

An early integrated transport system ?

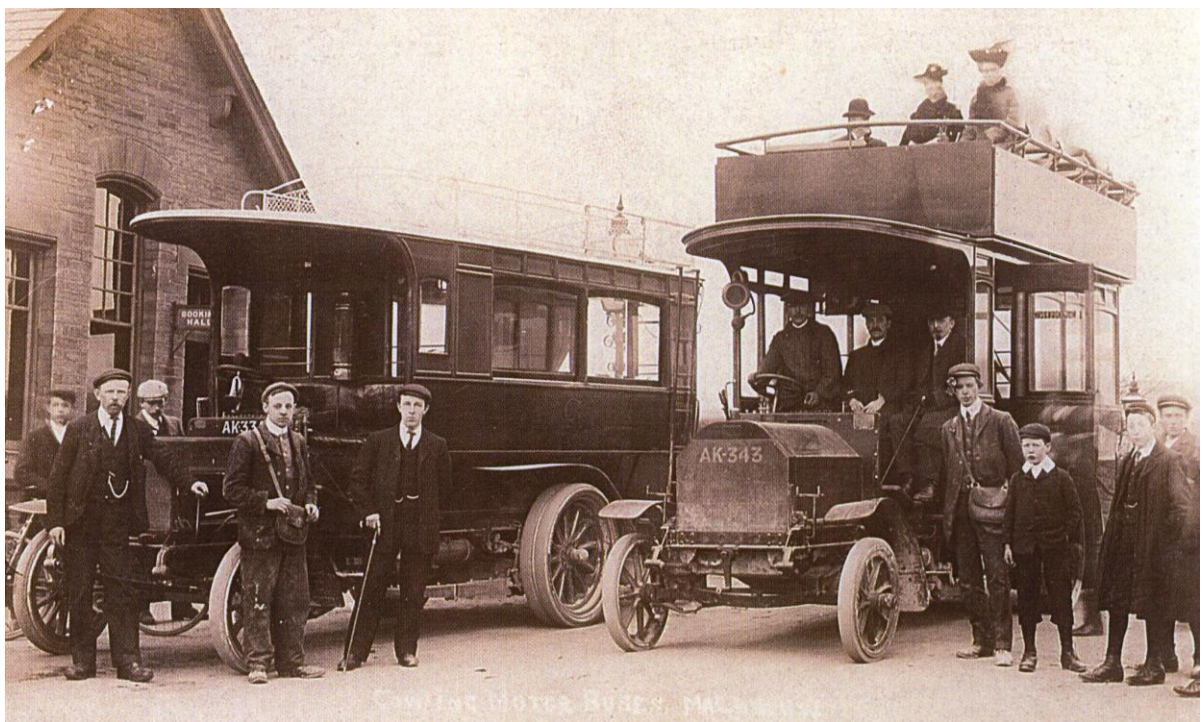
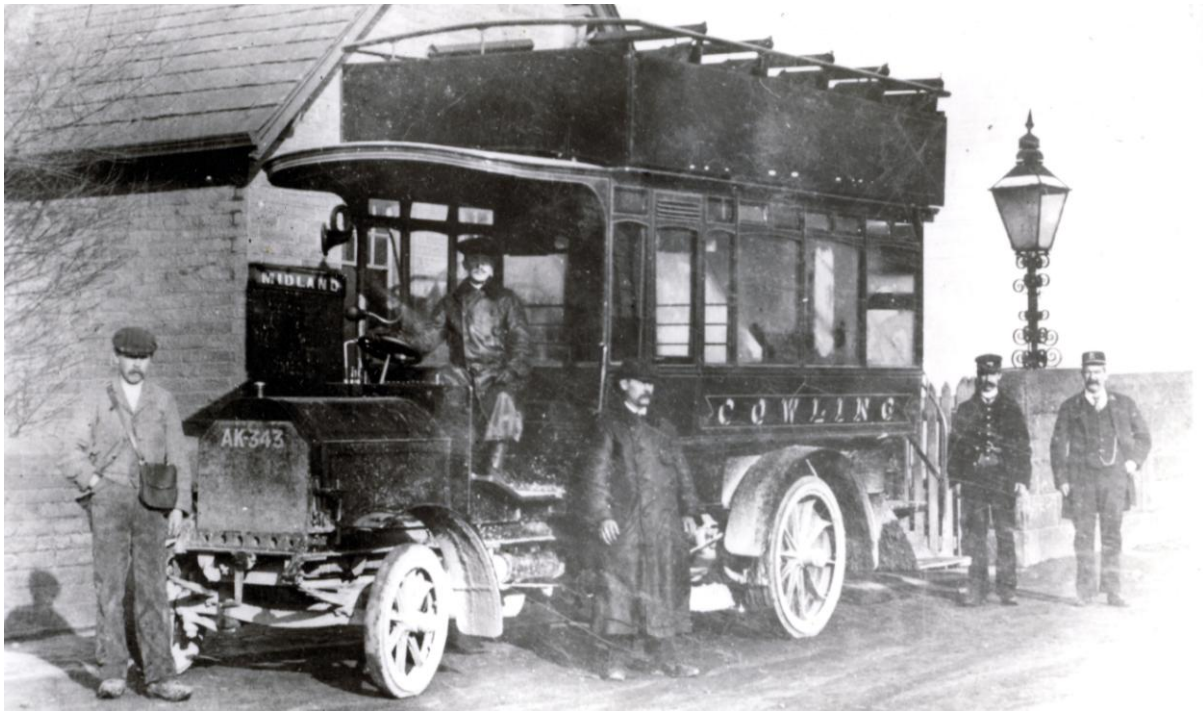
*I took a ferry to the highway
Then I drove to a pontoon plane
I took a plane to a taxi
And a taxi to a train*

“Black Crow” - Joni Mitchell

I suppose, if you're as famous as Joni Mitchell, you might arrange for the various modes of transport you need for your journey to be ready and waiting for you at the various stopping points; but the best the rest can hope for is that we're not left waiting in the rain too long for the bus – if, indeed, there is a bus.

In the early 20th century, if you were travelling from Cowling, there was certainly a bus that would get to and from Kildwick railway station, in Station Road.





The first local bus, believed to be the first bus in the north of England, was bought in London in 1905 by Ezra Laycock, and put into service on a route between Cowling and Kildwick station the following year.

At least one of these early buses could handle long-distance travellers. As shown in the photograph, the upper deck of AK 335 was designed to hold luggage, rather than providing seating.

By this time the Midland Railway was running regular services between Skipton and Bradford or Leeds, with some connections to London St. Pancras.

An 1896 railway timetable shows the following week-day departures from Kildwick (8.00am to 6.30pm).

To Skipton	8.14, 9.17, 10.12, 12.31, 13.56, 14.49, 16.39, 17.15, 17.50, 18.10, 18.24
To Bradford, etc	8.10, 8.36, 9.25, 10.00, 11.05, 12.21, 13.40, 14.29, 15.25, 16.10, 17.02, 17.36, 18.22

A 1906 timetable for the Cowling bus service shows arrivals at and departures from Kildwick at the following times. (Only the departure times from Cowling are actually provided; the journey time appears to have been around 20 minutes, and that has been used to provide the arrival time at Kildwick.)

arr. Kildwick	8.05, 9.50, 13.15, 16.05, 18.10
dep. Kildwick	8.10, 10.00, 13.40, 16.40, 18.40

Not a bad service, really.

Acknowledgements

Photographs of buses were provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive and also by Pauline Raw, who supplied information about Ezra Laycock.

The 1896 railway timetable and the 1906 bus timetable were provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive.