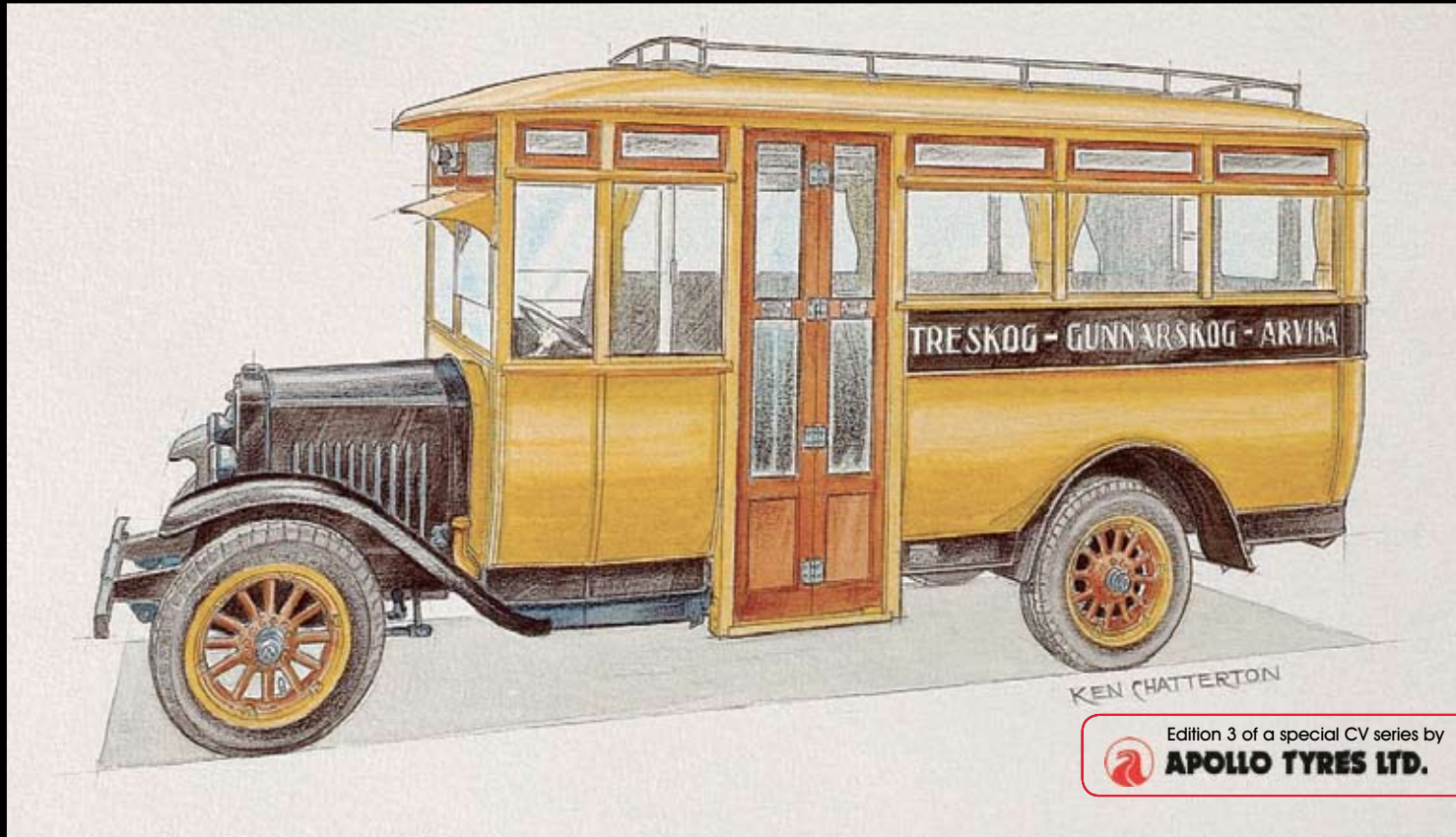


UNSTOPPABLE


1928 VOLVO LV4

Just as you realise what constitutes state-of-the-art in present day Indian coaches after looking at the myriad Volvos zipping past on our roads, the LV4 Arvika is a clear cut indicator of what was pretty much state-of-the-1920's-art in bus transportation.



