The National College of Art & Design

'The Railway Posters of Edward Pond:
Moving Forward by Looking Back.'

A Thesis submitted by NATALIE
HICKEY for the 15th of March 1991
to the Faculty of History of Art & Design
in Candinancy for the Bachelor of Design
in Visual Communications.

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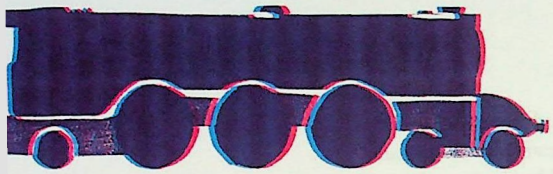

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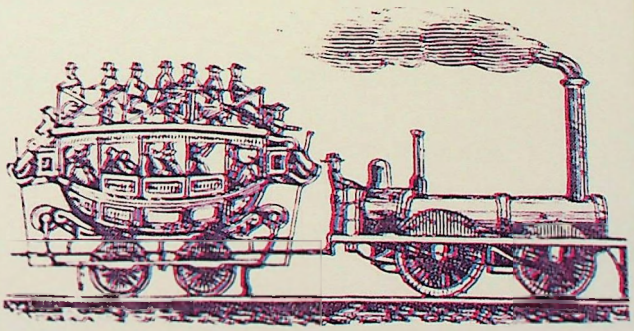
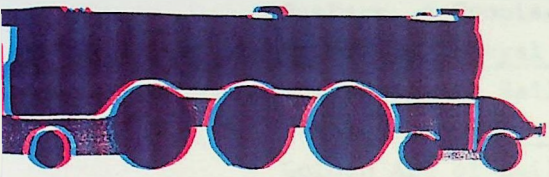
I would sincerely like to thank British Rail for their kind donation of Edward Pond posters, without which I would not have been able to complete my thesis.

' The history of art is the history of revivals.'
Samuel Butler.



' The past? I don't think it effects things one iota.'
Edward Pond.



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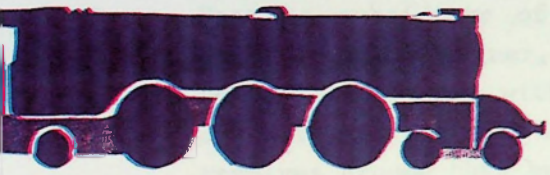


Introduction

Introduction

In the latter years of the 1980's, a textile designer, turned poster artist, was commissioned to design a set of venue posters for some of the major sea-side and holiday destinations visited by the railway train. Edward Pond was the designer and the work was commissioned by Network South East, a subsidiary of British Rail. The brief that was given to the designer, told him to create a collection of posters in keeping with those produced during the twenties and thirties but with a contemporary feel. My dissertation revolves around this brief and tries to pinpoint the use and effect of nostalgia and revivalism on today's railway poster. Logo identifications by Pond are also discussed, in connection with their use of heraldic emblems and in comparison with the identities from the thirties.

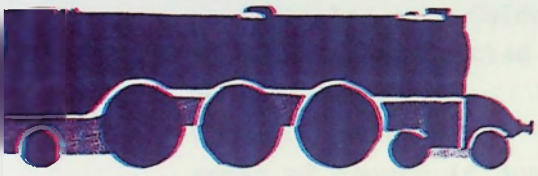
The railway system within England has always held a great fascination for the British public, both young and old. This fascination lies within the notion of nostalgia, a fondness for the memory of things past. Train sets, train engine numbers and railway memorabilia have all been collected through the years of the train's evolution. The items which this dissertation will discuss are the advertising posters and railway identities of a period known as The Golden Age of the Railway Poster. I hope to show in this discussion just how I believe a second Golden Age is being created by the railway company, Network South East. The term Golden Age, in my opinion, means a revival of all that the railway posters stood for in the decades of the 1920's and the 1930's - simple, yet strong flat colours, striking images and good poster-design by an economy of means. I intend to show what those years 1920 - 1930 stood for through the examination of posters from the period, comparing the successful with the not so successful. I will look at how British Rail are today attempting to adopt the Great Western Railway's policy of Regional Identity and how they are giving the policy life. I will discuss the style known as Simplified Realism, which came to the fore during the period of the thirties. I will provide a background which led to

the emergence of the style within the railway posters of artists, such as Tom Purvis and Frank Newbould. I will then try to build a foundation from detailed analysis of Pond's posters, on which to base the term Simplified Realism. I hope to show just how Pond has been influenced by posters from the railway's past history, even though he has refuted the whole notion. I will establish links between the posters of the two periods through detailed comparison and look at their visual impact as an advertising medium.

The thesis will be broken down into six main chapters, building on past research and findings. Chapter One will give a general detail of the period known as the Golden Age and will give us our first introduction to the poster artists. Today's brief from Network South East will be spelled out and a look will be taken at why the railway looked back. Revivalism will be set within the movement known as Post Modernism and I will look at why the public has a fascination with the past. Chapter Two looks at what happened between the period of the Golden Age of the Railway Poster and the period of Pond's posters and how many of the railway posters of that time gave such little inspiration. I will discuss simplified realism, its background, its first exponents and its emergence as a popular art form, in the third chapter. The following chapter will look at what makes a good poster and relates these findings to some of the major artists of the 1930's. A brief background is given to three of the major railway artists from the Golden Age in order to pave the way for detailed comparison and analysis in the last two sections. Chapters Five and Six fill in the colour for the rest of the thesis, giving example to the previous research. The posters of Pond will be compared and contrasted with similar posters from the thirties in order to create a link with the mind's eye. This link will try to prove just how much influence past design has had on Edward Pond and how nostalgia appears in almost all of his work. Posters will be discussed in terms of colour, typography, two and three dimensions and pictorial subject matter. Pond's posters will then be assessed for their visual strength and power as an advertising medium.

The final chapter deals solely with railway identities and how Pond has succeeded in intertwining history with the railway's logos in the form of heraldic emblems. The policy of promoting the particular; individual railway routes; which Network South East has adopted, will be compared to the 1930's policy of promoting the general, the one overall identity. I will show how Pond, while having been influenced by the past, has made certain steps forward and how those steps forward have benefited the railway company.

The conclusion of my thesis will draw together the findings of the above chapters. I will try to show just how much Pond was influenced by the past, and how this past fits in so well with the image of the railway train. I will discuss Pond's reaction to the British Rail brief and state whether he has, in fact, achieved a collection of posters in keeping with those produced during the twenties and thirties and if he has brought a modern feel to the work. I will give an assessed opinion of whether Pond, the artist, is inventive originator or small-time rip-off merchant and, in either case, whether his designs work.



Chapter One:

The Golden Age.

The Brief from the Eighties

Why Look Back!

Revivals.

Post-Modernism

Sum-Up

The Golden Age

The era of British railway posters between the two World Wars is hailed as a Golden Age, fired by the enthusiasm of a number of artists who did much to promote the railway system and the then popular British sea-side holiday resort. The period has been recorded in many good art history books and periodicals, as a Golden Age, even to the point of having a book published, titled The Golden Age of the Railway Poster by J.T. Shackleton. Through reading about the period and the railway's policy towards its public image, a strong sense of change is apparent in the work produced. I think that this sense of change and the railway's new idealism makes the period a Golden Age. The railway companies had made an active decision to progress, by improving their outward image to appeal to their customers and, in turn, bring in greater revenue; to reap the rewards of their labour, so to speak. Throughout the railway's entire history, no record appears of a greater surge of public advertising. This is not to say that all the work produced in the period was of a high standard, in fact some of it was quite poor in conception, rather than execution. But what remains most steadfastly in the mind's eye is the original work which was produced by some of the period's best artists : Frank Newbould, Tom Purvis and Kauffer E. McKnight. Their insight, originality and ability to bring about change, I believe, was paramount to the period being given its appropriate name - The Golden Age. Above all, the work produced at that time was both clever and appealing, clever in its direct simplicity and appealing in its use of colour and subject matter. This was a Golden Age of attractive and evocative railway posters, which worked by promoting the friendly face of large railway companies to their customers, in a new and, in my opinion, successful manner.

The railway company's advertising during the period between the wars was a manifestation of the pride it had for its services, the image which it appeared to have, or wished to appear to have and as a means of attracting an audience

which would become their passengers. Often the images which the railway chose to present to the public were not a true reflection of its reality, but a visual method of enticement. This means of enticement has been named as 'evocative enticement' by art historians, such as John Barnicoat, author of Posters, A Concise History. Using the description of 'evocative enticement', one covers a type of realistic representation which is colourful and descriptive, likening itself to a word-painting, which is what the best of the posters from the period were. They reflected the language, the taste, and the images which the railway body chose to put forward as its public image. The railway's history has been chronicled through the changing patterns of its poster design, whether it has been extolling the virtues of the modern steam train and its efficient service or popularising a hitherto unknown sea-side resort in a colourful pictorial display. As J.T. Shackleton puts it, '..... from the novelty and excitement of early excursion travel through the rumbustuous era of the sea-side holiday, to the chic period of international travel.' (Reference No. 1). Through the well-documented accounts of the advertising of the period - the 1920's and 1930's - it becomes possible for today's contemporary railway posters to be compared and contrasted with those produced in the Golden Age of the Railway Poster.

The Brief from the Eighties

In 1989, British Rail produced a brief for a British designer, Edward Pond, commissioning him to create a series of venue posters for some popular British resorts and towns. The brief demanded from Pond, a collection of images in keeping with the old railway posters, but with a contemporary look. This clear-cut decision by British Rail to hark back to the period between the wars and the posters which were produced then, allows the new collection to be compared with the former with due justification

Such a direct comparison raises the whole notion of nostalgia, or revivalism, as some art historians tend to call the phenomenon. Today, many people, when asked to state what a railway means to them, would speak in terms of

'draughty stations, stale sandwiches and trains which always run late.' (Reference No. 2). Not quite the public image that British Rail would wish to pursue. It is no great wonder, then, that the railway has set about dispelling this unpopular picture that the public holds in their memory of today's rail travel.

Why Look Back?

Revivalism is not a new idea, but a tried and tested means of advancing an already proven idea. As Samuel Butler once said 'The History of Art is the History of Revivals'. (Reference No. 3). This short statement practically sums up Art History and shows us just how long revivalism has been in operation. But could you not argue that some things date, whether they be art movements, clothes or music. When is it correct to turn to revivalism, will it work and why? In the following chapters, I hope to answer these questions in connection with the railway posters of Edward Pond, and see whether nostalgia is a useful method of advancing British Rail's image, or is it just anecdotal, a passing phase! I will place the method of revivalism within the framework of post-modernism, and look at its value for the public and railway advertising.

