

Family history at London Transport Museum

Introduction

This information sheet is for family historians interested in researching ancestors who have connections with public transport in London. Many thousands of people have been employed across the different modes of transport over the years, but relatively few records have survived since there is no statutory requirement to keep them beyond a few years.

The overview below, and step-by-step guide to sources, is designed to help you assess whether the Museum has any records related to your research. If relevant information is found, it may be possible to provide copies or a transcript of the entry. Each request is dealt with on a case by case basis, depending on the condition of the original records.

Sources at London Transport Museum

Staff magazines

From 1913 to the present day, the main source of information for individual staff members is our collection of staff magazines. The name and format of the magazines has changed over time, but the kind of information they contain remains fairly constant. Brief references to individual staff might typically be found in notices of retirement, obituaries, or reports on social activities. During the years of the two world wars references may also be made to individuals serving in the forces.

An index to staff mentioned in the magazines is in progress at the Museum. However, since not all the magazines have been covered we are happy to check a specific date if enquirers know when a retirement or other significant event occurred. Alternatively you are welcome to make an appointment to visit our Library and look at the magazines yourself. From past experience we know that browsing through the magazines is a very worthwhile activity as it provides a very vivid introduction to the working life of people in the organisation, even if no specific references are found to family members. Information about visiting the Library is on our website at www.ltmuseum.co.uk/collections/78.aspx

Staff registers

The Museum also holds a number of staff registers and war memorials. Details of these and other records which may be relevant to your research are also contained in information sheets produced by the Transport for London Group Archives, see www.tfl.gov.uk/foi/889.aspx#Information_sheets.

London County Council Tramways

Record of service in the Great War 1914-1918 by members of the Council's staff (1922)

A copy of this book was given to all LCC staff who served in the war or their next of kin. It gives brief details of their war service, including tramways staff.

London Road Car Company

Discipline register 1904-1908

London Tramways Company

Staff register c.1890

Metropolitan Railway

List of officers and staff in receipt of £200 per annum and upwards, c.1899

Register of female staff c.1915-1920

War memorials

Apart from the Elmers End memorial, which is in the Museum at Covent Garden, the memorials are in the collection at our Acton store. Please contact the Duty Curator at the Museum to enquire about access:

World War I Audit Office Staff Memorial Plaque
LTM Inventory Reference 1997/13161

World War I Surveyors Department, London General Omnibus Company,
Staff Memorial Plaque
LTM Inventory Reference 1996/2976

World War I T.O.T. (Train Omnibus Tram) roll of honour: soldiers and sailors from the T.O.T. services who have laid down their lives or have suffered honourable wounds in the nation's defence, 1914-16.

The Museum compiled this list from issues of the Underground Group staff magazine, 'News of T.O.T.'. The first list was published as a supplement to the magazine in March 1916 and included casualties since 1914. The last list was published in December 1916. The practice of publishing casualty lists appears to have stopped after that date.

World War II Elmers End Bus Garage, Memorial Plaque
LTM Inventory Reference 2000/8161

This commemorates and lists the names of ten London Transport staff who were killed on 18 July 1944 when the garage was directly hit by a German V1 flying bomb. The memorial is on display in the gallery dedicated to 'London's transport at war'.

World War II 44th Battalion, City of London, Home Guard, LPTB' Memorial Plaque
LTM Inventory Reference 1996/113

World War II 'London Transport Workers Memorial Laboratory' Memorial Plaque
LTM Inventory Reference 2000/15806

This is a section of the façade from Manor House Hospital, Golders Green c.1950.

Sources at Transport for London Group Archives

Transport for London Group Archives hold the official records of Transport for London (TfL), London Transport and other predecessor companies.

An information sheet on staff records and family history is published on the Transport for London website and includes sources available at TfL Archives and elsewhere, including the Museum. Contact details, copies of information sheets and other information about the Archives are on the TfL website at www.tfl.gov.uk/foi/889.aspx.

Railway staff – main line

Sometimes we are asked for information, but it turns out the ancestor worked for other companies, often on main line railways. The National Railway Museum does not hold staff records, but has a useful page of advice on their website at <http://www.nrm.org.uk/research/railwayrelatives.asp>

Cab and taxi drivers

Neither the Museum nor TfL Archives holds any records for taxi drivers. London Metropolitan Archives has produced an information leaflet number 12 'Vehicle registration and licensing' which usefully gathers together the available information.

http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Leisure_and_culture/Records_and_archives/Visitor_information/free_information_leaflets.htm

The Public Carriage Office <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/modesoftransport/1632.aspx> is responsible for all matters to do with current licensing of taxi and private hire services.

Museum Library

The Museum Library <http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/collections/80.aspx> holds general books on family history research and sources relating to specific groups of transport workers. When no information can be found about specific individuals, a visit to the Library can be useful to find out general information about the working lives of people on all modes of public transport in London. To make an appointment ring +44 (0)20 7565 7280.

Published sources

Tracing your ancestors in the National Archives / Amanda Bevan (2006)

My ancestors were Thames watermen : a guide to tracing your Thames watermen and lightermen ancestors / by James W. Legon (2006)

Was your grandfather a railwayman : a directory of records relating to staff employed by railways ... / compiled by Tom Richards (2002)

Railway records : a guide to sources / Cliff Edwards, Public Record Office (2001)

Railway ancestors : a guide to the staff records of the railway companies of England and Wales 1822-1947 / David T. Hawkings (1995)

