

ITINERARY FOR VISIT TO MOTORWAY ON 7TH SEPTEMBER, 1959  
BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL  
AND MIDLAND PRESS

- 8.0 a.m. Midland Press, B.B.C. and I.T.N. representatives join coach outside M.T.C.A. office at Lombard House, Great Charles Street, Birmingham.  
Set out for Berrygrove (Watford By-Pass) entrance to St. Albans By-Pass.  
Representative of M.T.C.A. travels with party to act as guide.
- 9.0 a.m. National Press and B.B.C. and I.T.N. representatives embark in coach outside Lower Regent Street office of John Laing & Son, Ltd.  
Set out for Berrygrove (Watford By-Pass) entrance to St. Albans By-Pass, accompanied by C.F.S. guide.
- 10.10 a.m. London press party arrives at St. Albans By-Pass, Berrygrove entrance, where refreshments are provided by Cubitts, Fitzpatrick, Shand.
- 10.20 a.m. Minister arrives in chauffeur driven car at Barrygrove entrance to St. Albans By-Pass, and is met by Lt. Col. ffolliott, Sir Owen Williams, and representatives of Cubitts, Fitzpatrick, Shand, Tarmac Civil Engineering, Ltd. and John Laing & Son, Ltd.  
Refreshments.
- 10.30 a.m. (approx.) Midland coach arrives. Note: This coach may be late in arriving.  
If so members of the party will stop at Berrygrove for rest and refreshments before overtaking Minister's party.
- 10.35 a.m. Minister inspects concrete laying train near entrance, talks to men on the job, and is introduced to representative group of workers.
- 10.45 a.m. Minister's car proceeds along By-Pass followed by two Press coaches and coach for representatives of Herts. County Council, consulting engineers and contractors. (Coaches are being used to obviate the need for a long procession of cars. Two of them will be provided by John Laing & Son Ltd. and the third by Tarmac Civil Engineering Ltd.).

- 11.0 a.m. Party arrive at Beechtree Junction and alight to view works and enable Minister to meet representatives of workers.
- 11.10 a.m. Party leave Beechtree. Mr. T. MacMillan, Tarmac Civil Engineering, Ltd. joins Minister's car, in place of representative of C.F.S.
- 11.30 a.m. Party arrive at Pepperstock Junction.  
Minister inspects stone which he laid at inauguration of work 17 months ago.  
Lt. Col. ffolliott and Mr. MacMillan leave Minister, who re-enters car with Sir Owen Williams and representative of John Laing & Son, Ltd., and proceeds to Newport Pagnell without halts.
- 12.30 p.m. Party arrives Newport Pagnell opposite Newsroom.  
Drinks served to party in Newsroom, where maps and photographs are on view.
- 1.0 p.m. Lunch in marquee adjacent to Newsroom at invitation of Sir Owen Williams & Partners.
- 2.0 p.m.  
(approx.) Sir Owen Williams invites Minister to speak.  
Minister addresses party and invites questions, to which he and engineers reply.  
On leaving marquee, Minister meets representatives of H.Q. staff at Newport Pagnell including a typist and telephone girl.
- 2.30 p.m.  
(prompt) Party embark in transport on bank opposite Newsroom and proceed north along the motorway to Collingtree Junction.  
Press representatives wishing to return by train are offered transport in cars to Bletchley Station.  
The third coach returns to Berrygrove and London.
- 2.50 p.m. Convoy leaves motorway by slip road, proceeds around Collingtree Junction and returns to motorway by acceleration slip road.
- 3.05 p.m. Party arrive at Nene viaduct and alight to view same.
- 3.20 p.m. Party re-embark and proceed to Structure 116. En route a halt is made at a convenient point for Minister to meet representatives of workers.

