

DOUBLE-DECK PAIN IN NECK

Omnibus Is Much Too Omni for Us

Big Import Won't Clear Bridges Here

BY HORTON TRAUTMAN

It was one thing, it seems, to import a London double-deck bus to Lake Calumet Harbor.

It has turned out that getting it to the Loop, where it's most wanted, is something else.

The handsome red bus is 14 feet, 6 inches high.

But fine-tooth combing of the city's maps has failed to find any way it can be driven to the Loop under its own power.

Carson Pirie Scott & Co. had planned that maneuver as an attention getter for its British Fortnight, Sept. 26-Oct. 7, during which it will feature imports from the British Isles.

"THERE ISN'T a bridge in town that will clear that bus," said Richard Fencil, city traffic engineer. "Most of them have only 13 feet 6 clearances."

Joe Condon, superintendent of transportation, thinks it had best be brought part way by rail. He has figured out a way for that.

"But there's such doubt that it can get under the L structure and inside the Loop that I'm having a field crew go out with a tape measure next week," said Fencil.

CONDON'S rail plan calls for transporting the bus on an Illinois Central flat car to the 26th St. yards.

"From there it could be driven down South Park to 31st St., where there's an overpass to Lake Shore Dr.," he said.

"It could go up to Ontario, then west to Wabash and south to Wacker."



This is the London bus that's giving city traffic officials a headache.

least be parked on the island in Wacker Dr. between Wabash and State, maybe even operated for short runs in the area — if the Loop's moat-in-reverse can't be crossed.

C. VIRGIL Martin, Carson's president, just shook his head.

"Isn't it, ah . . . the dickens, when something happens to spoil an attempt to be original?" he asked.

RED-COATED ENVOY

British Bus Gets A Move On Here

Double-Decker, Boxy Cabs To Bustle Around the Loop

BY HORTON TRAUTMAN

(Picture on Back Page)

The sign proclaims: "The British Are Coming!"

The vanguard, which has already arrived by sea, is appropriately red-coated.

It's a double deck bus, its tires worn by many miles on London streets, and it's as red as a fireman's red underwear.

The bus came to shore at Lake Calumet harbor Wednesday from the British flagship Pinemore of the Furness-Great Lakes Lines.

IT WAS accompanied by two London taxicabs, stubby and boxy, but with roomy passenger compartments and roof high enough to permit wearing a top hat inside. They're black.

They were brought here by Carson Pirie Scott & Co. for its British Fortnight Sept. 26-Oct. 7 which will feature British imports. Last year the store featured products of Italy.

The landing had its ticklish moments, and delaying tactics followed immediately after the tires touched American soil.

THE BUS, 14 feet 6 inches high, 6 feet 6 inches wide, 26 feet long and weighing 7,200 pounds, was no lifting problem

by itself for the floating crane of the Chicago Regional Port District, which can lift 110 tons.

But the crane had to be on the water side of the Pinemore. The problem was to angle its boom across the 60-foot beam of the ship and lower the bus to the dock, keeping the boom from pinching against one side of the ship and the bus from scraping on the other.

The maneuver worked without hitch, although the strong south wind at times swung the bus to no more than a foot from the ship.

THE DELAYING operation was handled by Imperial Tom Caine of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who found dirt on the fetters inside.

"Has to be again cleaned and this dirt must be examined before it leaves the port," he said.

"Have to be sure no nematodes are in the dirt. They can ruin crops, especially potatoes and tomatoes."

BUT THERE was luck, too—a man who knew how to drive the bus.

He's James Grimes, import manager here for Furness-Withy & Co. Ltd., the line's agent.

"I drove, with my wife Edie as 'Clippie,' on the team of a Manchester Liverpool-Burnley bus for seven years after the war. Formally you'd call her 'conductor,'" he said.

"She (the bus) will only do 30 miles an hour," he added fondly working the wheel, levers and pedals. "But I used to enjoy driving the bus more than my private car."

