

Rolling

Autumn 2021

Issue 186



Road Roller
Association
Journal



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Front cover: *This pair of 6-ton Wallis & Steevens 'Advance' rollers, Nos.8104 (left) and 8105 were built in 1936 for military service. As far as is known, they didn't meet up again until September 2021 at Amberley Museum in West Sussex. Brian Gooding*

Submissions for 'Rolling' can be sent by post to the Editor's address above or emailed to: editor@roadrollers.org. 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.

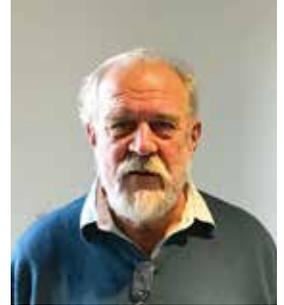
CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS 30TH DECEMBER 2021

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Chairman's Notes

At last things appear to be returning to some form of normality. Last weekend's social event at March was our first opportunity to meet each other in person for nearly two years and it was really good to see those of you who managed to come along. A full report can be found elsewhere in this edition but I think it is true to say that a very enjoyable weekend was held by those present and I thought it was a very fitting tribute to our late Chairman, Michael, basically using the itinerary that he had originally worked out for the 2021 AGM that was to have been held in March.



With this issue you will also find the initial details of the next AGM. We are assuming that we will not be forced into a third lockdown and we can only continue planning for a 'normal' meeting. Derek has been working hard to put together the events for the weekend and I urge as many of you as possible to attend. You will see from the information that, as usual, we are a bit short of committee members. I am keen that we increase this as it will relieve the pressure on the few present members. Committee meetings are no longer the whole day affairs that require a lot of travelling to attend. We now meet via Zoom and intend to carry on meeting this way. I try to limit meetings to an hour and a half although at the moment they often run to nearer two hours. Although in the winter we met on a Saturday afternoon, we have recently started a weekday evening meeting so that we can continue meeting through the summer months. At the moment meetings are held about once a month although I hope that once a few important issues are resolved we can extend that period.

As I stated, I am very keen to get some of the committee roles filled and I urge anyone who thinks they may have a little time and are willing to contribute to the running of the Association to either contact a present committee member or simply come to the AGM and volunteer.

There will be motions from the committee at the AGM with regard to our application to become a charity. A lot of work has been put into this and we are confident that what we will propose is the right way for the association to be moving. To be certain that we have the backing of the members, we would like to have a good number of members present to ensure that whatever the result we have the backing of the whole membership.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM; in the meantime I trust that you all keep safe and well until we are free from this virus threat.

Richard

RRA Social weekend gathering in March – in October!

A personal reflection...

PK Smith

Based loosely around what was to have been the proposed venue and itinerary for the March RRA 2021 AGM weekend which had to be cancelled due to the Covid pandemic, this was an opportunity for members to gather and meet up socially face to face – some of us for the first time in a considerable time! Our late Chairman, Michael Goakes, and his family had already done much of the organisation towards the original AGM weekend but, as you are doubtless all aware, tragically, Michael passed away before it was originally scheduled to be held. With the business side of the 2021 AGM having subsequently being dealt with via a 'virtual' Zoom meet up over a computer connection – as are all RRA committee meetings currently – the committee thought members would still appreciate the chance not only to enjoy the social aspect of the cancelled AGM but also an opportunity to pay tribute to and thanks to Michael for his many years of service both to the RRA as chairman and also to steam in general.

Arriving in March early on a gloriously warm and sunny October Friday afternoon, my good friend and chauffeur for the weekend, Mr Charlie Cribbes, and I promptly set off to explore the town high street and after taking lunch, in what we subsequently found out to be the town hall staff canteen(!), spent several hours ensuring that there was nothing left

of any steam relevance for sale in any of the high street's many charity shops. It was also a good opportunity to familiarise ourselves not only with the area but also to spy out a potential curry house for that evening's meal and maybe also one or two hostelrys for later use too. Fair to say I felt March's high street, although pretty and even quaint in places, was mostly functional, with the usual mix of retail opportunities, a preponderance of charity and betting shops, estate



A&P R15 No.3586 of 1895 is a mighty engine, listed at 15 tons weight but no doubt more when in working condition. Note the tyres are held on with wooden wedges.

agents and oddly, I felt, what appeared to be members-only night clubs and tattoo parlours – none of which we ventured into! The inevitable Weatherspoons was a conversion of a lovely Deco style Hippodrome cinema building, and a curry house, appropriately called the Spice Bank, situated in what had obviously been the old high street banking hall building.

