

The Trojan Museum Trust

Patron Tim Schenken



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*Cover Photograph Courtesy of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum
1922 Trojan with Leyland Works, Leyland, in the Background*

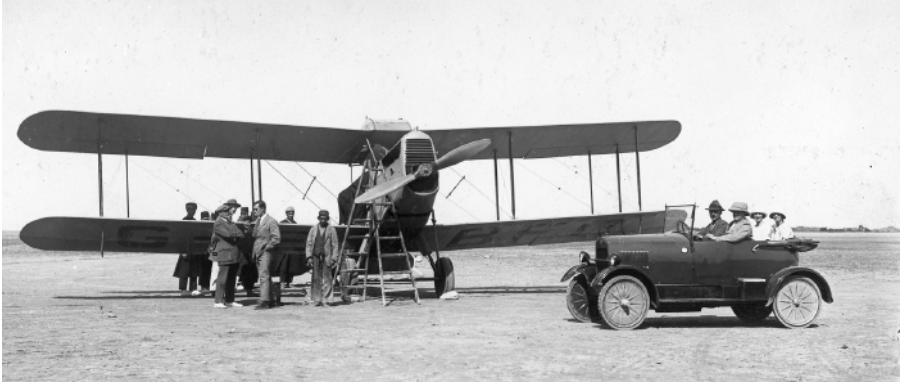
Dear Friends,

Welcome to your winter news sheet, I hope that you have been able to avoid the worst of the winter weather. Over the past few months the Trust has been in regular contact with the archives of the British Commercial Vehicles Museum in Leyland. This has been thanks to a volunteer archivist Chris Green. The museum has a huge archive covering all aspects of the Leyland company as well as many other commercial vehicles. We've also discovered that they have many items from the early days of Trojan vehicle production. Leyland built all of the early Trojan vehicles in their Kingston Upon Thames factory under license from Trojan. Trojan in the early 20's was not a large enough company to handle large scale vehicle manufacturing. This arrangement continued until the late 20's when Trojan had bought the Purley Way factory sight and so had space to take on the vehicle production, this coincided with Leyland requiring their factory for other uses and so the arrangement came to an end.



*Photograph Courtesy of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum
An Unusual Conversion of an early car by a London Firm*

The Trust has been sent scans of many interesting Trojan photographs most of which are completely new to the Trust. With the British Commercial Vehicle Museums kind permission I have printed a few in this news sheet. I hope to be able to visit the museum soon as they have many other documents which could be very helpful in filling in some of the early history of Trojan Ltd and their relationship with Leyland.



Photograph Courtesy of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum

We had an email from the son of a former Trojan worker which has prompted a little digging in our archive. The Trojan worker was Frank Nursaw who worked in the accounts and costing department of the Trojan Works from the mid 1930's right through to the early 1970's when he was made redundant. During the war Frank was part of the volunteer Works Fire Brigade. If any one has any knowledge of Frank or the Trojan Fire Brigade then do please get in touch. As I've mentioned before we have very few details from the war period for Trojans but I did find one document which mentions the work of the Trojan Fire Brigade and also other key activity including the Trojan section of the Home Guard. The document was produced by the directors of Trojan as a thank you mainly to the Duty Officers work during the war and as far as we can tell was presented to the Duty Officers as an ornate booklet between VE and VJ day. Our archive only has a photocopy of one of these rare booklets, but the following is the text from the booklet. It gives a real impression of life at the works during the war.

Appreciation on behalf of the board of directors of Trojan Limited by F. L. Blow Chairman

Immediately following the outbreak of war on September 3rd 1939, it became necessary to appoint responsible officers to be known as Duty Officers, for vitally important work involving continuous day and night vigilance, in the interests of the company and its employees. Volunteers were forthcoming without regard to payment; and for 2064 duty periods of 24 hours each, until the work was brought to a close on the morning of April 28th 1945, the volunteer group carried on, always in expectation of attacks from the air and at times under conditions of grave anxiety. The Directors feel it to be their bounden duty and privilege to place on record the indebtedness of the Company and Employees, to the Duty Officers and those who assisted them in their tasks, for the faithful and meritorious spirit in which their duties were discharged.

