

EXIT THE TRAM ENTER THE TROLLEY

Fanfare to popularise "New" Transport

Iford Shelter now a Museum piece

Bournemouth and Christchurch to be "as Brothers"

C.T. April 11, 1936

The "Light Railway" running through our main streets is happily no more. The lumbering old tramcar has passed as a means of public transport, being replaced by trolley bus. The petrol bus is still popular, for the trolley demands an overhead cage of wires and a plethora of ugly poles. Its coming does not enhance the Borough.

NO SENTIMENT

The Bournemouth Transport Department are charged with enterprise in their effort to provide public conveyances, and on Wednesday last the borough witnessed their latest effort in the extension of the trolley-service.

The last electric tramcar to pass from the confines of the Christchurch borders was made an event of importance in order to fanfare the entry of the trolley bus.

There was however, no sentiment displayed about either. Civic workers made a brave display and turned out in force, souvenir tickets of this "last round up" were distributed, but many spoilt the effect by paying for them with the traditional "tuppence."

The days of a cheering populace have passed, and only a few curious snapshottists recorded the passing and the arrival, the concern was purely civic. The trolley is not too welcome, for it is too closely allied to its deposed brother the tram, requiring even more poles and wires. An effort has been made to minimise the disastrous effect of the lurching poles by painting them green, the massed effect is far from happy. The petrol bus appears to be supreme.

CIVIC CEREMONY.

The event would have passed without notice, had it not been for the civic attention, rehearsals having become common and burgesses being already familiar with the huge yellow conveyances in our streets. Earlier in the week the last rehearsal was held when a bus operated the route to the terminus in Church Street. On Wednesday an Inspector of the Ministry of Transport (Major Wilson, R.E.) inspected and finally approved the extended route from the Christchurch terminus to the Square, Bournemouth.

The tramcar has enjoyed a life of thirty-one years in this borough, having been introduced in October, 1905 after a three years' previous trial in Bournemouth.

Wednesday's ceremony marked the completion of the Bournemouth Corporation's plan for a change-over to electric trolleys, the task having taken almost two years, instead of three years as originally proposed. The danger of tramlines, the advance of petrol driven conveyances and the trend of public opinion having applied a certain driving force.

Additionally the Bournemouth Transport system demands the most expert handling at the moment to make it a more acceptable service of municipal trading order. Like all such efforts it does not pay.

INN YARD TURN TABLE.

For the time being, and pending the installation of an electric turn-table at the inn yard of "The Dolphin," in Church Street, a method of reversing is in force at the terminus; a matter of skilled driving and some breath-taking moments to neighbouring shopkeepers. This actual reversing device was invented and made in Bournemouth Corporation workshops. The matter has been pushed forward in order to pick up the Easter trade. The Church Street terminus was borne of the fact that the Bournemouth Transport Department felt

they would lose valuable trade if they did not run passengers almost into the Priory Church precincts, and that for the trolley to halt at Bargates would afford their opposition an advantage. Our Council and the wishes of the burgesses were over-riden by virtue of the rights vested in tramlines; not all things done civically in the past were executed well or with due care to eventualities such as what has now happened.

THE LAST TRAM CAR.

The last tram car rumbled into the High Street bravely decked in bunting (with the stars and stripes foremost, evidently symbolical of Bournemouth's reaction to modernity and slickness). It was met by a silent little gathering of Mayors, Aldermen and Councillors of the two boroughs. In silence they boarded the "last tram," being conveyed to Tuckton Bridge. There the cortege passed with due solemnity over the bridge, the toll fare being waived in respect to the passing one.

Upon the Tuckton shore, and standing on the steps of the departing vehicle, Alderman F. B. Summerbee, chairman of the Transport Committee, formally invited Bournemouth's Mayor to declare the service of the trolley open. Alderman Harris accordingly "declared that portion of the new trolley bus route from Cross Roads to the bridge well and truly open."

His Worship expressed his pleasure, which the occasion gave him, and wished the new extension of the service "good luck in the future."

The company then walked back across the bridge to the Christchurch boundary, where from the rear platform of the waiting trolley bus the Mayor of Christchurch (Councillor D. Galton) said—

"Following the example of the Mayor of Bournemouth I have great pleasure in declaring this part of the route formally open."

The civic party with their camp followers of pressmen and photographers then made the official entry into Christchurch.

A CIVIC " RECEPTION " BOURNEMOUTH'S " RIGHT HAND."

Later in the Town Hall tea followed. At this informal reception the Mayor of Bournemouth said : —

"This has been a day of events, and the entry of the trolley bus and the withdrawal of the trams mark it as one to be remembered."

In a brief speech his Worship begged for a more complete understanding between the two boroughs, saying " we must not look too closely at things that are merely on the surface," and declared that he looked forward to the time when "we shall be as united as brothers."

