

Essex Bus Magazine Extra

Historical features special issue

Issue 1

Spring 2022



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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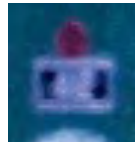
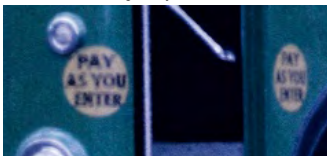
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Starting on page 18, John Bath recalls memories of the Southend Corporation fleet in 1958/9, complementing his similar memories of Eastern National published in EBN 685 (May 2021), so we thought these two shots by **Frank Church** would nicely capture the atmosphere of the time. The two were taken at the same time but there is no record of the date, however a process of deduction puts the pictures somewhere between November 1956 and early in 1958. They are taken on the forecourt of Southend Victoria Station, used both as a terminus for Eastern National buses to Grays, Chelmsford and Clacton, and for layovers.



First up we have SCT's 296 (LHJ 398), a Leyland PD2/12 with a Massey lowbridge body, new in February 1956. The chassis was one of twelve originally ordered by Plymouth City Transport. Unusually, the bodies were specified with a full 3-part destination indicator display on the nearside over the platform (just visible) meaning that the advert projected forward much further than normal. A full display was also included on the back of these buses. The extra nearside boxes were later removed. The bus has arrived on the short town circular 28, one of two former trolleybus routes which formed a figure of eight with Victoria Circus at the centre.

Alongside is an Eastern National Bristol LS / ECW bus and the second photo reveals this to be 854 ETW, then numbered 412 and to become 1232 in the 1964 renumbering scheme. Two features help to date the picture. Firstly, it has a red circle depot code symbol - these were dropped in 1958 and replaced by the more familiar two letter codes, the red circle for Southend becoming SD. The precise date of the change is not known, but various records suggest Southend buses were changed by March 1958. Secondly, note the early 'Pay as you Enter' painted sign. 412 was one of seven LS buses that were converted from crew operation to OMO in November 1956, the first such conversions of large saloons.



They were down-seated from 45 to 41 and it's just possible to make out how the first nearside seat is now inward facing, to create more circulating room. It has arrived in Southend from Wallasea Bay on service 12, a former Westcliff route. We have more on route numbering in an article starting on page 28.



Essex Bus Magazine Extra from the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

Issue 1

Spring 2022

Introduction

Welcome to this first edition of **Essex Bus Magazine Extra**, an occasional series brought free to members to offer some in-depth historical articles that we don't have room for in our monthly magazine. This issue has been funded by the Group's founder Alan Osborne as a special birthday gift to celebrate becoming an octogenarian in February and we are extremely grateful to him for his generosity. We hope to be able to publish one or two Extras each year, subject to funding. We already have a sponsor for the second issue which will appear in the autumn. We hope you enjoy this extra magazine and will find the range of articles interesting and stimulating, covering a range of eras, operators and parts of Essex.

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In 1942, the year that Alan was born, as far as we know only eight new buses were delivered to Essex operators. Eastern National took three Guy Arabs and two Bristol Ks, Colchester Corporation received two Bristol Ks, and Moore Bros of Kelvedon bought JPU 640, this Bristol K5G with a Duple body built to wartime utility standards. In May 1958 they sold it to another local operator, Ashdown's Luxury Coaches of Danbury, as seen here numbered 53, for whom it ran until going for scrap in 1961. **EBEG, Bryan Everitt Collection.**

Front Cover

As well as the two photos on the opposite page, redolent of the period covered in John Bath's article of his early bus spotting days in Southend in 1958/59 is this evocative shot of Southend Corporation 265, a Daimler CWA6 which had been new to London Transport in 1946 as D275 with a highbridge Park Royal body. Thirteen of these were acquired by Southend for trolleybus replacement and were sent to be rebodied with Massey lowbridge bodies. 265 entered service in Southend in April 1954 and lasted until July 1964. Another of the batch, 267, was the subject of our 'From the Colour Archives' feature in EBM 690 (October 2021). Here the conductress walks back to the platform at the stop outside Southend Victoria Station as the bus works the former trolleybus eastern & western circulars. Meanwhile a Mark II Ford Consul is about to pass. Photo courtesy of the **Bristol Vintage Bus Group.**

Halls Coaches of Hatfield Heath

by Alan Osborne

The 'Stag' Bus Service and the other ECW.

In EBN 682 (February 2021) Peter Carr contributed a letter with a photograph of the Halls ('Stag') bus outside the public house in Hatfield Heath. Peter commented that "he has never seen anything about this small Essex operator in EBN, might be time to correct that?". Indeed it is, and after much research and some valuable help, here goes.

Charles Edward Halls was born in 1888 in the Diss area of Norfolk, he married Alice and moved to Essex in the 1920s, where he later established Halls garage which had been converted from Aaron Hawkins coal depot. His wife administered the 'Stag' Inn, which was next door. The photo referred to above nicely illustrates the scene. The vehicles are parked outside the garage which is to the left of the pub (where Charles later become the publican).

In 1931, C. E. Halls obtained a licence to continue his Thursday market day bus service between Sheering and Bishop's Stortford (Car Park) via Hatfield Heath and Little Hallingbury which he had operated during the previous year. Before we go any further with the story it would be helpful to include a map showing these places in relation to one another. On the right is an ECC one from January 1977. The light hatched line indicates the county boundary and the solid black line is the railway. 'H', which appears twice, is the Stag service, 'H' standing for Halls.



Back to the 1930s and the PSV Circle Fleet History PF6 ('The Small Stage Carriage Operators of Essex and Suffolk', 1966) records the earliest vehicle in the fleet as UC 5276 (a 14-seat Chevrolet) acquired in 1929. It makes no mention of the small bus in the EBN 682 photo (registration CP 54x, would have been issued by Halifax C.B.C. in 1928) which suggests that operations commenced about

then. The earliest 'Stag' Bus timetable that I have is from Boardman's Bishop's Stortford Train and Omnibus Time Table dated December 1935. The service then appeared in the September 1936 (first issue) of the London Transport local timetable for Bishop's Stortford and District, distributed by Boardman's. The timetable was the same, with the terminal points then identified as Hatfield Heath, 'Stag' (naturally!) and Bishop's Stortford (Anchor Yard). The timetable did not change for many years. A copy of the January 1938 timetable is illustrated below.

Bus	Bishops Stortford - Hatfield Heath															The Stag						
THURSDAY ONLY																						
Bishops Stortford, Anchor Yard	11	0	12	0	2	0	3	15	4	45	5	30	10	30	11	30	1	30	2	30	4	20
Little Hallingbury	11	15	12	15	2	15	3	30	5	0	5	45	10	40	11	40	1	40	2	40	4	30
Hatfield Heath, Stag	11	25	12	25	2	25	3	40	5	10	5	55	10	55	11	55	1	55	2	55	4	45

*—This bus picks up passengers at Sheering (120 a.m.), then runs to Bishops Stortford via Hatfield Heath.
†—This bus picks up passengers at Sheering at 1.35 p.m., then runs to Bishops Stortford.

As can be seen, there were five departures from Hatfield Heath at 10.30, 11.30, 1.30, 2.30 and 4.20, running time 25 minutes. The 11.30 bus started at Sheering 10 minutes earlier, and the 1.30 bus served Sheering five minutes later (implying these went by different routes - serving Sheering didn't add anything to the running time of the 1.30 departure). Return journeys from Bishop's Stortford were at 11.00, 12.00, 2.00, 3.15, 4.45 and 5.30. None of these are indicated as serving Sheering, although it may be possible it was served on request on at least one journey, see the 4.45 June 1951 entry below.

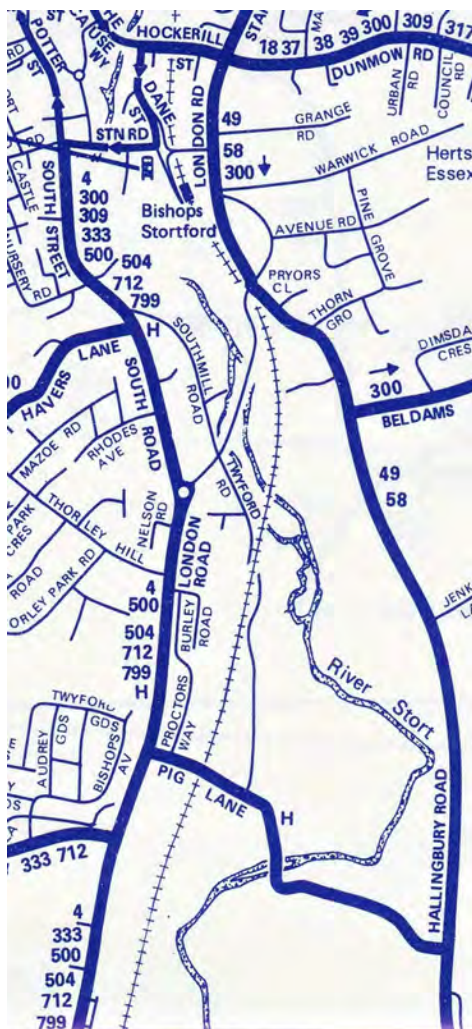
For the subsequent history of the service, since early 'Stag' timetables are quite rare and usually undated, references to changes are given as the date of the appropriate LT booklet when first noted. The timetable remained the same until August 1939 but was withdrawn during the war (by February 1940). It re-appeared by November 1946, to the same schedule to Anchor Yard. The terminal later became The Falcon, in Dane Street on the corner of Station Road, also used for Hicks Bros. services. This change was thought to be circa 1947-1948, it was still showing as Anchor Yard in a Boardman's LT Guide November 1947 timetable as shown top opposite.

BISHOPS STORTFORD - HATFIELD HEATH												The Stag Bus											
THURSDAY ONLY																							
BISHOPS STORTFORD <i>Anchor Yard</i>		11 0	12 0	2 0	3 15	4 45	5 30	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....		
HATFIELD HEATH <i>Stag</i>		11 25	12 25	2 25	3 40	5 10	5 55	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		
SHEERING .....		....	11 20	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....		
HATFIELD HEATH <i>Stag</i>		10 30	11 30	1 30	2 30	4 20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		
SHEERING .....		....	1 35	....	....	....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		
BISHOPS STORTFORD <i>Anchor Yard</i>		10 55	11 55	1 55	2 55	4 43	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..		

This is exactly the same as the pre-War 1938 timetable, except Little Hallingbury isn't shown and the last journey to Bishop's Stortford was two minutes quicker! The 11.30 and 1.30 journeys from Hatfield Heath, Stag, serving Sheering, are shown more clearly. The Falcon terminal was still current in December 1953, after which it changed (by August 1954) to the Rose & Crown. This location was unique to Halls, being on the other side of the road just a few yards from The Falcon, it remained as such for many years.