Extract from a Letter received from the Ministry of Aircraft Production January 30th 1945

I have also to state that the ministry notes with considerable pleasure the high standard of conduct displayed by all members of the firm's staff in the face of serious and continuing difficulties of many kinds on account of enemy action. The spirit displayed by all members of your firm both in ensuring uninterrupted production in the factory and in assisting elsewhere in minimising the effects of air attacks is such as to merit the warmest of appreciation.

Our Watch and Ward 1939 – 1945

!

It would be impossible in this interim between Victory in Europe and the final World Peace, which is in sight, to record completely the activities of the Firm during the years of war, but it is felt that some record should be made of the many voluntary and often arduous duties which have been performed by a number of personnel in the Company.

The main brunt of responsibility was of necessity borne by the Duty Officers, but the loyal support and prompt execution of instructions by all made their task lighter and they felt they had the backing and cooperation of those on whose behalf they carried out their duties.

Although much superficial damage was done on occasion, no loss of life has been sustained at the works through enemy action. The firm cannot but count itself miraculously fortunate in coming out of this ordeal with only relatively minor battle scars.

Many of its personnel lost all or much in their own homes. The firm is proud indeed that these refused to allow such dislocation to interfere with their work.

From September 3rd 1939, until April 28th 1945, Duty Officers, Telephonists and Fireman carried out their respective duties without a single break; day and night, Saturdays and Sundays and throughout all holiday periods.

Duty Officers

In the early period of the war, before an efficient system of warnings had been introduced, and often the first indication of the presence of hostile aircraft in the vicinity was when bombs had been dropped, to ensure the safety of personnel, initiative and quick action were the order of the day.

Until May 1942, many systems, some unofficial, were introduced, but it was not until the installation of the Multiphone, operated from the Observer Corps, through Messrs. Creed and Co, that there was any degree of certainty.

A rota of 24 hour duty periods was carried out, during which time the Duty Officer was on call for any emergency; by a flickering light system he could be called to the control room immediately.

In each case the Officer was a member of the Home Guard. Over 250 volunteered from these works, ultimately forming the major portion of "H" Coy. 32 Surrey (Factory) Battalion H. G. After July 1942 when Trojan Ltd. became the Battalion Headquarters, from 6.0pm to 9am a platoon mounted guard each night, and the Duty Officer was responsible for dealing with any military eventualities. All important government calls "after hours" had to be dealt with by him. These were many during the various periods of "rush" contracts which were urged through from time to time.

He was responsible for organising immediate first aid repairs to roof lights etc. During concentrated air raids, these were many, caused mostly by falling shell splinters and on occasions when tubes from our own rocket firing guns landed on our roof.

The total number of duties performed by the six regular Duty Officers and two Relief Officers was 2064. Out of this number were 1016 duty periods during which there was "nothing to report" As against these quiet days, it must be remembered that there were periods during which numbers of raids were recorded, the outstanding instance being on August 2nd 1944 when 129 plottings were made.

Not only enemy action accounted for "incidents" which had to be dealt with by the Duty Officers. Eight fires of varying severity broke out during the war years, only two of which were due to enemy action, and were expeditiously handled by the works Fire Brigade.

Telephonists

From the outbreak of war until May 5th 1945, the control room was manned day and night without a break. At first this was managed by voluntary operators taking over between 5.30 and 8.00pm, when the night operators came on duty, and also by this same few being on duty on Sundays.

Subsequently three night operators were engaged, and started earlier in the evenings and more of the staff were trained in telephone and plotting work and a more regular rota was adopted.

The courage and loyalty displayed by the voluntary and night operators throughout was exemplary; in many instances they had to journey to and from their work while air raids were in progress.

