

# THE JOURNAL OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND RAILWAY SOCIETY

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## SOCIETY MEMBER IN NEW LT APPOINTMENT

London Transport announced on 16th November that Mr J.P. Armstrong and Mr H. Clarke had been appointed Divisional Engineers in the Rolling Stock Division of the Railway Operating Department. Mr Armstrong, as Divisional Engineer "A", will be responsible to the Rolling Stock Engineer (Railways) for the overall control of rolling stock depots on the Central, Northern, Piccadilly and Victoria Lines and for breakdown matters. Society member Harry Clarke - now happily recovering from his recent illness - will be responsible as Divisional Engineer "B" for the depots on the Bakerloo, District and Metropolitan Lines, and for locomotives and miscellaneous vehicles, de-icing matters and the training of all rolling stock staff.

Mr Armstrong, who is 36, joined LT as an apprentice in 1953 and, after experience in various sections of the railway mechanical engineering department, was appointed New Stock Assistant at Ruislip Depot in 1960. After being a depot engineer, he became Line Engineer (Piccadilly) in 1969, and since 1971 has been Line Engineer (Metropolitan and Bakerloo).

Harry Clarke, aged 43, also started as an engineering apprentice, in 1948, and in due course he too became a depot engineer. Since 1970 he has been Line Engineer (Central), where he has been responsible for the commissioning of new classes of rolling stock as well as for the maintenance of Central Line stock.

We wish both the new appointees success in their new jobs.

## The Presidential Address for 1973

## CIRCLE RAILWAYS AND RING ROADS - HAVE THEY A ROLE?

Charles F. Klapper, FCIT, FRGS

Thoughts of what might have been had history turned out differently are perennially interesting, even if largely unprofitable. There is nonetheless some merit in what might be termed "the lessons of history". Looking at a diagram of schemes before Parliament in 1864, one may well imagine that had they been carried out, passengers today might hear on the loudspeakers at Clapham Junction: "The train standing at Platform 17 is a District Line Outer Circle train for Chelsea, High Street, Kilburn, Stamford Hill, Victoria Park, Bow, Limehouse and New Cross".

I have long been fascinated by the vagueness of references to the original intentions of the Metropolitan District Railway Company in regard to the Outer Circle. The primary objective of the MDR was to spread the financial burden of the Metropolitan company in completing the Inner Circle; the need for the Inner Circle arose from the edict of the Royal Commissioners of 1846 that set the limit of the termini on the confined inner ring of the New Road and eventually permitted the Cannon Street, Charing Cross and Victoria incursions north of the river and the Blackfriars-Farringdon link across the centre. The Select Committees of 1863 and 1864 on Metropolitan Railway Communication were an endeavour to do some comprehensive planning and to this end they expanded the confusingly-named Metropolitan Railway District to cover the area from the Barking Road station of the North Woolwich branch of the Great Eastern (better known to most of us as "Canning Town"), along the Great Eastern to Lea Bridge, then in a straight line to Seven Sisters on the Great Northern (better known as "Seven Sisters Road" or still more familiarly as "Finsbury Park"), thence in a straight line to the eastern end of Hampstead Tunnel of the Hampstead and City Junction (usually referred to as the "Hampstead Junction Railway"), along that railway to its junction with the West London (at Willesden Junction), along the West London and West London Extension to the London Chatham and Dover, along the LC&D to Brixton and thence to Lewisham Junction on the Mid-Kent and in a straight line back to Canning Town.

Although Britain lacked - and still suffers from - the concerted railway planning between public authorities and

entrepreneurs that marked the nineteenth century era in France and some other countries, we did, as in 1863 and 1864, when so many railway Bills concerned the Metropolis, appoint a Parliamentary committee to deal with the question as a whole and try to produce some co-ordination. Charles E. Lee puts the number of schemes relating to London brought up in 1864 as 259 and the mileage proposed was about 300.

