

London Bus Magazine

Summer 1987

Number 61



London Omnibus Traction Society



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CONTENTS SUMMER 1987

LBM 61

Around & About	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
The Overground Story by D. W. K. Jones	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Potters Bar Update	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Strange Visitors	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	40
Odds & Ends	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Hop on a Hoppa	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
From Tunbridge Wells to Leatherhead Matters Arising	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	48

Front cover: The new maroon and cream livery of Kentish Bus seems to enhance the appearance of SNB359 (DG) at the top of St John's Hill, Sevenoaks, though how such vehicles will look when bespattered with wintry grime is another matter. At first fleet numbers were placed on the first window along the side of the vehicle, although this was only a temporary measure now that renumbering of the fleet is complete. *R. S. Godfrey*

Back cover: As a reminder of Kentish Bus' lineage we show what could have been expected in Sevenoaks in the days before even London Country. Crew RTs were still common on routes such as the 421 and RT1000 awaits its departure on the then daily crew service to Heverham in 1962. The backdrop is the ever familiar Sevenoaks bus station. *R. H. G. Simpson*

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Around & About



The use given to the ultimate blind in route X68's white on blue display is noteworthy in this shot of L170 near Waterloo in November. In the opposite direction 'First set down WEST NORWOOD' is shown. Malcolm E. Papas

LRT Route Tenders

KINGSTON

Six of the seven Kingston routes put out to competitive tender last December have been awarded to London Buses as follows:-

- 65 Ealing Broadway – Kingston
- 71 Richmond – Chessington Zoo
- 85 Putney Bridge Station – Kingston
- 213 Kingston – Belmont/St Helier/Sutton/Croydon
- K1 New Malden – Malden Manor – Surrey Estate – Tolworth – Surbiton
- K2 Hook – Tolworth – Surbiton – Kingston – Kingston Hospital

Routes K1 and K2, together with existing route 215 to be renumbered K3, will be operated by midibuses and it is planned to base them at a re-opened Kingston (K) base run by London Buses' subsidiary company, Westlink.

The seventh route was awarded to London County South West:-

- 131 West Molesey – Wimbledon/Clapham Common

The full programme of changes, including related alterations to existing routes 152, 216, 281 and 285 in the Kingston area, is expected (at the time of the announcement) to be introduced on 27th June.

BEXLEYHEATH AND THAMESMEAD

Following the preliminary consultation process for the proposed revised network of services in Bexleyheath and Thamesmead, the following routes have been put out to competitive tender:-

- 96 Woolwich – Dartford
- 99 Woolwich – Erith
- 132 Eltham – Bexleyheath
- 178 Lewisham – Thamesmead, Eastern Industrial Estate
- 228A/C Eltham – Chislehurst (circular service re-tendered)
- 229 Sidcup – Erith (service re-tendered)
- 233 Eltham – Swanley
- 244 Woolwich – Broadwaters Estate
- 269 Bexleyheath – Bromley
- 272 Woolwich – Thamesmead, Bentham Road
- 291 Woolwich – Woodland Estate
- L1 Bexleyheath – Lodge Hill
- L2 Bexleyheath – Erith
- L3 Blackfen, Halfway Street – Bexleyheath
- L4 Erith – Slade Green – Bexleyheath
- L5 Welling Corner – Bexleyheath – Joydens Wood
- T1 Woolwich – Bedonwell Road – Bexleyheath
- T2 Woolwich – Thamesmead – Belvedere – Bexleyheath – Bexley/Wilmington Common
- T3 Woolwich Common – Woolwich – Erith – Bexleyheath
- T4 Sidcup – North Cray – Bexleyheath – Dartford

HARROW

Another consultation exercise has been conducted in the Harrow area resulting in a further batch of routes put out for tender. They are as follows:-

- 114 Ruislip Lido/Station – Mill Hill
- 136 Harrow – Northwick Park
- 140 Heathrow Airport – Harrow Weald
- 183 Golders Green – Pinner
- 209 South Harrow – Stanmore, (peak hours only)
- 258 South Harrow – Harrow Hill – Harrow – Watford Junction (route re-tendered)
- 340 South Harrow – Edgware (part of existing route 140)
- H1 Harrow – Kenton – Wealdstone – Rayners Lane – South Harrow – Harrow – Northwick Park Hospital
- M1 Northwood – Harrow
- M2 Harrow Weald – Pinner – Rayners Lane – South Harrow
- M3 Ruislip Lido – Pinner
- M4 Hatch End/Harrow Weald – Harrow – Northwick Park Hospital

The future of Elmtree Transport's route 98B (Rayners Lane – Ruislip) was unclear at the time when these proposals were released as many of the roads served by the 98B would be covered under the revised network.

ROUTES OFFERED FOR RE-TENDER

New tenders have also been sought for a number of existing routes already operated by London Buses under contract to LRT. The decision to re-tender these routes followed a financial review which showed that London Buses' full costs of operation of the routes concerned were not being covered by the present contract prices. The routes are as follows:-

- 79A Edgware – Alperton (to be renumbered 79)
- 84A Turnpike Lane – Barnet (to be renumbered 384)
- 125 North Finchley – Winchmore Hill
- 179 Barking – Chingford
- 179A Chingford – Yardley Lane Estate (to be renumbered 379)
- 261 Bromley Common – Lewisham

In addition, as indicated above, tendered routes 152, 215, 228A/C and 258 are being re-tendered or re-negotiated.

ROUTE 292

Out-county route 292 (Colindale – Borehamwood) has also been put out to tender in conjunction with Hertfordshire CC and the contract, awarded to London Country North East, will commence on 6th June.



On 7th February a new (and very short) route 244 was introduced between Woolwich (General Gordon Place) and Broadwaters. On return to Woolwich the bus becomes a 291. This situation is catered for by one turn of the ultimate blind, as can be seen from these views of L124 and L126 in Woolwich on 18th April. Both Colin Fradd

'Autocheck' introduced

The new experimental Bus Ticketing System (reported in LBM 58) known as 'Autocheck' was eventually introduced in Thamesmead and Bexley on 22nd March. Its main object is to speed up boarding times on opo buses.

Each bus involved in the experiment is equipped with two indicators (called bus readers), one placed behind the driver, the other over the nearside wheel arch. Holders of the new style magnetically-coded Travelcards or Passes insert their cards in the validators which illuminate a sign indicating the type of card being inserted, i.e. child, adult or concessionary fare passenger. At the same time a high-pitched bleeping sound is emitted signifying that the card is valid, but in cases when a card is not valid a much harsher sound is heard. The two types of validation being evaluated are Wayfarer and Thorn EMI.

A heavy publicity campaign accompanied the start of the experiment with over 160,000 leaflets produced mainly for house to house distribution. Special leaflets for the elderly also had to be printed advising Travel Permit holders to obtain a bus reader card from post offices in the area. Vehicles involved in the experiment (mainly Leyland Olympians) display special 'Autocheck' posters.



At the end of January Croydon (TC) began to play host to Ls and by early February they had become the predominant type there. Ls represent the last influx of genuinely new vehicles into the fleet for the foreseeable future, a fact made more poignant by the closure of the Eastern Coach Works at Lowestoft on 30th January. L135 was photographed in Croydon on 6th April. Colin Fradd

During January the H class began to re-enter service at Stockwell (SW). H2 crosses Parliament Square on 11th March. Colin Fradd



New legal title trading for London Country South East

London Country South East is now known as 'The Kentish Bus and Coach Company' with matching fleetname 'Kentish Bus' and a new livery of cream and maroon. The first vehicle repainted in the style were AN207 and SNB 359 (at Ensign's, Purfleet) which both entered service on 13th March at Northfleet (NF) and Dunton Green (DG) respectively. The company's routes are in the process of being renumbered; the fleet itself has been completely renumbered as from 27th April.

AN24 from Dunton Green (DG) shows off the new Kentish Bus livery and is seen passing through the Kent countryside at Twitton on 18th April. From 30th May Sevenoaks area bus services were revised and renumbered, the former 404 (Ide Hill-Shoreham) becoming 24. R. S. Godfrey.





More New Contracts

Above left: The contract for route 196 was initially awarded to LCSE but in fact passed to Cityrama on 7th February. Twelve ex-South Yorkshire PTE Fleetlines were acquired for this purpose most of which, including ECW-bodied 26 seen at Norwood Junction on 6th April, carry wrap-round advertisements for Pegasus Holidays. Colin Fradd Above: Tendered route 289 was also to have been operated by LCSE but in the event the contract was taken up on 7th February by LCSW. SNB352 from Chesham (CM) carries a good load on the first day of operation in St James's Road, West Croydon. R. J. Waterhouse Left: The 42 *did* go to LCSE and was initially operated out of Catford (NL). On the closure of this garage on 28th February the vehicles were moved to Victoria (coded VE) but actually parked at the NBC's Battersea Coach Park. SNB445, one of the buses subsequently transferred, was photographed on 7th February in Tower Bridge Approach. R. J. Waterhouse Below left:

The use of a brand name ('Eastender Bus') obviously derived from the television soap will perhaps seem inappropriate to some, but if it helps sell the service so much the better. Route 173 is now contracted to Dix of Dagenham, part of Grey Green. Ex-South Yorkshire PTE MCW-bodied Fleetlines in orange, brown and white livery are used on the service, exemplified here by OKW 519R at East Beckton on 18th April. Eamonn Kentell

New bus timetable service for enthusiasts

LRT has recently introduced – with bus enthusiasts particularly in mind – a new annual subscription service for the supply of individual route panel timetables. The following options are available to subscribers:-

£10 – Panel timetables only

£5 – A set of current panel timetables but without the updating service. Subscriptions run from April to March the following year when they must be renewed before further despatches can be made. Subscribers who join half way through the year will be required to pay the full annual amount. Application forms can be obtained from the Distribution Section, Advertising & Publicity Office, London Regional Transport, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD or by telephoning 01-222 5600 ext. 2389 during office hours.

Bus radio equipment to be replaced by 1995

According to a request in *LRT News*, London Buses will be required to replace its fleet-wide radio equipment in order to comply with new government regulations. At present, existing radio frequencies are saturated so the Home Office has ruled that by 1995 all British bus companies using radio equipment must change their systems to a range of VHF frequencies previously used for 405-line television.

The total cost to London Buses for the installation of the new equipment could amount to as much as £10m – double the cost of the present system.

Stagecoach of Perth operate a number of Routemasters under the trading name of Magicbus in Glasgow where they perform on route 20 which serves Castlemilk (said to be the largest housing development in Europe). Despite the registration this is Leyland engined RM560. Steve Fennell



End of the London Liner?

London Coaches, the coaching and private hire arm of London Buses Ltd, withdrew from its share of both London Liner services on 28th March after just a year's operation of the Birmingham service and only ten months of the Eastbourne service. The decision resulted from a detailed review of the current and projected performance of the two services.

West Midlands Travel, which had jointly operated the Birmingham service, has however continued to operate the service although in a somewhat reduced and altered form. London Coaches' other London Liner partner, Eastbourne Coaches, had already pulled out of the Eastbourne service from 26th February, latterly participating in the service only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In the meantime, London Coaches are considering whether to operate a revised Eastbourne service during the summer months only.



Eastern National finally took up operation of route 359 on 25th January when this view of 3312 was obtained in High Road, Tottenham. From this date the route was withdrawn on weekdays between Waltham Cross and Hammond Street, between which points the weekday service is provided by the 383, a commercial operation by LCNE. The rural nature of the latter point (linked directly by Routemaster with Smithfield not so long ago) is apparent in this view of LR59 on 18th April. R. J. Waterhouse, Eamonn Kentell



More London Buses garages to close

In a further bid to reduce costs, London Buses have announced the proposed closure of another three garages this summer while the future of four others is uncertain. The three to close are Clapton (CT), Hendon (AE) and Wandsworth (WD) and brings to 11 the number of garages closed since November 1985. Those garages under threat of closure are Seven Kings (AP), Harrow Weald (HD), Sidcup (SP) or Plumstead (PD) and one in Wandle District. The future of Seven Kings is dependent on whether London Buses are able to purchase some land behind Bow (BW) garage so that the latter can be expanded. The future of the others hinges on whether London Buses are successful in winning route tenders (reported elsewhere in this issue). Norbiton (NB) which had also been listed as a possible closure will stay open following London Buses' successful bid for most of the Kingston tenders.

As part of the reorganisation of vehicle allocations following the closure of Clapton this summer, a new open-air operating base is to open at Waterloo for all the Red Arrow services.



A somewhat complicated story surrounds the introduction of LCSW route H3 in Horsham. The closure of Southdown's Horsham depot to traffic on 24th January saw LCSW take over the Monday-Friday peak operation of route 292 to Oakhill Estate with an SNB, whilst Tillingbourne provided the Saturday service, its operation being exemplified by a Plaxton-bodied Reliance at Horsham Station on 31st January.

