crawley.

Speedlink's reliability record

The Speedlink service between Gatwick and Heathrow was reviewed by Mike Harris in LBM56. Figures have now been released by London Country indicating Speedlink's reliability record during the first four months of operation. The information covers two periods: 7th October-7th December (supplied at the public hearing on the helicopter link) and 20th December-16th February. The latter period is claimed to be the worst time of year for Speedlink to be affected by weather conditions.

The breakdown is as follows:

	7th October-7th December	20th December-16th February
Total number of journeys.....	5,580	4,514
Total over 10 mins. late.....	95	69
Percentage over 10 mins. late.....	1.7%	1.53%
Delayed by accidents.....	41	9
Delayed by traffic congestion.....	31	0
Other causes (diversions, weather, etc.)	23	60

During the first period Speedlink completed 98.3% of all scheduled journeys within 65 minutes (the "overall journey time is 60 minutes approx" according to the latest brochure) while in the subsequent period, this figure improved to 98.5%.



The Dennis Domino on loan from Greater Manchester PTE is seen here being operated by Holloway on route C11 in March near Brent Cross having been introduced on 27th January. The interior of its NCME body, now uprated to 25 looks at first sight remarkably like that of a double-decker. The vehicle's fleet number DMB1 is not shown. Ramon Hefford.



Crew operated Ms are now appearing on route 37 in readiness for its conversion to opo on 21st June. M1229 was photographed in Wandsworth on 28th April. *Ramon Hefford*



Newly delivered BTL38, a Leyland Tiger with Berkhof bodywork, operates Flightline 767 and is seen at Victoria. *Ramon Hefford*



Representing another new London Country type, Leyland Tiger TDL50 was photographed at Hyde Park Corner on 20th March. Duple 53-seat bodywork is carried and includes reclining seats, public address and stereo systems. *Ramon Hefford*



The Next Nine

by Malcolm E. Papes

Since the second half of last year when six routes which had been put out for competitive tender came to be operated by undertakings other than London Buses, the process has gathered momentum. London Buses have only retained three routes of the twelve tendered in the second batch, operation of the remaining nine passing to the undertakings detailed on page 7 of LBM 56. A brief review of each of these routes now follows along the lines of *The First Six* in LBM 54.

Route 145 Dagenham (Kent Avenue)—Ilford Station. School journeys to Chingford Station, these being tendered between Goodmayes-Chingford as route 145A.

On 31st March 1923, a 25C was introduced between Cranbrook and Becontree (Heavy Waters) via Ilford and Bennetts Castle Lane. It operated on Saturdays only, and at that time Heavy Waters was a forlorn farm on the edge of the Dagenham Marshes. However, the Becontree and Dagenham area was scheduled for a massive redevelopment by LCC, and Fords were soon to build their gigantic vehicle plant. On 19th May the route was extended at both ends, to Becontree (Chitty's Lane) and to Barkingside. Seven Kings (AP) provided 4 buses. On 7th November a trunk route 25C was introduced between Victoria and East Ham whereupon the former 25C was renumbered 25D and revised to run between Cranbrook Park (Beehive) and Becontree (Chitty's Lane) during weekday peak hours and all day Saturdays using 7 buses from

NS1709 (BK) stands at the Five Elms terminus in Becontree one Saturday afternoon in August 1929 in readiness for a journey to High Beach. The latter word here refers to the shingle outcrop in the locality. The fitting of headlamps is noteworthy as the bus operated along country lanes during the hours of darkness. W. Noel Jackson



LT1205 (AP7) waits at the Royal Forest Hotel in Chingford next to a rare CYF registered STL on the 102. From the state of the bus, especially the two unglazed windows, it must be at the end of the War. The poster below the garage code calls for conductors—men or women. LTs with this style of body were called Bluebirds. W.J. Haynes



Forest Gate (G). By 22nd October 1924 the newly opened Barking Garage (BK) began its long association with the route providing 5 buses.

1st December 1924 saw the introduction of the Bassom system of route numbering (named after the Chief Constable who devised it) under which each working received a suffix letter if shorter than the registered route and variations received a different number. The 25D was thus renumbered 145 and despite the use of various suffixes the family of routes under review will be referred to by this number alone.

From 8th July 1925 a summer Sunday service was introduced running from Becontree (Chitty's Lane) beyond Cranbrook to Epping Forest (Warren Wood House). Although it was withdrawn on 18th October, it proved popular linking the new housing estates of the reclaimed marshland with the leafy glades of Epping Forest, and it was re-introduced each year until 1929. From 29th June 1929 and for the next two summers, the weekend service was further extended to High Beech. This latter extension had been registered since 1925, but despite its appearance on some maps had not run. In 1932 there were no weekend extensions.

On 24th February 1926 the main service became daily and its northern terminus was altered to Woodford Wells via the new Woodford Avenue and Southend Road. The southern terminus was changed from Chitty's Lane to Bennetts Castle Lane (Longbridge Road). On 24th August 1927 this was further extended to Nine Elms. Hereafter no alterations

Left: Scruffy LT316 (U) had only a few months to go when this photograph was taken on a Tuesday in 1949. Already Guys worked the Saturday duties and new buses were about to appear. The Kent Avenue terminus at Dagenham is surrounded by typical LCC architecture. The body is a standard LGOC type. Alan B. Cross. Right: Seen at Dagenham new RT400 (AP) reflects the next generation of buses. AP only worked the route on Sundays at this time, and for a short time was allocated some of the earliest RTs before they were rapidly replaced by RTLs. The earlier type of reduced front blind display is still carried but the vertical stencil holder on the nearside front pillar has already fallen out of use. C. Carter





Brand new RTW260 (BK) stands in front of RTL300 (AP) on route 148. The wider RTWs were initially allocated to certain outer suburban routes because the Metropolitan Police thought they would cause traffic congestion in the City and the West End. A series of RTW availability tests were to prove the Police wrong and the RTWs moved out of such garages as BK for busy central routes during 1951. D.W.K. Jones

occurred until 1932 when from 27th January the route was extended via Wood Lane, Heathway and Oxlow Lane to Dagenham (Frizlands Lane) and from 1932 there were no weekend extensions. From 5th October a northern daily extension took the route along Whitehall Road to a picturesque terminus at Chingford (Royal Forest Hotel). By 1931 some weekend duties were acquired by Leyton (T) which introduced the new ST and LT buses, but with the extension to the Royal Forest Hotel Upton Park (U) came to provide 9 LTs on Sundays, thus beginning a long association with the route (although BK continued to provide most of the weekday service).

3rd October 1934 witnessed the abolition of the Bassom system which had proved too unwieldy for a rapidly expanding network, and all journeys became 145. There then followed a period in which there were few changes. On 17th February 1937 the route was withdrawn between Wood Lane and Frizlands Lane and was diverted to Kent Avenue via Porters Avenue and Gale Street. The wartime alterations of 13th December 1939 saw weekday extensions to Ford's Main Plant and Monday-Friday journeys to Dagenham Dock. From 29th October 1941 these latter journeys worked via Chequers Lane rather than New Road. Throughout this time BK provided buses with intermittent contributions from AP, U and G. Wartime Guys sometimes appeared from BK and U and the route received new buses early in the fleet renewal programme with the introduction of RT/Ls from AP, RTLs from BK and RTs from U. For a while RTWs were allocated to the route at these garages before the police allowed them on the streets of Central London; but by 1951 the allocations had settled to RTs from U, RTLs from BK with Sunday RTL and RT contributions from AP and G respectively. One small but significant rerouting took place in 1946 when journeys through Woodford were diverted via Waterworks Corner rather than the narrow High Street which even then was becoming congested.

The route was subjected to various changes on 9th October 1963. It was withdrawn north of Ilford Station with just a few Monday-Friday school journeys to Chingford (Royal Forest Hotel). A new RT operated route 179 was introduced between Chingford and Barking (which was recently retained by London Buses). On Sundays 145 was replaced by 145A which worked from Dagenham (New Road) to Ilford and then via The Drive to Leytonstone replacing the northern part of the old 148A. The 145 became an all BK route whilst U and AP provided the 145A with 3 RTs apiece. This lasted only until 23rd January 1966 when the 145A was replaced by the 145 between Ilford Broadway and Dagenham (Kent Avenue) using 6 RTs from AP. On 7th September 1968 the Royal Forest Hotel was replaced as a terminus by the new bus station at Chingford Station; and on 24th March 1969 the 145 was withdrawn on Sundays without replacement and AP severed its connection with the route for good.

RT1597 (G) works a Sunday duty in December 1952. Although Forest Gate had been associated with the route for many years its presence had declined over the years to disappear altogether in the immediate post war period, though in December 1952 it returned on Sundays only. *Alan B. Cross*



Ploughing its way through Ilford one wet Sunday in the sixties on route 145A RT 929 (AP) carries an RT10 type body. The very full blind details the journey from Dagenham which followed the 145 routeing and then roads that were the domain of the 147, until the bus ended up at Leytonstone the terminus of the 148. *Alan B. Cross*



RT1537 (BK) performs a school duty during the period when the route was cut back from Chingford. The outward journeys in the afternoon were very poorly patronized but the return buses towards Ilford were packed with children from the Forest and other schools. This part of the route (Ilford-Woodford Wells) forms the new 145A. *Colin Stannard*



The past few years have been a story of decline. On 18th July 1980 the school journeys were withdrawn between Chingford Station and Woodford Wells although they were reinstated via the 179 routeing on 8th September 1981. For the first time from 20th July 1985 the school journeys were withdrawn for the duration of the summer holidays. On 25th March 1974 the route was converted to opo using DMSs and the evening journeys to Ford's Main Works were transferred to the 148. Titans arrived at BK in 1980 to replace DMSs but with the cuts of 4th September 1982 associated with the House of Lords ruling overturning the low fares policy of the then GLC, the evening service was withdrawn. The final changes occurred on 2nd February 1985 when the remaining Dagenham Dock journeys were withdrawn and the service was rerouted at Hedgemans Road/Heathway via Church Elm Lane, Siviter Way and Ballards Road to serve Dagenham Village.



