

MONTGOMERY MOTOR Company Limited (84928) 11 Lincoln Road PETERBOROUGH

The Watch Committee of Peterborough City Council granted a Hackney Carriage Licence to the Montgomery Motor Company on 30th May 1905 for a Motor Omnibus No.90 licensed to carry eleven passengers. It is, however, extremely doubtful that the Montgomery Company either ever intended to operate buses or did so in practise.

This paper should be read in conjunction with NN-PE5/PE5A concerning Peterborough Motor 'Bus Companies.

It would appear that James Montgomery of 7 All Saints Road, Peterborough was a Motor Engineer who had for some time traded as the Montgomery Motor Company based at 11 Lincoln Road, Peterborough. By 1905 a number of separate strands were coming together in Peterborough involving the decline of the horse buses, the ascendancy of the trams, the development of the motor bus in other parts of the Country and the enthusiasm to develop a new type of motor chassis by a local engineering company.

The association of John Goode of 4 Cross Street, Peterborough, described as a Merchant, together with James Montgomery aforesaid and Alderman Daniel Redhead, Chairman of the Omnibus & Carriage Company Ltd (NN-PE6A) led to the formation of the Montgomery Motor Company Ltd, the objects of which were to take over as a going concern the business of manufacturers and repairers of and dealers in every description of motor conveyances etc hitherto carried on by James Montgomery.

Thus the Montgomery Motor Co Ltd was incorporated on 14th June 1905 with an initial nominal capital of £3,000 divided into 3,000 Shares of £1 each and increased to £4,000 on 14th November 1905 by the addition of 1,000 Shares.

The seven Subscriber who each took one Share were as follows:-

James Montgomery, 7 All Saints Road, Peterborough - Motor Engineer

Emily Elizabeth Montgomery, 7 All Saints Road, Peterborough - Married Woman

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John Goode, 4 Cross Street, Peterborough - Merchant
Edwin Scott Anderson, 123 Cromwell Road, Peterborough - Merchant
Mary Teresa Emily Goode, Gazeley Hall, Farcet
Frank Owen Goode, Gazeley Hall, Farcet - Farmer
Bernard Goode, Gazeley Hall, Farcet - Cattle Salesman

By the end of November 1905 some 3,200 Shares had been allotted, all but 800 for considerations other than cash. The Shareholders were:-

John Goode	1201 Shares
James Montgomery	701 Shares
Daniel H Redhead	700 Shares
Bernard Goode	401 Shares
Edwin Scott Anderson	101 Shares
Edward Cuthbert Little	93 Shares
Mary Teresa Goode	1 Share
Frank Owen Goode	1 Share
Emily Elizabeth Montgomery	<u>1 Share</u>
	<u>3200 Shares</u>

The Directors were John Goode, James Montgomery, Daniel Redhead and Edward Little who was Secretary and also a Shareholder in the Peterborough Omnibus & Carriage Co Ltd.

At this point we leave the Montgomery Motor Co Ltd and move to Messrs Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd of Westwood Works, Peterborough who had moved to the City from London in 1903. This well-known engineering company developed into Baker Perkins Ltd and should not be confused with the other famous Peterborough company of Perkins Engines Ltd which was not founded until 1932. Messrs Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd in 1905 decided to build a motor bus chassis based on principles not previously applied to the motor manufacturing industry which was in its infancy.

The vehicle was called the "Mercial" and the principle underlying its design was that the propelling gear comprising the engine, clutch, gearbox, rear axle and driving wheels should be contained in a unit separate from the main chassis frame. This would enable the swift removal of the main driving parts which could simply be replaced by a duplicate set and thus minimise down time of the vehicle. The faulty unit could then be returned to the manufacturers for repair by staff skilled and with the right machinery to undertake such work

For a more detailed explanation of the perceived virtues of the Mercial chassis a leaflet produced by Messrs Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd has survived and is reproduced on pages 3 to 6 by courtesy of the Baker Perkins Historical Society.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-MO1A

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Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins, Ltd.

“Mercial” Chassis

— FOR —
DELIVERY VANS



HEAD OFFICE:

Westwood Works, Peterborough.

BRANCHES:

LONDON, MANCHESTER, BRISTOL.

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WERNER, PFLEIDERER & PERKINS, LTD.,

General Description of the "Mercial" Chassis.

THE "Mercial" scheme for Motor Chassis does not arise from a mere desire to produce something distinctive and original, but is the outcome of close reasoning which was induced by a careful study of all the difficulties, drawbacks and causes of breakdown which are so frequent with Chassis of hitherto accepted design. Early in this process of reasoning it became clear that conditions must be laid down which would ensure each necessary component of the driving gear being subject *only* to such strains as it is designed to bear, that dirt and any foreign matter must be rigidly excluded far more than has hitherto been the case, and that if the further condition of perfect automatic lubrication were realized there should be no difficulty in ensuring that the whole of the propelling gear being capable of remaining at work for long periods, without overhaul or renewal of parts. It was also clear that provision must be made for dealing with the legitimate wear and tear in such a manner that the cost could be kept down to the narrowest limits. As no Car or Chassis is made which fulfils these conditions it became necessary to proceed on lines entirely novel. The condition last named made it desirable that the propelling parts should be capable of being detached *in toto* from the Chassis in such a manner that it formed a self-contained machine which could be packed up and sent to the makers for refit in a single case at ordinary goods rate, so that it could be dealt with in the establishment where all the tools, jigs, methods and men existed for doing the work on the cheapest and most efficient lines possible. It became clear that this could be done in such a manner that a duplicate set of gear could be substituted for the damaged or worn out set in a very