The accommodation that had been reserved for Association members for the weekend was at the 'Oliver Cromwell Hotel' on the high street and I don't know why, maybe because the great man himself was born just 20 miles down the road in Huntingdon, but I was expecting something black and white, half-timbered with low ceilings and beams festooned with Toby jugs, etc. In reality, our venue was more Crossroads Motel meets Holiday Inn but it was none the worse for that as they looked after and treated us all royally for the whole weekend. After checking in to our respective rooms, we met up with the many other members who were by now gathering in the bar. Later in the evening, as everyone else had seemingly opted to eat in the hotel restaurant, we ducked back out into March again



Progress on the Pudsey Roller attracted a fair bit of interest among members.



President Steve Milns chats with the owner of Foden tractor No.13484.

to sample several of the public houses and enjoy a most excellent curry in the Gurkha Spice curry house which we had also spotted earlier and which the nice lady serving in the hotel bar had also recommended to us. We both passed on the delights of Messrs George Thurstons funfair, which was also 'aglow' in town that night, well presented but too modern for our liking, both of us having served time with Carters vintage fair over the years. Instead we returned to re-join the others back at the hotel bar.

Saturday morning the sun was shining and it came with options for the first visit of the day. Either to view the Association's Aveling-Barford archive collection/storage facility or an alternative, organised by Vice Chair Derek to visit a nearby church at Wittlesey to view a plaque /memorial relating to the Aveling family. Most members opted to visit the archive where we were greeted by Andrew Watson who gave us a most thorough overview of the records held and the information contained therein, as well as a comprehensive understanding of the seemingly huge amount of work still to

be done regarding the cataloguing and recording of this most valuable Association asset. The next visit of the day was to March Museum, situated not far from our hotel, in what was the old town school house; a fascinating local museum packed to the rafters with a little of everything reflecting the town and life of the area through the ages. It seemed as if every local family had at sometime donated something – probably the reason we had found nothing of any interest in our trawl through the charity shops the previous afternoon!

We could all probably have spent some considerable time at the museum but it was time to move on by kind invitation to the Goakes family home, yard and workshops to view the steam display. Sometime such visits can frustrate with not much actually available to view but this was most certainly NOT the case today. Al credit and due respect to the Goakes family and their team as every shed, storage container and workshop was open and available for viewing and every engine possible was outside with all those able to also being in steam. The Goakes family had also laid on an excellent barbeque / buffet lunch for us all with donations going to the Pudsey Roller fund. The Association's *Rolling* editor, Brian Gooding, was seen taking numerous photographs of the event so I am sure readers will be treated to some of these either in this or one of his other publications in due course. Personal highlights for me included the Pudsey roller – the firebox, foundation ring is in, and although no stays or riveting has been achieved as yet, my fellow committee member Andrew Goakes told to me that it is his intention to have it 'holding water by Christmas'.



The Aveling & Porter DX6 roller at the entrance to the Tram Shed Mall.



The Aveling & Porter DX6 roller at the entrance to the Tram Shed Mall.

A&P 3586 of 1895 is an engine I personally had not seen before and was of interest as although a huge, near 20 ton beast, it is not that far away in number from my own A&P 3430 of 1894. A visitor was the lovely Foden C-Type timber tractor *Talisman*, which I have not seen for many years, and that I fondly remember parking up next to in my early years as an engine owner at the now sadly no longer Fairford steam rallies. Many and various motor rollers were to be found in sheds or containers and we also inspected one of the Association's resident tar boilers.

After a most convivial afternoon, a final look around, and following a speech of thanks to the Goakes family for their kind invitation, all their hard work and hospitality by President Steve Milns, it was late afternoon and time to move on to St Wendreda's church, back in March, and the church hall for a brief meeting – update on the charity status application and an outline of the proposed venue for the next AGM. There was then an opportunity for those gathered to pay tributes to and reflect on the late Michael Goakes, his life and love of steam and the work he had done for the Association over many years. Reminiscences came from fellow members as well as local friends and family. It was a fitting venue too as Michael himself had been heavily involved in building the hall in which we were meeting as well as ringing the bells at St Wedreda's church next door. After a brief interval, during which some took the opportunity to visit the church – fabulous double hammer beam roof/ceiling featuring 118 oak carved angels, with wings outstretched, looking down at you – we were treated to a talk by Mr Peter Wright, from the March Museum that most of us had visited earlier in the day, on the history of the local railways. Personally it is always a joy to listen to a speaker so obviously knowledgeable, animated and interested in his subject as was this gentleman. Finally it was back to the hotel to change into something a little more formal and enjoy the delicious three course evening meal, discuss the events of the day and generally enjoy the company of friends. Needless to say – much ale was consumed!