MCW bodied DMS1621 (BK) still looks smart on Midsummers Day 1975 as it stands at the Northern terminus off Thorold Road, Ilford after the route had been truncated. All such buses displayed ILFORD STATION although this covered a variety of possible layover points. The usual Dagenham terminus had by now become New Road. *Malcolm E. Papes*



London Transport's final operation on the 145 is represented here by T217 (BK) seen in March 1985. Devoid of adverts the Titan is seen at Ilford Station heading for Dagenham. The side destination blind has been replaced by the newer idea of displaying a number only, which is a throw back to the original DMSs which carried just a number. *Colin Stannard*

Route 200 Raynes Park—Streatham Hill (Telford Avenue)

What is now route 200 began on 3rd September 1930 as a daily service between Wimbledon Station and Raynes Park Station via The Ridgeway but was then numbered 103. At first its one bus was a single-deck K from Merton (AL) but by October it had become an S type. On 3rd October 1934 with the passing of the Bassom system and the renumbering all single-deck routes in the 2xx series it gained its present number and acquired two single-deck LTs. These were replaced in the spring of 1936 by 5Q5s which together with LTs and the occasional T served the route until the introduction of RFs in December 1952. On 27th May 1936 a daily extension was made from Raynes Park to Copse Hill which



Top left: Between 1936-1952 the usual allocation for route 200 from AL was the 5Q5 as is shown here by Q125. These buses with all-metal Park Royal 37-seat bodies performed sterling service even in their later days. The position of the underfloor engine can clearly be seen allowing a genuine front entrance at a time when such a design was considered unacceptably avant garde. *Malcolm E. Papes.* **Top right:** Those with long memories might well recall that LT six-wheelers were regular to the 200 before the 5Q5s appeared but LT1019 had probably been loaned to AL from its usual home at Sutton (A) when the former were in short supply. The vehicle lasted until June 1952 and displays the usual lazy blind. *J.H. Aston.* **Above:** In this July 1952 view T598 (AL) is also helping out on the route. The vehicle started life as a Green Line coach in August 1938 but was converted to an ambulance for the duration of the War. In September 1951 it was painted red and converted to a bus; this included locking the doors open as they were not otherwise considered safe by the Metropolitan Police. These buses were classified 10T10. The full blind is notable. *Alan B. Cross*

lasted until 3rd January 1962. In the meantime the frequency of the service was increased until on 25th August 1965 in line with contemporary policy RFs were replaced by RTs, still from AL.

The route became subject to more frequent alterations from 31st October 1965 when a Sunday afternoon extension was introduced from Raynes Park to Kingston via Coombe Lane lasting until 30th January 1971. Meanwhile on 31st December 1966 a weekday extension was introduced beyond Wimbledon to Mitcham (Fair Green) via Haydons Road and Phipps Bridge. At the same time as the Sunday extension to Kingston was withdrawn the route was converted to opo using SMSs daily, although from 13th November 1977 it regained double-deckers in the form of DMSS. From 28th January 1980 the terminus at Wimbledon was altered to stand in Victoria Crescent instead of South Park Crescent. On 25th April 1981 a Sunday extension was introduced from Wimbledon to Wallington (Shotfield) in part replacement of the 115, and on 4th September 1982 the latter was withdrawn between Wallington and Merton Garage. Before this a double run had been introduced to serve Atkinson Morley Hospital in Raynes Park on 31st October 1981.

The last changes took place in 1984. On 4th February the route was extended on weekdays from Mitcham to Streatham Garage via the old 234A roads. However, on Sundays the morning journeys were withdrawn entirely leaving a service between Wimbledon Station and Mitcham for the rest of the day. Finally on 27th October, with the closure of Streatham Garage the weekday terminus was changed to Brixton Garage at Telford Avenue. The 200 has served what in parts is a fairly prosperous part of outer south London for well over half a century with remarkably few changes.



RF356 (AL) is in as pristine a state as any enthusiast could wish. The Copse Hill working is clearly seen on the lazy blind. At this time the RFs were crew operated and the conductor can be seen chatting to his mate. In the interests of safety no front door is fitted. J.H. Aston

Left: By the spring of 1966 RTs had provided increased capacity and the route had been cut back from Copse Hill to Raynes Park. Lazy blinds were still the order of the day in this view of RT2319 (AL) passing through Raynes Park. *Malcolm E. Papes collection.* **Right:** 30th January 1971 saw a return to one deck and the introduction of opo. Here SMS373 (AL) passes through Wimbledon in the tropical summer of 1976. The rear engine grill has been removed to prevent overheating. The blind display is still not overhelpful. *Paul Hulyer*



D2618 (AL) leaves Mitcham (Fair Green) in 1984. The blind now draws attention to the fact that the Atkinson Morley Hospital and Phipps Bridge Estate are both served. *Malcolm E. Papes*



Route 275 Barkingside (High Street)—Walthamstow (Central Station)

Although bus route 275 was introduced as recently as 27th April 1960 it was a trolleybus replacement service and its history goes back to 8th May 1938 when trolleybus 625 was introduced between Wood Green and Woodford (Napier Arms) daily with an allocation from Walthamstow aided by three weekday trolleys from Wood Green. The route did not directly replace a tram except for a section of the 39 along Lordship Lane and it complemented the 623 for part of its length. On 12th October the route was altered to operate between Wood Green and Walthamstow (Beacontree Avenue) Monday-Saturday peak hours and Napier Arms off-peak and Sunday. This was unusual in that the extension only operated outside the rush hours. At this same time, a peak hour facility was provided to Winchmore Hill.

On 27th April 1960 bus route 275 replaced the 625. It worked daily between Woodford Bridge and Turnpike Lane with a Monday-Saturday extension to Winchmore Hill and a Monday-Friday peak extension to Enfield Town. It thus



Trolleybus 935 of the J1 class has left the turning circle at Walthamstow (Beacontree Avenue) and is starting a journey to Wood Green. Although the depot code is missing, it is allocated to Walthamstow (WW). Behind, 1284 on route 623 is bound for Manor House. The year is 1959. *J.H. Aston*



In brand new condition and unmodified, RM 235 (WW) is seen on the first day of 275 operation on 27th April 1960 working the peak hour extension to Enfield in heavy traffic. Trolley wires are still in position at Turnpike Lane. *Peter G. Mitchell*



Photographed in July 1975 MB632 (WW) works on the much shortened and altered version of the 275 at the Royal Standard, Walthamstow. By this time the route had been extended to Claybury Hospital. *Colin Stannard*

provided new facilities between Woodford Bridge and Napier Arms, a service to Winchmore Hill throughout each weekday instead of in peak hours only and a through facility to Enfield. It was also diverted away from Lordship Lane via Westbury Avenue to serve Turnpike Lane. Walthamstow (WW) by now provided 20 RMs. On 12th October 1960 the Saturday service was withdrawn between Wood Green and Winchmore Hill, although it was reinstated on 9th October 1963 when Tottenham (AR) acquired an allocation of 3 RMs for the route on Saturdays. From 31st December 1966 the evening service was withdrawn north of Wood Green and the Saturday AR allocation disappeared.

The extension of the Victoria Line to Walthamstow Central on 7th September 1968 brought in its wake considerable changes to bus services in the Walthamstow area. The 275 was withdrawn between Enfield and Walthamstow (Bell) and diverted to Walthamstow Central Station. What remained was converted to opo using a mere 6 MBs, the main part of the former route being covered by modifications to the 123. On 10th June 1971 the route acquired a daily extension



Above left: DMS1858 (WW) represents the return to double-deckers to the 275. The blind takes into account the various diversions although the route only now has half a mile in common with its original form. The loading bay at Walthamstow Central presents a pleasant spring backdrop in this May 1976 view. *Malcolm E. Papes.* **Above right:** T315 (WW) is about to depart for the current terminus at Barkingside High Street on 31st March 1983. WW received almost a hundred of these smart new X-registered buses and kept them as a batch for a long time. The practice of placing plain pink posters on an almost new bus is apparent. *Malcolm E. Papes*



This picture of LS86 (T) was taken in gloomy December 1985 when heading for Barkingside. *Colin Stannard*

from Woodford Bridge to Claybury Hospital. From 8th January 1972 the route was diverted away from Waterworks Corner and Woodford New Road to serve Hale End Road, The Avenue, Chingford Lane, Woodford High Road and Broadmead Road. Following the introduction of this new facility the route covered only about half a mile of its original course along Forest Road. On 3rd August 1975 the cumbersome MBs were replaced by 7 DMSS.

The 275 reached its present terminus at Barkingside (High Street) on 19th March 1977 on which date a double run was introduced to serve Claybury Hospital. From 15th September 1981, WW began to convert the route to Titan. On 2nd February 1985 the Sunday service was withdrawn allegedly due to poor use but public outcry caused a limited service to be re-introduced on 17th March. On 3rd August 1985 LSs took over the weekday workings when these were transferred from WW to Leyton (T) to enable route 48 (London Bridge—Walthamstow) to be worked with Titans.

Route 268 Golders Green Station—Finchley Road (LT Station)

Daily route 268 was introduced on 7th September 1968 to open up new roads in the Hampstead and Belsize Park areas to bus operation. Originally it was planned to extend the 226 but a self-contained service was felt to be more operationally satisfactory. Although loadings have seldom been heavy the routing of the service has remained unchanged throughout its history which seems to prove its worth in a well-to-do area. Cricklewood (W) initially provided MBs but on 24th April 1976 the MBs were replaced by shorter SMs and from 5th February 1978 these gave way to LSs. Perhaps the only unusual feature of the route these days is that it uses 4 buses on both weekdays and Sundays.

High-driving position MB184 (W) stands at Golders Green Station before completion of the alterations there. This misty morning view taken in September 1972 shows up the length of the vehicle which would thus seem unsuited to the roads traversed. *Malcolm E. Papes*



Barely a month old, LS109 (W) coasts through Hampstead Village on Good Friday in 1978. These vehicles provided the service for the next eight years on the same routing. *Eamonn Kentell*



Route 195 Charville Lane Estate—Hanwell Broadway

Route 195 was introduced on 4th December 1971 as a daily opo service between Greenford (Red Lion) via the 105 to Hayes Station. On weekdays it was extended from Hayes Station to Charville Lane Estate and on Monday-Friday from Greenford to Perivale (Bideford Avenue). Southall (HW) supplied 8 SMSs. On 31st March 1979 it was revised to operate daily between Charville Lane Estate and Greenford Broadway with Monday-Saturday extensions to Perivale (Hoover Factory). From 29th July 1979 it gained DMSs on Sundays, a very short-lived allocation, for from 17th September it was progressively converted to M. On 3rd August 1980 the daily service gained Metrobuses.



Above left: During 1978 a severe shortage of SMSs was alleviated by using redundant SMs on SMS routes. SM49 (HW) lays over at Greenford Red Lion during this time in September 1978, showing its single door. *Eamonn Kentell.* **Above right:** Seen en-route for Charville Lane Estate in Greenford, DMS1672 represents the very short-lived DMS allocation to route 195 on Sundays. *Eamonn Kentell*

Major changes occurred on 2nd June 1984 when a rerouting at Southall Town Hall sent the route daily to Ealing Hospital instead of Greenford and Perivale. HW by now supplied just 4 Ms. On 1st November the route was withdrawn between Southall Garage and Ealing Hospital and from 2nd February 1985 it was extended from Southall to Hanwell Broadway. This coincided with a reallocation from HW to Hanwell (HL). On 27th April the Saturday service between the latter points was reduced to garage journeys only.

