

London Bus Magazine

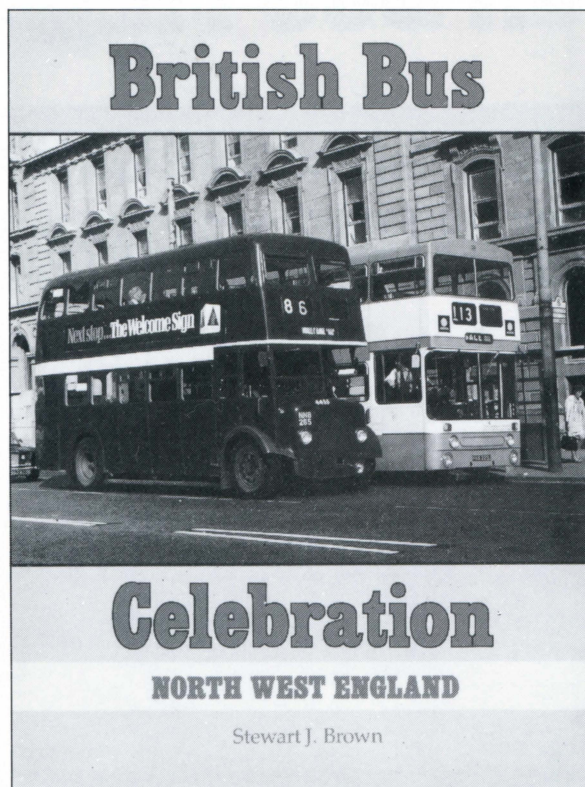
Winter 1987/88

Number 63



London Omnibus Traction Society

New from Capital Transport



British Bus Celebration North West England The latest book in this series covers an area noted for municipal operators. The 32 municipal fleets of the North West that have operated in the post-war years, ranging in size from Manchester and Liverpool down to the twelve-bus fleet of Ramsbottom, are all included, together with Ribble, North Western, Cumberland and Lancashire United. Over 300 photographs illustrate this fascinating area of bus operation. 104pp, 11ins by 8½ins, £8.95. *Available Now*

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London Bus Magazine

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Front cover: Barely a month old, GS17 basks in some unseasonal sunshine at LH in November 1953. Points to note are the absence of 'dog-ears' indicators, which were fitted fleetwide in 1958/9, and the profusion of chrome trim around the front end. *Geoff Rixon.*

Back cover: TD49(E) passes along Northaw Road on 3rd May 1953 through scenery which has altered little today – although PB may now provide a greater range of vehicles. The route itself, although suffering from working in the counties of Hertfordshire and Essex with their differing support policies, still arcs north of built-up London, and retains contact with its National and Public origins in the 306 family of routes stretching *in extremis* from Epping to Watford. The number 242 was used for the Waltham Cross – Waltham Abbey – Epping Forest (Volunteer) section in the October 1934 renumbering. *Peter G Mitchell.*

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ISSN 0140 8380



LBM is published quarterly by the London Omnibus Traction Society and appears during Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. No part of LBM may be reproduced without prior permission in writing. A limited amount of advertising space on transport related subjects is available. Advertising rates may be had on application to the Editor.

Articles and Photographs are always welcome, but photographs submitted cannot be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is supplied. Negatives and transparencies are of no use. The Editor and Publisher do not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed in contributions.

Subscriptions Annual subscriptions to the London Bus Magazine are available at the rate of £8.00 post paid. Members of LOTS qualify for the post-free rate of £6.40. Details of Membership of LOTS can be obtained from the Subscriptions Manager.

Production LBM is filmset and printed by **KPC PRINT**
London and Ashford, Kent

Around & About

Recent vehicle orders by London Buses

The successful bids by London Buses to operate the Harrow and Bexleyheath tendered routes have resulted in the following vehicle requirements.

27 Mark II Metrobuses for operation in Harrow. Pending the delivery of these vehicles early in 1988, London Buses has received on lease from Kirkby Central a number of ex-Greater Manchester Daimler Fleetlines with Northern Counties bodywork.

28 Leyland Olympians – Northern Counties bodywork. These vehicles, originally intended for Greater Manchester, will be on lease from Kirkby Central and in Bexleybus blue and cream livery.

54 MCW Metrорiders for both Harrow (30) and Bexleyheath (12) with the remaining twelve, which are of a larger capacity, going to Orpington for route R1 replacing RHs which are expected to be transferred to Bexleyheath.

Also expected are 30 secondhand Daimler Fleetlines for the Bexleybus fleet, some of which will include ex-LT examples brought back from Clydeside Scottish.

Kentish Bus 692 is one of a pair of ex-Midland Red North Olympians at Northfleet (NF) and is seen outside the garage on route 10, the former 480. Route renumbering began in March albeit in a somewhat spasmodic manner. The fleet itself was renumbered on 27th April on which date LCSE formally changed its title to Kentish Bus & Coach Co Ltd. Ramon Hefford



The route number 264 has enjoyed several incarnations in South West London. It was introduced in its latest form from 15th August for a service from Tooting Broadway to Croydon replacing the 64 between these points, with Sunday extensions to New Addington. DMS2420 (TC) speeds along at Kent Gateway on 23rd August. R. J. Waterhouse



Proposed Insurance Scheme to cover death from assaults on crews

In a report in LRT News, the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) has suggested to London buses that an insurance scheme should be introduced providing realistic compensation to the families of bus staff who have been killed as a result of assaults whilst on duty. The TGWU considers the present system of payments by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to be "miserly". If such a scheme is adopted payments of between fifty and sixty thousand pounds would be possible and the scheme could be introduced nationally throughout the bus industry.