Revivals

It is no accident that taste in art changes and that certain styles re-emerge after a given period of time. This happens on a rhythmic basis and not in an altogether predictable way. One could not construct an Almanac calendar around the changes, saying that in the third decade of the 21st Century, a return to decoration and Art Nouveau will be apparent. By looking back through the history of art, you begin to see the different ways in which the cycle exists. An art critic cannot possibly predict a return to a style saying that Classicism will be the in-thing; the return has to come from the artist, himself, or the patron who lays down the guidelines or rules for the work. Take, for example, the British Rail brief which makes a direct reference to a particular style; the style of posters and advertising from the thirties which, in turn, produces

modern designs based on nostalgia and revivalism. Revivalism is a part of the movement known as Post-Modernism, a revolt against scientific analysis and detailed, numerical-based construction. A use of nostalgia by one field does not stand for its use right across the board, for example, the thirties and their posters have been revived by British Rail, but nowhere else is the revival of the thirties apparent. Music and the clothing industry have chosen to hark back to the era of the sixties, as can be seen in the re-introduction of flared trousers, flower-power clothes and the music of the Beatles, while still other fields and their companies choose to move on, by not looking back for their inspiration. All have valid reasons for making their decisions, whether it is harking back or moving forward. The reasons for British Rail's choice have yet to be discussed.

Post-Modernism

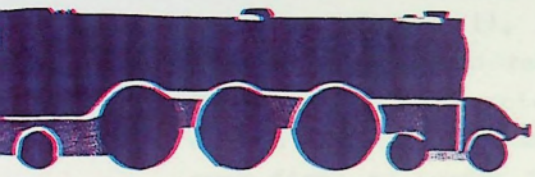
The 1970's was a period of technology and embodied the beliefs of Modernism, espousing the materials and methods of technology. At that time, while men were travelling to the moon and back, art was being assembled in factory lines from blueprints. Post-Modernism strove to abandon all the adherence to rigid strictures and established forms of logic, and opened up a fresh, new vocabulary based on nature. By opening up the past and looking back through art history, new and bigger doors were unlocked for both the artist/designer and their public to step through. Post-Modernism tends to be more human than its forebearer, it knows about shortages, it is aware of cost, and is realistic in its outlook. It is not afraid to quote, ransack, scavenge and recycle the past. As Kim Levin says 'It is style-free and free-style'. (Reference No. 4). The use of revivalism is a free-style, allowing any period or style from history to be chosen and recycled. Revivalism is playful and denies nothing. Artists down through the years have been extremely good at pointing us in a fertile direction where, sometimes, the new is not really the new at all, but the old seen in a new way. This is what Edward Pond has done with his Network South East posters and identities, he has guided our eyes forward to new designs, by his eyes looking back.

The reasons for British Rail's decision to look back

I believe the answer to British Rail's use of revivalism lies within the history of the Railway Network. The twenties and thirties were successful years for the locomotive train and the period encouraged the rapid growth of the railway system throughout the country. The public looked with keen admiration on the designs of the engines and the comparative efficiency of their time-tabling as against today's. Delays were not tolerated or expected in the train's earlier years. The whole system was looked upon with great delight and novelty and it held an almost spell-binding effect over its customers. Today, British Rail appears to have a regard for the period when railways were seen as friendly, reassuring and irreplaceable methods of enjoying and visiting the British towns and country-side. The feelings for the railway, then, are the antithesis of today's commuter's feelings. Apparently, British Rail are attempting to recreate a nostalgic feel, an aura of diversion away from how the system is run and by what means, towards the eventual picturesque destinations which are displayed in Pond's posters. A rather simple psychology on British Rail's part, trying to substitute the image of a pleasant, relaxing, resting place into the potential traveller's mind, in place of the means and method of transport. It is like trying to heal a seven-inch gash with a piece of two-inch sticky plaster; the plaster will not cover it. B.R. (British Rail) are trying to cover up their inadequacies by diverting the public's attention away from travel problems and onto the pleasant scenes of Edward Pond. Perhaps the saying 'what they don't see won't hurt them' is more in keeping with British Rail's policy. Keep them, the public, occupied with a pleasant offering and they won't bother to complain about the service. The only active concession B.R. have appeared to make to the public is in addressing the signage identities of the railway lines which make up Network South East. They have also commissioned Pond to re-design the individual identities that make up the network, by looking at time-tables, platform signs, train classifications and logos, making the passenger's task of finding the right train at the time time easier. This signage design is discussed in a later chapter.

Not only do British Rail have a regard for the past, especially 1920 - 1930, but so do a large proportion of the British population. Consider the large number of railway enthusiasts who collect vintage model railways, preferring the old steam locomotives to the modern electric-run cars. Look at how many young children train-spotted, collecting engine numbers in their copybooks, recording history. The public's fascination lies with the old, as far as the railway is concerned. How many of today's children collect Network South East train engine numbers? British Rail have just selected a period where good advertising came to the fore in the railway's history, pinpointing the public's fascination with the train's history, to a specific time and in a specific way.

A re-introduction of style, fun, colour and sophistication, all properties of the railway and its advertising in the thirties, is British Rail's aim. It would appear that today's railway no longer can offer the rich potential of subjects and destinations that were available in the Golden Age of the Railway Poster. The reason for this is the increased competition from foreign travel. It is as easy now to hop on a plane, as to catch a train and many British people are choosing to either holday abroad or use alternative methods of transport to reach their destinations. These decisions by the general public have led, in some cases, to the extinction, or at least, the decrease in popularity of certain holiday resorts. If the public does not visit a place, it can hardly be expected to thrive. It appears that today, travellers by train want some of the dream back, the dream world which was created in the travel posters of the twenties and thirties. This dream world was made up of simplicity, good old-fashioned values and tangible ideas. Today, we believe we are a lot more sophisticated in our advertising and our marketing, but we still have the need to be told stories, fact or fiction, to make us, and our surroundings, feel better. These stories are told through the revival of colourful, lively and imagistic posters which are produced by the artist, Edward Pond. He creates an atmosphere, an ideal destination for us all to escape to.



Chapter Two:

What Happened after the Thirties

Posters and what they should achieve.

Sum-Up

What Happened after the Thirties

The Golden Age of the Railway Poster diminished with the advent of the Second World War. Travel was universally discouraged as frivolous and life-threatening, and the poster artist's output was channeled into promoting the ideals and aspirations of the war effort. Take, for example, (Figure 1), a poster urging rationed Britons to grow more food and rely less on imports; executed by the famous war poster artist, Abram Games. Abram Games was one of the few artists who continued to enjoy the patronage of such firms as London Transport, the Post Office, Shell and the Railway. Games' artistic education was supplied by the poster hoardings and billboards of the thirties, where most of the great designers of the period displayed their work. After this period the 'art gallery of the street' seems to have lost some of its vibrancy, and the railway poster was not excluded from this. Economic pressures, plus those of advanced competition from other new forms of transport, forced the railway and its public image into the shadows. The old English coastal resort was shunned in favour of the new and fresh European destination. The posters which were issued after the end of the 1930's, showed a railway system bereft of its previous dynamism. The car and the aeroplane were all shiney and new, leading the public into a new age of mass consumerism and technology. This era appears only to have diminished with the advent of the eighties, and a new outlook on life. This new outlook on life, while still containing a reverence for technology, involves a return to nature, a human element and a slight distrust of the whole man-made world. In the eighties, logic no longer sufficed to satisfy the general public, and mass technology had undesirable side effects on the globe:

> ... in a world threatened by defoliated land, polluted air and water, and depleted resources, by chemical additives, radioactive wastes and space debris, progress is no longer the issue.
>
> (Reference No. 5)

Today, the public wants to be safe, re-assured and comfortable and this is, in part, reinforced through the

images, including advertising, that surround them. Why is there a return to the aesthetic cycle of the thirties within railway advertising? The answer, I beleive, lies within the following quote,

> There appears to be a longing for a world which we have lost and that somehow (probably wrongly) seems more comprehensible and safer than the one we live in. (Reference No. 6)

This is what is happening within the present railway's corporate policy, a longing for nostalgia and history, creating an image of the past in order to strengthen today's new identity. Is it correct for British Rail to be assimilating history instead of creating its own personal step forward? Is it just easier for the railway to borrow from past success rather than discovering their own? Or do they, in fact, achieve progress and success through their reference and borrowing. The thirties were a time of great courage and optimism in the face of adversity. The public put on a happy face to chase the clouds of doom away and part of this happy face was the advertising and images of the period. Visual matter helped to stimulate the public into adopting a healthy attitude towards their situation. This situation was summed up by A.J.P. Taylor

> If one were to judge the decade from the newspapers and contemporary literature, it would appear as an almost uninterrupted record of violence and alarms with the forces of destruction knocking threateningly at the door.
>
> (Reference No. 7)

If these images that the railway used in the thirties were successful in distracting the public and increasing the train traffic to specified destinations at such a critical period in history, surely their merit warrants today's current reference to them by British Rail. After the gay twenties of frivolous fun and freedom, the thirties lay in stark contrast. Serious issues had to be contended with, and with the sight of war threatening, a new outlook was called for. Again, in the seventies, frivolity, soul-searching and self-analysis were still in vogue after the hippy days of the sixties. Technology was gaining

strength and with its advances came many catastrophies, environmental disasters and public health risks. Inevitably the eighties had to contend with the serious by-products of its predecessor. A serious attitude was again called for. An attitude of sensible thinking and appropriate design work.

Posters, and what they should achieve

A poster's job is to convey its message clearly, competently and at once. It is essential to get the complete message in not more than three seconds, otherwise the posters are ineffective. A good poster should not puzzle people; it should be like a boxer's punch, straight, hard and quick, delivering its message in a flash.

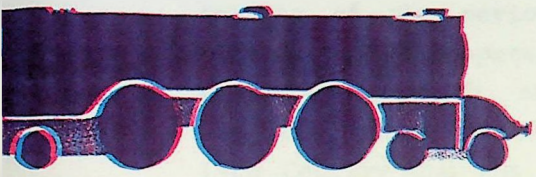
> The message must be given quickly and vividly so that interest is subconsciously retained. The designer constructs, winds the spring, the viewer's eye is caught, the spring is released.
>
> (Reference No. 8)

A poster of merit contains the assets of vitality and attraction. Often ordinary, simple solutions work as well as, or sometimes better than, the modern or extreme approach. Simplified Realism, as is used within the railway posters of the thirties and, I believe, in the posters of Edward Pond, is a highly successful method of simple attraction. By binding attractive images and colourful displays together in the form of bold, flat masses of colour, the maximum effect is achieved. Attraction back to the railway can only be measured in ticket numbers and fiscal terms, but certainly the posters of the 1930's offer an attractive and memorable spot on which to rest the eye.

