

# THE JOURNAL OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND RAILWAY SOCIETY

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## DINNER AT SYON PARK

On the evening of Friday 10th August, after a Private View of the London Transport Collection of Historical Relics at Syon Park, during which a conducted tour of the exhibits was led by Percy Silverlock and John Day, the Society had the pleasure of entertaining to Dinner at the Camellia Restaurant a number of London Transport Members and Officials, accompanied by their wives.

The Dinner had been arranged as a tribute to the enormous amount of work which had been carried out so successfully, and in such a short time, by Mr. Silverlock in setting up the LT Collection at Syon. This having been decided upon, the opportunity was taken to invite also some of those who had been instrumental in reaching an agreement between LT and The Gardening Centre Limited to locate the Collection at Syon, and a few of those who have been of such great assistance to the Society during the past twelve years. The complete LT guest list was as follows:-

- Percy R. Silverlock - Principal Assistant -  
Historical Relics  
(Guest of Honour)
- R. Michael Robbins - Member of the Executive and  
Managing Director (Railways)
- J. Graeme Bruce - Chief Operating Manager  
(Railways)
- F. Eric Wilkins - Chief Public Relations Officer
- Frank Baker - Public Relations Officer
- John R. Day - Senior Executive Assistant to  
the Press Officer.

The President of the Society, Mr. Charles F. Klapper, was present, accompanied by Mrs. Klapper and guests were also entertained from The Transport Trust, the Ealing Museum, Art and History Society and The National Musical Museum.

The Chairman, who was accompanied by Mrs. Davis, presided, and proposed the Loyal Toast and that to Mr. Silverlock and other guests - which was the only other toast as proceedings were kept as informal as possible.

Mr. Silverlock responded with a speech which was both amusing and informative (and is reproduced below), and the evening ended informally with drinks at the private bar in the Conference room where the Dinner was held.

It should be placed on record that Percy Silverlock in fact retired from London Transport on the 31st July, although very fortunately he is continuing as part-time consultant at Syon Park on matters affecting the LT Collection. There could be no more fitting end to a career with LT, which goes back to 1937, than the establishment of this public exhibition of relics which will give pleasure to thousands over the years - and had already been visited by 38,000 members of the public between the opening on the 23rd May and early August.

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TEXT OF SPEECH BY PERCY R. SILVERLOCK  
GIVEN AT THE SOCIETY DINNER, SYON PARK, 10 AUGUST 1973.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you very much, Mr. Davis, for proposing my toast and you Ladies and Gentlemen, for the way you have received it. I feel very proud this evening that the members of The London Underground Railway Society should invite me on this occasion, with my wife, to be your guest of honour. I do not think that my part in setting up the London Transport Collection here in Syon Park deserves as much credit as the efforts of all the other people who have been involved, particularly my colleagues on London Transport who worked so hard preparing the pavilion and installing the relics. Also we should not forget to thank John Price who I understand is not able to be with us this evening but who first brought the existence of the pavilion in Syon Park to the notice of The Transport Trust early in 1972. He undoubtedly shewed acute foresight in visualising the possibility of setting up a Transport Collection in a Greenhouse.

Then there is Peter Davis who, on behalf of The Transport Trust, first brought it to our notice shortly afterwards and also appreciated its possibilities. Nobody could have shewn more perseverance and determination than Peter to find and recommend to London Transport a home in London where the Executive's historical relics could continue to be on exhibition to the public. As most of you know there had been many previous disappointments, particularly the Transport Trust's efforts at Crystal Palace to set up a Transport Museum to which London Transport could have contributed their relics. We had, in fact, practically resigned ourselves to the storing of the relics with limited opportunities for viewing. This would most likely have been in the L.U.T. generating station in Chiswick High Road.

