

## Transport *for* London Group Archive

No 3

### Documentary Sources for World War Two

#### Introduction

London Transport (LT) played a crucial role in the Home Front of WW2. The transport system operated whilst sustaining severe damage through enemy bombardment. Much of the correspondence between LT and the Government refers to the financial and material resources available. Deep level shelters were created and made available not only for the general public but also munitions factories and government agencies. LT's 'Works' (e.g. Acton Works), which were usually used for the production and maintenance of rolling stock continued to do this, but also formed munitions factories - including forming a major part the London Aircraft Production. The LT fleet of buses and coaches were used for the mobilisation of troops, particularly when the American troops entered the war - some being converted to ambulances.

Staffing was drastically altered. Many staff joined the Armed Forces, and served at home in the 84<sup>th</sup> (LT) Anti-aircraft regiment. Those who remained working in London as 'reserved personnel' took on many additional responsibilities and found themselves working alongside increasing numbers of women who filled the vacancies - which in turn altered the nature of labour records such as Trade Union agreements, Rules and Regulations, Training and Personnel. By 1942 the total number of staff was 76,263 of which some 15,500 were women (of which 11,500 were employed to release men for the Services). The total of staff employed with the Services was 20,448. Throughout the War, London Transport suffered heavy losses in London as well as on active service. In the 1944 Annual Accounts & Reports, the total from the outbreak of hostilities were: 548 staff killed whilst on active service, 463 prisoners of war; 179 killed and 1,609 injured whilst working for the Board with an additional 222 killed and 907 were injured whilst off duty. The high loss of staff due to the Blitz indicates the devastation London Transport faced in the War and the difficulties faced in retaining services. By 1942, 2 officers and 44 staff had been awarded honours by the King. By 1944 The total was 74, including 29 appearing in the New Years Honours Lists.

## Records at Transport for London Archives

The following records series (this is not a comprehensive list) give detailed information about LT in WW2:

LT9	84 <sup>th</sup> (LT) Anti-aircraft regiment records	18 items
LT12	Pick's Vice Chairman's records	159 items
LT231	Ashfield's Chairman's records	500 items
LT232	Grainger's records	78 items
LT233	L C Hawkins' records	202 items
LT180, LT350	London Aircraft Production records	14 items
A0111, A0115		
A0116	Parliamentary records	170 items
LT234	Engineer-in-Chief records	165 items
S94/174	Home Guard records	12 items

## Records available at other repositories (see leaflet no. 1 for addresses)

1. **London Metropolitan Archives** holds L.P.T.B. Board Minutes and Papers and records of London wide authorities for the war years.
2. The **Public Record Office** holds London Transport records that were not transferred to London Transport in 1968. In addition it holds government records of transport related bodies, such as the Ministry of Transport and the War Office with whom LT has close links during wartime.
3. **London's Transport Museum** Library holds a wide selection of books, periodicals and articles pertaining to London, its history and its transport. Of particular interest are the Annual Reports, staff magazines and Organisational Circulars for the war period. The Photograph Library has one of the foremost collections of images of London. For wartime this includes operational photographs of damage which had occurred to the system, as well as photographs which documented LT's contribution to the war effort including many of staff activities. In addition, the Museum holds LT's collection of posters, photographs, drawings and ephemera (maps, rule books, timetables, etc). For war time this includes publicity encouraging a more efficient use of the tube, as well as information such as directions for the blackout and instructions for shelterers.
4. The **National Railway Museum** at York holds a significant series of collections, including printed books, periodicals, timetables; Government publications, photographs, posters, and an Archive (mainly technical material including correspondence and drawings).