

Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway

The Buses

CHORLEY, WHITTLE LE WOODS
AND BAMBER BRIDGE

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AND BAMBER BRIDGE.

B-2084

1907 - 1911



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Cover Illustration: Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway's No. 1 (B2084), a 1907 Milnes-Daimler with 34-seat bodywork on the Chorley service. (LTHS collection).

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The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (L&YR) had first experimented with road transport in 1901 when a Thornycroft steam wagon had been purchased, but by 1906 with a number of other railway companies operating bus services, albeit without legal powers to do so, the Company gave the General Manager the go ahead to purchase four motor omnibuses with which to commence feeder services, although in the event only three were acquired.

On 24th April 1907 the L&YR commenced a service operating between Blundellsands and Thornton via Crosby Station. Two Milnes-Daimlers had been purchased at a cost of £900 each for the service. The chassis and bodies were presumably delivered separately as it is reported that the bodies were fitted at the L&YR's Newton Heath loco works. Liveried in red with cream upper deck and lined out in light brown, they seated 34 passengers.

Sadly for the L&YR the service was not a success and shortly afterwards one of the Milnes-Daimlers was transferred to Chorley, where the L&YR had commenced another feeder service between Chorley and Bamber Bridge, via Clayton-le-Woods and Whittle-le-Woods for which another vehicle, a 36hp Commer, had been purchased. Starting on the 9th October 1907 this service fared no better than the first, partly due to the fact that the times of operation were not publicised and were only obtainable from the Stationmaster at Chorley!

By the 9th November 1907 the service between Blundellsands and Thornton had

ceased and the remaining Milnes-Daimler bus was also sent to Chorley, where the service had begun to prosper. The vehicles were maintained at Horwich Railway Works and garaged at Friday Street in Chorley, using an open-sided shed from Blundellsands, which had been dismantled and re-erected there. Consisting of disused carriage roofs supported by timber uprights it did not afford much protection from the elements which led to problems starting the buses during winter months and led to delays in the service.

Overloading was a persistent problem, with vehicles sometimes carrying up to double their capacity and, coupled with the poor state of the roads at the time, the buses suffered endless mechanical problems, which affected their reliability. The L&YR management were indecisive about continuing their operation to such an extent that, on the 31st January 1911, the service ceased, thus bringing to an end the L&YR's brief flirtation with the motorbus, although the official reason for its demise was that the service was unprofitable.

Bus Fleet List 1907-1911

This listing is in the format - Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

1907

**1-2; B2084-85; Milnes-Daimler 24hp; ? ; ? ; O18/16RO
3; B2156; Commer 36hp; ? ; ? ; O18/16RO**

Withdrawn 1911 (1-3).



No. 1 (B2084), a 1907 Milnes-Daimler, originally employed on the Blundellsands and Crosby route as shown here. It was transferred to the Chorley route in November 1907 when the Blundellsands route ceased. (courtesy Pennine Heritage/Atack Family collection).



The second of the Milnes-Daimlers was No. 2 (B2085), seen here on the Chorley route after it was transferred there in 1907. (courtesy Pennine Heritage/Atack Family collection).



No. 3 (B2156) was purchased to support the Milnes-Daimlers on the Chorley route to help alleviate overloading. It was a Commer 36hp chassis seating 34 passengers. After the service ceased it became a lorry of the L&YR. (courtesy Pennine Heritage/Atack Family collection).

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