As I have said, the first thing thought about was the area that they should include in their deliberations and although it was much bigger than the area the 1846 committee had thought fit to outline, it still left out many areas where development was bubbling up. West of the West London Railway route there was the Finchley, Willesden and Acton; Hammersmith & City (Extension) for a line to Kew and Richmond; Hammersmith & Wimbledon; Kew, Turnham Green & Hammersmith; Kingston, Tooting & London; London & South Western (Kensington, Hammersmith & Richmond New Lines); North & South Western Junction (extension to Kew and Richmond); Tooting, Merton & Wimbledon Extension; these lines, criss-crossing an area "ripe for building development", no doubt had their due at the hands of the respective Parliamentary committees, but did not get looked at in the comprehensive sense of their effect on Metropolitan railway communication. The expanding area round the Crystal Palace was also omitted from their consideration. It is a sign of that trait of amateurism that has afflicted so much of British administration and which is confirmed by the naive questioning by committee members of some of the witnesses.

The committee decided that squares and open spaces were not to be taken for railway purposes unnecessarily.

A Great Central terminus in the Metropolis was considered objectionable.

Subways, covered ways or tunnels were preferable where circumstances permitted.

To favour the "labouring classes" a clause should be incorporated in any Bill where 30 or more houses inhabited by the labouring classes were being taken by the railway, four weeks should be given by personal notice to heads of families or by placards, handbills, etc, on public view in the neighbourhood and that no houses should be taken until a certificate has been obtained from a Justice that such notice has, to his satisfaction, been given.

Goods traffic was not desirable on lines through the centre of the Metropolis, from north to south of the Thames.

That there should be a line of railway on the eastern side of the Metropolis connecting the lines north and south of the Thames.

Additional facilities and less onerous tolls were desirable on the lines west of the Metropolis joining the northern lines and railways south of the Thames.

Additional railways were needed in the densely populated parts of the Metropolis and where not already provided should be established between the various lines of railway.

That the Great Eastern should be allowed to establish a more central station than it has at present and be placed in communication with lines running to the western part of the Metropolis.

That it is not desirable to bring the main stations of the principal long lines of railway, except the Great Eastern, further into London than is at present authorised, but one or more railways should be made for carrying passengers from different parts of London to the main stations of the long lines. Such new lines not to be in the hands of any one of the present great companies, but placed under such management as to ensure equal advantages to all.

That it would also be desirable to complete an inner circuit of railway that should abut upon, if it did not actually join, nearly all the principal railway termini in the Metropolis, commencing with the extension, in an easterly and southerly direction of the Metropolitan from Finsbury Circus at one end, and in a westerly and southerly direction from Paddington, at the other and connecting the extremities of those lines by a line north of the Thames; such a continuous line of railway would afford means of distributing the passenger traffic arriving by the main line of railway, and also absorb a very large proportion of the omnibus and cab traffic and thus essentially relieve the crowded streets.

The suggested line might be undertaken in connection with the construction by the municipal authorities of the City or the Metropolitan Board of Works of new streets urgently required in many of the crowded parts of the Metropolis. Under some of these new streets and under a portion of the proposed Thames Embankment (north side) and under some of the existing wide thoroughfares, new lines of railway might be advantageously and economically constructed; and arrangements might be made by which railway companies might, in consideration of being allowed to construct their lines under the streets and the Thames Embankment, without charge for the land, be willing to undertake the construction of other parts of the lines required for completing the circuit

of communication, which if constructed not in connection with such cheap lines, would be so expensive as to be unremunerative.

It would be desirable that an outer circle of railway should be formed within the Metropolitan Railway District, in its course intersecting and communicating with the principal lines of railway north of the River Thames. It might be convenient to bring this outer circle, at certain points, into communication with the inner circle.

The Committee are of the opinion that every such system of internal railway communication for the Metropolis should be under one management and they are of the opinion that this might be secured without interfering with the existing practice of allowing free competition in plans by providing through a Standing Order:-

That in any notice for any Bill it should be stated that the Bill may be so altered in its course through Parliament as to unite the whole or some portions of such railway with some one or other existing railway or work.

The suggestion that a commission be appointed to consider the building of railways in the Metropolis was thought to be too delaying and not likely to solve the problem of the supply of capital.

If the general views which they have explained should be deemed satisfactory by the House, the committee hoped that means would be taken to render future legislation conformable with the views laid down. This could be done by appointing a committee in future sessions to consider schemes coming into the Metropolitan Railway District. A report from the Board of Trade on such schemes would be desirable each session. The Metropolitan Board of Works and the Commissioners of Sewers for the City should have the plans and Bills for such schemes so that if they thought fit they could report on them. The two houses should arrange that all Bills relating to railways in the Metropolitan Railway District should be introduced in one House, be grouped together and referred to the same Select Committee.

