

News

- Great Britain railway timetable series
- Green Bus Co. Ltd. of Mid-Staffordshire
- *Timetable World's* relaunch – two years on
- *Timetable World's* partnerships.

A wide-angle photograph of a street in the village of Barmston. On the left, there is a row of stone buildings, including a church with a prominent spire. The street is paved and leads towards a distant horizon. On the right, there is a row of houses with stone walls and tiled roofs. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Lybster, south-west of Wick, was a planned settlement. The wide Main Street between harbour and station (highlighted) was a production line where fish were gutted and packed.



Great Britain railway timetable series

The initial aim of *Timetable World* was to be representative rather than comprehensive. As a new fully digital archive, that choice was grounded in the reality of what could be achieved most quickly. Two years on, we can begin to transition to comprehensive coverage in selected areas.

Assembling a full set of railway timetables for Great Britain was thought to be achievable but has taken a while. We now have about 85% of the national and regional books published by British Railways and its successors since 1948. That is sufficient to begin releasing them in blocks.

We are beginning by releasing a full set 1974 to 2020 under the Network Rail reproduction licence we have held since

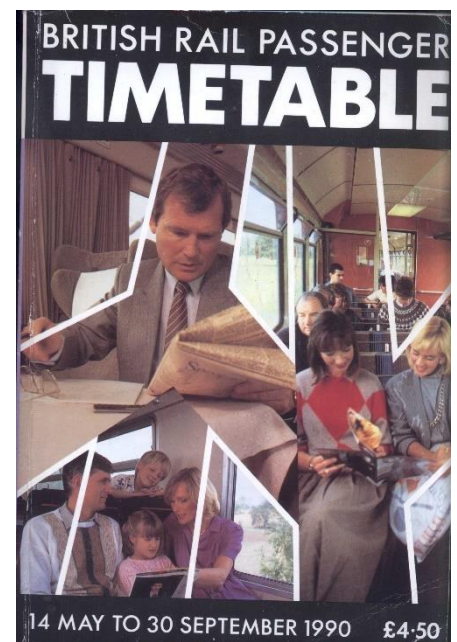
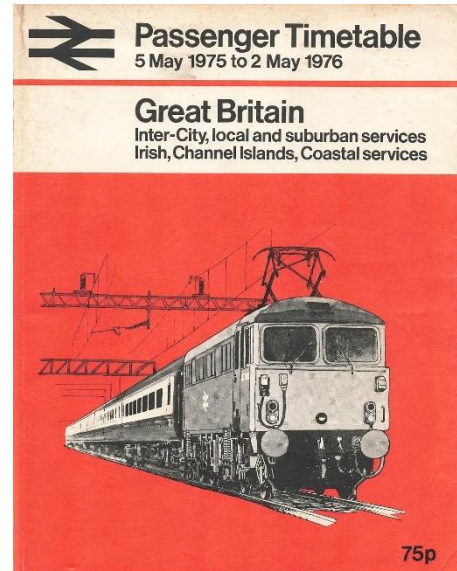


2010. The Winter 2007 edition was the first electronic version. 2007-2020 are available as free downloads - free because *Timetable World* did not digitise them. Post 2020 timetables are being held back for now. 1974-2007 are paid-for downloads.

Timetable World has not only digitised these hefty books – May 2007 reached a chunky 3,188 pages - but also applied optical character recognition (OCR) to make the resulting PDF files searchable.

There are 80 books in the series so far. Many of you may recognise certain timetable images from the cover artwork as familiar old friends from your travels. Visit [Great Britain Railway Series](#).

For the period 1948-1973, timetables were prepared on a regional basis. We aim to release these books by region over the coming months. There are a few gaps, but no large ones, and it is to be hoped we can fill them eventually.



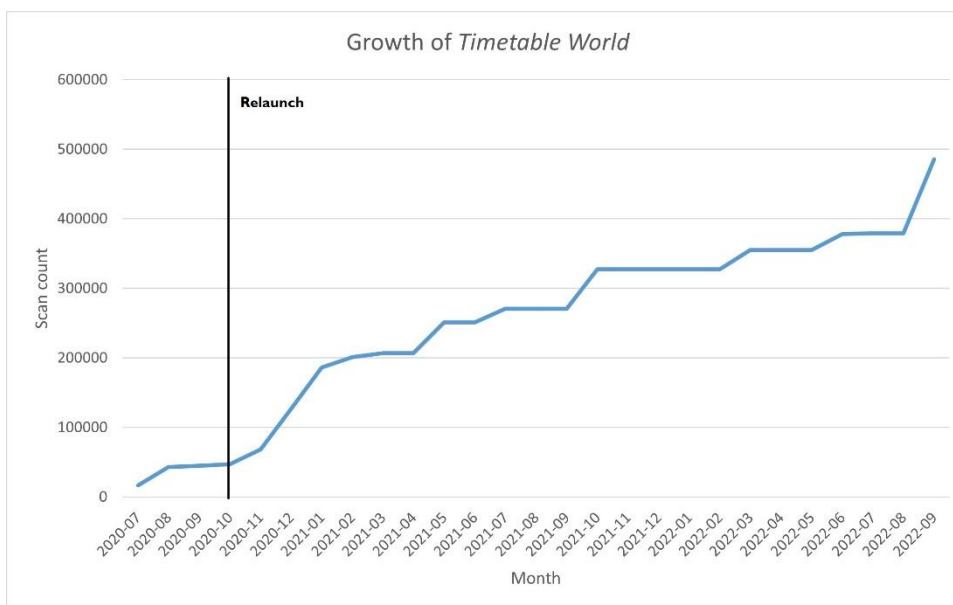
Timetable World's relaunch – two years on

We always like to say that *Timetable World* started in 2009, but October 2020 was when it was relaunched. Soundings were taken in May 2020 about whether to try to grow the project and, after the “go” decision was made, it took about four months to build the necessary processes and technology, then to assemble a critical mass of timetables for release.