The proposed scheme arises from the fatal stabbing of a conductor on route 38 last summer.

Introduction of new Local Bus Guides

London Buses has produced a new series of thirty-three Local Bus Guides similar in format to a fold-up bus map. Each guide concentrates on a particular area of London depicting a 'bubblegraph' style of map and details of local bus headways on one side, while shopping centre diagrams, places of interest and addresses of shops that sell Bus Passes and Travelcards are featured on the reverse side. Five million copies have been produced, half of which have been delivered to houses on a door-to-door basis.

The guides were launched in September at Covent Garden where a balloon 'sculpture' in the shape of a London Bus, made up of 10,500 balloons, was constructed earning it a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the biggest of its kind ever built in the UK!

Blue Triangle operates this ex-Northern Routemaster (or 'Chinese Daimler' as some Northern crews called them) which has been numbered RMO2118 after its conversion to permanent open top following roof damage. This operator also uses RCL2239 (still with its roof) together with an ex-Portsmouth Atlantean. This photograph was taken at Bank on 1st September. Colin Fradd



Increase in LRT Fares of 9.5%

London Bus and Underground fares are to rise by an overall average of 9.5% on 10th January 1988. The higher than inflation increase is defended on the grounds that a higher level of investment is required to improve travel conditions, particularly on the Underground which is carrying record numbers of passengers. Whilst LRT acknowledges that "the government has given generous financial support for major projects", some of the extra finance required has to be met from fares increases.

On the buses, the revision will generally have a greater effect in the suburbs than inside the Central Zone where the 35p 'short hop' and 50p fares will remain unchanged during the day. In the Inner and Outer Zones, a 'medium hop' fare of 30p (35p during the morning peak) for journeys of up to about one and a half miles will apply; longer journeys within a zone will increase to 40p (45p in the morning peak). Two and three zone fares of 60p, 70p and £1 will generally increase by 10p. The child fare will increase from 20p to 25p throughout the morning peak but otherwise will either remain at 15p where the adult fare is 30p or increase to 20p for all other journeys. On night buses, the Central Zone fare will increase from 50p to 80p and a minimum of 50p will apply for journeys wholly within the Inner or Outer Zones. The flat fare on Red Arrows will stay at 40p.

Most existing Bus Passes, Travelcards and Capitalcards are to increase by various amounts averaging 12%, the one-day Bus Pass increasing from 60p to either 70p in the Inner Zone or to 80p in the Outer Zone. The two zone version is to rise from £1.20 to £1.40. A new local Area Bus Pass is to be introduced in fourteen suburban centres (all within the Outer Zone) costing £2.80 weekly or £10.80 monthly. London Explorer tickets are to be withdrawn as it is felt that the range of Travelcards available will be adequate to meet the needs of tourists.

LRT to take over Victoria Coach Station

The ownership of Victoria Coach Station is to be transferred from the National Bus Company (NBC) to London Regional Transport at the request of the government. The Minister for Public Transport, David Mitchell, said that the NBC had a statutory duty to dispose of its property as part of its privatisation programme, but in view of the proposed public inquiry to be held on coach stations in London, there was a need to ensure that Victoria Coach Station continued to operate unaffected by the break-up of the NBC. The Minister therefore considered that the Coach Station should remain in public sector control, at least until the result of the inquiry was known.

London Buses win County contracts

London Buses has been successful in its bids to operate some County Council contract routes both in Essex and Surrey. Since 1st November LBL has been running the Sunday service on route 500 (Romford - Harlow) which is operated by London Country North East during the rest of the week. In Surrey LBL has been providing since 1st November the following services:-

508 Sunday service between Epsom and Sutton via Banstead replacing route 518 on this day.

520 Monday - Saturday evening service and certain Monday - Friday morning journeys between Sutton and Walton-on-the-Hill.

522 Monday - Saturday evening service between Sutton and Redhill with certain morning journeys over various sections of the route; also the Sunday service between Sutton and Gatwick Airport.

Contracts vary between one and three years, the journeys in question having been operated by LCSW.

Vehicles used consist of LSs from both Leyton (T) on the 500 and DMSs from Sutton (A) on routes 508, 520 and 522.

Below left: Rogue RML2693 at Hyde Park Corner on 13th July. Now that Ash Grove (AG) has withdrawn from the 9 (and the 11) such appearances will no longer be possible for the time being. Malcolm E. Papes Below right: The Red Arrow fleet was supposed to have been transferred from AG and GM to a site at Waterloo (coded RA) from 1st August. In the event Walworth Garage (WL) was re-opened on 15th August for this purpose following objections from residents at Waterloo and for the time being the Red Arrows remain at WL, albeit without garage codes. On the same date new route 509 was introduced providing a circular service between Liverpool Street Station and the West End in the off-peak (Mondays to Fridays) and shopping hours (Saturdays). LS497, still sporting an AG code, is seen in Ludgate Hill on the first day.