Sunday arrived grey, dreary and threatening rain. After an ample breakfast, and checking out for those of us not returning to stay for the Sunday night, everyone bundled



Members enjoy the convivial atmosphere of the Saturday evening dinner at the Oliver Cromwell hotel.

off to the first of the day's arranged visits. This was to view Stretham Old Engine pumping station which was built in 1831 to drain the district of the Fens called the Waterbeach Level near Ely. The actual engine is a Watt type 60NBH double acting rotative condensing beam engine supplied by the Butterley Company. An impressive 24ft diameter, 8 spoke flywheel with the beam measuring 24ft 8½ins between centres, the length of the connecting rod



The imposing buildings of Stretham Pumping Station. The engine is in the tall building while the scoop wheel it drives is in the one this side of it.



The impressive beam engine at Stretham. It can be turned by an electric motor.



The beam floor at Stretham Pumping Station.



The view of the river from the beam floor.



The scoop wheel.

to the crankshaft coming in at 24ft. All this was to drive a scoop wheel revolving at 4 to 5 revolutions a minute which would deliver an average 30 tons of water per revolution, or approximately 100 tons per minute, from the drain up into the Old West River. This was powered by three Lancashire boilers, also supplied by the Butterley Company, operating pressure being initially at 4psi and latterly at 8psi and when running fully operational consuming approximately 5 tons of coal a day _ you can perhaps tell I made notes!

Next stop was the Prickwillow Pumping Station Museum and visitor centre where we were greeted by the curator and given an overview of the history and development of the Fenland drainage system. We were then able to inspect their collection which includes six large diesel Fenland pumping engines, all British-built and of early and mid-20th century design. They were even kind enough to start up several of them for us – most impressive. Once again our esteemed editor was spotted taking notes and photos so one can, I am sure, expect a feature on this museum to appear in one of his preservation publications in due course. A sandwich and hot sausage roll buffet lunch was provided at little extra cost for us all after which it was sadly time to make our farewells and head our separate ways.

Those travelling home north were able to call in at Rundle's yard at New Bollingbroke. My



Prickwillow Drainage Engine Museum pumped water from the drains into the River Lark in the foreground.



Stretham also has an air blast Mirrlees Bickerton & Day four cylinder diesel engine installed in 1925.



Electric pumps in a building off to the right now lift water from the drain behind the museum into the River Lark.

trusty chauffeur and I, however, headed home south, only managing to get lost once, courtesy naturally of the 'sat-nag', in and amongst the myriad of dual carriageways, etc. that seem to surround Cambridge!!

In all, it was an excellent weekend and I would happily encourage any member who has yet to attend an AGM weekend to try to attend in 2022. It will be, I am sure, just as enjoyable as well as being an important one for your Association.



The Vickers Petter hot bulb engine on the left is started by powerful twin blowlamps. On the right is another Mirreles diesel, this time a five cylinder one.



Members of the RRA party watch the fun with the Vickers Petter engine which wouldn't start, sadly.



With the Vickers Petter engine not willing to play, the museum staff started some other engines.



Another engine which was run was this three cylinder Allen of Bedford diesel, moved here from another pumping station.

Scarifier Tine Keys

A member has recently asked the question as to whether the Association is able to source scarifier tine keys and keepers to enable him to put the Allen scarifier on his Fowler steam roller back into service.

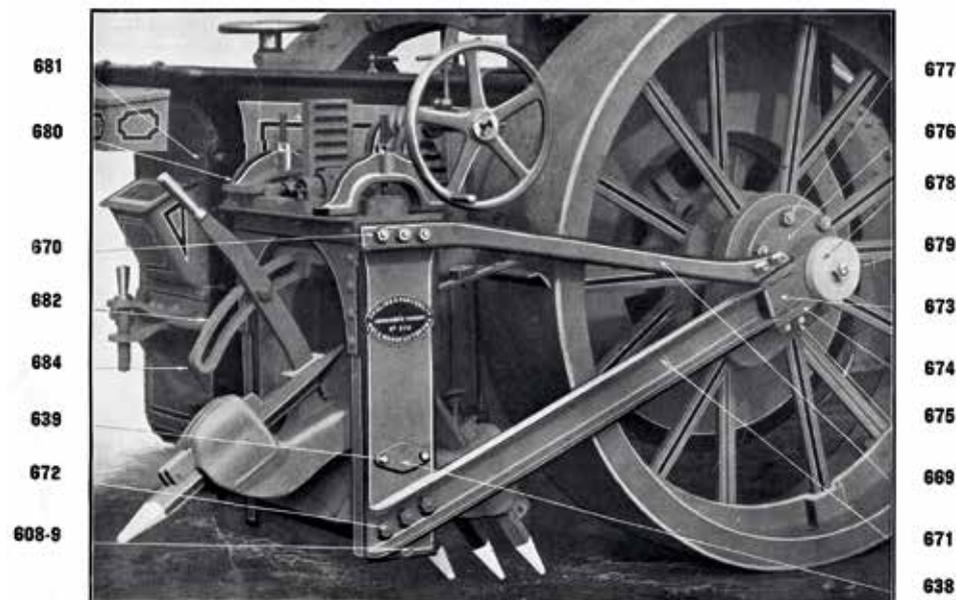
He apparently has tines – and indeed, tines of various lengths are available from our Vice Chairman if anyone is requiring same. Please contact Derek direct.

