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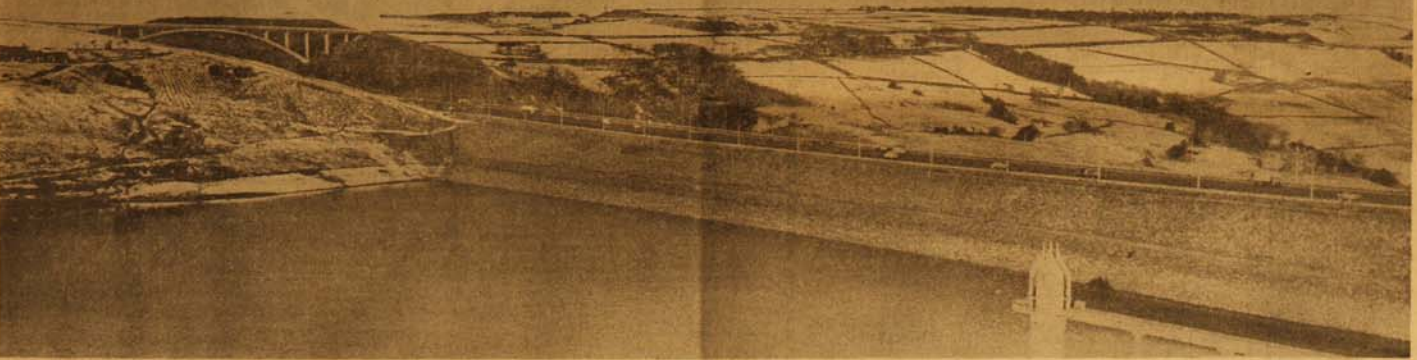
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MOTORWAY madness is a thing called streaking from one end of the Lancashire-Yorkshire motorway to the other before lunch. I have to confess: I did it the other day — by car.

Motorway with the mostest!

It's landscape charms — to lapse concentration one second is dangerous. Death had struck thirty or so miles back along the road from where we talked.

Just beyond "Little America" — the overgrown runways and silent hangars of what was once the USAF's biggest base at Burtonwood (Lancs) — a breakdown gang was lifting the tangled wreck of a van out of a field as I drove by.

I learned later there had been a six-vehicle pile-up. One man had died and six other people had been injured.

Deputy News Editor ALAN DRISCOLL found every mile an adventure testing whether a completed M62 fulfilled the billing he gave it at the half-way stage five years ago.

Clark, but once past Littlewood's Pools I was making a quick about-turn and setting my bonnet-nose for Hull. The complete East-West crossing, the weather over the Pennines continued rough, but the going became progressively less tense the further east I pushed.

It should be pointed-out that the M62 eastbound finishes some way short of Hull. The last fifteen miles on the A63 capturing fine views of the Humber Bridge towers, though, is an excellently smooth dual carriageway.

For what bit it matters, my drive from the centre of Liverpool to Hull City's Boothferry Park ground was accomplished in two hours, forty-five minutes — 138 miles.

Not quite up to the expectations of the planners. They were saying five years ago that by the mid-1970s Liverpool-Hull would be cut from five or six hours to an easy cruise of less than two hours.

But could it be that even the experts miscalculated somewhat on the extent to which traffic volumes would boom?

The latest M62 vehicle count revealed 36,900 a day, taking both directions. That's a 6 per cent growth rate on 1975. Well done by the M62 pioneers in every other respect. They did their sums well.

QUOTE:
 The toughest motorway project there has been so far in Britain. The sort of challenge that civil engineers dream about—A director of Sir Alfred McAlpine and Son

three-mile tailback of west-bound traffic having to crawl along two lanes while snowplough crews strove to clear a third with snow still falling.

The low cloud thickened as we approached Windy Hill, 1,200ft up and the highest point along with the 120-mile route from Humber to Mersey. The snow flurries were becoming heavier and more persistent.

But for BBC man Harry Carpenter's Open House report that there were blue skies over Manchester, I may well have turned back and postponed the trip.

I could have picked a better day, and yet I was pleased later that I had pressed on, for when all is said and done these rapidly-changing climatic extremes are a basic feature of the winter scenario on this section of the M62.

