

Mr. Drewry and the Derby Wagons.

By H. S. TWELLS.

ON New Year's day seventeen hundred and thirty-two Mr. Samuel Drewry, of the Market Place, Derby, conferred a benefit upon all students of Derbyshire history for on that day, the twenty-fifth of March, he published the first number of the Derby Mercury.

From the files of the Mercury one may learn something of footpads or foreign affairs, of ministerial changes and the 'cockings' at the Angel by Gaol Bridge. They record the disastrous bankruptcy of John Heath and the notable mayoralty of Henry Flint. One may learn from them where an ass in milk was to be bought, who sold bottled Matlock Water in Derby's streets, of Derby's Spa or the attractions of the Kedleston Bath, why it is Exeter Bridge and why the Rodney Yard.

In these files are chronicled races, balls, assizes, transportations, hangings, including that one when the Methodists accompanying the prisoner in the cart sang "Come, let us raise our cheerful Song," just before he was turned off.

The Mercury lets us see Doctor Johnson's Ashbourne friend, Doctor Taylor, saving the Derbyshire cheese, which lay at Willington, waiting transit by water to Gainsborough and by sea to London, from a hungry, marauding mob but none of these happenings provide my theme.

I write of the 'Derby Wagons' and set before my readers what the Mercury contains concerning them from the year 1732 until the end of the Century.

My first extract is dated Dec. 27, 1733 for on that date there appeared the following advertisement:

“ These are to Certify

That George Paschall, now the old Derby carrier to London, sends a Waggon from his House adjoining to the Red-Lyon Inn in Derby every Monday and is at the Bull and Mouth Inn near Aldersgate, London every Saturday: Also sets out again every Monday from thence and is at his house every Friday or Saturday following. Note: That those are the days of setting out and coming in, for the Winter season and all Persons that are disposed to Travel by the said Waggon shall have Handsome Usage; also those that have Goods or Parcels of any kind to send or have brought shall be kindly received and well used: He also returns money to and from London but if any be put into Parcels unknown to him or without Notice given to his Bookeepers thereof, he will not be accountable for any such money lost.”

At what date Derby and Derbyshire began to send and receive their necessities by means of wheeled transport is hard to say. Strings of pack horses, jags as they were called, were in use until the end of the XVIII century in the more backward parts of the county, like Buxton: an Ashbourne carrier had been paid four shillings in Stuart times for bringing a barrel of oysters from London to Haddon and the carriers' trade was known to Shakespeare as every reader of Henry the fourth will remember, but we must be content with the knowledge that in 1733 Mr. Paschall was the 'old' Derby carrier. Road travel was still in a very crude and undeveloped shape. No coach in all England had springs for another twenty years and it was as long before there was direct communication between London and Manchester at more than walking pace. It is true private men of wealth rode in their own coaches as did Samuel Pepys Esq., the Secretary to the

Navy and as one Derby lady at least did for in September, 1735 the Mercury advertises for sale

“A pair of good Seasoned Coach Horses well marked lately belonging to Madam Chambers deceas'd.” Madam Chambers deserves remembrance for much more than her ‘able’ coach horses for it was her daughter and heiress that married the Earl of Exeter; it was Madame Chambers’ house in ‘the Full Street’ that became the Exeter House that sheltered Prince Charles Edward in the ‘45 and through Madame Chambers Derby school had as a scholar a member of that branch of the Cecil family to whom we are indebted for the name of Exeter bridge.

Mr. Paschall was not the only Derby carrier travelling to London and back for in May of the year 1734, when the summer season had begun, the citizens of Derby read:

“This is to give Notice

That the Derby Waggon begins on Tuesday the 14th of May, 1734, Sets out from the White Hart Inn at Derby every Tuesday morning and comes to the White Hart Inn in Friday Street, London on Saturday following and goes out every Monday morning at Ten o'clock. In the Winter sets out from Derby every Monday morning at ten o'clock, carries Goods and Passengers to Loughborough, Leicester, Market Harborough and places adjacent.

Performed (if God permit)

by Thomas and Henry Partridge.

N.B. They will not be accountable for any Money, Plate, Jewels, Watches, Rings or Writings packed in Boxes or Parcels etc. if lost. Glass and China if broke, unless entered as such that Proper Care may be taken of them and the same paid for accordingly.”