We can now focus on some other aspects of the operation. Incidentally, in his letter Peter Carr indicated that the service ran on both Thursdays and Saturdays, but no evidence can be found for any Saturday running, it was purely a market day service. The next question to consider is the actual route followed from Little Hallingbury into Bishop's Stortford. In 1936, the direct route along the Hallingbury Road (B1005) was covered by Eastern National service 8 (numbers of journeys per day shown in parentheses): Thurs (1), Fri (2), Sat & Sun (4), and by Simpsons of Leaden Roding: Mon, Wed & Fri (4), Thurs (7), Fri (2), Sat (4), and Sun (2), on their regular services from Chelmsford via Leaden Roding and Hatfield Heath. It is thought that from the early days the 'Stag' actually turned left after Little Hallingbury along Pig Lane to join London Road (A11) and thence into Bishop's Stortford. However, this may not have always been the case. The central pages bus map in the 1936 LT timetable only indicated terminal points and roads traversed for their own services. The remainder of the district map was geographic only which showed place names, along roads with direction arrows to destinations beyond. Pig Lane was not shown, which might have implied that it was unserved. During wartime the maps were discontinued and were not restored until September 1950 which showed the 'Stag' entering Bishop's Stortford along the Hallingbury Road on its way to the Falcon Hotel; Pig Lane not being shown on the district map, similarly for the June 1951 issue (where the 4.45 ex Bishop's Stortford was shown as extending to Sheering if required). However, in the September 1952 timetable the 'Stag' bus is shown arriving in Bishop's Stortford along the London Road, South Road and South Street; Pig Lane then featured on the district map labelled 'Stag', the only service to use it. However, NO application can be traced in Notices & Proceedings by Halls Coaches for any variation of route during the period. The question to be asked, was the diversion effected in 1951/2, or did it only become known to the LT cartographers at that time? One thing is certain is that from 1952 the 'Stag' bus travelled into Bishop's Stortford via Pig Lane, London Road, South Road, South Street, Potter Street, Bridge Street, The Causeway and Dane Street to Station Road (Rose & Crown), returning direct to South Street.

Right: ECC map from July 1987 showing service H for Halls alongside Pig Lane, London Road and South Road / South Street.



Next let us look at the service licensing as well as the Halls family. Although most of the 'Stag' route was within Essex and hence in the Eastern Traffic Area, Bishop's Stortford is in Hertfordshire in the Metropolitan Traffic Area. Two licences were therefore needed. The boundary between the two areas was the River Stort which was bridged at Pig Lane (as shown in the map on the previous page). The information given is from records for the period 1966-1971. For the Eastern Traffic Area, backing licence F/R 1886 was issued to Charles Edward Halls of 'The Stag', Hatfield Heath. Charles died in 1966. The Metropolitan primary licence TNR3954/1 was later in the name of his son, born in 1921, Eric Charles William (hence 'the other ECW' in the sub-title) Halls of 'The Stag', and subsequently of Downfield House, Hatfield Heath. Each licence was for a Thursday only service from Sheering (Crown) to Bishop's Stortford (Rose and Crown).

STAG BUS SERVICE	TIME TABLE		Halls Coaches, Hatfield Heath.		
<u>Thursdays only</u>	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
Sherring (The Crown)	10.20	11.30	1.25	2.30	
Hatfield Heath (The Stag)	10.30	11.35	1.30	2.35	4.20
Little Hallingbury (School)	10.37	11.42	1.37	2.42	4.27
Bp's Stortford (Rose & Crown, Station Rd.)	10.50	11.55	1.50	2.55	4.40
Bp's Stortford (Rose & Crown, Station Rd.)	11.00	12.00	2.00	3.15	4.45
Little Hallingbury (School)	11.13	12.13	2.13	3.28	4.58
Hatfield Heath (The Stag)	11.20	12.20	2.20	3.35	5.05
Sheering (The Crown)	11.25	12.25	2.25		5.10

Stage No.	FARE TABLE					SINGLE FARES
1	Bishops Stortford (Rose and Crown, Station Road)					
2	10d	Old George				
3	1/-	3d	Little Hallingbury (School)			
4	1/2	7d	4d	Sutton Arms		
5	1/6	11d	9d	6d	Hatfield Heath (The Stag)	
6	1/8	1/2	1/1	10d	6d	Sheering (The Crown)
Bishops Stortford (Rose and Crown, Station Road) and Sheering (The Crown)						RETURN FARE 2/11d.
Children under 5 (no charge) from 3 - 14 years - Half Fare.						

As previously mentioned, early 'Stag' bus timetables are quite rare, however, I have a copy of a pre-decimal example, illustrated above, which also shows fares. Note the incorrect spelling of 'Sheering' in the first entry, although correct in subsequent ones. By then, the number of journeys serving Sheering had increased to four each way, and the ones to Bishop's Stortford all commenced from there (rather than, as per the 1938 and 1947 timetables, one starting from there and one starting at The Stag but serving there). This timetable remained current throughout most of the 1970s (although the fares changed to decimal in February 1971) and appeared unchanged in the very first issue of the Bishop's Stortford, Saffron Walden, Royston and Haverhill area bus timetable dated June 1977 published jointly by Herts CC, Suffolk CC and Essex CC, attributed to the 'Stag' bus. However, by 31 March 1979, the date of the below timetable from London Country Bus Services Harlow & Hertford book (which included services from other operators in the area), now in 24 hour clock notation, the last journey from Hatfield Heath, Stag, to Bishop's Stortford had been withdrawn, the 3.15 from Bishop's Stortford had been advanced by 15 minutes and the 4.45 from there had been put back by half an hour.

Sheering and Bishops Stortford via Hatfield Heath, Little Hallingbury										Stag
Thursdays										
Sheering Crown	1020	1130	1325	1430	Bishops Stortford Rose and Crown.....	1110	1200	1400	1500	1715
Hatfield Heath Stag.....	1030	1135	1330	1435	Little Hallingbury School	1113	1213	1413	1513	1728
Little Hallingbury School	1037	1142	1337	1442	Hatfield Heath Stag.....	1120	1220	1420	1520	1735
Bishops Stortford Rose and Crown.....	1050	1155	1350	1455	Sheering Crown	1125	1225	1425	....	1740
No service other days										

Some minor revisions followed, in common with many other rural bus routes which went into slow decline and gradual retrenchment. Just before deregulation, the April 1986 issue was the last to refer to operation by E.C.W. Halls ('Stag' bus) of Hatfield Heath. Shortly afterwards notice was given that the 'Stag' bus service was to be withdrawn. However, in the event, in the deregulation ECC timetable booklet dated 26 October 1986 (D-Day), the route was still included running to the same schedule, attributed to Halls Coaches, but no operator details were given. Further research eventually revealed that the service was being run by Hornsby of Little Canfield. In the following issue (July 1987) Halls Coaches was restored to the operators list with a new office address at Rifle Hill, Braintree. By September

1989 the service had gained the number 48, this was also the last timetable that showed the 'Rose & Crown' as the terminal, this having been extant for 35 years. In the next issue (December 1990) a new terminal point was shown which was Bishop's Stortford, Bus Station. The 'Bus Station' was more commonly known as the 'Interchange', it was on Station Road and had been brought into use in 1986. A short article about the Interchange appeared in EBM 687 and an overview photo of it is on page 10 below.

On 10 May 1990 the service was registered by Francis David Hornsby of Exeter Close, Braintree, trading as Halls Coaches, with an office address at Rifle Hill. There were then four return journeys on service 48 on Thursdays, from Sheering at 0945, 1045, 1145 and 1345, and from Bishop's Stortford, Bus Station at 1015, 1115, 1215 and 1415. The July 1987 ECC timetable (page 108) included a map of Bishop's Stortford bus stands, Halls Coaches 48 was allocated to stand D. However, it took until January 1993 for the 'Interchange' designation to feature in the 48 timetable. In 1991, application was made by Hornsby for conversion of a lorry yard on the site of the former railway sidings in Old Mead Road, Henham into a parking area for coaches. I remember taking a train ride in the 1990s from Liverpool Street to Cambridge; just as we entered Elsenham Station the Thaxted branch platform could still be seen. After leaving Elsenham, the Halls Coaches yard could be viewed on the right from the train. However, Rifle Hill still remained as the office contact, it being changed to the Henham address from May 1995. From 17 October 1996 the service was reduced to two Thursday return journeys, from Sheering at 0945 and 1215, and from Bishop's Stortford Interchange at 1145 and 1430. On 27 October 1996 a partnership between Francis David Hornsby and Raymond Phillip Vidler was set up, then on 5 April 2001, R. P. Vidler became the sole owner of Halls Coaches, based at Old Mead Road, Henham. The very last timetable appeared on 22 April 2001, illustrated below - don't be fooled by the date, the new style of A4 sized Essex CC timetables introduced in 2000 included dates of last revisions. Note that the Hatfield Heath terminal is now shown as 'White Horse'. In the later Henham years, although the Halls Coaches name was still used, since there was then no family connection with the Stag, the Hatfield Heath timing point was changed to the White Horse, which had always been used by National, Eastern National and First Essex, this being another pub about 100 yards along on the same side of the road towards Bishop's Stortford.

Halls Coaches

SHEERING - BISHOPS STORTFORD

Thursdays only

Notes

Sheering, Crown	0945	1215
Hatfield Heath, White Horse	0950	1220
Little Hallingbury, School	0957	1227
Bishops Stortford, Interchange	±	1007 1237

Notes

Bishops Stortford, Interchange	±	1145 1430
Little Hallingbury, School		1155 1440
Hatfield Heath, White Horse		1202 1447
Sheering, Crown		1207 1452

48

From: 01/10/1998

NOTES

± Bus stop near Rail Station

Service 48 ceased on 14 June 2001. N&P 1899 has the following entry for Halls Coaches: "Licence surrendered WEF 12 August 2003". The Stag Inn closed in 2013 but a year later it re-opened as a bakery, takeaway and sandwich shop by Dorrington's of Sawbridgeworth. The building appearance is essentially unaltered. The address of the premises is The Stag, Hatfield Heath, so the Halls legacy lives on.

I do not have detailed fleet information available; I can only quote from readily available sources. A fleet list (to November 1966) is included in PSV Circle fleet history PF6, referred to earlier. Only two pre-war vehicles are listed, UC 5276 (Chevrolet, 1929) and ATW 745 (Bedford WTB with local Thurgood B20 bodywork, new in 1933 which lasted until 1950). The fleet then comprised mainly Bedfords (types WLB, WTB, OB, SB, SBG and SB3). Other makes operated were a Fordson BB18F and a Commer Avenger I. The only heavyweight in the fleet was DRU 457 a Leyland TS8 / Beadle, C28F, acquired from Hants & Dorset (fleet number 639) in March 1953, which only stayed for five months. A nice illustration of MMT 506, a Bedford OB with Duple Vista bodywork, in Station Road, Bishop's Stortford is included on page 54 of 'London Transport Connections, 1945-85', by Phillip Wallis, Capital Transport, 2003. The livery was light blue and cream. The fleet strength ranged from two to five. Later vehicles owned included DNH 197, a Roe bodied Daimler CVG6, new in 1953 to Northampton Corporation (fleet number 197), used as a school bus. The coach fleet included 461 ULG, which was also illustrated in EBN 682 and on page 9 below, which ended its days as a roadside cafe on the A604 just outside Halstead. I also photographed HNV 1D, a Bedford VAM5 with Duple coachwork, another Northants import, being new to Heaps, Guilsborough in 1966, also shown on page 9. Plus, on page 10, there is a view of B920 CSU, when owned by Halls Coaches (Hornsby and Vidler) of Henham in a revised livery.