Roof Spotters

The preliminary work by the small number of men trained in roof spotting must not be overlooked. Many long cold and anxious hours were spent on the roof of the works during the days when other means of warning were not reliable. After the introduction of the Observer Corps. System which proved so efficient, it was decided to abandon the roof spotting and its attendant risks.

Fireman

A band of men, day and night, did duty at the works. These men became fully trained under the direction of the Croydon Fire Brigade, not only proving themselves skilled in competition work, but also capable of dealing with actual fires when they did break out, as previously mentioned.

Outstanding Incidents Affecting Trojan Works

On August 31st 1940 a 500lb H.E. Bomb fell on Messrs. Waterman's engine room, within 30 yards of our works, causing major structural damage and two fatal casualties; 75 percent of the roof of Purley Way was damaged, and it was only by a miracle that the canteen, which was full at the time, was saved the full blast of the bomb.

Less than six weeks later, on October 9th, a H.E. Bomb fell at the foot of Waddon Bridge. Although some distance from the works, our telephones were disorganised for four days. Five days later, the large gas holder of the Croydon Gas Company was hit. It took approximately two years to restore this to working order.

In April 1941, three land mines came down in the Waddon district, one luckily did not explode, but the others did considerable damage to the works, destroying again a portion of the Purley Way roof which by then had been repaired.

1942 and 1943 were, in comparison with other years, relatively raid free.

In the early part of 1944 heavy raids were experienced in the Croydon borough. The noise of the heavy anti-aircraft barrage and the splinterings of shell which fell over the area, accentuated the terror of the time.

On June 13th 1944, the country experienced the first of its flying bomb attacks, which continued relentlessly until August 31st 1944, when our armies overran the launching sites in Northern France. Viewing the lanes of flight up which these bombs were launched, it was obvious that Croydon, being near the apex of the triangle at which most of these missiles were being aimed, was getting more than her share of those which, having come through the preliminary defences, fell short of their target. No less than 3570 flying bombs were plotted within the radius of the works.

There were few people at the works who were not affected to some extent by this weapon, but owing to the nature of its performance, which could only vary to a small degree, it was a simpler matter to gauge the moment for going to shelter. The fact that relatively few hours were lost by this necessity is creditable both to the judgement of the Duty Officers and the staunch tenacity of the workers who allowed the ordeal to interfere as little as possible with their work.

The rockets which followed were no less a menace than the flying bombs had been, but although Croydon had some of these fall within her boundaries, she was not on the direct line of flight. As they were completely unheralded, no precautions could be taken.

This record endeavours to show how a practical working system of rotas and duties was introduced into a firm on essential National work, situated in the front line of home attack.

These efforts, as recorded, would have been of little avail had it not been for the magnificent way in which the personnel of the Company remained staunch and loyal to their jobs throughout the war. It is hard to express adequately the thanks that are due to them for their tenacity of purpose and goodwill.

