

Rolling

Spring 2018

Issue 172



Road Roller
Association
Journal



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Submissions for 'Rolling' can be sent by post to the address above or emailed to: editor@r-r-a.org.uk. Please ensure emailed images are good quality Jpegs or Tiffs.

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Association.

PRESS DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS 30TH APRIL

Website: www.r-r-a.org.uk

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Chairman's letter

It gives me great pleasure to advise the Membership that the Committee have placed an order with my son for the boiler repairs to the Pudsey Roller and have appointed me as operational manager for the restoration to steam of the roller.

Work will start on the boiler over the next few weeks. The first job will be to refit the old boiler barrel and cylinder block, align the motion, and make a jig. Once this has been done, the backhead and throatplate will be removed and along with the old firebox taken to Bicknells for new pieces to be made. Once these items are completed, work will recommence whilst funds exist. There is a shortfall of approximately £5,000 to complete the boiler to steam test. David hopes that it will be in a position to attend the Great Dorset Steam Fair this year.

We will start sorting the components for the roller, some of which will require repair/ replacing so that we know the full extent of this work and to keep the Membership and Friends up to date.

As I said, there is a long way to go, both in work involved but also funds required so if anyone has any good ideas or is prepared to organise any fundraising events, please let us know. Some people have used crowd funding; I know nothing of this but this might be an avenue to explore.

I do hope to see old and new faces at the AGM; it will be another good weekend, also at the rallies. We have not sorted out which we will be at.

Not a roller, but my son Andrew will be at GDSF with his 1900 Aveling & Porter Road Locomotive *Jimmy*, which will be its first outing in ten years following a complete rebuild. We will have our rollers there hopefully.

Whatever your passion, enjoy the year. I am always on the end of the phone before 9.30pm should you wish to have a chat.

It is with great regret that I have to advise the Membership that Steve Arrowsmith has resigned as President from the Committee due to personal differences mainly concerning the Pudsey Roller. This is a great shame just when things are moving positively towards the roller's eventual return to steam. I thank Steve on behalf of the Association and Committee for his advice and support over many years, being very supportive of rollers and strongly against conversions. I personally wish Steve well, and hope it will give him more time to enjoy his engine.

Michael

Front cover picture: *Camborne's Trevithick Day a couple of years ago produced this picture of an immaculate 1926 Wallis & Steevens 'Advance' roller No.7878, an engine now based in Cornwall. Brian Gooding*

An unfortunate crash landing... a steam roller and an aircraft

Derek Rayner

Ebay was the source of the adjacent image, taken from *The Times - Weekly Edition - Illustrated Section*.



AEROPLANE v. STEAMROLLER.

Through a miscalculation an aeroplane came into collision with a steamroller at a Royal Air Force aerodrome. The machine was smashed, but no one was seriously injured.

The aircraft and roller after the crash landing.



An RE8, the type of aircraft which is believed to be of the sort involved in the crash.

The vendor knew it was from one of the November 1919 issues of the paper but because of damage to the whole of the item concerned which he had, he was unable to provide the paper's publication date. I decided to find out which issue he had cut it from since the British Library's Newspaper Archive is now located at Boston Spa, less than half an hour's drive from home.

Arrangements were made for an appointment there and it didn't take long to find the specific issue – Volume XLIII, No.2236 – Illustrated Section; a Supplement to The Times Weekly Edition – dated Friday 7th November 1919 – page iii. A trawl through the rest of the paper for that day revealed nothing related to the incident which, I suppose, was only to be expected!

The Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington on the eastern outskirts of York provided some possible details of the aircraft involved. The Director there thought it may have been an RE8 type – manufactured by the Royal Aircraft Factory. It's obvious that the steam roller involved was an Aveling since it has a horse on the front. However, it's not been possible to determine where the incident took place and therefore the owner of the roller and its location at the time of the accident will therefore have to remain a mystery.

Wordbrough – a roller misnomer

Derek Rayner

The adjacent image was advertised on Ebay as – ‘Wordbrough Steam Roller – Seedale, Cumbria’ and this intrigued me since, when I Googled ‘Wordbrough’ as a place name, I discovered that there was no such place in Britain. The rest of the description also had me curious since I felt that Wordbrough was more like Worsbrough than anything else and I knew where Worsbrough was located. It also turned out that, likewise, there is no such place as ‘Seedale, Cumbria’ in Britain either!

A query to the vendor about this misinformation brought the response that the original came to him as part of an album a number of years ago; it was captioned as in the description given and he honestly didn’t remember more about it than that. That, therefore, was the end of the possibility of any further help from that direction.

Worsbrough lies within the current-day Barnsley Metropolitan Borough and is situated around two miles south of the town on the main A61 road to Sheffield. Worsbrough Mill is a 17th century working watermill which is still grinding wheat in the traditional way today and produces white and wholemeal flours utilising a pair of 19th century ‘French Burr’ stones powered by a cast iron waterwheel, installed in 1865. The mill is also home to a rare Hornsby hot bulb oil engine, formerly from Sykehouse windmill and this is demonstrated regularly to visitors.



The ‘Wordborough roller’ postcard as purchased. Note the substantial traction wagon which is being towed. The WRCC licence plate can be seen on the motion cover, mounted above the long rectangular ‘Worsborough Urban District Council’ owner’s plate.

From the RLS records, it didn't take long to establish that Worsbrough Urban District Council (Worsbrough Local Board until the reorganisations of 1895) had three Aveling & Porter steam rollers over time.