In his letter Peter commented "In the early 1970s he [E.C.W. Halls] operated a couple of ex-Northampton Daimler rear-entrance double deckers on school contracts, they would sometimes be parked up during the day on a piece of land opposite the Eastern National Bishop's Stortford garage in South Street". This statement needs correction since Halls Coaches only ever owned ONE double decker, the aforementioned DNH 197. Reference to the PSV Circle Northampton Corporation Transport fleet history quickly resolved the mystery.

In 1953, Northampton took delivery of a batch of 10 Roe bodied Daimler CVG6 double deckers (190-9, DNH 190-9). In October 1969, 197 passed to Halls Coaches, as recorded above. In the same month, 192 and 194 passed to Don's Coaches of Bishop's Stortford. At that time the Dons business was split into two parts, one at their premises in Dunmow, and a newer base in Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, near the Bricklayers Arms from whence the Lea Valley Coaches segment was conducted. David Grimmer's photograph of 192 and 194 with Don's fleet names, taken in early 1971, is on page 8. These are therefore the vehicles to which Peter referred.

As an aside, the January 1938 timetable also included a list of all bus services in the Bishop's Stortford area, this is shown below together with the adverts on the previous page in the timetable.

TELEPHONE .. 428

FAITH KNOWLES

Wool Specialist

**STATION ROAD
BISHOP'S STORTFORD**



The Noted House for
Knitting Wools and
Art Needlework
Goods. First Class
Selection always
stocked

Little beggar! He deserves the
best! And he shall have it!

JACK BEESLEY

Canine Supply Stores

**29, NORTH STREET
BISHOP'S STORTFORD**

Everything for Dogs, Poultry, Cage
Birds and Pigeons
ALL KINDS OF PETS SUPPLIED

List of Routes

Only the first page of
each timetable is given

BUS	Route Number, Route and page number
350.	B. Stortford-Wareside-Hertford. <i>Page 13.</i>
350A.	B. Stortford-Stanstead Abbots-Hertford. <i>P. 13.</i>
386.	B. Stortford-Buntingford-Hitchin. <i>Page 19.</i>
389.	B. Stortford-Sawbridgeworth-Hertford. <i>Page 21.</i>
399.	Hertford-Epping-Coopersale Street. <i>Page 23.</i>
E. Nat. S.	B. Stortford-Chelmsford. <i>Page 25.</i>
E. Nat. 13.	B. Stortford-Saffron Walden. <i>Page 27.</i>
E. Nat. 13A.	B. Stortford - Henham. <i>Page 28.</i>
Simpson.	B. Stortford-Rodings-Chelmsford. <i>Page 29.</i>
The Stag.	B. Stortford-Hatfield Heath. <i>Page 31.</i>
Hicks.	B. Stortford-Dunmow-Colchester. <i>Page 32.</i>
Hicks.	B. Stortford-Broxton-Dunmow. <i>Page 33.</i>
Hicks.	B. Stortford-Tye Green. <i>Page 33.</i>
Hicks.	B. Stortford-Thaxted-Dunmow. <i>Page 34.</i>
Hicks.	B. Stortford-Gt. Hallingbury. <i>Page 34.</i>
Cannou.	B. Stortford-Braughing. <i>Page 34.</i>
Weeden.	B. Stortford-Clavering-Heydon. <i>Page 35.</i>
Clavering & Dist.	B. Stortford-Clavering-Langley. <i>Page 36.</i>
Clavering & Dist.	B. Stortford-Elsenham-Clavering. <i>Page 37.</i>
Clavering & Dist.	B. Stortford-Quendon-Langley. <i>Page 37.</i>

COACH

Route Letter, Route
and Page Number

Green Line N. B. Stortford-London-Windsor. *Page 41.*

Green Line V. B. Stortford-Stratford-London. *P. 51.*

Eastern Counties. B. Stortford - Cambridge - Norfolk
Coast. *Page 59.*

Hicks. Braintree - Harlow - London. *Page 61.*

TRAIN

Railway, Route and
Page Number

Summary. Bishop's Stortford-Liverpool St. *Page 63.*

L.N.E.R. B. Stortford-Broxbourne-London. *Page 65.*

L.N.E.R. B. Stortford-Cambridge-Yarmouth. *Page 79.*

L.N.E.R. B. Stortford-Broxbourne-Hertford. *Page 84.*

L.N.E.R. B. Stortford-Dunmow-Witham, etc. *Page 87.*

L.N.E.R. B. Stortford-Elsenham-Thaxted. *Page 89.*

L.N.E.R. Buntingford-Hadham-St. Margarets. *Page 90.*

MAPS

Street Plan of Bishop's Stortford. *Page 47.*

Map of all local routes. *Pages 48 and 49.*

I was amazed to discover that at the time Bishop's Stortford was served by no less than 10 different operators that used six different terminal points in the town. The list is shown below with details of subsequent takeovers, it certainly makes an interesting comparison with the situation today.

Operator	Terminal	Later
London Transport	Southmill Road	London Country Bus Services
London Transport (Green Line)	Bricklayers Arms	LC Bus Services (bus fares from Epping)
Eastern National	South Street (the first E.N. garage)	First Essex
Cannon	Grays Shop	WH Smith, Buntingford
Clavering & District	Anchor	Eastern National
Drayton	Anchor	Premier Travel
Hicks	Falcon	Eastern National
Monk	Grays Shop	Biss Bros
Simpson	Anchor	Eastern National
'Stag'	Anchor	Halls
Weeden	Anchor	Premier Travel

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L. H. Newell, "A History of Motor Vehicle Registration in the United Kingdom", Kithead, Droitwich Spa, 1999.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Peter Clark, Nigel Turner, Trevor J. Beal, David Grimmett, Richard Delahoy and Martin Weyell for supply of information and for helpful discussions and to Peter Carr for his initial encouragement. I would also like to express my most grateful thanks to Adam Kelleher for converting my typescript and original colour slides into a suitable format for the magazine.

Below: Halls Coaches Bedford OB with Thurgood bodywork bound for Hatfield Heath. LVW 152 was purchased new in 1947 and after withdrawal in 1953 ended its days as a mobile shop in Baldock. **D. A. Jones, courtesy of Martin Weyell**



Top: The two ex-Northampton Daimlers parked in South Street opposite the Eastern National garage as referred to by Peter Carr were actually owned by Don's Coaches of Bishop's Stortford. This view of them dates from early 1971. A smaller version of this photo was on the rear cover of EBN 671, but it is worth reproducing here due to its relevance, and comparison with the photo below it. **David Grimm**. But Halls did own another of this batch, DNH 197, used as a school bus. It is seen at Downfield House yard next to the Halls residence in Hatfield Heath in October 1975. Withdrawn just two months later in December 1975, it was acquired for preservation and appeared at the June 1976 Southend Bus Rally. **Alan Osborne**. All three buses still in Northampton livery.



Also seen in the Downfield House yard next to the Halls residence in Hatfield Heath in October 1975 are (top) 461 ULG, a Bedford SB5 with Duple C41F bodywork new to Sykes of Warrington in 1962, as depicted by Peter Carr in EBN 682, and (bottom) HNV 1D, a Bedford VAM5 with Duple bodywork dating from 1966. I did not see what was burning in the background! Both **Alan Osborne**



Top: Parked in Bishop's Stortford Bus Interchange in February 1999 is Halls Coaches, by then based at Old Mead Road, Henham (Hornsby and Vidler), B920 CSU, an Irizar bodied DAF SB230 new to Mayo of Caterham in 1985. The chimneys of the Falcon Inn can just be seen above the coach roof.

Bottom: A wonderful panoramic Thursday shot of Bishop's Stortford Interchange in February 1999 with five independent vehicles on market day services. On the left, Viceroy and Richmond, on the right Heddingham, Myalls and Halls. The Rose & Crown public house, which served as the 'Stag' bus terminal for many years is in the background. Both **Alan Osborne**



Manningtree Railway Bridge & Level Crossing by Robert Appleton

Over and under. Below: Brand new Bedford YMQS / Wadham Stringer 1053 (TJN 976W), allocated to Colchester, crosses the Manningtree level crossing on 12 July 1981, working the summer Sunday service 87, Colchester - Manningtree.

Bottom: Two years earlier, on 1 July 1979, Bristol RELL / ECW 1528 (LVX 116J), also allocated to Colchester, had just come under the Manningtree railway bridge, also working the summer Sunday service 87. Note that the height limit was 10ft.



Ray Boreham's letter in EBN 629, September 2016, mentioned the delays caused to service 212 (Harwich to Ipswich) at the notorious Manningtree level crossing gates, which has encouraged me to write this article.

Editor's note: Robert wrote this article at the time, but it was never published in EBN, although his photo of Carters L456 JCK, a Volvo B10L with Saffle body, passing under the Manningtree railway bridge on 16 September 2014, appeared in colour on the inside rear cover of EBN 630 and his photo of Eastern Counties LKD202 (VVF 202), a Bristol LD5G / ECW, coming over the level crossing in August 1971 was in EBN 634. Robert has now revised, expanded, and updated his article.

All photos by **the author** except one, as stated.

The railway line from Colchester to Ipswich was built by the Eastern Union Railway, with work starting in 1844. Manningtree Station was opened on 15 June 1846. The branch line from Manningtree to Harwich opened on 15 August 1854. An 1897 map shows the Manningtree to Brantham road passing under the railway bridge just to the east of Manningtree Station, but no level crossing is shown. The Eastern Union Railway became part of the Great Eastern Railway that re-signaled the Manningtree area in the early 1920s. The London & North Eastern Railway completed this work by constructing a new signal box to the east of the station in 1926, this was Manningtree South Junction signal box. For many years until 1980, the signaller's assistant had the job of walking from the signal box to the level crossing to open and close the level crossing gates. He could only do this when there were suitable gaps between trains. The height limit on the single carriageway railway bridge was 10ft, so buses and other traffic needing to use the level crossing were often delayed for 15 to 20 minutes.

I regret that I cannot establish when the level crossing was built, it was possibly in the early 1920s when motorised road traffic increased after World War One. For example, the Eastern Counties Road Car Company was expanding its bus services from Ipswich in this period, and service 21, Ipswich - Mistley, commenced on 17 April 1924. This became service 221 after the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company was created in 1931.