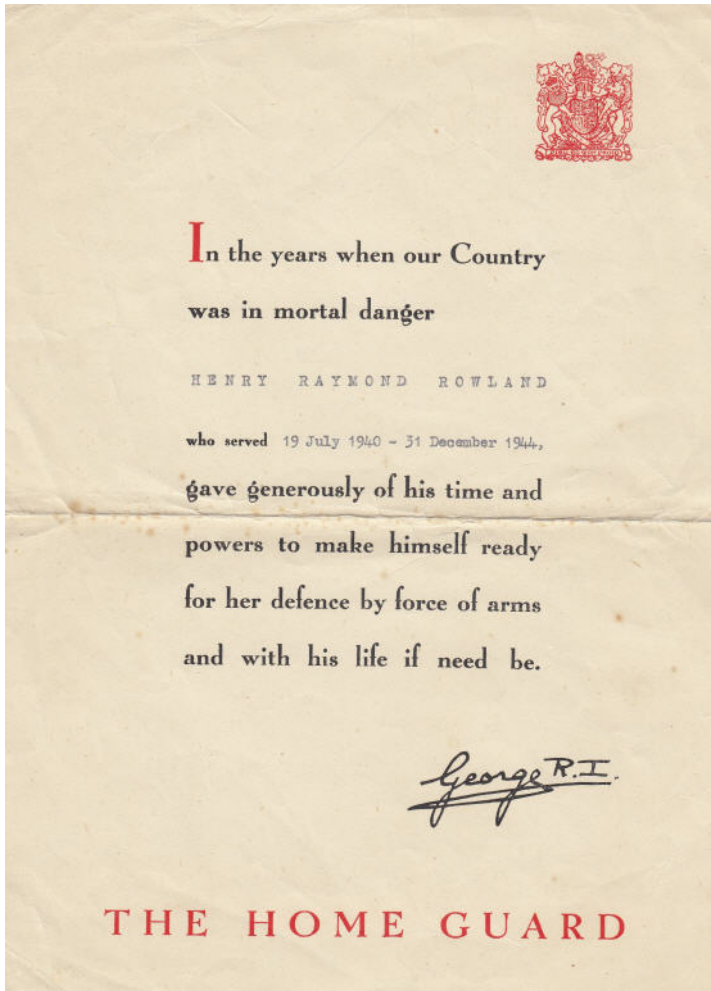
Recognition and appreciation of these united efforts have been portrayed in the award by H.M. The King, of the M.B.E. To our shop superintendent.

It is appropriate to record here that 325 personnel from the Company enlisted voluntarily, or were called up, to serve in H.M. Forces.

May this spirit which has won through these times of anxiety and trouble to Victory be rewarded by peace with prosperity for all during the coming years.

We also have a couple of Trojan Works Home Guard certificates in our archive. It would be wonderful to track down the Home Guard records for 'H' Coy. 32 Surrey (Factory) Battalion as amongst other fascinating information the records would also give us the names and details of around 250 Trojan employees from that era, whose details it would be great to add to our list of employees. I am sure that these official records exist along with detailed records of exactly what Trojan were producing during the war. We know of a few products such as the Trolley Accs and the supply drop canisters, but have almost no details of anything else. We are even missing the war time company minute books from our archive. Trojans work during the First and Second World Wars would be a

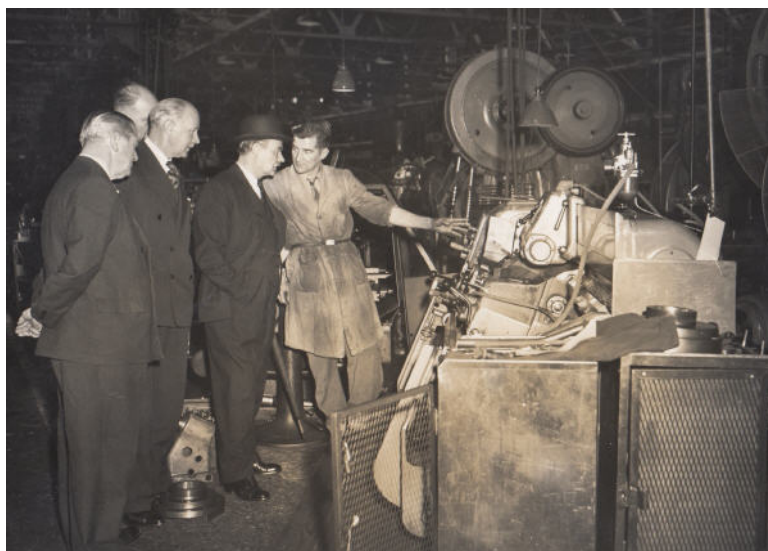
wonderful subject for a book and the research involved for this project would uncover all sorts of information from the governments official archive. If this idea appeals to you then do please get in touch.