That goes for the bumps and the breakdowns as well. The breakdown people all looked to be missing out on breakfast as a result of emergency turn-outs, the surprising thing was that there were no more nasty "tramps" — like some people seemed oblivious to warning signals.

On the downgrade from Windy Hill towards Ribblesdale Valley — the steepest motorway

in Britain — some lorries were hurtling past me at 50mph, twenty miles an hour in excess of the illuminated advisory limits.

So this was "Way madness" — West Yorkshire Metro Police traffic expert Supt Roy Eley confirmed my impressions. This is one of the problems. The "heavies" take every advantage downhill — it can be frightening if you have one on your tail.

Thank goodness, Carpenter's BBC weather brief was spot accurate. Unbelievably, almost, the skies lifted and a small patch of blue appeared. There was even sunshine by the time Worsley's "spaghetti junction" was reached and we were opening off in a long curve through the flat Cheshire countryside, for Bartonwood and then Liverpool.

The newly-completed Tarbock Queen's Drive section, incidentally, takes the M62 only three miles short of Liverpool's Pier Head.

I crossed the M62 finishing line exactly one hour, five minutes after leaving Outlane — fifty-two miles. Not bad going on the day.

In the event, a quite remarkable day was only just beginning.

In no sense was this an attempt to simulate Lombard rally winter. Bigger.

The M62 high on the Pennines where it forms the embankment of Scammonden Water, the reservoir planned by the Huddersfield Corporation. Below: Mr Edward Earnshaw in his caravan park.

Pictures by **ATHOL BUXTON.**



What of the future?

THE final page of the great M62 saga has yet to be written, namely, what its social and economic impact has been on the industrial conurbations that straddle its path.

On both sides of the Pennines, there will be people who still mourn having to leave their homes in the name of progress.

Outlane made a vigorous stand — Motorway or no motorway, Humberbridge is today one of the blackest employment pockets in the country.

On the other side of the Pennines, Skelmerdale's depression plight is equally grim.

In these circumstances, it is well that Prof Kenneth Gwylliam, lecturer in transport economics at Leeds University, advised the Department of the Environment that he would need eight years to compile an accurate assessment.

The document is one which Prof Gwylliam and his team hope to have ready in another three years.

But one conclusion firmly established is that the "draw" of traffic to the M62 is proving a much wider spread than was at one time thought possible.

The police, in their statistical analysis, go on vehicles; they state that 36,000 vehicles a day are plying the M62, and this represents an unusual growth rate of 6 per cent.

But Prof Gwylliam's team aim to go deeper in their researches; they point to 45,282 axle counts in May this year, which is 15,000 up on two years ago and could indicate two things — more vehicles and bigger trailer units.

There is no more striking example of the impact which good motorway connections can have on a business than the case of Ben Shaws and Sons Ltd, the soft-drink manufacturers. They closed their factory in Oldham, finding it better to concentrate production at Hillhouse and Brookholes and distribute into Lancashire from those outlets.

There is evidence, heartening for Kirkstoes, that in the years ahead industry is going to be looking more and more for floorpace near to the motorways.

Brighouse's industrial estate continues to expand, slowly but significantly, bringing new jobs to the district. Another series of considerable new warehousing activity in the distribution centre being developed at the junction of the M62 and M61 motorways at Gildersome

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MOTORWAY designers went to sophisticated technical lengths in aiming to make the M62 not merely a fast and smooth — but safe — super highway. But sadly accident scenes are an almost twice-weekly occurrence.

West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police released these five-year statistics of accidents and casualty figures on the section for which they are responsible — from the Lancashire border at Windy Hill eastwards to near South-Boothferry Bridge where Humberdale police and ambulance crews do the patrolling.

| Year | Accidents | Total casualties | Fatally injured |
|----------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1971 | 5 | 13 | 2 |
| 1972 | 24 | 25 | 0 |
| 1973 | 44 | 87 | 7 |
| 1974 | 69 | 125 | 3 |
| 1975 | 69 | 113 | 3 |
| 1976 (to Sept) | 45 | 71 | 1 |

LATEST: Accidents in freezing fog, ice and snow claimed four more deaths on the M62 last week — one near Outlane, and three in the Greater Manchester area.

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