Below left: By the time this view of M121 (HW) had been taken at Greenford on 28th October 1981 route 195 enjoyed a daily double-decker allocation. The round sticker on the front showing 'FLAT FARE BUS' was part of an earlier attempt to simplify fare structures and increase loading efficiency. *Malcolm E. Papes.* **Below right:** M1260 (HL) demonstrates the final form of the route with its extension to Hanwell Broadway to accommodate the garage journeys. More informative route details are provided although the bus no longer serves Ealing Hospital grounds as it did formerly. *Malcolm E. Papes*



Route 127 Tooting Broadway—Selsdon.

Route 127A Streatham Hill (Telford Avenue)—South Croydon Garage

25th April 1981 was the date of the birth of the 127 which worked between Tooting Broadway and Wallington (Shotfield) via the former 77 to Mitcham and the 115 to Wallington. Merton (AL) provided DMSs for what was in effect a localization of the southern end of the 77. On 4th September 1982 spare LSs replaced DMSs. On 4th February 1984 a major reorganization took place when route 234A was withdrawn causing the 127 to be extended from Wallington to Purley and rerouted between Wallington and Hackbridge via Hackbridge Road and High Street Carshalton instead of via London Road. Croydon (TC) now provided 4 Ds Mondays-Fridays and 9 on Sundays. From 5th February a 127A was introduced

on Sundays between Streatham Garage and South Croydon Garage. When Streatham Garage closed for rebuilding on 27th October 1984 Brixton Garage at Telford Avenue became the terminus instead. Finally on 27th April 1985 the remaining Monday-Friday peak journeys on 234 were withdrawn and 127 was extended to Selsdon at those times instead.



The first form of route 127 was little more than an opo version of the southern section of the 77. Here DMS1702 (AL) working a garage journey pauses on Mitcham Common to pick up a puddle straddling passenger after an April shower in 1982. *Malcolm E. Papes*



LS72 (AL) stands at Wallington (Shotfield), highlighting the use of Nationals on routes which could be operated by double-deckers. The blind is beginning to curl up on one side showing how tatty the blinds can become after intensive use. *Colin Stannard*



One of the most recent buses to work route 127A has been M1194 (TC) seen passing through Wallington on 3rd October 1985 with its blind set for the extension beyond Purley to Croydon Garage. *Paul Hulver*

Route 283 West Brompton (Empress State Building)—East Acton (Hammersmith Hospital)

The 283 is the youngest route to be contracted out so far. It was introduced as a local service within the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham linking the White City Estate with various hospitals and other points in the area; it began on 29th January 1983 as a weekday route between Fulham and the East Acton area. Routing was via the 295 to Shepherd's Bush thence via Uxbridge Road, Bloemfontein Road and a one-way loop in East Acton via Bryony Road, Wormholt Road, Steventon Road, Old Oak Road, Old Oak Common Lane, Du Cane Road and Westway back to Bloemfontein Road. The terminal at Fulham was Fulham Broadway (Farm Lane) (the site of an early LGOC bus garage) during Monday-Friday peak hours and at all other times at Fulham Palace Road (Lillie Road). In practice, however, buses were unable to stand at the latter point and consequently were extended out of service to the Salisbury stand. 4 DMSs were worked from Shepherd's Bush (S). Since these terminal points were unsatisfactory the service was revised from 26th February to operate as follows: East Acton loop and Fulham Broadway (evenings excepted); East Acton loop and Fulham Palace Road (Lillie Road) early Saturday mornings; and East Acton loop and Hammersmith evenings. Buses turning at Fulham Palace Road operated out of service from there to Fulham (Salisbury) returning in service. From 31st August Ms started to displace DMSs.

The foregoing terminal arrangements were still far from satisfactory. From 31st March 1984 the service was rerouted in Fulham to West Brompton (Empress State Building) via Lillie Road instead of Fulham Broadway and the evening service was also extended from Hammersmith to this point.

DMS2258 (S) swings into Lillie Road, when heading for the second terminus in Fulham. Autumn 1983 sunshine highlights how attractive these buses were in "white topped" livery, now but a memory. Colin Stannard



Seen on the loop of this frying pan route is brand new M894 (S) representing London Transport's final offering. Colin Stannard



The Story So Far

In December 1985 London Regional Transport announced the results of the second batch of route tendering. We gave outline details of these results in the last issue of LBM, and for completeness we now list the full route details and successful tenderers, together with the confirmed dates of introduction.

Route	Terminals	Operator	Date
79A	Edgware Station-Alperton	London Buses	12.4.86
125	North Finchley-Winchmore Hill/Enfield Town	London Buses	12.4.86
127	Tooting Broadway-Selsdon		
127A	Streatham Hill-Selsdon	London Country	22.3.86
145	Dagenham-Redbridge Station	Ensignbus	21.6.86
145A	Goodmayes-Chingford Station	Eastern National	7.4.86
179	Barking-Chingford Station	London Buses	24.5.86
195	Charville Lane Estate-Ealing Hospital	Len Wright Travel	12.4.86
200	Streatham Hill-Raynes Park	London Cityrama	22.3.86
268	Golders Green Station-Finchley Road Station	London Country	31.5.86
275	Walthamstow Central-Barkingside/Claybury Broadway	Eastern National	24.5.86
283	West Brompton-East Acton	Scancoaches	31.5.86

Combined with the tendering process come a number of route alterations: 125 extended on Sundays to Enfield Town; 127 extended on Saturdays to Sanderstead; 127A withdrawn between Purley and South Croydon and extended instead to Selsdon; 145 withdrawn between Ilford and Chingford (replaced by separate service 145A), and extended to Redbridge Station; 179 withdrawn between Chingford and Loughton; 195 withdrawn daily between Ealing Hospital and Hanwell Broadway and on Saturday mornings between Southall (Town Hall) and Hanwell Broadway; 200 extended on Mondays to Saturdays (except evenings) to Streatham (Atkins Road); and 275 extended on Sundays to Claybury Broadway.

The next services to be offered for tender comprised many of those crossing the Greater London boundary into the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire and Surrey. Of those entering Essex, LRT offered the 20, 167, 206 and 217B, while the County Council themselves took responsibility for the 201, 250 and 250A (renumbered 251) putting them out to tender along with some peak hour journeys on the 242 between Waltham Cross and Chingford Station (renumbered 252) as well as the school buses on routes 20, 167, 201 and 206. The section of route 242 inside the Greater London area between Yardley Lane Estate and Chingford Station is retained as a separate LRT service numbered 179A (originally planned as C1) on Mondays to Saturdays, and covered by an extension of London Buses service 235 beyond Woodford Wells to Yardley Lane Estate on Sundays.

In Hertfordshire LRT put out to tender routes 107, 142, 259 (part), 263 and 298, leaving Hertfordshire County Council to secure tenders for the 242 (between Potters Bar and Waltham Abbey) and PB1, along with London Country route 84 and new routes PB2 and PB3. Those services crossing over into Surrey, which are retained as part of the LRT network, were put out to tender by LRT and comprised routes 116, 117, 197, 203, 293 and London Country route 403. Surrey County Council deferred their decision on routes 216, 218 and 290 until registrations of those routes (if any) had been published as part of operators' viable bus services.

The results of this phase of route tendering were announced jointly by LRT and the County Councils during February and March, and a summary of these is as follows:

London Regional Transport Services

a) Essex area

Route	Terminals	Operator	Date
20	Walthamstow Central-Debden Station	Eastern National	24.5.86
167	Ilford-Loughton	Eastern National	24.5.86
179A	Chingford Station-Yardley Lane Estate	London Buses	24.5.86
206	Walthamstow Central-Chigwell Station	Eastern National	24.5.86
217B	Enfield Town-Upshire	Sampsons	24.5.86

b) Hertfordshire area

Route	Terminals	Operator	Date
107	Brimsdown-Arkley	Eastern National	?
107A	New Barnet Station-Queensbury	London Buses	?
142	Brent Cross-Watford Junction	London Country	21.6.86
259A	Manor House-Hammond Street	Eastern National	?
263	Archway Station-Arkley/Potters Bar	London Buses	21.6.86
298	Turnpike Lane Station-South Mimms	London Country	21.6.86

c) Surrey area

Route	Terminals	Operator	Date
116	Hounslow-Bedfont Green	London Buses	9.8.86
116A	Hounslow-Staines	London Buses	9.8.86
117	Brentford-Staines (via Ashford)	London Buses	9.8.86
197	Norwood Junction-Croydon (Mon-Sat)	London Country	} 19.7.86
197A	West Croydon-Caterham (Mon-Sat)	London Country	
197B	Norwood Junction-Caterham (Sundays)	London Country	} 19.7.86
203	Brentford-Staines (via Stanwell)	London Buses	
293	Hackbridge-Epsom	London Country	19.7.86
403	Cheam Village-Warlingham Park Hospital	London Country	9.8.86

Those routes which do not or will no longer form part of the LRT network and have been offered for tender by the County Councils are:

Route	Terminals	Operator	Date
84	New Barnet Station-St. Albans (via Potters Bar)	London Buses	21.6.86
201	Buckhurst Hill Station-Ongar	West's Coaches	24.5.86
202-4	West Hatch School services	Cullinan Coaches	24.5.86
242	Potters Bar-Waltham Abbey	London Buses	24.5.86
250	Waltham Cross-South Woodford Station	Sampsons	24.5.86
251	Waltham Cross-Upshire	Sampsons	24.5.86
252	Waltham Cross-Chingford Station	Eastern National	24.5.86
PB1/2/3	Potters Bar local service	North Mymms Coaches	14.6.86

It will be seen from the above that there are considerable changes to the services accompanying the tendering process. In Essex, route 20 is revised to run in both directions via the Debden Estate instead of as a circular via Rectory Lane, and the 206 is withdrawn completely beyond Chigwell Station. The LRT services in Herts were adjusted so that the 107 and 259 were split into sections. The 107 is divided as shown above, while the 259 lost the Manor House to Hammond Street leg of service to the 259A, the 259 itself being reduced to Holborn Circus to Ponders End on Mondays to Fridays, and Manor House to Waltham Cross on Sundays. There will be no Saturday service on the plain 259 which was not put out to tender at this time. The 263 gains a daily bifurcation to Arkley, with a reduced service north of Barnet on Mondays to Saturdays (withdrawn north of Barnet on Sundays apart from garage runs) being replaced by the rerouting of the 84 via Potters Bar. LRT services into Surrey will see the through workings on the 116 to Staines renumbered 116A, and the 197 split into two sections on Mondays to Saturdays (197 and 197A) with the through service retained on Sundays as 197B. Service 242 suffers from running through two counties (Herts and Essex) and inside Greater London with the result that Hertfordshire are supporting the section between Potters Bar and Waltham Abbey and LRT between Yardley Lane and Chingford, but Essex see no demand for the section between Waltham Abbey and Yardley Lane apart from a few peak hour journeys.

