

APR 1974

The following is an extract from a speech made by the late Alderman R.W.Thomas at a Transport gathering at Cardiff in 1930:-

"Cowbridge is a very ancient town, also the place of my birth and I feel very proud of being the Mayor for this year. As we are interested with transport I should like to deal briefly with the important part Cowbridge played. Records show that there were two horse-passenger coach services between Cardiff and Swansea. One was owned by Mr Briggs and the other by Mr Christopher Bradley of the Bear Inn. The fare charged was 1/6d. per mile. But as there were no Traffic Commissioners in those days cutting the price of fares was usual. Mr Christopher Bradley reduced his fare to 1/0d. per mile. For doing this he was given notice to quit the Bear Inn. He then had the following notice posted along the route:-

"Christopher Bradley begs leave to return thanks to his friends and public for their liberal support he has received during 18 years at the Bear Inn and since quitting begs to inform friends and public that he will continue his business from his own house. He has fitted up some comfortable rooms as accommodation for the ladies and gentlemen who may honour him with their support, to wait in while the horses are being changed. Free Ale and cakes also provided. Please note that Christopher Bradley is the only person running regularly at 1/0d. per mile."

"The last of these coaches ran in 1855, but in that year a Railway Company was formed in Cowbridge, to build a line to connect with the Great Western Railway at Llantrisant, which had just been opened. It was called the Cowbridge Railway Company and their rolling stock consisted of two puffing engines and two coaches. This line was opened in May 1856 and the day was declared a general holiday. The Aldermen and Councillors were invited to a free ride on the first trip to Llantrisant. However after 1½ miles out from Cowbridge the engine broke down and they had to get the other engine along to push from the back of the coaches. This company was eventually bought by the Taff Vale Railway Company.

In the year 1918, Mr Maddox of Cowbridge brought the first bus to Cowbridge. It was a second hand Double-deck bus, with solid rubber tyres, which he had purchased in London. The top deck was removed and the vehicle was converted into a single-deck bus.

The following year the South Wales Commercial Motors Limited put vehicles on the road. Competition was very keen with the Cowbridge buses leaving the Town Hall a few minutes before the South Wales Commercial Motors were due to leave. There was great excitement in the Borough when the first of the buses arrived from Cardiff.

Over an hour before, people began to assemble outside the Town Hall where the General Manager of the Company had invited the Mayor and Councillors to inspect the bus after the Mayor had declared the service open."