Writings, by the way, in mid-Victorian as well as early Georgian days had no connection with odes or sonnets, but were deeds, leases, mortgages.

The time taken by the Partridges was a little less than Paschalls but by the middle of May the roads would be a little drier, a little less 'foundrous.' The Partridges advertisement utters the constant complaint of the carriers, as of the coach proprietors after them, for the public were never content to declare and pay for the transit of coin. The ways and means of evasion were never ending: Mrs. Langley, an Ashbourne auditor of Doctor Johnson, for instance, sewed her guineas into the left hand lapel of the home made waistcoat she sent her ward, bound apprentice in London town.

Precautions such as this were perhaps natural and it was seemly that the devout should pray for all those who travel by land and by water for English roads were infested in the days of George the second by many ruffians, often cowardly ruffians too as Mr. Drewry shows by a statement he made in July of the year 1741 as follows:

"On Saturday Morning about two o'clock the Derbyshire Waggon, which inns at the Bell in Woodstreet, was robbed by two footpads on Finchley Common. They took from the Waggoner about 7/- who making a stout Resistance they stabbed him in three places in the back, each about two inches deep and cut the Sinews of his neck so that his Head lay on his Shoulder: after which the Villains made off: Some Higglers soon after passing that Way took up the Waggoner and carried him to Finchley but his Life is Despaired of."

This same year the Mercury gives us two more references to the Derby, Loughborough and Leicester Wagons but save that we learn that the first day's journey ended at the Cross Keys, Loughborough and the next at the White Horse, Leicester and that the firms were Clark and Hackett and Farrow and Berresford these two references may be passed by. An important cut in the time table was at hand, however, for a year later we read:

“ The Derby Flying Waggon sets out from the Wheat Sheaf, Derby, early every Wednesday morning and will be at the Bell Inn in Wood St. early on the Saturday following and sets out again from the said Bell Inn every Monday morning and will be at the Wheat Sheaf Inn in Derby every Thursday Evening and carries Goods and Passengers to and from London.”

Then follows the pious hope of performance by Clark and Hackett together with the ever recurrent warning against the sending of undeclared valuables and the advertisement concludes:

“ Gentlemen and Tradesmen are desired to send their Goods into the Bell Inn in Wood St. early on Monday morning the Stage being performed in so short a time.

Note. The said William Clark and John Hackett hath no Waggon at the White Hart Inn at Derby.”

The haste of the journey is very properly dwelt upon for the distance from London to Derby is a hundred and twenty seven miles and was covered in seventy odd hours. True an extra half day was taken when the winter season arrived. This difference between the two seasons was recognized by the authorities. The regulation of prices to be charged by carriers had been entrusted by an act made in the third year of King William and Queen Mary to the Justices of the Peace throughout the Realm of England and Dominion of Wales, who were required at their next General or Quarter Sessions after Easter Day to assess the rates and prices of all land carriage of goods brought into or carried from their respective jurisdictions by every common waggoner or carrier, who was debarred from charging more than these same rates, under forfeiture of £5 to the use of the party aggrieved.

Our Derbyshire rulers divided the year from Lady Day to Michaelmas and Michaelmas to Lady Day, following in spite of their sound Protestantism the festivals of the

Church and allowed an increased price to be charged during the winter season. Perhaps now I have mentioned our county's rulers I had better bring before my readers the serious aspersions these same potentates cast upon the characters of our common carriers. This then is the indictment:

“ Derby Nov. 14th, 1751.

Whereas the Game in this County, is Daily destroyed by common Poachers, and loose Idle People, in so notorious a manner, that even Gentlemen of the largest Estates cannot find Game enough to their own Diversion; and whereas great quantities of such Game is Weekly, and oftener taken to London and other places, by Common Carriers, and others, contrary to Law:

We whose names are hereunto subscribed do jointly and severally agree to punish all offenders in general against the Laws now in Force for the better Preservation of all Game and for that Purpose We agree to pay the several Sums of money hereafter set down to Mr. Richard Calton of Chesterfield and Mr. Richard Whitby of Derby, whom we appoint our lawful Attorneys to carry on all such Prosecutions against such Offenders in such Manner as shall be thought Proper.”

The rewards for procuring convictions varied. Five guineas was to be paid if the offence was destroying or snaring hares or pheasants or tunnelling partridges by night, two guineas if the deed had been done by day and half a guinea more if the accused was convicted of illegal selling.