R. J. Waterhouse



From 31st October LBL were awarded the Sunday contract on LCNE route 500 by Essex County Council, and Forester liveried LS871(T) picks up in Tumbler Road, Harlow on the first day. The Epping to Romford section of this route is the main part of the old 250; this route was absorbed into the 247 (Epping – Brentwood) in January 1977 making the latter the longest red bus route at the time. It is good to see red buses in this part of the Essex countryside.

R. J. Waterhouse



The conversion of routes 279/A to OPO from 26th September ended Routemaster operation both to out-county destinations and at Ponders End (E) into which garage RM730 has just made its last journey.

R. J. Waterhouse



Revised network planned for Wimbledon and Sutton

Wimbledon, Morden and Sutton are the latest areas to come under the LRT microscope for service changes linked with the tendering process. The proposals, which have been published in a consultation document, are the outcome of a survey of travel patterns in the areas concerned but unlike the results of previous surveys of this kind elsewhere, no more minibus services are planned. The total level of service would remain broadly similar to that found at present although some improvements or reductions are involved to match current demand. Eleven routes in all are affected by the proposals which are planned for introduction in the summer of 1988 following consultation with local councils and interested parties. The main changes consist of:-

- i) Rationalisation of the main Morden – Wimbledon – Putney corridor so that the service is provided by only one trunk route, the 93, but at a greatly increased frequency.
- ii) New links to the Savacentre shopping development at Merton Abbey due to open next August.
- iii) Certain routes shortened with the aim of improving reliability to Morden Station and to areas such as Sutton Common, Epsom and Hackbridge.
- iv) New links between residential areas and local shopping centres such as Stonecot Hill and Sutton and Rose Hill with Wimbledon.
- v) Existing routes revised to serve previously unserved roads including Tudor Drive, Lower Morden.

Midi-Bus 1950s Style

by Steve Fennell

By 1953 the long sought after standardisation of the London Bus fleet was well under way. Floods of new RT and RF vehicles were pouring into service and many of the older types were gone forever. However, there was one particular type of bus that was not catered for in the programme, this being a small 'Midi-bus' type to replace the fleet of one-man operated Leyland Cubs classified C and CR, which were being operated on a variety of rural routes by London Transport's Country Bus Department. It may come as a surprise to the reader to learn that one-man operation had been successfully employed in the Country Area for many years past. Admittedly the routes concerned could never have been classed as busy (with a few exceptions); and man-

agement had balked at the thought of larger vehicles, such as the RFs then being delivered, being suitable for one-man operation. In any case, the necessary legislation to permit such operation did not exist in 1953. However, change was in the air and as we shall see later, the economic climate of the late 1950s eventually reduced the appeal of the small OMO bus.

The replacement vehicles turned out to be attractive looking 26-seat saloons known as the GS class. The chassis were by Guy Motors using components from their successful Otter and Vixen designs and a Perkins P6 indirect-injection oil engine was fitted. Rather surprisingly, in view of the then universal fitting in new buses of Wilson pre-select air operated

Route 471 played host to GSs for many years until 1966. In this April 1961 view GS18 waits patiently for departure before embarking on a rural journey through the lanes of this pleasant part of Kent. G. Mead





A February 1954 scene in GR shows brand new Guys awaiting entry into service. From left to right illustrated are GS82, 78, 69, 79, 74 and 73 along with some redundant Cubs which earlier GS deliveries had already rendered surplus. Geoff Rixon

gearboxes, a four-speed constant mesh manual transmission system was utilised, presumably to keep down the overall weight of the vehicle. Bodywork was by Eastern Coach Works (ECW) of Lowestoft, a situation forced upon London Transport by government, which insisted that a proportion of LT's needs should be met through this newly nationalised manufacturer. However, the vehicles incorporated many standard London Transport features. Internal decor, seat frames etc. were practically identical to those fitted to the RT and RF vehicles being delivered concurrently. The same supplier that provided body parts for the Ford Motor Company was employed and the similarity of the front design of a GS with a contemporary Ford Thames lorry was very apparent. From the outset, it was intended that all eighty-four of the GSs would be used in the Country Area and all were delivered in standard Lincoln green and cream livery. Details

of the vehicles and their allocation are set out in Appendices I and II.

