

Some thoughts on joint operations

Another story from Alan M Watkins

Service 47 (Weymouth to Exeter) was a joint route between Southern National and Devon General worked by SN from Weymouth and DG from Exeter.

On the first journeys of both (the 9.25 from Weymouth and the 10.25 from Exeter) there was a crew switch but not a vehicle switch at Axminster, the SN crew taking over the DG down vehicle and the DG crew taking over the up SN vehicle.

SN called this route 42 and DG called it 47.

There was a similar switch (crew not vehicle) on the 5.25 from Weymouth and the 6.25 from Exeter, also at Axminster. There was also a middle turn 2 pm from Weymouth, 1.25 p.m from Exeter which changed crews (not vehicles) at Chideock Bridge.

The arrangement above applied up to about 1961 but in 1962 the arrangements changed and the route was split into two and given one service No - 47. From 1962 the 9.25 SN out of Weymouth ended at Axminster at 11.31. The connecting bus with a 20 minute was then shown as Devon General from Axminster into Exeter leaving at 11.50.

The first DG down journey from Exeter 10.25 was shown as Devon General as far as Axminster arriving at 11.35 am. At 11.45 SN was shown leaving to go back to Weymouth.

I have been right through my fairly considerable collection of SN timetables and the summer timetable of June 17th 1962 is the first I can find to show this arrangement and to say the words at the head of the timetable: Change Buses at Axminster. An interesting question: did the down Devon General from Exeter show Weymouth (would that be on a DG blind?).

And then there was the joint Eastern Counties/Eastern National 123 Clacton-Ipswich. The switch for the 123 was Holbrook so on the last journeys of the night the down Eastern Counties crew took over the up Eastern National vehicle to return to Ipswich and the up Eastern National crew took over the down Eastern Counties red vehicle to get back to Clacton.

So there was a green bus in the Ipswich garage and a red bus in the Clacton garage.

And next mornings down crew from Ipswich set out with a green Eastern National bus and the crew from Clacton set out with a red Eastern Counties bus.

But everything was resolved when they met at Holbrook.