This association for the prosecution of evildoers was headed by the High Sheriff. The Duke of Devonshire signed next and the names that follow include Curzon, Burdett, Hunloke, Vernon, Pole, Mundy, Coke, Meynell, Gell, FitzHerbert, Boothby and was in fact a list of all Derbyshire's most important personages.

That there should be a touch of condescension in the pronouncement of such an august body of individuals when dealing, in the year 1751, with mortals of less degree will surprise no one and the notice ends:

“ This Association is not enter'd into to prevent Gentlemen Farmers or Substantial Tradesmen (tho Unqualified) from Sporting in a fair and reasonable a Manner and with Proper Leave but to discourage and punish the Sorts of Persons before mentioned.”

Let me turn to a perfectly legal use of the Derby and London Wagon when in September, 1752 there had been brought by their means to the George Inn “ the largest and most grand collection of China Ware that has ever appeared in this part of the country this being part of the Stock of a Merchant going to leave the Trade which will be sold by Hand in a large room at the George Inn. Great Variety of Useful and Ornamental China, as Table dishes, Plates and Bowls of all sizes, all sorts of Tea Equipages, all sorts of engraved and cut drinking Glasses, Dessert Glasses, Gelly Glasses and Salt Stands of Glass mounted with Silver, all sorts of Figures as beautiful and resembling life, all sorts of branches ornamented with China Flowers, cut glass smelling bottles of all colours. Also a great variety of English China and several other kinds of China too tedious to mention. To be sold under Prime Cost by Mrs. Anne Mills from the Corner of the Haymarket near the Opera House, London, the lowest price being Fixed and no Abatement.”

The London wagon bore many varied loads and perhaps the most tragic is described in this extract:

“ Last Tuesday Morning the five following Transports were carried from hence in one of the London Stage Waggons, in order to be shipped off, agreeable to their several sentences at the last Assizes, viz. James Bagnall for sheep stealing; Elizabeth Stone for robbing Mr.

James's House at Winster, Ann Elliott for breaking open a box and stealing therefrom half a guinea and some silver; Richard Chamberlain for stealing 9s. 6d. (in Halfpence) out of the dwelling house of Mr. Sam. Dawson of Ashbourne, and John Cheshire for stealing a Spade from Thomas Insley of Bratby."

This is an extract from a paper dated September, 1763, and for forty-five years before this, unfortunates were being sent to his Majesty's colonies and plantations across the Atlantic, the state of Maryland receiving a considerable proportion of the two hundred emigrants that our county exported before the traffic ceased with the rebellion of the thirteen colonies. The methods of dealing with these unhappy people was methodical, businesslike. Three or four justices of the peace were chosen to deal with the matter and they entered into contract with some merchant, like Mr. Jonathan Forward of Fenchurch Street near the Mitre Tavern, who on being paid two or three guineas, promised to deliver the convict in the New World, death or casualties at sea excepted. The sum seems small but the merchant had the right to sell the labour of the transport for the term of his sentence once landed at his destination.

As the years passed the news of the wagons grows less. Unhappily I have found no time tables, nothing to show how long the different journeys took and though I now turn from the London road to other lines of traffic, yet it is in the main to chance happenings that one has to trust to bring the wagons into the columns of the Mercury.

For example under February the 25th, 1757 we read:

"Lost or Stolen out of a Stage Wagon belonging to Mr. Wm. Weston of Tamworth, between Burton and Derby, a large parcel of Black, White and Coloured Kid and lamb gloves among which were 6 Pairs of Mens

Gloves lined with Fur. The parcel was directed to Mr. James Baker in Derby. Also at the same time was missing a Piece of Scarlet Frise containing 15 or 16 yards wrapped up in Canvas and directed to Mr. Henry Flint in Derby also a parcel of Cotton Ribbed hose and Caps manufactured by Mr. Ralph Jeynes of Tewkesbury."

The reward offered, to be paid on conviction, was ten guineas. If the goods had not been lost or stolen then the fact there was a Wagon travelling between Derby and Tamworth would not have come to light. Chance, half a dozen years later, brings us news of an even more interesting route. The Mercury's announcement reads:

"Bromwell Powell's Waggon that used to come to Inn at the Red Lion and carry goods from Bewdley to Derby and came in every Wednesday night is now removed to the Nags Head and continues to come in on the same nights" and Bromwell Powell begs for a continuance of his patrons favours."