Delivery commenced in October 1953 with an initial batch of sixteen vehicles. Hitchin (HN) had the honour of placing the first in service on route 383 (Hitchin – Weston) whilst others were distributed as trainers to garages that would be future recipients. Later in the month Chelsham (CM) received an allocation for routes 464 (Holland – Oxted – Westerham), 465 (Holland – Oxted – Edenbridge) and 485 (Westerham – Edenbridge). An initial allocation was also made at Hertford (HG). November saw their arrival *en masse* at HG when routes 329 (Hertford – Nup End), 333/B (Hertford – Chapmore End/Ware Park Hospital) and 388 (Hertford – Mardley Hill) were converted. Dunton Green (DG) received some for route 471 (Orpington – Cudham – Pratts Bottom circular) whilst others made Swanley (SJ) their home on routes 478



Route 383 was the first to receive GSs in October 1953 and this official photograph illustrates GS3. Photographs can lie however since GS3's entire working life was spent at CM until withdrawal in 1962. London Transport



A view of the interior of a brand new GS. The similarity between it and other contemporary LT vehicles is very apparent. London Transport

(Swanley – Wrotham) and 479 (Dartford – Farningham). Lastly, route 481 (Epsom – Wells Estate) was converted at Leatherhead (LH).

Delivery accelerated in December when a further thirty-six examples entered service. Garages receiving an allocation were: Amersham (MA) for routes 348/A (Chesham – Buckland Common/Pond Park Estate), 373 (Penn – Beaconsfield), 397 (Chesham – Tring) and 398/A (Amersham – Beaconsfield/Winchmore Hill); Dorking (DS) for routes 433 (Ranmore – Coldharbour) and 449 (Dorking – Ewhurst); East Grinstead (EG) for route 494 (East Grinstead – Oxted); Epping (EP) for routes 381 (Epping – Toothill) and 393 (Hoddesdon – Harlow);

Garston (GR) for route 336A (Rickmansworth – Loudwater Village); Guildford (GF) for routes 448/A (Guildford – Ewhurst/Pewley Way); and Northfleet (NF) for routes 450 (Dartford – Gravesend), 451 (Gravesend – Hartley Court), 452 (Dartford – West Kingsdown), 490 (Singlewell – Gravesend – Hartley Court), 490A (Northumberland Bottom – Gravesend – Hartley Court) and 492 (Gravesend – West Kingsdown). The 452 conversion at NF was the first example of a GS replacing a crew-operated T-type vehicle whilst the allocation to route 336A involved the use of an outstation at Loudwater Village.

By the end of 1953 the GSs had replaced all the

Another Guy in pristine condition is GS41 on route 433 and allocated to DS. GS41 was to have a very short LT career, being withdrawn as early as 1958. Three years later the vehicle had the rather dubious honour of being one of the first to be sold.

Alan B. Cross



A 1955 view featuring GS45 at Dorking Bus Station operating on route 449. GS45's service career last almost sixteen years but encompassed only three operating garages.

W. J. Haynes



remaining Cubs, apart from the allocation at Tring (TG) for route 387 (Tring – Aldbury) which had to wait until January 1954. However, only sixty-five of the batch of eighty-four had been allocated (GS1-62, 64-66). The remainder, which were delivered during the early part of 1954 were placed directly into store since there was no immediate use for them, the last of which, GS80, arriving in April.

Throughout the first part of 1954 a steady trickle of the stored vehicles were placed into service. HG received an additional allocation when three GSs converted routes 329A (Hitchin – Datchworth), 386 (Hitchin – Bishops Stortford), 386A (Hertford – Buntingford) and 389 (Hertford – Sawbridgeworth)

from crew RF and 10T10 operation from 21st April. 19th May saw a further allocation placed at GR when three replaced an equivalent number of 15T13s on routes 309 (Harefield – Rickmansworth) and 361 (Rickmansworth – Chorleywood). Windsor (WR) was the next recipient when routes 442 (Slough – Farnham Royal) and 445 (Windsor – Datchet Common) were converted from RT and crew RF operation respectively.

On 3rd March an event took place which was to have far reaching consequences for the future of the GSs as this was the day that 'high capacity' one-man operation was to be introduced in the Country Area. Bearing in mind the capacity of today's one-man



The withdrawal of the sections of routes 490 and 490A east of Gravesend in October 1955 was the first example of the process of retrenchment to which the class became subject. GS57 poses at Singlewell shortly before Gravesend Town Centre became the normal terminus. L. Rowe

buses, the fact that an RF was in 1954 classed as 'high capacity' may come as a slight shock! The necessary legislation had been passed and the Country Bus Department was keen for the experiment to begin. Five RFs, suitably modified for one-man operation were allocated to LH for use on route 419 (Langley Vale – Epsom, Brettgrave). The experiment was transferred to Hemel Hempstead's (HH) route 316 (Hemel Hempstead – Chesham Broadway) from 11th August and, in view of subsequent events, was obviously considered successful. The question one must ask is what course future events would have taken had the experiment been a failure!

The way was now set for the large scale introduction of OMO using the existing fleet of RF vehicles and this was to be a feature of the Country Bus Department's route alteration programme for some considerable time. In many cases an economy could be effected by replacing two GSs with one OMO

RF, and coupled with the overall decline in public transport usage many GSs found themselves with little or no work. It was to be some time before this trend became obvious, but by the early 1960s numerous GSs were in store and some were never to run in revenue earning service for London Transport again.

Even with 'high capacity' OMO on the cards, the last month of 1954 saw some expansion within the GSs' operating sphere. From 15th December a new route, numbered 388A and operated by HG, was introduced between Hertford Bus Station and the neighbouring Sele Farm Estate which at that time was still in its infancy. No additional vehicles were required for this service, the whole route being operated from HG's existing GS allocation.