I should like to mention the encouragement and active support of London Transport's Executive Board Member, Mr. Robbins. We were indeed fortunate to have the backing of such a recognised authority and historian on London's history. I must pay my tribute too to Mr. Wilkins, Chief Public Relations Officer, who, two years ago, gave me the opportunity to find a home for the relics and arrange for their removal after the closure of Clapham Museum. I shall always be most grateful to him for the chance and for his keen interest and encouragement. Last but not least I should like to say a sincere thankyou to representatives of The Gardening Centre Limited, whose help in getting the project off the ground has been so invaluable, and who have given us every possible assistance; particularly I would mention Mr. Hall, James Short and my partner on the management committee Michael Cogswell. I must also not forget the leading attendant, Ted Francis, who is now responsible for looking after the Collection and takes care that it always looks spick and span.

While I have had the task of setting up the Collection I think you should know that the excellent poster display and the aesthetic layout and captioning of the exhibits has been the work of the Publicity Officer, Bruce Beaumont, with assistance from a freelance designer, Bob Miller. I am sure that you will agree that their efforts have contributed, in no small measure, to enhancing the appeal of the Collection. They even put the finishing touch to the pavilion with suitable flags at the entrance.

It is very fitting that our relics should have found their home at Syon Park for they are indeed tender plants. They have blossomed well and each has been admired on London's streets and railway lines in its day. They are now frail with age and without careful attention would very soon wither away. Their enemies are not greenfly, red spider, black spot or one of the other myriad pests which plague the horticulturalist but damp rot, dry rot, woodworm, excessive humidity, insufficient humidity, ultra-violet rays, small boys - and, I regret to say, small girls as well. This requires constant vigilance and preventive measures at some considerable cost, but I feel that it is essential if we are to maintain a practical and tangible record of London Transport's history for the enjoyment and instruction of Londoners as well as for visitors from other parts of this country and abroad.

Indeed, I am sure that London Transport will continue to preserve relics which mark the progress of development both technically and to meet London's changing traffic requirements. You may like to know that it is proposed to preserve and put on exhibition in the near future a 1938 Tube Stock Motor Car, as well as RT and RF buses. We have also in mind saving a metadyne machine from one of the three battery locomotives with this type of traction control still in use. A further item of interest we shall have in 1974 is the City and South London padded cell coach from the present York railway museum. Serious thought will, therefore, have to be given to making space for these in the near future. We are also hoping to put on display shortly some paintings we have had donated, including one of Aldersgate Station presented by Sir John Betjeman. I could go on at some length with proposals for improving the Collection, and I would like to thank the members of your Society who have made suggestions.

Once again, thank you for the honour you have done me this evening, and may I wish The London Underground Railway Society, and The Transport Trust, on behalf of all your guests, continued success in maintaining interest in the preservation, in tangible form, the milestones of our Transport History.

STATEN ISLAND RAPID TRANSIT  
Samuel R. Ganczaruk

Little known in New York's transit system is the Staten Island Rapid Transit providing passenger service from St. George to Tottenville in the least populated Borough of the city. Trains start from the basement like atmosphere of the St. George Ferry Terminal and what a bargain is to be found in this basement! For the flat fare of only 35 cents, the residents of Staten Island can enjoy the fastest and most dependable transportation in their Borough.

Staten Island Rapid Transit has recently become part of the regional Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), a "super agency" which operates everything from the massive subway system in New York's four other Boroughs to commuter railroads running to Montauk, Long Island and New Haven, Connecticut (in co-operation with the Connecticut Transportation Authority). Prior to joining MTA, Staten Island Rapid Transit was owned and operated by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which retains freight service rights over the tracks to Tottenville and to New Jersey. It is interesting to note that, while SIRT was under control of the B&O Railroad, all operations had to conform to regulations issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission (a Federal Agency) including the operation of the rapid transit passenger service which meant that SIRT was the only urban rapid transit line operated to main line railroad standards.