How little of these beneficent intentions were carried out my audience will be aware.

The Bills considered by the 1863 committee were as follows:

Midland Railway (Extension to London)  
Barnes, Hammersmith & Kensington

East London & Rotherhithe  
 Grand Surrey & Commercial Docks  
 Hammersmith & City  
 Metropolitan, Tottenham & Hampstead  
 Rotherhithe  
 Victoria Station & Pimlico  
 Tottenham & Hampstead Junction  
 London, Chatham & Dover (No 1)  
 London Railway (Victoria Section)  
 Ludgate Station & Junction  
 L B & S C (Extensions & Alterations)

On 9 July 1863 the House of Lords Committee said Parliament should entrust to some competent authority the duty of submitting to it a well-digested plan for the construction and working of Metropolitan railways. Yolland, Board of Trade inspecting officer, recommended that the L C & D route should pass under Ludgate Hill instead of over it.

The East London & Rotherhithe was to connect the London & Blackwall with the Thames Tunnel and the three Southern lines. This original intention to connect with the London & Blackwall no doubt accounts for the naming of some of the Terrier tanks, intending for working the East London, after stations on the L & B - Fenchurch, Poplar and Blackwall, Shadwell common to both and Wapping on the EL. Later batches saw Thames, Shoreditch and Whitechapel and Rotherhithe (EL) and Stepney, Minories and Millwall (L & B).

The Rotherhithe Railway was an alternative scheme to the E L & Rotherhithe and these two were in opposition to the Grand Surrey & Commercial Docks and No 4 Bill of the L C & D or Thames Branch. This may help to explain why the London, Chatham and Dover, which did not touch the East London at any point, was later one of its six lessees.

Straying away from the outer circle project it is worth remark that the generally held railway ambition was for radial communication. Seymour Clark, general manager of the Great Northern, said that by the Regent Circus Railway the Great Northern wanted to reach Haymarket; they were spending £1000 a week on cartage or 2s 4d a ton on coal. The GNR in 1862 brought 378,264 tons of coal to London and 153,311 came by MR. Coal to Kew cost the GNR 2s a ton by North London Railway ("under the thumb of the North Western"). The NLR went an immense way round to Fenchurch and if the Metropolitan were extended passengers would go by it.

James Cawkwell, general manager of the London & North Western, referred at length to the station at Liverpool Street for the City (which eventually became Broad Street). He was obsessed with the prospect of connecting it on the surface with Cannon Street.

James Allport of the Midland wanted an independent authority for unification of the railways in London and a surface route to link the Midland with the South Eastern at Charing Cross.

Saunders of the Great Western gave evidence (1 May 1863) that the Metropolitan had frustrated them from using it as a good suburban line because the Metropolitan was so interested in local traffic. "They have assumed a right to fix how many trains they will have for local traffic. I am not admitting they are legally entitled to do it; that is a question in difference between the Metropolitan and the Great Western." They had no marketing sense for the Victoria traffic. He was certain four tracks were needed on the Metropolitan.

Arthur Wightman, general manager of the London & Blackwall, elaborated on his company's part in freight traffic and how it would be linked with the Thames Tunnel. The LNWR traffic to Haydon Square was at 200,000 tons a year and Great Northern loads to Royal Mint Street at 60,000 tons a year. The Midland to Royal Mint Street had 50,000 tons a year. Clay Cross coal to Shadwell began three years previously and was at 300,000 tons a year. The L T & S brought goods from Victoria Docks to the Minories bonded warehouse. The Thames Tunnel project was to join the L & B  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile from Fenchurch Street and, passing over London Docks, drop down to the Thames Tunnel. The Rotherhithe Bill, which provided for 1 in 17 gradients, was then withdrawn.

Page, the engineer of Westminster Bridge, proposed an eastern link from Coopers Row on the London & Blackwall via Trinity House, and Tower Hill, to the London & Greenwich about a mile from London Bridge.

A surface line from Fenchurch Street to Cannon Street was also proposed.

George Parker Bidder, who had achieved youthful fame as the "calculating boy", appeared on behalf of the Great Eastern, but instead of pressing its need for a city terminus rambled on about an endeavour to get into St Pancras to capture the Cambridge traffic the Great Northern was likely to get as a result of taking over the Royston & Cambridge line. He advocated a

mechanical junction with the Metropolitan rather than through carriages and in particular spoke of the atmospheric railway on a viaduct to connect the Great Eastern at Shoreditch with Leicester Square.