However, there presently seems to be a major dearth of tine keys and keepers – of both the type[s] for Allen scarifiers and also for Morrison scarifiers which are also to be found on many Aveling & Porter rollers.

Indeed, thinking ahead, the Allen scarifier on the Pudsey Roller will require these items at some time in the future – so assistance can also be rendered at present in that direction as well.

Should any member have the availability of keepers and keys for either or both the two types of scarifier mentioned, Derek Rayner would be pleased to hear from them – and hopefully borrow one of each – so that they can be used as patterns to produce more, as a service to members.

Derek's contact details can be found inside the front cover.



A catalogue illustration of a Morrison scarifier, complete with tines, carriers and keys. These are not numbered in this view.

PK celebrates at 'The Trout'

Reg Dore

Saturday 7th August 2021 saw a gathering of friends, family and engines at 'The Trout' at Lechlade-on-Thames to celebrate PK Smith's 60th birthday.

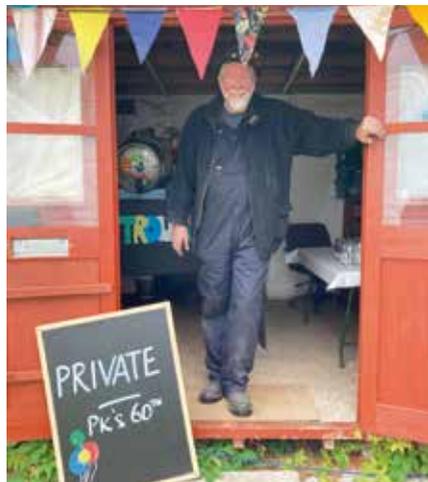
Engines present were;

- Aveling & Porter 3430, Sarah, built in 1894 and owned by PK Smith.
- Burrell 2159, built in 1899 and owned by Patrick Edwards.
- Burrell 2426, Ted Haggard, built in 1901 and owned by Colin Hatch.
- Burrell 3458, Defiance, built in 1913 and owned by the Barker family.
- Marshall 15391, Eynsham Hall, built in 1887 and owned by John Wharton.

All engines travelled to the venue under their own steam, some further than others – Chipping Norton, Swindon and Witney for instance. Of note is that four of the engine's dates from the Victorian era, and that there were two of the oldest surviving Oxfordshire-registered engines present – B 2159 & M 15391.

Your scribe and wife Jan travelled to the village of Broughton Poggs in order to find Defiance and crew (Nigel Barker, Richard Barker and Harry Edwards) at the 'Five Alls' lunchtime stop. I then travelled with them on to Lechlade, a stop en route being made to replenish the living van stock of Port. On arrival at 'The Trout', Sarah and Ted Haggard were already in position in the paddock.

As we crossed the entrance bridge, Eynsham Hall, driven by Stan Lewendon, could be seen in the distance, no doubt conducting a change of gear in order to make entrance a little easier, as they were towing John Wharton's Fowler gyrotiller living van. The last engine to arrive was Patrick Edwards' venerable Burrell 2159; a couple of "historic" motor cars were also noted in the field, an Austin 7 and a Ford Zephyr.



PK Smith celebrating his 60th birthday.



The Barker family's Burrell Gold Medal No. 3458, Defiance, during a pub stop en route to Lechlade.



A line up of engines in the car park of 'The Trout' at Lechlade.

Festivities were due to start at around 3pm, and PK and family had provided a sumptuous barbeque, which was ably conducted by the staff of 'The Trout'. A self-service barrel of ale was also provided in an adjacent shed together with a 'tab' behind the bar. Guests were accommodated within a marquee and gazebo, or in the pub garden depending on the prevailing weather conditions. Later there was music provided by Nigel Keene and friends, which finished at about 21.30.

It was good to catch up with so many faces from the past and present in these strange times. In fact, plans were made to meet again later in the year, as the management of 'The Trout' have offered to host this year's SoDEM road run on Saturday 13th November; it appears that some sort of normality may be on the horizon. Once again, we must record our thanks to PK, family and friends for providing a great day out.

Thanks are due to PK's wife Phillipa, Steph and Mike Lewendon for their help with organising of the event.