It was initially something of a lockdown project during the Covid-19 period, and there is no doubt that it suited some of our most committed volunteers to have an activity, such as scanning, or indexing, or shopping on eBay, that also helped *Timetable World*. With Covid-19 slipping into folk memory (to be supplanted by many new crises), let's review what has been achieved and think about what the future holds.

Coverage has reached 1,387 items. Items range from a single page map to several books that exceed 3,000 pages. Strongest coverage, unsurprisingly, is in Great Britain.

Region	count
Railways of Great Britain & Ireland	211
Buses and Trams of Great Britain	396
Europe (excluding GB & Ireland)	344
Asia	37
North America	265
Africa & Middle East	14
International	28
Australasia	3
Air (Worldwide)	9
PDF download only	80
	1387



The latest release has brought the number of scanned (and published) pages to just under 500,000. That is a great achievement for two years, and a testament to the efforts made by the scanning volunteers.

Releases have moved to quarterly from monthly, but the archive continues to grow apace.

A small amount of commercial activity now takes place. 10 facsimile timetables are available to purchase via Amazon and paid-for downloads of PDF files commenced in March 2022. The GB railway series mentioned earlier will be extended on a paid-for basis, partly to acknowledge the sustained effort required to digitise an estimated 150,000 pages and to defray our running costs.

The cost of running the archive remains low. We run three servers continuously, and are affected by rising electricity bills, but probably the biggest expense is a storage unit for material awaiting processing. The occasional beer with a volunteer is not counted ...

Timetable World's partnerships

Users of *Timetable World* are now beginning to see some of the benefits of our partnership with the *Railway Correspondence & Travel Society* (the **RCTS**). The Society has made much of its vast timetable archive available for digitisation, which includes passenger and employee timetables – some two tonnes of paper. There are approaching 10,000 unique items available, almost exclusively covering British railways, and it gives us quite a challenge to work through them.

The Society has just launched a digital archive of its own, with the aim of making its back catalogue of definitive publications available again.

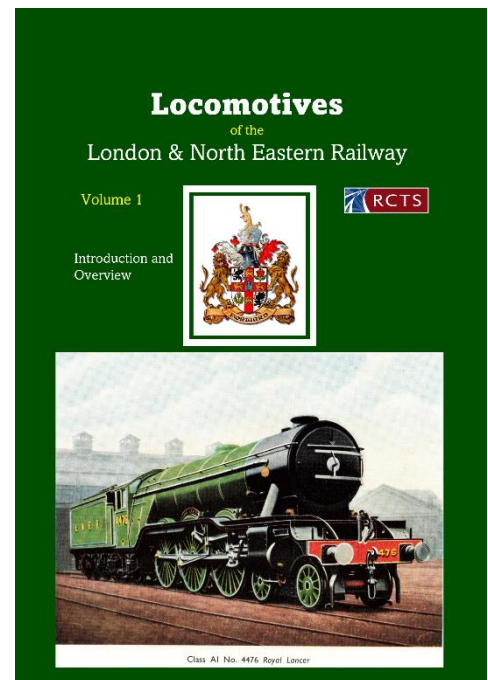
<https://archive.rcts.org.uk>

The first collection has just been launched. *Locomotives of the LNER* was a 19-part history, originally published 1963 – 1994.



The relaunched series is available in book form from Amazon, using the same print-on-demand service as used by *Timetable World*, and in digital form via the website.

Your editor – who did the digitisation and set up the archive - is due to have an article appearing in *Back Track* magazine (November) about the digital archive.



RailDate is rather different. It is a weekly email newsletter chock-full of transport-related news items that have been spotted online by contributors. It has been going for 33 years in various forms – i.e. before email was widely adopted.

<https://latest.raildate.co.uk/>

Howard Sprenger, the long-standing editor, recently retired and handed it over to your *Timetable World* editor to take forward. I'd welcome readers of this newsletter to join the *RailDate* list – details via the web link above.

There is a blizzard of news available, so why add to it? The beauty of *RailDate* is that it is a convenient digest covering news, events, what's on TV etc.

Timetable World

The archive

Timetable World is a fully digital historical archive. The online archive covers transport modes with regular schedules, meaning railways, urban transit, bus services, and airlines. It includes timetables and maps.

<https://timetableworld.com/>

The aim is to have representative examples at different times, not comprehensive coverage of every time. The focus is on transport networks in timetable books rather than loose leaflets.

Volunteering

Timetable World is run entirely by volunteers. The archive is non-commercial, free to use, and privately funded by the administrator. If you find it useful, please consider what you can give back:

- Sign up for indexing tasks online
- Contribute timetables for digitisation as a loan or donation.

The Timetable World Shop

There is a charge made for downloading PDF files of timetables for customers to "own". The proceeds help to defray the costs of running the website.

Amazon

Selected timetable books are available for customers wishing to purchase a printed book. Orders are handled Amazon, where available, and fulfilled locally. The proceeds help to defray the costs of running the website.



Newsletter editor: **Matthew Shaw**

Contact email address: **timetableworld.com@gmail.com**