As for the success or otherwise of the operators who put in bids for the services, it can be seen that London Buses did particularly badly in Essex, with the result that Loughton Garage closes after 23rd May, but a little better in Hertfordshire and Surrey, even to the point of winning back route 84 from London Country. Retention of the services to Staines was no doubt aided by the plan to set up a subsidiary company within London Buses for their operation. Both London Country and Eastern National have taken a substantial share of the services, with Sampsons being the only other operator awarded LRT contracts, and West's Coaches and North Mymms Coaches awarded non-LRT contracts.

The remaining group of services outstanding as a result of the tendering process at the beginning of the year consisted of the revised Orpington Network, whose future was finally announced during April. A detailed study of the original network was published in LBM54 (see *A New Bus Network for Orpington and The New Network—Some local observations*), while the subsequent changes to the planned network were detailed in LBM55 (see *Tendering Update*). The final results are:

Route	Terminals	Operator
51	Green Street Green-Woolwich	London Country
61	Bromley North-Chislehurst	Metrobus
61B	Chislehurst-Eltham Station (to be integrated with existing route 228)	London Buses
229	Sidcup-Erith	London Buses
261	Bromley Common-Lewisham	London Buses
261A	Bromley North-Green Street Green	London Buses
493	Orpington-Ramsden Estate	London Country
L1	Bromley Common-Queen Mary's Hospital	London Buses
L2	Orpington-Biggin Hill Valley	London Buses
L3	Green Street Green-Petts Wood	London Buses
L4	Locks Bottom-St. Paul's Cray East	London Buses
L5	Orpington-Cudham-Knockholt Pound (circular)	London Buses
L6	Orpington-Sevenoaks	London Buses

London Country routes 431, 432 and 471 are withdrawn, and London Buses 208, Metrobus 353/357 (Orpington-Croydon) and London Country 477 and 706 have not been put out to tender but remain with their existing operators. In this phase of tendering London Buses performed much better, retaining most of the trunk services and taking over the new midibus network (L1-L6) for which a separate subsidiary is to be set up. The midibus network will be worked by a mixture of five Optare CityPacers and 24 Robin Hood CityNipper bodied Iveco vehicles in a special maroon and grey livery trading under the name 'Roundabout'. The loss of 'country' routes is conveniently made up by the acquisition of the 51 (to be worked from the re-opened Swanley garage), and Metrobus, who have worked well on the 353/357, have been rewarded with the contract for the 61. Conspicuous by their absence from the list of successful tenderers are Crystals Coaches. This is rather surprising bearing in mind their location, their affection for small vehicles, the existence of routes suitable for such operation, and their present LRT contract on route 146. Indeed, their 858 route has been awarded to London Buses (renumbered L2), and one must draw one's own conclusions from this. The new arrangements are expected to be introduced on 16th August.

RH1 is seen on demonstration near LRT Headquarters at 55 Broadway. The vehicles comprising the class are Ivecos with Robin Hood City Nipper bodywork and each will be named after a species of bird in keeping with the rural image sought for the Roundabout network. *Colin Fradd*



Reigate & Redhill in the Seventies

by Steve Fennell

Reigate has traditionally been the headquarters for the Country bus routes from the earliest days of the East Surrey Traction Company, through the London Transport era and to the present NBC administration. Not surprisingly therefore, Reigate, along with neighbouring Redhill, has always been a focal point in the Country bus network. During the seventies many trunk routes converged on the two towns from Croydon and Kingston in the north, Bromley in the east, Horsham and Dorking in the west, and Crawley and East Grinstead in the south. All roads appeared to lead to Reigate!

With such a variety of routes there was an equivalent variety of vehicles. RTs, RMLs, RMCs and RCLs all featured on the many trunk routes, while Reigate (RG) was the first garage to work new AEC Merlins during the late sixties. A handful of RFs served the few rural routes that radiated from the two towns, and the eight vehicles that comprised the XF class could be seen on their usual haunt, the 424 operated by East Grinstead (EG).

Latterly, as in most other towns served by London Country, the route pattern has altered significantly in an effort to contain costs, although such familiar route numbers as 406, 410 and 414 can still be seen. The following selection of photographs show services in the area during the mid-seventies. The 'London influence' could still be seen and the only NBC interlopers were a handful of Leyland Nationals, officially scheduled for use on Green Line services.

The 406 ran from Kingston to Redhill with a half-hourly service south of Tadworth. A trunk route in every sense, it is surprising how long it was scheduled for RT operation after their removal from all other RG crew routes. A start was made in 1973 when the first RMCs were allocated, but this turned out to be a very protracted affair with RTs still performing on the backbone of the service many years later. Leatherhead (LH) held the lion's share of the 406, and here we see RT4767 passing the Market Hall, Reigate, ten minutes into its 1½ hour journey from Redhill to Kingston.





The use of RCLs on the 406 was considerably rarer, despite the existence of a scheduled working. RCLs were officially banned north of Epsom because of minimal clearance at the railway bridge at Stoneleigh, but there was one schoolday working which duplicated a through bus from Tattenham Corner into Redhill. Unfortunately, in times of vehicle shortage (and ironically RG seemed to suffer more than many), this journey did not run creating a good deal of ill feeling amongst intending passengers. When the duplicate journey did run, very rarely did it produce an RCL: almost anything but, in fact. Shown here is RCL2218 as it pauses outside Reigate garage on its way to Redhill.



RG had a one-bus involvement in routes 409 and 411, the balance being provided by Godstone (GD) and EG. Shown here is RML2308, at the time RG's sole RML, working towards its home base during the evening peak in Redhill.



Whenever the RML was unavailable, RG usually placed an RT on this running. After one had become familiar with RMLs on the 411 for a number of years the sight of an RT showing this number come as a shock to the system. Here at Godstone RT3450 is bound for Reigate.



Above left: Route 410 was another trunk service, linking Reigate and Redhill with Oxted, Westerham and Bromley. An early convert to opo, the route was operated by GD using Daimler Fleetlines originally destined for Western Welsh, but diverted instead to London Country who classified them AF. Here, AF5 is seen arriving at Reigate after its lengthy journey from Bromley. **Above right:** The 414 paralleled the 405 between Croydon and Redhill before branching south-west to Dorking and Horsham. Officially RCL since 1972, the route tended to be a home for virtually anything. RMCs were by no means unusual and a freshly overhauled RMC1486, ostensibly part of RG's 406 allocation, proceeds along Bell Street in Reigate.



Both RG and Crawley (CY) operated the 405 which linked Croydon with Crawley. In pre-London Country days the route had extended beyond Crawley to the Sussex town of Horsham. Originally RT worked, RCLs appeared early in 1972 when displaced from Green Line duties. CY's RCL2249 passes through Redhill on its way to West Croydon, destined later to be the only member of its class to work from Addlestone (WY).

Below left: Rather more unusual was the use of an RML on the 414. RML2446 was loaned by Northfleet (NF) to RG when the latter were having difficulty in maintaining their scheduled services. The bus remained at RG for some considerable time prior to the 414's opo conversion, and also operated on both the 405 and 414 during its stay. On the right the original East Surrey Traction Company's garage in Bell Street can be seen. **Below right:** Most London Country conductors were able to stay at home on Sundays as the bulk of the work was opo on that day. MBS270 waits outside Reigate garage on its way to Croydon. One could not imagine a more unacceptable vehicle for a route of this nature. Given the high running time associated with Sunday operations, such a trip must have been something of an endurance test!





Above: The 424 reached Reigate after a lengthy scenic run from East Grinstead and was the mainstay of the XF5, a class always associated with EG. XF5 is shown here setting off from Reigate on the long trip home.



RG also had dealings with route 424, but unlike EG most of its workings were crew operated. Scheduled for RCL, the normal vehicle shortages soon put pay to any regular allocation, and most types could be observed. RMC1490 covered with overall advertising for London & Manchester Assurance leaves the intermediate terminus at Woodhatch, Beehive having completed the lunchtime working to this obscure destination.



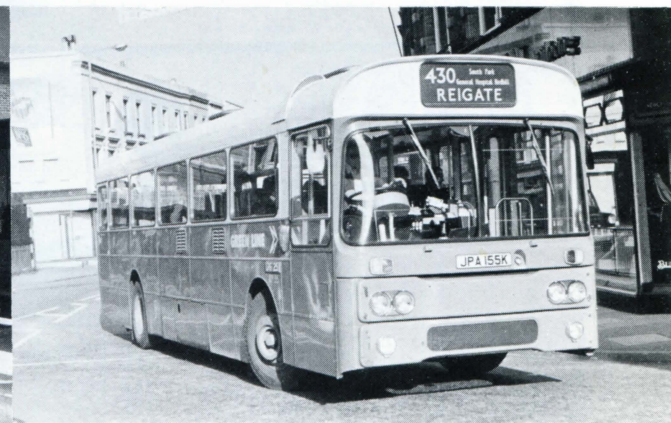
One early morning journey on the 424 was opp and employed an LNC from the 711 allocation. However, the working illustrated carried a conductor and the running number reveals it to be an RCL substitution. In full Green Line livery, LNC56 was caught at Reigate, and this photograph shows its spartan interior, with the sort of conditions that passengers on certain Green Line routes had to endure.



Above left: RG held the dubious honour of placing into service the first batches of MBs and MBSs during 1968 and 1969 respectively. MBs held sway on route 447 for some considerable time, and illustrated here is freshly overhauled MB82 leaving Reigate on its circuitous journey to Redhill. Above: Somewhat surprisingly, MBS4 found its way to RG during the seventies and worked on the majority of its routes. The vehicle is shown here on the Reigate-Redhill circular 447 route: a far cry from its Red Arrow days!

RG's RF allocation latterly found employment on the 425 and 440 routes. Subsequent conversion of the 440 to MB/MBS left the 425 as its sole RF allocation, until further MB types could be purloined to effect replacement. RF624 is seen here on a garage journey on the 425 in Bell Street, Reigate.

Below left: Red buses and London Transport fleetnames returned to some Country towns in 1974 to ease the crippling vehicle shortage that was manifesting itself at the time. Devoid of its 'On hire to London Country Bus Services Ltd.' sticker but displaying the then new style of non-Aldenham produced blinds being supplied to LCBS, MBS42 waits for its departure time at Merstham (Delabole Road) on the 440. Below: Covering for a non-available MBS vehicle on the 430 is RP55, shown here in Redhill town centre. The use of an RP in such circumstances usually meant that its mechanical capability was in doubt, and that it had to be confined to local bus work where it would be easy to rescue if the need arose. From conversations with drivers at the time, RP55 was considered to be the roughest of its type allocated to RG.



London Liner

On 11th March 1986 London Buses Limited and West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive unveiled their plans for the new quality coach service—London Liner—to run between London and Birmingham.