The first was new in November 1890 and was No.2742, a 10-ton single cylinder roller of the 'standard type' of the time. Under the provisions of the Locomotives Act 1898, it was issued with licence No.185 at a West Riding County Council meeting on 22nd April 1901. This roller was sold in 1906 to the Lancashire Road Rolling Company of Broadheath, Cheshire, via Aveling & Porter, obviously in a part exchange deal which involved the pictured roller.

This 15 ton 6hp slide valve compound roller was No.6087 and was new to the Council on 30th August 1906 and it was issued with WRCC licence plate No.333. The design of this 'rectangular' plate was unique to the WRCC – where the centre part is removable and fits behind tabs. When the plate is bolted to an engine, a key is required to take this portion out, in order to insert the details of a new annual licence.

Later, in around 1921, when it became compulsory for all vehicles to carry the usual style of registration marks which most road steam engines have, it received the West Riding C.C. registration WY 910.

The Aveling Royalty Book page for No.6087 revealed that the scarifier which can be seen fitted to the roller was Morrison No.385 and indicated that: 'the Council's own scarifier was to be fitted to the roller'. This item, therefore, was that previously fitted to the Council's 1890-built roller No.2742.

Other items recorded on the Build Sheet included that it was fitted with a 'sheet iron awning over tender' and a footboard on the right hand side of the engine. It's tender was 'cut away' to allow easy access for the driver and a water elevator was also provided. It's manufactured weight was 16 tons 13 cwt.



A typical West Riding County Council licence plate issued under the provisions of the Locomotives Act 1898. This example was issued to Samuel Whitefield of Conisborough on 26th February 1900 for the firm's 1893 10hp McLaren road engine No.531, Victoria.

Derek Rayner

There was no mention of a front towing bracket. This item was therefore not an original fitting and would have been used either for towing a trailed scarifier when the roller was working in reverse, or for similarly hauling and/or manoeuvring the traction wagon which is pictured along with the roller in the

photograph. It's interesting to note that this large strap arrangement on the roller's saddle has necessitated the Aveling horse having to be moved upwards to accommodate the newly fitted item.

No.6087 was sold to H Eccles in Sheffield in 1925, consequent upon the purchase of an Aveling piston valve roller – No.11153 (WT 8962) – which was new on 17th March of that year. Dealer Eccles sold the 15-tonner on to another dealer, ER Cole Ltd of Wood Lane, London. By 1928, it was with Bason & Condliffe, Longsight, Manchester and had been scrapped by April 1932. The piston valve roller was scrapped in 1956.

After the postcard's purchase, an inspection of it under a magnifying glass showed that the road sign finger post on the right, beyond the front forks, had the letters 'xxxWORTH' on it. The village of Dodworth lies only about five miles from Worsbrough Bridge where the council's offices were located in Saville House. When not in use, it's presumed that the roller was kept in the council's adjacent yard.

An important association for the RRA – for the record

There is perhaps nothing particularly remarkable about this terrace house in the suburb of King Cross in Halifax but it is of the utmost importance in the annals of history relating to the Road Roller Association.

In the mid-1970s, it was the home of Lyndon and Barbara Shearman and it was in this house, 15 Thornton Street, Halifax, that concept of the Association being formed originated in mid-1974, the inaugural meeting of which took place on 1st September 1974 in the Golden Lion Hotel, Halifax.

This latter fact is well known and the 40th anniversary of the Association was celebrated in 2014. However, the location where the Association originated has never been recorded in the Journal - until now!

Grateful thanks are extended to Lyndon for providing the opportunity for this important record to be made and brought to the notice of members. **DAR**



The Rolling Centre of the World

Lyndon Shearman

Recently, I was helping Derek Rayner with some research into the history of some steam rollers, and a parallel and very important matter arose. For the road rolling industry, where is the centre of the world? No, it is not Dorchester, nor Rochester, it is actually the King Cross area of Halifax, West Yorkshire. Well, for a start, it is where the Road Roller Association began in 1974, following a meeting of interested people in our front room at 15 Thornton Street.

I should explain that King Cross is said to take its name from when Canute became king of England and began a tour of his kingdom. He reached this exposed place where wind and rain were blasting across from the Pennine moors, and immediately turned back towards London. The weather was too much for him, and the King was Cross...

Seriously, at the top of Thornton Street, across Fenton Road, road contractors J W Mitchell & Sons Ltd had a yard, and their name, now faded, can still be seen on the building. Turn left on Fenton Road, and across Stanley Road is a house called 'Lorraine', which appears to have been the residence of Charles Wade, who in the 1920s operated at least one steam roller from a depot near Sowerby Bridge. Then, when my wife and I started our roller hiring business, still living at Thornton Street, and we bought our first roller, a Greens DRM, we parked it for a couple of weeks on vacant land at the bottom of Warley Road, about 100 yards from our house. Is there anywhere else where THREE separate roller owners have lived and worked so close together, albeit at different times?

There's more. In the 1960s, when I was a volunteer at the Middleton Railway, I saw a poster at King Cross advertising a film called 'The Iron Maiden'. I went to see the film, was fascinated, and decided I must have one of those steam road things. I chattered about it endlessly, and finally, with two other Middleton Railway volunteers, Derek Rayner and John Charlesworth, we formed the White Rose Steam Traction Company and bought Aveling & Porter steam roller 8506 from Joshua Rodgers at South Crossland and began to rally her. So it can be said that WRSTC really had its origins at King Cross.