My association with the crossing began in 1965 as outlined below. In the period from 1965 to 1970 the following bus services linked Manningtree in Essex with Brantham in Suffolk.

Eastern Counties:

221 Ipswich - Holbrook - Mistley - Colchester / East Bergholt - Mistley - Colchester.

246 East Bergholt - Manningtree - Little Bromley - Colchester.

Eastern National:

87/A Colchester - Dedham - Manningtree - East Bergholt.

Works contracts from Colchester, Clacton, and Harwich to the British Xylonite Plastics Ltd and Bexford Ltd factories at Brantham.

Joint Eastern Counties / Eastern National:

123 Clacton - Thorpe le Soken - Manningtree - Holbrook - Ipswich.

212 Harwich - Bradfield - Manningtree - Holbrook - Ipswich.

All double-deckers and most single-deckers had to use the level crossing. A long wait there caused late running, which meant late Eastern Counties / Eastern National crew changeovers on some service 123 and all service 212 journeys, plus late running on Eastern Counties service 221.

My friend Trevor Peartree remembers Eastern Counties LL440 (WPW 640), a Bristol MW5G / ECW B45F, being delivered new to East Bergholt outstation in November 1958. It was crew operated, mainly working on service 221, having to use Manningtree level crossing ten times per day on Mondays to Saturdays. After eighteen months of LL440 having to wait at the level crossing, it was replaced by older LL724 (LNG 724), a Bristol LL5G / ECW B39R new in 1950. LL724 was low enough to pass under the railway bridge. LL440 then worked from Ipswich depot, and was converted to one-man-operation, reclassified LM440. However, busy peak-hour journeys to Colchester on service 221 needed double deck capacity, so had no choice but to use the level crossing.

This affected me from September 1965 when I started travelling from Mistley to Colchester to attend the Royal Grammar School, using the 0745 East Bergholt - Colchester 221, worked by a LKD class Bristol LD5G / ECW, H33/27RD, from East Bergholt outstation. This was such a busy journey that another LKD provided a relief journey from Lawford (on the Colchester side of the crossing). So Lawford and Ardleigh passengers got to Colchester on time, but the 0745 journey was sometimes delayed by 15 to 20 minutes at Manningtree level crossing. Thus, adults were late getting to work in Colchester, and schoolchildren, including myself, were late getting to school. I can recollect missing the 0900-morning registration and creeping into the school assembly. My teachers were not pleased, but somehow, I managed to avoid Saturday morning detention. Help came with the 5 May 1968 timetable changes. The 0745 East Bergholt - Colchester 221 was retimed to run five minutes earlier, thus arriving at the Manningtree level crossing earlier, and normally not being held up there.

As mentioned, Bristol LWL5Gs with ECW bodies were low enough to go under the 10ft high railway bridge, and Eastern National examples worked on services 87/A. Eastern Counties examples from East Bergholt outstation worked service 246, and some 221 journeys. Another bus type that could pass under the bridge was the Bristol SC4LK / ECW B35F, classified LC by Eastern Counties. These did work certain service 221 journeys, both from Ipswich depot and East Bergholt outstation. LC556 (3003 AH) is seen below in Harwich Road Mistley working a Mistley - Ipswich journey on service 221 in March 1970.



The last Eastern National Bristol LWL5Gs were withdrawn in June - July 1965 (the last two in the fleet, 1132 (EJN 633), which had been new to Westcliff Motor Services, and 1139 (TTW 570), had survived three months longer than the rest and in April had been allocated to Colchester to replace other examples on the 87/A). 1139 is seen right going under the bridge, between April and June 1965, photo taken by **Bob Beaumont**. It is quite possible that Bob went out to take photos of the last day of Bristol L types operating for Eastern National so this may well have been taken that day, a fellow photographer is just visible on the far left of the photo.



After this the single-deckers used were Bristol LS5G / ECW B45F (1200 series), Bristol MW5G / ECW B45F (1300 series) and Bristol MW5G / ECW DP41F (1400 series). These worked on services 87/87A/123/212,

and the works contracts to Brantham. These were slightly too high to go under the railway bridge, so they had to use the level crossing. However, late running due to waiting at the level crossing would affect the shift changeovers at British Xylonite Plastics at 0600, 1400, and 2200. Fellow EBEG member Stephen Barham who worked at Eastern National's Colchester depot before moving to Harwich depot, told me that a solution was to fit smaller rear tyres to a few Bristol MW5Gs so that they could pass under Manningtree railway bridge. An Eastern National driver told me at the time that two Bristol MW5G at Colchester were modified in this way. I presume that a few Bristol MW5Gs at Clacton and Harwich were also modified, indeed I did manage to get a photo of one of them, Clacton based 1317 at Harwich depot in August 1974, as seen at the top of the next page.



On service 212, the through journeys to Ipswich were withdrawn on 5 September 1970. Eastern Counties LFS76 (AAH 614B), a Bristol FS5G / ECW, H33/27RD, is seen below turning from Heath Road onto Harwich Road, Mistley, in September 1969. LFS76 was working 1330 Harwich - Ipswich 212 with an Eastern National crew. Further into this journey they would have met the 1345 Ipswich - Harwich 212 worked by an Eastern Counties crew with an Eastern National Bristol LS5G / ECW or Bristol MW5G / ECW. The crews changed over, with the Eastern National crew and bus working to Clacton, and LFS76, now with an Eastern Counties crew, continuing to Ipswich.



From 1969, Eastern National started to buy 53-seat Bristol RELL6G / ECW buses (1500 series). These vehicles were just low enough to go under Manningtree railway bridge, as seen on page 11, thus avoiding delays at the level crossing. In time Colchester, Clacton and Harwich depots gained allocations of Bristol RELL6Gs, so that these vehicles operated all the works contracts to Brantham.

By March 1971 nearly all of Clacton depot's journeys on service 123 Clacton - Ipswich were one man operated using Bristol RELL6Gs, thus able to pass under the railway bridge. The exceptions were 1430 Clacton - Ipswich 123, and 1630 Ipswich - Clacton 123 which remained crew operated using a Bristol / ECW FLF Lodekka. The Bristol RELL6Gs at Colchester also worked the few remaining service 87/A journeys beyond Dedham to East Bergholt. These journeys, plus through journeys on service 123 to Ipswich, and Eastern Counties service 246 were withdrawn on 29 April 1972.

From 30 April 1972, Eastern Counties operated Ipswich - Mistley services 209/221, plus short workings East Bergholt - Mistley. Buses used were LKD class (Bristol LD5G / ECW), LFS class (Bristol FS5G / ECW), LM class (Bristol MW5G / ECW), LS class (Bristol LS5G / ECW or MW5G / ECW coaches downgraded for bus work), LH class (Bristol LH6P / ECW), RS class (Bristol RESL6G / ECW) and RL/RLE class (Bristol RELL6G / ECW). As the years progressed and one person operation spread, Bristol VRT / ECW and Leyland Nationals appeared. Only the RS/RL/RLEs went under the Manningtree railway bridge, all others had to use the level crossing.

Also from 30 April 1972, the Mistley - Colchester part of 221 transferred to a revised Eastern National Harwich - Colchester service, renumbered 103/104 (as detailed in my article in EBM 690). Service 123 became a sole Eastern National operation, running from Clacton to Manningtree Station, later extended to Lawford Place. Services 209/221 connected with 103/104/123 in Manningtree.

Eastern National service 87 served East Bergholt again in 1979, but this was a summer Sunday only service to take passengers to Dedham, East Bergholt, and Flatford in Constable Country. The route was Colchester - Ardleigh - Dedham - A12 - East Bergholt - Flatford - Cattawade - Manningtree. This was worked by a Colchester based Bristol RELL6G and thus could go under the Manningtree railway bridge. However, two years later in 1981, this service was worked by new CR1053 (TJN 976W), a Bedford YMQS / Wadham Stringer DP33F, which had to use the level crossing. Both are illustrated on page 11.

In 1980 the level crossing gates were replaced by lifting barriers, controlled from the Manningtree South Junction signal box, and this significantly reduced the delays at the level crossing.

The joint Eastern Counties / Eastern National service 123 Clacton - Ipswich restarted on 15 June 1981. Most Eastern National journeys were worked by Leyland Nationals from Clacton depot. Often on a Saturday afternoon I travelled on one from Mistley, the 1240 from Clacton, to observe in Ipswich the Eastern Counties outstation workings, plus Ipswich Borough Transport buses and Bickers of Coddanham



buses. I would return to Mistley on an Eastern Counties Bristol VRT allocated to Cattawade outstation, working 1705 Ipswich - Clacton 123. One such journey was on VR204 (XNG 204S) on 11 July 1981, seen at the bottom of the previous page at Ipswich Old Cattle Market Bus Station. Delays at the Manningtree level crossing were minimal. The 123 finally ceased on 25 October 1986, the day before bus deregulation. Leyland Nationals on the service are illustrated on the rear cover.

In the post deregulation period, another service to use the level crossing was Colchester Borough Transport 25 running from Colchester to Ipswich via Ardleigh, Lawford, Brantham, and the Orwell Bridge. This ran from 18 April to 19 December 1987. Originally worked by a Leyland Olympian, later a Leyland Leopard coach was used. 101 (DHK 101T), a Leyland Leopard PSU3 / Duple Dominant II, is seen below coming over the Manningtree level crossing on 28 November 1987, working from Ipswich to Colchester. Note the automatic lifting barriers and warning lights.



The British Xylonite Plastics factory became part of Wardle Storeys and closed in 2007. The Bexford factory became part of ICI and closed in 2010. So there are no longer any works contracts to Brantham. Today part of the Brantham site of these factories is occupied by some light industrial units. Plans by Greater Anglia to build a new train maintenance depot on this land came to nothing, partly because of the large number of empty stock movements that would have needed to use Manningtree level crossing.

First Eastern Counties withdrew their Ipswich - Mistley service 96 on 27 August 2005, and after a period when Mistley and Manningtree had lost their bus service to Ipswich, Carters Coach Services provided a replacement service in 2007, later revised to be Ipswich - Manningtree service 92. This follows the old 123/212/221 route via Holbrook, Stutton, Brantham, and Cattawade. This service passed to Ipswich Buses with the Carters Coach Services business in May 2016, thus today most service 92 journeys are worked by Scania OmniCity double-deckers, as illustrated by 45 (YR61 RVE) right at Long Road Lawford on 7 October 2020. Service 92 is scheduled to avoid the times of passenger trains at Manningtree, but in case of delays at the level crossing, most Ipswich to Manningtree journeys have five minutes layover in Manningtree, and Manningtree to Ipswich journeys have an extra five-minute running time between Manningtree and Cattawade.