The service commenced on Monday 17th March and runs every two hours, daily except Christmas Day, from each terminus between 0730 and 2130. The scheduled journey time is 2½ hours, and the cheapest fare—single or day return—is £9. Period returns are £11.00 (Mondays to Thursdays except Bank Holidays) or £12.50 (when one or both journeys are made on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday). Fares for children, OAPs and students are £6.00, £7.50 and £8.50 respectively. Passengers can book seats in advance at any LRT or WMPTE Travel Information Centre through an appointed agent, or by telephone using a credit card. Standby passengers can pay on board subject to seats being available.

Coaches pick up in London at the Wilton Road Coach Station, and in Birmingham at the Grand Hotel (Colmore Row), and near the Albany Hotel in Smallbrook Queensway. Passengers from Birmingham are also able to alight in London at Baker Street Station or Marble Arch.

The luxury coaches are of two types. London Buses are using three DAF MB vehicles with Duple Caribbean 2 C49FT bodies, leased from the Stanley Hughes Organisation in Yorkshire. They carry a smart red, gold and white livery and are registered C27-29MCX. The allocated fleet numbers, DD7-9, are not carried on the vehicles which are based in the former Battersea bus garage. West Midlands employ two Bova Futura Integral coaches (C903-904 BOF) finished

London Buses vehicle contribution to the London Liner service is represented by DD7 seen in Wilton Road, Victoria after a high speed run from Birmingham in the first weeks of service. It should be noted that the London Buses coaches do not carry fleet numbers. *Ramon Hefford*



in French blue with gold and white lining—also with 49 seats. All coaches carry stewards offering a refreshment service, and are equipped with toilets. Optional films and on-board telephones are also available on some services. Both operators will be switching to the use of MCW Metroliners during May.

An interesting comparison can be made between the fares *from* Birmingham on this service and those on National Express Rapide 555 which charges a single or day return fare of £7.50, £9.00 for period returns, and £10.00 for period returns commencing on Fridays. Fares towards London are the same for both operators.

Right: West Midlands have opted for the Bova Futura Integral coaches for their operations on the London Liner. It is surprising that West Midlands have chosen an all foreign rather than a Birmingham based product in the form of the new Metroliner. C903 JOF is captured on film at Brent Cross in March. *Ramon Hefford*

Below: The front of the leaflet advertising the service giving the timetable and the location of the pick-up points.



Right: The rear of DD9 parked in Wilton Road Coach Station. Apart from the roundel there is little to suggest that London Buses operate the service and no doubt this is the view that most motorists will get on the Motorway. *Ramon Hefford*

West Ham Trolleys Relived

by Bob Saxby

This article is unashamedly nostalgic. It describes an excursion mainly by trolleybus around the former County Borough of West Ham in 1958, with forays into East Ham and Woolwich north of the river. It depicts a world that in a number of respects no longer exists, so put the clock back and join us this misty December morning in Upton Park as we wait by the green and black traction standard for a trolleybus to Stratford:

On the other side of the cobbled street the local stationers shop is opening for another Saturday's trading and from one of the adjacent bay windowed terraced houses a wireless declares "This is the BBC Home Service". Hardly have we started a discussion about the week's radio programmes when the shape of a 690 looms up out of the mist, though had we wished we could have detected the approach of a trolleybus much earlier by putting an ear to the traction standard.

From the shape of the body it is clearly number 1385B that is approaching since this is the only trolleybus at West Ham (WH) to have been rebodied by East Lancashire Coachbuilders after its original L3 body was destroyed by a wartime bomb. It has a more upright appearance than normal and many details, such as the lack of an opening nearside front cab window, are different. Details of WH's routes and allocations are shown in Appendices A, B and C.

Climbing the stairs we enter the smoky atmosphere of the top deck, already occupied by a number of early shoppers. Here another unusual feature is to be found in the use of blue instead of green moquette on the seats. Having made our way to the front and paid out twopenny halves to the conductor we settle down for the pleasant ride to Stratford. Despite the cobbles the ride along Plashet Road is smooth and quiet. We pass street after street of terraced houses

L3 1386 works route 690 at the junction of Plashet Grove and Green Street. The author's excursion began near this point. C. Carter

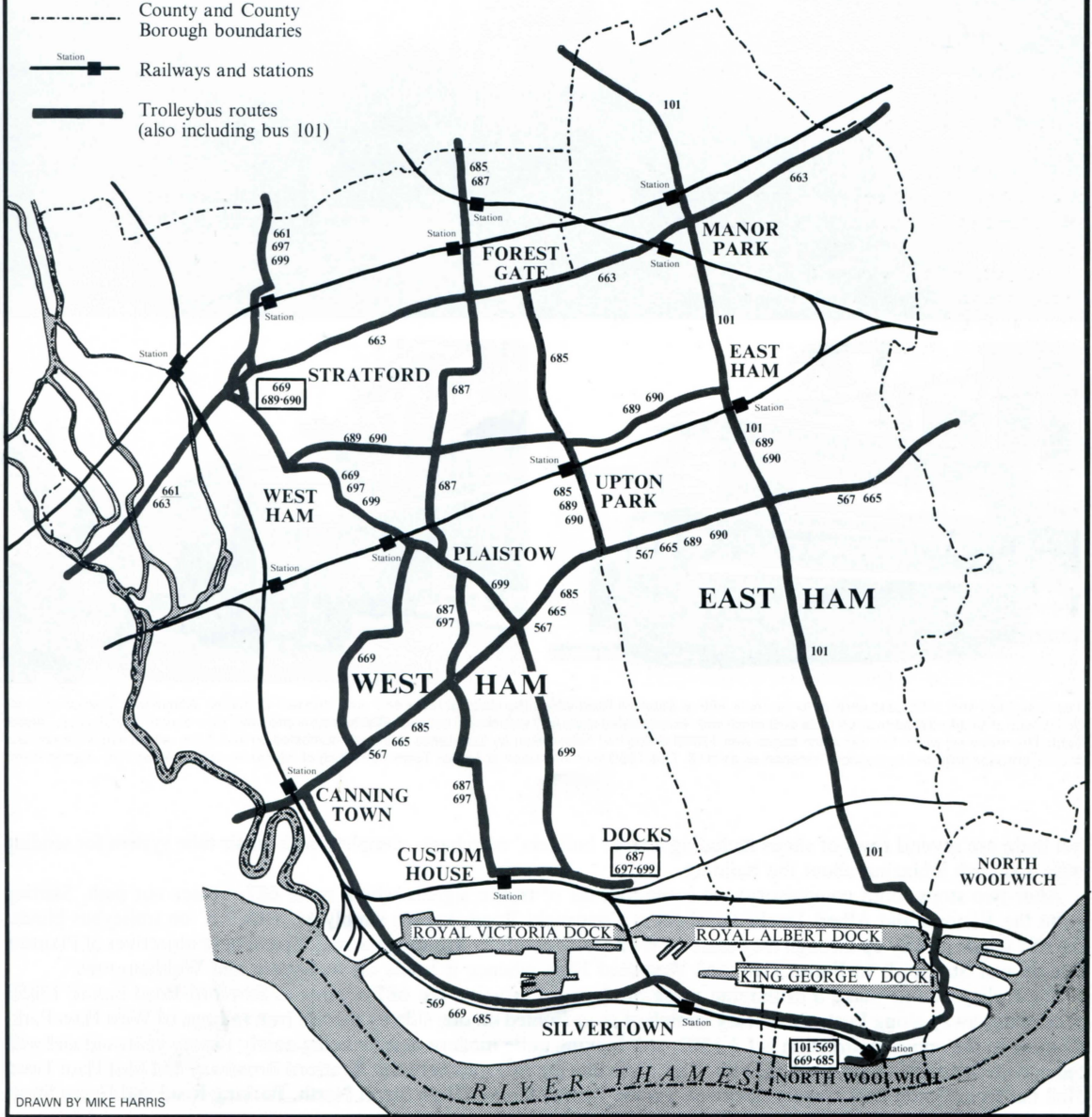


THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF WEST HAM AND EAST HAM

showing trolleybus routes
and bus route 101

KEY

- County and County Borough boundaries
- Station  Railways and stations
-  Trolleybus routes (also including bus 101)





Top: L3s 1383 and 1456 pass each other on route 689 at Stopford Road where the wires of route 687 were crossed. C. Carter. Above left: Walthamstow H1 884 is seen at Stratford Broadway on route 699 which with its associated route 697 was shared between Walthamstow and West Ham depots. Alan B. Cross. Above right: The trolley on which this excursion began was 1385B which had been rebuilt by East Lancs. Although numbered as an L3 the vehicle had a conventional chassis and was regarded by London Transport as an N1B. This 1960 shot was taken at Leyton Town Hall which of course lay outside West Ham. Pamlin Prints.

but there are several rows of shops including a large builders' merchants complete with an air tube system for sending bills and cash whizzing about the building.

After two stops (both compulsory) we come to a set of traffic signals where route 687 crosses our path. Starting from the Victoria and Albert Docks terminus at Connaught Road, known simply as 'DOCKS' on trolleybus blinds, the 687 winds its way up through the centre of West Ham (carefully avoiding the major passenger objectives of Plaistow Station and Stratford) to Forest Gate and Wanstead Flats whence it heads off to Leyton and Walthamstow.

The trolley booms make a drumming noise on the roof crossing the 687's wires at Stopford Road before 1385B accelerates away along Portway, a leafy stretch of road fronted on one side by the tall iron railings of West Ham Park. Coming in the opposite direction is L3 1382, still looking quite modern despite being nearly twenty years old and well laden with Saturday shoppers on the 689. This route like the 690 runs between Stratford Broadway and East Ham Town Hall but from Upton Park travels clockwise via the Plashet Grove, High Street North, Barking Road and Green Street

loop whereas the 690 travels anti-clockwise. Both routes run every six to eight minutes (twelve minutes evenings) on Mondays-Fridays but on Saturdays they are strengthened to run every five minutes during shopping hours.

After the park and another cluster of shops we come to a narrow stretch of road with a bomb site on one side and small houses close to the road on the other. Here and further along by a group of prefabs the road is so narrow that trolleybuses rub their tyres against the kerb in order to pass each other.

The road remains narrow as it curves tightly round the wall of West Ham churchyard; all along this stretch the wires are suspended from standards on one side only, with curved bracket arms reaching out across the centre of the road. To the right is a large macadamized open space around which the tree-lined Densham Road carries most of the traffic (such as it is) direct to West Ham Lane. Being wire-bound, however, we use Church Street North which continues from Portway to a T-junction by the large Kings Head public house.