A week later, from 22nd December, London Transport stepped in at short notice to provide a service formerly operated by the independent, Hants & Sussex of Emsworth. The independent had



EP received a small number of Guys for operation on routes 381 and 393. GS44 heads for Harlow on the latter route. Author's collection

run into financial difficulties and had been forced to withdraw all operations. Two new GS routes were provided, operated by Crawley (CY). The main service, numbered 852, ran from Three Bridges to Ewhurst via Crawley and Horsham, whilst a minimal service which ran via Faygate was numbered 852A. Some of the GSs which were in store were used bringing an allocation to CY for the first time. These two new routes took London Transport outside its traditional operating area and, as a result, created a great deal of resentment amongst the

other independents based in the surrounding district. However, the offending section of route between Horsham and Ewhurst was not to last very long as an LT operation and this section was withdrawn from May 1955 with Browns Motor Services of Forest Green providing the replacement service.

Apart from the alteration to route 852 referred to above, 1955 was to be a quiet year generally for the class, the only other change of note being from 5th October when the Gravesend – Singlewell section of route 490 and the Gravesend – Northumberland Bottom section of route 490A were both withdrawn. As a result the use of the number 490A was discontinued, all journeys operating as 490 between Gravesend and Hartley Court.

Route 387 was the last Country Area operation to enjoy the services of a Cub. GS conversion took place in January 1954 and operation was to last some eight years. Some twelve months before the end, GS33 arrives at Tring Station. L. Rowe



The first part of 1956 saw a slight reduction in the level of GS operation, but by the end of the year the peak had been reached with a record total of sixty-eight scheduled vehicles on Mondays to Fridays. Details of their allocation as at 17th October are set out in Appendix II. 21st March saw the first schedule change of the year which was to affect the class when routes 388A and 852A were withdrawn. Both had been very short lived affairs, the inauguration date in each case being as recent as December 1954. At DS 'inadequacies' (ie overcrowding) were being experienced on route 449 due primarily to the development of Chart Downs Estate in Dorking. To solve the problem, one of the GSs allocated to the 449 was replaced by an RT and, as a result, most of

the short workings between Dorking and Chart Downs were so worked. Some of the RT workings were also extended from Dorking to South Holmwood replacing short workings on route 414.

From 11th July an additional GS was allocated to GR for certain journeys on route 319 (Watford – Chipperfield/Two Waters) and its many suffixed variations, replacing a crew-operated RF, whilst at HH two GSs replaced the experimental OMO RFs on route 316.

By this time 'high capacity' OMO conversions were in full swing and 11th July saw suitably modified RFs enter service at HG, HH and MA. Those at MA were used to convert routes 394/A/B/C/D (Great Missenden – Hyde End; Great Missen-

den – Chesham Moor; Great Missenden – Chesham, Nashleigh Arms; Hyde End – Amersham; Chesham – Kings Ash respectively) and concurrent with this alteration some journeys on routes 394/A/B were operated by a GS vehicle from the 348/397 allocation.

The next bout of route alterations to affect the GS class took place from 17th October. At HG route 389 was swallowed up by a lengthy extension of route 388. No additional vehicles were required, the 389 allocation merely being transferred to the 388. An additional GS was needed at HN for a new route numbered 807. Running from Letchworth to Stevenage, this route provided a completely new facility linking the villages of Weston and Friends Green with the new town at Stevenage which was then at a very early stage of its development. At SJ route 478 was upgraded to RT status instead of GS, the benefits of which were somewhat dubious as the headway was substantially extended!

As 1956 drew to a close the full effects of the RF OMO conversion programme had yet to be felt, the Guys complementing their larger cousins in a number of cases. However, for those prepared to look further ahead the prospects were far from rosy. The small capacity of the GSs was ultimately to be their downfall as the all conquering RF extended its domain.

It was to be October 1957 before any further alterations took place. From 16th October two Saturday morning journeys on route 381 were extended from Toothill via Stanford Rivers to Ongar. This turned out to be a very short lived

extension, patronage being practically non-existent, and the journeys concerned reverted to their normal Toothill terminus from 18th January 1958. A mild form of expansion took place at MA from the same date when routes 398/A were extended from Amersham Station into the adjoining Quill Hill Estate. Coincidental with this was the introduction of a new GS route numbered 332 running from Amersham Garage to Quill Hall Estate via Stanley Hill intended primarily for school children. No additional vehicles were needed for these alterations.

A fortnight later, from 30th October, changes occurred that saw the first direct replacement of GSs by OMO RFs. At HG the three GSs allocated to routes 333/B were replaced by only two OMO RFs, GSs being banished from these routes until the early 1960s when, thanks to the intricacies of joint compilation, certain journeys were once again worked by Guys. EP lost two GSs when route 393 received OMO RFs although one GS remained there solely for scheduled duplication on route 393 and lasted until June 1959. These changes at HG and EP set the trend for the future as the larger capacity of the RFs was fully exploited. In many cases scheduled duplication could be reduced or withdrawn altogether with the introduction of the larger vehicles.