One further service using the Manningtree level crossing is schooldays only 693 from Ardleigh to East Bergholt High School via Lawford, Mistley Towers, Manningtree, Cattawade, Brantham, and East Bergholt East End. This commenced on 22 March 1999 as service 193, operated by Essex Buses (Eastern National), with Harwich depot working the morning journey, and Colchester depot working the afternoon journey, usually with Volvo Olympians. When Harwich depot closed in November 2013, Colchester depot worked both journeys, by this time Scania L94UB / Wright Solar saloons were used. This service passed to Carters Coach Services in September 2014. Carters acquired Seaford & District L456 JCK, a Volvo B10L with Saffle body, for this service. The height of this bus was low enough to pass under Manningtree railway bridge, despite the height limit being reduced to 9ft 6in (see aforementioned photo in EBN 630). Service 193 did not pass to Ipswich Buses in May 2016 but was retained by Carters Heritage Buses. This service had already become a double deck working again due to increased number of schoolchildren using the service from Cattawade and Brantham. However, Carters Heritage Buses worked this service for the last time at the end of the school term on 20 July 2021, so that Viv Carter could enjoy his semi-retirement and the route finally passed to Ipswich Buses from the start of the new school term in September, although renumbered 693. Right: Carters



Heritage Buses LK05 GFV, an Alexander Dennis Trident / ALX400, on the approach to Manningtree level crossing on 16 July 2021, working 1545 East Bergholt High School - Ardleigh 193 with Viv Carter driving. This photo clearly shows both the road over the crossing and the road going to the bridge.

Many London commuters would drive to Manningtree Railway Station instead of to Ipswich or Colchester; the single carriageway railway bridge caused severe traffic congestion at peak times. The adjacent level crossing has seen a vast increase in lorry traffic in recent years. Part of this is malted barley from East Anglia, transported by lorry to Mistley Quay, where it is shipped to Scotland for the Scotch whisky producers. With new housing developments built and planned in north-east Essex and south-east Suffolk, traffic congestion at the Manningtree railway bridge and level crossing kept on increasing. Essex and Suffolk County Councils were having ongoing meetings with Network Rail to try and find a long-term solution to the traffic congestion problems. However, the Covid-19 pandemic saw a large decrease in rail commuting with mandatory working from home where possible. This reduced the traffic congestion at the bridge, and Manningtree Station car park never becomes full now. This may mean that a long-term solution to the traffic congestion at the railway bridge and level crossing never comes to fruition. Many Covid-19 restrictions ended in England towards the end of January 2022, including the requirement to work from home where possible. However, it is too early to judge what effect this will have on commuting, and the traffic congestion at Manningtree railway bridge. For many office workers, a mixture of working from home and commuting to the office is likely to become the norm.

Acknowledgments

Branch lines to Harwich and Hadleigh, by Vic Mitchell (Oakwood Press).

Manningtree Station, by David Cleveland (David Cleveland).

A brief history of the Eastern Counties Road Car Company (Ipswich Transport Museum).

Eastern Counties Omnibus Co. Ltd timetables.

Eastern National Omnibus Co. Ltd Fleet Record 1964 - 1990 (Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group).

Essex Bus Archive (Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group).

Ipswich Transport Society Journals.

Memories of the Southend Corporation Fleet in 1958/59 by John Bath

John's companion piece, 'Memories of the Eastern National Fleet in 1958/59', appeared in EBN 685, May 2021.

As I mentioned in my Eastern National reminiscences, I would have seen, but not recorded, so many interesting buses on my walk to school, not least the Southend Trolleybuses which disappeared from service for good after service on 28 October 1954, when I was just seven years old.

As with ENOC, the SCT fleet was quite varied for its relatively small size. Although I just missed the ex-Canadian Air Force Dodges, I did see chassis built by AEC, Albion, Daimler and Leyland, but I did just miss recording all the pre-war AEC double-deckers, and also the seemingly rarely photographed (and relatively short-lived) trio of early post-war 1946 Massey bodied Regent IIs, 236-8 (BJN 94/95/96), as they were sold earlier in 1958.

But on the other hand, unlike with ENOC, information on this fleet was freely available, and when my classmate in Westcliff High School (Class 1B) told me that his dad worked for SCT, it meant I could get a trip round old the London Road depot and be given a precious fleet list in the latter part of 1958!

As with ENOC, I was drawn to AECs and the older vehicles 'on their way out', notably my sighting of the last un-rebuilt utility Daimler on the fleet, 226 (BHI 775), which languished delicenced in the depot yard until 1960. The rest of the utility-bodied closed-top fleet had gone for disposal and 226 was one of the last two survivors of this batch, along with 228 (BHI 777), found by chance many years later. 228 was a bus which I photographed as late as 1971, derelict in Dixon's Scrapyard at Ramsden Heath, one of the earliest bus pictures I took. Weirdly every square inch of the blue paintwork had fallen off, to be replaced by brown rust, but most of the cream had survived. Had I taken a colour picture, it would have looked vaguely like a refugee from the Colchester fleet which is exactly what I thought it was at first sight, although Colchester had no lowbridge buses. The odd thing is that the aforementioned 226 had landed up here too and I have a purchased photo of 228 alongside another unidentifiable bus, only partially in view, but it was not 226.

Below: To my eternal regret, the only SCT bus picture I took before about 1978 was 228 (BHI 777), in Dixon's Ramsden Heath scrapyard in 1971. The PSV Circle fleet history records its disposal thus: withdrawn July 1958, Essebridge Autos (dealer), Rayleigh August 1958, Teleflex Ltd, Basildon 1958 (non-PSV - was this for staff transport perhaps?), Dixon (dealer), Ramsden Heath by 1967. 228 and 226 were the only two SCT buses scrapped by Dixon. **John Bath.**

Opposite bottom: front nearside view of 228 at the same location. **Brian Ashley Collection**





But my favourite pair of SCT vehicles were the oldest buses in British municipal service back then, although heavily modernised by SCT not long before we saw them. These were of course the famous two survivors of a fleet of seven, the long-lived 1931 AEC Regals, the first conventional motor buses in the SCT fleet, 203/4 (JN 823/4). JN 824 disappeared in 1960 but JN 823 lasted until early 1968. The picture above by **Michael Dryhurst** shows 204 in Broadway Market with 'tin-front' Leyland PD2 299 (MHJ 921) in the distance.

It is a real shame that JN 823 was not preserved, and very sadly, nor was one of the six long-lived handsome Massey bodied Regent IIIs with the beautifully chromed radiator shells, 257-262 (EHJ 441-446) my favourites in the fleet, purely on appearance grounds, after the Regals. I was told much later that JN 823 was attracting so much unwelcome interest from enthusiasts that it was becoming a nuisance and was disposed of quickly in the end to get it out of sight.

It was still possible to see seven out of these eight elderly AECs as late as 1966, and so, realising that time was running out for these veterans, I took my newly purchased 35mm camera on my brother's bike down to Tickfield Road Works twice in that year. But sadly, I was refused permission both times to look round and capture these gems - and no doubt others in the yard - on colour transparency film for posterity.



But at least I did record them in action, plus the more common and somewhat 'utilitarian' (to my eyes) Daimlers with registrations in the BHI / CHI / DHJ series (closed top Masseys), the similar looking ex-LT re-bodied Utility examples, including now preserved 263 (GLX 913), plus of course the five well-travelled open-top conversions (FOP plus sole JVV) which lasted to the early 1970s.

And now to the mysterious case of the 'missing' Daimler CWG5....

It appears that one of the Daimler open-toppers 'disappeared', this was 247 (FOP 340) which, for some unknown reason, failed to make an appearance in the Ian Allan abc 'British Bus Fleets' book until the 3rd Edition was published in 1965.

242-46		Chassis: Daimler CWA6 built 1944-45. Body: (a) Park Royal OT56R. (b) Duple OT56R. (c) Brush OT56R. Ex. Eastern National 1955.					
242	FOP 462a	244	FOP 429b	245	FOP 452b	246	JVW 561c

Here is an extract from that inaugural Ian Allan *British Bus Fleets - East Anglia* of 1959, with open topper 247 missing (Richard Delahoy Collection). In contrast, below is an extract from the August 1958 official SCT fleet list that I obtained, correctly

showing all five open toppers and my favourite 203/4, plus 226 with its original utility body. 247 is listed as built, i.e., CWG5, but had been re-engined with an AEC unit.

<u>SOUTHEND CORPORATION TRANSPORT</u>							
<u>DETAILS OF FLEET</u>							
<u>No.</u>	<u>Reg No.</u>	<u>Chassis</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Chassis No.</u>	<u>Engine</u>	<u>Body</u>	<u>Seating</u>
203	JN 823	AEC Regal	1931	662872	Gard. 51W	Eng. Elec.	SD 32
204	JN 824	" "	"	662873	" "	" "	SD 32
226	BHJ 775	Daimler CWA6	1944	11737	AEC 7.7	Brush	LB 27/28
230	BHJ 804	" "	1945	11865	" "	Rbt. Massey	LB 29/28
231	BHJ 805	" "	"	11871	" "	" "	LB 29/28
232	BHJ 806	" "	"	11872	" "	" "	LB 29/28
233	BHJ 807	" "	"	11873	" "	" "	LB 29/28
234	BHJ 808	" "	"	11891	" "	" "	LB 29/28
235	BHJ 809	" "	"	11892	" "	" "	LB 29/28
239	CHJ 439	Daimler CWA6	1947	13613	" "	Massey	LB 27/26
240	CHJ 440	" "	"	13614	" "	"	LB 27/26
241	CHJ 441	" "	"	13615	" "	"	LB 27/26
242	FOP 462	" CWA6	1945	12257	" "	{ Conversion to Open Top Deck during 1955/7 by S.C.T.	OTD30/26
244	FOP 429	" "	"	11994	" "		OTD30/26
245	FOP 452	" "	1944	11925	" "		OTD30/26
246	JVW 561	" "	"	11564	" "		OTD30/26
247	FOP 340	" CWG5	1943	11328	" "		OTD30/26

As my SCT fleet list was dated 1958, it included the six Massey-bodied PHJ-registered (311 to 316) 30' Leyland PD3/6s delivered that year, the first double-deckers of this length in the fleet (following the legal length being increased to this in July 1956) and very sleek and attractive they looked too.

I recall very clearly seeing the brand new (and then modern looking) Albion duo of 1959 saloons, 200/201 (SIN 634/635), at Southend Victoria Station, in the original form with the central V-shaped cream area below the windscreen (later removed) a fad of the time for saloons which I rather liked. Therefore, the Albions were the newest vehicles towards the end of my period of greatest interest back then, as well as the two Bridgemasters that also appeared that year also in the SIN series - 317/318 (SIN 636/637), the first AECs since the 1950 Regent IIIs, but nowhere near as successful or long-lasting, although I found them surprisingly spacious upstairs.

The tin-front Leylands (both Massey and MCW-bodied) had seemed very modern to me as a 10-year-old at the time, compared with the rest of the double-decker fleet with their 'old-fashioned' exposed radiators, but this was before my interest developed to recording details. But as an example of how tastes change at this raw age, I was soon to turn my nose up generally at 'tin-fronts', in the same way as some enthusiasts disliked those 'infernal rear-engined' buses. However, it was precisely those 'old fashioned' exposed radiator buses that were solely responsible for my revived interest in the late 1970s when these stalwarts were tending to disappear very quickly, not least in Southend.