This same Powell ten years later advertised that he had a wagon which "leaves the Kings Head, High Street, Worcester at 3 a.m. on Monday and proceeds by Bewdley, Kidderminster, Wolverhampton, Willinall, Walsall, Lichfield and Burton and arrives at the Nags Head, Derby, on Wednesday evening" meeting there John Anderton's Sheffield wagon which in turn connected with the Northern carriers working as far away as Kendal.

Bewdley strikes one for a moment as an unlikely terminal for a wagon route even remembering that towns differed in comparative importance two hundred years ago but Bewdley is on Severn and apart from being on the road to the West its main attraction for our predecessors lay, I imagine, in its being a connecting link with that most important form of transport—an inland waterway.

Sometimes a theft may draw one's attention to a carriers' route that is not mentioned elsewhere in the

Mercury: sometimes the notice is redolent of the XVIIIth century as is the passage from the issue of Nov. 11th, 1757 which runs:

“ Stolen out of a Waggon standing at the door of the White Lion Inn at Derby on the night of the 9th instant a large round Portmanteau Trunk covered with the Skin and the Hair on it and marked with a M in nails.”

“ In the said Trunk there was 5 Guineas in Gold, six tea Spoons, a Pair of tea Tongs and a large Table Spoon all Silver, marked with an M and no other letter. One Blue Damask gown and a brown Tabby Gown, the Cuffs lined with Red and one cross Barr'd Poplin Gown with French pocket holes. Two quilted Petticoats, one of them Green, also two hats one is paper covered with Tinsel and bound with a Red Ribbon.”

For the recovery of her property a Sheffield lady was willing to pay two guineas.

The owners of the Wagons clearly had to contend with a considerable amount of pillage if the adventures of Hopping Jack are anything to go by. This worthy, John Sandall, in a statement made to the magistrates admitted he had stolen a truss from a Wagon in Leicester containing Tammy and Shaloon and Cloth for great coats and had sold his spoil worth 15*l.* for 2 guineas to a framework knitter and his own story made it clear that he specialised in the theft of cloths. Apparently he found a poor market for his gains for an innkeeper's wife in St. Peters Parish, Derby, would only go to three and sixpence for a basket of shirts and shifts which he had acquired at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Sandall wanted four shillings and said the things had come from Lichfield but the lady was obdurate saying a 'flash' price was enough as they had not come from far enough away and handed the three and six to a woman who bought the loot on the landlady's behalf who finally said that she knew he made a custom of

robbing wagons and she might as well have a share of the spoils. Sandall, the thirteen colonies having by now ceased to be His Majesty's Colonies and Plantations and no longer open for the reception of transports, was condemned to three years hard labour on the river Thames, broke out of gaol and into the house of a Burton attorney named Fowler where, going upstairs, he fell over a warming pan by which some of the family were alarmed and assistance being called the manservant ran up armed with a pair of tongs and immediately knocked Sandall down. Stafford Gaol received the housebreaker and the Mercury parted company with him piously wishing he was on his way to the gallows he had so long deserved.

News of the Derby Wagons comes from various sources and it was a deserter and his misdeeds who brings us news of still another wagon route. The 34th regiment of foot, commanded by Lord Frederick Cavendish, wanted Thomas Jones, alias Key, Sutton and Sefton, and he was also wanted for "robbing the Derby Waggon of a bale of silk stockings and a medicine chest between Derby and Liverpool," for deer killing, deer stealing and poaching and deserting from the Light Dragoons. We Derbyshire people need feel no shame at the ill deeds of Thomas Jones for the chronicle adds that "he was born at Liverpool in Lancashire," but his misdemeanours let us know that there was a wagon travelling with goods between our town and the Lancashire seaport which in this year, 1761, was outstripping Lancaster in importance.

The lines that the coaches were to follow were being made clear when George the third came to the throne. Of course there was a waggon working between Derby and Nottingham. When it first set out, probably from the New Inn at the top of Bridge Gate, cannot be proved but in 1753 the Mercury records that there was:

“ To be Sold

A Waggon, cart and team of six horses with all the Utensils belonging being the Stage Waggon between Derby and Nottingham.”