1958 will always be remembered as the year of the catastrophic bus strike which brought the whole of London Transport's road operations to a complete standstill for nearly eight weeks from 5th May. The reasons for and events leading up to the strike have been well documented elsewhere and it is not proposed to go into detail within this article. Suffice to say, when operations returned to normal things were never again to be quite the same as they had been. Passenger losses were considerable and, inevitably, in the months ahead there were wide-scale frequency reductions and service withdrawals.

Preparations had already been made for the introduction of the Summer Programme from 14th May but in the event this turned out to be a 'paper

Below: Hertford Car Park, as it was affectionately known, was the focal point for bus operations in the town for many years and it is only comparatively recently that this scene has been swept away forever following redevelopment of the area. Recalling happier days are GS18 and 73 on routes 388 and 388A respectively. Below right... Whilst on the subject of car parks, the one at Rickmansworth provided the terminal point for routes 309, 336A and 361 for many years. GS76 awaits departure on route 361 for Chorleywood. Both Author's collection



change' only, the services being at a complete standstill due to industrial action. The only proposal contained in the Summer Programme that affected the GS class was the planned introduction of a new Sunday-only route numbered 400, operated by CM and linking Warlingham Park Hospital with New Addington Estate running via quaintly named Ficklehole. The route, hardly surprisingly, having been introduced in the middle of a period of industrial turmoil, did not live up to expectations, and it ran on only seventeen occasions before being withdrawn, the last day of operation being 26th October.

Other changes in October, mostly directly related to the stoppage, involved total withdrawal of a number of little used routes. Not surprisingly, most of these were operated by GSs. 12th October was the last day of route 386A, the journeys being absorbed into route 331 (Hertford – Buntingford), whilst the following day the last rites were performed on route 442. A fortnight later, 28th October proved to be the last day of routes 479 and 492. The 479 withdrawal caused SJ to be the first garage to lose its GS allocation, and GSs never returned there for scheduled service again. Other alterations in the 29th October programme saw the section of route 448 between Peaslake and Ewhurst lose its Sunday service whilst the section of route 449 between Chart Downs Estate and Ewhurst was totally withdrawn, apart from a sparse service running as far as Holmwood Common. At NF one GS was removed from route 450's allocation through a frequency reduction, whilst one GS on the 451/490 allocation was replaced by an OMO RF. GR's route 319 (and suffixes) lost its link with the GS class when the one GS and three crew-operated RFs so allocated were replaced overall by three OMO RFs. A new route for GS operation however was the 459 (Uxbridge Station – Richings Park Estate), having been converted from crew RF. The Guy was made surplus by the withdrawal of route 442.

Even before the October programme, there was

and embarrassing surplus of GSs and these alterations did nothing to help the situation. Buyers for the class were being sought as it had already become obvious to the Country Bus Department that there was simply no use for them. As a result, the long term hire of five members of the class to Great Yarmouth Corporation was arranged. GS72 became the first example to make the journey eastwards leaving on 17th August. GS61, 63, 68 and 70 soon followed and all five were in service at Yarmouth by 12th September. The GSs did not find favour in Yarmouth and had been returned by July 1959, all going directly to store at, of all places the basement of Victoria Garage (GM), there being no sale in this particular instance.

The last change of the year affected LH's route 481 when, from December an OMO RF was allocated in lieu of the GS previously employed. The displaced Guy remained at LH however, its new role being that of a scheduled duplicate with journeys on routes 422 (Leatherhead – Boxhill) and 481.

1959 saw overall little alteration to scheduled GS operations, most changes being of a fairly minor nature. On 4th March route 459 lost its scheduled GS and received an OMO RF instead. The GS allocation on the 459 had been a very short lived affair, lasting only from 30th October 1958 and the reasons for its replacement are far from clear. As GSs still remained allocated to WR for route 445, vehicle standardisation could not have been the reason and one can only assume that capacity problems prompted this further conversion.

Below: The delivery of G26 to SJ in November 1953 justified the taking of this semi-official style of photograph. The identity of both the photographer together with the subjects of the view have long been lost in the mists of time. Author's collection Below left: Taking a break at HN is GS9. This particular vehicle has never been recorded at being allocated to HN and one assumes this was in fact a short term loan from neighbouring HG. In years to come GS9 found a home at the new garage in Stevenage New Town. L Rowe





Certain journeys on route 422 were GS operated using LH's 'special duplicate' vehicle. GS30 waits at Leatherhead Station.
R. H. G. Simpson



MA was the largest operator of the class and employed them on the many rural services throughout that part of Buckinghamshire. GS65 has just arrived at Chesham Broadway after a journey from Tring on route 397.
R. H. G. Simpson



Chesham local service 348A was also GS operated. GS64 provides the necessary interest at Chesham Broadway.
R. H. G. Simpson

Great Yarmouth Transport borrowed a small number of GSs with a view to possible purchase, although the Guys' endearing charms failed to impress and all returned to London. Pictured is GS72 at Yarmouth Vauxhall Station in February 1959. T. Wright



NF possessed a number of the class and operated GSs as late as October 1969. Some years earlier in 1963 GS46 was photographed at Stone working on route 450, long after the closure of Southfleet Station shown on the blind. G. Mead



CM lost its association with the class in June 1962 when redundant Green Line RFs provided an upgrading on routes 464, 465 & 485. Two months earlier, GS8 passes through Oxted on route 465. The fine condition of the vehicle did little to guarantee its future. After displacement from Chelsham GS8 never saw further service under the auspices of London Transport again. By now various features of the class had subtly altered since delivery. The chrome bumper has received a coat of black paint, whilst the polished aluminium radiator surround and wheel trims have vanished under a coat of Lincoln green. G. Mead



Just over a month later the last bus ran into HN. From the following day, all operations, including the GS allocations on routes 383 and 807 moved into the new garage (SV) situated in Stevenage New Town.