It is hardly necessary to remind one that flat treatment has been used for wall decoration from the earliest times. So what better way to cover the walls of a city. Bold patterns and large areas of flat colour will draw the eye in the busiest thoroughfare and on the largest hoarding. The thirties sought simplicity, bold dramatic images and a distinctive manner, all of which they achieved through a small number of dedicated artists, such as Frank Newbould

and Tom Purvis. They created posters of style,

> ... with forceful, compact design, memorable and direct, with a minimum of lettering and text.
>
> (Reference No. 9)



Chapter Three:

Two Dimensional Art or Simplified Realism

—a brief history.

Ludwig Hohlwein & the Beggarstaff Brothers

Why the Twenties & Thirties made Simplified Realism acceptable.

Sum-Up

Two Dimensional Art or 'Simplified Realism' - a brief History

The change from a three dimensional realism to a two dimensional flat colour impression was not solely a concept of the twenties and thirties. Although this was the period when it was greatly explored by some of the better poster artists of the period, such as Frank Newbould and Tom Purvis. This supposedly 'new' art form had previously been explored by such artists as the English Beggarstaff Brothers, James Pryde and William Nicholson, in the late 19th Century and the German artist Ludwig Hohlwein in the early part of the 20th Century. All three of these designers were pioneers in the use of large, flat areas of colour and compositions of extreme simplicity. In this chapter I will look at their work and why it only gained popularity in the twenties and thirties and not before. I will use this chapter to set a background to the work of artists such as Newbould and Purvis, by introducing the style with which they chose to work. The following chapter will be given over to their individual posters and they will be used to look at the whole notion of nostalgia and revivalism within today's work of Edward Pond for Network South East.

Ludwig Hohlwein and the Beggarstaff Brothers

Lugwig Hohlwein was an artist who made a success of the return to decorative realism. He made use of the flat pattern and simplified design that had become the essence of good poster imagery with such artists as Toulouse Lautrec and the Beggarstaff Brothers. An example of Hohlwein's work can be seen in (Figure 2). Here the artist presents a realistic image of an English gentleman with his bulldog, by an economy of means. The use of shadow, which is in fact the actual background colour, becomes a decorative element in the composition, although the picture is actually based on careful observation. This exaggeration of light and shade suggests relief in a two dimensional work. Consequently

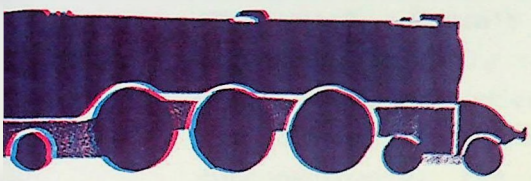
Hohlwein opposes this relief with his use of pattern in the flat areas of textile. This work of Hohlwein's plays on pattern and decoration without becoming totally abstract. He uses flat coloured masses to create imaginitive compositions of realistic scenes. His work is simplistic yet highly decorative, drawing the eye into his represented scenes. The men who gave Hohlwein his inspiration were two English designers by the names Pryde and Nicholson, who later gained fame as the Beggarstaff Brothers. They worked by making paper cut-outs and pasting them onto boards. No lettering was included, the intention being that a suitable title could be added later. This unassuming way of working produced original and unorthodox results. The two men '.... represented the exception in good poster art rather than the general standard of most hoardings ....' at the turn of the 19th Century. (Reference No. 10). The Brothers had to contend with having their work dismissed during the period of its origination. However, after the First World War their work became more generally acceptable. The convention of simplicity and directness that they and other great designers such as Toulouse Lautrec and Lucian Bernhard had established now became what most people regarded as good poster technique. An example of the Brothers work can be seen in (Figure 3) Girl On A Sofa, 1895. The design after first being rejected, was later published in 1914 by the magazine Das Plakat. The picture was printed by the publication in sharp colours that gave accent to the flat pattern in an almost abstract way. This use of sharp colour will be discussed further in Edward Pond's work. Other versions of Girl On A Sofa however, have acquired a more mellow colouring distracting from the abbreviated shorthand of the simple pattern. The work of these two exponents of the two-dimensional style paved the way forward for the railway poster artists, Newbould, Purvis and Brown. English artists who gave the experiments of the Beggarstaff Brothers popular currency.

Why the Twenties and Thirties made Simplified Realism Acceptable

With the rise of so many new and modern art forms at the turn of the 19th Century, the public had become more accustomed to the idea of change. After the devastating effects of the First World War, the public could no longer sit complacently by and refuse to alter their outlooks. Instead, the person from the general public became more adapt at accepting or at least trying to accept, the more sophisticated discoveries of professional artists. This was shown through the initial rejection and subsequent acceptance of the Beggarstaff Brothers work. The advance of the simple economic statement had other justifications as well as timing. The poster was not only being seen by the leisurely passer-by in the street, but by busy commuters, on buses, on trains and in cars. The poster now had to communicate to a public who were constantly on the move. Therefore, the medium had to convey its message in the short space of six seconds. It did this by reducing its images to single elements, capable of being retained in the memory at a glance. Today's society is not that much different to the thirties, in terms of who looks at the poster, although there are additional competitors with the television, increased newspaper and magazine publications, more radio stations and numerous billboard sites. In order to transmit messages with speed in a visual format, many artists chose to reduce the elements of the poster to flat patterns of very simple shape rather than make them take on linear substance. While the line is quicker to record, the flat pattern is easier to produce. The use of flat pattern enables the form to be impressed on the mind like an after-image. The advancement of printing at that time enabled the artist to achieve greater effects with fewer printing stages, leading to less costly production. Simplified realism was a style which greatly suited a small number of printings and stressed the use of tonal colour.

All of the above factors determined a number of well designed posters by a small number of capable designers, in

the intervening years between the wars. The railway promoted this use of good poster design through commissioning artists such as Frank Newbould and Tom Purvis, who both worked for the L.N.E.R. line. The posters were anecdotal, charming and pleasantly attractive and could be considered by some as being quaintly naive. The look at life, which the railway artists of the thirties took, was simplistic and idealistic. Their use of colour, typography, composition and pictorial subject matter were given great consideration to form an overall simplistic effect. Selling a commodity within the format of an advertising poster poses its own problems, but to try and sell something as intangible as travel to a specified destination, is a harder task to transfer into visual terms. To provoke the general public into making a required effort of movement as well as spending money, is perhaps one of the most effective achievements of the transport poster. This was a task which was tackled by the artists of the Golden Age of the Railway Poster and a task which is again being tackled today.



Chapter Four:

Setting down the rules of Good Poster Design.

The Best of the Bunch.

Tom Purvis

Frank Newbould

E Mc Knight Kauffer

Sum-Up

Setting down the rules of good Poster Design

To discuss and compare the posters of Edward Pond for British Rail, with those from the Golden Age of the Railway Poster, a few ground rules have to be set down. In a quote from Graphics World on the subject of Pond's posters, the artist himself disclaims any direct influence from the past, 'The past? I don't think it effects things one iota'. (Reference No. 11). Pond may have effectively set out to create without reference to history, but through my comparisons I intend to show just how, perhaps subconsciously, the historical posters of Newbould and Purvis did affect him. Also the term 'simplified realism' as was applied to much of the better railway art of the thirties, is it now still in practice within Pond's work in a modern and simplified format? Is Pond's attitude towards his work 'a modern approach to the picturesque', painting a picture for the public's enjoyment and visual enticement? Is there in fact a definite link in style between the two periods, or are we just connecting them because of the strong historical connotations that the railway engine has, linking them in memory but not visually.

What I shall discuss in the comparison of the posters are the fundamental rules of good poster design: colour, pictorial subject matter, typography, integration of image and text, plus the concept of two dimensions within the poster; does it work better than a more realistic three dimensions? Poster art has many more facets than picture painting, and becomes more complex in trying to achieve simplicity. It is easier to include everything bar the kitchen sink within a panoramic easel picture, than to have to sit down and edit with care, exactly what is, or is not needed to produce an exciting poster which is both direct and attractive. For this reason an easel picture with type attached does not make a good poster. It is not a good poster for the following reasons - it is too hard to read from a distance, the subtleties of the painting confuse the eye and distract the attention so the message is not conveyed in the quickest and most accurate way. Take for

example, Jack Merriott's study for the Royal Leamington Spa, commissioned by the Western Region Railway (Figure 4); an insipid and discreet painting of a quiet road in the main town. There is an air of snobishness inherent in the detached picture, as Michael Palin put it '.... no riff-raff in Royal Leamington Spa'. (Reference No. 12). No attempt has been made to integrate the text with the image, a practice quite normal among the posters of the time. Some posters, however, could succeed in making the format of adding the text onto the bottom of the poster work quite attractively. Compare the poster in (Figure 4) with a working example of poster art as displayed in (Figure 5), the G.W.R. Royal Leamington Spa poster, Things happen after a Glass of Water at Leamington Spa. The artist, Ronald Lampitt, has made an eye-catching example of the experimental graphic techniques, which were encouraged by the private railway companies in the 1930's. His use of more flat coloured masses, makes for a more simplistic and arresting rendition than that of Jack Merriott's poster. The use of flat, two dimensional colour allows the poster to read clearly from a distance without being unintelligible while near at hand. However, Lampitt's use of colours in this particular poster (Figure 5) is rather disconcerting; they fight for dominance instead of working together as a unified whole. What the poster does succeed in achieving is, an idyllic example of what was offered to the general public as a potential holiday resort by the railway. An advertisement of tranquil, serene beauty, a painted dream of escapism which depicted perhaps, exactly what the holiday maker wanted.

The Best of the Bunch?

To introduce what I consider to be the best comparison posters for Edward Pond's work, I will first give a brief outline of the major artists history. Those major artists are Tom Purvis and Frank Newbould along with an input by E. McKnight Kauffer.

Tom Purvis 1888 - 1957

Tom Purvis was born in Bristol, the son of a sailor who later turned marine painter. He trained at Camberwell School of Art as well as with Sickert and Degas. After six years in advertising, he became freelance and designed his first independent poster for Dewar's whisky in 1907. The major commissions which followed were mostly executed for the London and North Eastern Railway and are among his most renowned works. Another major employer was Austin Reed the clothier, for whom he produced many striking posters in the line of Hohlwein, the German artist. Purvis had a great fondness for figure drawing and a large majority of his railway work presents splashing holiday-makers enjoying their exursions by train. Purvis will perhaps be most renowned for his use of flat bold colours, which so dramatically brought his pictures to life and evoked a holiday atmosphere all of their own.