Here we meet with routes 669, 697 and 699 and amid scenes of large scale redevelopment turn right towards Stratford, carefully negotiating the overhead point work (the scene of several spectacular dewirements). Having safely joined

Below left: Route 663 was operated entirely by Bow. Here N2 1650 is seen at Bow Bridge where a flyover has made this 1955 view unrecognizable. *W.J. Haynes.*
Below right: A 663 trolley is overtaken by Green Line RT 3239 (RE) as they both make their way to Aldgate. Route 721 (Brentwood-Aldgate) was a busy and frequent service which was introduced in 1946 but had its origins in the prewar Y1. *Michael Dryhurst.* Bottom: "Quizzical" is the word used by the author to describe the front end of trolleys such as 1609, a BRCW bodied AEC of the N1 class operated by Bow on the 663. The location is Stratford High Street at the junction with Carpenters Road, which is now dual carriageway. *C. Carter*





RT1248 from Leyton (T) may well have been the very roof box RT observed in Stratford. In this April 1959 view it prepares for its long trip to Woodford Bridge via London Bridge and Stratford. The RT3 body was one of the earliest and would not have seen another overhaul before withdrawal. *Alan B. Cross*



Before performing a short working to Victoria RT216 from Forest Gate (G) stands in Aldgate Bus Station. Route 25 has been an important artery through Stratford since it and route 8 swapped eastern termini in 1912 sending the 8 to the Old Ford and the 25 to Seven Kings. At one time G provided the 25 with the largest single allocation of any garage to one route: 83 vehicles. Minories opened as a bus and coach station in 1939. *Peter J. Relf*

Below left: Until withdrawal on 20th August 1958 route 96 (Putney Common-Redbridge Station) passed through Stratford, though latterly it had worked into the East End Monday to Friday only. RTL777 from Putney Bridge (F) is seen at its western terminus. *Alan B. Cross*

Below: L3 1506 passes the Gaumont Cinema in Tramway Avenue, Stratford en route for North Woolwich. It is amazing that in 1958 a route so short as this required some 39 trolleys for its Monday-Friday operation. *L. Stitson collection*



RT4399 from North Street (NS) works a short at the eastern end of route 86A (Upminster-Limehouse) at Chadwell Heath where it is joined by an N1 from BW on the 663. Peter G. Mitchell



Single-deckers were not common in East London although the plethora of low bridges under the main lines into Liverpool Street sometimes made their use unavoidable. RF317 from Dalston (D) works route 208A (Clapton Pond-Maryland Station) which was introduced in 1941. Eric Surfleet



the main road we immediately negotiate a tight right hand bend to take us into West Ham Lane, catching up with a 699 opposite the Classic cinema (which is showing 'Sailor Beware!' starring Peggy Mount). Coming past West Ham recreation ground are two older looking trolleybuses, an E1 on route 699 and a J2 on the 697. The most striking difference between these vehicles and the newer types such as the L3 are the straight rainshields above the front upper deck windows which give them something of an angry look. Such vehicles make up about one third of the fleet at West Ham but they are only normally used on the routes serving Dockland and very rarely turn up on the 689 or 690. Routes 697 and 699 together form a north-south axis between Chingford Mount and the Docks through the centres of Walthamstow, Leyton and Stratford, parting company only for a mile and a half at the southern end.

Approaching the top end of West Ham Lane we make our way downstairs and alight outside West Ham Town Hall with most of the other passengers. At this point the road becomes one way and southbound traffic has to use Tramway Avenue which, as its name suggests, was built to facilitate the operation of trams. Their electrically powered successors naturally made use of this facility and trolleybuses terminating at Stratford originally turned right into Tramway Avenue, and circumnavigated the Swan public house to return against the one way flow in West Ham Lane. However now 1385B follows the general traffic flow through the traffic signals to cross Broadway, serving an additional stop on the north side outside Boardmans' department store before disappearing behind the church. Meanwhile we walk around the corner past the fire station to enter the warm atmosphere of Lyons Tea House for a 'milk and dash' (weak coffee made with milk).

Stratford is a like a funnel squeezing traffic from several main roads into one heavy flow through Broadway and Stratford High Street to cross the River Lea at Bow Bridge. Broadway itself is very wide with an attractive spired church surrounded by trees on a large central island and a hotch-potch of tatty shops, offices and pubs on either side.

Whilst we sit with our drinks a roof box RT zooms by on the other side of the road on route 10 heading for Woodford Bridge. The next bus along is a Green Line RT on the 722 bound for Upminster Corbets Tey. This will carry on around the church into Romford Road which has a very intensive bus, trolleybus and Green Line service to Ilford and beyond.

Along the kerbside opposite a street market is set up several days a week. This, together with numerous small shops in Angel Lane, is a popular spot for finding the odd bargain. Beyond the shops, amid streets of small terraced houses, lies Stratford station where Britannias storm by with expresses to East Anglia and green overhead electricians have a brief encounter with the red tube trains of the Central Line popping out of the ground. There are also low level platforms served by grubby quint-arts hauled by N7 or L1 tank engines on the Palace Gates-North Woolwich Line.

Emerging warm and refreshed we make our way to the stand where 1385B waits in company with E2 622. The road south of the church is six lanes wide at this point with an island in the middle (complete with inspector's hut). Most traffic passes to the north of this island but all buses and trolleybuses use the south side, either to stand by the island or to serve the stop outside the King Edward VII public house. Stratford is incidentally notable for the number of such establishments and there are at least seven within a hundred yard radius. There are also two large cinemas (the Rex in High Street and the Gaumont in Tramway Avenue) and the Theatre Royal in Angel Lane. In addition, the Stratford Empire stands boarded up a few yards from where we are standing.

The scene outside the King Edward VII is busy with a sizeable queue waiting in the bus shelter for the trunk services to Aldgate. In peak periods this stretch of road sees over fifty buses and eighty trolleybuses an hour, and a Green Line comes by (sometimes on the other side of the island) on average every four minutes. The first trolleybus to arrive is a heavily laden N1 on the 663 closely followed by a Forest Gate (G) RT on route 25. These two vehicles disgorge a crowd of early travellers and the waiting queue edges forward to fill up all the available seats.

The two trunk trolleybus routes 661 (Aldgate-Lea Bridge) and 663 (Aldgate-Chadwell Heath) provide a frequent service to Aldgate and being operated by Bow (BW) they are identified with the N1 class with its semi-streamlined and rather quizical front end. A third less frequent route, the 695 (Chadwell Heath-Bow) is also mostly operated by N1s from BW but it has a small allocation from Ilford (ID) and if we were to stand here for long enough we would see one of ID's non-standard SA class. Indeed, with these and the E,J,L,M and N classes on the West Ham routes (including examples of all three types of rebodied vehicles with A, B and C suffixes), Stratford Broadway must have a greater variety of trolleybuses than almost anywhere else in London.

The next bus to appear is another RT, this time on the 86A going to Limehouse, and it takes up the remainder of the queue. Most of the bus routes through here are RT operated although the 25 has a small allocation of RTLs from Clay Hall (CL) and until recently on Mondays-Fridays route 96 had worked through from Putney Common bringing RTLs from Putney Bridge (F). Signs of activity on the island indicate that a 669 is about to depart so we start to make tracks, pausing only to watch an RF on the 208A (destination Dalston Garage) arriving from Maryland, crew operated and without doors.

Hurrying around the corner into Tramway Avenue we come to three stops. The first is for the through routes 697/699, the second (outside the Gaumont cinema which is showing 'Hell Drivers' starring Sean Connery) is for the 689/690 and the third is for the 669. As we join the short queue in the shelter at the third stop our E2 swings into Tramway Avenue using the offside set of wires and slows down where the two sets of parallel wiring (one for through services and the other for those from the stand) cross over between the first and second stops. This arrangement permits overtaking at busy points, particularly in the evening peak period when many of the trolleybuses take on a full load.

Jumping aboard we catch a glimpse of the special plaque on the bulkhead of the lower saloon of 622 reading:

WITH THIS TROLLEYBUS
THE MAYOR
(ALDERMAN Mrs. DAISY PARSONS)
INAUGURATED THE FIRST TROLLEYBUS SERVICE
IN THE
COUNTY BOROUGH OF WEST HAM
ON THE
6th JUNE 1937

before we climb the stairs, and being the only passengers on the top deck, head for our favourite seats above the driver's head. We have to hang on to the grab rails as the trolleybus accelerates (as only an electric vehicle can) and veers left into West Ham Lane, throwing us into the seat.

The once white enamel ceiling has been stained a faded yellow by cigarette smoke but it still proudly carries the number 622 above the front windows. Several cloth capped men smoking Woodbines join us on the upper deck further along West Ham Lane until we trundle around the left hand bend into Church Street, slowing down for the points. At this moment the conductress comes up for our fares, issuing us with sevenpenny halves to Woolwich Ferry from her new Gibson ticket machine, though until recently we would have received a colourful card ticket from a bell punch.

Having passed the square towered West Ham Church, parts of which date back to Norman times, we enter an area



Above left: Another rebuild was 621A, an E2A rebodied by Weymanns in 1941. The bodies on such vehicles were framed with unseasoned timber and this was the only survivor in the West Ham area. Its sliding windows will be noted together with the stop and shelter for the through in the background at Stratford. *Alan B. Cross.* **Above right:** Brush-bodied E1 603 waits on the cobbles at Stratford Broadway in 1960. The author considered that the straight rainshields above the front upper deck windows gave these vehicles an angry look in comparison with newer types such as the L3s. The conductor is seen talking to the driver through the opening bulkhead window; it was not unknown for some conductors to spend much of quiet journeys seated in this part of the bus chatting with the driver. *J.H. Aston*



Above left: E2 627 is seen at the start of Silvertown Way, Canning Town. The stand for the 685, which was shared between West Ham and Walthamstow, is in the background. *J.H. Aston.* **Above right:** The blind of E2 608 has been already changed for the return trip. Boardmans on the north side of Stratford Broadway has long since gone as has the yet to be completed Co-op store to the right of the trolley in this 1960 view. *LTPS*

Below Left: The blind of L3 1498 is set for West Ham depot. The trolley is photographed at Young & Marten's corner in Stratford Broadway and is followed by an ex-North Western Road Car Bristol. *LTPS.* **Below right:** The background to this view of Poplar L3 1466 highlights the kind of changes that were taking place in the area in the late 1950s. The venue is the Trinity Church turning loop in Canning Town mentioned in the text. The blind display is of course incorrect and one hopes the driver knew to which end of route 567 he was going. *C. Carter*



which was heavily bombed during the war and only a handful of buildings survive fronting the main road like islands in a sea of waste. One such is the 'Slipper Baths' standing alone without another building within fifty yards. Our fellow passengers alight here to spruce themselves up in readiness for a night out for this is an area where few homes have bathrooms.

The sun begins to break through the mist as we come to the end of Church Street and turn left towards Plaistow Station passing more flattened sites, some with prefabs on them and some where building work has started for new blocks of flats. These large and mostly empty sites often enable one to see some distance across into other streets and even after we have travelled about quarter mile further along the road we can look back through the clearing mist and still see trolleybuses running along Church Street.

To the right a set of wires disappears into one of the side streets re-emerging from the next. This is Bull Road turning loop which is used by the many short workings between the docks and Plaistow in peak periods.