From 13th May, NF's route 452, which ran only at weekends, was converted to RF OMO operation in lieu of GS.

Guy's were eliminated from the schedules of EP from 10th June although in the event this was to be only a temporary loss. Route 381 received an extension from Epping to Roydon over route 372 and an OMO RF replaced the allocated GS. The other GS replaced was the scheduled duplicate vehicle, held primarily for route 393, an OMO RF again providing the necessary cover. A minor change which occurred from the same date was the extension of route 386 within Bishops Stortford from the town centre to Havers Lane Estate.

8th July saw a reverse in the trend that had been set in previous months when one of the OMO RFs allocated to HH for routes 317/A (Two Waters – Berkhamsted/Little Gaddesden) was replaced by a GS, a new route for Guy operation.

The last change of the year occurred from 14th October, when GR's route 361 was swallowed up by an extension of route 309. This scheme required no overall change to the total number of vehicles, the GS off route 361 merely being added to the allocation for route 309.

Overall, 1960 saw a slight increase in the level of GS operations, the first additional allocation being that of one GS to route 434 (Crawley – Edenbridge) operated by CY from 3rd February. On the face of it this appears to be a rather strange allocation, all the more so in that it lasted until 1965! In many people's eyes the 434 was considered to be one of the Country Bus Department's trunk routes and not one normally associated with GS vehicles. The 434 GS did not in fact replace anything, but was classed in London Transport parlance as "providing an increased service". One can only assume that it was used to relieve overcrowding on the normal scheduled service and in fact only provided scheduled duplicate journeys in the peak periods between Crawley and Crawley Down.

13th April saw the Monday to Friday operation on route 382 (St Albans – Codicote) converted from OMO RF to GS bringing St Albans (SA) within the sphere of those operating GSs for the first time. The 382 could certainly not be classed as a particularly busy service and no doubt it was felt that the capacity of a GS was more in keeping with the traffic potential of the route. The Saturday service remained scheduled for RF operation however, presumably as loadings justified the provision of a larger vehicle, and the GS remained idle on this day.

EP renewed its acquaintance with the GS class when one such vehicle was again allocated to route

381 from 25th May. This allocation replaced a crew operated RF coach which had provided certain journeys in the morning peak period prior to entering coach service. From the same date, the remaining Monday to Saturday GS workings on DS's route 449 were converted to RF OMO using a bus made spare by reductions on other Dorking services, primarily route 425 (Dorking – Guildford). The Sunday service contrived to remain GS worked until 12th October when it too succumbed to the OMO RF. GSs still remained allocated to DS, however, for route 433 and were to be so for another eight years.

Since 1958 there had always been an increasing surplus of GSs and a number had been placed in store with no prospects of a return to revenue earning service with London Transport. Although buyers were being sought for redundant members of the class it was to be 1961 before disposals were to commence. January 1961 saw the first sales which were to West Bromwich Corporation, when GS40 and 41 made the journey to the Midlands. A point of interest relating to these two vehicles was that apart from remaining in service with their new owners longer than they did with LT, both lasted long enough to be incorporated into the fleet of the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive when that undertaking was created in April 1969. A total of ten vehicles were to find new homes in 1961 whilst further spare examples were allocated to Central Area garages as staff buses, replacing the last of the 15T13s which had been specifically retained for these services. Additionally, GS78 was allocated to Harrow Weald (HD) to assist in transport for staff employed on the Metropolitan Line quadrupling scheme which was then taking place. In the event the use of GSs on staff bus duties was to be a feature of the London bus scene as late as 1974, beating their brothers on normal stage carriage work by almost two years.

Apart from the sales of redundant vehicles, 1961 saw little change to the use of the stage carriage GS fleet. DG received an additional GS for new route 413B (Chipstead – Sevenoaks Station) which was introduced from 18th January as a form of Railway Replacement Service for the Dunton Green – Westerham branch line which had closed. Operation of this service was extremely short lived, the main reason for its introduction being for railway season ticket holders in the Chipstead area whose tickets had yet to expire. Withdrawal took place from 26th April, presumably by which time no current season tickets were held.