Staten Island Rapid Transit was the tail of the dog, the dog being the ferry service from Manhattan to Staten Island which antedates to 1713. By 1836, pressure had grown for construction of a railroad on the island and one was opened on April 23, 1860 between what is now called Stapleton and Eltingville and on June 2, 1860, the line was completed to Tottenville. The extension from Stapleton to St. George was opened on July 31, 1884 which completed the main line as it is operated today. Branches to Arlington (opened February 23, 1886), South Beach (opened March 8, 1886) and to Cranford Junction, New Jersey (opened June 13, 1889) completed the development of SIRT to its fullest extent of operation. Staten Island Rapid Transit, although chartered as a main line railroad, has always carried the name "Rapid Transit" from its inception and was the first passenger service to be so named "rapid transit".

Staten Island, more so then than now, being so lightly populated, turned out to be unpromising for passenger railroad service despite the original demand for service and the resort services offered and developed by the original owners.

Enter the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. B&O saw Staten Island as being a better access to the port of New York as compared to its already existing facilities on the west shore of the Hudson River in New Jersey opposite Manhattan. When B&O acquired the SIRT in 1889, it had an effective monopoly on the railroad service on that island. B&O embarked upon a program of improving the railroad facilities and the ferries operated by the SIRT and saw the opportunity of terminating some of its long distance passenger trains at St. George. However, the long distance trains served St. George briefly and returned to New Jersey terminals.

A serious blow to the B&O and the Staten Island Rapid Transit was the loss of control over the ferry service in 1905 because of a serious accident involving a boiler explosion on the B&O's ferry operated by the Central Railroad of New Jersey which rammed and sunk SIRT's ferry Northfield at the cost of five lives. The City of New York claimed the ferries operated were unsafe and seized the ferries, forming the municipal ferry service which remains in operation today.

During this difficult time, the SIRT found a new friend, the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company which operated the elevated railroad, subway and streetcar system in Brooklyn and Queens and had an extension of its subway under construction to Manhattan. BRT proposed a tunnel under the Verazzano Narrows to connect SIRT to its new 4th Avenue Subway in Brooklyn which would provide direct rapid transit service from Manhattan to Staten Island thusly boosting a diminishing passenger traffic. SIRT eagerly embraced this proposal and completed electricification of its services in 1925 and started electric operations with passenger MU cars similar to and compatible with the BRT's "standard steels" type of subway car.

Yet again, another cruel accident destroyed all the hopes of the SIRT. This time the accident was on the Brooklyn Rapid Transit in 1918 and the litigation and city politics dragged on for more than ten years which forced the BRT into a corporate reorganisation. The tunnel project to Staten Island was a casualty even though routes were proposed through the mid 1920's

and some construction had actually started.

Staten Island Rapid Transit continued electric operations through the worst years of the great depression which saw the sweeping away of the streetcar and trackless trolley operations on Staten Island; through the years of World War II which saw a temporary increase in riding and into the present day to the take-over by MTA. Staten Island also saw the burning of the original St. George terminal in 1946 with the loss of several rapid transit cars, the termination of passenger service on the South Beach and Arlington branches in 1953 and the selling of 30 cars to the New York City Transit Authority in 1953/4 for use in the BMT subway system.

The opening of the Verazzano Narrows Bridge in 1964 and the resulting increase in population of Staten Island was of no aid to the railroad. In the age of the automobile and the bus, the traffic across the bridge grew while the rail passengers continued to decline. There was talk of building the rail link to Brooklyn on the lower deck of the bridge, but the agency which operates the bridge refused to co-operate and the SIRT appeared doomed to oblivion.

Help came in the form of the MTA which took over the railroad in 1972. New cars of the R-44 class with minor modifications, otherwise identical to the newest cars in the subway system, were purchased for Staten Island Rapid Transit.

With new money, cars and interest in rail rapid transit on Staten Island the future, at long last, appears secure and promising.