John Parson, deputy chairman of the Metropolitan said on 4 May 1863:

"We are contemplating through trains from Paddington by the London, Chatham & Dover to Crystal Palace and also to Dover."

For the L C & D James Staats Forbes said that a three-horse bus provided a link from Elephant & Castle to Farringdon Street.

This then is the background against which the Metropolitan District Railways were promoted in 1864. The separate company from the Metropolitan was formed to provide a broader base for finance, but at first a common directorate and hierarchy of management was thought possible. As has been mentioned the Metropolitan was already promoting extensions from Paddington to High Street and South Kensington and from Moorgate to Aldgate and Tower Hill and the Metropolitan District was therefore promoted (the Bill was deposited in November 1863) to join South Kensington and Tower Hill and to form three short spurs - one from east of South Kensington parallel to the Metropolitan through Gloucester Road to Earls Court and a junction with the West London Extension at West Brompton. A spur was to take off from Earls Court towards Addison Road on the West London and another from Earls Court to join the Metropolitan at High Street. The Outer Circle scheme of the M D R began at the West London Extension platforms at Clapham Junction, where a spur was to be thrown off towards the LC&D halfway to Factory Junction. The line was to have gone up the west side of Battersea Park, crossing the Thames just west of Albert Bridge and paralleling the Circle from about Gloucester Road through High Street (where you can see how it might have gone on) to Notting Hill. There it would have struck off to Westbourne Park to take in a curve from the Hammersmith & City and another from the GWR main lines.

At Kilburn High Road it would have sent off a spur towards Euston on the London & North Western and taken one in from the Willesden direction; at Finchley Road there would have been a triangular junction with the Midland which would have been paralleled through Haverstock Hill tunnel and the MDR Outer Circle would then have gone direct from Kentish Town to south of Finsbury Park and a point just north of Stoke Newington on



the GER new Seven Sisters and Enfield line. At Finsbury Park there would have been a triangular junction leading northwards on the Great Northern. Curving after Stoke Newington the Outer Circle would have aimed at Victoria Park on the North London where separate spurs would have joined the North London Poplar line and the Great Eastern Victoria Park and Stratford branch.

At the Great Eastern main line near Coborn Road a north to west spur towards Liverpool Street and a south to east spur towards Stratford would have been followed by a south to south spur to the North London at Bow leading from New Cross (Outer Circle) towards Poplar. At Limehouse the Thames would have been crossed and at New Cross two connections to the Brighton main line and junctions with the LS&SC Old Kent Road line and the South Eastern were proposed.

Even the optimistic promoters of the MDR Outer Circle did not suggest duplication of the South London line which had been authorised from London Bridge to Brixton on 30 June 1862 and was destined to be opened on 13 August 1866. From Brixton to Factory Junction the London Chatham & Dover had obtained powers back in 1860 as part of its direct line from Beckenham to Victoria; it opened on 25 August 1862; in 1864 the LC&D Act gave power to build the tracks used by LBSC trains from Brixton to Battersea Park.

Looking at the Outer Circle scheme and without tediously testing all the connections it might have made it is easy to see its defects; it was going to be short-circuited not only by the established North London but by the projected main scheme of the Metropolitan District itself, which had such objectives as securing the passage of LSWR and LBSCR trains via West Brompton to a terminus at South Kensington (hence the duplication of the Metropolitan between South Kensington and Gloucester Road); it also sought and eventually obtained the interest of the LNWR for traffic from the West London on to its main stem. In view of the many other schemes which were boiling up it is not altogether surprising that the Committee of 1864, while theoretically in favour of an Outer Circle, turned this one down. In this they were greatly influenced by objections from the London & North Western voiced by James Cawkwell, the general manager, in two long letters to the Board of Trade, first on 13 January 1864 and the second on 26 January 1864. Existing authorised schemes nearly covered the ground, it was contended. E. Stewart, LNWR secretary, gave evidence to the Committee: "I do not believe

circular railways will be attended with any practical convenience to the public". In this he touched the vital fact: that people will not go from Victoria to Paddington via Kensington without resenting the roundabout route. It applied so much to the costly eastern end of the Inner Circle that for many years it was (and possibly still is) a financial drag on the whole undertaking.

