



SHELVOKE & DREWRY ENTHUSIASTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 2. Issue No. 51.

Autumn 2023.

From the Editor.

We're back to four pages for this Newsletter but I think there's plenty to interest you. I was delighted to see the slide rule described on page 3. I only knew that SD produced these from the Kaleidoscope book. On page 2 I describe four photos I've received about the remarkable Freighter. There are many other news articles here and again I'm grateful to all those people who send in the information that I'm able to use. I hope you enjoy the Newsletter.

Brian Carpenter Editor 1st September 2023.

THE WAY THINGS WERE IN THE 1950's.



In August Campbell Spence posted in Facebook this delightful photo of an SD 'W' type with Chelsea type body, at work in Broughton Ferry, Dundee, Scotland. Pablo Raybound had found this slide among a number he was researching for other purposes.

It amazed me that a loader would be standing on the refuse, presumably to speed up the loading. The cab of this vehicle appears to have a storage compartment behind the driver since there isn't a glass window. The hooks on the rear door may well have been used for sacks to carry waste paper or perhaps the vehicle carried its own waste bins.

LOOK WHAT I'VE GOT!



Ray Kilby sent in this photo of a printer's block that his father, Tom Kilby, brought home from Shelvoke's for him to play with over 60 years ago. It was used in an advertising brochure for the 'W' type Fore & Aft tipper.



OUT & ABOUT THIS SUMMER.

Paul Nicholls has informed us that his TZ Reg. No. **JNN 463 K** has been displayed at a number of rallies this Summer. The TBN Pakamatic owned by Keighley Bus Museum has also been seen at some events this year.

THOSE AMAZING SD FREIGHTERS.

Four photos have arrived recently of SD Freighter all on solid tyres, and I thought they'd make an interesting page shown together.

PROBABLY THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED.



Nigel Atha sent in this newspaper photo from Shepway Today. With the Title:- **Bin there, done that.**

The text reads:-

The way we were ... this is one of the earliest 'bin lorries', to work on the streets of Folkestone. The photograph was sent to Shepway Today by John Fitch of Sturry whose father John, 'Jack' Fitch, an engineer is pictured.

Jack was employed by the former Shelvoke & Drewry company of Letchworth in Hertfordshire which manufactured commercial vehicles. The original covers on the dustcart were canvas, but were later made of steel sheet.

John says that the dustcart, which was manufactured in 1927, saw many years of service for the former Folkestone Borough Council collecting rubbish from local homes before it fell into 'wrack and ruin.' It was salvaged and re-built by a team of Shelvoke & Drewry apprentices and was entered in the London to Brighton run for commercial vehicles in the 1950's.

A VERY EARLY FREIGHTER.



Brads Ross provided this photo of one of the first Freighters. A raised platform body has been provided to accommodate any customer who already has a standard height loading dock where the low loading height wasn't required.

CLOSE TO HOME.



Martin Blatch shared this photo of a Freighter designated 'Letchworth No. 2'. It is equipped with the early style canvas covers and in all probability replaced a horse drawn cart. Letchworth's Cleansing Departments yard was just a short distance from SD's works in Icknield Way on the opposite side of the road. It must have been pleasing for the company to not only secure the local council as a customer but also to receive a repeat order.

NORTH OF THE BORDER.



Darren Ainsworth sent a link to this photo from the Visit Dunfermline Facebook page. Two operators stand alongside the Freighter which is fitted with twin rear wheels. It's also equipped with 'dustless shutters' which were opened by foot treadles. At the time a lot of the refuse consisted of ash from open fires and when the bins were tipped into the body inevitable a cloud of dust emerged. To some extent the shutter would reduce this. The text on the body appears to encourage householders to burn their vegetable waste to reduce rates.

On the Dunfermline page Charlie Kingour commented:-"The bin lorry at the top was a nightmare to work with. As it filled up, you found yourself throwing the rubbish uphill, out of the bucket. Not easy if you're short. And with nothing to stop it, you often ended up wearing it when it fell back down, as you attempted to fill it right up, to save going to the tip, which you did frequently. You'd be lucky to get a street's worth in there."

Sorry – Your days are numbered my old mate! By the Editor.



I'm finding it very hard to imagine a world in which the horse drawn cart was still a common sight on our roads. But in 1922 when the first SD Freighter appeared a horse drawn dustcart often still collected household refuse. According to Kaleidoscope of Shelvocke & Drewry (to which volume I acknowledge my indebtedness for much of the following information), the newly formed SD company was somewhat surprised when local authorities realised the potential for the Freighter as a refuse carrier.

Through their service inspectors and sales representatives S&D uncovered facts and figures in 1924 & 1925. At the time a horse cost about £80 or £100 to purchase and had a working life of about five years. The Freighter costing roughly £500 however was expected to last at least ten years.

It was known that three people filled about one refuse bin per week, and Tynemouth reported that per head of population between 3.66 cwt and 7.30 cwt of refuse was collected per year. Eastbourne replaced two horses and carts with a driver and one loader by one Freighter with a driver and two loaders and reported a 27% reduction in costs. Torquay calculated that using a Freighter was 31% per load cheaper than using a horse drawn cart, whilst St. Helens experienced a fall in the cost per ton of disposing of refuse of 9% Middlesborough compared the cost of using a Freighter against a Ford TT and disclosed a saving of 21%.