- 3.50 p.m. Party inspect Crick Extension Flyover at junction with Birmingham Spur.
- 4.0 p.m. Party proceed along Birmingham Spur arriving at junction with Dunchurch By-Pass about 4.15 p.m., pausing to view Structure 112 en route.
- 4.15 p.m. Minister meets D.R.E., Midland Division; County Surveyor, Warwickshire, and representatives of Messrs. Monks, and drives along Dunchurch By-Pass.
- Sir Owen Williams and representatives of John Laing & Son, Ltd. leave party.
- London press coach turns back at this or earlier stage.
- 4.30 p.m. Minister's party leave Dunchurch By-Pass and inspect works in progress or completed on A.45.
- Tea (D.R.E. to arrange with Contractors)
- 6.30 p.m. Party meet City officials and inspect Birmingham Inner Ring Road. Minister then leaves for Great Malvern.
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Telegrams: TRANSMINEY LONDON TELEK  
(CIVIL AVIATION) CIVILAIR LONDON TELEK  
Telephone No.: MAYFAIR 9494  
EXTN. 3683

*9. own aircraft*  
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CIVIL AVIATION, *WTC*

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE,  
LONDON, W.1.



27th August, 1959.

Our reference

Your reference

*Yes we will cover that slot  
can they also give us  
air facilities for build up  
+ pictures*

Dear Miss Field,

*London - 9.50  
pick out  
sports.*

I am enclosing two letters from Mr. Hoare which invite you to send a representative to accompany the Minister on the first day of a tour which he will be making on Monday, September 7. You will see that we are inviting you to send a representative from London or Birmingham, or both if you wish, and you will no doubt wish to make arrangements to cover this tour.

As this will, however, take a considerable amount of time on the Monday, we feel that you might like to have an opportunity for free shooting on the previous Friday (September 4) (embargoed for release at noon on Monday, September 7). Perhaps you would let me know about this. For the free shooting it might be simpler to start from London and go as far as possible, or alternatively you might want to send someone down from your Midlands office to meet the party from London at say, Newport Pagnell.

On the occasion of the Minister's tour, he will be starting at Aldenham Spur (from Watford By-Pass) which has not previously been seen by the press or newareels and he will travel for the first time throughout the whole length of the Motorway. Previously facilities have not extended beyond Newport Pagnell.

Yours sincerely,

*Phyllis E. Faulkner*  
Phyllis E. Faulkner  
Publicity Officer

Miss G. Field,  
Pathe News,  
Film House,  
Oxford Street, W.1.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CIVIL AVIATION,

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE,  
LONDON, W.1.



26th August, 1959.

Our reference

Your reference

Dear Sir,

London-Birmingham Motorway

At the start of a three-day tour, the Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, Mr. Harold Watkinson, will drive the full-length of the London-Birmingham Motorway on Monday, September 7, joining the Watford end of the St. Albans By-pass at 10.20 a.m. and proceeding along the nearly-completed carriageways of the motorway as far as the end of the Dunchurch By-pass.

It is thought that Midland newspapers and news agencies together with broadcasting and T.V. authorities, may like to take this opportunity to see the Motorway and meet the Minister. I am writing therefore, to invite you, or your representative, to accompany the Minister on his first day's tour.

A coach will leave Lombard House, Great Charles Street, Birmingham, at 8 a.m. on September 7 to convey guests to the starting point of the tour at the Berrygrove (Watford By-pass) end of the St. Albans By-pass. Alternatively, press representatives staying overnight in London can join a coach leaving the offices of John Laing & Son, in Lower Regent Street, London, at 9 a.m.

If you would like to cover the tour, would you please state in your reply whether you wish a seat to be reserved for you in the Birmingham coach or the London coach. Representatives of newspapers who cannot reach Birmingham in time to join the coach and who do not want to stay overnight in London, should proceed direct to site H.Q. at Newport Pagnell to await the Minister's party. It is regretted that Press representatives cannot be permitted to drive along the motorway in their own cars while work is still in progress.

Lunch will be provided by Sir Owen Williams & Partners, Consulting Engineers, at their site Headquarters at Newport Pagnell. The Minister will then make a short speech and invite questions before resuming his tour.

The Birmingham boundary should be reached between 4.30 and 5 p.m. There will be a break for tea after which the Minister and his party will go on into Birmingham to see the Inner Ring Road Scheme.