By 1968, I had purchased Aveling 6544, *Little Wonder*, from Hampshire Brothers at Dewsbury, and with the help of an uncle, drove her home towards Mytholmroyd where I then lived. Well, that was the plan, and we brought *Little Wonder* through King Cross, but only a quarter of a mile further along, she broke her back axle! She obviously did not want to leave King Cross!

Mitchell's subsequently left their yard on Fenton Road, to a yard at Wakefield Gate, which is only a couple of hundred yards from King Cross. The yard had been a quarry from which had been produced the stone to build, in 1874, the Octagon Tower, which with a height of 255 feet, still dominates the King Cross skyline. I rented part of that yard for our rollers as our business became established. Also, only a quarter of a mile from King Cross, down Haugh Shaw Road, a building contractor, Whatmough's, had an American Huber diesel roller.

As our business developed, we took a yard on Queen's Road, but retained our

connection with King Cross by buying one of a new development of houses next to St Paul's Church. No, we didn't keep the rollers there, but there was a communal lawn between the houses, and one day I brought an Aveling Barford 2½ ton roller and gave the lawn a rolling! Also, on 2nd November 1978, I brought our Greens DRM along the cul-de-sac next to the houses, for it was the roller's 40th birthday. Barbara, very heavily pregnant with our first son, poured champagne over the roller as a celebration (well, the roller was now named 'Barbara Anne' after her), and the local newspaper carried the story.

Then, when we got our portable engine, we kept it at the yard for a while until I cleared a space for it at our house, then I used our 2½ ton roller to tow the portable to its new residence in our back garden. When we had her in steam, the Vicar of St Paul's would come and have a natter, as the vicarage was right next to us.

And King Cross doesn't go away. One day, while living in Orkney, we had the portable in steam and some tourists stopped to have a look. I asked where they were from, and they said Halifax, and they used to have Spencer's optician's business on King Cross! They got a shock when I sang them a song from my Boy Scout days:

Have you been to Spencer's the opticians?

There we have the experts on your sight.

We correct your squints and dispositions.

We see that you folk are all put right.

Finally, there was, by the Feathers pub, an object like a pillar box but painted green. No one knew what it was, but one day the door was left open, and inside was a tap. A story in the local paper, the 'Courier', explained it was for providing water for steam lorries, whose drivers carried a token or key for opening it, presumably their employers paying a fee for this. Sadly, it was removed years ago. But the memories of King Cross are strong, and Canute never knew what he missed!

Letter

Dundee Robey

Dear Editor

Derek Rayner's contribution to Rolling 171, 'Demonstrations at Dundee in the early 1900s' drew my attention. Perhaps the City of Dundee purchased Robey HTR type 7-ton 45664, TS 8892, after viewing Robey 8-ton tandem 42156, FE 6535, of 1924, owned by William Briggs & Sons Ltd of Dundee. She spent all her working life with Briggs, last licensed in 1951. Marshall 6-ton vertical boilered roller No.76945, or rather Miller-Marshall double cylinder tandem steam roller, TS 4231 was first of the class.

I believe 76945 may have been acquired by Dundee contractors Horsburgh & Murray & Co. in the early 1950s, as I can remember them using a steam tandem on reinstatement works, and it was parked up close to my home for many months.

Eddie Valentine

Marykirk, Kincardineshire

From cricket square to level crossing

Brian Gooding

As reported previously, back in the summer, the Hollycombe steam museum took delivery of a Wallis & Steevens diesel roller from the Silverston Cricket Club, the roller being kindly delivered by none other than our Charman and his son David.

With the museum's impending autumn night time fairground openings due, I decided something should be done about the uneven railway crossing that led into the fairground. With the railway not being used, we decided to raise the ground level to avoid the trip hazard that the protruding rails made where the ground had worn away. This meant infilling most of the crossing with road planings which we had on site, so these were brought down and spread on the crossing before being rolled in with the little Wallis roller. We found the roller a bit light for the job so we topped up the water tank to add a bit more weight and this certainly helped.

To tackle the worst bit, we





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E-mail: aveling10780@aol.co.uk

February 2018

2018 Annual General Meeting

Saturday 3rd March 2018

The 44th Annual General Meeting of the Road Roller Association will be held at 13.30 on Saturday 3rd March 2018 in the Marco Pierre White restaurant of the Jurys Inn, Godstow Road, Oxford, OX2 8AL.

Copies of the minutes of the 2017 AGM at Darlton-on-Furness are available on request from the General Secretary at either the postal address above, on receipt of a self-addressed stamped envelope, or from the e-mail address above.

AGENDA

1. President's Address
2. Chairman's Opening Remarks
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of Previous AGM
5. Matters Arising
6. Chairman's Report
7. Financial Report
8. Officer's Reports
 - a. General Secretary
 - b. Vice Chairman / Steam Archivist
 - c. General Archivist
 - d. Editor
 - e. Membership Secretary
 - f. Publicity Officer
 - g. Webmaster
9. Election of Officers, see overleaf
10. Presentation of Trophies
11. Any Other Business
12. Date and Geographical Location of next Annual General Meeting

Charles Swaffield
General Secretary (acting)