R. J. Waterhouse LCSW subsequently numbered their journeys H3 in readiness for the Horsham minibus scheme introduced on 21st February. The final piece to the jigsaw was completed when LCSW took over the Monday-Friday off-peak service on 21st March, re-introducing an SNB as insufficient Sherpas (made redundant at Guildford) were available. Bryant Homes SNB350 is seen on 18th February in Depot Road during the first phase of National operation.

R. S. Godfrey



Light Railways for London streets?

The possibility of Docklands style trains (promptly dubbed as 'trams' by the press) operating along some London suburban streets, is among the suggestions in a preliminary joint study* of light railways by LRT and BR.

A case study is to focus on a possible network of routes in the Croydon area including the use of streets through the town centre. The study, which is expected to take about six months, will also look at the effects of adapting some BR branch lines to light railways including new stopping points and an extension of the system across the town centre to New Addington.

The three other case studies will be based on the East London line, the outer ends of the Central line and a proposed link between the Metropolitan line and BR in the Croyley area. David Bayliss, LRT's Director of Planning, speculated that in the long term "it might even be possible to convert some major bus routes, including those in central London from Paddington to Marble Arch, Victoria and Oxford Circus to trams."

* *Light Rail for London?* published jointly by LRT and Network South East. (Price £5)



Above: No Ts at T! This of course was why LSs appeared on Sundays following the conversion of the 55. LS432 looks somehow out of place in Piccadilly on 8th February on a route served by 'tourist' RMLs during the week. R. J. Waterhouse

OPO Developments

Yet more daily OPO was introduced on 7th February with the conversion of routes 30, 109, 149 and 237. Sunday crew operation was further reduced with the conversion of the Sunday service on routes 13, 14, 22, 29, 55, 88 and 137 as part of the same changes. 28th March and 14th April saw the conversion of routes 207 and 43 respectively.

Revised Fares on Out-County services

LONDON REGIONAL TRANSPORT

Fares on most LRT out-county services were revised on 29th March (routes 20 and 167 on 12th April) reflecting either the particular requirements of the supporting County Councils or changes to London Country farescales. On most Surrey routes and in Hertfordshire the minimum adult fare was raised to 30p, though some local fares in Watford and Borehamwood were subject to slight reductions. Child fares were generally standardised to half the adult fares. There were no changes to the availability of Travelcards and Bus passes except these have ceased to be valid on route 242 since 18th April.

LONDON COUNTRY NORTH EAST

A general 5% increase was made to most medium and long distance fares from 29th March. Short distance fares in Hertfordshire were however rounded down.

LONDON COUNTRY NORTH WEST

A similar increase was made on 29th March similar to that introduced by LCNE though fares for journeys up to 1½ miles were either unchanged or reduced to conform to LCNE scales in Hertfordshire. On 14th February a reduction was implemented on route 347/8 between Harefield and Uxbridge to make LCNW fares more competitive with the new service operated by C&S Travel introduced on 9th February.

LONDON COUNTRY SOUTH EAST

Fares were revised on 11th January averaging around 7%. A new Travelwide ticket was introduced in Dartford on 28th March to combat competition from other operators.

LONDON COUNTRY SOUTH WEST

Most fares were increased on 29th March, the minimum adult fare being raised from 17p to 18p.

Right: The same changes introduced new OPO route 14A to Central London running Monday-Saturday from Piccadilly Circus to Hornsey Rise (via 14) thence to Turnpike Lane Station (via 41). M1117(HT) was caught at Euston on 20th February. Colin Fradd



Right: With the route's conversion to OPO, the weekday operation of the 109 finally parted company with the section from Embankment via Blackfriars and Elephant to Kennington. London Road, Croydon provides the background to M1100 on 7th February. R. J. Waterhouse



Right: M754 at Stamford Hill on 5th April highlights both the reduced status of route 149 and the attractive livery of red, white and black now to be found on some Leaside vehicles. Colin Fradd



The Overground Story

by D W K Jones

The recent tendering of routes by LRT and their operation, in some cases by small companies, should remind us of the 'twenties and 'thirties when a large number of independents existed in London until they succumbed either to the General or the London Passenger Transport Board. In the earliest days of the pirates, say up to the end of 1924, these bold new interlopers were exactly that: cut-and-thrust at the steering wheel, courtesy and gallantry on the rear platform, and daring in tactics, switching destination boards like a pirate ship changing flags. The Great North Road offered rich pickings: Alberta, Central, X-Service, Drake & McCowen, Reliable, Hav-a-Ride with other exotic names

appearing, some with their odd Daimlers and Straker Squires, mostly at weekends, and mostly under the 127 or 206 flag. They snatched the booty of full loads from the General's boiling Bs and pathetic crawling Ks, and must have given many a tram driver the fright of his life.

Many of these earlier independents showed little enterprise in route development, preferring to work duties on General's established routes. There were exceptions: City established the 536 (Highgate-Elmers End and Beckenham) still recognisable in part as the 137. Birch developed the 214 (Hendon Central – Mill Hill Broadway), extant today as a lengthened 113. Overground's contributions in-

ST529 (24) on route 284 and D10 on route 629 lay over in the spacious forecourt of Potters Bar garage in March 1933. Neither route was to retain its identity for much longer: the 284 was renumbered 134 in October 1934 and the 629 lost its Enfield West workings in February of that year, becoming part of the 29 in October. Today some of the roads are covered by parts of route 298. D. W. K. Jones



The only known view of any Dangerfield bus on route 4 is that of XO 8490, a Leyland LB2 with Dodson body, the early examples of which could be recognised by the inverted L-shaped panel at the offside rear. The bus was numbered 6 in the Carlton fleet.

G. J. Robbins collection



B371 works from the old Holloway (J) garage on a short lived route 4 in 1912. The number was chosen, coincidentally or otherwise, for Carlton's similar route some eleven years later.

Malcolm E. Papes collection



involved the 284/285 group (Victoria – Hadley Highstone, Potters Bar and Arkley) still to be seen as the 134, together with the 307 (Whetstone – Enfield Town), a number reborn on 27th September 1986 for Eastern National's tendered operation (Arkley – Brimsdown Station); and finally some development of the northern end of the 29 now partially recognisable as the 298. The network based on Potters Bar (PB) has also developed over the years.

What follows is the story of Overground, known on its tickets and publicity material as 'Dangerfield's Overground Service', a title reflecting the dominant role played in the history of Overground by Walter James Dangerfield whose influence was not totally extinguished until he retired long after the transfer of his undertaking to the LGOC and later LPTB.

It is not easy to write impersonally about a chapter in one's personal history which remains so

vivid, so I hope that I may be excused the occasional lapse into reminiscence. Among the two hundred and more independent concerns which operated a maximum of over 600 buses on London streets between 1922 and 1934, a few stand out as being soundly-based and well-managed. The largest included City Motor Omnibus Co. with about 40 buses and 30 coaches, Birch Bros. with a fairly steady total of 27 buses and some coaches, and Overground Ltd. which reached 37 buses in its independent days, and expanded to 53 buses as an associated company of the LGOC. Details of the Overground fleet will be found in appendices I and II below.

Features common to all three of these operators were (i) sound planning; each carved out a new and imaginative route or routes on which to concentrate its resources; (ii) good engineering back-up and maintenance; and (iii) dynamic management. There



Top: Jaunty hard-top hats and full uniforms were always the rule for the crews as can be seen in this view of XO 3160 on route 284A in 1924. At that time it was numbered 4 in the Carlton fleet, but with renumbering the vehicle (a Leyland LB2 new in 1923 with Dodson 48-seat body) became 24. D. W. K. Jones Above left: The Northern Straker-Squire, XP 2039, with its rather high-built Straker body, polished ornate radiator shell and gleaming wheel hubs, not to mention the oil headlamps as fitted originally, looked somewhat antiquated, even in 1924, but was quite fast for its day. After experimental sallies on the 27 and 29, the Straker settled down to work a regular schedule on the 284, in informal association with Dangerfield, who eventually acquired the Northern business in June 1926. W. Noel Jackson Above right: MH 5067, Overground 38, rests at Hadley Highstone after being topped up with water, a ritual performed after every trip by the water-carrier stationed at Hadley. He can be seen chatting to the driver in this 1931 view. D. W. K. Jones

were other concerns which shared the second and third characteristics (Chocolate Express, Premier, and Westminster come to mind), but it is significant that City, Birch, and Overground all pinned their faith on establishing a frequent and reliable route of their own selection, and in each case picked a winner. City established the 536, Birch the trio of 526 (North Finchley-Wandsworth Bridge), 214 and 231 based on Hendon Central and Hampstead respectively, and Overground the 284/285 group.

It is also significant that Birch and Overground selected routes which partly paralleled tram services of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways which were slow and outdated at the time. In addition to being quicker and cheaper, the buses drained off through traffic by extending to parts the trams couldn't reach. Thus Overground's 284 followed the 19 tram for the whole distance from Barnet to Euston and then carried on to the lucrative West End and Whitehall offering civil servants a single

seat to transport them from home to office. Other independents did the same: witness A.T.Bennett's Admiral service which covered almost wholly Metropolitan tram 29 and then ran on to Victoria, saucily using the number 529 for its schedules.

Overground's founder, Walter James Dangerfield, a rough diamond of a man, foresaw the pattern of change. The future lay, not with pirates, but with well-planned independents, offering new routes and/or cheaper or better service at regular intervals. Dangerfield was the first to establish his

own route, modestly enough at first, with a single 48-seat Leyland LB2, XN 3091, using the Carlton fleetname and registered in the name of Dangerfield Ltd. Without previous publicity the gleaming chocolate and cream XN 3091 started work on route 4 from Victoria to Muswell Hill Broadway: nothing like this had been seen before in Muswell Hill, the stronghold of double and single deck B-types. Soon XN 3091 was joined by others till eight Carlton buses were working between Muswell Hill and Victoria, giving regular and direct access to the West

Below left: Leyland LB2 XO 3813 (formerly 5 and renumbered 25) poses in Hadley in 1932, this probably being its last photograph before withdrawal. The bus had lasted well for the time. J. F. Higham Below right: The fleet number 3 of Dennis 4-ton XT 5517 is visible where the garage code would be found today. This rare view was taken at Victoria on 28th July 1929 showing the Hatfield destination reached only on summer Sundays. W. Noel Jackson Bottom: Before making its long run south on 15th July 1927 XW 8817 Dennis 4-ton 20 rests at Hadley. The white number stencil and ultimate destination of HADLEY HIGHSTONE via BARNET are of interest. W. Noel Jackson





Above left: The last Leyland to be delivered to Overground whilst independent was YP 5287 (33) and was only a year old when photographed at Hadley on 15th July 1927. This view shows that the vehicle probably received a Dodson body of an earlier date as is evidenced by the inverted L-panel at the rear. W. Noel Jackson Above right: Still retaining the original domed metal mudguards of 1924 Dennis XW 5379 (17) was photographed in Hadley in 1927. Many of these had been replaced by plain bentwood guards after numerous encounters. D. W. K. Jones

End, something never before enjoyed by the locals apart from a short period in 1912 when the LGOC ran a route 4 between the same points, which probably explains the use of the number '4', so unlike the usual run of independent route numbers. The precise starting date of the new service is rather hazy. Dangerfield Ltd. was registered on 9th February 1923 and XN 3091 licensed on 27th March 1923. Route 4 certainly started soon after this, but there were preliminary runs elsewhere as the chocolate and cream buses probed prospects on General's 24, 27 and 29 for example. The restrictions of the London Traffic Act of 1924 had yet to hit them!

Dangerfield was astutely planning ahead, no

doubt with the forthcoming London Traffic Act in mind. In May 1924, he began operating a 284A (Victoria-Hadley Highstone) on which he gradually built up a fleet of twenty 45-hp Dennis buses licensed in his own name, and running with the fleetname 'OVERGROUND'. All had Dodson bodies and his connection with the respected firm of body-builders, Christopher Dodson. Ltd. of Willesden (whose works until 1921 had been at Harwood Street, Camden Town where Overground and others garaged their vehicles) may explain how Dangerfield found it possible to finance as many as twenty Dennis buses in less than a year. These twenty vehicles were still insufficient to give a close

Right: The full frontal view of XO 8490 (26) obtained in July 1927 shows the 11-hole frame cross-member and wider frames that distinguished the LB2 from its successor marks LB4 and LB5. W. Noel Jackson Far right: The LB4 is exemplified here in 1930 by XP 7074 (21, ex-Public 21) which provides a contrast with the previous photograph. The narrower frame width gave a better steering lock. W. Noel Jackson



Right: Some good features of the Chiswick designed bodies of the three open top Dennis Hs of 1929 are shown in this view of YW 8005 (D147): the floor level is lower than was then usual, thus allowing a modest step height, and there are plentiful grab rails.