GRIMES will have the honor of driving it into the Loop the first time.

The bus will give free rides to children inside the Loop during the British Fortnight.

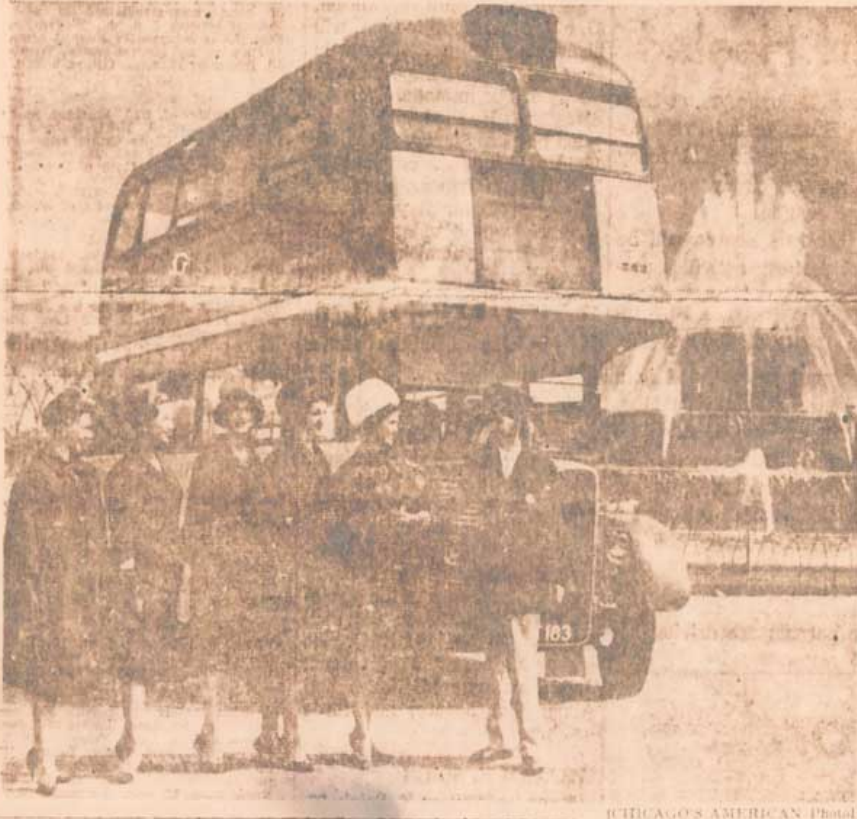
British loading rules will be followed. The sign says, "26 passengers—30 downstairs, 26 upstairs."

"And no more than five standees, all downstairs" Grimes said. "The bobby would nab you quick as that if he saw more."

AFTER the Fortnight, C. Virgil Martin, Carson's president, who bought one of the taxicabs personally, intends to use it between his Western Springs home and commuter railroad station.

Mike Ward, of Arthur Schiller & Son, china and glass firm, was given the other taxi by his wife. He isn't altogether sure what he'll do with his after its special career. Perhaps rent it out, he said.

London Bus Here



(CHICAGO'S AMERICAN Photo)

TRANSFER for his London bus is given by driver Jim Grimes to five members of the American Association of University Women—Mrs. Walter Nelson, Western Springs; Mrs. Jack Luhey, Western Springs; Mrs. Stan Franburg, La Grange; Mrs. Lester Barritt, Western Springs; and Mrs. Kent Savage, La Grange. Buckingham fountain is in background. The bus was imported by Carson Pirie Scott & Co. for its British Fortnight starting Sept. 25, and the A. A. U. W. will hold its fellowship benefit tea in Carson's Heather House Oct. 4.



THE TWO-DECKER BUS, "FLEA MARKET SPECIAL" stops at Stix, Baer & Fuller's Westroads store, where the sale of donated art objects and household furnishings will be held on May 17, 18 and 19.

by JUDY JONES
Democrat Staff Writer