Above, from my second-favourite batch of buses, AEC Regent / Massey 258 (EHJ 442) approaches Victoria Circus passing a former trolleybus traction pole complete with informative stop sign and a plethora of phone bells linked to the box on the pole - possibly to enable bus inspectors to contact the garage? Behind on the station forecourt is an Eastern National Bristol FLF, meaning that this picture is slightly newer than the main period covered by this article. **Richard Delahoy Collection**

Demonstrators. I recall very clearly seeing near The Bell in Westcliff, AEC Bridgemaster 116 TMD demonstrator in Liverpool livery (which still survives in preservation) and being anxious to ride on the very modernistic (for the time) Leyland Atlantean 661 KTJ, the first of this type I had ever seen. But of course, it was many years before examples of rear-engined double deckers were to be seen on the Southend fleet - or the Eastern National fleet for that matter.

I'd like to record my grateful thanks to my good friend Paul Bateson, one of EBEG's two members living in Canada but resident in the UK at the time, for his help with this article.



Here's the proof that 247 did exist! When first converted, the utility bodies on the five Daimler CWs didn't feature an upper deck windscreen (one was added later) and had blue rather than black wings. Both features are seen in this shot at the Kursaal, with one of the amusement park attractions behind and shadows from the strings of fairy lights across the side of the bus. This is a rare shot, taken in June 1957 before a second blue band was added to the livery. **Brian Pask**



I recall seeing the brand new and modern looking duo of 1959 Albion Aberdonian saloons, 200/201 (SIN 634/635), with a V shaped swoop on the front (a feature perpetuated later on the next pair, 202/5 and on Leopards 206/7) - shades of City of Oxford's livery, but without mouldings to define the V. 201 exits from Broadway Market, just a few yards beyond where 258 was seen on page 21, on Waking route 4A which continued on to Shoeburyness as it still does today, albeit now only once every two hours on a Sunday. Leyland PD2 288 (LHJ 390) behind will turn right rather than left as it heads for Rayleigh via Rochford and Hawkwell.

D Clark, Surfleet collection, courtesy of the Southdown Enthusiasts Club (ref 8893).

Meanwhile, rebodied ex-London Daimler 273 (GXV 784) rounds Victoria Circus roundabout pursued by an Austin A40 or A50 Cambridge and a 'tin-front' PD2 in this shot by **Robin Jenkinson**. The area is now pedestrianised and W H Smiths occupies the Dixons store site.



First Essex Scotland Connections

by Steve Sellars

Some of the buses that have operated for First both in Essex and in Scotland, not a definitive list.

Right: Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 32669 (SN55 HDZ) in Princes Street Edinburgh on 2 February 2018. The bus is in the two-tone blue livery introduced for the Midland Bluebird fleet which operates around the Stirling, Falkirk, and West Lothian areas with routes into Edinburgh and Glasgow. Historically, Alexanders and its successors had used blue based liveries until the introduction of the First Barbie corporate liveries for operations in Stirling and Falkirk, but West Lothian had predominantly been served by Scottish Omnibuses (Eastern Scottish) who used green based paint schemes. The blue livery of Midland was illustrated by Richard Delahoy in EBN 683 on one of the VRTs Eastern National received from Midland during 1971 in exchange for FLF Lodekkas. 32669 was acquired by First Essex from First West of England in February 2020. A photo of it in this livery was also in EBN 683 and photos of it in Halfords advert livery were in EBM 690, all taken in Colchester. At time of press it is back in this livery having had its Halfords advert removed in January this year. As noted in EBN 683, this livery style has now been superseded in Scotland by the current First Urban 2 style using white and two shades of blue and with a fleet name of 'Midland' (see bottom photo page 26).



Right: 37133 (SN57 HDH), also a Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini, but on Volvo B9TL chassis, is seen leaving Edinburgh Bus Station on route X62 bound for Galashiels via Peebles in the Scottish Borders on 31 December 2015. Because of the service being registered in sections with the Traffic Commissioner, to keep it within scope of UK domestic drivers' rules it displays a destination of Peebles at this stage of the journey, with Galashiels included in the scrolling points listed on the second line. The Edinburgh bus station building can be seen in the background which features a shopping centre built above the bus departure area and stands on the site of the original St. Andrew Square bus station site, the new facility is smaller and caters mainly for longer distance services, routes to destinations in the Lothians now generally use on street stops. The tartan livery, using First corporate colours, was applied to six of the buses allocated to the route to raise its profile in June 2014, the vehicles were all taken from this batch which featured higher backed seating compared to the standard First interior, making them more suitable for the longer length of passenger journeys made on the route between borders towns and Edinburgh. By this time, the First network in the borders had been slimmed down considerably compared to that provided by predecessors Lowland Scottish and Scottish Omnibuses, but had begun to grow again with the allocation of newer buses, including a significant double-deck proportion, and frequency enhancements to every 20 mins for the X62. However, the (re)opening of the Borders Railway between Tweedbank and Edinburgh in 2015 had a significant impact, reducing bus passenger numbers on the two trunk routes run by First between the border towns and Edinburgh (X62 and X95) and First withdrew from the area in March 2017, selling the routes and properties onto Borders Buses - part of the Craig of Campbelltown Group, better known until then for its West Coast Motors operation. The six buses, 37133-6/8-9 were then sold to First Essex in May & June 2017. They arrived in this X62 livery but were repainted into route 62 livery before entering service (see photo page 25). A seventh, 37140, was acquired and entered service in Barbie livery in April 2017, before being repainted to Urban livery six months later.





Above: 32672 (SN55 HEV), a Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini, entering Galashiels Transport Interchange on route X62 heading for Edinburgh via Peebles on 23 January 2016. A standard First specification bus in Barbie livery showing the small First Borders fleet name then in use. The former Scottish Bus Group operations of Midland Scottish, Eastern Scottish and Lowland Scottish had been merged by First into a company trading as First Edinburgh but using two operators' licenses, First Edinburgh Ltd and Midland Bluebird Ltd, this covered a large geographic area. Later more localised fleet names were introduced. This bus was acquired by First Essex from First Eastern Counties in September 2018, by then in Urban livery. This and both photos on previous page **Steve Sellars**.

Opposite top: 37138 (SN57 HCX), a Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini, also entering Galashiels Transport Interchange on 23 January 2016, working local route 70 to Langlee despite its branding for route X62. The tartan livery incorporated an all-over rear wrap promoting the service. The transport interchange incorporates the railway station and bus station, albeit with the main A7 road running



between the building and the railway platform, and replaced the former Scottish Bus Group bus station in the town. **Steve Sellars**

Opposite bottom: The same bus after repaint into route 62 livery, in Colchester Bus Station on 7 September 2020. This is the only one of the six which retained its X62 purple around the blind box after repaint. As in its Scottish days it has occasionally ventured onto route 70 despite its branding, in this case the Colchester - Baintree - Chelmsford version.

Adam Kelleher

Left: 37140 (SN57 HCZ), in Urban livery on route 62, exiting Colchester Bus Station on 16 November 2017.

Robert Appleton



As well 37133-6/8-40, First Essex also received six Scania L94UB / Wrightbus Solars following the closure of First's Borders operation. These were 65742, 65743, 65745, 65746, 65748 and 65750 (SN55 JVG/H/K/L/O/A), all acquired in August 2017. They were all in Urban livery. However, their stay with Essex was very short-lived, all except 65748 returning to First Scotland East on 28 April 2018. The reason 65748 didn't return at the same time was because it was off road awaiting repairs, and so new to First Essex 65686 (YS03 ZKC) went instead. However, after repair, 65748 also returned to First Scotland East, in September 2018. So Essex ended up acquiring six buses but losing seven!

Top right: 65748 out of service and looking forlorn at the back of Clacton depot on 25 July 2018, three months after its sisters had returned to Scotland. This photo was taken three days before the closure of Clacton depot. Engineering van 90650 (SN17 NWZ) is alongside. 65748 was disposed of by First Bus (likely for scrap) in January 2022.

Adam Kelleher



Back in Scotland and repainted out of Urban livery, 65742 (middle) is still in the previous First Midland Bluebird two-tone blue livery whilst 65746 (bottom) is in the latest Urban 2 style First Midland colours. Both are working cross Falkirk routes (1 Dunipace - Maddistoun and 2 Limerigg - Bo'ness), both fairly local although Bo'ness is further out near the Firth of Forth. Both at Upper Newmarket Street which is the main bus loading area since the closure of the bus station in 2018. Both photos taken on 3 January 2022.

Both **Steve Sellars**



Blind Spot - City Coach Company

by Richard Delahoy



The City Coach Company was famous for its London to Southend 'main road' service but also ran local routes around Brentwood, Billericay, Wickford and Laindon. Here we present two examples of their destination blinds. Single-deckers had shallow boxes which usually only had a single line display (but sometimes used double lines in quite a small typeface) but their double-deckers used deep, double line boxes (although a picture exists of LD3, presumably when new, with shallow single line boxes). Detail aspects of their blinds varied over time, for example qualifying points were sometimes in square brackets, sometimes in curved brackets and sometimes with no brackets at all. The use of sloping displays also varied over time.

Left: an undated example of a single-decker blind, copied from an eBay listing (based on four photos stitched together) and showing obvious signs of wear and tear. We don't know which vehicle this came from, but it may well have been one of the famous three-axle Leyland Tigers, the City 'LT' class.

Right: we have a diagram created for us by **David Reynolds** from notes made by the late Derek Giles, extracted from his notebooks held by The Bus Archive. In the diagram we cannot reproduce the precise fonts but hopefully they are close to the originals. (Additionally, there were brackets round the various qualifying points, but it has not been possible to reproduce them with the software we have).

This blind was fitted to Bedford B29, KTW 242, as recorded by Derek on 15 March 1954. He noted that the last two entries of the original blind (Brentwood and Stondon Ch.) were painted on additions, and then the section **below** had been sewn on to extend the blind. These cover local routes in the developing Basildon New Town, with B29 being numbered 179 in the Eastern National fleet and allocated to the EN depot at Bull Road, Vange by then. There was a colour picture of sister B21 and some historical notes in EBN 682, February 2021.

The story of the development of EN's services and depots in Basildon was covered in Essex Bus News 576 (April 2012) and then 592/4/5/6 (2013) - if you'd like pdf copies of these issues, please e-mail me - we have every copy scanned and available in our archive as pdf files.

We'll feature more City blinds in future issues but if you'd like a pdf copy of all the ones that Derek recorded, just e-mail me, address inside rear cover.



What's in a Number?

by Richard Delahoy

Ever wondered why the 251 route had that number? A chance find at The Bus Archive solves the mystery.