D. W. K. Jones Far right: The minimum protection afforded to the driver in those days is demonstrated by YW 8006 (D148): the wire rectangle above the cab front served to support a floppy piece of canvas, and that was all. From 1934 the hardy drivers were given a standard Chiswick windscreen. D. W. K. Jones



headway on the 284A, so Dangerfield then switched the Carlton fleet, which had now grown to twelve buses, from route 4 (renumbered 285 under the Bassom scheme) to the attractive 284A. The last four Carlton buses had been delivered in plain red and white livery which foreshadowed the amalgamation of the two fleets, and the twelve Carlton buses licensed to Dangerfield Ltd. were renumbered 21-32 on the end of the Dangerfield Dennis fleet.

The inception of routes 284A and 285A is very involved. The best account is given in a paper which formed the substance of the Presidential Address of 1954 to the Omnibus Society by John M. Birch (of Birch Bros.) who wrote:

"Birch Bros had been approached by the Overground undertaking who wished Birch to join them

in associated operation of certain new routes between Potters Bar and Victoria etc., and accordingly on 26th September 1924, Birch Bros. made application to the Commissioner of Police for approval of four new routes simultaneously with a similar application by the Overground company. The routes were as follows:

1. Potters Bar and Hampton Court.
2. Hadley Highstone and Elephant and Castle.
3. Muswell Hill and Victoria Station.
4. Potters Bar and Victoria Station.

On 6th October the Commissioner approved these routes."

It was at this stage that the Commissioner of Police allocated 284 for the whole route between

Below left: Perhaps the prettiest of all were the two Drake buses in their smart primrose and black livery, beautifully lined out and always carefully driven. XT 4608 was caught in Hadley in 1927 and, together with its sister XP 435, was later repainted all red and eventually absorbed by Birch Bros. W. Noel Jackson Below right: XP 4908, the Nulli Secundus LB4, was a sturdy performer on the 284 even before it became Overground 36 in 1926. It was distinguished from most by its three tone livery of off-white, red and dark brown for the lower panels, very much favoured by the General. A. Lewis



Potters Bar and Victoria above; hence Hadley Highstone to Victoria became 284A, and the existing route 4 (Muswell Hill and Victoria) was then allocated the number 285. When abandoned by Carlton/Overground by the spring of 1925, it was reasonable that the next venture, Arkley Hotel and Victoria, should be allocated the number 285.

The 32 buses which provided a 5-7½ minute service on the 284A did not allow sufficient reserves for maintenance and for the generous terminal lay-over times which were Overground practice. It was quite common to see four or more buses parked in Buckingham Palace Road alongside Victoria Station or in the yard of the 'Two Brewers' at Hadley Highstone. Here radiators were topped up after the sustained climb out of London to the 400-foot elevation of Barnet, and the crews took a well-earned break. Things eased during 1925-6. The X-Service Straker-Squire XM 9591 became 33 in the Overground Fleet; then three new Leylands were delivered, 34, 35 and 33 in that order, 33 replacing the Straker-Squire which had rarely been seen on the road. Two other businesses fell into Overground hands in 1926 bringing in one bus each. Nulli Secundus Omnibus Co. ran a smart red and white Leyland which upon sale to Dangerfield in September 1926 became 36. By this time, the only Straker-Squire still regularly operating on the 284A was the Northern XP 2039. From June 1926, the bus came under Dangerfield's direction, but retained its identity and dark brown and cream livery until its end in 1927.

I travelled daily to school and later to work by Overground for the whole period of its existence and learned to value the Leylands and Dennises and their worthy crews. The first few years were exhilarating. There was a sense of enterprise, of clipping seconds off everything. Take the evening rush hour at Tottenham Court Road, Oxford Street: as the 284 came over the junction from Charing Cross Road and drew up at the point, the conductor would be leaning out reciting the main points on the route, and in some cases the driver would join in the harangue. As like as not the conductor would have about six feet of string attached to his bell pull so that he could stand on the rear step to gather up late-comers, and ring off from there to save a second! There was unofficial co-operation between crews too: if, as often happened two buses came together, the first conductor would sing out "Not stopping before Camden Town-one behind!" Three bells and away, and with any luck there might be a non-stop run to Kentish Town or even Highgate Archway while the second bus picked up the casualties along the way. The leader, probably steaming by now, would have made up lost time and hoisted its loads of 50 or more satisfied customers up to the Northern Heights, getting them home earlier-and

cheaper-than ever before. No wonder Overground and other concerns like Premier, City, Birch and Chocolate Express won the allegiance of the public.

The General Strike of 1926 helped to seal the bond. The independents kept running while the Combine (i.e. the LGOC and its associated Companies) buses did not; and the few trams out on the Great North Road were ill-patronised as they penetrated only as far as Highgate Archway, the wholly unionised LCC trams giving no service to the public at all. Many of the Overground buses (in common with those of other independents) were parked overnight under armed guard in Regents Park where the Anglo-American Oil Company (now Esso) had set up hand-operated pumps for servicing them. This was the only time I saw Overground buses with passengers on the bench next to the driver, and on occasion even on the staircase. There were rumours that a bus had been overturned at Camden Town, but this seemed unthinkable in those days.

Dangerfield drove his men hard, but there were compensations. The pay was good by the standard of the time and there were bonuses. In fact the whole Overground organisation looked efficiently run: smart machines, smart men and smart timings. Conductors had well cut black serge uniform with blue piping and appropriate badges, a storm coat for top-deck sallies, and indeed on the dripping rear platform which offered little protection. The whole was crowned with a stiff-topped uniform cap, though it must be said that many conductors, and drivers too, removed the wire stiffening so that the cap was less of a handicap in the breeze. To keep out the cold, drivers were issued with a long and substantial topcoat, but supplemented it with various pullovers and even a second topcoat.

Some men displayed their World War I medal ribbons on their uniforms. One such whose smart parade ground appearance was legendary was Major Hollis, a slight man of upright bearing and waxed sandy moustache, who conducted his bus as if it were still a military unit. Firmness blended with the utmost courtesy: "Will ladies and gentlemen please pass further down the car!", "Hold very tight, please!" and so on, while giving a helping arm to the aged. Unfortunately war nerves caught up with him and he had to give up. Others were more fortunate. I recall one pink cheeked young Overground man who turned up many years later as a gold-badge inspector for London Transport.

In February 1927, the Overground fleet reached its maximum (while independent) with the delivery of 37, a Dennis registered YE 6045.

In July 1927 an event occurred which surprised many. In a year when many other independents were finding it advantageous to sell out to the LGOC, there had been no overt moves so to

A fine day in 1933 sees D146 at Victoria with opening side windows wound fully down. There were no protective bars fitted to these windows. When a Chiswick windscreen was fitted in 1934 the side lamp was removed to a more conventional position on the cab front.

E. G. P. Masterman



Between November 1931 and January 1932 25 double-deck 48-seater Dennis Lances with MCW all-metal bodies were delivered to Overground, one of them being D8 which here leads a fascinating line-up at Victoria. This bus has already acquired a white painted fleet number. E. G. P. Masterman



ST822 was one of a batch of five Regents to join Overground in February 1931 which did not carry Overground fleet numbers. The indicator on this new bus, seen at Victoria, has reverted to an incorrect ARKLEY destination but at least correctly shows 285A whereas the LB2 behind sticks to 285. Note the shortlived off-side route number box unique to this batch. W. Noel Jackson





Freshly repainted by London Transport on 24th July 1933, D9 carried the correctly worded destination and route number 285A ARKLEY HOTEL. Earlier board indicators had always shown 285 ARKLEY, though the village is a good half mile beyond the hotel which is on the fringe of Barnet. Chocolate Express Titan UW 6157 shares the stand at Victoria. D. W. K. Jones

transfer the Overground business. The first firm evidence of an LGOC interest in Overground arrived in the shape of a Dennis 45-hp bus, MF 9159 with Overground fleet name and numbered 38. It was however painted in General style, bore standard LGOC transfers and, most obvious of all, carried a gilt bonnet number D47 in the LGOC series. The bus, ex-Empress Omnibus Co. which had sold out to LGOC earlier in the year was at first licensed to Northern Omnibus Co. as a replacement for the Straker-Squire

In fact, Overground had already been sold to the LGOC in a deal that included Dangerfield Ltd. and the Nulli Secundus and Northern Companies. Dangerfield remained as Manager, and operations continued as a separate entity much as before. On the road too little changed. The statutory fleet name now read simply "Overground Ltd., Walter James Dangerfield, Manager" on all vehicles with still no mention of 55 Broadway. No other independent thus managed to maintain its identity. For Overground the next five years were to see not absorption but expansion with Dangerfield still very much in charge.

For the observer of tactics on the road, it was interesting to note that the smartly kept fleet still made rings round the elderly K-type buses which plodded in parallel on the 144, and still enraged tram drivers on occasion with baulking movements, though all were nominally of the same stable. (The trams found an answer to such tactics when between 1928 and 1930 they were rejuvenated with high speed motors and powerful braking systems, and could accelerate far faster than the contemporary bus.)

In those days of open-top buses it was almost

universal for the conductor if collecting fares on top to 'ring off' from a stop by leaning over the side and giving a couple of hefty taps on the side panels with his ticket rack. Overground men however would stamp heavily on the top deck floor (almost over the driver's ear!) and leave it to him to turn round and see if all was clear to start. This was not in accordance with the book which required a conductor to be on his rear platform to start!

The drivers were on balance a tough lot. They had to be. But it was often a delight to watch them getting the best out of only 36 hp under the bonnet. They would keep the engine ticking over fast at a stop to save a second at the 'off'. There was constant manipulation of the advance-and-retard lever to keep a Leyland engine on the edge of pinking, popularly supposed to be its best setting for power. Perhaps touchiest of all was the art of bringing a heavily laden solid tyred bus to a more or less straight line stop on the polished, perhaps wet, wooden blocks with which London roads were cursed in those days. Dabs on the brake and smart changing down were not always successful, and the rear nearside would sometimes slide in to catch the kerb with a mighty thump.

It was a cold job too. Storm aprons stopped some of the rain but not the draught. One man sticks in the memory: reputed to be a scion of the Dangerfield family, he was a surly creature who in winter became a great round bear of a man in many layers of clothing, the top layer tied in with string. But when he slumped down in the extreme offside corner of the driver's bench (how ever did he reach the pedals?) he drove like a demon. Was he taking his aggression out on the bus? Perhaps only the maintenance costs would show!

D148 is seen in a rare photograph showing the original route 629 when it operated between Victoria and Potters Bar. As it lays over at the southern terminus the engine gives the driver cause for concern. The Leyland behind is 23.

D. W. K. Jones



Mechanically, though, the men got the machines they deserved. Maintenance was sound; rarely did one see an Overground bus parked at the roadside, seat cushion propped against the back step in the London busman's code for breakdown. A small Morris light van served as a flying squad for roadside repairs. For anything more serious a spare bus came out with a spare wheel or whatever.

The weakest point in the Leylands and the Dennises was the wear on the universal joints on the main drive shaft. From time to time one would board a bus racked by intense vibrations at any reasonable speed, but this was probably a reflection of the nature of their duties and intense strain of constant starting and stopping. A curious feature of the Dennises was the tendency of the rear springs to collapse. Usually this was the nearside spring which took the heaviest load because of the camber of the road. The combined effect of flat spring and camber (more pronounced than now) gave the bus a dangerous looking list to port. In the event of a skid, there were all the elements of an accident although there seems to be no record of an Overground bus overturning.

One small idiosyncrasy of Dangerfield's reign was his insistence that whenever possible the registration numbers of his buses should end in or at least include the lucky number '7'. 19 out of the 23 buses licensed directly to him fulfilled this as did the majority of the Dangerfield Ltd. vehicles. This pleasing touch had to end when expansion brought a whole new range of vehicles into Overground livery.

Before moving on to the years 1928 to 1933 of Overground as a subsidiary of the LGOC, we should look briefly at the other buses which had been at work on the 284A and the routes which impinged

upon it. In the earliest days of the independents, the 27 and 127 together with their variant the 206, were favoured routes. This guise covered many permutations of LGOC 27, and could be found, mostly at weekends anywhere between Hadley Highstone and Hampton Court. Adelaide, Alberta, Birch, Cardinal, Central, Drake & McCowen, Liberty, Majestic, P.H. R.H. and Reliable all appeared, some of them spasmodically on these routes or on the 284 until the passing of the London Traffic Act in December 1924 when all were required to adhere to schedules on approved routes. Those which took up firm schedules on the 284A included Birch, Cardinal, Drake, Majestic and Reliable joined soon by Hav-a-Ride (renamed H.F.B.). Cardinal, Reliable and Birch withdrew at various dates; Drake had sold out to Birch; and H.F.B. and Majestic went to London Public, eventually leaving Overground in sole command of the 284 by 1930. Overground also had some operation in the morning peaks on route 279B (Tally Ho Corner and Strand (Aldwych) which was very profitable. It involved two loads, one from North Finchley to Golders Green, and then inwards to Central London. Buses were not available from the 284 schedules for the evening peak which in any case was not so concentrated. In the late 'twenties when the trams were rejuvenated this operation ceased.