There is no light shed on the reason for the sale: the passage merely shows that the carriers were earning a living by the transmission of goods between the two towns. Nineteen years later there is proof of a through service from Birmingham to Nottingham and the advertisement announcing the service runs:

“ Birmingham, Nottingham and Derby Old Stage Waggon. For the more safe and expeditious Conveyance of Goods Thomas Weston begs leave to announce that he has a Waggon loaded every Monday afternoon at his Warehouse in High St. Birmingham which sets off early Tuesday morning and arrives at the Nags Head in Derby every Wednesday night, proceeds to the Flying Horse at Nottingham early every Thursday morning and delivers goods for all the respective carriers of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. Returns to the Nags Head every Friday night where it is loaded for Birmingham, all parts of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and the West of England. Sets off early Saturday morning and arrives at the aforesaid warehouse at Birmingham every Monday.”

Such was the service Mr. Thomas Weston offered the public in the year 1772, and his trip from Birmingham to Nottingham and back it will be noted took a week to perform. Occasionally the Mercury leaves us in doubt as to the route the Wagons, took and of this obscurity the following extract is an example:

“ Whereas the Nottingham and Manchester Stage Wagon was on its journey last Thursday the 15th of this instant May robbed at a place called New Haven House

between Ashbourne and Buxton of a large quantity of hosiery goods and other articles to the value of fifty pounds consisting of mens and womens cotton hose, Gloves, Mitts, Breeches Pieces, plaited silk and worsted stockings, Cotton Caps, etc. Also a box of sweetmeats value about £5 consisting of biscuits, Queen Cakes and Sugar Plumbs. For a discovery of the person or persons guilty of this most atrocious felony" one learns—the reward was £5.

But whether the Manchester and Nottingham Wagon came through Derby and Ashbourne or joined the Ashbourne to Buxton road well to the north of Derby is obscure. The wagon owned by Coopers that journeyed from Derby to Manchester went of course by Ashbourne as is confirmed when in June '79 the Waggoner instead of trudging besides his team rode sitting on the shaft, slept as they passed through Mackworth, fell under the wheel and was killed.

Another firm of carriers comes to light in a notice in June '87 when Elizabeth Bailey whose husband had been responsible for the wagons working the Manchester, Derby, Leicester road announced her intention of carrying on the business and what is more interesting stated that in future her customers need not be perturbed for:

"Goods conveyed to and from Cavendish Bridge as usual."

Here we have a reference to the water-born traffic which played so considerable a part in the economy of the period. One more road that became a coach route remains to be mentioned the Sheffield, Derby and Birmingham road. August, 1773 saw appear an advertisement in the Mercury, that ran:

"S. Smith, the Three Crowns, High St. Sheffield sets out on Wednesday morning and arrives at the Dog and Partridge, Derby on Thursday evening and delivers

goods to Joseph Saxon who keeps a regular weekly stage to Birmingham and forwards goods to the West of England" and then follows the names of some of the South Staffordshire towns this carrier served.

The horse-drawn carriers carts came into every market town in England on market days sixty years ago. In Victorian days the journey from the village to town and back was performed in the day and the Mercury preserves the record of one service that went from Derby no further afield than Matlock. The extract in question runs:

" Old Stage Wagons

Wirksworth, Cromford, Matlock, Bonsall and places adjoining

We hereby give notice to the Public that all parcels delivered to us for carriage will be charged 2d. for every hundred weight of goods from Derby to the above places as an advanced charge. As witness our hands this Jan. 31.

Math. Bowmer

John Smith

William Gretorex."

It was war time, the year 1792 and the rise in prices was in accordance with what we are all familiar with these days. The order in which the places served are arranged is interesting. Wirksworth as the most important comes first but I imagine the road these carriers took from Derby led direct to the old Derbyshire lead mining town.

Gretorex and Bowmer are local names but for the most part the names of our carriers mean little to us. They have fallen into obscurity but there is one exception for the name of one is still to be seen on our hoardings and displayed over some of our inns, the name of Bass, Bass of Burton. How the fortunes of this house began is not pertinent to our theme though there was a Coffee House

porter of the name who won 500*l.* in the Bridge lottery in '37. At any rate in '65 Mr. Bass of Burton had the letting of a handsome new built house in that town with "sashed windows," elegantly papered rooms, a very good vault for Ale and Wine, a brewhouse, a paved yard, a stable for two horses and a good garden and summer house with the river Trent running at the bottom, delightfully situated and 'commanding the most Pleasing Prospects.'