Nominations for Committee Positions

The following nominations for the Committee have been received:-

Role	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
President	VACANT		
Chairman	Michael Goakes	Steve Milns	Charlie Swaffield
Vice-Chairman	Derek Rayner	Keith Weir	John Knapton
General Secretary	VACANT		
Treasurer	Paul Wood	Ali Green	Andrew Eyre
Membership Secretary	Alison Green	Tony Smith	Michael Goakes
Editor	Brian Gooding	Paul Green	Paul Wood
Steam Archivist	Derek Rayner	Michael Goakes	Brian Gooding
General Archivist	VACANT		
Sales Officer	VACANT		
Publicity Officer	Richard Newman	Brian Gooding	Michael Goakes
Webmaster	VACANT		
Committee	Paul Green	Tony Smith	Brian Gooding
Committee	Charlie Swaffield	Paul Green	Andrew Eyre
Committee	VACANT		
Committee	VACANT		

Assets at 31st December 2017 :-

Wallis & Steevens type OG diesel roller; Reg No ROT 243 – location: County Durham
 Wallis & Steevens type OG diesel roller; Reg No SHO 455 – location: Gloucestershire
 Thomas Green Motor Roller, Works No PRX 323 – location: County Durham
 Coleman’s Tar Boiler – location: Cambridgeshire
 Phoenix Tar Boiler – location: County Durham
 Mackintosh Tar Boiler – location: County Durham
 Municipal Tar Boiler – location: Staffordshire
 Phoenix Grader – location: County Durham
 Various signs, tool, lamps etc. – location: Cambridgeshire
 Tar Boiler spares – location: Yorkshire
 Laptop computer – location: Buckinghamshire
 Archive material – location: Cambridgeshire / Yorkshire
 Aveling-Batho type steam roller model, presented by AIPETHOAC – location: Yorkshire
 Model of Clockwork Skoda steam roller – location: Yorkshire
 Sales stock – location: Nottinghamshire
 £100 Share in Robey Tri-tandem Trust – location: Yorkshire
 Trophies – location: various
 Green’s Griffin Cigarette Lighter – location: Cambridgeshire
 Software upgrade – location: Buckinghamshire
 Chairman’s Hammer and Gavel – location: Cambridgeshire

Acquisitions during 2017 :-

None

Disposal of Assets during 2017 :-

None



2018 Annual General Meeting

Saturday 3rd March 2018

1. All members will have received details of the 2018 AGM with the last Issue of *Rolling*.
2. If you wish to attend and have NOT already done so, please return the green slip as soon as possible as per the instructions provided on it. This is vital in order that the organisers can be aware of the exact numbers intending to participate in each visit – and also, more importantly, the number of free buffets required at the hotel prior to the meeting.
3. Maps showing the location of the Hotel, the Saturday visit, and the first visit on Sunday are available by request from RRA2018AGM@gmail.com or hard copies will be available from Ali or Paul Green at the hotel.
4. To book the hotel, members are asked to make their own reservations direct with the Hotel, by telephone 0870 4100 800 or via the website www.jurysinn.com/hotels/oxford It is **essential** that “**JIROAD010318**” is mentioned when booking and please book as early as possible since the RRA’s allocation of rooms will only be held until the 5th February 2018.

Weekend Itinerary

2018 is the Association's 44th AGM and follows the tried and tested format with the AGM being held in the Hotel that is to be used as our base for the weekend.

Friday 2nd March 2018

At own leisure Evening Meal at the Jurys Inn, Marco Pierre White Restaurant.
Followed by a Social Gathering. The Hotel has Real Ale available (from hopefully a local brewery)

Saturday 3rd March 2018

09.30 - 12.00 A visit to Combe Mill, approx. 8 miles and a 15 minute drive from the Jurys Inn
They will open especially for our visit.
Admission £6.00 per head, which will be collected on the day. Teas and coffees extra.

12.30 - 13.15 Free Buffet Lunch for Members in the Marco Pierre White Restaurant

13.30 - 15.45 AGM in the Marco Pierre White Restaurant, Jurys Inn.

16.00 - 16.15 Tea and biscuits in the Marco Pierre White Restaurant, Jurys Inn.

16.30 - 18.30 A visit to Loop Farm. A personal collection approx. 1 mile from Jurys Inn.

From 19.30 Evening Meal at the Jurys Inn, Marco Pierre White Restaurant, followed by a Social Gathering. The Hotel has Real Ale available (from hopefully a local brewery)

Sunday 4th March 2018

10:00 - 12:00 A visit to the Oxford Bus Museum – approx. 6.5 miles and a 10 minute drive from the Jurys Inn.
Entrance costs are £5 per adult, £4 per concession and £3 per child, which should be paid on arrival.
The museum has limited Car Parking spaces in their on-site car park, please use the adjoining Hanborough station carpark – free on Sundays, see page 4 for more details.
The museum has a café serving hot and cold drinks and light snacks.
For lunch - other nearby pubs include, White House, Bladon; The George & Dragon, Long Hanborough; Three Horseshoes, Long Hanborough; Masons Arms, North Leigh; Evenlode, Eynsham. Menus are available on request.

p.m. A visit to a Member's premises, to the north west of Oxford, a yard with many different engines. Some of which will be in steam for our visit

Please see the insert for details of how to book for the above visits.



put down a few bags of tarmac that had been around for a while. This, of course, came out hard and bag shaped, but after volunteer Steve applied a bit of heat and some thumping, it soon formed a good ramp from the fairground over the rails.

Next, we added more planings to the crossing area to make it as smooth as possible and then we mixed in a few bags of pea grit to help bond it all together.

There was also a deep gully in one of the adjacent roads so this was filled in with planings and these rolled in.

Despite this all being a 'quick fix', the planings have stayed in place well although they do get the occasional roll either by the diesel or my own heavier steam roller. It is good that the little cricket club roller is still earning its keep; it has been used on other jobs since, too!