In 1926-7, the LGOC set about absorbing the independents in a big way. By the end of 1927 most of the smaller operators had given in to the fairly generous terms offered. Many others sought refuge with the London Public Omnibus Co. formed in July 1927 ostensibly to protect and further the interests of the independents. But in the following year the London Public sold out by agreement to the LGOC, which thus had a mixed fleet of some 320 buses



Dennis Lances served Enfield West station from its opening on 13th March 1933. On 19 March D10 and D4 were to be seen working on route 629 and 307 respectively. D. W. K. Jones



The Lances soon assumed a mainly red livery and standard front and rear indicators as can be seen in this view of D4 on route 307 at Whetstone (Black Bull) terminus. The heavy rear bumper did not last long. The rear number plate is now in the conventional London position instead of being above the rear window. W. J. Haynes

thrust upon it including 36 Leyland LBs. These Leylands were to influence profoundly the make-up of the Overground fleet in subsequent years.

The transfer of ownership to the LGOC brought little immediate change; Dangerfield remained 'the Boss' to his men. After a while a few Jumpers (random ticket inspectors) were to be seen wearing black weathercoats of unmistakable General style. More investment became apparent. One day in 1928, Dennis No. 3 appeared fitted with pneumatic tyres and within a year almost all the fleet were on pneumatics which greatly improved performance and comfort, not to mention appearance. Leylands in particular must now have become the quietest running buses while the aptitude for speed of the Dennises could be safely indulged.

There was a disastrous fire on 17th November 1928 at the premises at Harmood Street, Camden Town where the vehicles of these and other independents were garaged, reducing the cramped accommodation still further. The LGOC thereupon

planned a magnificent new garage for Overground at Potters Bar with space far in excess of its present allocation of 38 buses. The garage opened on 28th May 1930 and although its floor space was never fully taken up, it was utilised for some expansion later. It had one disadvantage in that it lay three miles beyond Hadley Highstone so that each bus had to cover six dead miles each day. Expansion started in 1928 when the LGOC transferred six Leylands direct from the L-series of buses recently acquired from the independents. They were followed in May 1928 by four from London Public stock representing workings that Public had on the 284. These batches became 39-44 and 45-48 respectively in Overground stock. The next batch of Leylands from Public arrived in January 1930 on solid tyres and were numbered, for no reason then obvious, 1A-4A. This gave rise to some speculation.

It was in fact the beginning of a massive transfusion by which in the first half of 1930, the Overground Dennis buses were taken over by the LGOC

and transferred to West Green (WG) to work with the former Public Dennis fleet (about 145 strong) there or at Enfield (E). In return all the serviceable ex-Public Leylands were sent to Overground. The Dennises left at intervals, as due for overhaul, starting with 16 and ending with 11, the whole batch becoming D150-172 in LGOC stock. By October 1930, all but 7 and 31 had gone, and these were to remain at Potters Bar until the winter of 1930-31. The numbers D173 and D174 appear to have been reserved for them, but they were scrapped without carrying General livery.

The flood of ex-Public Leylands continued so that Overground ultimately assembled a fleet of 50 Leyland LBs, almost certainly the largest group of these elegant machines ever to be gathered together. The total strength of Overground was now stabilised at a little over 50 and was so maintained. How were they deployed? The main service remained on the 284A (Hadley Highstone and Victoria). In the summers of 1928, 1929 (briefly) and 1930 (April 30th to September 30th) the Sunday service

was extended to Hatfield (Dray Horse)) replacing LGOC's summer Sunday 82 (Golders Green/Strand (Aldwych) and Hatfield (Dray Horse), and illustrating an early degree of integration. On 9th April 1930 a new service 285A was introduced between Arkley and Victoria following the same route as the 284A except for the last mile to Arkley, and fitting in its timings to maintain a regular interval joint service. On summer Sundays in 1930, the 285 was extended to Borehamwood (The Crown). It was logical that Potters Bar should take over some work on the 29 family of routes, so from 6th August 1930, LGOC route 29 was withdrawn from Potters Bar, the southern section of the route now starting at Hadley Wood as 29F and the 629 was introduced between Potters Bar (Overground Garage) and Victoria Station via Cockfosters and Wood Green daily. PB provided 9 Leyland buses (8 on Sundays). The Saturday operation of 284A, 285 and 629 required 50 buses in August 1930 and this stretched the fleet to the limit. The maximum number of vehicles on strength was in the mid-fifties, and the vast garage

Below left: Also resting at Whetstone (Black Bull) D14 was photographed in late 1934. The very detailed blind mentions Enfield West Station which, as it was a good two miles from Enfield Town was soon renamed Oakwood to avoid confusion. D. W. K. Jones Below right: NS 1148 is a real interloper. The only time that an NS worked on the 284/5 roads was Saturday 2nd June 1934 when the bus made seventeen journeys between Whetstone (Black Bull) and Friern Barnet for the annual Fete and Fair there as a 285B. The experiment was not repeated. D. W. K. Jones





ST412 was one of the second batch of 27 Regents which came to Overground around November 1932 sporting the almost all red livery from the start. They retained their LGOC stock numbers but additionally bore an Overground number (in this case 21) on the waist rail. E. G. P. Masterman

was often seen virtually empty.

Some relief was at hand when the first standard LGOC buses appeared. These were five STs. Fifteen ST chassis had been ordered for Overground but ten were diverted to East Surrey and the LGOC, still leaving Overground short of stock. ST822-6 were delivered new to Overground in February 1931, appearing in the full livery of dark red (a richer shade than that used by the LGOC) with only small areas of white around the window pillars. ST500 also put in a brief appearance, the first bus to run in General livery on the 284. By July 1931, 48 Monday-Friday schedules were due to be worked by a fleet of 50 ageing Leylands and the STs.

ST822-6 had all returned to LGOC stock by November 1931 when sufficient deliveries had been made from a new batch of 25 Dennis Lance vehicles with Metro-Cammell all-metal bodies. The LGOC had never run anything like this and as an experiment it was not very successful. The bodies superficially resembled LGOC practice but the detailing was non-standard even down to the destination indicators – a fault quickly remedied. Not so easy to eradicate were the basic problems of splits in the metal particularly round the base of the staircase, nor the alleged shortcomings of the braking system – though this could partly have been due to the pounding the Lances received at the hands of the crews. They were slightly underpowered and after a while when the stock situation eased found themselves restricted to the less-trafficked suburban routes. The first entered service on the 629 on 11th October 1931, and there they were usually to be found.

Once the Lances had arrived by early 1932 a start could be made on withdrawing the Leyland LBs, and during the winter a total of 24 were culled leaving a fleet of 26 Leylands and 25 Lances. The extra workings were met by the transfer of the three

open-top Dennis H-types, D146-8, ordered by LGOC for evaluation in 1929, which had been working the 29 from WG. The habitual stance of these three hapless vehicles was at the wrong end of a towrope, and they fared no better in Overground livery.

From 5th October 1932 the 284 ran half-hourly through to Potters Bar while the 285 was diverted intermediately to run via Friern Barnet and Muswell Hill rejoining the 284 route at Highgate (Woodman).

In November and December 1932, 27 LGOC ST vehicles arrived in full Overground colours and numbered 1–27 in a separate series. They were on loan from the LGOC for an annual rental thus allowing the last 26 Leylands to be withdrawn. This happened quite quickly, the last appearance recorded by the writer being 16, XW 2215, on a rush hour duty on the 284A on 19th December 1932. The bodies of the Leylands were lifted from the chassis on the waste ground north of Potters Bar Garage and burned. The chassis were then serviced, painted black and apparently found ready sale, for numbers of them appeared as lorries on the London streets notably in the fleet of H. and G. Dufield. All trace of the Leylands had vanished from Potters Bar by May 1933. The STs took over the brunt of the 284A workings, the Lances being mostly relegated to the 285, 629, and new route 307. Coincidentally, two of the STs allocated were ST825 and 826 which had already had a spell in Overground livery in 1931.

On 13th March 1933 when the Piccadilly Line was extended from Arnos Grove to Enfield West (now Oakwood) Station, the 629 was withdrawn from the centre of London and diverted to run from Enfield West Station to Potters Bar. At the same time, a twenty-minute service, 307, was introduced between Enfield Town, Enfield West and Whetstone (Black Bull), thus linking the Piccadilly Line's greenfields

extension with the dormitory areas east and west of it, while the 629 provided a similar link to the growing suburb of Potters Bar. Initially loadings on both routes were light. From April 1933, the 629 was diverted on Sundays to Turnpike Lane so that the weekday service became 629A.

The London Passenger Transport Board was formed on 1st July 1933. Under the enabling Act, it immediately assumed control of the LGOC and the associated companies in London of which Overground Ltd. was one. The vehicles were provided overnight with stickers giving the statutory name and address of the Board, and the name of Walter James Dangerfield was at last obliterated.

Potters Bar garage, however, retained its individuality for quite a while. The first bus to be repainted in General colours (the Board retained the fleet name 'GENERAL' at first) was Lance D8 which appeared in mid-July. D9, 10, and 11 *et seq.* followed at weekly intervals, and on 30th August came the first sighting of a repainted ST, ST826. At about the same time, all the Lances' white Overground numbers were painted out and replaced by standard bonnet numbers in General style, at first in the D and later DL series. The first to appear in the latter series was DL1 which was noted with a bright-finish radiator shell instead of the customary black on 24th February 1934. The Lances also had brackets screwed to the waist panels ready to accommodate standard garage code and running numbers. The STs already possessed these features, the code 'PB' being an obvious one. Despite rumours of withdrawal the three Dennis H open top buses were repainted in General colours, fitted with standard windscreens, and set to work on the 629. They were renumbered DH1, 2 and 3 in February 1934, and left PB in October 1934 for Putney Bridge (F) where they enjoyed only seven to eight weeks' service before being finally withdrawn.

One particular aspect of Potters Bar's individual-

ity, however, was perhaps not to the liking of the crews or maintenance staff. Central Buses were doubtless hard put to find a use for the three Dennis Lances and five Dennis H-types which they had so far inherited from independent operators. Since the Lances obviously fitted with PB's 25 existing Lances why not transfer them and the five H-types too? They were a mixed lot. The first to appear on the 284A on 20th January 1934 was DH5, the brown and yellow unrepainted covered-top H which had formed the whole of F.A. Rasey's fleet. In Potters Bar Garage there was a similar bus, DH8, nominally 'under repair' and still in the worn red and yellow of B.B.P. Omnibus Co. This vehicle remained inside the garage until removed to Chiswick works where it was seen on 19th February 1934 prior to transfer to the Country Area. Open-top Dennis HS GJ 5506 was seen, repainted and numbered DH6, on the 284A on 12th April 1934. DH4 was never sighted at PB, nor was DH7 (formerly Redline's UU 4830). Further information and any photos of these H-types at PB would be most welcome.

The three Lances were easily absorbed into normal workings. The open-stairs Lance of Convey and Clayton, now numbered DL27, was seen on the 284A on 4th February closely followed by ex-Claremont GK 8667, which appeared to have rebuilt thoroughly in Chiswick style. The magnificent Birch bodied Red Rover Lance GY 1961 appeared still in its all-over dark red livery but numbered DL28 on 1st March. Eventually all the eight double-deck Lances acquired by the Board joined the fleet at PB, the remainder being DL29 and 30 (ex-Ambassador) and DL31 (ex-Sphere) which arrived in October 1934, and DL32 and 33 (ex-Reliance) in December 1934. Some STs left PB in compensation. On 12th May 1934 DL7, which had long outlasted all the others in its Overground livery, returned from overhaul in General colours (but with no fleet-name).