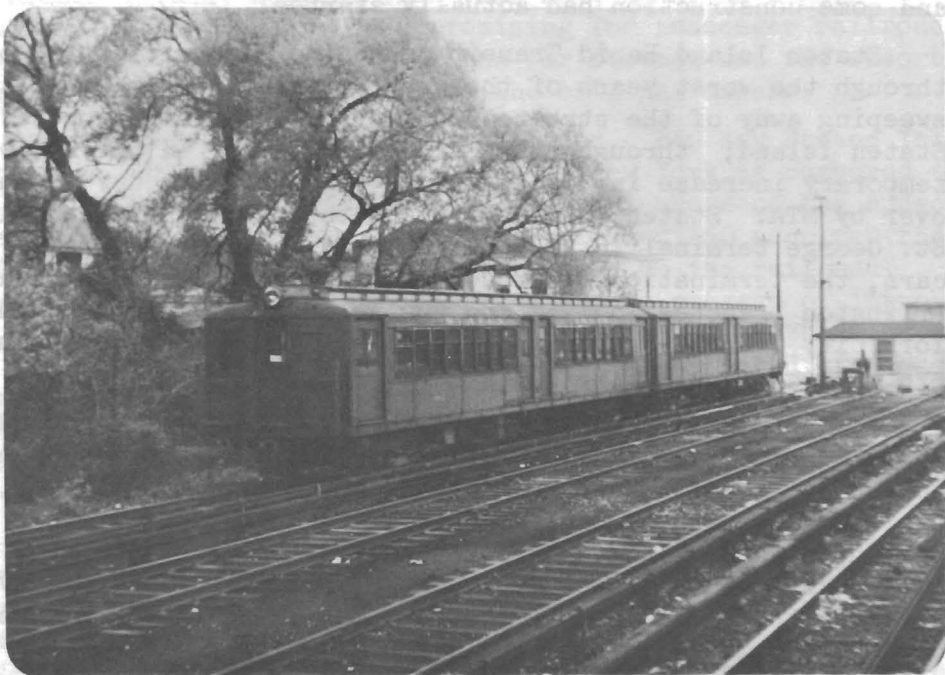
On April 28, 1973, the Electric Railroaders Association operated a tour of the Staten Island Rapid Transit using three different types of cars: the original SIRT 1925 electric MU cars; the MP-72 Long Island Railroad cars which are on loan to SIRT to ease a temporary car shortage due to the loss of several SIRT cars; and the new R-44 cars. Such an event cannot ever again be repeated on Staten Island, and it was a truly historic event.