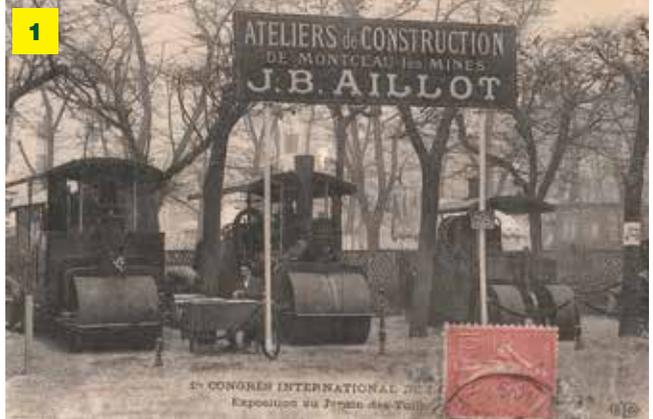
My thanks to the team who helped make this area safer.



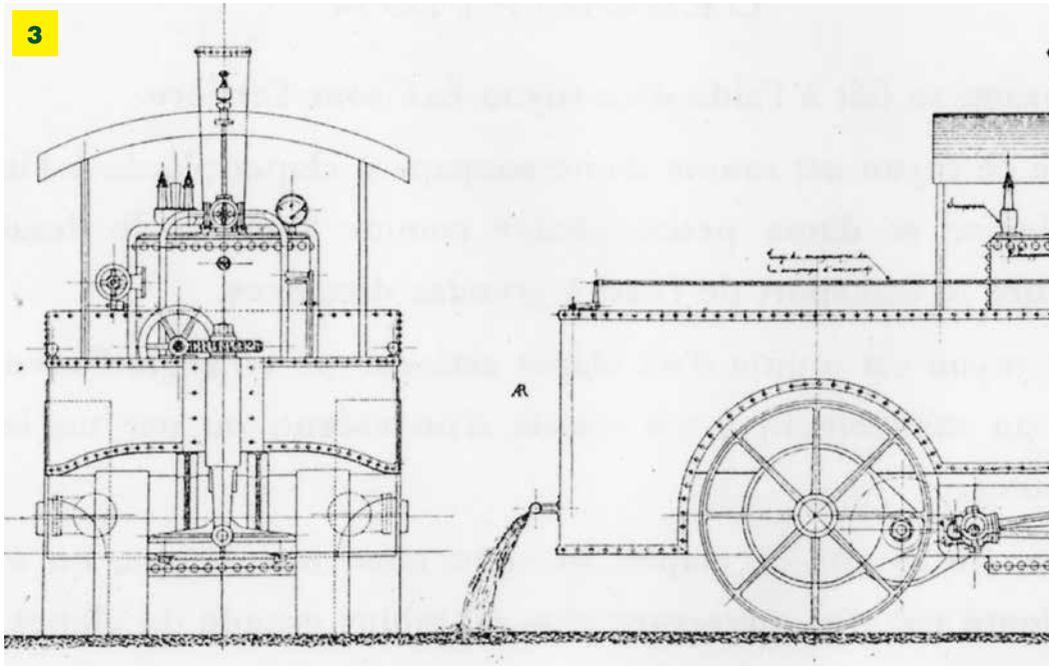
Steam rollers from Aillot

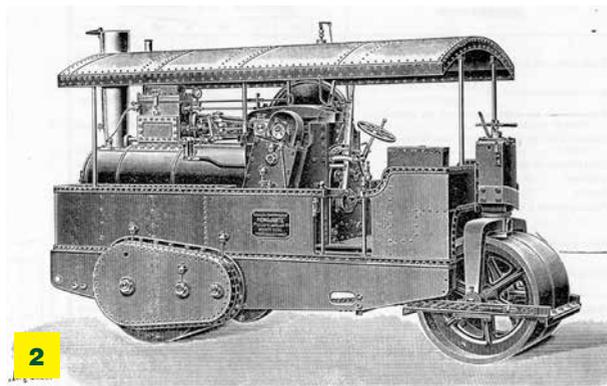
Derek Rayner

Not a very well known name in steam roller circles in the UK is that of J B Aillot of Montceau-les-Mines, France. This firm in eastern France, in the Saône-et-Loire department in the region of Bourgogne, manufactured a range of steam rollers and examples of these are to be found in the country dating from 1907 through to 1928. Aillot's production range also included portable engines and, as we shall see, other items of interest.



A postcard image [Fig 1] was obtained from Delcampe, the European 'equivalent' of Ebay, from a huge range of very expensive postcards which are to be found on that website – (search for rouleau compresseur). This particular card proved of some great interest.

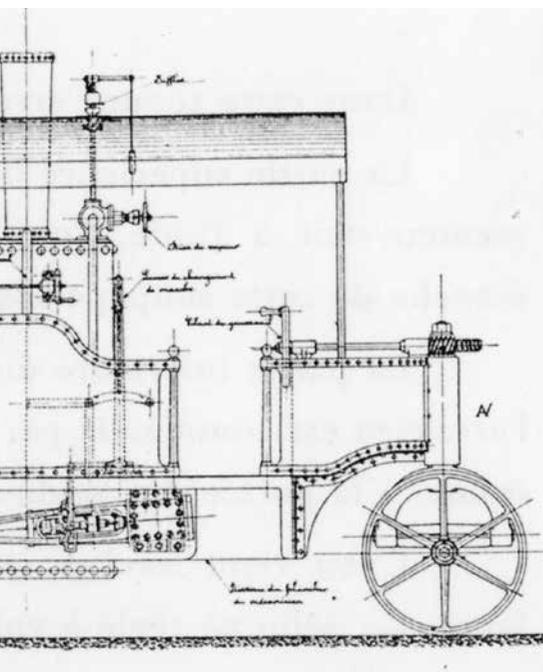




The accompanying image features a show stand – numbered 78 – at an obviously large exhibition held in the early years of the 20th century in the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris.