F. A. Rasey's Dennis H (DH5) served for several months in 1934 in its former owner's chocolate and primrose livery, and was one of the 'imported' H-types to appear regularly on the 284 and 629. Eventually it joined its fellows in the Country Area.
D. W. K. Jones





An early ex-Independent acquisition was DL26, ex-Claremont, which arrived at PB and started work on the 284 on 11th February 1934. It was fully 'Chiswicked' even to the white-tipped number plates and was given a bright metal radiator shell, a feature which became widespread on the Lances. Some comparisons can be made with the Lances on the 629 behind. D. W. K. Jones



Red Rover's fine Birch bodied Lance was new in August 1932, and contrary to general practice was transferred to PB virtually unaltered as DL28 from March 1934. The minute side-lamps were unchanged – there were no headlamps – and the all-over dark red livery stayed smart until repainting in standard colours late in 1934. D. W. K. Jones



In October 1934 DL29 and two others from Ambassador arrived at PB allowing the Dennis H open-top buses to be transferred to Putney Bridge (F). The new route number 134 is carried and Victoria Coach Station is shown as the ultimate destination. The bus was a bit of a compromise: the staircase was appropriate to an open-staircase version, and the enclosed rear end looked like an afterthought. D. W. K. Jones

Ambassador's impressive but somewhat heavy looking Dodson bodied Lance arrived in full LT livery and was numbered DL30, first being noted on 5th October 1934. The roof box enjoyed a moderate vogue at the time with operators other than LT. D. W. K. Jones



Reliance Omnibus Company was one of the last of the Independents to be taken over by London Transport (on 7th November 1934). After a refit the Company's two Lances (VX 8363/4) came to PB as DL32/3 respectively. Black radiator shells were now high fashion for Lances. D. W. K. Jones



After five years of pounding up and down the Northern Heights, all the Lances were suddenly transferred to Sutton (A) where they could work out their salvation on flatter routes. The 80 and 156 were favourites, and DL1 and DL6 are seen here with STL159 at Morden Station. D. W. K. Jones



The Regents which came in 1931 and 1932 had a good reception from the crews though some conductors preferred fresh air to a smoke laden 'inside'. The Lances as has been noted, were less popular, but real indignation was reserved for the LGOC Dennis Hs known as the "Company's old junk". One driver said confidently "We'll have these off the road in six months." Actually it took two years, but some of the time was taken up round the garage awaiting spares, which was just where the crews wanted to see them!

Route 629/A was re-organised from 28th February 1934. The Enfield West workings were discontinued, and the service operated between Potters Bar (Cranborne Road) and Turnpike Lane daily, as 629A, and between Turnpike Lane and Potters Bar Garage as 629. The latter route lost its Sunday service from 20th May.

The renumbering of 3rd October 1934 produced the following:-

New Number	Old Number	Detail	Garage	Type	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
29A	629A	Turnpike Lane-Potters Bar (Cranborne Road)	PB	DL	7	9	8
29	629	Turnpike Lane-Potters Bar Garage (Weekdays)	PB	DL			0
107	307	Whetstone-Enfield Town	PB	DL	4	4	3
134	284	Potters Bar/Hadley Highstone-Victoria Station	PB	ST	26	26	23
135	285	Arkley-Victoria Station	PB	DL	13	11	10

Route 29 now ran in three sections: Victoria – Southgate Station, Turnpike Lane – Hadley Wood and the section listed above.

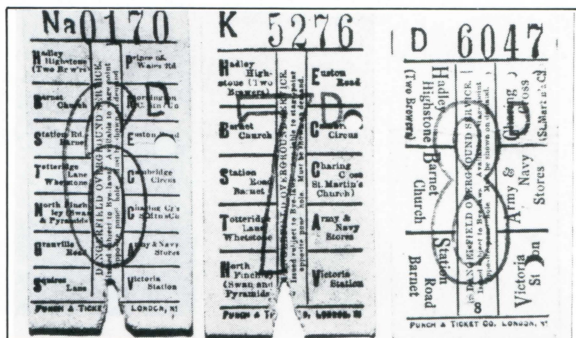
In November and December 1936 all the Lances were transferred to Sutton (A) where they worked local routes largely based on Morden Station, and by 8th January 1938 when they were seen in store at a tram depot, all 33 had been withdrawn.

On 25th March 1937 W. J. Dangerfield, who had become depot superintendent at PB, retired. According to a contemporary press cutting two dinners were given for all his old employees, and great regret was expressed at the severing of his links with PB. With the departure of the DLs PB became an all-ST garage; by 1939 it housed some 63 buses of this type. With these events our account of how one man made his personal mark on a well-defined configuration of routes comes to a close, though later in this issue we depict further aspects of the legacy of W. J. Dangerfield at Potters Bar which to this day remains a garage of some individuality.

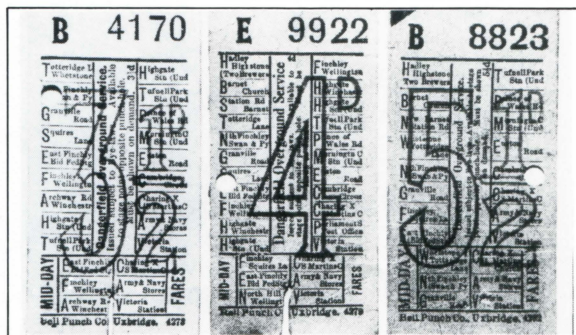
In conclusion I would especially like to acknowledge and recommend a study of *London's Buses* Vol I by Blacker, Lunn and Westgate pp140-145 which gives a masterly account of Dangerfield's enterprise; indeed this book is necessary for full understanding of the Independent era of London's transport history. I acknowledge also with gratitude the help which I have received from Malcolm Papes and George Robbins in establishing certain facts.



Above: The end came for the Lances late in 1937 when they were all put into store. This view obtained on 8th January 1938 includes three ex-Independent buses. D. W. K. Jones



Below: The title 'Dangerfield Overground Service' remained on tickets even after the LGOC assumed control. The Punch & Ticket examples were supplied prior to this event and the Bell Punch examples thereafter. Overground was a participant in the scheme providing through fares to the Underground via Highgate (Archway) station, the name appearing on through tickets with that of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways – a strange combination indeed. Both photos D. W. K. Jones





Appendix I – Fleet Lists

1. Carlton (Dangerfield Ltd) 1923-24

1	XN3091	Leyland LB2	1923	All with 48-seat Dodson bodies
2	XN9227	Leyland LB2	1923	1-8 delivered in chocolate and white livery with elaborate lining.
3	XO2525	Leyland LB2	1923	9-12 delivered in plain red and white livery
4	XO3160	Leyland LB2	1923	All repainted in full Overground colours, and then
5	XO3813	Leyland LB2	1923	renumbered 21-32 in the Overground fleet during 1924-25.
6	XO8490	Leyland LB2	1923	All on solid tyres at this period.
7	XP3798	Leyland LB4	1923	
8	XP7746	Leyland LB4	1923	
9	XU7889	Leyland LB5	1924	
10	XU9857	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
11	XU9867	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
12	XW1867	Dennis 4-ton	1924	

2. The complete Overground fleet under Dangerfield's control, 1924-27

By 1925 the original Carlton and Overground fleets were virtually working as one. A common numbering system was introduced and all buses appeared in the pleasing Overground livery of red, deeper than that used by the LGOC, contrasting well with white window surrounds and waist rail. Panels were neatly lined out in black.

1	XT3927	Dennis 4-ton	1924	All with 48-seat Dodson bodies
2	XT5507	Dennis 4-ton	1924	1-20 licensed to W. J. Dangerfield personally.
3	XT5517	Dennis 4-ton	1924	All on solid tyres at this period
4	XT6847	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
5	XT6837	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
6	XT8294	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
7	XU8830	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
8	XU8829	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
9	XU8831	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
10	XW3177	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
11	XW3167	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
12	XW3697	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
13	XW4407	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
14	XW4897	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
15	XW5377	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
16	XW5378	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
17	XW5379	Dennis 4-ton	1924	
18	XW7614	Dennis 4-ton	1925	
19	XW7615	Dennis 4-ton	1925	
20	XW8817	Dennis 4-ton	1925	
21-32 As Carlton list above, renumbered in the same order.				
33	XM9591	Straker-Squire	1923	46-seat Dodson body. Acquired July 1925 from X-Service (Punnett) and withdrawn from service 1926.
33	YP5287	Leyland LB5	1926	48-seat Dodson body
34	YM527	Leyland LB5	1925	48-seat Dodson body
35	YK8897	Leyland LB5	1925	48-seat Dodson body
36	XP4908	Leyland LB4	1923	Ex-Nulli Secundus Omnibus Co., 1926 (1)
37	YE6045	Dennis 4-ton	1927	48-seat Dodson body
38	MF9159	Dennis 4-ton	1924	Ex-Empress Omnibus Co. and LGOC D47 (2)

Notes:

- (1) The Nulli Secundus bus of Martin and Routledge worked mainly on the 284A, and was sold to Dangerfield Ltd. with effect from 1st September 1926.
- (2) In the same year the Northern Straker-Squire XP2039, also working mainly on the 284A, was taken over by Dangerfield but retained its separate identity and brown-and-white livery until withdrawn in July 1927. Its replacement, 38 in the Overground fleet was at first licensed to the Northern Omnibus Co. Ltd. MF9159 carried the LGOC bonnet number D47 and other details in LGOC style. When it arrived in July 1927 it was the first visible indication that a controlling interest in the Overground concern had been acquired by the LGOC.

3. Strengthening of Overground Ltd. from LGOC and ex-Public sources 1928-30

A. Transferred direct from LGOC stock 1928

39	HM4393	Former Atlas Omnibus Co. 7 and LGOC L11	}	3/28	(1)
40	HM4756	Former Atlas Omnibus Co. 15 and LGOC L8			
41	HM4757	Former Atlas Omnibus Co. 16 and LGOC L7			
42	HM4627	Former Atlas Omnibus Co. 12 and LGOC L17			
43	XO5617	Former Atlas Omnibus Co. 2 and LGOC L20			
44	YN3800	Former Horseshoe and LGOC L28			

B. Transferred from ex-Public stock in 1928-30

45	XT 196	Former New Times and Public L36	}	5/28	
46	MF7628	Former Poppy and Public L2			
47	XP7074	Former Rapid 5 and Public L21			
48	XP7075	Former Rapid 6 and Public L17			
1A	XR4807	Former Clarendon and Public L1	}	1/30	(2)
2A	MK7335	Former H.F.B. and Public L27			(2)
3A	XN8049	Former Eclipse and Public L14			(2)
4A	XO6328	Former Commonwealth and Public L29			(2)
49	XT3142	Former Majestic and Public L3	}	7/30	(3)
50	NK8710	Former H.H. (Heast) and Public L34			
51	XW1620	Former Eclipse and Public L24			
52	XX7200	Former H.M.M. (Merry) and Public L16			
53	MH1435	Former Meteor and Public L8			

- Notes: (1) At the time of delivery of YN3800, Horseshoe was in the process of acquisition by the LGOC; hence YN3800 took a number from an LGOC registration series when licensed in April 1926. The bus was allocated to Grangewood before coming to Overground.
- (2) These four vehicles were allotted temporary 'A' numbers pending transfer of Dennis buses from Overground to LGOC stock. They were then renumbered 1, 2, 14 and 4 respectively in a revised Overground fleet series.
- (3) 51 and 52 had 48-seat bodies by Strachan and Brown, of which an outstanding feature was the curvature or 'bulge' of the side panels. All others listed above had standard Dodson 48-seat bodies.

4. Exchange of LGOC ex-Public Leylands and Overground Dennis, 1930-31

A. Transfer to LGOC of Overground Dennis

Between January and July 1930 all but two Dennis buses (i.e. 23 out of 25) were transferred to LGOC stock at West Green garage, where the ex-Public Dennis fleet was mainly concentrated. The Dennis buses left Potters Bar as and when replacement Leylands became available, and roughly in the order of the LGOC stock numbers they received:-

		<i>O'gd</i>	<i>ex-O'gd</i>	<i>Disposal</i>			<i>O'gd</i>	<i>ex-O'gd</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
D150	XW5378	16	2/30	5/31	D162	XW5377	15	6/30	11/32
151	YE6045	37	2/30	1/32	163	XU8831	9	7/30	1/33
152	XW7614	18	2/30	7/32	164	XW3697	12	7/30	11/32
153	XT6837	5	2/30	5/31	165	XW5379	17	7/30	12/32
154	XT3927	1	2/30	5/31	166	XW4407	13	7/30	1/33
155	XW7615	19	3/30	7/32	167	XT6847	4	7/30	10/32
156	XW1867	32	3/30	10/32	168	XT8294	6	9/30	10/32
157	XW8817	20	4/30	12/32	169	XW3177	10	9/30	7/32
158	XT5507	2	5/30	7/32	170	XW4897	14	10/30	1/33
159	MF9159	38	5/30	7/32	171	XU8829	8	10/30	8/32
160	XT5517	3	6/30	7/32	172	XW3167	11	10/30	7/32
161	XU9857	30	6/30	12/32					

It is believed that D173 and D174 were allocated to 7 and 31, the last two Dennises to leave Overground. No trace has been found of their operating for LGOC, and they were scrapped in May 1931 with others shown above. The remainder were sold at various later dates. D156 received a new LGOC body after fire damage on 24th March 1930.

B. Transfer to Overground of LGOC ex-Public Leylands

18 more Leyland LBs were transferred from the LGOC's ex-Public stock. With those already transferred from ex-Public stock, Overground had received a total of 31 out of the 36-strong ex-Public Leyland fleet - probably all that were deemed serviceable. XP440 (ex-Clarendon and Public L5) is thought to have been transferred also, but was not used in service.