Captions to photographs overleaf

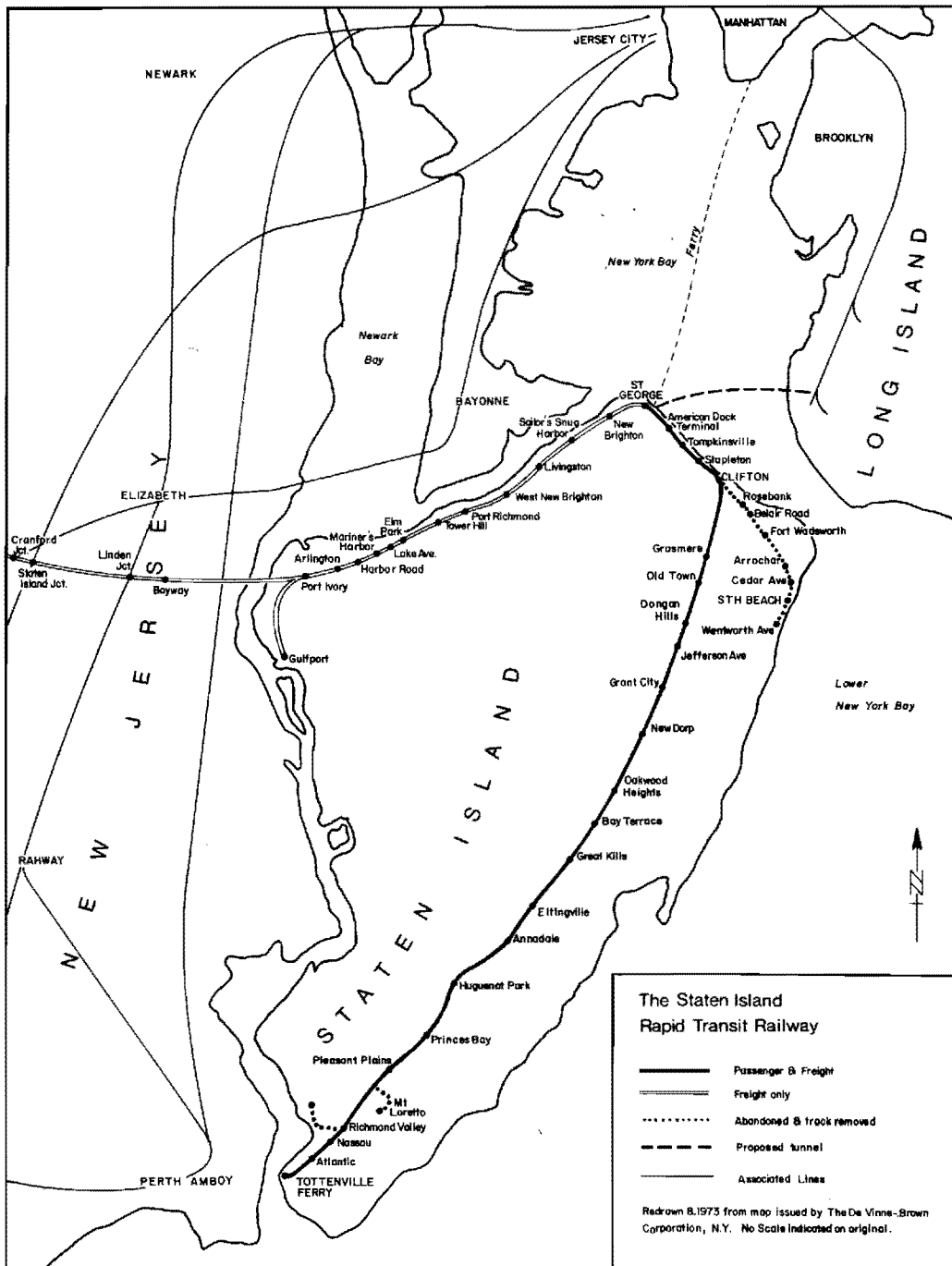
Staten Island Rapid Transit:

top - 1925 MU cars at Tottenville  
bottom - R-44 cars at Annadale.

Both photos by the author - copyright.







**The Staten Island  
Rapid Transit Railway**

- Passenger & Freight
- Freight only
- ..... Abandoned & track removed
- - - - Proposed tunnel
- Associated Lines

Redrawn 8.1973 from map issued by The De Vinne-Brown Corporation, N.Y. No Scale Indicated on original.

## REVIEWS

Periodicals and Reports

Underground Services; Foundation Publications Limited; page size A4; bi-monthly; price per issue £1.

The first issue of this new journal, which is a companion to that issued by the same publishers under the title "Ground Engineering", appeared in June 1973. Edited by Richard Tilden Smith, it is described as "the new specialist engineering journal of the underground world", and deals with all activities below ground - sewers, cables, inground storage, pipelines, etc. as well as underground railways. This issue contains a one-page illustrated article on the Victoria and Fleet Lines, drawing attention to the stupidity of the Government in not authorising the construction of the second stage of the latter line; there is also an illustrated note on the two-way conveyor system of C.J.R. Fyson and Son Limited, now being used by W. & C. French (Construction) Limited on the Piccadilly Line Heathrow Extension.