A postage stamp very annoyingly covers the title of the exhibition but it can be observed that it is the first 'International Congress' but of what was not initially known. The postcard's vendor

thought it may have been 'about 1906'. However, further research via Martin Clarke has established that with the initials 'ELD' in the bottom right-hand corner, the publisher is identified as Ernest Le Deley, who produced postcards in Paris from 1908 to 1916. In addition, the first 'motor show' of its kind in France, which included cars, lorries and steam engines – the '1re Congrès International de La Route' – took place in Paris between 11th and 21st October 1908 at the Tuileries Gardens. On exhibition there were over 2000 exhibitors from 28 countries. The missing word under the stamp, therefore, with its departement of Calvados postmark is 'Route' – i.e. 'Road'.



In addition, the Association's long-standing contact in France, Francis Pierre, has very kindly provided further information about what can be seen on the card. He's indicated that it's probable that the roller on the left is a steam-powered tandem machine since its chimney is at rear and of the type illustrated in Fig 2. However, it could also possibly be a later conversion of one of these examples which has been fitted with a petrol engine.

The roller in the centre is a conventional Aillot steam roller, some of which were 'in-line' tandem compounds. However, that on the right is not a steam roller but a self-propelled steam-powered water sprinkler. Francis has also very kindly provided a drawing of one of these machines [Fig 3] for the education of RRA members! It's believed that an example of a machine of this type has never been produced in Britain!

A selection of Robey works photographs

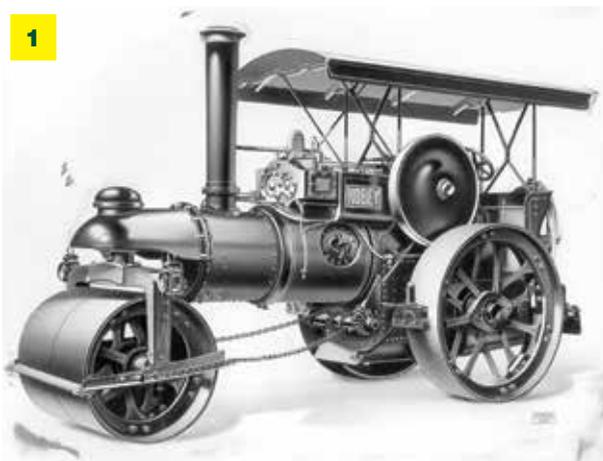
Derek Rayner

Courtesy of the Lincolnshire Archives, we are able to bring to these pages a number of images of Robey steam rollers from their collection. If readers should wish to purchase any of these images, arrangements can be made direct with the Archives Office in Lincoln. The references are all in the '47 MLL 22' file and the individual references for each image are provided here. Details of the rollers illustrated are courtesy of the Road Locomotive Society's extremely comprehensive records.

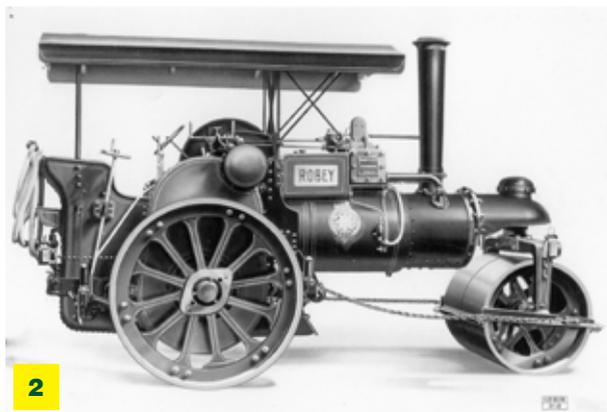
The first Robey steam roller mentioned in the RLS records in respect of the Lincoln firm is No.32387. This was a 10-ton compound machine, dated 23rd June 1913 and was exhibited at the Royal Agricultural Society of England's show at Bristol. The recorded date of sale to JA Stephens & Son, Pembroke, was 15th December 1913. This historic roller was later registered DE 2592; it survives as part of the Robey Trust's collection at Tavistock.

Although there are two tractors annotated in the records as 'convertibles' – Nos.37652 and 37665 – these were apparently converted in later life with components supplied from the firm at Lincoln.

The first machine in Robey's records specifically designated as a convertible from new, and therefore a truly convertible machine, was No.38580, dated 25th November 1920. This one was exhibited at the Smithfield Show in London and later sold to Shipley Urban District Council, near Bradford, on 1st



A Robey convertible compound roller. Possibly No.38580 of 1920. 47 MLL 22/11



The same roller, the identity of which is discussed in the accompanying text. 47 MLL 22/12

March 1921. In Yorkshire it received the registration mark WY 1981 and at the end of that decade, it was sold to Anglesey. It's therefore likely that the roller pictured in Fig.1 and Fig.2 is this roller, since it was the first of this 'new' type of product constructed at Lincoln.