Frank Newbould

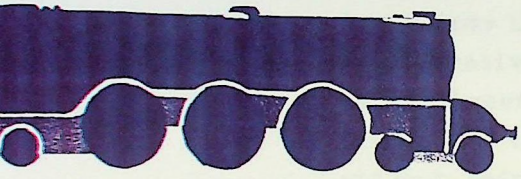
Frank Newbould was an English artist in the same mould as Tom Purvis. Their styles are quite similar in their use of flat areas of colour, however their subject matter does vary. The L.N.E.R's manager W.M. Teasdale, was acutely conscious of the necessity for a high pictorial quality of poster work, but he chose the avant-garde rather than the academic approach. Of the artists he selected, Frank Newbould was one. Frank had a knack in capturing the quiet dignity of ordinary folk going about their everyday business. Even his holiday-makers appear leisurely and at ease compared with the boisterous antics of Tom Purvis's trippers. Newbould illustrated both figurative and landscape scenes, with his expert play of light and shade, his somber masses and his delicate drawing skills, creating a simplified realism.

E. McKnight Kauffer 1890 - 1954

Edward McKnight Kauffer was one of the most talented and prolific designers of the 1920's and the 1930's. He is probably most famous for his London Underground poster work, which was commissioned by a long-standing patron, Frank

Pick. Pick first encouraged Kauffer's work by commissioning him to produce posters for the Great Western Railway line, and it is in these posters that I am interested. His designs are a compromise between the formal and decorative art movements and in his early railway posters we can see his tendancy to use flat, simple, shapes and colours to promote a solid but single element. Kauffer was also responsible for the monogram of the Great Western Railway, showing his adept hand at typography. The artist Paul Nash, writing in 1935, considered Kauffer 'responsible above anyone else for the change in attitude towards commercial art in this country'. (Reference No. 13)

While other artists do make a contribution to the work of the twenties and thirties, being used here to compare and contrast with Pond's modern day posters, the above three artists have the most significant relevance. Other artists whose work will be used as catalysts for discussion are: Kenneth Shoesmith, J. Littlejohns, Leonard Richmond, Frank Sherwin and H.G. Gawthorne. The following chapter will be devoted to an analytical discussion of the posters, both past and present. Details of design, the question of nostalgia and revivalism and the adopted corporate policy of Network South East - Regional Identity, will all be looked at in a detailed light and assessed for their success, or lack of it.



Chapter Five:

Poster Analysis & Comparison

Pictorial Content

Typography: Integration of Text & Image

Colour

Two & Three Dimensions

Sum-Up

Poster Analysis and Comparison

In the production of attractive railway posters, the artist is limited by certain practical requirements. The better the artist, the less he will be limited by these requirements. As Mr. J. Littlejohns, a railway poster artist from the 1930's, quoted

> Apart from the artist's instinctive desire to make an expressive decoration, the problem seems to me to be threefold - (1) to attract visitors to the place, (2) to make the poster "tell" at a distance without being unintelligble near at hand, (3) to make the most effective use of a limited number of colours. (Reference No. 14)

All of the above three stipulations quoted by J. Littlejohns are some of the requirements which the railway poster artist, both in the 1930s and 1980s, had to adhere to. Add to these the effective use of typography, integration of text with image and suitable pictorial subject matter and you will have the breakdown of how I am about to analyse Edward Pond's contemporary posters. This chapter will be broken down into four main headings in the following order, (1) Pictorial Content, (2) typography, integration of text and image, (3) colour and (4) two and three dimensions. The chapter will then be summed up by assessing the pros and cons of today's railway poster and to see if nostalgia played an important role in their success or failure.

Pictorial Content

Throughout the history of railway poster design, the pictorial content or subject matter has not drastically changed. In the early posters, just after the train came into being, typography played a major role, the posters being little more than time-tables and price sheets. After the train began to achieve a modicum of popularity, the poster came into its own right. By 1890, the old typographical railway notice had virtually been exhausted. With greater competition between rival railway companies for passengers, new advertising approaches were called for. These new approaches fell generally into two categories,

(1) the figurative poster, with bathing beauties or families holidaying together at coastal resorts, and (2) the scenic view of a coastal resort, spa or holiday area. It is the scenic view approach which has been revived in the posters of Edward Pond and, therefore, warrants indepth discussion.

In the 1920's and 1930's 'it was an acceptd practice that colour posters were used mainly for advertising those places which would continue to enjoy a long-term patronage from the public, ... ' (Reference No. 15). These places were usually coastal holiday resorts, which are still active today and are, again, being advertised through the work of Edward Pond. Scenic views were chosen to represent a resort, often because of the production costs of a poster. The cost was shared between the railway company and the resort authorities. This meant, in practice, that the design, once it had been originated by the railway company, had to meet with the approval of the local Council before it could be released. This practice, by and large, restricted the artist to representational views which would show the resort to its best advantage. In Pond's work today, the railway has again chosen to show landmarks or scenic views which represent the chosen resort visited by the railway. However, the main difference between the policies of the two decades is that the 1930's chose to portray the general, while the 1980's strove to show the particular. The general being, panoramic views which encompassed a mass of detail and often people or families enjoying their surrounds within that detail. The particular with Edward Pond is specific landmarks, taking one identifying feature from the resort and using it to represent the whole area. I intend to show this difference of general and particular through comparing five of Pond's posters with their counterparts from the thirties and how the two decades chose different subjects to represent the same resorts.

Nostalgia springs to mind when you look at the posters of Edward Pond, and it is hard to lift the scales or retrospection from your eyes. This may, in part, be due to the connotations that the locations of Dover, Brighton, Isle of Wight, Hastings and Windsor conjure up in the imagination,

connotations of resorts and landmarks which were in their heydey during the period of the 1930's. Look at Pond's poster for the Isle of Wight (Figure 6.) and compare it with Frank Newbould's Ventnor from 1922. (Figure 7). Both posters represent the same holiday resort, but in two different ways, the earlier poster representing the general and the contemporary poster showing the particular. Newbould's approach is of a composite view of the resort, showing sea, beach, cliffs and town in a flat simplistic colour representation. The view is scenic and tranquil with no sign of life except for the gently lapping waves at the bottom right-hand corner of the poster. Pond's poster is far more simplistic in its approach, using the title Needles and Sandcastle as its theme. Pond has used a particular focus point to represent the resort and has edited his view to two main points, the sandcastle and the needles in the background. The use of colour is far more limited in this poster compared with Newbould's Ventnor. Pond has restricted himself to five pure colours with no tone deviations, keeping the overall view simplistic and flat. In both posters, no attempt is made to create a third dimension or depth, the artists are happy to keep the posters simple and decorative. Pond cleverly introduces an element of life into his work through the use of the sandcastle in the centre of the composition. Some person had to be present to construct the sandcastle, although no direct reference is made to him, or her, in the image. This use of the sandcastle could have been inspired by a work of Tom Purvis (Figure 8.) in his Safe Sands edition. Purvis used the sandcastle as the focus point in his railway poster, as we can see by the congregating children at play around it. The same purist treatment of colour is used by Purvis, the blue of the sea and the golden ochre of the sand being remarkably similar to that in Pond's poster. A distinguishing feature of the work of Tom Purvis is his gamboling figures which feature in almost all of his railway posters, apart from one, Robin Hood's Bay. (Figure 9).

Hastings is another resort which has been advertised by both periods and shows two different views of the area. Hastings and St. Leonards by Leonard Richmond (Figure 10) is an early

ploy at using two dimensions in a poster. Although the poster is not a true representation of Simplified Realism, its subject matter is of use in comparison with Edward Pond's poster (Figure 11). Richmond, in his work from the 1930's, has chosen to mix a specific landmark with a scenic view in the ascendancy, combining the particular and the general in the one format. This combination is distracting as the two images fight for dominance. The ruin from the battle of Hastings is not solid or strong enough in colour to take control of the poster and work as a focus point, while the background scene is of little consequence in promoting the area. In general, the scene is a disordered attempt at combining the two ideas of general and particular in the one poster. The use of colour is confusing, appearing as a mish-mash of tones and flat colours jumbled together to bewilder the eye. The artist, Richmond, seems not to have made up his mind altogether about the use of two or three dimensions, leading to a poor quality poster. On the other hand, Pond's poster of Hastings is a visual success, in terms of its composition and colouring. The strong verticals of the fishing shacks along Hastings' beach dominate the centralised composition of the poster. While Pond continues to use his flat colours and simplified shapes, he appears to have taken simplified realism a step forward. This step forward, in my opinion, is his introduction of texture, while still keeping the image simple. He uses flat, black lines to suggest the texture and pattern of the strutted timber planks which make up the fishing huts and soft, flat white speckles on the yellow beach surface, to create a tactile quality. He contrasts these areas of texture with the strong flat colours of the background, achieving a harmonious balance. With this balance in Pond's work, one is reminded of the work of the German artist Ludwig Hohlwein, who was discussed in an earlier introduction, Chapter Three, a link with the forerunner of simplified realism! Pond's choice of image to represent Hastings is rather dubious. One wonders why he did not use the ruin of the Norman castle from the historical battle of Hastings. Perhaps his reasoning might be that something as visually attractive as the fishing huts, which line one end

of the beach, are a strong enough image to attract new visitors. He is using a fresh image for fresh visitors, instead of relying on a time-worn historical ruin. Pond is here turning his back on history and the pictorial subject matter from the railway posters of the 1930's. However, Hastings will always be remembered in history as the site of the famous battle in 1066 and held in the memory of the British public as a monument to their nationality. Therefore, why bat against the British and their nationality? Again, Pond introduces life into his poster through the strong white images of seagulls hovering over the sheds. Could these white birds circling be a hidden metaphor for the dove of peace, flying in a resort which is renowned, perhaps, only for its fighting history? Is Pond introducing more into his posters than just simplified realism and area landmarks? Is he, in fact, producing some social and historical comments on his posters, as suggested in my comments on his Hastings image?

Brighton is a popular and long-standing holiday resort on the South coast of England. Its pavilion in the centre of the town has been the subject of much discussion and representation. Pond's depiction of the pavilion in (Figure 12) breaks with his use of simplified realism in the rest of the series. The format of the poster remains the same as the others, keeping flat, strong colours in the background, blue at the top for the sky and green at the bottom for the grass. However, his centralised image of the pavilion is left white, with the soft lead or crayon drawing taking the colour's place. The whole image takes on a life of its own through the simple, but accurate, drawing technique. The image is totally flat, with no attempt made to achieve depth of field. The poster has a child-like atmosphere created by the crayon drawing, and evokes an aura of playfulness and fun.