Ask an enthusiast to name a famous Eastern National route and there's a good chance they'll say "251" - the Southend to London Wood Green service. After all, it was a high-profile service with by far the highest number of buses allocated to it anywhere on the EN network, with a PVR (peak vehicle requirement) of around 25 buses, ignoring duplicates and reliefs - a function both of the length of the route (2 hours 36 minutes) and a 15-minute headway. But why such a high route number, that didn't seem to fit with other EN services, the Brentwood area aside? That's something that has long puzzled me. However, I now have an answer, thanks to a copy of an internal EN memo lurking in the Derek Giles collection at The Bus Archive.

The origins of the 251 can be traced to 1927 when Arthur Young established his New Empress Saloons service; he converted later to a limited company and in 1928 the City Motor Omnibus Co. took control. City's London bus operations were compulsorily purchased by London Transport in 1934, and the New Empress name was changed to the City Coach Company in 1936. They developed an intensive Southend to London service, always known as the 'Main Road' or sometimes as service 1, although route numbers were not displayed. Just how busy it could be was graphically described in my article 'Moving the Crowds' in EBN 680 (December 2020).

City's owners sold the company to the British Transport Commission in 1952 and the BTC placed City's operations under the control of Westcliff Motor Services. Westcliff was already state owned like EN, and EN was taking more control over Westcliff and over Hicks Bros, the Braintree operator that BTC had acquired in 1950. It was pretty much inevitable that all would be merged into one company eventually, especially after EN had lost its Midland Area operations to United Counties and the Grays local area services to London Transport. Indeed, EN took control of Westcliff from 1 June 1952. Co-ordination with Southend Corporation Transport was also being actively negotiated. However, that left the thorny question of route numbers, with a number of potential duplicates and triplicates within an enlarged Eastern National and some illogical numbers which reflected the piecemeal development of EN over the past 20 plus years.

So a scheme was drawn up to bring the Westcliff, City and Hicks routes into a common number series with EN. Jumping ahead a bit in this story, the finally agreed scheme didn't come into full effect until the autumn of 1955, but I have before me a copy of a memo from the EN Head Office some three years earlier, dated 28 October 1952 and setting out the proposed numbers to be allocated to the Westcliff, City and Hicks routes. It was clearly an updated version of a slightly earlier proposal, as attached is a memo written a month earlier, making some adjustments to an initial list. The basis of the list was to leave the existing EN numbers completely unchanged, for example keeping the diverse routes based on Bishops Stortford as 13, 13A, 13B, 13C, 13D and 13E (they actually became 301 to 306 in the 1955 scheme). Those EN numbers went up to 83 with some gaps, then continued from 101 up to 124 for the Clacton area, and finally 164 (the only route that linked to the Midland Area, being Bishops Stortford to Royston). Bizarrely, it was also planned to keep totally different numbers for the jointly-operated Southend to Grays service, where each operator provided alternate timings, the EN journeys were numbered 70 but the Westcliff ones were 2. Another historical anomaly that was now pointless.

So how do we get from 125 to 251? Well, this original plan envisaged renumbering all the existing Westcliff routes, 1 to 27 & 80, by adding 200 to each, to give a south-east Essex series of 201 upwards. Working in blocks, the next logical grouping was therefore 251 up, which was then allocated to the City routes, and 301 up for Hicks (where in practice, the lowest number used was 310). And so we have it - 251 is route 1 of the City series. But, I hear you say, Southend to Rayleigh didn't become 201, nor did Leigh to Eastwood become 223A, to give just two examples from a long list. There were three potential problems with the October 1952 proposed scheme:

- Four-digit numbers like 223A would have not worked well with the standard three-track number blinds fitted to the newest buses and would have needed a double-digit number on the first track, so 22/3/A. This was not an insurmountable problem as a solution was deployed at Clacton with 10, 11 and 12 on the first track of their blinds, as discussed in my article in EBN 663 (July 2019)
- It didn't take account of the planned Southend co-ordination scheme, where SCT had numbers that would clash, such as 61-64
- It singularly failed to deal with any historical anomalies like the aforementioned 13A-E or 2/70, or others like EN 23, Braintree to Halstead & Sudbury, that now logically belonged in the Braintree Hicks series (and indeed, it did become 323 in 1955).

Clearly a decision was made not to implement all of the 1952 proposals, but allocating numbers to the ex-City and Hicks routes was seen as a priority, so that part went ahead anyway. The last Westcliff timetable book, June 1952, had included the City routes but with no route numbers. The first EN timetable book to show the new numbers was the 4 January 1953 issue and on page 30 we reproduce an extract from the list of services. As can be seen, the temporary "solution" to the established Westcliff routes was to use a W prefix, so that W1, Southend to Rayleigh, would not be confused with EN 1, Chelmsford to Maldon. Although appearing in the timetables, the W prefix never appeared on buses' blinds.

118	HARWICH - PARKESTON QUAY.
118A	DOVERCOURT - PARKESTON QUAY
119	HARWICH - DOVERCOURT (VIA FRONKI'S ROAD)
119A	HARWICH - DOVERCOURT (VIA MAIN ROAD)
121	CLACTON - MEADOWVIEW CAMP.
123	CLACTON - IPSWICH.
124	CLACTON - BLACK NOTLEY HOSPITAL.
164	BISHOP'S STORTFORD - ROYSTON.
201	SOUTHEND - RAYLEIGH (VIA HADLEIGH)
202	SOUTHEND - GRAYS (VIA CORRINGTONHAM).
202A	SOUTHEND - ROMFORD.
202B	SOUTHEND - GRAYS (VIA HOMESTEADS)
202C	SOUTHEND - SHELL HAVEN.
203	SOUTHEND - SOUTH BENFLEET.
204	SOUTHEND - LANDWICK.
204A	SOUTHEND - SHOBURYNES (VIA GREAT WAKERING)
204B	SOUTHEND - LITTLE WAKERING.
205	SOUTHEND - SHOBURYNES (VIA CAMBRIDGE HOTEL)
206	SOUTHEND (PIER HILL) - RAYLEIGH (VIA WESTCLIFF)
207	SOUTHEND - RAYLEIGH (VIA ASHINGTON)
208	SOUTHEND - RAYLEIGH (VIA HAWKWEIL)
208A	SOUTHEND - RAYLEIGH (VIA HALL ROAD)
209	SOUTHEND - EASTWOOD (VIA ROCHFORD ROAD)
209A	SOUTHEND - EASTWOOD (VIA MANNERS WAY)
209B	SOUTHEND - SUTTON SCHOOLS.
210	SOUTHEND - FABLESHAM.
211	SOUTHEND - FANBRIDGE
212	SOUTHEND - CRECKSEA.
217	SOUTHEND (PIER HILL) - EASTWOOD
218	SOUTHEND - FOULNESS.

Left: What never was: an extract from the EN 1952 memo, showing part of the proposed Westcliff renumbering:

And next page, what did happen at the start of 1953 - an extract from the EN January 1953 timetable book. All the former City routes can be seen in the 251 to 261 range.

Below: 251 displayed on a bus ordered by City (LD25) but delivered to Westcliff after the takeover, by now Eastern National 1138.

**Richard Delahoy
Collection**



So there we have it - how 251 came about. If it had not been for the odd service 164, the block of numbers 151-200 would have been free in 1952 and who knows, they might have been used for the City routes. Ironically, 164 was withdrawn in mid-1953 anyway. Indeed, 151 did get used for a variant of the 251 from April 1964, when half of the 251 service was diverted through Basildon New Town and the A13, rather than via Wickford and Rayleigh, but that's another story and decade.

There's not space here to go through the whole of the actual 1955 scheme as implemented, but suffice to say that in the end, it was the Southend area routes (Westcliff and Southend Corporation) that remained unchanged and the EN ones that were renumbered to fit around, with 30 added to some (Chelmsford & Maldon areas, for example) and 70 added to others (Colchester area), and some anomalies resolved. We published a complete list many years ago and this is available free as a pdf, just e-mail me or send an A4 SAE if you'd like a copy of it and of the EN 1952 memo. Similarly, we have a history of service 164 if you are interested (see inside rear cover for address). One effect of allocating 251 upwards to the City routes was that it created a discrete Brentwood area series, so working backwards, 241 up could be used for services in the nearby newly developing Basildon New Town in the second half of the 1950s. But even the 1955 series left a big gap until later partially used, with nothing after 125 until 242, as the originally proposed Westcliff series of 201 upwards remained unused. Later, further sequences were added, such as 4xx for limited stop services and then 5xx for a revamped Basildon town network in 1978 and later for school routes, with 6xx, 7xx and 8xx also used more recently for schools. New routes also used numbers in 13x, 14x, 15x & 23x sequences, so that by 1973 for example, the biggest gap was now from

159 to 231.

Finally, going back to PVRs, if 251 was the biggest, what was next, at least in say the mid-late 1950s? My guess is the 51/53, Tilbury Ferry to Clacton / Harwich, with perhaps the 30 (ex 10) Chelmsford to Bow next, but I can't think of many that even got to double figures, making 251 a real stand-out route. Can you identify any other large allocations?

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE OPERATED BY THE WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA MOTOR SERVICES LTD.