It is quite evident that the Committee was so anxious that the Inner Circle should be completed that they did not want available resources to be dissipated on the Outer Circle scheme. They had no knowledge of the real financial difficulties that were to come following the collapse of Overend Gurney the bankers on Black Friday, 1866, and the consequent unprecedented 10 per cent bank rate. This made the position of the London Chatham & Dover Railway difficult financially, but they had most of their railway completed; the Metropolitan District was in a much more disastrous state because it had to persuade its contractors to go on building the line despite the money situation. James Staats Forbes tackled both situations with aplomb, the standard technique being to persuade someone else to find the money.

The 1864 Committee had a lot of turning down to do. They rejected 10 schemes out of hand to weed out some of the 174 miles of line put before them. The capital bill would have totalled £33m, plus £11m on loan: lands and buildings would have comprised about one-quarter of the area of the City so, if all these railways had been authorised we should have been much in the position of the American city of the rapid transit propaganda film that obtained the largest parking lot in the world, only for the city fathers to turn round and say: "Wherever has the city gone?"

This process eliminated two pneumatic lines:-

Victoria Station and Thames Embankment  
Oxford Street and City

and the following:

London Main Trunk Underground  
Metropolitan Grand Union  
Charing Cross Northern  
Charing Cross Western  
Tottenham & Hampstead Junction (extension to Charing Cross)  
London Union  
Metropolitan District (Outer Circle lines)  
Tottenham & Farringdon Street

The Metropolitan Grand Union was combined with the Metropolitan District Inner Circle line except for its venture across the Thames to join the London & Greenwich viaduct towards Spa Road. The 100ft high, 820ft span bridge gained no more approval than the MDR Outer Circle 130 ft high 750ft span proposed at Limehouse. These were the days of tall ships.

The London Main Trunk Underground would have joined the LC&D round Farringdon with the London & Blackwall and also meandered under Whitechapel Road to join the Great Eastern just east of Coborn Road. The London Union was to have linked the West London Extension with the South Eastern at Bricklayers Arms.

Other curiosities of the 1864 inquiry are recorded in the evidence: that John Fowler declared the average Metropolitan train to have 180 passengers, a Great Northern suburban, 21, and the Great Western trains on the Metropolitan, only 10.

A scheme was put up and much fancied for cheapening completion of the Inner Circle, by shortening it at Farringdon Street-Blackfriars; this would have left Broad Street, Liverpool Street, Fenchurch Street and Cannon Street off it.

The East London, much favoured by the Committee, proposed a terminus at Moorgate Street and connections with the Great Eastern and Metropolitan. John S. Burke, its engineer, said on 18 February 1864: There would be a clause in the Bill that special trains should be run through the Thames Tunnel for the accommodation of persons who used the tunnel as foot passengers. They would cater for the "omnibus" traffic in the French or Swiss sense. Needless to say, nothing of the sort happened.

In the years since 1864 horse-shoe shaped "circular" services have appeared and gone again for lack of patronage. In 1872 the Outer Circle from Broad Street via Willesden and Earls Court to Mansion House began with LNW trains. At first, after electrification of the District, it persisted with District electric locomotives performing the haulage from Earls Court to Mansion House, from 4 December 1905 for just over three years, the service being cut off at Earls Court from 1 January 1909. The Great Western Middle Circle service from the north side of the Circle to Mansion House lasted only from 1872 until 1900 when it was cut at Earls Court. The Midland service from St Pancras via Childs Hill and Stonebridge Park to Earls Court ran 1 May 1878 to 30 September 1880.

There is no public interest in going a great way round a circle to make a short journey which can be made cheaper and quicker by some other route.

Paris, when at long last it tackled underground railways, quickly shed earlier ideas about circular services and operated two semi-circular routes, 2 starting on the north side at Porte Dauphine and going via Charles de Gaulle-Etoile to Nation and 6 running from Charles de Gaulle-Etoile to Nation via the southern semi-circle. All the numerous schemes for improved links across Paris are radial and not circumferential; these involve both the SNCF and the RER section of the Paris Transport Board and there are no schemes for revival of the Petit Ceinture nor even of the Paris Outer Circle as the G and Ceinture.