Pond has been quite astute in breaking with flat colour shapes for this poster. As you look at his line drawing, you perceive just how intricate the building and its decoration actually are. To attempt to make a collage of flat,

coloured shapes in order to depict the pavilion would, in fact, only succeed in destroying the intricate detail or else become over-fussy in portraying its finer points. Pond has managed to achieve simplicity in colour and form, with his expressive outline pattern conveying detail and ornateness in a matter-of-fact manner. Could this matter-of-fact manner, which is Pond's childlike crayon drawing, again be a social comment on the pavilion and its expensive decorative upkeep. Pond perhaps, in my opinion, is trying to understate about quite an over-stated building. A British Taj Mahal in a sea-side holiday resort, posing as a decorative element of construction is quite an amusing sight. A building which should appear in the heat and sunshine of India, a country which is on the other side of the world, instead stands resolutely in the fog and rain which Britain experiences so regularly. An amusing sight which has been treated by Pond, in a playful and amusing manner. Pond's choice of an individual landmark, compounds Network South East's policy of promoting the particular, as against a poster for the same resort which was executed in the 1930's. This poster conveys a general, feeling, atmosphere and scenic view (Figure 13). The artist H.G. Gawthorne, while showing us his adeptness at handling colour and flat, simplified realism, does not succeed in arousing a specific interest in the resort of Brighton. The image is all too similar to other posters for other sea-side resorts, take for example (Figure 14) a poster for Seaton in Devon, by Kenneth D. Shoesmith. Both posters (Figures 13 and 14) give general views of the beach in the resort, the only difference being the use of the human figure in the Brighton poster, to give added interest. This use of the human figure was a strong design feature in the railway posters of the thirties. A feature which was not drawn upon in Network South East's advertising. The Brighton advertising poster of Mr. Gawthorne is an example of an insipid view brought to life only through its animated figures. The image is a pretty picture, but quite a dull and monotonous pretty picture. This beautifying of resorts, which the 1930's railway artists did in order to make up for their unattractive appearance, was a common earmark of the decade. As M.J. Littlejohns, a railway

poster artist from the thirties, puts it

> The first part of the problem is generally the most embarrassing. Some resorts are so unattractive to an artist that he wonders why any one could endure such a holiday. He is tempted to beautify in a manner that would constitute a fraud, disappoint those he has persuaded, and discredit his employers. (Reference No 16)

So, if a resort did not sport an outstanding or distinctive feature, a beach landscape or a portrait of bathing figures was used instead. Mr. Littlejohns did exactly just this in his posters for Whitley Bay (Figure 15) and Felixtowe (Figure 16). Both posters are typical examples of distracting the viewer's eye away from the topography of the resort and focussing it instead on bathers enjoying the beach and sea. Quite valid in producing attractive posters, but ducking the issue of promoting a particular resort. The two posters produced by J. Littlejohns could quite easily promote any other two sea-side resorts by just changing the name posted beneath the image. Edward Pond's posters have managed to steer clear of becoming too general, by promoting a distinctive feature of the resort. These posters generally could not be used to advertise other resorts by simply changing the name at the bottom of the image. Each image is personal and identifiable to a particular town and place, all of which are visited by the train.

The last two posters which I will discuss under this subheading are of Dover (Figure 17) and Windsor (Figure 18). Both posters, executed by Pond, have had their subjects aired to the public in previous works. Two of these works are from the railway posters of the thirties, Dover by Leonard Richmond (Figure 19) and Windsor by Frank Sherwin (Figure 20). With these posters there is a strong link between the two periods of the thirties and the eighties, as far as railway posters are concerned. Their choice of subjects to promote the resorts are the link between them. The Dover poster of Pond draws on the famous iamge of the white cliffs and castle as does the poster made by Leonard Richmond. One major difference between the two is Richmond's

choice of a general, landscape view, encompassing sea, pier and sailing boats. Pond, however, has chosen to hone in on the one focus point, cliff and castle. Again, the point of general versus particular is apparent when looking at the posters from the two periods. The Dover poster (Figure 17) is a striking image, where the cliffs dominate the strong vertical slope of the page. Texture is used to simulate the tactile quality of the stone cliffs, adding an extra feature to the image while still remaining simple. This texture is produced by a flat white mottle breaking up the background grey, creating a decorative surface to offset the strong flat colour of the sky and sea. The same method is used to simulate the stone walls of the castle. The whole appearance of the poster is slightly foreign and would put one in mind of a French Foreign legion castle in the desert. This is, perhaps, because of the stark quality of the image against the bright red of a setting sun. The colours used amount to four, yet they create a dynamic and rich poster which attracts the eye. Red, white and blue are the predominating colours, along with grey and they add a nationalistic flavour to the poster. This feeling of nationalism is appropriate, I feel, due to the historical and nationalistic connotations that the name Dover conjures up in the mind. Vera Lynn has immortalised the place in her song about the White Cliffs of Dover, a song which was used to remind the army of home during the Second World War. This strong referral to history that Pond uses in the majority of his posters, apart from Margate (Figure 21), is again apparent in the poster for Windsor (Figure 18). Windsor Castle and the river Thames are, perhaps, one of the most potent and enduring images of England and her monarchy. There is no question about nationalism playing a part in both Pond's poster and in that of Frank Sherwin's (Figure 20). Both artists have incorporated the Union Jack, which flies atop the castle, into their images and even if one is uneducated about the Royal Family, it would not take too many guesses to see that the castle is a residence for the monarch. I believe the use of nationalism has a lot to do with nostalgia, as both of their roots lie in history. The British public have a sentimental feeling for their nationalism and their monarchy, and they have a great reverence for anything associated with the King/Queen and their country's history.

Nostalgia and nationalism are both feelings or emotions which, at times, become intertwined. The two are intertwined within most of the work of Edward Pond for the railway, as exemplified in Windsor Castle (Figure 18). Pond is recording a historical and nationalistic landmark within a format of poster design that has drawn inspiration from the productive decade of the 1930's. He is appealing to the public's love of their monarchy and their pride in their visual history. Both posters for Windsor show the river and her swans along with the huge looming trees that border her banks. The style of imagery used by the two artists differs greatly. Where Sherwin's is more sugary and pretty, Pond's poster is powerful and more colourful. Decoration is used throughout most of Pond's work and is a strong visual eye-catcher when juxtaposed against the flat colour of the background. Pond introduces small visual elements, such as the swans in the river Thames, to draw the eye even further into the image. One point which does detract, I feel, from Pond's work is his constant centring of images. He fits his illustrations into the poster area using the same format each time, centre, centre, centre. Looking at Frank Sherwin's poster, I wonder would the slight off-centre format not suit the image better, creating more movement for the eye to follow.

To sum up the comparison of Pond's posters within this sub-heading, it would be naive of me not to produce some critical remarks on the poster's layout and format. One of the major faults I found within Pond's work is the aforementioned habit of centring images within the structure of the poster. Of the five poster's discussed previously, all have centred images. Although movement is inserted into these posters through the animated use of animal forms or drawing technique, the structure of these posters could provide more adequate scope for the eye to move about. The style of poster design, flat simple shapes, strength of colour and decorative embellishments, such as texture and pattern, are completely adequate to hold the poster collection together as a unit. A variation of structure would not have torn this unity apart, but would have served to act as an added feature of design, letting the image dictate the

poster's internal order. While I believe Pond has picked some attractive images to advertise the resorts, he has, in a way, undermined this good choice by not giving adequate attention to layout and structural movement. Two good examples of structure within the poster are, Tom Purvis' Whitley Bay (Figure 22) and Frank Sherwin's Somerset (Figure 23). The latter, Sherwin's Somerset, positions the main feature of bridge and house on the left side of the poster, using the bridge as a lead-in for the eye. As your eye crosses the bridge, you are struck by the strong vertical of the chimney, which is parallel to the edge of the poster and is used to break up the foliage at the rear of the house. Your eye then continues up over the remainder of the bridge to be greeted by the gently rolling hills. This positioning of the major feature of the left indicates exactly where your eye should start in the picture and where it should then continue to go. Again in Whitley Bay, the image is weighted to the left, allowing the wave to give a strong movement upwards from right to left. The interesting cropping of the male figure makes sure your eye does not leave the image but, instead, is propelled back down to the type and the breaking wave. Even though Pond's posters contain only one major element, the potential for eye movement would have been increased by more thoughtful positioning and cropping. Instead, the images of Network South East hit you head-on, giving a striking first impression but, perhaps, losing visual interest on a third or fourth viewing. To add to this lack of movement, I believe that Pond's typography has been given poor consideration in the overall poster design. This adds to a somewhat static appearance inherent in the posters and will be discussed in the next sub-heading.

Typography : Integration of text and image

As legibility is the goal of any poster's typography, any lettering that is easily read and that fits with the image portrayed, is obviously good typography. Typography is not just an added extra of a poster but an integral element of good poster design. In this part of the chapter, I will study Edward Pond's use of type, its colour, spacing and

position within the overall format, and how he has, or has not, integrated the type with his image. I will compare his use of lettering with specific examples of poster typography from the 1930's, and look at both periods' design attitude towards functional type.

Looking at the typography which Pond has chosen for his collection of posters, we can see that it falls into two main styles, (1) a decorative style which is reminiscent of Roman, carved lettering and (2) a more robust, chunky serif face, where the difference between verticals and horizontals is less pronounced. Pond has kept both faces sans serif, a trait quite usual for poster design, as this style of type is more easily legible than a serif face. Style number one can be seen in (Figure 24), the poster for Portsmouth, and style number two in (Figure 25), the poster for Margate. It is not quite clear to me why Pond chose to use two styles instead of just one. Perhaps he was marking out the three posters where he used the larger, chunky face : Margate, Hastings and Windsor. All three of these posters contain a lot of decorative pattern and are quite striking in appearance. Perhaps Pond felt a bolder type face was called for in order to offset the strong pattern in the image. Margate, for example, is a mass of converging coloured lines, overlaid by the black rung pattern of the roller- coaster. In order to gain strength over this image, the typography has been made large and robust in order to fight for dominance. It does not appear that the lettering for the Margate poster was included in the overall design and so, weakens the strength of the exciting image. This poster is not a unit, as both image and type fight for command instead of working in harmony. Perhaps here we see Pond as textile designer, through his bad use of type and his poor attention to unity of design. His concept of type is not that of a poster artist, but that of a novice's approach. Again, in Pond's use of style number one, as shown in (Figure 24), a poster for Portsmouth, the type does not appear to have been considered in the overall design. Here the type face has a decorative quality to its lettering and seems to have drawn inspiration from the carved Roman letter. The use of a type

face which has both thick and thin strokes does not lend well to legibility, as the narrower strokes tend to get lost in the background when viewed from a distance. In certain posters, the choice of a Roman-based type face is quite suitable and in keeping with the historical images used. Such posters are Winchester, the Cathedral (Figure 26) Chichester, Market Cross (Figure 27) and Portsmouth, Victory and Warrier (Figure 24). However, the Roman-based type face which Pond has chosen is not compatible with the strong nostalgic images and serves only to distract the eye from the destination being advertised. An example of a compatible type face with image can be seen, in my opinion, in the poster designs of E. McKnight Kauffer, (Figures 28 to 30). In all three railway posters, Kauffer has included the type in his overall designs, working the two together as a whole. In (Figure 30) Great Western to Devon's Moors, the background colour is used to form the type by adding highlights to the edges of the capital letters. The type face is simple and clear with small words, such as TO, taking up less space, in order to make way for the name of the railway and its destination. The feel for the informational type is that it is just as important as the image itself, and is part of the overall style.