Edition 3 of a special CV series by

APOLLO TYRES LTD.



APOLLO TYRES LTD.

UNSTOPPABLE

Never wary of progress, never skeptical about success,
 Never scared of challenges, never tired of trying,
 Every step of the way we travel with our customers,
 On the "unstoppable" journey to success.



Functional aesthetics dominate with the traditional driver's position and the large flat windscreen giving ample forward vision. Note the simple mechanical driver-operated passenger door actuator on the dashboard.

VOLVO WAS INCORPORATED IN 1915 AS A SUBSIDIARY OF AB SKF, the Swedish ball bearing manufacturer – very much an integral part even of Indian industry. In 1924, Assar Gabriellson and Gustaf Larson, the two founders, decided to start construction of a Swedish car. The original production models were designed to withstand the rigours of Sweden's rough roads and cold temperatures. This emphasis on durability has been a feature of Volvo products ever since, be it cars or commercial vehicles. In fact the standout reliability and toughness of contemporary Volvos has been a detail carried on unfailingly since the inception of the company. As is the emphasis on safety, both occupant and vehicle safety which bear out Volvo's integrity through the ages.

At 10 a m in the morning of April 14, 1927, Volvo's then sales manager Hilmer Johansson drove the first series-produced Volvo car through the factory gates and the company known as Volvo was officially born. However it was not long before the Volvo car was eclipsed by the utility demanding Swedes and it was inevitable that Volvo had to develop a truck version of its first car. It was a curious thing that while sales of the early Volvo cars were anything but quick, the trucks crafted out of the cars became instant hits. By the time the LV4 was launched in 1928, a large number of customers had placed orders for it and the production run of 500 was sold out within six months. Good it might seem on the face of it, but the Volvo management had surmised that it would take two years for them to shift the 500 units! For once this was not such a bad thing and the company set out to build another batch of 500 units but demand just didn't seem to peter off! More importantly it was because of the quality of the products which were built tough to tackle the rough and rutted Swedish terrain better than the competition made sure the demand was genuinely manifest.

The early trucks were delivered sans cabs, a fact that most Indian truck makers do to this day. However then the scene was different because automobiles were in their infancy in Sweden and the horse-drawn coach and cart makers were yet very much in business and seemed to know a thing or two about bodies. Many of the early Type 1 LV4s have survived to this day thanks to the strength of their construction and design. Volvo's role in designing the complete chassis, drivetrain and running gear was responsible for this state of affairs.

It was inevitable that these early Type 1 LV4 trucks also lent themselves to bus application. However given the hectic nature of the demand and the inability of the firm to cope with it, meant that further development work on larger-engined vehicles had to be sidelined. However the 28bhp four-cylinder motors were robust as were their transmissions and while initially Volvo offered two rear axle ratios, this was standardized to a single one, the 'slower' axle resulting in a reduced top speed but delivering improved driveability.

This truly helped with the bus trade and the LV4 Series 2 vehicles were preferred by coach operators who took to all-Volvo fleets as happens in many a nation to this day. These early buses had wooden-framed bus bodies covered by sheet metal and as you can see from the pics of the buses on this page, the interiors were functional yet very comfortable. Functionality was of the essence and these LV4s had quite a load of it. Of course propulsion was yet by petrol powered motors but then these LV4s planted the seed for the unstoppable reign of Volvo buses in the psyche of bus operators and users the world over to this day.



Another LV4 but this time with a sheet metal body on a wooden frame doing the business in Sweden.



Almost 80 years in between them: the LV4 Arvika with Volvo's latest B12 coach.