"What is good for you is good for us and what is good for us is good for you. We should join hands and make this a real success. We in Bournemouth hold out our right hand to you in Christchurch."

"FIRM SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP OF CHRISTCHURCH."

Briefly, the Mayor of Christchurch extended a warm welcome to the Bournemouth Councillors, pointing out "that this is the first time we have ever had the pleasure of meeting you on our own territory."

His Worship further assured them that "the hand extended will be firmly grasped in the spirit of friendship, and if this be done, then the trams will have served their purpose truly and well."

The Mayor of Christchurch commiserated with Bournemouth ratepayers, saying: "At this time rates are undoubtedly uppermost in our minds. In Christchurch we have fortunately stabilised ours and we hope that next year Bournemouth will have a better Easter egg than this year."

A RECORD CHANGE-OVER.

Alderman F. B. Summerbee presented Councillor Galton with the first ticket issued for the trolley bus service from Christchurch to the Square, handing to the Mayor of Bournemouth the last ticket issued on the trams.

Speaking of matters of finance connected with the transport systems, he said :—

"When it was suggested that trolley buses should be adopted in Bournemouth, there was a debit of £311,000 on the tramway system."

The change over from the old to the new was planned to be spread over three years, and was actually accomplished in one year and nine months. "As a team the Corporation workers and myself set out to do it in the quickest possible time. I think we can claim a record for speed in this switch over, which is unexcelled in the whole of Great Britain."

SOME FIGURES.

Referring to the cost of the trolley buses, Alderman Summerbee said road costs were 10d. a mile, and that the Cross Roads to Westbourne route had already show a clear profit of £2,222. "I am sure," he added, "that my successor will have a far rosier time than I had."

"Returning to statistics, Alderman Summerbee quoted the following figures : —

The aggregate total of trolley bus passengers from April 1st, 1935, to March 31st, 1936, was 19,111,838. The new service will be a twelve minute one from Christchurch, showing a saving of eleven minutes over the old tram routes.

On Route 26 (Moordown) the trolleys over the period above quoted have shown a passenger increase of 597,829, and the increase in receipts over trams being £3,060. The gross receipts of trolleys being £6,768, trams £2,799, an actual increase of £3,969.

The saving in running expenses were £909.

Alderman Summerbee argued that this service will mean that many more Bournemouth visitors will visit Christchurch.

"The Christchurch Borough," he concluded, "may have a continuation from Iford whenever it is desired." Councillor A. E. Shave interposed with a touch of correction to the Bournemouth glow, by suggesting that Tuckton Bridge be put on the retired list. This was too much—the meeting closed.

TROLLEY FARES.

At Tuesday's meeting of the Bournemouth Town Council it was decided that the trolley bus fares along the extension to Christchurch should be the same as on the No. 2 bus route. The through fare from the Square to Christchurch will therefore be 6d., and from the Lansdowne 5d.

The fare stages from Fisherman's Walk to Cross Roads will be Id.; from Cross Roads to Tuckton Bridge West 1d. ; and from Tuckton Bridge East to Christchurch 1d. All the fares are inclusive of the bridge toll. The last tram to leave Christchurch was staffed by the two senior tramway employees, Mr. G. Biles (driver) and Mr. F. King (conductor).

QUICK WORK.

Although the trams were only stopped on Wednesday, Thursday morning found many changes on the ancient route. During the night the old tram wires were removed with few being the wiser, and further developments took place on Thursday morning with preparation well under way to begin filling in the tram lines at Lansdowne, working towards Christchurch. The filling material is a mixture of coal ash and granite chippings.

Trolley Bus Fares to Christchurch No Change from Cross Roads Local Firm to Erect Turn-Table Buildings

The construction of Church Street buildings in connection with the trolley bus turning-point was referred to at the Bournemouth Town Council meeting on Tuesday.

The Transport Committee reported that five tenders were received, and they recommended that the lowest tender, that of Messrs. Bryant and Trowbridge at £197 10s. be accepted.

Six tenders were received for the supply and erection of a turn-table, including the services of a skilled erector, and it was recommended that that of Messrs. Sanderson Bros., Ltd., at £380, be accepted.

TROLLEY BUS FARES TO CROSS ROADS.

It was recommended that the trolley bus fares on the section of the route from Cross Roads, Southbourne, to Christchurch, be the same as at present fares on No. 2 bus route.

The Town Clerk submitted correspondence with the Town Clerk of Christchurch with regard to an extension of the notice given to the Christchurch Corporation under section 130 of the Bournemouth Corporation Act, 1930, of intention to abandon or discontinue the tramways in the Borough of Christchurch.

It was recommended that the action taken by the Town Clerk be approved and confirmed.

Alderman F. B. Summerbee said that the fares would, of course, be the same for Christchurch people as for Bournemouth people.