Details of the Minister's tour on September 8 and 9 will be sent to you later.

Yours faithfully,

*R. G. S. Hoare*

R.G.S. Hoare  
Chief Information Officer

*Meet Min Faulkner.  
at 9.15 am. at  
Berry Grove Entrance  
to St. Albans By-Pass.*

The News Editor

P.S.- A reply by next Monday, August 31st,  
would be appreciated.

*Padditt side*

Telegrams: TRANSMINY LONDON TELEX.  
(CIVIL AVIATION) CIVILAIR LONDON TELEX.  
Telephone No.: MAYFAIR 9494  
EXTN.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CIVIL AVIATION,

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE,

LONDON, W.1.



*Our reference*

*Your reference*

3rd September, 1959.

Dear Miss Field,

I am enclosing a copy of the itinerary for the Minister's visit to the Motorway on Monday next, September 7. As your representatives will be going in their own transport they will probably wish to join the party at the Berrygrove entrance to the St. Albans By-Pass and I am enclosing a map which shows the various routes to this. The press party from London is expected to arrive there at 10.10 a.m.

Yours sincerely,

*Phyllis E. Faulkner*  
Phyllis E. Faulkner  
Publicity Officer

Miss G. Field,  
Pathe News,  
142 Wardour Street,  
W.1.



# PRESS RELEASE

FROM PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATES LIMITED

47, BUCK STREET, LONDON, W.1. Telephone: GEC 5573

For further information  
please telephone

Oliver Lawson Dick

September 7th, 1959.

## RECORDS BROKEN ON NEW MOTORWAY

### Fastest Highway Paving in Britain

During the construction of the "Watford leg" of Britain's first long-distance motorway between London and the Midlands, a new highway paving record has been set up. A total of 1,200 feet of 26 ft. wide reinforced concrete has been laid in eleven hours, which is believed to beat the existing British highway record by about 100 feet.

The record was made possible by the use of a new and highly mechanised method of laying. A "concrete train" was developed using the most up-to-date machinery from America, Belgium, Britain and Germany.

All the equipment is mounted on rails and when one machine has completed its part of the process, the next stage is carried out by another machine travelling along behind.

Said a spokesman for the contractors, Cubitts-Fitzpatrick-Shand: "Last year's weather meant that we fell five months behind with our contract, and a delay in completing our section would have prejudiced the opening of the entire motorway.

"This motorway is the artery from the industrial Midlands to London, and it will cut down the cost of transporting our exports.

"By applying a new concreting system, instead of being behind with our schedule, we're way ahead. When people have the opportunity of travelling on the motorway, they will see that our road surface will compare favourably with the best roads in the world".

To achieve the new record of 1,200 feet, approximately 2,000 tons of material had to be weighed automatically, transported to the placing area, mixed and laid to a width of 26 feet. The value of the equipment used for concreting was approximately £150,000.

END



# PRESS RELEASE

FROM PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATES LIMITED

67, BROOK STREET, LONDON, W.1. Telephone: GROsvenor 5573

For further information  
please telephone

Oliver Lawson Dick

September 7th, 1959.

## SCHEDULE EXCEEDED on LONDON-YORKSHIRE MOTORWAY

### Contractors Use Foremost Equipment in Europe

Despite their comparative late start and the problems of the most adverse weather conditions last year, the contractors at work on the "Watford leg" of the London-Yorkshire motorway, Cubitts-Fitzpatrick-Shand, will complete their stretch of the road ahead of schedule. Due to weather, they were five months behind at one time, but have made rapid progress in recent months by adopting the most highly mechanised methods of construction ever used in this country.

This was announced on Monday, September 7th, when the Minister of Transport, Mr. Harold Watkinson, toured the new motorway, which is scheduled for completion in December.

The Minister learned that one of the main factors behind the rapid rate of progress which has been achieved, is the use of a gigantic "concrete train". Each of the machines used for the concreting process has been mounted on wheels and when work carried out by one machine has been completed, it moves on to the next section of roadway and its place is taken by another machine following behind.