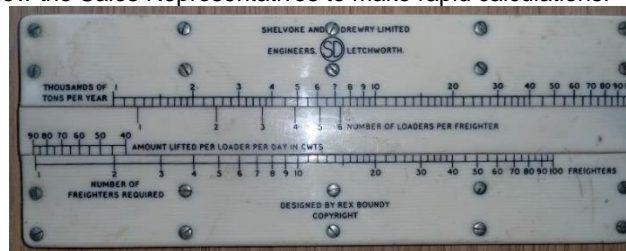
The side loading Freighter didn't supply any compression of the load and Councils such as this example from Stockport encouraged their customers to produce as little refuse as possible.



[The sides of the body made great advertising spaces.]

The SD Sales Representatives must often have been asked about the financial advantages of the Freighter as well as its advantages for driver and loaders. After the sad accidental death of Edward Asquith in 1926, Geoffrey Rackham was promoted to Sales Director and SD's former factory representative in Australia, Rex Boundy, was appointed as Sales Manager.

The task of calculating estimated cost savings was a complicated one and Rex devised a double sided slide rule to allow the Sales Representatives to make rapid calculations.

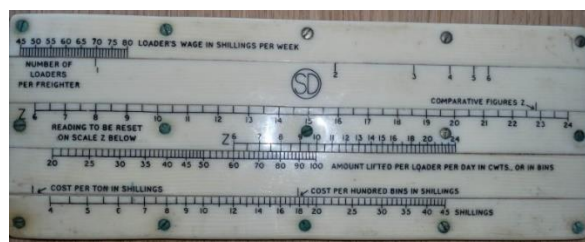


Recently I've had the opportunity to examine one of these slide rules, since in our Facebook Group Paul Lordster posted photos. About thirty years ago Paul found this slide rule on a rubbish tip and had been unable to discover its use until he found us on the Internet.

I imagine these devices were given to each Sales Representative. They will have asked the prospective customer for five statistics:-

- (i) The annual tonnage of refuse collected.
- (ii) The number of loaders used on each Freighter.
- (iii) The weight of refuse in cwts per loader in a day.
- (iv) The loaders' wage in shillings per week
- (v) The number of bins lifted by a loader in a day.

On the front side the refuse in thousands of tons per year (i) was aligned with the number of proposed loaders (ii), then from the lower scale against the amount per loader per day (iii) the number of Freighters required was shown.



The reverse side has two sliding scales (numbered 80B & 80C)

First the top slide is aligned with the number of loaders (ii) against the loaders' wages (iv) and a figure coded as Z is given. On the lower scale the Z code is entered against the amount lifted per loader in cwts (iii). or bins (v). The resulting figure is the cost in shillings per ton or per hundred bins in shillings.

An ingenious device to make the salesman calculations in the days before pocket calculators had been invented.

My thanks for the photos to Peter Johnston for the photo of his replica horse drawn dustcart to Shaun Taylor and to Paul Lordster for the other photos.



I liked this photo of an SPV WY Hydraulic Platform in service in Leicestershire sent in by Alan Warden.

OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO FORMER SD EMPLOYEES.

Freda Tassell

I was saddened to learn via Facebook that Freda Tassell died recently in her sleep peacefully at home at the age of 98. Her nephew, Tony Tassell, the son of Eddie Tassell, who some of you will have known, kindly passed on the news. Freda's funeral took place on 24th July.

Freda came to Letchworth in 1942 at the age of 18 leaving her home in Orsett, near Thurrock in Essex to train as a welder as part of the War effort. She was engaged in welding manifolds and bends for Army trucks. Later she was moved to the Cost Office where she spent the remainder of her working life until she retired in 1987 having run the Cost Office since 1966.

I have passed on our condolences to the family and posted a longer history of Freda's time with the company on the Internet version of the Newsletter.

ALL CHANGE IN ICKNIELD WAY.

I am told that shortly the remaining part of the S&D works in Icknield Way is to be cleared for housing. This will include the demolition of the final office block built on the site. How sad that Ebenezer Howard's vision of a Garden City providing homes for those working in Letchworth's manufacturing industries is steadily losing all the companies that brought wealth to the town.

The Shelvoke & Drewry Enthusiasts' Club Newsletter is published four times a year on 1st March, 1st June, 1st September and 1st December. Items for inclusion may be e-mailed to me at: [pinnerboy\[at\]btinternet.com](mailto:pinnerboy[at]btinternet.com)

Next Issue :- 1st December 2023 Winter Issue.



Richard Dallimore, the proprietor of N'Tastic Scale Models, has announced that he has added the 'W' type Fore & Aft Tipper to his range of 3D printed resin models in N gauge (1/148). The model comes unpainted and in five sections. Richard has also told me that he intends to add other SD vehicles to this range.



Yet another photo has been posted of the 1970 TBN Fore & Aft tipper Reg. No. GWJ 867 J preserved by Sheffield City Council in the 1980's. Attempts to contact the Council about the future of this vehicle, which is stored in an open yard, have failed once more.