At Plaistow station the railway is at ground level. Originally there had been a level crossing, but before the trams came a bridge was constructed to take the road over the railway with a new station building on the top. Climbing the gradient of the bridge we catch a glimpse of a clerestory roofed District Line train entering the platforms next to the old London Tilbury and Southend Railway works. A 2-6-4 tank engine thunders by underneath with a rake of grimy compartment stock bound for Shoeburyness; and on the way down the other side the conductress has to leap off to pull the point switch on the traction standard so that we can take the set of wires that branch right at the bottom of the bridge. The top deck now fills up with passengers changing from the District Line as we turn right into Upper Road, parting company with the 697 and 699 which carry straight on to Plaistow Broadway and 'Docks'. Passing St. Mary's Hospital on the right we ascend another gradient to cross the embankment of the Northern Outfall Sewer which contains five pipes nine feet in diameter which carry effluent from North London to the Thames at Beckton sewage works.

Having descended on the other side we enter a drab area of small terraced houses. The route bends sharply to the right along Hermit Road and then follows a sweeping left hand curve around a small park to emerge at Barking Road amid yet more scenes of redevelopment. This junction is known locally as 'Trinity Church' although the church itself, which stood on the corner to our left, has now disappeared and flats are being built on the site. There is a turning loop around the site in question where two trolleybuses stand awaiting their next duty on the 669. This is a crew changeover point and we pull up short of the traffic signals to receive a fresh driver and conductor under the watchful eye of the inspector.

Below left: E2 605 lays over at Canning Town stand on route 685 in 1960. *Alan B. Cross.* **Below right:** In December 1958 the section of route 175 passing through West Ham (North Romford-Blackwall Tunnel) ran along the East Ham & Barking By-Pass (now Newham Way). Here RT323 (U) lays over at Blackwall Tunnel on a working from Chase Cross. *Alan B. Cross.* **Bottom left:** RT2731 from Upton Park (U) unloads at North Woolwich having worked from Manor Park. It will then make a U-turn to park behind the trolleybuses. The entrance to the foot tunnel under the river to Woolwich is visible on the other side of the road. *W.J. Haynes.* **Bottom right:** The old ferry loading ramps are seen to the right of L3 1398 at North Woolwich terminus in 1960. The station appears to be the subject of renovation work. *C. Carter*



Everyone seems to be talking at once and snippets of conversation come wafting over from behind. As we strain to keep straight faces at some of the gems of wisdom overheard the trolleybus moves off with the characteristic soft whining sound of the traction motors. We turn right, booms thudding across the wires on the main road and pass an RTW on route 106 waiting to turn right into Beckton Road. The traffic is quite heavy here for this is the A13 London-Tilbury trunk road along which cars and long distance lorries pass through the middle of the shopping centre of Canning Town. To our left past Woolworths, Rathbone Street Market is in full swing and a sea of heads fill the roadway between two rows of stalls leading off into the distance. Women armed with empty shopping bags pile off here to go 'up Rathbone' and their places are taken by others encumbered with laden bags and talking sixteen to the dozen about their latest acquisitions. On the other side of the road more shoppers are cramming themselves into an L3 on the 567, one of the busy trunk services which ply along the Barking and Commercial Roads.

Whilst the conductor stands by the roadside 'pulling the chain' our trolley booms swing left at the points in readiness for a left turn at the next traffic lights. Just before we reach the lights a set of wires leads off into a side street to the left and a 685 stands around the corner by an ugly electricity sub-station with its crew having a quiet smoke inside.

Standing grotesquely on the corner of the main junction facing us is a group of war damaged buildings some of which have been patched up and brought back into use, including a pub and a large cinema. Straight ahead the Iron Bridge (in fact a wide concrete structure retaining the name of an earlier bridge) crosses the River Lea to Poplar but as the lights change we turn left into the equally wide Silvertown Way which stretches out towards Dockland, lifting us after a short while to Silvertown Viaduct. This is another concrete structure completed in 1935 under an unemployment relief programme to take the road over the railway to North Woolwich and the barge entrance to the Royal Docks, as well as several streets of small factories. From here we can see some distance. To our right the Thames sweeps round beyond Thames Wharf railway sidings and to our left the rooftops of Keir Hardie Estate give way to the extensive PLA marshalling yards and then the Royal Victoria Dock. Nearest to us we see the 12,000 ton Libertad unloading meat from South America; and several berths along is Shaw Saville Lines' 26,000 ton Dominion Monarch, its two yellow funnels dominating the skyline.

On the downward gradient we pass one of the dock gates where a turning loop, used only for short workings, is formed in the wide entrance. At the foot of the viaduct we enter the narrow North Woolwich Road running alongside the Silvertown Tramway, a goods line which serves the numerous factories between the dock and the river edge. Most

Below left: The type of cigarette advertised on the side of 635C (a Northern Coachbuilders E3C rebuild) at North Woolwich dates this 1959 shot. Vehicles rebodied by NCB and East Lancs lacked an opening nearside cab window. *Alan B. Cross.* **Below right:** This shot was taken in 1957 between Silvertown and North Woolwich where the road runs parallel to the railway. Beyond Silvertown turning loop the side bracket arms mentioned in the text can be seen. 623C was an E2C rebuilt by Northern Coachbuilders in 1945/6 and at the time of the photograph was allocated to West Ham. *C. Carter.* **Bottom left:** Working a short to Plaistow Station E2 613 is seen at Silvertown Station with part of the Tate and Lyle complex in the background. *LTPS.* **Bottom right:** This 1955 shot of E1 601 in Silvertown Way gives a panoramic view of much that was typical of part of the routes traversed by West Ham trolleybuses. Note the wires suspended from 'cross the road' brackets rather than normal span wires. *C. Carter*



people work on Saturday mornings and the factories are alive with activity, smoke belching from their chimneys which emit all kinds of odd smells.

Shortly we come to another viaduct, this time with an impressive concrete girder bridge in the centre span, and this takes us up over part of the PLA railway and the North Woolwich-Palace Gates line (again) as well as a couple of roads. The whole area is in fact riddled with railways which impeded transit by road before the viaducts were built. In fact the trams did not reach the area at all and in the early days only the 106 bus route competed with the railway.

Since the trolleybuses were extended from Canning Town in 1938 they have captured the bulk of the passenger traffic and this, the longest of all extensions of a trolleybus service in London beyond the original tram route, has proved a roaring success. The railway still handles most of the goods to and from the docks and factories (with over 60 goods trains per day trundling up the North Woolwich line) but the passenger train service has dwindled from over 90 trains each weekday in the 1930s to approximately 25 trains each way today.

And so we enter a narrow corridor of road and railway squeezed between streets of terraced houses on one side, dominated by the ships in King George V Dock behind, and the large Tate and Lyle sugar refinery on the other. Silvertown station, with its tatty wooden buildings, sits tight up to the road and from here to North Woolwich we run alongside the railway, its three tracks close to the kerb on the other side of a flimsy chain link fence.

Passing number 626C (one of the vehicles rebodied by Northern Coachbuilders which are similar in general appearance to the N1 class) our spotters note pad reveals that this is the twentieth trolleybus that we have seen since leaving Stratford.

On the left an E1 on route 685 waits to turn out of one of the side streets comprising the Silvertown turning loop. Part of the 685 service is extended to this point during peak periods (including Sundays when many dockers still work) and in Monday-Friday peaks some 685s run through to North Woolwich. The 669 is also helped out in peak periods by one of the Commercial Road routes (569) giving a direct service to Aldgate. There follows another stretch where the trolley standards are fixed on one side of the road only, and here separate and ornately fluted lamp standards are provided instead of lanterns being fixed to the traction standards. We have now left Silvertown (named in the last century after the local water proofing works of S.W. Silver & Co.) and the County Borough of West Ham, passed through a small peice of East Ham and entered North Woolwich which is still part of the LCC area.

Shortly beyond where the railway curves off to North Woolwich station 622 sweeps right and we all file off at the stop just beyond the entrance to the Woolwich Free Ferry. Most of the passengers head across the road to the foot tunnel entrance for the half mile walk under the river to Woolwich, but a few choose the more pleasant alternative of a ride on the ferry by walking down the catwalks alongside the two girder ramps leading to the landing stage; and one or two join us in crossing the wide roadway to board a waiting RT from Upton Park (U) on the 101 stand.

Safely installed in our customary front seats we have a few minutes to enjoy the scenery whilst the driver and conductor take their layover downstairs. At the landing stage John Benn, one of the four magnificent paddle-boats that operate the ferry service, takes on the last of its load of cars and lorries, whilst her fellow steamer Gordon makes her way across the river towards us, her two long funnels wisping smoke at either end of the vehicle deck. Behind her, across the foul smelling water, Woolwich presents a tantalizing glimpse of activity in its streets. RTs appear momentarily

Left: 23A was the Sunday version of route 23 and was introduced in 1949 as a renumbering of route 163. Although it originally started from Wormwood Scrubs it had by the time of its withdrawal on 26th November 1958 been shortened to run from Ladbroke Grove to Becontree Heath. RTW59 (U) is seen at Ladbroke Grove. **Peter G. Mitchell.** **Right:** RTL68 from Camberwell (Q) leaves London Bridge in heavy traffic. In December 1958 route 40 operated in its basic form between Wanstead and Camberwell Green. It is another old route having been introduced in 1912 between Elephant & Castle and Upton Park (Duke of Edinburgh); it soon received extensions at both ends to Wanstead and Norwood with summer Sunday forays to Epping Forest. **Alan B. Cross**



in the gaps between buildings accompanied by the odd trolleybus on one of the isolated Bexleyheath (BX) routes.

Our bus rocks as the driver leaps into his cab and starts up the engine, shattering the peace in which we have travelled so far. We pull out past 622, which has turned in the road to its stand, and bounce across the cobbles, around the bend and into the main road. Turning right, we bid a temporary farewell to the trolleybus wires and take the tortuous route through Manor Way across the narrow lock bridges at the eastern end of the docks. These bridges can cause long delays when they are opened to let a large ship through and on such occasions you have plenty of time to reflect upon which far off port the ship saw last. Because of these delays route 101 is split into two (North Woolwich-Manor Park; Royal Albert Dock-Wanstead) and where they overlap the route is one of London's most frequent, running every one to two minutes in peak periods. The aforementioned bridges undoubtedly militated against the conversion of tram route 73 (Royal Albert Dock-Wanstead Park) to trolleybuses when it was withdrawn in 1936 since difficulties would have been encountered with the poles and wires. Had such a conversion taken place there might have been a route 673 but instead the trams were largely replaced with a strengthened service on the 101 plus peak hour extensions of the 25C (Victoria Station-East Ham) to North Woolwich.

