

The visit of Her Majesty the Queen and  
His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh  
to St Cuthbert's Transport Department  
on 30th June 1966

commemoration booklet



Pictorial Record of the  
Visit of Her Majesty the Queen and  
His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh  
to St Cuthbert's Transport Department  
on 30th June 1966

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ST CUTHBERT'S has attained the highest pinnacle of honour in the commercial life of the land with two firsts. On 29th December 1964 as the first co-operative society in Britain to be awarded the coveted right to put up the Royal "By Appointment" sign over the door and on 30th June 1966 this was crowned with the visit of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh—the first reigning monarch to officially visit a British co-operative.

However, this high distinction did not go to St Cuthbert's for its services to the Royal household as provision merchants, nor yet as dairymen, butchers, drapers, or any other of the more everyday facets of its huge enterprise. The Royal Warrant of Appointment was awarded under the clear-cut and very special title of "Coachpainters to the Queen".

This is no empty "courtesy" title. It is the Royal seal of approval for service and craftsmanship of the highest possible standard over a period of years; and, of course, sheer hard toil.

But the prosaic term "Coachpainters" in this case covers so very much more than the word indicates. For, in actual fact, St Cuthbert's, in Edinburgh's Fountainbridge district, is the unobtrusive, unpublicised workshop of the famous Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace; the vital maintenance side of an institution which reaches back over centuries of our Monarchy.

St Cuthbert's association with the Royal Mews began in 1953 with the Queen's State visit to Edinburgh, but, besides the important State occasions such as the Coronation procession, the ceremonial drives of visiting monarchs and heads of State, there is a steady two-way traffic of coaches of some sort or other either on their way up to Edinburgh from the Royal Mews or on their way South after renewal or repair.

In the long history of St Cuthbert's there has never been a more memorable occasion than the day Her Majesty and His Royal Highness visited the transport department under which all this work for the Royal household comes.

Memorable in that Her Majesty and the Duke so obviously enjoyed every moment of their visit and how, in her own delightful way, Her Majesty made all concerned aware of her appreciation and gratitude for the arrangements made.

The following pages portray some of the interesting highlights of the Royal Tour.

Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, are greeted by Lord Provost Herbert Brechin on entering St Cuthbert's Transport Yard in Gardner's Crescent.



Mr George Gay, President of St Cuthbert's, is presented to the Queen by the Lord Provost.



The Royal party move off on their tour of inspection.





The Queen reviewed a parade of St Cuthbert's own vintage vehicles in the yard which included the four-in-hand stage coach which operated between Edinburgh and Moffat during the early eighteenth century, a hansom cab, Irish jaunting car and a brake—the 'bus of yesteryear.



Opposite :  
A delightful portrait of Her Majesty through a brougham.





The farriers at work shoeing a piebald milk lorry horse. Great interest was taken by the Duke of Edinburgh in this work.



Her Majesty discusses the repair of some of her own harness with Lord Provost Brechin.



As a supreme example of the saddler's art the silver-mounted carriage harness inscribed with the crest of the Marchioness of Bute was displayed.



Saddler, Andrew Banks, making key ring fobs for the half-crown toll over the Forth Road Bridge.



Horse-collar maker, Willie Taylor, who makes collars for harness-makers all over the world.

The Duke of Edinburgh and Colonel John Miller, the Crown Equerry, inspect a Wagonette.



Her Majesty, so relaxed and interested in everything.

Her Majesty checks the details on an Irish Jaunting-car while inspecting a display of twenty vintage carriages.



"I think it a very good idea," said the Queen when, watched by Mr Gay, she went into the driving-seat of a mobile bakery van to see the new mirror safety device through which the driver can see if children are playing behind the rear wheels.



Her Majesty recognises the Governess Car used for family outings.





*Left:*

The Queen showed considerable interest in the work of the wheelwrights and the various woods employed.

*Below left:*

Mr Prentice points out the varied work carried out by craftsmen on the repairs to wheels and the fitting of solid rubber tyres to State coaches.

*Below right:*

The finished article—the pride and joy of the wheelwright, the blacksmith and the coach painter.



Her Majesty inspects metal workers, mechanics and electricians doing repairs to lamps from State coaches.



Stately elegance is portrayed in this picture of a refurbished State coach lamp.



The Queen admires the elaborate gate made of wrought iron metal in birds, flowers and leaves. The work of a metal artist.

Mr Prentice explains the initial damage done to a Mercedes-Benz car in an accident, illustrated by a series of 'blown-up' photographs, and how his own craftsmen get to work to bring it back to its original form.



Her Majesty showed considerable interest in the preparation of a circular channel metal rim before putting on new rubber tyres to one of her State coaches.





The Queen recognises an old friend—a gig—which she uses while on holiday at Balmoral.