Although the total value of the contract for this section of the roadway is only £1¼ million, approximately £1 million worth of equipment has been used in order to complete the contract coincident with the opening of the adjoining new roads.

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The "Watford leg" is part of the St. Albans by-pass and consists of about five miles of dual carriageway extending from Berry Grove to just south of Beechtree. Each track is 26 feet in width. Work on this section commenced in June 1958, three months after the starting time for the other contracts. The contractors, therefore, missed the fine weather spell, and commenced their mass excavations coincident with the onset of one of the worst summers in history. On one length of excavation, wet chalk was encountered, and there was real danger that a tractor would be completely submerged in the chalk at this stage.

Sub-soil conditions encountered were much less stable than had been anticipated and the depth of sub-base construction was increased from 18 inches to 33 inches to take this into account. Early in 1959, only 30 per cent of the contract had been fulfilled instead of the 60 per cent required by programme. When Mr. Watkinson visited the site at that time, he described the conditions there as "appalling".

When the weather broke in March, the contractors decided that the contract could only be fulfilled if there was a three-fold increase in the amount of equipment being used, and this they obtained and placed in continuous work.

For the final construction of the concrete carriageway, the most modern machinery available was purchased from firms in Belgium, Germany and the United States, as well as in Britain.

The 300 men working on the site responded splendidly to the task of doing everything possible to obtain a rate of progress nearly three times that originally planned, and within four months work had advanced to such an extent that it was 10 per cent ahead of schedule.

This rate of progress has<sup>s</sup> been maintained and the contractors estimate that the northern half of their section of the roadway will be available for traffic in October (two months ahead of the contract time) and the southern half will be ready one month ahead of contract requirement.

#### CONCRETING PROCESS.

At the start of the laying operation, crushed concrete is tipped on to the formation, spread and rolled to a thickness of about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Road forms are laid on a concrete bed and blinding sand is then spread on the formation by a grader.

The level of the sand underneath the concrete can vary up to 2 inches and the levelling is carried out by a "Blaw Knox" spreader. An S. G. M. E. sand compacting machine is used to ensure a finished tolerance of  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. and the sand is then covered by machine with a layer of "Visqueen" polythene sheeting 26 feet wide. This sheeting is automatically unrolled on top of the sand, and is the widest polythene film ever used on road work in this country. Had the new width not been made specially available, additional time would have been required in order to overlap smaller widths by hand. Expansion joints are then formed with steel dowels inserted into chipboard, and wire cage units are fixed at intervals of 120 feet.

Dry aggregates are loaded into a batching plant and each batch is automatically discharged into compartmented batch lorries. The material is transported to the Koering twin-batch mixer and discharged a batch at a time into the loading hoppers.

After mixing, the concrete is discharged into an A. B. G. spreader which can handle up to 70 cu. ft. at one time. The machine, which runs on the road forms and is entirely power-operated, first spreads a layer 8 inches in thickness and after reinforcement has been laid, it returns to deposit an additional 3 inch layer.

Following behind this machine is an A. B. G. compactor and finisher which vibrates the concrete. A wet surface profile meter is used to indicate any indentation in the surface finish and a manual brush finish is then applied. The entire laying and finishing process is carried out under a high level canvas cover which moves along with the plant and thus weather-proofs the operation.

"Ritecure" sealing compound is applied automatically and low level canvas covers are then rolled into place to protect the finished surface from the elements. Further spraying with the compound is carried out when required. Finally, expansion joints are cut in the concrete with the aid of an A. B. G. saw.

After this concreting process had been proved, the speed of the "train" was increased even further by the introduction of a second spreading machine and an additional compactor and finisher. The conveyors on the mixers which feed the spreaders were also extended to enable a quicker turn-round of lorries.

The "Watford leg" of the new motorway includes twelve reinforced concrete bridges (including two subways). When bad weather held up road construction, the contractors pushed ahead with the work on these bridges.