Just north of the docks we pass the former Manor Way station, a shabby timber building now used as a café. It was on the Custom House-Gallions branch, once an important line bringing boat trains to the passenger landing stage at Gallions Reach where the mock tudor hotel formerly used by some of these ocean travellers still stands as a monument to a more glorious past. The Gallions branch was closed in 1940 following bomb damage and there is now a special Custom House-Manor Way bus service within the docks run by RTLs from Athol Street (C) and RTWs from CL for dock workers.

The bus continues past the small community of prefabs and terraced houses around Cyprus Place (the terminus of the northern section of the route) and then through the marshy wastelands of Beckton, reserved for the future expansion of the docks. We pass over the level crossing with the Custom House-Beckton coke line and under an ornate railway bridge, observing the impressive slag heap known as Beckton Alps at the foot of which an 0-4-0 tank engine shunts a train of wagons from the Beckton gasworks. Continuing up Manor Way we cross the East Ham and Barking By-Pass (served by routes 106 and 175), and for the second time the embankment of the Northern Outfall Sewer.

We soon reach the centre of East Ham and hastily noting down the numbers of the three RTWs on route 15 and the RT on route 147 on the White Horse stand, we make our way through the bus, which has become quite crowded by now, to get off opposite East Ham Town Hall. At the back of the Town Hall in Nelson Street are the old East Ham Corporation tram sheds. These are now used as a council depot, but the tram tracks can still be seen outside the entrance doors. A set of trolleybus wires are strung along Nelson Street as part of the turning loop which runs around the Town Hall block. This had once been the terminus of trolleybus 565, a peak hour only service from Holborn Circus which became a victim of service cuts in 1956 (having been extended to Barking in 1952 and cut back to West India Docks in 1955).

The RT then carries on across the Barking Road lights into the crowded High Street North whilst we walk around the corner to the stop opposite the Granada cinema. The first bus along is roof box RT167 (recently drafted into Barking (BK) from Old Kent Road (P) on the latter's closure) heading for Marylebone on route 23 which roars past the short queue without stopping as the conductor signals that it is full up. The moans and grumbles start immediately: "I've been here for twenty minutes!" says the fat lady in front of us who arrived just before us five minutes ago, and "Yes, I waited nearly half an hour for a bus to Canning Town last week, then five come along at once!" says another. This starts off a general round of adverse comments which encompass the weather, Teddy Boys, skiffle groups and the price of sausages and it is a great relief when two 665s arrive to take on the old groaners. Both 665s are L3s, the first running into Poplar Depot (PR) and the second going through to Bloomsbury. These are followed closely by N2 1668 on the 689 which has just turned right out of High Street North to head back on its circular route towards Stratford before it pulls up in response to our outstretched arms to allow us to join its load of homeward bound shoppers.

The front seats of the top deck by the distinctive thick corner pillars are full so we have to take a seat about half way down for the ride along the busy Barking Road to the Boleyn traffic lights. The trunk services on Barking Road, like those on the parallel Romford Road through Stratford, are intensive with bus, trolleybus and Green Line routes providing a frequent service through to Aldgate. The bus routes provide considerable variety with RTs on the 23, RTWs on the 15 and, at the Boleyn, RTs and RTLs on route 40 from Wanstead. The pattern changes on Sundays when the 23's RTs are used on route 9 which is extended to run all the way from Mortlake to Becontree Heath. Until recently there was a Sunday only RTW route 23A from Becontree Heath to Ladbroke Grove.

Turning right at the Boleyn into Green Street we stop opposite a 690 whose conductor is pulling the long bamboo pole out from underneath in order to lower the booms so that other trolleybuses may pass. Beyond West Ham United football ground (near which Boleyn Castle formerly stood where Henry VIII is said to have courted Ann Boleyn) we pass another crowded street market at Queens Road just this side of Upton Park station. On the corner stands the imposing Queens Hotel next to a small square with subterranean toilets in the middle.

Beyond the District Line station the pavements are crowded with people doubtless attracted by the big chain stores such as Woolworths and British Home Stores that are located in this part of Green Street, not to mention numerous



Left: John Benn (whose namesake had been chairman of the LCC in 1904) was one of the paddle boats that plied between Woolwich and North Woolwich. The latter was until the creation of the county of Greater London part of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich together with another small enclave on the northern side of the river. This anomaly had its origin in the eleventh century when the Sheriff of Kent had had landed interests in Essex. *Pamlin Prints.* **Right:** The scene at the top of Green Street where it joins Barking Road is unchanged today except that the building in the extreme right has been demolished. N2 1665 from West Ham has just passed Finden Road turning loop in the background. *C. Carter*



Left: The 106 was a long established route that had its origins in an 87 (Colney Hatch Lane-Archway) but by December 1985 ran from Finsbury Park to Becontree Heath (Chitty's Lane). Here RTW413 from Hackney (H) bounces over the cobblestones that were typical of the area as it crosses Mile End Road on a short working to Blackwall Tunnel. *W.J. Haynes.* **Right:** Another Northern Coachbuilders rebuild was this E1C numbered 578C. It is seen here at the Princess Alice in Forest Gate in 1959. *LTPS*

small shops. On the other side of the road the bus queue spills into the road as people jostle to board a 40 bus bound for Camberwell Green and a 685 trolleybus which is pulling in behind it.

Having done its share of loading and unloading our 689 passes Plashet Grove on the right (where it started its loop working some 15 minutes before) as the conductor leaps out to switch the points for the tight left turn into Plashet Road. Preparing to get off at the second stop in Plashet Road we meet the conductor on the way downstairs and part company with our twopences as 1668 pulls up to deposit us where we started two hours ago. It trundles off across the cobbles to Stratford and we start to formulate plans for a longer trip next week: shall we go to Hammersmith to see the Q1s or ride up to North Finchley and the Tally Ho!?

* * *

And so the vision fades almost thirty years on. The County Borough of West Ham has formed part of the London Borough of Newham since 1965. Road widening and reconstruction have eliminated the cobblestones which were a feature of the local trolleybus routes and large scale redevelopment has obliterated almost all the bomb sites and many of the streets of terraced houses. 'Inner city decline' has accomplished much that Hitler failed to and parts of West Ham are not the desirable area they were. In the 1950s Silvertown and the Royal Docks were thriving places, part of the largest and busiest port in the world. Today there are wide expanses of dereliction and the Docks are closed. Yet with the massive Dockland redevelopment scheme now taking shape changes are afoot which will undoubtedly have their effect upon the area's transport patterns.

Thanks are due to Ken Blacker, Les Stitson and Malcolm Papes for the provision of much invaluable information, and also to the Local Studies section of Stratford Library for their assistance with certain historical details.

APPENDIX A

At the time of the journeys described WH operated the following routes:

Route	Details	WH allocation (November 1958)		
		Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
567	Barking-Aldgate (Extended peaks, Sat & Sun to Smithfield)	11a	10b	7
665	Barking-Bloomsbury		(Joint with PR)	
569	North Woolwich-Aldgate (Weekday peaks & Sun am)			
669	Stratford Broadway-North Woolwich	39c	23	11d
685	Walthamstow-Canning Town (Extended peaks, & Sun pm to Silvertown Station. Some Mon-Fri peak journeys to North Woolwich)	29e	29f	9
			(Joint with WW)	
687	Walthamstow-Victoria & Albert Docks	21	18	10
689	Stratford-Plashet Grove-Green Street-Stratford	} 11g	15	6
690	Stratford-Green Street-Plashet Grove-Stratford			
697	Chingford Mount-Victoria & Albert Docks via Freemasons Road			
699	Chingford Mount-Victoria & Albert Docks via Prince Regent Lane	28h	27i	15
			(Joint with WW)	

a: + 7 off 669 and 1 off 685

b: + 1 off 685 and 2 off 689/90

c: + 1 off 689/90

d: + 4 off 685, 2 off 687 and 1 off 689/90

e: + 2 off 669

f: + 6 off 669

g: + 1 off 669

h: + 6 off 669 and 7 off 687

i: + 5 off 687

APPENDIX B

Vehicle allocation at WH (December 1958):

E1 575, 577-94, 596, 597, 599, 602C, 603

E2 604-20, 621A, 622, 624-8

E3 629, 633, 635, 641, 643 (all C)

J2 967-9, 973-7, 979, 982, 984

L3 1381-4, 1385B, 1386, 1388-1406, 1453-60

1473, 1495-9, 1501-6, 1521-9

M1 1530-9, 1541, 1542, 1544, 1546-8

N2 1645, 1646, 1651, 1654, 1656-60, 1663-9

APPENDIX C

Vehicle types:

Number	Class	Registration No.	Chassis	Body	Seating	Built
554-603	E1	DLY 554-603	AEC 664T	Brush	H70R	1937
604-628	E2	DLY 604-628	AEC 664T	Weymann	H70R	1937
629-653	E3	DLY 629-653	AEC 664T	Park Royal	H70R	1937
955-999	} J2	ELB 955-999	{ AEC 664T	BRCW	H70R	1938
1000		EXX 10				
1001-1029		EXV 1-29				
1381-1529	L3	FXH 381-529	MCCW chassisless	MCCW	H70R	1939
1520-1554	M1	FXH 530-554	AEC/MCW	Weymann	H70R	1939
1645-1669	N2	FXH 645-669	AEC 664T	Park Royal	H70R	1939

Rebodying

A suffix: Rebuilt 1941 by Weymann

B suffix: Rebuilt 1945-8 by East Lincs

C suffix: Rebuilt 1945-6 by NCB

The Rovers Return



Above left: Introduced on 23rd January 1966 route 171A was a Sundays only replacement for parts of routes 171 and 180 and ran between Tottenham (Bruce Grove) and Abbey Wood. It was withdrawn on 9th January 1972 and was replaced by the 171 and 180A. This wintry shot of RM49 (New Cross) was taken at Manor House. *J.G.S. Smith.* **Above right:** Route 171A was reintroduced on 1st February 1986 to run weekdays only from Tottenham (Bruce Grove) to Waterloo replacing the 171 north of Rosebery Avenue. M772 (Tottenham) was seen here in Waterloo in March. From 22nd June the 171A will run on Sundays between Northumberland Park Station and Waterloo replacing the northern end of the 171 and providing a Sunday service for the first time to the Lansdowne Road area of Tottenham. *Colin Fradd.* **Below left:** Route 287 began life on 15th August 1962 linking Barking and Brentwood as a replacement for the northern end of the 87 but on 31st December 1966 was diverted to run from Brentwood to Hornchurch where this 1969 view of RT3168 (North Street) was taken. The route was withdrawn on 18th July 1970 and replaced in part by the 87. *Colin Stannard.* **Below right:** It was just over twelve years before route 287 saw its next incarnation when it took the form of a service between Rainham and Barking with a weekday extension to Becontree replacing this time the southern end of the 87. This view of T191 (Barking) was taken in Barking on 4th September 1982, the date of the route's reintroduction. *Colin Fradd*



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