Obviously a periodical which will contain much of interest to the Underground enthusiast, who may, however, be put off by the price - £1 for 36 pages A4 is a bit expensive for "hobby reading", although it is not all that high in comparison with other specialist professional journals. Subscriptions, £6 a year, may be sent to Foundation Publications Limited, 33 Short Croft, Doddinghurst, Essex.

London Transport Passengers Committee; Annual Report 1972; 16pp A4; no price stated.

This report, presented to the Greater London Council on 12th June 1973, gives details of the work done by the Committee for last year; 17 complaints and 32 suggestions were considered relating to the Underground - far fewer complaints than were received about bus services, which totalled 44 - but there were only 9 bus suggestions.

One recommendation to LT was that the Wentworth Avenue entrance to West Finchley station, closed on 30th April 1973, should be reopened in the morning peak period, and this was agreed to by the Executive.

A very interesting annexe to the report gives the proposed rebuilding plans for Hammersmith District and Piccadilly station and the adjoining bus garage; these plans include a bus station and a subway to the Metropolitan station is under consideration.

London Facts and Figures No. 2 (free)  
 Transport Facts and Figures No. 1 (10p)

Both 32pp 6" x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " in card covers; Greater London Council; 1973.

Two invaluable booklets full of statistics, charts, graphs, tables and various other visual presentations of numerical information, in full colour in most cases. The first does contain certain information on transport and traffic amongst all the other details given; the second is devoted entirely to that subject, and is therefore the one of most direct interest to our readers. The GLC is obviously making an effort to explain London to Londoners, and this is a good way of doing it - every reader will learn something, and they will be very useful books to have around for quick reference. As this is the second edition of the first title, it is to be hoped that they will both become annual publications. There is to be another companion publication incidentally - Housing Facts and Figures, due to come out at any time now, compiled as are the above two by the GLC's Intelligence Unit.

Anyone needing highly detailed statistical information on Greater London will, of course, still refer to the Annual Abstract of Greater London Statistics - but that costs £3-50 plus postage, which makes it a rather more expensive proposition, and in any case it is likely to be found too detailed for the ordinary reader.

Both the booklets reviewed are obtainable from the Society.

#### Other Booklets

Your New Electric Railway; British Railways Eastern Region; 20pp A4 (11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "); May 1973; no price stated.

Well-illustrated booklet produced by BR and distributed recently to passengers on the GN Suburban network describing in adequate detail the electrification scheme now in progress between Kings Cross/Moorgate (GN&C) and Hertford. New trains, new signalling and power supply and engineering work together with the proposed pattern of services are all discussed and illustrated with maps and photographs. Recommended addition to members' libraries although this publication shows up very well the disadvantages of strict adherence to 'standard A' paper sizes; A4 is far too large a format for an item of this nature.

150 Years in Motive Power 1823-1973; 8pp A4

150 Years in Traction; 16pp A4

Both published 1973 by GEC Traction Limited, Manchester.

These two nicely-illustrated and well-produced booklets are both commemorative of the foundation of Robert Stephenson and Company in 1823, the publishers being a directly descended organisation. The first is more historical in content, giving details of the various companies whose traction activities are now incorporated in GEC Traction, together with the dates the constituent concerns were established. It then goes on to give in narrative form some details of the achievements of the various concerns, paying particular attention to the very many "firsts", and making reference to much work done for the old London Underground companies. There are a number of photos, ranging from the Rocket to a steam locomotive built in 1955 for East African Railways, and covering between the electric locos for the City and South London Railway, electric trams and trolleybuses, petrol-electric buses, electric battery cars and locos, diesel locos and mining locomotives. Quite a wide field, which lends support to the comment on the last page "The history of GEC Traction is almost 'the history of traction itself' from the early days of George Stephenson to the present day".

The second, and lengthier, book is much more an advertising brochure, comprised mainly of photographs of the company's present activities in transport. It is a most impressive field of operations, once again with Underground connections, including the Victoria Line trains and thyristor-control railway equipment.

