

Transport for London



Information Sheet No. 1

Other Sources: Records Held by Other Bodies of Use for Historical Research about Transport in London

Introduction

Transport in the London area has a long and varied history and there are key groups of records outside of those created by London Transport and its predecessor or subsidiary companies. These records give details of transport in London, which may not be available in the records created by the company. The following is by no means a complete guide to related sources but seeks to highlight some of the key bodies and surviving papers which can be used in studying aspects of transport history.

The addresses of all the organisations mentioned in the text are given at the end of this Guidance Sheet.

London Transport Museum

The Museum holds the most comprehensive collection of objects, publications and ephemera documenting the history and development of London's transport, principally from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Sources found in the Museum Library include published and unpublished material, and around 100 transport-related journal titles. Library collections of particular interest are: staff magazines; the Frank Pick collection of personal papers; and the extensive Reinohl Collection of tickets and other surface transport ephemera. Other collections available to researchers include posters, photographs, maps and guides.

The National Archives (formerly known as the Public Record Office)

The National Archives (TNA) for England and Wales holds records directly related to London Transport (see 'The British Transport Commission'). It also holds government records of transport related bodies, such as the Ministry of Transport and the British Transport Police (which reports to the Home Office).

The TNA also holds surviving records from the main line railway companies with which London Transport and its predecessor companies were associated. A fact sheet on railway records is available from the TNA.

Local Authority Records

Of particular interest at the London Metropolitan Archive are the records of London wide authorities, namely the London County Council and the Greater London Council, both of whom had responsibilities for transport. Borough and / or county record offices in the London area should also be referred to for committees with a transport responsibility. Often the Planning Department for an authority will hold valuable information. In particular Local Authorities prior to 1933 were responsible for some public transport provision, especially tramways.

Parliamentary Records

Transport is closely involved with various parliamentary processes – before the creation of Companies House early companies that wished to be registered had to do so through Parliament. Parliamentary powers are required for permission to build railway lines, extensions or to carry out major improvements. Plans were / are submitted and are approved through normal parliamentary process. Records relating to the approval of transport acts are to be found in the House of Lords Record Office. In addition MP's for the London area often brought up transport issues in parliament and transcripts of debates can be found in Hansard.

Online Archival Databases

The following databases are hosted by The National Archives on their website, and can be found under 'Search the Archives':

- **The National Register of Archives (NRA)**

All institutions in Britain holding archives are invited to inform the NRA of records that they hold. This Register is now computerised and searches can be made for Personal Papers and Corporate Bodies, either by writing to, or personally visiting, the NRA via the National Archives. Alternatively searches can be made by visiting the NRA web-site over the Internet. The Register shows where the material is held, an indication of quantity, and can assist with access details for how researchers can consult the records.

The NRA has traditionally encouraged institutions to send them copies of completed catalogues, which can be consulted, at their London offices. However, not all repositories have computerised systems so some repositories will continue to send copies of completed catalogues to the NRA, which will be searchable only at the individual record office or in person at the NRA. Please note that the NRA does not hold any archives itself, it acts solely as a directory service.

- **The ARCHON Directory**

The ARCHON Directory includes addresses and contact details for record repositories in the United Kingdom and also for institutions elsewhere in the world which have substantial collections of manuscripts noted under the indexes to the National Register of Archives.

- **Access to Archives (A2A)**

The A2A site allows you to search and browse for information about archives across detailed catalogues from around 400 repositories in England and Wales. As with the NRA, the A2A site acts purely as a directory service. You will need to contact the individual repository itself to investigate any information.

Trade Union Sources

The Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick actively collects Trade Union archives. It has the largest single collection of Trade Union and related papers in the UK and also has a significant research library. Its holdings include the papers created by the two national unions closely related with London Transport:

- The Transport and General Workers Union from c1922
- The Transport Salaried Staffs' Association from c1900

Also archives such as the:

- National Union of Railwaymen
- International Transport Worker's Federation
- National Cycle Archive
- And a wide variety of Personal Papers

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) Library is based at the University of North London (UNL). It is the key collection of Trade Union publications in the UK, covering dates c1868-1993. It includes material at UK and international levels relating to: - pressure groups, campaign movements, working conditions, industrial relations, and Political Parties. There are also key collections of periodicals and newspaper cuttings. Many of these sources relate to London Transport. There is also a small collection of archives: -

- previously held by the TUC Museum Collection
- Majorie Nicholson Collection (deposited by the TUC)

Professional Institutions

There are numerous professional institutions, which have connections to London's transport history. However of particular interest are the Engineering Institutions such as the Institution of Civil Engineers founded in 1818; Institution of Electrical Engineers founded in 1871; Institution of Mechanical Engineers (including Institution of Automobile Engineers from 1905 and the Institution of Locomotive Engineers from 1911); Institution of Mechanical Incorporated Engineers founded in 1988 (upon the amalgamation of the Institute of Technical Engineers in Mechanical Engineering; and the Institution of Mechanical & General Technician Engineers founded in 1864.