Although there is a circular service on the Moscow Underground it is worth noting that Evan Evans, who as operating manager of London Transport underground railways was called to advise the Russians, told me he had strenuously opposed any such line, partly because of operating difficulties, including men's relief and partly because of public reaction to going the long way round. A more recent LPTB operating man, Gordon Maxwell, has told me that Russian fear of a showpiece going wrong causes the trains on Moscow's circle to be inspected every six hours. Not a reason for not building a circular railway, perhaps, but illustrative of difficulties that can arise.

On the other hand I feel that the present Greater London Council has been much too precipitate in abandoning the Motorway Box or Ringway 1 or some similar circular distributor for motor vehicle traffic. To the motorist or even the lorry driver, sitting on his own power plant, the considerations of going out of the way to follow a circular route hardly apply with the same force. In any event the East Cross Route was completed in 1971 and a great deal of work has been done on the West Cross Route. The North and South Cross Routes were both scheduled for completion after 1991, but both could be routed over railway sites without the destruction of houses forecast by prophets of woe. The state of the South Circular Road makes action before the eighties urgent. Some of the complexes already planned, such as the new Brixton town centre, with a motorway refreshment and refuelling area far above the South London railway and with tube and bus stations at sub-surface level, are positively attractive. At some time someone will have to do something; it is extraordinary how much is already outlined

by railway or canal route, so that loss of houses need be nothing like as great as the opponents opine.

Now let us turn to the latest railway scheme; the plan of Messrs G.L.Crowther, R.H.Vickers and A.D.Pilling, set out in "A New Ring Rail for London". Some of the views on the use of public transport as set out could be accepted by anybody without hesitation. We need to discourage car commuters and encourage bus and train users. Whether we do this by a revival of the Outer Circle scheme as "Ring Rail", despite the facile claim that 61½% of journeys would be quicker by Ring Rail, is to my mind extremely doubtful.

Ring Rail is proposed to follow the Hampstead Junction and North London routes from Willesden Junction via Gospel Oak, Highbury and Hackney to Victoria Park, thence the Great Eastern via Stratford to Canning Town, a tunnel under the Thames to the Angerstein Wharf branch, the Southern to Blackheath and Lewisham Junction, thence Nunhead, Peckham and the South London line to Factory Junction and by West London Extension and West London Lines back to Willesden Junction.

Proposed interchange points are Finchley Road (with the Metropolitan and Midland); Gospel Oak (with Maplin Airport line, which my latest information says will not come this way); Camden (Northern Line); Vale Royal (Great Northern main line; this, incidentally, is how trains from Maplin are proposed to be routed); Highbury (Victoria Line and GN suburban service); Hackney, (GE Cambridge line); Stratford (GE main line and Central Line); West Ham (LT&S route and District); Westcombe Park (Southern North Kent Line); Blackheath (Bexleyheath line); Lewisham (South Eastern main line by planning interchange about St.Johns); Brockley (Brighton line from London Bridge); Peckham (Southern); East Brixton (replacing Loughborough); Clapham (Northern Line); Clapham Junction (new site to avoid reversing on cusp at existing station); Earls Court West (new site); Shepherds Bush (Central Line); White City (Hammersmith & City); Mitre Bridge (Great Western main line); Willesden Junction (LNW main line).

To make these interchanges an enormous amount of local traffic would have to be altered and local passengers inconvenienced to an intolerable extent. In place all main line services would be subjected to an additional stop shortly after beginning their high-speed journey to pick up the necessarily-limited number of Ring Rail passengers; would those passengers really prefer to

board a long-distance train at Stratford or Lewisham or Mitre Bridge and have difficulty in finding a seat rather than getting in at the terminus?

It seems particularly regrettable that the three authors have not done their homework, especially in respect of the operation of the Southern Region. A very limited amount of the service from Victoria runs to the former LC&D line via the Catford loop. In general Continental trains are routed via Herne Hill and Beckenham and not via Peckham Rye. The authors also make the stupid mistake in the case of the Bexleyheath line of taking the capacity of tube trains to be equal to that of Southern stock - or they would never suggest the Fleet Line taking over this most crowded of Southern suburban routes. Moreover the present projected Fleet Line terminus is in a shopping centre at Lewisham and London Transport planners would be most reluctant to lose this feature. Nor should Southern suburban passengers be deprived of shopping at Brixton in favour of a chimerical interchange with the Northern Line at Clapham.