All of Pond's type is centred in the structure of the poster, directly beneath the image. As I said earlier, this centring adds to a static quality which fights with the colourful images that make the posters successful. This centring of type by Pond could have drawn its inspiration from the railway posters of the thirties. If you look at (Figures 31 to 33) you will see that all three posters have their type centred under the main image. The Ramsgate poster could just be a pleasant image with a strip of paper containing type pasted across the base of the picture. This is also true of some of Pond's posters, where a band of colour has been drawn across the bottom of the poster to create an area for the typography. In the remainder of his posters, the resort name appears in a colour picked out from the image, at the bottom centre of the advertisement, (Figure 34). No attempt at integration of type and image

has been made in the railway posters of Bridlington and Ramsgate. The type has merely been adjoined to the image like a gilt frame. In Pond's posters, also, no substantial attempt at including the typography as part of the design has been made. It just appears that type has been stuck on at the last minute. As Pond has been so daring in his treatment of historical landmarks, one wishes he could have paid more attention to the positioning of his type, as he seems to have undone his good work through bad typography. Perhaps if Pond had noticed some of the more successful plays at typography from the 1930's, his visual impact with the posters would have been twice as strong. These more successful plays at typography are shown in the work of Tom Purvis (Figure 35), Frank Newbould (Figure 36) and the Llandrindod Wells poster (Figure 37). The poster by Tom Purvis for Cruden Bay, uses a simple sans serif face in capitals to extend across the top right of the image. Purvis has obviously constructed his image in order to include the type as part of his design. All the rest of the information forms a horizontal strip across the bottom of the poster, much like the typography in Pond's posters. The strong type in the top right corner serves to balance the large group of spectators on the left of the golfer and forms a crescent-shaped movement from bottom to top, following the arc of the golfer's swing.

Newbould's use of typography is quite modern in its approach. The face is open and angular and forms an interesting contrast with the smooth flat shapes that make up the picnic scene. The line of type follows the figures' line of movement across the poster, extending from the left edge right over to the far side. The name, North Berwick, takes up almost a quarter of the poster's area, but yet is not so blocky as to dominate or obscure the image. If, in Pond's poster of Southend, (Figure 34), the type had, too, extended across the full width of the image, a more useful line of movement would have been created to occupy the eye. This line of type would have drawn attention to the strong horizontal of the background houses and sheds and would have offset the vertical lines of the ship's masts quite attractively. Finally, in the poster for Llandrindod Wells, we see

a quite rare use of script writing in a railway poster. This type, although not situated in the best of positions, has still managed to find its way into the image. The choice of type is in keeping with the oriental but fluid style of the poster and in no way is obtrusive. The brush type script, which is outlined in the colour of the setting sun, is reminiscent of Chinese hand writing and adds authenticity to the feel of the poster. Although I do not know what is quite so oriental about a Welsh village, it is still a step forward for typography in the thirties.

The overall view of the typography in Pond's posters is, on the whole, dismal. Poor attention has been paid to type choice and, apparently, no attention has been given to the integration of this type with the image. Typography in a poster is fundamental to its success, as its job is to state clearly what the advertisement is selling. As Fred P. Phillips, a poster artist, puts it,

> A poster should be as fit for purpose as a chair or a teapot. Its job is to advertise something, and the lettering should state clearly what it advertises. (Reference No 17).

While the efforts of the Bauhaus and others in the integration of text and picture gained some achievement with certain poster artists, such as Kauffer E. McKnight, the artist Edward Pond seems to have escaped their influence. Here we see how Pond's borrowing from the bad typography of the 1930's has backfired in his shallow application of poor type to a good image. It appears that Pond does not consider the functional type of a poster as having the same importance as its image. One point which Pond has got right is his use of colour for the type. Bright red against dark navy, white on blue, wine on grey and yellow on blue are some of the type on background combinations. In all posters, Pond picks out a colour already used in the image for the lettering. Sometimes the type is a strong vivid colour against a paler, more subdued background, like bright red type on a pale navy base. However, the colour is of little importance if the actual lettering, itself, is not strong enough to be legible at a distance or compatible enough with

the image to work as a unit. While Pond appears to have fished in the sea of nostalgia and revivalism, it seems he has hooked onto some antiquated and defunct ideas, like the idea, or lack of idea, behind his typography.

Colour

Colour, as we have seen in the work of the Beggarstaff Brothers, plays an important role in the way a poster is perceived. Colour can stir the emotions to be happy, sad, angry or peaceful. It can also alter dramatically the message which an image sends out. By using sharp vivid colours, a work can be made abstract or decorative as seen in Girl on a Sofa (Figure 3). Good colouring is paramount to an advertising poster's success. As Leslie Carr, a poster designer, wrote of colour,

> Good colour is an achievement, and with the insistent demand for strong arresting design, the subtlety that separates good from blatant colour calls for a great amount of experiment before complete success is attained. (Reference No. 18).

Within this heading, I will look at the treatment Pond has given his posters, and try to see if they have any similarity with colour railway posters from the thirties. Is the use of strong, flat colour, which enhanced the simplicity of design of Purvis' and Kauffer's railway work, an integral portion of Pond's posters? Does the colouring within the landmark posters of Network South East, suggest attractive destinations for the traveller to visit? Are these posters an evocative enticement for the public?

An example of good colouring can be seen in Kauffer's poster, The North Downs (Figure 38). The illustration is fresh and open and the colouring supports the drawing's approach, clear simplicity. Kauffer uses a crisp green and light orange to complement each other, causing a play on light and dark. You can almost feel the hills rolling gently away in the distance, although there is no actual sculpting with light. Tones are suggested through the juxtaposition of the green against different depths of orange. A minimum use of black creates a decorative effect on which

the eye can play and leads the eye back and forward over the fields and hills. Compare this with the poster Dorking by Motor-Bus (Figure 39) by Gregory Brown. Brown's image is extremely similar in subject but drastically different in terms of atmosphere. The rural landscape is dull and uninspiring due to the overuse of brown in the foreground. The eye is not drawn into the picture, but instead repelled by the uninspiring colour. All of the shades of green and orange are wishy-washy when compared with those in (Figure 38). If asked which destination I would visit, I would most certainly choose the rolling hills of the North Downs. I have made my choice by looking at Kauffer's poster, and have been enticed through his fresh approach to colour and his vivid, decorative imagery. His colour supports his image, bringing an added dimension of life to a scenic view and animating the pattern-like quality of his drawing.

Throughout the twenties and thirties, railway artists made a large output of brightly coloured rural and sea-side resort landscapes. Most of these posters contained vivid, well-defined tones that were easily translated into a lithographic poster. The monopoly, however, did not belong solely to the railway artist. London Transport commissioned many such works from artists, such as Kauffer E. McKnight (Figure 40) and Dorothy Dix (Figure 41). These two posters are examples of simplified realism at its best. Both posters are based on actual observation but differ themsleves from scenic paintings through their bold, vibrant use of colour. The artists have not been afraid to draw dramatic attention to their works through strong contrasts of colours. Red and green both predominate in the posters and act as a catalyst for the eye. This strong use of colour lends itself well to the style of image-making used. The flat areas open up space for the contrasting colours to play against each other. This use of contrasting colours bouncing off each other can be seen in Pond's poster for Southend (Figure 34). The vivid violet blue of the sea and sky is cut open by the strong horizontal slash of crimson pink which forms the foundation and rooves of the neutral grey houses. The eye is given a quiet resting spot in the white sails of the yachts, while

movement is created through the textural white strokes beneath the boats, indicating gentle waves. The jewel-like colours placed on the top of the yacht's sails act as a decoration and finishing focus point. After the eye has rested on the white sails, it moves upwards to land on the small squares of colour. These squares help to relate the sailing boats out in the mass of blue sea back to the land at the rear of the picture. Colour manages to unite this picture as a whole, linking sea with land and movement with stability. The contrasting colours of pink and blue are nicely toned so that they do not jar the eye. One poor choice of colour, I feel, is the yellow which is used in the type. The colour tends to jostle or disturb the serene and peaceful image and is quite acidic in tone. The overall colour balance of the image is disturbed, although Pond does try to introduce some of the colour into the sailing boats. Pond's strong use of blue for the sea is reminiscent of Tom Purvis' collection of posters for L.N.E.R. (Figures 42 to 46). This collection of posters form a series of which (Figure 8) is the missing link. Here too, Purvis uses a smooth white ripple on the water to create movement, like Pond has used his textured white lines for exactly the same effect in his poster for Southend. Both artists have chosen boats to promote the sea and Purvis' Sea Fishing (Figure 45) has much of the same sunny tranquil feelings of Pond's Regatta/Old Leigh poster. Another poster of Pond's which has much of the same colour treatment as Purvis' beach and sea scenes, is the Isle of Wight. The yellow/golden ochre of the sand set against the deep blue of the sea is a vivid contrast and conjures up feelings of hot sun and soft sand with the cool embrace of the water just waiting. Both Pond's poster for the Isle of Wight and Purvis' poster, Safe Sands (Figure 8) show a scene that entices you to just step into the image and relax, forget your cares and holiday beside the deep blue sea. Colour has been used to great extent in order to extoll those feelings from the public. Vivid, rich hues excite the eye and draw our attention, and what our attention is drawn to, are the wistful images of holiday resorts that we think only exist in our dreams. Granted, it would not be often that you would see an English

beach glowing with such sunny colour. But what these posters offer is a world to escape to, a haven of retreat where, perhaps, reality is of little consequence.

One poster of Pond's which stands out from the rest of the collection is that of Winchester Cathedral (Figure 26). Here Pond has broken away from the use of flat colour, except for the solid light grey background of the image. What Pond has used to great effect is colour and use of texture. There appears to be a cool angelic sort of atmosphere emanating from the cathedral, quite an appropriate feel for the House of God. Pond has, again, animated the poster through his textured cut-out images of fluffy white clouds, a symbol often associated with angels and heaven. To warm up the white of the cathedral against the grey background, the artist has introduced a slight tint of yellow and pink. These colours are then picked up on with the marbling effect of the stained glass windows. Here we see how Pond has managed to tackle intricate detail in a simplified manner, by his simple use of colour and pattern to depict the stained windows. While this poster is not a formal representation of simplified realism, it makes a just attempt at portraying a detailed building in a direct and simple manner. It is quite an achievement of Pond's to have introduced elements of pure colour texture into his posters without detracting from the direct and simple approach of both colour and drawing.