PK's venerable Aveling & Porter roller No. 3430, Sarah, dates from 1894. Next to it is Colin Hatch's Burrell No. 2426, Ted Haggard.

Some Moray County Council images for our delight

Derek Rayner

I'm very pleased to be able to once again provide some extremely interesting photos which have been sent to me by Keith Jones from Aberdeen. Keith has told me that they probably came from bundles of photos donated to the Great North of Scotland Railway Association for resale at exhibitions and he subsequently purchased them for his own collection since he found them of interest.

At the time they were sent to me, Keith was not aware of the photographer(s) involved back in the 1950s but it's subsequently been established that at least some of this selection of black & white images were taken by the late Frank Jones of Kent who journeyed to Morayshire and then embarked on a cycle tour of interesting locations whilst he was there. It can perhaps be assumed that Frank took his bike on the train with him to a convenient location, perhaps via Aberdeen and through to Elgin, and continued his journeyings by bike. Whether he had a companion with him at the time, is not known. However, it has been confirmed that he stayed at Youth Hostels whilst up in the far north.

August 1952 was the date given for when this photo (Fig 1) was taken at the Moray County Council's depot at Ashgrove, Elgin. The cycle leaning on the tender has been identified as belonging to Frank Jones by a very close friend of his – so both this image and the following one can be assumed to have been taken by Frank.

This is Moray County Council's Aveling 3-speed traction engine – Type KT No.11137 – which is still in existence and now belongs to an RRA member in Aberdeenshire. This engine was supplied to the county council as late as March 1925, at a time when the use of such engines was dwindling fast. At the same time, an 8-ton Aveling convertible roller – consecutively numbered 11136 – was also supplied but this one was last licensed at the end of December 1963 and unfortunately has not survived. These two were registered SO 2182 and SO 2181 respectively and were fleet numbers 8 and 9. The convertible roller bore the name *Cock o' the North*.

The steam roller (Fig.2) to the right of the traction engine was Aveling convertible No.3969 of September 1897. As befits a convertible, it was fitted with governors and at one time had a scarifier but this was not fitted at the time the photograph



Fig.1

was taken. It may have been removed to transfer it to a later purchased roller! The owner's plate on this machine reads 'ELGIN COUNTY COUNCIL - ELGIN No.2' which was something of a mystery to me until it was ascertained that until 7th May 1919, the official name of the County Council of Moray was the County Council of Elgin.

This one was registered SO 1080, presumably in around 1921 – and it can be seen that its cylinder is the 'wrong way round' – i.e. it's on the left hand side rather than the way in which most Avelings are seen as being on the boiler's right hand side. It's not known at this time why Aveling's changed its original long-standing arrangement for a relatively short period but it's assumed that the new design wasn't successful – which is why they reverted to the single cylinder being on the right again.

There were also three images of a somewhat rare Leeds-built product in the shape of a Mann's steam wagon – but this one (Fig 3) was fitted with an Aitken-type tar tank with spraying equipment. This put me in mind of an earlier article of mine about this type of road

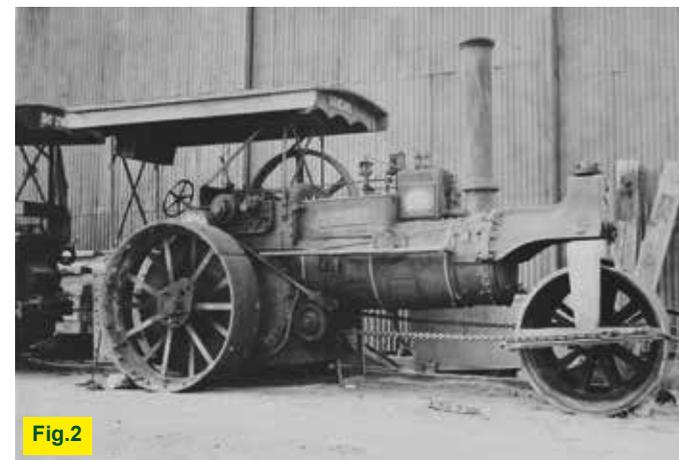


Fig.2



Fig.3

maintenance equipment which related to one of these machines being on trial in Dundee in 1910 (see *Rolling* 171). That was an early model but the one illustrated in Moray was new to the county council where it became Fleet No.5 but it was obviously out of use and had become somewhat derelict by the time the photos were taken. It was No.997 of 1915 and was registered SO 567 when it was new.

It has subsequently been confirmed that this image was taken by Frank Jones on 5th August 1952; but (Fig. 4) – was by an unknown photographer and was taken a year or so later on 11th August 1953; as was (Fig. 5) – which it's been assumed was also by the same

photographer since it was also taken on the same 1953 August date.