The consolidated fleet which thus emerged is shown below. For the first time it was to include new vehicles of LGOC provision, Regents ST822-826:-

			Transfer					Transfer	
Former numbering or ownership			Dates	Notes	Former numbering or ownership			Dates	Notes
1	XR4807	Overground 1A and Public L1			28	XP7746	Overground 28		
2	MK7335	Overground 2A and Public L27			29	XU7889	Overground 29		
3	MF6321	Commonwealth and Public L30	5/30	(1)	30	YP5156	Alma and Public L26	6/30	
4	XO6328	Overground 4A and Public L29			31	XU9867	Overground (Dennis)		
5	XP6211	Rapid 4 and Public L13	2/30		32	XX8697	Alma and Public L12	3/30	
6	ME8109	Reliance and Public L19	7/30		33	YP5287	Overground 33		
7	XU8830	Overground 7 (Dennis)			34	YM 527	Overground 34		
8	XP37	Rapid 2 and Public L7	7/30		35	YK8897	Overground 35		
9	XN3322	New Era and Public L20	6/30		36	XP4908	Overground 36		
10	XO7581	Majestic and Public L25	7/30		37	XW2215	Rapid 7 and Public L11	6/30	
11	—			(2)	38	MH5067	A.J.M. and Public L28	5/30	
12	MH1264	Commonwealth and Public L31	7/30	(3)	39	HM4393	Overground 39		
13	XT2645	British Lion and Public L23	7/30		40	HM4756	Overground 40		
14	XN8049	Overground 3A and Public L14			41	HM4757	Overground 41		
15	MF3646	Meteor and Public L10	6/30		42	HM4627	Overground 42		
16	XP4850	Eastern and Public L22	1/30		43	XO5617	Overground 43		
17	XN5203	Rapid 8 and Public L18	6/30		44	YN3800	Overground 44		
18	YR172	Commonwealth and Public L32	6/30		45	XT196	Overground 45 and Public L36		
19	XW2158	New Era and Public L4	2/30		46	MF7628	Overground 46 and Public L2		
20	XN2910	Rapid 1 and Public L15	2/30		47	XP7074	Overground 47 and Public L21		
21	XN3091	Overground 21			48	XP7075	Overground 48 and Public L17		
22	XN9227	Overground 22			49	XT3142	Overground 49 and Public L3		
23	XO2525	Overground 23			50	NK8710	Overground 50 and Public L34		
24	XO3160	Overground 24			51	XW1620	Overground 51 and Public L24		(4)
25	XO3813	Overground 25			52	XX7200	Overground 52 and Public L16		
26	XO8490	Overground 26			53	MH1435	Overground 53 and Public L8		
27	XP3798	Overground 27							

Notes: (1) MF6321 renumbered 4 on withdrawal of XO6328 in Summer 1931. In late 1931 it was renumbered 26 for a short while, finally becoming 12.

(2) No. 11 presumably retained for Dennis 11, which left Overground for LGOC service (somewhat later than the other Dennis buses) as D172.

(3) MH1264 carried a distinctive Birch body while in Overground service.

(4) XW1620 sometime in 1931 assumed the body and identity of 8 (XP37), which was withdrawn.

ST822	GN2128	Standard 49-seat ST type ordered by the	ST826	GN2094	Overground in March 1931, the others in
ST823	GN2093	LGOC for Overground Ltd. and delivered			November 1931; ST825/6 returned in
ST824	GN2089	in February 1931.			November 1932.
ST825	GN2090	No Overground fleet numbers. ST824 left			

5. The Dennis Lance fleet, 1931

25 double-deck 49-seat (later 48-seat) Dennis Lance buses with all-metal MCCW bodies were delivered to Overground between October and December 1931, except D25 which arrived later.

D1	GP3414	D 7	GP3426	D13	GP3465	10/31	D19	GP3476	11/31
D2	GO7182	D 8	GP3423	D14	GP3449		D20	GP3484	11/31
D3	GP3410	D 9	GP3443	D15	GP3475		D21	GP3600	12/31
D4	GP3424	D10	GP3482	D16	GP3464	11/31	D22	GP3409	12/31
D5	GP3408	D11	GP3463	D17	GP3483		D23	GP3497	12/31
D6	GP3428	D12	GP3427	D18	GP3525		D24	GP3526	12/31
							D25	GT5001	2/32

6. The reduced Leyland fleet, 1932

Entry into service of the Lances enabled many Leyland LBs to be withdrawn. 26 were left operational, and these were renumbered 1–26 as below. This last series is recognisable in photographs as the fleet number, previously painted on the waist rail, now appeared on the same position on a small cast oval plate, with bright figures on a black ground. The waist rail itself was now painted red instead of white. All 26 buses were withdrawn by the end of December 1932.

1	XO5617	former 43	10	XO3160	former 24	19	XN5203	former 17
2	MF7628	former 46	11	MH5067	former 38	20	XP7075	former 48
3	XW2158	former 19	12	MF6321	former 26*	21	XW1620	former 51 & 8
4	HM4627	former 42	13	YR 172	former 18	22	XT3142	former 49
5	XN2910	former 20	14	XO3813	former 25	23	XT2645	former 13
6	YN3800	former 44	15	XT 196	former 45	24	NK8710	former 50
7	XN8049	former 14	16	XW2215	former 37	25	XP7074	former 47
8	XO2525	former 23	17	MF3646	former 15	26	YP5287	former 33
9	XN3322	former 9	18	YP5156	former 30			

*earlier numbered 3, then 4.

7. Dennis H-type open-top

Ordered for comparative purposes by the LGOC in 1929 and allocated successively to Putney Bridge, West Green and (from October 1932) Potters Bar garages. They carried full Overground livery but with LGOC stock nos. in black.

D146 YW8004
D147 YW8005
D148 YW8006

DH1 as renumbered by LPTB in January 1934

DH2 as renumbered by LPTB in January 1934

DH3 as renumbered by LPTB in January 1934

They left Potters Bar in October 1934, were transferred to Putney Bridge, withdrawn in November and sold to Canvey Transport in April 1935 (along with DH6 which served briefly at PB in 1934) where they lasted till Autumn 1936.

For completeness, the H-types briefly allocated to Potters Bar by LPTB were:-

DH 5 MY1689
DH 6 GJ5506
DH 8 GN5896
DH10 GU 977
DH11 GU6463

ex-F.A. Rasey. To PB 1/34, left 7/34.

ex-Holliday and Bangs open top. To PB 4/34, left 7/34.

ex-Golden Arrow. To PB 1/34, left 2/34. Doubtful if used.

ex-Birch Bros. To PB 2/34, left 2/34. Not used.

ex-Birch Bros. To PB 2/34, left 3/34. Not used.

8. LGOC ST-TYPE 1932

As the Leylands were withdrawn towards the end of 1932 they were replaced by 27 AEC Regent ST-type on loan from LGOC stock and repainted in Overground colours, newly-modified to all-red except for a minimum white window band. This batch retained its LGOC stock numbers, and additionally bore an Overground fleet number in gilt on the waist rail. All received London Transport livery on repainting between September and November 1933.

	<i>At PB</i>		<i>At PB</i>
1 ST456 GK3135	10/32-5/36	15 ST826 GN2094	11/32-11/39
2 ST825 GN2090	10/32-5/36	16 ST544 GK5361	11/32-1/34
3 ST531 GK5357	11/32-11/39	17 ST 4 GC3928	11/32-10/37
4 ST431 GK3158	11/32-11/39	18 ST417 GK3066	11/32-11/39
5 ST357 GK3010	11/32-5/35	19 ST467 GK3091	11/32-9/39
6 ST397 GK3063	11/32-9/39	20 ST525 GK5346	11/32-12/36
7 ST378 GK3035	11/32-11/39	21 ST412 GK3068	11/32-11/39
8 ST515 GH3855	11/32-5/36	22 ST 14 GC3936	11/32-5/36
9 ST 3 GC3927	11/32-5/36	23 ST510 GH3861	11/32-5/36
10 ST 36 GC3952	11/32-11/39	24 ST529 GK5350	11/32-7/34
11 ST343 GK3037	11/32-10/36	25 ST 16 GC3946	11/32-12/33
12 ST447 GK3150	11/32-8/36	26 ST546 GK5358	11/32-12/33
13 ST468 GK5311	11/32-5/38	27 ST 6 GC3931	12/32-12/33
14 ST393 GK3036	11/32-11/39		

APPENDIX II

Some notes on various types operated by Overground

A. The Leyland LB class

Nearly 200 examples of the LB class – LB2, LB4 and the latest variant LB5 – entered London bus service between 1922 and 1929. "The Leyland omnibus for service in London is a special machine known as the LB5 built to conform with London regulations. The four-cylinder engine having an R.A.C. rating of 36 hp develops 39 bhp at 1000 rpm, its cylinder bore being 4½", with a stroke of 6". The power unit which is of the side valve type, is fitted with aluminium pistons. The gearbox used in this chassis is of special interest being of the constant mesh type with double helical gear wheels which ensure silent running in intermediate gears" (Tramway and Railway World: 14th July 1927)

B. The Dennis 4-ton

This commercial chassis adapted very readily for bus service in London, one of the few changes required being the larger diameter front wheels. Introduced in 1924, the type was favoured by the majority of the independents as a fast and reliable vehicle. Most received White & Poppe four-cylinder engines rated at 45 hp. The gears were straight-cut and noisy. The foot brake acted on the transmission, and the hand brake on the rear wheels only.

C. The Dennis H-type

LGOC purchased three Dennis H-types for experimental purposes in 1929. They had 50-seat open top bodies, and at first were allocated to Putney Bridge (F) for routes 14 and 96, but were transferred to Overground Ltd. in October 1932. The wheelbase was 16'6" and the clutch was of the cone type. The Dennis 4-cylinder engine developed 30 hp. DH4-18 were allocated to other Dennis H-types acquired from independent operators.

D. The Dennis DL class

These were based on the Dennis Lance chassis with an overall length of 25'7". They had 49-seat (later reduced to 48) all-metal bodies by MCCW similar to that fitted to experimental ST211 six months earlier. They had four forward gears with a dry multi-plate clutch with a six cylinder engine developing 100 bhp at 2500 rpm. Twenty-five were purchased new as D1-25, being reclassified DL, and additions from independents brought the class to 39, although only up to DL33 operated from PB, the remainder DL34-39 being single-deck buses and coaches allocated to the Country Department.

Potters Bar Update

Potters Bar continues to be a garage that is just a little different from the rest, both in terms of its vehicles and its operations. The former include a number of Vs (some ex-South Yorkshire PTE) together with Ms and LSs, and the latter include routes contracted by London Regional Transport and Hertfordshire County Council, not to mention a registered commercial operation. The overall im-

pression is enhanced by Leaside's distinctive livery of red, white and black and the use of upper case lettering in many intermediate blinds.

What follows is a brief pictorial survey of some of the types and routes associated with the garage since its Overground days.

Thanks are due to Malcolm Papes for the provision of certain of the historical material used in this feature.



Above: On 24th March 1937 the 135 was withdrawn between Whetstone and Arkley and diverted to New Barnet Station, the section from New Barnet to Arkley being covered by the 107 and 306. Note that the 135 now takes the direct route to Victoria via North Finchley, the 134 having been diverted to serve Muswell Hill with a more frequent service. On 15th May 1940 the 135 was withdrawn completely. D. W. K. Jones Left: An influx of open stairs LTs hit PB in the early days of the War. Here LT43 makes an all-out attack on the snowy slopes of Enfield Chase during the bitter winter of 1939-40. How the passengers and crew must have been suffering! D. W. K. Jones

In 1936 PB had gained a majority share in the 84 (Golders Green-St Albans). An allocation of petrol STLs was acquired particularly for this route since open staged buses were not considered suitable for its country section. STL168 was at PB on 30th October 1948.

Alan B. Cross



RT 1590 performs a duty on the shortlived 207 introduced 17th October 1951 linking New Barnet Station and the new housing development at Chesterfield Road. The three

RTs allocated were required to have semaphore indicators housed just below the running number allegedly due to the number of right-hand turns. On 6th May 1953 the route was replaced by an extension of the 34 from New Barnet Station to Chesterfield Road for which semaphores were not stipulated.

Alan B. Cross



Route 242A operated on Sundays linking Potters Bar with Upshire, one of PB's most easterly points, and was a variation of the daily 242 which reached Chingford Station.