Here we are in touch with Bass of Burton but there is nothing to show whence came his prosperity nor how great that was. In September, 1766 the Mercury had an advertisement 'To be Sold, Together or Separate 2 Well Accustomed Common Stage Wagons travelling from Derby to London, with ten able horses to each Wagon' and for further particulars enquiries were to be made from Mr. John Farrow the Cross Keys Inn, Loughborough. Mr. Bass of Burton was clearly a man of some substance and commanded considerable resources for by November following an announcement in the Mercury read:

"Notice is hereby Given

That Mr. Farrow of Loughborough having declined the business of carrying

William Bass of Burton on Trent in Staffs.

Takes this opportunity of acquainting the Gentlemen and Tradesmen That he has one Waggon sets out from the Castle Inn in Wood St. and one Waggon from the Bell Inn in Smithfield at 12 o'clock every Monday and takes in Goods and Passengers at each inn for Northampton, Harborough, Leicester, Loughborough, Hinckley, Burton, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Derby, Ashbourne, Buxton, Stockport, Manchester, Ashton, Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Bolton, Blackburn and places adjacent."

This was William Bass' first advertisement and it is clear he had come into the carrying trade with the intention of doing business on a considerable scale.

The south bound Bass' wagons left the Swan with Two Necks, Manchester at four o'clock on Thursdays and save that Uttoxeter and Newport Pagnell are added called at the same places as did the north bound teams. The advertisement has the customary warning against the sending of undeclared valuables and ends:

" All Gentlemen and Tradesmen who please to favour me with their Goods and Interest may depend upon the greatest care and Punctuality by
Their Humble Servant William Bass."

The next news the Mercury brings us of William Bass is in November, 1767, and then he is not a buyer but a seller wishing to dispose of five old stage wagons that had been in use on the London and Manchester Road, the 'able' horses that drew them but whose number is not stated, two hundred and fifty tons of hay and 'several stacks of oats, Wheat and Beans.' The somewhat casual word 'several' suggests a man whose business was not on a small scale. Within a month notice was given that William Bass, of Burton on Trent had declined the carrying business and William and Samuel Morris and Samuel Sadler of the same town were carrying on. For how long William Bass was out of the trade I cannot say but by June '75 he was advertising:

" Stolen or lost out of a broad Wheeled Wagon travelling between Dishley in Leicestershire and Buxton in Derbyshire a trunk directed for Madame Anne Leigh."

Here is evidence that once more William Bass served the public and it may be there is a touch of self righteousness in the description of his wagon for the advertisement makes it clear that this wagon had broad wheels which as the contemporary experts held flattened and consolidated the roads while narrow wheels destroyed them. Further proof that Wm. Bass'

departure from the carrying trade was only temporary is afforded by an account published in May, 1783 stating that on 'Sunday night about 11 o'clock Mr. Bass' Stage Waggon was stopped about two miles from this town' (Derby) 'on its way to London by two footpads who endeavoured to rob it. They were however prevented from executing their Purpose by the Stout Resistance and Defence of the Driver; he beat down the first with so much violence as to disable him for some time and then engaged the other with such Resolution and Firmness that they were both glad to make their escape from him as soon as possible.'

It is clear I think that by this year 1783 Wm. Bass was a person of importance for the Mercury speaks respectfully of him; it is Mister Bass' Stage Waggon and that word Mister is suggestive to the student of XVIII century newspapers.

One more passage completes my extracts from the Mercury and confirms my opinion that worldly prosperity had come to Wm. Bass whatever domestic losses may have been his for in March, 1786 there is an obituary notice that runs:

"On Saturday last died Mrs. Bass after a long illness born with the utmost fortitude and Resignation. Wife of Mr. Wm. Bass a considerable brewer at Burton on Trent."

"She was a Person of Unbounded Benevolence and Hospitality and her death is deservedly lamented."

So ends what I have found in the columns of Mr. Drewry relating to the Derby Wagons.

This has been a chronicle of small and unimportant events though perhaps among all their seeming incoherence one may savour something of that very eventful era for England the XVIIIth century and I make no apology for my choice of subject, for the means of transit a community enjoys are probably of as much

importance to its everyday life as any other factor, climate excepted. The wagons had their day and passed but there has also passed the life of the village, of the country-side, for once movement was easy it was no longer true to say, as Cardinal Richelieu did, that every village was a capital.