To conclude with more information about the Moray County Council's road maintenance fleet, from the records of the Road Locomotive Society, we learn that the first machine owned by Elgin County Council was Aveling convertible No.3326 of April 1894, a 15 ton machine (SO 1079). That was followed by the pictured roller in 1897 (Fig 2) and then an Aveling convertible XAC tractor – No.6589 of 1908 (SO 138). The next machine was another Aveling – this time a GND tractor in July 1915 (SO 567) which was fleet number 4.

Following the Mann wagons was Aveling KND tractor No.9263 in November 1920 (SO 1226) which was purchased via the dealers, Cole Brothers of Sleaford. The two 1925 Aveling products already mentioned arrived after that one and the final roller was a very late-build 'Q Class' 12 ton Marshall – No.89385 – which came to the council in May 1943 (FVA 360).

The council's steam fleet also included two Foden 6-ton wagons, also purchased in March 1925, concurrent with the two Avelings, these being Nos.11576 and 11582 – registered consecutively SO 2183 and 2184. The reason for the large increase in road maintenance equipment at this time is not known but it could have been associated with a rearrangement of Scotland-wide responsibilities for such at the time.



Letters

Rollers in South West Scotland sparked another Scottish coincidence!

Dear Editor

Between 1964 and 1966, I was doing part of my horticultural training with the National Trust for Scotland at Threave Gardens, which is close to Castle Douglas in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

I was engaged in the now somewhat forgotten task when my attention was drawn to an unfamiliar sound on the nearby A75. A steam roller then hove into view, the first one I had seen in that part of the world.

I abandoned my task and moved to get a closer look; an Aveling & Porter I thought – but it sounded different and there was no sign of steam. The roller rattled to a halt and then I realised there was a diesel engine mounted where the cylinder block should be. I had never seen such a roller, and after a few minutes she moved on. Over the next couple of years or so, I saw her on a regular basis, coming and going from the depot at Tongland.

Fast forward almost thirty years.

I was chatting to Grampian Regional Council's Kincardine & Deeside divisional road surveyor, cannot recall his name, but a decent chap. The subject of rollers arose and to cut a long story short, this Aveling & Porter came up. It turned out that he had spent the earlier part of his career with the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright and knew the roller well. The dieselisation of Aveling No.10890 had been carried out at Tongland depot workshop by the council's own staff.

I never did come across Fowler roller No.16402, but in those days I was limited in my range, having only a push bike to get around. The Stewartry did, however, operate Aveling Barford DXY AD048 of 1938, SW5855, which now resides in Cheshire, No.10890 having outworked her by fourteen years. Out for a spin one evening, in either 1965 or 1966, I came across AD048's replacement parked up on a roadside verge, a brand new Master Pavior which must have been one of the first.

Tongland near Kirkcudbright may be familiar to some members since it is also one of the early hydro electric stations of the Galloway Power Scheme. Adjacent is a custom-built motor car factory constructed to utilise the hydro power. This facility was once one of the homes of the Scottish-manufactured range of Arrol-Johnston cars.

Eddie Valentine

Marykirk

Road Making in Reading Revisited – Philip Shepherd & Co.

PK Smith & Ian Corfield

Following on from the publication of four photographs, courtesy of the Reg Dore collection, in the summer 2021 edition of *Rolling* (issue 185), I was delighted to be contacted by fellow RRA member Ian Corfield of Carsington, Derbyshire regarding the two photographs featuring works being undertaken by Philip Shepherd & Co. It transpires that Ian is the current proud owner (or is it 'custodian' as surely we are all really only the temporary guardians of our machines?!) of Aveling & Porter 2031 of 1884 which was owned by Philip Shepherd & Co. from late 1921 until 1932. This may mean that one of the steam rollers in the hazy background of the photos could have been his. Sadly there is no way from the photos to be certain of this and I have suggested to him that some further detective work in the Reading area archives may possibly help in more definitively and accurately establishing if his roller was indeed one of those involved with the works being photographed. In the course of our correspondence he also kindly supplied me with the information he has been able to gather over the years regarding Philip Shepherd along with his permission to summarise it for the benefit of publication and of course in the hope it may produce further details about the firm from our fellow RRA members.

The company was based at 36 Mansell Road, Acton Vale, London which was quite close to the Acton UDC depot who were the previous owners of the roller. The RLS records show Philip Shepherd & Co. owning two steam rollers and two steam wagons. Aveling & Porter wagon No.7773, Reg D 8441, dated September 1912 and a Foden wagon No.6114 of April 1916. Their rollers were Aveling & Porter roller No.2031, Reg ME 1797 of December 1884 (ex Acton Corporation in 1921) and a Ruston, Proctor roller No.29200 of February 1905, Reg ME 3925. The number crunchers amongst you will note that Ian's engine registration number is recorded as ME 1797, not its current registration of ME 3918, and he is currently investigating this anomaly.