Information within the extensive listings of the Road Locomotive Society has revealed that the company's first tandem roller was designated by the Lincoln firm as a model HTR. The firm proudly exhibited this new product at the Public Works, Roads and Transport Exhibition in London in November 1921. It was manufactured in two sizes, 5-ton and 6-ton, and was described fully in the report of the show in *The Engineer* dated 23rd December 1921 (page 378).

The first sale of a roller of this type was a 6-ton model, No.39440 – FE 4612 – and this left the works on 13th January 1922. It was hired to Highways Construction Ltd and in April of the same year, it went to Limmer & Trinidad Lake Asphalt Co. Ltd. Around 1934, it's recorded as going to Aveling-Barford at Grantham by whom it was scrapped. However, this may well have been a trade-in deal for another machine from Aveling's, for example, a motor roller.

Hampshire County Council bought a new HTR type tandem roller – Fig.3 – No.42386 in



Type HTR 6-ton tandem roller No.42386 – FE 6875 – was new on 13th June 1925 to Hampshire County Council. 47 MLL 22/16

1925. It was last licensed by them in 1951; however, it's then recorded with Cowards Ltd of Stoke Gifford, Bristol, who had it for sale in 1952. Nothing further is known about it and it's therefore presumed the roller was later scrapped.

A similar roller [Fig.4] was purchased by Birmingham Corporation in 1922. This was No.40653 and again, unfortunately, nothing further is known about it.

The last image here [Fig.5] is of Robey No.42156, an HTR8 machine. This went north of the border to William Briggs & Son Ltd of Ladybank, Dundee, on 3rd December 1924.

According to the records, this roller was re-numbered from No.39456 which was sent to Calcutta on 3rd January 1922 – defined as an HTR6 – and was then returned to Robey's. Parts of this latter-numbered roller were used in the construction of that sold to Briggs. One wonders whether the Scottish customer realised that some of the components of their newly purchased roller were not quite all that 'new' by the time it reached them! It was last licenced in 1951.

Further research has determined that there were 77 of Robey's design of tandem rollers manufactured, including the three that later became Tri-tandem rollers. A recent series of articles in Old Glory magazines, Nos.310, 311 and 312, dealt with many types of these unusual rollers and the Robey Tri-tandem rollers inevitably received extensive coverage.

The largest customer by far for Robey tandem rollers was the Limmer & Trinidad organisation mentioned previously, together with their associated companies. No less



No.40653 was dispatched on 28th October 1922 to Birmingham Corporation with the registration mark FE 5052. 47 MLL 22/10



An 8-ton machine of type HTR8 was Robey No.42156 – FE 6535 – of 1924. It was sold to William Briggs & Son Ltd of Dundee. 47 MLL 22/9

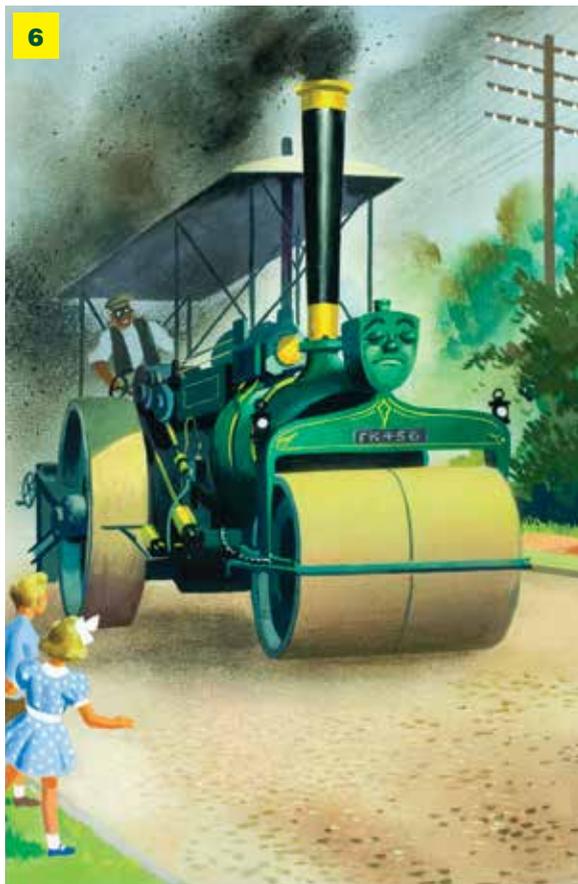
than 23 of them were in these hands. Two dozen of the rollers were exported and 30 found use with various contractors and local authorities both in the British Isles and in Southern Ireland.

The most popular weight was undoubtedly the 7-ton version (36), followed by the 8-tonner (20). However, Robey's also made tandem rollers in such sizes as 10-ton, 6-ton and 5-ton. Other variations included 5½-ton; 6½-ton and even a very small 3-ton version.

Eight of the Robey 'standard-type' tandem rollers remain in preservation in the UK and, in addition, there are two out of the three converted Tri-tandems still in existence.

As an aside, probably the most famous of the preserved rollers is *Stumbles*, the example owned by the Robey Trust at Tavistock, Devon. This ex-Devon C.C. machine was placed in Tavistock children's playground in around 1960-61 and resided there until

1983. The roller took its name from the steam roller illustrated in a contemporary popular 'Ladybird' children's book. Admittedly, this illustration [Fig.6] courtesy of Ladybird Books, looks more like one of the later-build Aveling-Barford steam rollers but under the circumstances, that's perhaps somewhat irrelevant! It's the thought that counts...



Stumbles the Steam Roller. An illustration from 'Tootles the Taxi and Other Rhymes'.

© Ladybird Books Ltd, 1956.