During the 1950's Trojan had a strong business relationship with Wall's Ice Cream, helped by the fact that Wall's rented their Croydon depot from Trojan and so were right on the factory doorstep. In the mid 50's a little ceremony followed by a factory tour and dinner was organised to celebrate the handing over of the 200th Trojan Ice Cream van to Wall's.



The photo shows Basil Monk handing a gold plated set of Keys to the Wall's drivers, beside him is Mr. Cecil Rodd chairman of Wall's.



The Tour of the Works

Wall's Ice Cream are now owned by Unilever along with another big Trojan customer Brooke Bond Tea. Unilever has recently purchased a 1950's Trojan Brooke Bond Tea van for publicity purposes. All part of Unilever marking the 150th anniversary of Brooke Bond Tea. They are also set to re launch the name of Brooke Bond as one of their tea types.



Three of the 200 Wall's Ice Cream Vans



Photograph Courtesy of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum

THE TROJAN IN FOG



PRICES from
£125
 COMPLETE

"One very foggy night, a week or two ago, I watched a procession of cars creeping towards a Midland town, at speeds varying between four and eight miles an hour, the leading car being a Trojan. The driver of this car sometimes sat in the driving seat, sometimes stood on the running board, and sometimes walked alongside the car, steering with his left hand.

"Those who were driving more conventional cars could not understand how he managed to keep control of the car, especially when walking beside it. To anyone who knows the Trojan, however, the matter is quite clear The car can be started by pushing the gear lever into first, the driver being outside the car, and when visibility permits it is simple to hop on to the running board and move the gear lever into top and travel along at about six miles an hour on the level For stopping it is necessary merely to move the gear lever from top back into reverse, which acts as a brake, and then forward into control"

This is an extract from an article which appeared in the recent issue of "Light Car and Cyclecar" and is yet another tribute to the extreme adaptability of the Trojan to all conditions in this and any other country.

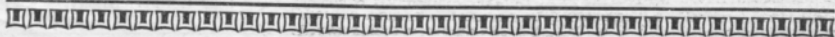
**Have
 YOU
 tried it?**

If not, may we
 extend to you
 the advice we
 ← offer to all

Try a Trojan

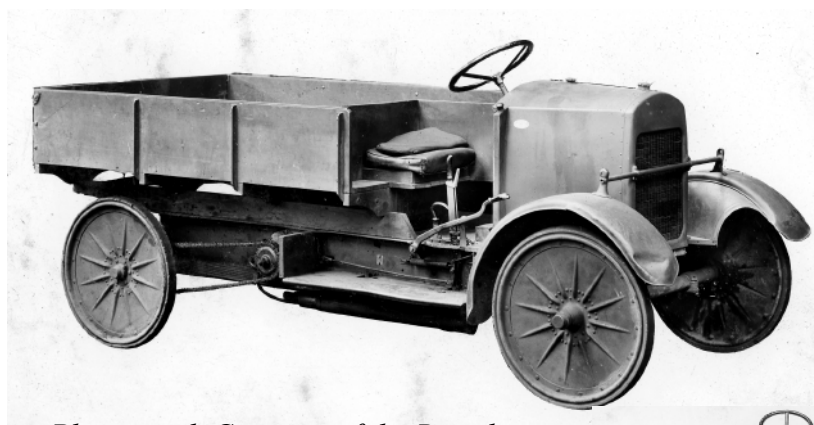
—The Simplest Car in the World

MADE BY LEYLAND MOTORS LTD, LEYLAND, LANCs





*Photograph Courtesy of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum
Trojan Taxi Cab*



*Photograph Courtesy of the British
Commercial Vehicle Museum
Judging by the Flywheels in the
Back, I Believe this to be a Truck
For Use in the Kingston Factory*



TROJAN

for work



20/25 cwt FORWARD CONTROL VAN



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20/25 cwt CHASSIS



25 cwt DROP SIDE TRUCK



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I hope that you have found this news sheet of interest and do please get in touch with any Trojan queries or information. I hope that you have a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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