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little time, thus leaving the Chassis proper within the body, &c., on the road and earning revenue. Dealing with the problem in this manner it appeared feasible to ensure conditions which would make a mileage possible hitherto never attempted, provided always that the gear could remain undisturbed, and that the false ideal of accessibility, which carries with it more or less incompetent interference of the gear were abolished. Out of these considerations the present "Mercial" Chassis has been evolved with the following leading features:

The carriage under-frame has no back wheels, but carries the front wheels with steering gear, control levers, petrol and oil tanks, the body, and all the usual appurtenances. All these parts are in no way delicate or complex and do not call for any really skilled labour for their maintenance in proper working order. Their care requires nothing more technical than is involved in the upkeep of an ordinary horse-drawn vehicle. On the other hand the whole of the propelling gear is arranged as one self-contained machine, consisting of engine and all its parts, the clutch, the speed changing and transmission gear, the back axle with differential and live axle drive to the rear driving wheels which are one with the propelling machine. The carriage under-frame is fitted with springs which rest upon and are attached to the back-axle portion of the propelling machine, while the front end of the latter is suspended from the carriage under-frame. These suspension and backspring connections are of a simple kind which can be attached or detached by unskilled labour, and the removal of the propelling machine from the under-frame is a very simple matter. Flexible hose connections are provided for coupling the oil and petrol tanks to the propelling machine. The actual tests have proved that all the aims here set forth have been realized, and that the arrangements described also ensure a Chassis which runs more sweetly and silently and is freer from vibration than any where the engine and gear are mounted upon, and therefore form part of the carriage under-frame. All these parts of the propelling machine are designed and constructed with a view to being safely left in the hands of an

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ordinary driver, and do not call for a mechanic for their proper handling. The chief advantages from a user's point of view are:

Greatly reduced running expenses and increased earning power arising from

- (1) Long mileage without wear or repairs to machine.
- (2) Freedom from breakdown.
- (3) No call for specially-trained driver mechanics.
- (4) No call for large repair-shop outlay and staff where many are in use, or local garage repair bills in case of a lesser number.
- (5) In case of wear or damage to propelling machine substitution by an intact set.
- (6) Extremely silent and vibrationless Chassis.
- (7) Low cost of overhaul of the propelling machine, which would be subjected to full tests before being returned in perfect working order.
- (8) Practically absolute freedom from liability to side slip.



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We now return to the Montgomery Motor Company Limited. In May 1905 John Goode entered into negotiations with Messrs Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd the manufacturers of the "Mercial" Motor Bus Chassis under letters patent for the sale to him of their entire output on the terms below:

"Peterborough, 17th May 1905.

John Goode Esq, Farcet, Peterborough.

Dear Sir,

Re Mercial Chassis

We confirm our various conversations with you and the arrangement that in consideration of your arranging that our Motor Chassis shall be the Chassis used by the Peterborough Motors Ltd and of you giving us the benefit of the outlet you create and custom you obtain from other various sources, we will give you the first call in our output of Bus Chassis at the prices already mentioned in quotations and specifications subject to the trade allowance to be hereafter fixed, according to the number of Bus Chassis ordered at one time, or to any alterations which may subsequently be agreed upon between us, it is also agreed that any enquiries for Motor Bus Chassis which we may receive from other sources shall be referred to you.

Yours truly,
Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd."

Thus the above option passed from John Goode to the Montgomery Motor Company Ltd of which Goode and Montgomery were appointed Managing Directors. John Goode's duties appertained to the selling of the products of the Company whilst James Montgomery was responsible for the management of the Works.

It will be noted that Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd were the manufacturers of the Mercial chassis whilst the Montgomery Motor Company constructed the bodywork. At the time of the formation of the Company one of its assets was listed as a Bus Body for the Peterborough Motor Bus Co. - £130.

The Motor Omnibus carrying Hackney Carriage Licence No.90 mentioned in the opening paragraph of this paper was presumably one of the three Mercial chassis built. The body fitted to the vehicle illustrated on the Mercial leaflet is that of a bus rather than a van which Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd were promoting at the time. The leaflet was probably issued after the failure of the chassis to prove satisfactory as a bus when it was thought that it might serve a lesser role as a delivery vehicle. In the end Peterborough tradesmen preferred to stick with the horse-drawn vehicles to which they were used.

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Such a promising start sadly did not have a happy ending. With only three Mercial chassis being built and none ending up as usable buses, the Author surmises that they were not powerful enough for a passenger vehicle carrying eleven, sixteen or even more people. Unfortunately there seem to be no surviving reports of any road tests that might give an indication of the failure of the project.

On 2nd September 1906 Daniel Redhead, now Chairman of the Company, appointed John Rich Smart of Queen Street, Peterborough, Chartered Accountant as Receiver of the Company from 1st January 1907. The Company was finally wound up on 28th May 1912. It is interesting to note that the Receiver was successful in getting a payment of £650 from Werner, Pfeleiderer & Perkins Ltd as a settlement of their liability.