FOR SALE



2 ton Wallis & Steevens Diesel Roller. Intermittent fault selecting forward gear and can no longer be relied upon for its pitch rolling duties. It has been a faithful servant for more than 40 years and deserves some TLC. For offers and enquiries contact Tim Davis. 07947 560 951 or tim.davis31@btinternet.com

A postcard from the First World War

Derek Rayner

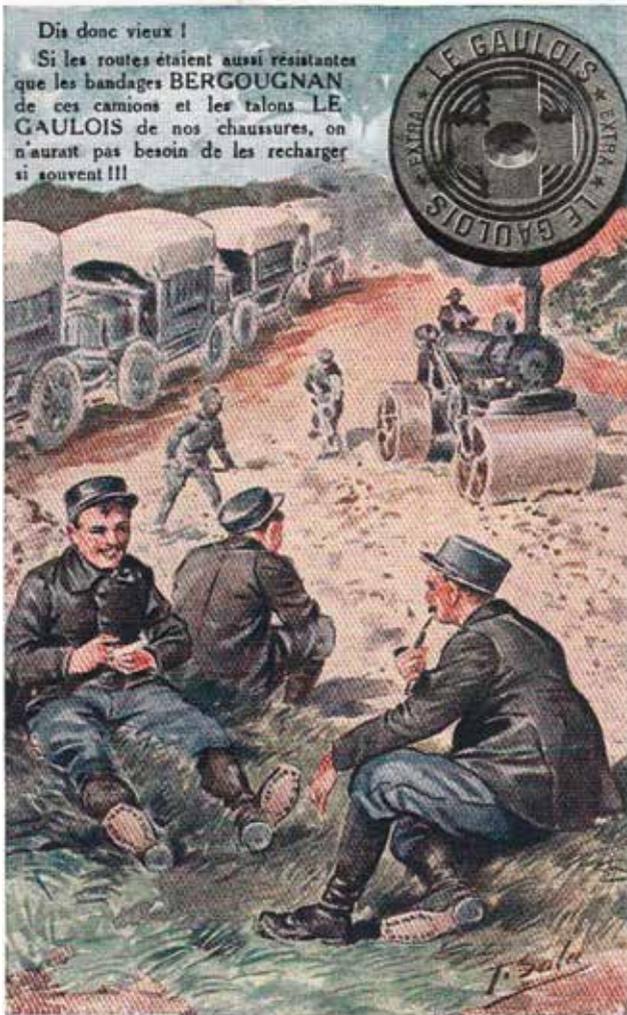
Having purchased the postcard via Ebay, an image of which is adjacent, I set about determining something about it. The object which drew it to my attention in the first instance was, of course, the steam roller. I'd only relatively recently visited the US and with that in mind, it initially looked to me, with the appearance of its front rolls set back

under the smokebox, to be an American-built Case machine.

The card very obviously originated in France and for things associated with the French language, I turned to my very good friend and RRA member Martin Clarke, a French resident who has contributed several articles to *Rolling* in days gone by. I asked him about the card's connection with the well-known brand of French cigarette – Gauloises – as I was sure that the group of French soldiers who were sitting around smoking in the postcard image were discussing something related to that brand of tobacco.

Martin very kindly provided a translation of the image's caption which appears on the card in the top left hand corner and also a commentary about what can be seen.

I was rather surprised, therefore, to discover that the text wasn't about the roller at all – or even about



The French postcard that initiated the research into the details related in the accompanying article.

cigarettes - more that the roller was actually the butt of the 'joke'. (Please excuse the pun!!)

'Le Gaulois' turned out to be not a reference to the popular French cigarette but to a type of solid rubber tyre originally manufactured for early 20th century lorries by a firm called 'Bergougnan', based in Clermont Ferrand which was later bought out by the well-known Michelin tyre company.

The Bergougnan firm's previous connection with 'rubber' would appear to have been via the soles of shoes, as depicted by the heels on the soldiers' boots. Judging by the soldiers' dress and the style of the lorries shown passing by them, it's very likely that the card dates from the First World War period.

Martin also reminded me that in design, the steam roller was perhaps not American, since it rather more resembled a French-built Salmson undertype machine, manufactured in Paris which, given the context, is certainly more likely.

With all that information, the card thus appears to be a promotional item for the Bergougnan tyre company, since the text reads – presumably with one soldier saying to another...

"Listen, old chap – if the roads were as 'resistant' (i.e. well-made) as the 'Bergougnan' tyres on those lorries or the 'Gaulois' heels on our boots, then they (the roads) wouldn't need repairing quite so often!"

On the reverse of the card (the address side), the name 'Verger Freres et Cie' is printed. Googling this name produced the information that this was – and still is – a firm of high-class jewelers in Paris which made/make bespoke jewelry for the likes of movie stars. However, a further and somewhat more closer look, indicated that at the beginning of the 20th century, there was also a Leopold Verger & Cie in Paris. It turned out that this firm was a manufacturer of calendars, printers and, more importantly in this respect, makers of 'cartes postales' (postcards).

So, with the grateful assistance of Martin, the story behind the postcard has been discovered.



An engraving of a steam roller manufactured by the French firm of Émile Salmson of Paris.



A little bit of editorial self-indulgence with two shots of my Babcock Monarch. Above it is seen on the newly-laid planings at Hollycombe (see page 12), while below it is seen at the end of a great day hauling the float for the Worshipful Company of Paviers in the Lord Mayor's Show in London. There is a reason for the pigs!