No price is quoted for either booklet, and the availability to the general public is not known, but a copy of each has been added to the Society Library.

Charles E. Lee; The Northern Line - A Brief History; 32pp + 12pp illustrations and frontispiece; 8½" x 5¼"; London, 1973; London Transport; 25p.

This is the latest in the series of Line Histories being produced by Charles Lee for LT, and is an updated version of "Sixty Years of the Northern" published in 1967, and which had itself been preceded in 1957 by "Fifty Years of the Hampstead Tube", both written by Mr. Lee. Brought right up to date, this new version has illustrations better reproduced and on a whiter art paper - a considerable improvement.

Elizabeth Cooper; Harrow Walkabout; 56pp 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " in card covers; Harrow, 1973; Pinner and Hatch End Branch, Workers' Educational Association, 50p.

Published to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Pinner and Hatch End WEA, this pocket-sized book details seven walks through parts of the London Borough of Harrow, and gives some very interesting historical information about the areas being walked and the buildings that will be seen en route.

The authoress in her preface makes reference to the series of Country Walks published by the Metropolitan Railway Company, and her method is much the same as was used in those books of so long ago - with one important difference. The walks in the MR books were of between six and twelve miles each - but none of Miss Cooper's exceeds three miles. Is this a symptom of a car-orientated, legless society, or is it just that Miss Cooper has kept each walk short so that it is confined to one district of the borough?

Each walk is provided with a plan and the book is well illustrated with other maps, drawings and photographs; of course, the various railways in the area are mentioned a number of times, but it is not an enthusiasts book - but very interesting to anyone concerned with the history of Harrow - and nicely produced too. Can be strongly recommended to the local history student; a bibliography appears on the inside back cover, and there is also a list of local societies both useful details.

### Pottery

Readers may like to know that mugs bearing the names of the more important Underground stations are now being sold by many souvenir shops in the West End. These mugs, of about half-pint capacity, are in cream earthenware with gold-lined rims, and the LT station name signs on the side in the correct colours. Those seen so far are showing Bond Street, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus and Westminster, but there may well be others.

There is also on the market now an ashtray, about 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " oblong in shape, believed to be in a burn-proof unbreakable material, showing the central area Underground map in its proper colours.

No prices can be quoted for these products, as they are not price-controlled and prices vary from shop to shop.

## COSTS OF CONVERSION OF C69 STOCK FOR ONE-MAN OPERATION

The Greater London Council, which has agreed to help finance the conversion of the 35 trains of C69 Stock to one-man control, provided the Government will make a grant of 75 per cent of the cost, has given details of the estimated cost of the change, and confirmed that the trade unions concerned have agreed to one-man operation on both the Circle and Hammersmith and City Lines.

As the trains were designed for easy conversion to omo when they were built in 1970 and 1971, the expenditure is not likely to be as great as might have been thought.

Anticipated cost is £1,380,000, which is broken down into its component parts in the estimate as follows:

Trainborne radio equipment	560,000
Platform television	160,000
Improved lighting for television	390,000
Platform emergency stop plungers	110,000
Trackside and tunnel equipment	160,000
	1,380,000

These costs include certain other work on lighting and other improvements which would be needed in any case to bring the stations concerned up to modern standards.

The finance charges to be borne by the GLC and the Government will amount to £135,000 per annum, but will be partly offset by a reduction of £80,000 a year in staff wages and training costs. The saving in staff will be 90.

## MODERNISATION OF NEASDEN DEPOT

In the next ten years LT propose the expenditure of £2.6m on depot modernisation, and Neasden is the first to be dealt with, in conjunction with the requirements of the Fleet Line stock, and the removal of Bakerloo stock to the new depot being built at Stonebridge Park. The proposals include renewing the entry and exit signalling system (installed in 1938/39), new depot lighting on 100ft masts to replace the present lights, which are on 50ft masts, and a central shunting control tower which will replace the present outmoded shunting system. Total cost will be £800,000, and a Government grant is expected of 75%, the GLC to bear the balance.