The company was incorporated in 1916 and is noted as having exhibited at the 1923 'Public Works, Roads &



A&P 2031, probably in the 1930s with Alex Angus, Aberdeen.

Transport Exhibition' held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, London during late November of that year. The same year saw a quite serious fire at their Mansell Road yard which was reported as being caused by a tar tank having boiled over as the fire underneath was left unattended when the workmen went to light the fires in the steam engines in preparation for that day's works. It took two brigades, Acton and Chiswick, to successfully contain the conflagration to the shed although the firemen involved "suffered considerably from the smoke and got their uniforms and hoses smeared with tar" according to the report in the *Acton Gazette*. Another later newspaper article relates to a 1927 bankruptcy case in which the company was cited by the defendant (a director) as having been the cause of some of his losses. It was noted that the company "executed large contracts for public bodies but ultimately made heavy losses". He thus attributed his insolvency to the "failure of Philip Shepherd & Co. Ltd, loss of shares therein and liabilities incurred on its behalf". There were, however, also aspects of fraudulent dealings by the gentleman involved regarding other investments not involving the company so the receiver was not convinced they were in any way wholly at fault. This would though lead one to speculate that the company was not perhaps financially very strong in the late twenties and indeed it went into receivership in 1931/32. There are records in the National Archives relating to receivership but Ian has as yet been unable to access them as they are not digitised.

After Shepherds went into receivership, the records of A&P 2031 show it as next being registered to an Alex M Angus in Aberdeen in June 1933. Whether Philip Shepherds' receiver advertised the company assets nationwide is not yet known but one would presume the engine would have travelled by train between London and Aberdeen!

Both Ian and I have long searched for working day photos of our engines and so far



A&P 2031 at a Cromford rally.

my search (for A&P 3430 of 1894) has been unsuccessful! He has to date only one confirmed photo of his engine which was acquired courtesy of the Grampian Transport Museum, Alford and he has kindly shared it with us here although probably taken whilst in the ownership of Alex Angus, Aberdeen in the 1930s unless of course any members know otherwise?!

Aveling Attachments: Part 1: the Roadside Excavator

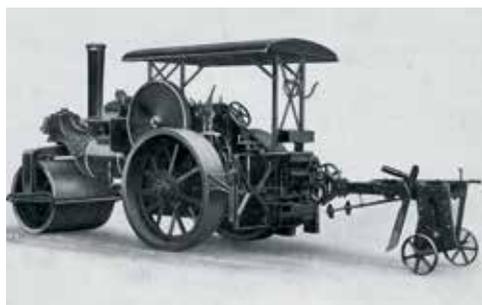
Derek Rayner

As well as manufacturing and selling steam rollers, literally by the thousand, Aveling & Porter also produced and sold attachments for them at various times during their long history.

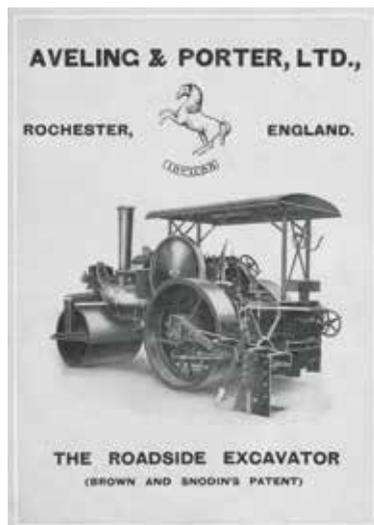
In this first part of five short articles, we'll look at their Roadside Excavator which was marketed as Brown & Snodin's Patent. It was designed specially for reducing the cost of the necessary excavation required for widening roadways where just a few feet of roadside verge was required to be removed in order to achieve the desired new width.

The device, which was attached to the rear of the steam roller, was able to cut away to a width of 18 inches and up to 2ft high at a rate of 30 lineal yards per minute. The material was then able to be moved away without the use of picks to loosen it.

It was able to be fitted in a few minutes to any type of roller or tractor and when its use had concluded, it could be detached in a similar manner. As can be seen in the accompanying illustrations, the Excavator overhung the roller's rear roll on the near side and, as such, it was clear of passing traffic and it was able to be coupled up to and hauled by the roller as an 'independent trailer' from one location to another.



The Excavator in its travelling mode coupled up to a roller.



An Aveling & Porter advertisement for their Roadside Excavator – to Brown & Snodin's Patent.



The Patent Excavator in use cutting below road level behind Aveling & Porter 10 ton piston valve compound roller No.11254 of June 1925 (NX 8892), supplied new to Warwickshire C.C., becoming their fleet No.9.

