



Peter William Blackwell, employed in Manweb sales from 1954 to 1960

*Notes written by Peter Milham, former son-in-law of Peter Blackwell
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Following Peter's death in January 2017, aged 91, I found some extracts and cuttings he kept from his career and employments. This included some relating to his Manweb employment from June 1954 until 1960, with extracts from Manweb's *Contact* magazine. Peter often said to me how important his employment at Manweb was to his career that followed. I discovered the *manweb-remembered* website, and I thought some of these documents may be interesting to others. My thanks to Ed Quinn for putting these documents on the website and I hope you enjoy them.

Manweb employment

Like so many who conscripted into World War II service, this war service disrupted Peter's education and settling to a career. By 1950, Peter was living in Tarporley, Cheshire, with his wife, son and daughter. He was seeking a career with job satisfaction and prospects, and he had a sequence of sales roles in several companies, which led to his employment by Manweb. At that time, Manweb among all the other electricity boards were promoting electricity usage and products by displaying and demonstrating new home heating systems, cookers and washing machines etc; often to customers who may be unfamiliar with the new products available.

Peter wrote in his eulogy notes: *"in June 1954 I joined the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board as a sales representative based in Chester. I covered an area south of the city which included Tarporley. I later drove an experimental 'Showcar' providing a service to rural villages and this exposure and later success in the regional Public Speaking competition brought me to the attention of senior managers in that Board. My appointment to the new post of Senior Sales Training Officer attached to HQ marked the first real step in my subsequent career."*

The showcar mentioned may have been of the type shown in the *Contact* magazine issue of January 1956. Manweb must have suited Peter, as he stayed in this sales role for over 2 years.

As Peter said, he took part in a national speaking competition in 1956. He won the regional competition (see *Contact* magazine of March 1956), and competed in the national final (see the cutting from the *E.D.A.* magazine of May/June 1956). He was seen in this speaking competition by Mr T. R. Smith (Assistant Commercial Officer) who recommended that Peter should apply for a job at Manweb's Wallasey sales training centre. Peter's job application was successful; from the cuttings Peter kept from *Contact* magazine it looks like Peter enjoyed this training role, and with the team of instructors, he was involved in showground exhibition stands as well as leading training courses.

Peter would have probably stayed at Manweb, but he needed to help his elderly parents who lived in Cambridgeshire. So, Peter applied for a similar training role in Eastern Electricity, and moved there in 1960.