SERVICES W1—W80 and 251—261

Service

W 1	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — HADLEIGH — THUNDERSLEY — RAYLEIGH
W 2	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — HADLEIGH — PITSEA — CORRINGHAM — STANFORD-LE-HOPE — GRAYS
W 2A	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — PITSEA — LAINDON — UPMINSTER — ROMFORD
W 2B	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — HADLEIGH — PITSEA — HOMESTEADS — STANFORD-LE-HOPE — GRAYS
W 2C	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — HADLEIGH — PITSEA — CORRINGHAM — SHELLHAVEN
W 3	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — HADLEIGH — SOUTH BENFLEET
W 4	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — GREAT WAKERING — LANDWICK
W 4A	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — GREAT WAKERING — SHOEBOURNNESS
W 4B	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — BARLING — LITTLE WAKERING
W 5	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — NORTH SHOEBOURN — SHOEBOURNNESS
W 6	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Pier Hill) — WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA (Plough Hotel)
W 6B	WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — RAYLEIGH (High Street)
W 7	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — ROCHFORD — ASHINGDON — HOCKLEY — RAYLEIGH
W 8	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — ROCHFORD — HAWKWELL — HOCKLEY — RAYLEIGH
W 9	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — EASTWOODBURY via Rochford Road
W 9A	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — EASTWOODBURY via Manners Way
W 9B	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — SUTTON
W10	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — ROCHFORD — STAMBRIDGE — PAGLESHAM
W11	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — ROCHFORD — ASHINGDON — STAMBRIDGE — SOUTH FAMBRIDGE
W12	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — ROCHFORD — STAMBRIDGE — CANEWDON — CREEKSEA (Wallasea Bay)
W17	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Pier Hill) — PRITTLEWELL CHASE — EASTWOOD (Woodcutters Arms)
W18	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA — GREAT WAKERING — FOULNESS
W19	CHALKWELL STATION — WESTBOROUGH ROAD
W19A	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Kursaal) — SEA FRONT — CHALKWELL STATION — LEIGH-ON-SEA
W21	LEIGH-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — PRITTLEWELL (Hobleythick Lane)
W22	LEIGH-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — HADLEIGH — DAWES HEATH — RAYLEIGH — HULLBRIDGE
W23	LEIGH-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — EASTWOOD ROAD — EASTWOOD (Jones' Corner)
W23A	LEIGH-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — ELSMSLEIGH DRIVE — EASTWOOD (Coombe's Corner)
W24	LEIGH-ON-SEA (Railway Station) — THAMES DRIVE — RAYLEIGH (High Street)
W25A	HIGHLANDS BOULEVARD — SOUTHCHURCH — THORPE BAY
W25B	HIGHLANDS BOULEVARD — EASTERN ESPLANADE — THORPE BAY
W26	SOUTH BENFLEET — CANVEY ISLAND (Leigh Back Farm)
W26A	SOUTH BENFLEET — CANVEY ISLAND (Casino)
W27	SOUTH BENFLEET — NEVENDON — WICKFORD
W80	PITSEA — CORRINGHAM — EAST TILBURY (Bata Shoe Factory)
251	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Tylers Avenue) — EASTWOOD — RAYLEIGH — WICKFORD — BILLERICAY — BRENTWOOD — ROMFORD — ILFORD — WOODFORD — WALTHAMSTOW — TOTTENHAM — LONDON (Wood Green)
252	BRENTWOOD — HUTTON (Bracken Bank)
253	BRENTWOOD — BILLERICAY — RAMSDEN — WICKFORD — RAWRETH (Shotgate)
254	BRENTWOOD — BILLERICAY — GREAT BURSTEAD — LAINDON
255	BRENTWOOD — BILLERICAY — LITTLE BURSTEAD — LAINDON
256	BILLERICAY — BILLERICAY (Sunnymede Estate)
257	LAINDON — NEVENDON — WICKFORD
258	LAINDON — PIPPS HILL (Circular)
259	LAINDON — LANGDON HILLS
260	ONGAR — BLACKMORE — STONDON — BRENTWOOD — HERONGATE — BULPHAN — DUNTON — LAINDON
261	BRENTWOOD — DODDINGHURST — HOOK END — STONDON MASSEY

Prior to the renumbering of the Hicks' routes in the 3xx series, this is how they were shown in the EN timetable books - in this case from the June 1952 edition. As with the W prefix, the use of an H prefix was purely administrative and was not shown on buses.

We've included the highest numbered EN services as well for reference.

119	Harwich—Dovercourt Tollgate (via Fronks Road) ...	Daily ...
119a	Harwich—Dovercourt Tollgate (via Main Road) ...	Daily ...
121	Clacton—Little Clacton, Meadowview Camp ...	Daily ...
123	Clacton—Thorpe-le-Soken—Ipswich ...	Daily ...
124	Clacton—Colchester—Black Notley Hospital ...	Wednesdays and Sundays
164	Bishop's Stortford—Standon—Puckeridge—Royston ...	Weekdays
SERVICES OPERATED BY HICKS BROS., LTD.		
H10	Braintree—Felsted—Dunmow—Bishop's Stortford ...	Daily ...
H11	Braintree—Great Leighs—Little Waltham—Chelmsford ...	Daily ...
H15	Braintree—Stebbing—Dunmow—Bishop's Stortford ...	Weekdays
H16	Stebbing—Felsted—Great Waltham—Chelmsford ...	Tues., Fris. and Sats.
H17	Bishop's Stortford—Broxted—Bishop's Stortford ...	Thursdays and Saturdays
H18	Broxted—Takeley—Dunmow ...	Tuesdays
H19	Braintree—Beasley End—Wethersfield ...	Weekdays
H19b	Braintree—Bocking Factory ...	Weekdays
H21	Dunmow—Ford End—Great Waltham—Chelmsford ...	Daily ...
H22	Braintree—Felsted—Dunmow—Harlow—London (King's Cross) ...	Daily ...
H29	Felsted—Willows Green—Braintree ...	Wednesdays
H35	Braintree—Silver End—Witham ...	Daily ...
H49	Bishop's Stortford—Great Hallingbury ...	Thursdays
H52	Braintree—Notley—Faulkbourne—Witham ...	Daily ...
EXPRESS COACH SERVICES		
A	London (Victoria)—Colchester—Clacton—Jaywick Sands ...	Daily ...
B	London (King's Cross)—Braintree—Halstead ...	Daily ...
C	London (King's Cross)—Danbury—Maldon ...	Daily ...
K	Enfield—Edmonton—Southend ...	Summer Months
L	Tilbury, Pitsea, Maldon—Yarmouth ...	
N	Tilbury, Chelmsford—Clacton—Jaywick Sands ...	
H12	Bishop's Stortford—Braintree—Clacton (Hicks) ...	

After the City takeover, various Eastern National buses were drafted in to bolster the fleet for what became the 251, including a number of the 1947 Leyland PD1 Titans with ECW bodies, some of which ran with City fleet names but in this undated shot, MPU 44 has EN fleet names and displays its post-July 1954 fleet number of 1114. It has attracted a very healthy, near capacity load as it stands at the Southend Tylers Avenue terminus with the exit from the former City depot there in the right background. It's working a short trip on the 251 to Wickford and in the last lower deck window there's a slip board "via Battlesbridge" to indicate that it is not following the direct route through Shotgate under the low Blue Brick Bridge there - the road was later lowered to permit double deckers to pass under it. Photo courtesy of the Southdown Enthusiasts Club, Surfleet collection, by **D Clark** (ref 8965).



Like City, Hicks buses didn't display route numbers and those quoted in the Eastern National list above, with H prefixes, were based on the road service licence reference numbers. The single-piece Hicks blinds showed just a destination, they were later replaced by newer blinds incorporating the numbers EN allocated in the 1955 scheme, still utilising the single-piece destination aperture.

Here we have before and after examples, the upper shot by **Alan Cross** taken on 30 April 1950 showing 1947-built LPU 125, a Guy Arab II with Strachans body, parked in Victoria Street with no indication of the route it had operated on to reach Braintree. This bus is in the blue & yellow Hicks colours and lasted until withdrawn by EN in 1956; latterly it was numbered 1188.

By contrast, the lower picture by **Frank Church** shows one of the two Guy Arab III / Strachans that were on order at the time of the British Transport Commission takeover on 1 January 1950 and which were delivered later in 1950 in Eastern National green & cream but with Hicks names. PTW 624 was initially allocated EN fleet number 4109, becoming 1193 in the July 1954 renumbering and lasting until 1959. Here it displays its 1954 fleet number and depot triangle (dark blue for Braintree, inspired by Hicks livery) and has a new blind showing how the Hicks 35, Braintree - Silver End - Witham, had become Eastern National 335. It is in Braintree Bus Park.

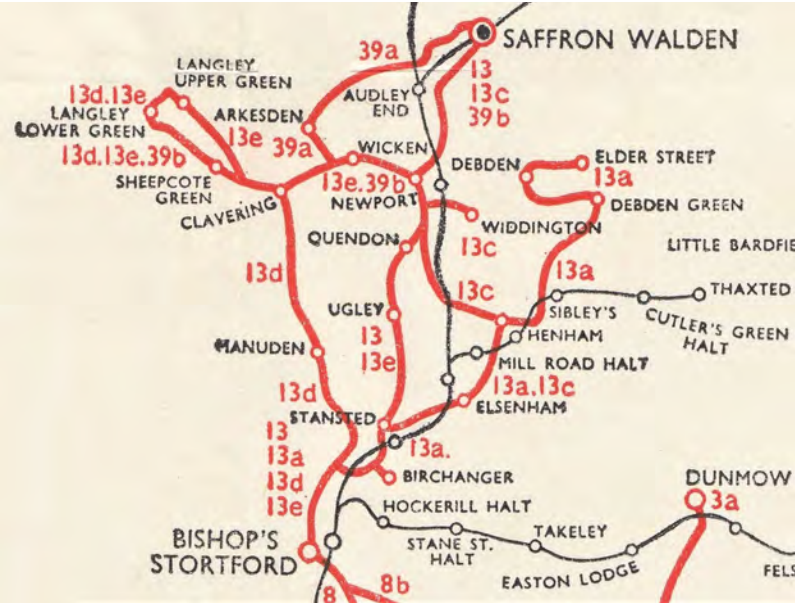


Route 13 - to almost all points of the compass!

As noted above, potentially the most confusing sets of original numbers was the 13 group, where the only theme was that they all served parts of the area between Bishops Stortford and Saffron Walden, although there was no single common point served by all six routes!

13	Bishops Stortford—Newport—Saffron Walden	... Daily ...
13a	Bishops Stortford—Henham—Debden	... Mon.s, Tues., Thurs., Fris., Sats. & Suns.
13b	Bishop's Stortford—Rickling—Clavering	... Sundays ...
13c	Elsenham—Newport—Saffron Walden	... Tues. & Sats. ...
13d	Bishops Stortford—Manuden—Langley Upper Green	... Thurs., Sats. & Suns. ...
13e	Bishops Stortford—Newport—Langley Lower Green	... Weekdays ...

This extract from the November 1947 timetable and map shows just how (although the Sunday only 13b with just two trips each way didn't even make it onto the map!). In practice, given the low frequency of these services, passengers probably weren't too confused. We also wonder to what extent the various route numbers were actually displayed, in the days before the more comprehensive two and three-part displays ushered in post-war? But, as explained above, the 1955 scheme removed any confusion by making them 301-306.



Rear Cover: Eastern Counties Leyland National in Essex and Eastern National Leyland National in Suffolk, both on route 123.

Postscript to the Manningtree article. The joint Eastern National / Eastern Counties Clacton - Ipswich service 123 had restarted on 15 June 1981. Initially buses and drivers worked the whole route. **Top:** LN599 on the 0905 Ipswich - Clacton 123 in Harwich Road, Mistley on 31 December 1981. However, service revisions on 6 June 1982 meant that buses worked through, but drivers changed buses at Mistley (Rigby Avenue). **Bottom:** Eastern National Leyland National 1825 (VAR 902S), with an Eastern Counties driver, had arrived at Dogs Head Street (opposite the Old Cattle Market bus station) in Ipswich on 25 June 1982 on 0840 Clacton - Ipswich 123. Like 1782 illustrated in EBM 694, 1825 has lost its front white band but not yet received a full 1980s repaint to all green. Both **Robert Appleton**

Essex Bus Magazine Extra is published by the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

Editor

Adam Kelleher
74 Park Road, Brentwood, Essex
CM14 4TU
adamxxxx4@yahoo.co.uk

Membership

Richard Delahoy
272 Shoebury Road, Southend on Sea, Essex
SS1 3TT
richard.delahoy@blueyonder.co.uk

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