## ANOTHER LONDON TRANSPORT TUBE TOUR

There is to be another LT Tube Tour for enthusiasts this autumn. It will take place on Sunday 14th October, and will be the first train to carry passengers over the 46-year old link between the Piccadilly and Northern Lines at King's Cross.

This 80-mile, 6½-hour Rove-a-Tube tour will be undertaken by a six-car train of 1938 Tube stock from the Bakerloo Line, and apart from running over the link - which is the only connection between the Northern Line and the rest of the Underground system - the tour will take in the western end of the Hammersmith and City Line and the western branches of the District - to Olympia, Richmond and Wimbledon, which are, of course, tracks not normally used by tube stock.

The tour will start from High Street Kensington at 10.00 and finish there at 16.30, with a 35-minute lunch break there from 12.30. There will be photographic stops at reversing points and at certain Southern Region stations when possible without delaying ordinary services. There will, of course, be a Society party on board this train, but tickets, which cost £2 each, with no reductions for children but including free travel for the day between any London Transport stations, should be obtained direct from the Fares and Charges Assistant, London Transport Executive, 55 Broadway, London, SW1H 0BD.

A Bakerloo train is being used for this tour as it is the only tube stock suitable for operation on BR earthed-return tracks, and it is limited to six cars by the terminal platform length at Hammersmith.

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#### THE CITY UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME 1973-74

The Programme of Courses for evening students at the City University, 1973/74 looks as interesting as usual, although there are no purely railway courses this year. One of those closest to our subject is that entitled "Accidents and Victorian Engineering" comprising ten meetings commencing 17th January 1974; this will be devoted to a study of the effect of disasters on engineering developments in railway, signalling, boiler and civil engineering, and will include accidents to ships and the collapse of buildings. Other courses of fringe interest to the Society are devoted to "Energy and the Environment", "The Background to Social Policy" and "Modern Timekeeping Developments". Further details of these

and other courses may be obtained from the Editor at 62 Billet Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RML1 1XA or from Adult Education, Room A343, The City University, St. John Street, London, EC1V 4PB.

#### THE TIMETABLE

19.00 for 19.15 Friday 14th September at Hammersmith Town Hall; Percy R. Silverlock, recently retired as Principal Assistant - Historical Relics, London Transport, will present a Paper on "Problems of Preservation of Transport Relics". In view of the work he has done recently at Syon Park, Mr. Silverlock is well aware of the problems involved in preservation, and his talk, which will be illustrated, promises to be an interesting one. Saturday and Sunday 22nd/23rd September at Didcot. Stand at the Great Western Society/BR Open Days.

18.00 Monday 1st October Visit to the Post Office Railway. Names, accompanied by a First Class Stamped Addressed Envelope, to J. Pearce, 55 Aberdeen Road, Highbury, London, N.5. - as soon as possible please.

19.00 for 19.15 Friday 12th October at Hammersmith Town Hall; the President's Address for 1973. Our President, Charles F. Klapper, FCIT., FRGS., has chosen for his subject one that is very topical - "Circle Railways and Ring Roads - have they a rôle?" and everyone who has heard Mr. Klapper speak is sure to want another opportunity to hear him; this is it.

Saturday 13th October Visit to Golders Green Depot, LT. Names accompanied by a 1st Class sae., to S.E. Jones, 113 Wandle Road, Morden, Surrey.

#### THE TAIL LAMP

From Tourist Information folder issued by LT, 1972:

"London Transport runs the capital's extensive bus and Underground networks - cheap (the fares are among the world's lowest) and convenient transport for all your sightseeing."

From Railway Gazette Management Study Manual No. 1 -Urban Railways and Rapid Transit:

p. 28 " . . in London where fares are high . . "

p. 12 " . . planners unofficially express concern that high fares discourage optional travel."

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