Similar considerations apply to the stopping of Eastern Region trains at Bow in the alternative scheme for Ring Rail to go via the Isle of Dogs. The new site of Clapham Junction would divorce the station from the shopping centre and the concatenation of roads that make the present site of Clapham Junction a good one.

A deep study of the relative value of local mobility and facilities and of distributing passengers by the Outer Circle route to the radial main lines, with a comparison of cost-benefit, would be necessary to persuade some of us that by this scheme we should not be losing more than the possible gains; there might be still greater gain from pursuing the present radial plans (for the Fleet Line to Lewisham and the Bakerloo extension to Peckham) plus the farther-off design for the Wimbledon-Victoria-Waterloo-Holborn-Shoreditch-Hackney-Leytonstone-Hainault Line and the possible eastward projection of the Waterloo & City (transferred to London Transport) towards Liverpool Street-Whitechapel-Stepney-Blackwall-Thamesmead. After all, it comes to the most rewarding way of spending £200m.

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The above Address was presented by Charles F. Klapper at a meeting of The London Under ground Railway Society held at Hammersmith Town Hall on Friday, 12th October 1973.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Mileposts and Kilometre Posts

As you know, the whole L.T. system has been surveyed in this new-fangled metric system, and kilometre posts and plates erected.

As far as can be seen by observation from the carriage window, and from enquiry of train operators, there are no mileposts on the Victoria Line similar to those on other lines. This would seem to be logical in view of the current pressure by Government bodies and others to metricate.

However by Section 97 of the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845:

"The company shall cause the length of the railway to be measured, and milestones posts or other conspicuous objects to be set up and maintained along the whole line thereof, at the distance of one-quarter of a mile from each other, with numbers or marks inscribed thereon denoting such distances".

Can any of your readers please tell me whether London Transport has obtained special exemption from that Section, and if so, by what authority?

Yours faithfully,

7 Cavenham Close  
Woking.

V. Badman

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NEWS FLASHES

1302 A desk top computer has been installed experimentally at Watford station, to perform the functions of the more usual programme machine. More flexible in operation than the machine replaced, the computer is part of an engineering trial to test reliability. Installed during the summer, the computer has a built-in teleprinter from which a print out can be obtained by pressing a button.

1303 There was a wages snatch at Upminster station at 10.15 Thursday 1-11-1973, when £8000 was snatched from LT staff by three men in fluorescent jackets so as to look like railway workers. Ammonia was thrown in the faces of the staff and security guards during the raid.

## THE TIMETABLE

18.15 Tuesday 11th December at the Great Western Royal Hotel, Paddington, London, W2. A meeting of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society, which TLURS members may attend by the kind invitation of the RCTS. The speaker will be E.Figini, the Chief Officer of Swiss Federal Railways responsible for his country's timetable. He will be describing his work as Swiss representative on the International Train and Through Carriage Conference. Members wishing to attend are asked to advise Mr J.L.Lean, 75a Studley Grange Road, London, W7 2LU, mentioning TLURS in their notification.

14.00 Wednesday 12th December Visit to Greenwich Generating Station, LT. Names, accompanied by a first class stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary, S.E.Jones, 113 Wandle Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 6AD.

19.00 for 19.15 Friday 14th December at Hammersmith Town Hall; An Underground Quiz. It is usual to have something fairly light for the December meeting - this is it. Come along to find out how much you don't know about the Underground!

13.00-19.00 Saturday 15th December at Caxton Hall, London, SW1; Stand at the London Omnibus Traction Society's Autumn Sale - a good opportunity to buy Christmas presents for others, and an even better one to persuade wife or girlfriend to buy one for you!

Friday 11th January 1974 at Hammersmith Town Hall; a talk on tube rolling stock by Piers R.Connor - details next month.

Saturday 19th January 1974 Visit to Richmond Signal Box - for details see the January Timetable.

The Committee wish all members a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year - may all your trains run and be on time.

## THE TAIL LAMP

In early October 1973 a notice was spotted at Tottenham Hale station reading merely 'London Transport regrets'!

from a letter to The Times

published 5th October 1973

Typelithoed by Celtic Mailways, 93/94, Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1DT, and Published by The London Underground Railway Society, 62 Billet Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1XA.  
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