RT 3398 lays over at Upshire on 31st May 1964. Peter G. Mitchell





Above left: Reviving ghosts of the erstwhile 629/A, the 29B was a Monday to Friday service between Turnpike Lane and Potters Bar (Cranborne Road) introduced 10th October 1962. RT1121 has worked a peak hour journey to Cranborne Estate where the scenery appears to be more akin to a country lane. The route was withdrawn on 7th September 1968. J. G. S. Smith

Above right: The lengthy route 29 was subject to much delay and was often altered at the Potters Bar end giving rise to routes 298/A and 299. The latter route was introduced on 24th January 1970 and basically operated between Southgate Station and South Mimms with some workings to Cranborne Industrial Estate, Clare Hall Hospital and Borehamwood. When the 134 received a daily allocation of RMs a few were spare at weekends for this route. Crew operation ended on 3rd July 1971 and the route was withdrawn on 27th September 1980. RM1981 passes through Cockfosters. J. G. S. Smith

Whether by coincidence or not, the route number 284 returned to the Potters Bar area in 1968 in the form of a circular service to and from Potters Bar Station via Mutton Lane, High Street and Darkes Lane. The route played host to RF, MB, DMS and somewhat ignominiously to the unique FRM1 which was photographed on one of the hottest Saturdays of the century in early July 1976. Malcolm E. Papes

D1725 nears its northern terminus in July 1982. Route 134 was selected in 1973 for the use of crew-operated doored buses, and although PB kept these buses in better condition than many inner London garages, the scheme was not judged to be a success and RMs returned in 1982. In 1983 the route was withdrawn between Potters Bar and Barnet Church and became the sole preserve of Muswell Hill (MH) thus ending crew operation at PB. It was noteworthy that when, in 1986, the 134 was converted to OPO, the publicity spoke of taking "the Overground route". Malcolm E. Papes



Above left: Another example of an immaculate DMS from PB (even down to a correctly turned side blind) is 1899 passing through territory typical of route 242 and hardly conducive to high loadings. The route works now between Potters Bar and Waltham Abbey only and although still operated out of PB is no longer part of the LRT network. Malcolm E. Papes
 Above right: During 1980, due to the unreliability of the DMS class, SMSs were used at Potters Bar. Even these despised vehicles were kept smart by PB staff as can be seen from this photograph of SMS364 taken at New Barnet Station. Malcolm E. Papes

Route 298 was taken over by London Country on 21st June 1986. On 18th April of that year however M639 (PB) was seen leaving Turnpike Lane Station for Cranborne Road Industrial Estate on one of the few remaining peak hour journeys thereto. Behind, a Wood Green (WN) M prepares to make a peak hour journey on the 84A to Chesterfield Road. Malcolm E. Papes



With the withdrawal of the 134 north of Barnet Church on 23rd April 1983 some of the journeys on route 263 were extended to cover the roads lost thereby. This route is wholly worked by PB, normally with Ms or Vs. LSs however are not infrequent strange visitors, the class here being exemplified by LS112 leaving the garage on 18th April. Eamonn Kentell





The reincarnation of the 284 lasted until 19th March 1977 when it was modified to minibus type PB1 which was operated with FSs and As. The latter class, consisting of two vehicles, entered service at PB on 21st May 1983. A1 was photographed on 14th June 1986 at Potters Bar Station on the last weekend of operation by LBL before the route went to North Mymms Coaches. R. J. Waterhouse



PB became solely responsible for the operation of route W8 with the closure of Edmonton (EM) on 1st February 1986. The route had its origins in the 204 and 128. M670 shows off its upper case blind at Chase Farm Hospital on 18th April.

PB enjoyed a brief flirtation with route 313 which it acquired from London Country on 24th April 1982 in exchange for route 84. This situation was however shortlived for London Country regained the 313 on 13th July 1985 as part of LRT's tendering process. Prior to that the route had been extended on 4th September 1982 from Enfield to Chingford Station in place of the 121. M671 was seen at Ponders End a few days later, and represents the only vehicle type used on the route by PB. Colin Stannard



Following the tradition of FRM1, V3 appeared in service at Potters Bar on 25th February albeit with its unique rear exit removed. It continues to have two staircases. In this view taken at Potters Bar garage it works route 84 in which PB acquired a majority share as far back as 1936. Ramon Hefford



In addition to V1-3 PB has gained a number of Van Hool McArde bodied Ailsas from Ensignbus ex-South Yorkshire PTE. Although the lines of V5 (seen in Barnet) look somewhat dated by today's standards, the view afforded from the front seats upstairs is notable. Eamonn Kentell



Strange Visitors



RMLs from Brixton now appear on Sundays on route 159 following the conversion of route 137 to OPO on that day. Many Routemasters are currently in very battered condition and RML2477 (seen in Regent Street) on 5th April is no exception. Colin Fradd



Although route 3 is officially RM operated by Camberwell, RMLs from time to time put in appearances. RML2398 approaches Effra Road, Brixton on 10th December. Colin Fradd



RT3314 worked throughout 27th March, the last day of crew operation on route 207. It is seen after its last trip at Uxbridge just after 12.30am on the day of conversion. R. J. Waterhouse
Route 293 sees the occasional use of SNBs because of double-deck shortages at Dorking. Replete with its LRT board in the front windscreen SNB427 waits at traffic lights in winter sunshine at Ewell on 30th January. Colin Fradd

Odds and Ends



Route 278 was extended on 7th February from Limehouse to Aldgate to replace route 56 on Saturdays and between the Monday to Friday peaks. T640, representing the official allocation of West Ham, approaches Aldgate on 9th March.

LSs, such as LS81 at Aldgate on 6th April do however appear on occasions. Colin Fradd





One wonders whether Laidlaw of Brentwood was getting its money's worth on 18th April when Eastern National 1848 was working in Barnet. The strangely apt blind and lack of an LRT board suggest an improved operation..
Malcolm E. Papes



SNB191 (SL) was experimentally fitted last year with a DAF engine, repainted in Green Line livery and refurbished with new seating moquette. It was photographed in Slough Road, Iwer Heath on 28th March. R. J. Waterhouse



Following the demise of the Forester service in February at least two LSs operated at Leyton in Forester livery on route 230. LS76 has now been repainted in London Coaches livery but on 14th March was still giving passengers the benefit of superior seating and confusing them with exotic destinations. R. J. Waterhouse



From 27th March Ensignbus took over route N99 on Friday and Saturday nights between Romford Market and Cranham (Moor Lane), this being a limited operation in the one direction only. This service had been abandoned by London Buses at the end of January and is now operated on a contract basis. Romford provides the nocturnal setting for Ensign's A211. R. Upcraft



Since 16th March Transcity have worked competitively on the 477A which sees types as contrasting as ex-Fife Fleetlines and coaches such as this Volvo with Duple bodywork seen in Swanley on 18th April. Transcity also provide competition on route 423B, worked on the same day with a Mercedes Minibus. R. J. Waterhouse

Hop on a hoppa

London Regional Transport first used the 'Hoppa' identity for midibus operations with the tendering of routes 193 and 268 during 1986. On 31st May the 268 was branded as the 'Hampstead Hoppa' using Mercedes (see LBM58), and from 2nd August Ford Transits replaced the Bristol VRT double-deckers on the 193 which became the 'Hornchurch Hoppa'. From 20th October Mercedes took over from the

Ford Transits on the 193 while Reeve-Burgess bodied Dodges (MBDs) replaced the Mercedes on the 268 from 13th December.

The conversion of routes to a higher frequency midibus operation using vehicles painted in eye-catching liveries seems to prove popular with passengers, and further Hoppas have recently been introduced.



The Hornchurch Hoppa 193 has now changed over to Mercedes vehicles, but still retains the original yellow and green livery. Eastern National's 0229 (D229PPU) heads back to Romford Market during March sunshine, devoid of its 'LRT SERVICE' notice at the front. Eamonn Kentell



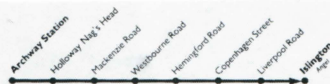
The larger Reeve-Burgess bodied Dodges have now taken over from the Mercedes on the 268 providing welcome extra capacity. The MBDs carry the bright yellow, red and green livery, and MBD22 passes through picturesque Hampstead at South End Pond. Eamonn Kentell

Hop on a HOLLOWAY hoppa



Archway- Islington Angel

Your new local bus service
from London Transport



The Route

The bright green Holloway Hoppa minibus route 153 is your new local service from London Transport. It runs Monday to Saturday between Archway and Islington Angel, where it connects with many other routes to all parts of London.

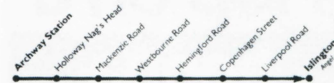
The Holloway Hoppa starts at Archway Station and runs via Holloway Road to Mackenzie Road, and then through Barnsbury to Westbourne Road, Hemingford Road and Copenhagen Street. It then continues along Liverpool Road to the Angel.

The Holloway Hoppa gives good Tube connections at Archway, Holloway Road and Angel. It's great for the shops in Holloway Road, the shops and markets at Angel and provides residents of Barnsbury a direct link to Whittington Hospital.

Fast and Frequent

Your new minibus service, The Holloway Hoppa, is more than twice as frequent as the previous 153. At most times of the day, they'll be along about every 10 minutes, with a 15 minute service in the early mornings and 20 minutes in the evening. There will still be no service on Sundays.

hoppa Route 153 Timetable



Monday to Fridays

Archway Station	06.50	06.55	06.56	07.00	Then about	18.05	Then every	23.55
Holloway Way's Head	06.50	06.55	06.56	07.00	every 10	18.02	20	23.51
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	06.51	06.56	07.00	minutes	19.09	minutes	23.49	
Islington Angel	06.52	06.57	07.01	until	19.12	until	23.52	

Saturdays

Archway Station	07.00	07.05	07.06	07.10	08.05	08.10	08.15	08.20
Holloway Way's Head	07.01	07.06	07.07	07.11	08.06	08.11	08.16	08.21
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	07.02	07.07	07.11	minutes	08.07	08.12	08.17	08.22
Islington Angel	07.03	07.08	07.12	08.08	08.13	08.18	08.23	08.28
Archway Station	09.00	Then about	18.02	18.05	Then	23.50		
Holloway Way's Head	09.02	every 10	18.04	18.07	every 20	23.48		
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	09.03	minutes	18.01	18.04	minutes	23.49		
Islington Angel	09.04	until	18.03	18.06	until	23.51		



Monday to Fridays

Islington Angel	06.45	06.50	07.00	Then about	19.09	Then every	23.56
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	06.43	06.48	07.04	every 10	19.12	20	23.59
Holloway Way's Head	06.42	07.00	07.05	minutes	19.10	minutes	00.00
Archway Station	06.56	07.07	07.12	until	19.12	until	00.02

Saturdays

Islington Angel	07.00	07.05	07.06	07.10	08.05	08.10	08.15	08.20
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	07.01	07.06	07.10	07.11	08.06	08.11	08.16	08.21
Archway Station	07.02	07.07	07.11	minutes	08.07	08.12	08.17	08.22
Islington Angel	08.01	Then about	19.09	Then	23.50			
Barnsbury Hemingford Arms	08.03	every 10	19.12	every 20	23.59			
Holloway Way's Head	08.02	minutes	19.10	minutes	00.00			
Archway Station	08.10	until	19.12	until	00.02			

Holloway Hoppa Route 153 (Archway Station – Islington, Angel)

Also from 4th April, route 153 became the Holloway Hoppa, and the contract for this too was awarded to London Country North West. The 153 is worked by Robin Hood Daily bodied Iveco midibuses (MBIs) in a two-tone green and white livery. Again, Hoppa logos are carried on the sides with a route description above the windows. The route now runs at a much more attractive frequency – every 10 minutes during the day on Mondays to Saturdays compared to the previous half-hourly service. An evening service has now been restored through the Barnsbury Estate with buses running every 20 minutes. Buses no longer run beyond

Islington to Tottenham Court Road Station and, as previously, there is no Sunday service.

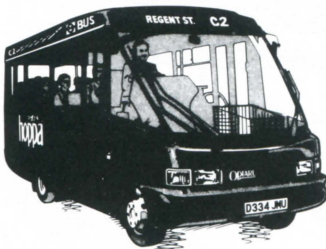
The London Country North West midibus routes are worked from their new base at Muswell Hill at Pickford's Depot in Coppetts Road, including route 268 which has been moved in from the temporary outstation at Scratchwood Service Station.

From 5th May some journeys on route C2 will run on Mondays to Saturdays north of Parliament Hill Fields to and from the Muswell Hill base via Southwood Road, Muswell Hill Road, Fortis Green Road and Coppetts Road serving Coppetts Wood Hospital.

Among the first of the new style Hoppas was the 153, now branded as the Holloway Hoppa. The two-tone green and white livery applied to the Iveco adds a touch of colour to Liverpool Road where MB159 is bound for Islington, Angel. Eamonn Kentell



Hop on a CAMDEN hoppa



Regent Street- Parliament Hill Fields

Your new, frequent, local bus
service from London Transport



CAMDEN hoppa

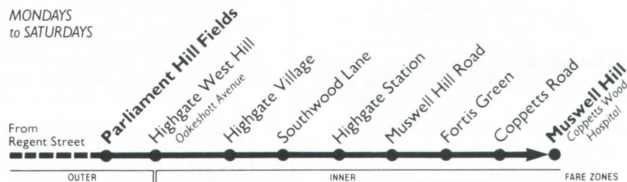
From Tuesday 5th May, some buses on the Camden Hoppa C2 will run on Mondays to Saturdays between Coppetts Wood Hospital and Parliament Hill Fields via Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill Road, Highgate Station, Southwood Lane, Highgate Village and Highgate West Hill.