Two and Three Dimensions

Two-dimensional posters are successful, primarily because they are based on fundamental factors of advertising display, which are directness of image, attractive colour and simplicity of design. This style of two dimensions appears to suit the railway advertisements, as their posters usually are based on detailed views of land and sea, while some contain family scenes. Instead of producing pure representational picture paintings of the railway's destination, many artists have chosen to simplify the scenes in order for the eye to grasp an overall image of limited detail. A good example of a typical railway poster from the 1930's is

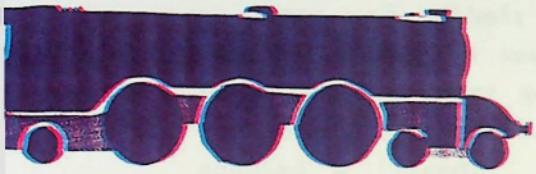
Helensburgh (Figure 47). This poster shows the style of simplified realism, using colour to make patterns upon an otherwise uneventful promenade. The artist has added numerous figures and they, with their long grey shadows, add interest to the picture. Another form of the use of two dimensions can be seen in (Figure 48), a poster for Cleethorpes by Frank Newbould. Here Newbould has applied the style to three figure forms in order to maintain them as part of an overall decorative effect. The colour is crisp and clear, defining the edges of the flat areas of pattern-making. These two posters show us how well the style of simplified realism suits both the figure and the scenic view, both of which make up the bulk of the railway's advertising image.

Not only did the railway use this style for their advertising but so, too, did the London Underground and a ship firm, Orient Cruises (Figures 49, 50, 51). All three posters show the flat decorative landscape scenes which were so common in the travel posters of the twenties and thirties. With unusual cropping or layout this simple style could turn an ordinary view into quite a striking image, containing fun, colour and atmosphere (see Figure 49). One poster from today which achieves an aura of fun and laughter is Pond's Margate image (Figure 21). Here the use of colour and flat pattern create a patchwork of movement and vibrancy. The image is quite abstract in its strong and sharp use of colour, while the flat lines of the roller-coaster swirl about to create the speeding movement of the car. I cannot help likening this image to some of Matisse's colourful paper cut-outs. Both Pond's use of colour and technique of representation in this particular poster, (Figure 21) evokes the playful nature that was so reminiscent of the great Fauve. One note about the Margate poster is that I feel the heavy black car in the centre of the picture dominates the colourful play of the swirling lines. Perhaps if Pond had chosen another colour for the coaster car, the poster would appear more unified and harmonious.

The last poster I will talk about in this section is that of Chichester (Figure 27) by Edward Pond. This poster is quite unusual among the series for its strong use of colour in the background. Here the use of simplified realism is quite apparent in the two-tone background. The strong clash of red and orange tends to push the image of the market cross out of the picture towards the viewer. In the detailing of the market cross, Pond has used far more careful placement of texture and structural lines which, in a manner, detracts from the impact of the image. Pond could have afforded to make the image larger, so that it dominated the background instead of the background dominating it. On the whole, though, I think the poster belongs in the series due to its striking impact on first sight. Pond has managed, with his two dimensions, to create a realism that is both fun and appealing to the public. His posters draw them to a realistic train destination that has taken on a new and more attractive form of nostalgia, which revives the colourful, amusing venue posters of the railway from the twenties and thirties.

I believe Pond's railway posters of today will work. They will work by attracting the eye of the commuter and the leisurely passer-by. One thing which I can not measure, is the fiscal success of these advertisements and only time will tell on that score. Pond has chosen landmarks or scenes that are indisputably linked with the place name, such as Brighton and the Pavilion and Dover and the White Cliffs. He offers a connection for the public to hold on to in their memory, linking the railway line to historical landmarks and pleasant old English retreats. He helps the public to remember the train by offering symbols of English heritage, culture and history, in his attractive picture posters. Pond has linked his posters, perhaps unwittingly, to the railway posters of the twenties and thirties through his treatment of images, his colour and his choice of subject matter. One aspect of train travel, however, which very few artists touched upon was the actual train and railway itself. Cassandre, the French artist, was one of the few men along with Frank Newbould (Figure 52) who created posters which

extolled the virtues of the railway through the depiction of sleek streamlined trains. Pond has not chosen this route for his advertisements, as the subject matter offers little scope for historical and nationalistic content. It would be just one rail line or one train after another. While Pond's chosen subjects may have been used before, this artist lends a new contemporary air to them. This air is brought about through the exciting attack of colour, the bravery of using images in isolation and the strong feature of decoration - not being afraid to show the bastions of English history in a playful and decorative manner. It must be pointed out that one main feature of the posters from the thirties was not apparent in Pond's designs. This feature is the use of the human figure as shown in (Figures 53 and 54). While most posters from the 1930's contained some reference to the human figure, hardly any at all has been made by Edward Pond. This lack of the human body in no way detracts from the appeal of his posters, as it leaves scope for the animation of his drawing technique to take over. Pond, instead of using the person to bring life into his pictures, inserts small symbols of movement in the natural surrounds, e.g. waves in the sea, clouds in the sky and the flag blowing in the wind atop Windsor Castle. He also introduces animals into the posters to help animate the scene, and birds are the creatures he uses. Pond's references to life appear to be subtle and you have to study the picture to notice them. This subtleness is in stark contrast to the strength of his colour and flat images. This opposition of subtleness and strength provides and interesting contrast for the eye and mind to scramble over. It makes the effect of Pond's posters last far longer than that of the bathing beauty in Bognor Regis (Figure 53). After the war, many posters similar to that of Bognor Regis, were produced. Security and the family were popularised in the posters of the fifties and the girl in the swimsuit again resurfaced in the sixties. After that, there appears to have been no clear policy towards the railway's advertising until the advent of Edward Pond and his colourful nostalgic posters which revived a tradition long forgotten. As many good artists will know, the new is often not the new at all, but the old seen in a different light.



Chapter Six:

The use of Heraldic Emblems as Logo Identities

A Link with Kauffer E Mc Knight!

Details of Design

Heraldic Imagery

Sum-Up

Pond, as well as being commissioned to design posters for Network South-East, envisaged a collection of logo designs to give the different routes of the network clear and individual identities. The company - British Rail - felt that both their customers and their employees needed to have a sense of 'their route', in terms of technical administration, as seen on trains, time tables and notice boards, and in more general terms, as a sense of goodwill and company friendliness. British Rail appears to have adopted a friendly, nostalgic corporate identity, which would appeal to all walks of life - the civil servant, the young shopper, the parent and family and the passenger who just likes to sight-see. How did the railway system come up with the choice of Heraldic emblems as logos? What are they trying to represent? Are the emblems achieving their aim of regional distinction? I will discuss and attempt to provide an answer to all these questions in the following paragraphs, while giving some detailed attention to the logo designs. Typography, size and format, colour and imagery will all be looked at and assessed for their impact upon the viewer.

The intention of using good design to promote the company's pride and confidence in itself corresponds with the same intention of the period between the wars, the twenties and the thirties. The Railway Company, both then and now, has the common aim of wooing the public, telling them that they are not mere commuters, but paying customers, entitled to respect, friendliness and value for money. The relationship which the company wishes to build is not just fiscal but also service orientated. In the past number of years British Rail has come under public scrutiny for not providing an up to scratch service. Unfriendly, tardy, dirty, over-crowded and apathetic could be some of the words many of the travelling public would use to describe the railway service. For the reason of correcting a bad public image, the company's present policy has been drawn from an era where its publicity was both effective and friendly.

Popularising holiday resorts which are still renowned today and increasing their number of customers through good service and friendly persuasion. The art of travel on the train is being changed in Britain, from a chore to a pleasure, through the new wave of advertising by the railways. Style and class are being re-introduced to rail travel after many years of idleness, through the memorable picture associations of Edward Pond.

A Link with Kauffer E. McKnight?

The use of style and class by Pond is seen within the strong, heraldic emblems of Network South-East. Imagistic logos which return to past regional distinction and heritage. These logos are strongly linked with the work of E. McKnight Kauffer, particularly his identification design. His rounded monogram, which he designed for the Great Western Railway, reflects the modernist styles of typography which were popular during the period (see Figure 59) and is comparable to the work being carried out by Pond. The link between the logos of the two periods is not in their subject matter - what they portray in their image - but in their objectivity. That is, what the companies who commissioned them aimed to achieve - a strong regional identity. One specific difference between the two periods is that the thirties chose to represent the general as against the eighties representing the particular. By the word general, I mean the company showing only its main features, one main idea, image or unified symbol; as shown on the thirties monogram (Figure 59). No attempt is made to show the particular, or to detail such items as different trains travelling on different routes. Everything is encapsulated within the one image to give a general sense of identity. Looking at the logo, we see through its simplistic use of a sans serif type face, that all routes were included under the mother lines single identity, distinguishing routes only through the changing of the logos colour. Whether the passenger was travelling to Royal Leamington Spa or St. Ives in Cornwall, the same identity for G.W.R. appears on the seperate routes. Today, however, Network South East has

chosen to promote the particular by commissioning a number of separate identities which, when combined, form a collection of stylistically unified logos which identify the mother line (see Figures 55 to 58). The use of identification here is detailed and coherent, singling out individual lines for separate logos, while maintaining a strong overall design concept.

Details of Design

Of the four identities presented here, all have a similar format, an image contained within one box within a second box of a different colour. The typography on all four images is placed centrally under the inner box, helping to unify the collection. Note that the shape of the identities change with the length of the rail line name, e.g. The Great Northern Line, becoming more elongated and narrower in format. This change of shape does not detract from the unity of the collection, but rather strengthens it with variety. Pond has not been afraid to alter his designs as need dictates, shaping his formats around the specified type. Instead of reducing the type to fit the format, I believe Pond has taken the better road, by keeping the type large enough to be legible and changing the shape of his working area. Although we shall see in another chapter just how Pond tends to treat type in a much more haphazard way. One upsetting factor about the overall presentations, is the choice of type face and its setting. Looking at these logos one wonders how well these signs could be read from a distance, or in fact from a moving train. A better choice of type and a better use of space between the individual letters would lend better to its legibility. A type, where the horizontals and verticals of the face are more similar in width would have been more appropriate. A good example of legible type on a logo, can be seen in a design from the thirties (Figure 60). The type used is very similar to a style used by Frank Pick on the Underground's signage and posters. The face was designed by Edward Johnston and is based on plain, carefully proportioned block letters where the main strokes are of

equal thickness and there are no serifs. The face is ideal for use on posters and signage where clarity and legibility at a distance are essential. This is not to dictate that Pond should have used such a type-face, but merely to indicate that better thought should have been given to the lettering. Obviously, typography was not a leaf which Pond took from the Design Book of the thirties.