A conflagration in Manea

Taken from a Cambridgeshire Scrapbook 20th July 1923

This story appeared in the *Ely Standard* newspaper of this date, filed in the Cambridgeshire Collection, Lion Yard Library, Cambridge.

Fire broke out at Manea during tarring operations. A barrel was being hoisted onto the tar boiler when the bung came out and the contents sprayed onto the furnace and immediately became a mass of flames. The stream of burning tar quickly ran down the gutter and ignited six other barrels of tar standing a few yards away just outside the Vicarage.

Dense clouds of smoke began to ascend and the flames burnt the tall wooden fence which bounds the Vicarage and the road. So rapidly did the fire progress that those immediately on the spot were powerless to check it and it was at first thought that the Vicarage itself would be burned for it seemed impossible to save it. However, the dense smoke gave its own warning that help was needed and families, whether in the fields or the home, hastened to the spot. The crier went around on his bicycle shouting 'Bring your pails'.

Never has such a human weapon been so speedily mobilised to fight a fire. Young and old, male and female, with hundreds of buckets were soon working like Trojans, everyone realising that upon their prompt action rested the issue of whether the fire would be the biggest catastrophe that has ever befallen the village.

Flames leapt up the Vicarage wall, paint was blistered and windows in the kitchen cracked by the heat. So serious was the situation that valuables and other articles were removed for it seemed imminent that the house would be burnt. Flames were kept from getting stronger only by the continual douching by hundreds buckets of water from the eager band of willing workers.

While this was happening, the tar boiler itself was blazing to which was attached to horse and it was with some difficulty that the animal was extricated after it had received some injuries to its flanks. One of the workmen who was on the boiler found to the lower parts of his legs were in flames but he jumped into pails of water and saved himself.

Fortunately there was a good supply of water handy from wells which had almost been forgotten. Although the fire engine was brought to the scene, the outbreak was practically extinguished without its aid. So speedily and determined was the work of the fire fighters that the conflagration lasted only half an hour from beginning to end.

To show his appreciation, the Vicar threw open Vicarage lawn with amusements including bowls which had never before been played in the village.

With thanks to Dean Rayner via Derek Rayner

Charlie's birthday

Richard Newman

Our Secretary (Charlie Swaffield) recently had a significant birthday and a steam party was arranged to help him celebrate. Many of Charlie's friends brought along vintage machines and there was plenty to interest the majority of attendees. Steam was represented by three Aveling engines: The Darch family's Aveling showman's-style tractor No.8376, *Princess Victoria*, the enormous Aveling LC8 Colonial road locomotive No.5192, *Flame Lily*, and, of course, the Swaffield's own ex-Thursford D type roller No.10780.



An appropriate birthday cake for a garage business owner. Courtesy Jim Gerrard



The birthday boy...



Princess Victoria with a miniature Foden alongside.

Lost Registrations

The RRA Fact Sheet Number One, entitled **LOST REGISTRATION NUMBERS**, explains how to re-register your motor roller with its original registration mark (the V765 Scheme).

Fact Sheet Number Two has details of how to register a previously un-registered machine – or see the website.

Send two first class stamps to:

Derek Rayner, 9 Beagle Ridge Drive, Acomb, York, YO24 3JH.

As with most parties, a barbeque provided visitors with much needed sustenance of slow cooked pork and beefburgers and a well-stocked bar was used to the full. It was a really good party and it went on well into the night raising over £400 for local charities.



Parts Lists still available

The Spring 2020 edition of *Rolling* listed 52 parts lists and instruction manuals which were surplus to the RRA's Archive collection. Of these, 13 have been sold, but the others are still available for sale at £20 each. If interested, please contact me on andrewwatsonmarston@gmail.com. Note that only one Aveling-Barford GA roller parts list remains, which covers the Mark 1 with petrol engine (book No.1549A).

Andrew Watson

Information request

I recently purchased a Wallis & Stevens motor roller but am having difficulty finding information about it. It is an Advance roller number OCR-C-68482, which indicates it was built in 1968. Unfortunately the build records for these later years are not in the archives at Reading so they are not a lot of help with this one. It is believed that the records still exist in private ownership so if any member either has some of the records or knows where I can find the information, please contact me via treasurer@roadrollers.org.

The roller has a Ruston Hornsby two cylinder diesel engine (No.1061-0168-187) and again I am having difficulty finding information, particularly with regard to sourcing of parts and part numbers. Again any information will be gratefully accepted.

Richard Newman

Dave Bickerdike's Aveling roller No. 5499 of 1904 in steam at Beamish on 25th September 2021. David hopes to fit cladding and an awning to this interesting 6-ton roller over the winter. It has an interesting story to tell, having worked in Germany until preservation. **Anthony Coulls**