These institutions hold a range of material including journals, papers and lectures related to the institution and related subjects. They also include a number of membership records. All enquiries should be made in writing and access is by appointment only. Most of these institutions have Web sites, providing details of their Libraries and Archives.

Personal Papers

Conducting a search at the National Register of Archives (NRA) for surviving personal papers can be of great benefit. Many individuals have exerted influence in the course of London Transport's history, and searching for the personal archives of individuals may yield information, even though not indexed under 'London Transport'.

For example the Bristol Record Office holds the papers of George White, an early tramways pioneer who was heavily involved in London United Tramways before returning to Bristol Tramways. During his time in London he corresponded with Charles Tyson Yerkes, the founder of the Underground Electric Railway Ltd, as well as others involved in the development of transport in London. In particular there is correspondence with the London Local Authorities and engineering companies.

Another example, are the personal papers of the engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The National Archives' class 'RAIL1149' is a special collection of I K Brunel papers, whilst his additional personal papers are held at Bristol University Library. These contain references to the construction of the Thames Tunnel, now part of the East London Line. In addition, Bristol University Library holds the papers of Henry Marc Brunel and Sir Marc Isambard Brunel – also prominent engineers.

Frank Pick (1878-1941) was the first Chief Executive of London Transport in 1933. He had a significant personal influence on the development of the public transport system in London. He was particularly interested in art, architecture and design as applied to public transport. In addition to his official business records and papers held in the TfL Archive, the Library at London's Transport Museum holds a collection of his personal papers containing letters he received, his own writings and personal scrapbooks.

Contractors and Consultants

There are many engineering, architectural, design, financial and other external bodies that have advised London Transport and its predecessor bodies. The surviving records of such bodies may be located by contacting the National Register of Archives. See also the Royal Commission on Historic Manuscripts' publication: 'Guides to Sources for British History 9, Records of British Business and Industry 1760-1914 Metal Processing and Engineering' (London HMSO 1994) ISBN 0 11 440232 9.

Special Collections

Several institutions have special collections, which may relate to London Transport. For example Newham Archives and Local Studies Library hold the 'Historic Vehicle Collection' (HCVC) and the 'Burroughs Collection' – both comprise publications, photographs and some original records relating to trams and buses (incorporating some London General Omnibus Company Ltd staff records).

Locating special collections can be difficult – searches can be carried out at the NRA, as well as requesting advice from archivists, curators and librarians on your particular area of research will prove beneficial.

Addresses

Bristol's City Record Office

'B' Bond Warehouse

Smeaton Road

Bristol BS1 6XN

Tel: 0117 922 4224

Email: bro@bristol-city.gov.uk

www.bristol-city.gov.uk/ccm/content/Leisure-Culture/Museums-Galleries/our-museums-brisols-museums-and-galleries.en

Institution of Civil Engineers

Archives

1 Great George Street,

Westminster,

London SW1P 3AA

Tel: 0171 665 2043

Email: archives@ice.org.uk

www.ice.org.uk/

Institution of Electrical Engineers

Archives Department

Savoy Place

London WC2R 0BL

Tel: 020 7344 8436

Email: archives@iee.org.uk

www.iee.org/TheIEE/Research/Archives/

Institution of Mechanical Engineers

Archive Officer

1 Birdcage Walk,

Westminster

London SW1H 9JJ

Tel: 020 7973 1265

Email: f_philpot@imeche.org.uk

www.imeche.org.uk/ils/archive.asp

London Metropolitan Archives

40 Northampton Road

London EC1R OHB

Tel: 0207 332 3820

Email: ask.lma@cityoflondon.gov.uk

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/leisure_heritage/libraries_archives_museums_galleries/JAS/lma/lma

London Transport Museum

39 Wellington Street

London

WC2E 7BB

Tel: 020 7379 6344

Email: enquiry@ltmuseum.co.uk

www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Modern Records Centre

University of Warwick Library

Coventry

CV4 7AL

Tel: 024 7652 4219

Email: archives@warwick.ac.uk

www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/

(including Trades Union Congress archives 1920-1989)

The National Archives

Ruskin Avenue

Kew

Surrey TW3 4DU

Tel: 0208 876 3444

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

(including the National Register of Archives: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/)

Newham Archives and Local Studies Library

Stratford Library

3 The Grove

London E15 1EL

Tel: 0208 430 6881

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/Services/LibraryDetails/AboutUs/ArchivesAndLocalStudies.htm>

Parliamentary Archives

House of Lords Record Office

London SW1A OPW

Tel: 0207 219 3074

Email: hlro@parliament.uk

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_publications_and_archives/parliamentary_archives.s.cfm

Trades Union Congress Library Collections

University of North London
Holloway Road Learning Centre
236-250, Holloway Road
London N7 6PP
Tel: 020 7133 2260
Email: tuclib@londonmet.ac.uk
www.londonmet.ac.uk/services/sas/library-services/tuc/

***University of Bristol
(for Brunel Family Collection)***

Arts and Social Sciences Library
Tyndall Avenue
Bristol
BS8 1TJ
Tel: 0117 928 8014
Email: special-collections@bristol.ac.uk
www.bris.ac.uk/is/services/specialcollections/brunel.html