Heraldic Imagery

Colour is used to maintain the heraldic theme throughout Pond's designs, with the nationalistic colours of red and blue predominating. The British love their history and are proud of their national flag and its colours - red, white and blue. So Pond has cleverly adopted these historical colours into his designs for the logos, instilling a sense of subliminal national pride through colour association. The images are silk-screened on to P.V.C. which allows for additional layers to be added to cover up wear and tear. Colour is also used to help classify the trains, where many of the logos are printed against a red or blue background, signifying whether it is an express or slow train, respectively. Heraldry is employed within the actual images of the signage, creating an air of history and nostalgia. By looking back, Pond has moved forward to produce simplistic but striking design. Take for example the Anglia Electric logo (Figure 55), which is a simplified version of the regimental badge of the Anglia Regiment. Quite a valid choice of image to represent the railway line in that area. The associated imagery of the army in connection with the train compounds this air of nostalgia, harking back to an era where scenes of men and women in uniform, being bid adieu at the train station, touched the lives of many British families. The time of the Second World War is being resurrected through the use of the army badge logo, reminding us of the strong emotions felt at the time. It is a sort of picture association, one image reminding us of another until we have created a short story, a logo telling us a historical story of regional distinction. How many films have we seen, with views of

equal thickness and there are no serifs. The face is ideal for use on posters and signage where clarity and legibility at a distance are essential. This is not to dictate that Pond should have used such a type-face, but merely to indicate that better thought should have been given to the lettering. Obviously, typography was not a leaf which Pond took from the Design Book of the thirties.

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Colour is used to maintain the heraldic theme throughout Pond's designs, with the nationalistic colours of red and blue predominating. The British love their history and are proud of their national flag and its colours - red, white and blue. So Pond has cleverly adopted these historical colours into his designs for the logos, instilling a sense of subliminal national pride through colour association. The images are silk-screened on to P.V.C. which allows for additional layers to be added to cover up wear and tear. Colour is also used to help classify the trains, where many of the logos are printed against a red or blue background, signifying whether it is an express or slow train, respectively. Heraldry is employed within the actual images of the signage, creating an air of history and nostalgia. By looking back, Pond has moved forward to produce simplistic but striking design. Take for example the Anglia Electric logo (Figure 55), which is a simplified version of the regimental badge of the Anglia Regiment. Quite a valid choice of image to represent the railway line in that area. The associated imagery of the army in connection with the train compounds this air of nostalgia, harking back to an era where scenes of men and women in uniform, being bid adieu at the train station, touched the lives of many British families. The time of the Second World War is being resurrected through the use of the army badge logo, reminding us of the strong emotions felt at the time. It is a sort of picture association, one image reminding us of another until we have created a short story, a logo telling us a historical story of regional distinction. How many films have we seen, with views of

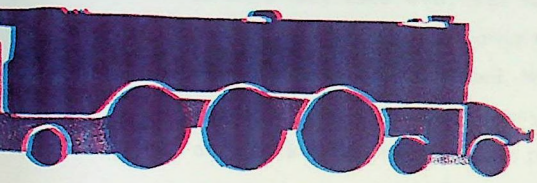
the army waving farewell from aboard trains, linking the two in sadness and in happiness also, upon those same soldiers victorious return. Kent Coast's logo (Figure 58) is a detail from the coat of arms from the Cinque Ports - that is the five major ports of the county for which the area is famous. While Essex Electrics - not shown here - uses the heraldic badge of Essex in its entirity. Where genuine heraldry could not provide an adequate image for an area, improvised interpretations of the past were devised. The Thames logo (Figure 57) combines the curving lines of the river with the trident of Old Father Thames, perhaps a subtle link with the mythological Neptune, King of the Sea. This modern appearing image uses the trident specifically to bring history and mythology into the framework so as not to alienate itself from the whole group. A heraldic emblem in appearance, but totally improvised from collected images.

The general overview of the use of history and heraldry within the Network South East logos is that they work quite successfully. They are successful in terms of their chosen images and their effectiveness at identification. Although heraldry is particular to a certain family, or a coat of arms to a certain town or area, I believe Pond has made his images accessible to a large number of the general public. Granted, the symbols are localised, most probably known to the inhabitants of the area and so to the regular users of that particular symbol's railway line e.g. the Kent Link's heraldic symbol would be known to a large number of people in the area, who in turn would provide a large number of passengers on the Kent Link line. To those people who travel to Kent from outside the area, perhaps for their holidays, the heraldic emblem used in the logo would be most likely unknown. Pond instead uses the visual simplicity of the logo to attract the customer and the historical symbolism of the image to cause it to be retained in the memory. He creates a visual history. I cannot measure the fiscal success of the identities without reference to receipts and invoices, but then I am not an accountant. All that can be derived from the images, is whether the work, visually and aesthetically. Do they identify the lines,

can they be maintained in the memory for future reference and are they user friendly? To answer the first question, I believe yes is the reply. Each sign manages to convey something particular and personal to the specified area. The sign does this through either its use of heraldry or its specific historical reference point. It gives the public an image association with an area, that is apt and historically correct. Where the modern logos improve on their forebearers from the twenties and thirties, is in their promotion of the specific and the particular. They tend to leave no lee-way for confusion and mistakes, identifying the individual lines while still remaining part of the whole Network South East Identity. To the point of user friendliness, it would appear yes is also the answer. The public has made their own historical connections with certain signs where there is no genuine direct reference to history. The sign for the Norfolk Line is being taken as the official badge of the Grand Union Canal and Railways agreement. The sign consists of shaking hands surrounded by barge-painting like flowers. All the lettering is done by hand and the entire emblem is totally fictitious, but yet appears to the public as being authentic. The whole collection of signs 'gel' together so completely, that the red-herring is not smelt, it is conceived of as an original piece of heraldry. The public is playing picture association, making up their own stories to fit the identities. Surely a success on Pond's part!

A down point on the designs of Edward Pond is the legibility of the signs, quite adequate for near reading but unclear from a distance. A design fault which could be easily remedied. What the Network South East designs have achieved, however, is something far more remarkable. Remarkable in that it is drawing together the company's various activities to establish a strong positive corporate image in the minds of the public. The tack of their campaign is similar to that used on the London Underground by Frank Pick in the thirties, which has not been repeated since. The railway today is avoiding the use of 'hard sell' tactics, in both their posters and their corporate

identity. Instead they are cultivating the idea that attractive destinations, in both town and country, can be reached through a new means of transport, the improved train. Pond is extending the work which was started some fifty years ago on the railways in Britain. He is distinguishing the network from its past bad publicity and failures by creating a new advertising campaign of understated class and style, offering a more friendly service. We can only wait to see the results, and perhaps the campaign will be introduced throughout the whole railway network!



Conclusion

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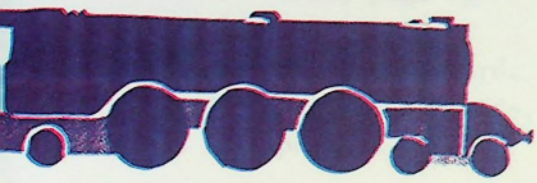
The questions which this thesis brought forward are mainly twofold. The first question related to nostalgia and revivalism, were they used in the posters of Edward Pond and if so were they used well? The second question asked if Pond's posters were a visual success, do they have the power to attract and if so, why? In this conclusion I will state what my thesis has unearthed, whether it answers the above second question adequately is another matter, as the railway posters and identities are still in their infancy, being only in their second year. One point I will not attempt to assess is that of the poster's monetary success. Did British Rail sell more tickets on the Network South East routes? That question can only be answered by British Rail's financial department. What I have examined within these posters, is their visual imagery and potence as an advertising medium.

Edward Pond stated in an interview that the past or history did not affect him one iota. I hope I have challenged this notion through the detailed comparison of Pond's posters with their counterparts from the thirties. The railway company of all institutions, has a deep and lasting link with it's history. The general public has a fondness for holding the railway's history in their memory. Sometimes that memory takes on the form of artifacts like the much collected toy railway sets, of which nearly every child receives one in their lifetime. It is on this notion of British reverence for their history, that Network South East and their posters are playing on. The railway company has introduced it's advertising to a period where an abundance of good poster design was produced. It has adopted a stance on it's public image by presenting Network South East with a set of identities that will communicate each individual route to the public through it's historical connections. Particular history has been used as a theme in both Pond's posters and his corporate identities. He has selected identifiable landmarks which connect historically with the appropriate destination. An example of using historical landmarks is the Windsor Castle poster. Some of Pond's posters contain slight subtleties of design where not everything meets the eye at first glance. Pond has managed to incorporate animation of drawing, use of symbols and colour to denote nationality, and social commentary through his method of treating the image, into a majority of his posters. He has embellished his posters with hidden symbols or meanings e.g. Nationalism, without distracting from the overall simplicity or impact of design.

Dramatic, strong images are what Pond uses to great effect. His colour technique is on a par with that used in the posters of Tom Purvis and other poster artists from the thirties.



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Subconsciously it appears that Pond has been affected by the astounding prolific work of the 1930's. His choice of image and colour application is remarkably similar with those posters from the Golden Age. One thing that can be said about Pond's work is that it is not understated. His size of format, his dramatic use of colour and his compelling images all lead to eye catching renditions of British history. These posters make a great use of nostalgia, between recapturing the style of simplified realism and advancing it a bit further, to the use of historical landmarks and scenes. Pond's emblems must not be forgotten either in their connection with history, as their strong heraldic theme unites them as a colourful whole. What did emerge in the discussion of Edward Pond's posters is Pond as a textile designer. His introduction of texture and his strong use of pattern brought his simplified realism one step further along the road of design. His technique with typography and unusual cropping and layout design does not compare with that of a graphic designer or long standing professional poster artist. It is a pity that his vibrant images are let down badly through the misuse of lettering. Bad legibility and poor integration of type and image are two of the major faults with Pond's posters. His redeeming factor however, is the power which his images have to attract a viewer on the move. If Pond addressed his problem with type and continues to produce such beautiful scenes of the British country perhaps British Rail will lose business. The poster will offer such an attractive view of a holiday destination that the viewer will instead of purchasing a railway ticket , decide to buy the poster, which will be a constant reminder of the beauty of that resort. If this trend of good poster design continues to re-surface with artists such as Pond, a second Golden Age will be in full swing. A second Golden Age of colourful, playful, witty, imagistic and compelling posters, a remarkable commentary on the history of Britain's holiday destinations, old and new.

> 'We may think we are a lot more sophisticated in our advertising nowadays, but we're still happy to be told stories if it makes us feel better.....and that's what these posters are all about.' (Michael Palin, Happy Holidays page 13.)

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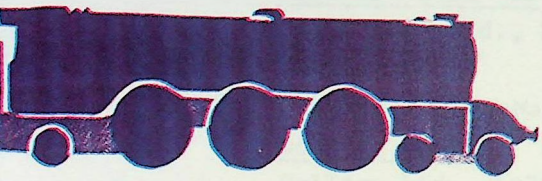

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