Outer Zone fares apply between Coppetts Wood Hospital and Highgate West Hill/Oakeshott Avenue, and Inner Zone fares from there to Parliament Hill Fields. All Bus Passes, Travelcards, Capitalcards, Elderly and Handicapped Person's Permits, and all similar tickets are valid on the C2 for travel in the appropriate zones.

C2

MONDAYS
to SATURDAYS

Please
have your
fare
ready to
**PAY THE
DRIVER**



All buses start from Regent Street and run via Great Portland Street and Camden Town.

Monday to Fridays

	NTh		Th												NTh		
Parliament Hill Fields	10:1	10:31	10:51	11:11	11:51	12:31	12:51	14:1	14:31	14:51	15:1	15:31	15:51		19:1	19:31	19:51
Highgate Village	10:6	10:36	10:56	11:16	11:56	12:36	12:56	14:6	14:36	14:56	15:6	15:36	15:56		19:6	19:36	19:56
Highgate Station	10:20	10:40	11:00	11:20	12:00	12:40	13:00	14:20	14:40	15:00	15:20	15:40	16:00		19:10	19:30	19:50
Muswell Hill Coppetts Wood Hospital	10:31	10:51	11:11	11:31	12:11	12:51	13:11	14:31	14:51	15:11	15:31	15:51	16:11		19:21	19:41	19:51
	NTh		Th												NTh		
Parliament Hill Fields	19:48	20:08	20:28	20:48	20:52	20:40		23:01	23:18	23:33	23:48	00:03	00:18	00:33			
Highgate Village	19:52	20:04	20:12	20:22	20:36	20:44		23:07	23:22	23:37	23:52	00:07	00:22	00:37			
Highgate Station	19:56	20:08	20:16	20:26	20:40	20:48		23:11	23:26	23:41	23:56	00:11	00:26	00:41			
Muswell Hill Coppetts Wood Hospital	20:06	20:18	20:26	20:36	20:50	20:58		23:21	23:36	23:51	00:06	00:21	00:36	00:51			

Saturdays

Parliament Hill Fields	11:31	13:31	13:51	14:11	14:31	15:11	15:31	15:51	16:11	16:31	16:51	17:11	18:14	19:11	19:48	20:0
Highgate Village	11:36	13:36	13:56	14:16	14:36	15:16	15:36	15:56	16:16	16:36	16:56	17:16	18:18	19:17	19:52	20:4
Highgate Station	11:40	13:40	14:00	14:20	14:40	15:20	15:40	16:00	16:20	16:40	17:00	17:20	19:02	19:4	19:56	20:8
Muswell Hill Coppetts Wood Hospital	11:51	13:51	14:11	14:31	14:51	15:31	15:51	16:11	16:31	16:51	17:11	17:31	19:12	19:5	20:6	20:8
	23:03		23:13		23:48		00:03		00:18		00:33					
Parliament Hill Fields	23:03	23:18	23:33	23:48	00:03	00:18	00:33									
Highgate Village	23:07	23:22	23:37	23:52	00:07	00:22	00:37									
Highgate Station	23:11	23:26	23:41	23:56	00:11	00:26	00:41									
Muswell Hill Coppetts Wood Hospital	23:21	23:36	23:51	00:06	00:23	00:36	00:51									

NTh - Not Thursdays

Th - Thursdays only

Camden Hoppa Route C2 (Parliament Hill Fields – Regent Street)

The successful bid by London Country North West for the operation of midibuses between Parliament Hill Fields and Regent Street resulted in the launch of the Camden Hoppa C2 route from Tuesday 24th March. It is worked by Optare midibuses (MBVs) which carry LRT red livery, the vehicles being owned by London Regional Transport and leased to London Country North West for the duration of the contract. They carry 'Camden Hoppa' signing on the sides and rear in a style which has now been set as a standard for future Hoppas, with brief route descriptions above the windows along the sides. The initial service on the C2 provided a 12 minute service on Mondays to Fridays between 7am and 7pm only, which ran alongside the continued operation of the

53 north of Oxford Circus. From Saturday 4th April the full service commenced providing a bus every 4 minutes on Mondays to Saturdays, every 8 minutes on Sundays and Monday to Saturday evenings, and every 15 minutes on Sunday evenings. Additional buses run during peak hours between Regent Street and Camden Town, and on Thursday evenings for late night shoppers. The C2 gives a Sunday service from Parliament Hill Fields to the West End for the first time in very many years. Route 53 was cut back to Oxford Circus at all times, along with the weekend extension of route 3. As a result, there is no longer any through facility for passengers wishing to travel from points north of Oxford Circus to Piccadilly Circus and beyond.



The high-frequency Camden Hoppa C2 service uses Optares which are owned by London Regional Transport and leased to London Country North West which runs the service. They carry LRT red livery and MBV27 waits at Parliament Hill Fields before setting off for its return trip to Regent Street in the heart of the West End. Eamonn Kentell



The C3 Chelsea Harbour Hoppa is run by London Coaches Ltd on behalf of LRT and the developers of the Chelsea Wharf site, Chelsea Harbour Ltd. The vehicles are a mixture of Ivecos and Sherpas, all of which carry an attractive dark blue livery with white signing. The service was introduced at short notice and initially blinds were not available, as shown by D974 PJW at the entrance to the Chelsea Harbour site. Buses now run into the works area carrying passengers to the sales office, although they are not permitted to board or alight between the sales office and the entrance. Eamonn Kentell

Chelsea Harbour Hoppa Route C3 (Chelsea Harbour – Earl's Court)

The most recent Hoppa, and of particular interest, is the C3 Chelsea Harbour Hoppa which started on Monday 13th April. It is run by London Buses' subsidiary, London Coaches Ltd from their Battersea base under contract to London Regional Transport in conjunction with Chelsea Harbour Ltd, the company which is currently developing the Chelsea Wharf site. It runs from a temporary terminus in Lots Road on a completely circular routeing via Kings Road, Gunter Grove, Finborough Road, Warwick Road, Nevern Square, Trebovir Road, Earl's Court Road, Redcliffe Gardens, Edith Grove and Cremorne Road to Lots Road. As soon as the roads within the Chelsea Harbour site are suitable the buses will continue into the development. The service is designed to provide a convenient and reliable link to Earl's Court Station for Underground connections, and runs every 15 minutes on Mondays to Fridays and every 20 minutes

on Saturdays. There is no evening or Sunday service.

An assortment of vehicles are used, all of which carry a blue livery with Hoppa logos and route descriptions along the sides. At first, the main vehicles were two Rover Sherpa 20-seaters and a 21-seat Robin Hood Daily Iveco. It is expected that a 23-seat Talbot Tristar will shortly be acquired which will relegate the Iveco to being the spare vehicle.

All the latest Hoppas have received uniform treatment in terms of publicity and on-bus signing. The leaflets are printed in the appropriate colours to match the vehicles, with the addition of red for the LRT identity. It seems highly likely that more Hoppas will be introduced in the future as and when further LRT contracted midibus services appear.

From Tunbridge Wells to Leatherhead

Matters Arising

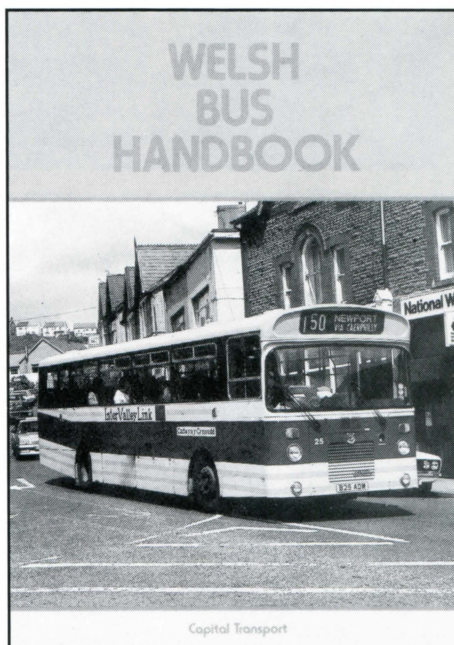
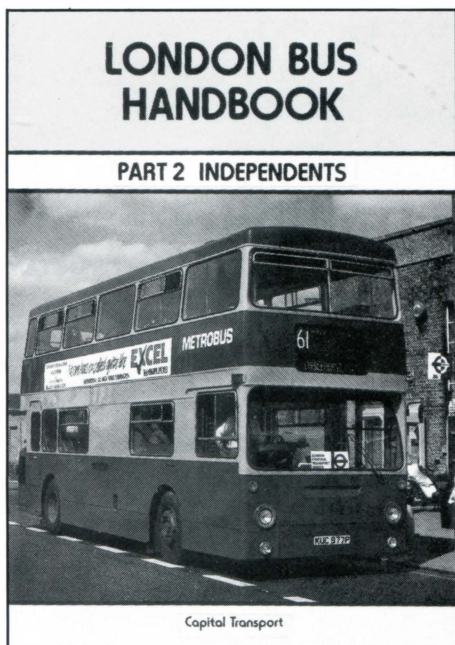
Following publication of Brian Bunker's history of route 403 in LBM 58 several points have been raised by Messrs Maurice Lynch and J. Ward. On page 11 reference is made to "AEC Tylers"; the engine maker was in fact Tylor. These single deckers are stated, incidentally, to seat 26 on page 36 of *East Surrey* and 28 in the fleet list on page 152. Does anybody know which is correct? The reference on page 14 (para 3) to the 408A is not strictly correct. Mr Lynch thinks that this route was in fact started by the London independent Regal prior to the passing of the London Traffic Act. Regal was the first independent to sell to London Public Omnibus Company, and A. T. Bennett took over operation on behalf of Public on 23rd June 1927. It was on 23rd May 1928 that the 408A was given up to General as part of an exchange concentrating Public's buses on fewer routes. (See *London's Buses* vol. 1 p. 114).

The ST on page 15 is described as being "in the green livery of London General Country Services". LGCS buses retained the red livery of the former East Surrey and National fleets (as is stated on page 13) and had a General Country Services logo on a pearl grey rectangle on each side. Mr Ward states that it was the LPTB that first painted the vehicles green (initially with a black waistband) and applied a plain General fleet name in gold prior to the arrival of the London Transport logo many months later. Some minor corrections should be made to a couple of captions. The vehicle shown in the third picture on page 12 is an AEC K and its registration should be XB 8431. The Maudslay Mentor on page 15 was perhaps not as unique as suggested: Coventry Corporation had three for example (see *Buses Illustrated* number 37 of 1957, page 45).



Operation of the LRT Careline service was relinquished by Alder Valley North (Bee Line) on 14th February but was thereafter handled by Vic Hughes of Ashford, a company specialising in the carriage of the disabled. This Talbot Express 'Welfare' demonstrator was seen at Victoria in February. M. Dryhurst

New from Capital Transport



London Bus Handbook Part 2 provides details of the fleets of the London Country companies, Eastern National Citybus, all LRT contract independents and nine other independent bus operators in and around London. Brief histories, fleet lists and 80 photographs are contained in the popular A5 size format. *Available Now*, £3.95. (Part 1 *London Buses Ltd* also available at £3.95).

Welsh Bus Handbook This new edition to our range of fleet handbooks covers the major operators and over 40 bus-operating independents in Wales. Around 160 photographs illustrate the fleets and full fleet lists are included for each of the companies dealt with. *July*, £5.95.

Major Bus Operators South East England The London Country companies have been moved to Part 2 of the London Bus Handbook, making way for the addition to the South East book of Alder Valley South, Berks Bucks Bus Company, Reading, Oxford and South Midland. Around 150 photographs accompany updated fleet lists to 1st April. *Late-June*, £4.95.

Major Bus Operators Eastern England The company, vehicle and livery changes since the last edition of this book have been many and the third edition is correct to 1st May. Operators included are Eastern Counties, Eastern National, Cambus, Ambassador Travel, Colchester, Great Yarmouth, Grimsby-Cleethorpes, Ipswich, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, Northampton, Southend, United Counties, Milton Keynes Citybus and Luton & District. *July*, £4.50.

Workhorses of the London Underground by J. Graeme Bruce. A history of service stock on the London Underground, covering pilot locomotives, battery and diesel locos, wagons and travelling cranes etc. An appendix lists all motive power service stock and 115 photographs illustrate the text. Hardback, 96pp, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins by 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ins. *July*, £8.95.

These books can be ordered through any bookshop, many transport societies or for post-free despatch from Capital Transport, 38 Long Elmes, Harrow Weald, Middlesex, HA3 5JL. They may also be ordered through Giro, quoting account number 318 5559.



£1.80