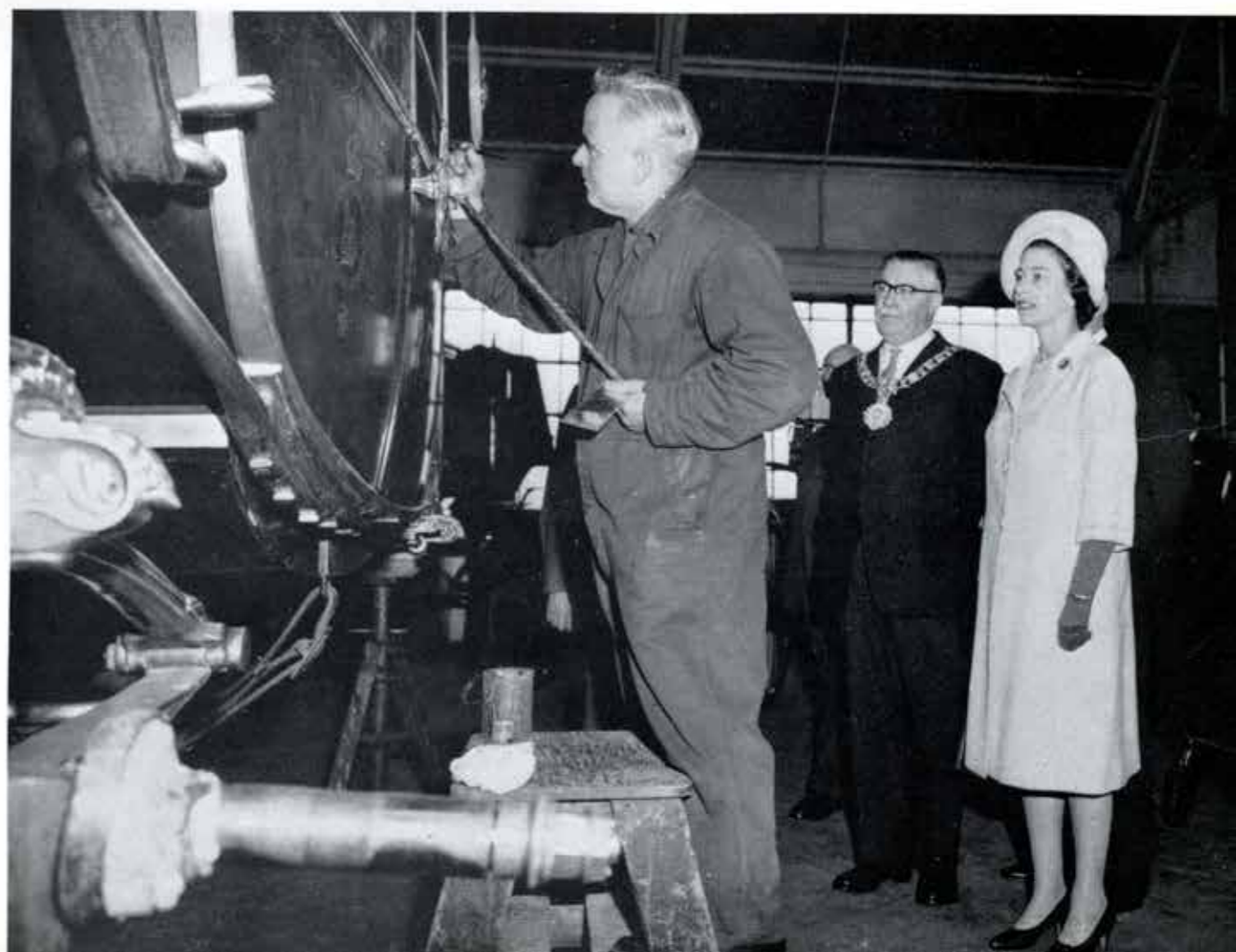


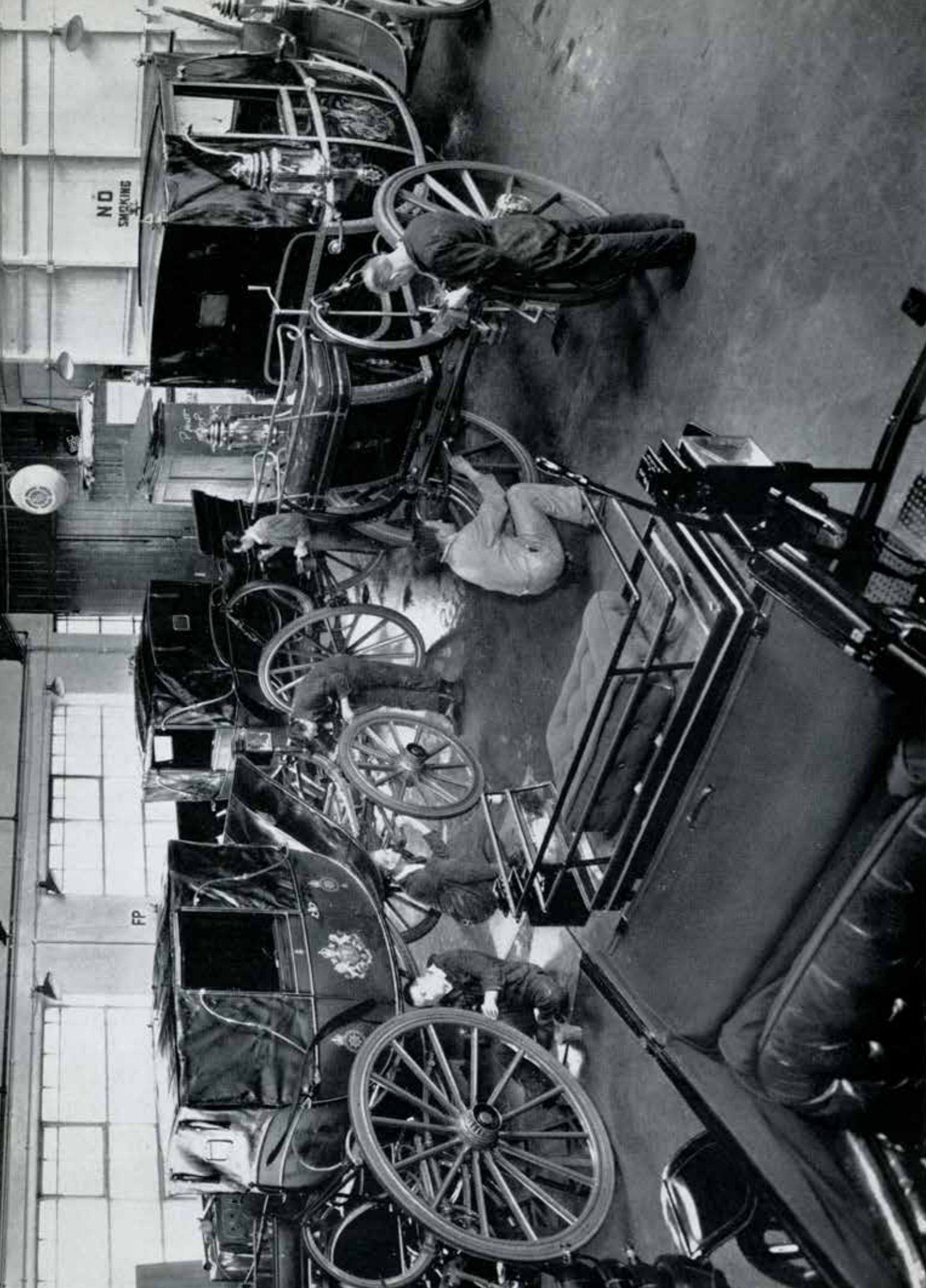
Her Majesty is obviously delighted with the four-wheeled game waggon presented to her by Mr Gay.



The delicate details of the sign-writer's craft are revealed by top craftsman William Imrie, as he completes the Royal coat-of-arms.

The Queen inspects the repair work being done on one of her State coaches when she sees how a perfect finish is obtained on each panel by frequent application of paint and rubbing down.



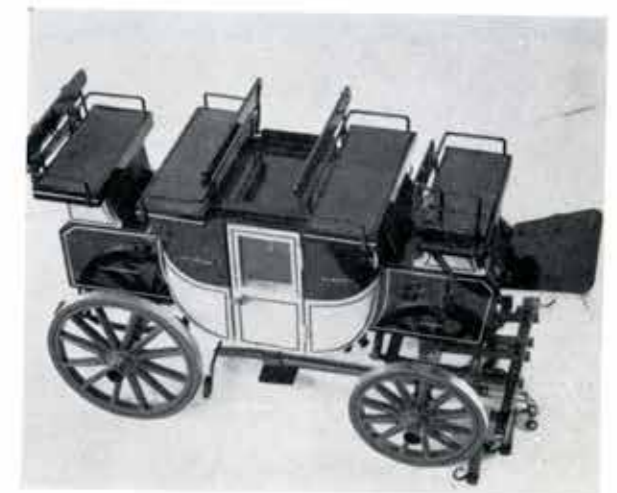


Final touches are made to Her Majesty's carriages before the Royal visit.



Mr Gay introduces Her Majesty to the scale replica of a stage coach made by our craftsmen as a present for the Royal children. Beautifully finished in intricate detail it is reproduced in yellow and black with the rims of red wheels finished in gold leaf. 'One of the most wonderful gifts I have ever received,' commented the Queen, 'the children will get a lot of amusement and enjoyment with it.'

Bottom right:  
A close-up of the model stage coach.





Watched by General Manager, David Shaw,  
and George Gay, President,  
Her Majesty signs the visitors' book  
at the end of her tour.



A most friendly and successful visit over,  
Her Majesty is accompanied to her car  
by Lord Provost Brechin.



The Royal party take their leave with a most sincere send-off by the children from neighbouring schools.



BY APPOINTMENT  
TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
COACH PAINTERS