The major change of the year took place from 7th June when alterations were made to the services emanating from EP, HG and SV. At EP new route 381A was introduced running from Coopersale Common to St Margarets Station via Epping and

The suburbs of Gravesend look unusually quiet as GS53 passes the Pelham Arms on its way to Ash on route 489 in July 1963. L. Rowe



History is made at Biggin Hill on 16th February 1963 as GS16 prepares to depart on the first journey on route 479. GS22 behind is provided as a duplicate although its front offside headlight seems to suggest that something unscheduled occurred between Dunton Green garage and Biggin Hill earlier that morning! L. Rowe



Roydon replacing OMO RF route 372. At the same time some 381s were also extended from Roydon to St Margarets Station. An additional GS was allocated to EP which in effect converted the erstwhile 372 route from RF OMO to GS under the new route number 381A. At HG a GS was allocated for the first time to routes 308/A (Hertford – Cuffley/Little Berkhamstead) replacing an OMO RF, whilst the section of route 388 between Hertford and Sawbridgeworth was withdrawn and replaced by new route 380 running between the same points, and allocated one GS. This restored the service to the pre-October 1956 pattern when the Hertford – Sawbridgeworth section was numbered 389. At SV, the Saturday service on route 383 was converted from GS to RF OMO, the Monday to Friday service remaining GS operated until 11th September when that too became RF worked. SV still however retained an allocation of Guys which were employed on route 807

A minor change from 7th June affected DS's route 433 when some journeys operated to Chart Downs Estate over route 449, bringing GS operation back to this section, albeit with a different number.

At this stage in the story it is worth explaining the pattern of operation employed in the County Bus Department. Whereas in the Central Area a bus remained on one route all day (other than for peak period requirements when a different running number was allocated), in the Country Area interworkings between routes were common with one vehicle covering many different routes during the course of a day. At HG for example, GSs were allocated to routes 308/A, 329/A, 380, 386 and 388. Reference to the allocation book showed that certain journeys on routes 310 (Enfield – Hertford), 331 (Hertford – Buntingford), 333 (Hertford – Chapmore End) and 393 (by now Welwyn Garden City – Harlow) all had the occasional GS working on them using buses



HG possessed a quantity of GSs which were gradually replaced as RFs became available. Most operated on infrequent rural services sometimes on only a couple of days each week. Such was the case with route 386 which operated latterly on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays only. GS13 takes its stand time at Havers Lane Estate, Bishops Stortford. J. G. S. Smith

Operation of GSs from SA was restricted to just one vehicle and, initially at least, confined to Mondays to Fridays; it also appeared to be very rarely photographed! In this view GS21 stands in St. Albans garage after service on route 382. L. Rowe

Route 380 was born on 7th June 1961 and had an existence of just under two years. The whole saga of routes 380, 388 and 389 is explained fully in the text, but suffice to say the reason for so many alterations in so short space of time is intriguing! GS20 carries a respectable load at Harlow New Town Bus Station on the last stage of its journey to Sawbridgeworth. Alan B. Cross



Guys were still to be found in Oxted after their removal from CM as route 494, operated by EG, retained one until May 1964. In this April 1961 view taken at Oxted Station GS81 waits to depart for Chelsham garage on route 464 whilst behind GS58 heads for East Grinstead on route 494. L. Rowe



Destined to be the very last GS in service, GS42 climbs over Fishery Lock at Hemel Hempstead on route 316 in October 1963. Operation of route 316 by London Transport ceased from the following May when its independent partner on the route, Rover Bus Service, gained sole charge. L. Rowe



With an Ultimate ticket machine clearly on view GS39 waits at Horsham before embarking on a journey to Crawley. The RT behind provides the direct service between the same two points on route 405. P. J. Relf



Above: An experimental town service numbered 389 and GS operated was introduced in Harlow from May 1964 and brought Guys to HA for the first time. Even the healthy load on GS54 illustrated here could not justify the retention of the service and withdrawal came from January 1965. GS54 was the only member of the class to be fitted with Loadmeter equipment and towards the end of its life toured various garages where loading information was required. L. Rowe Above right: An exhilarating trip was normally guaranteed on limited stop service 399 which linked Dartford and Grays. GS21 is seen leaving Grays on its short high speed thrash to Dartford! Author's collection



routes 451/490 was replaced by a crew-operated RF.

From 18th June Grays (GY) joined the ranks of those operating GSs when a new service numbered 372 was introduced. This was a local service running within the extremities of the vast Belhus Estate. Positioning journeys were also operated on route 328 (Rainham – Grays) to get the necessary GS to and from Belhus. Hardly surprising was the fact that the route was a commercial failure and withdrawal came swiftly, the last day of operation being 23rd October after a bare four months' existence.

Other changes from 18th June involved TG and MA. Route 387 lost its GS when one OMO RF replaced it and the crew-RF that operated on this service. This meant that TG no longer had a GS allocation but the relevant vehicle remained allocated for another month until it was transferred. At MA route 373 was withdrawn, being replaced by an extension of route 363 (High Wycombe – Penn) onwards from Penn to Beaconsfield, in effect converting the route to RT crew operation in lieu of GS! MA lost one GS as a result of this change. The withdrawal of route 373 was merely the lull before the storm as, from 24th October, MA lost its entire GS allocation. Routes 332, 348/A and 398/A were all converted to RF OMO. Route 397 was withdrawn, the service from Chesham to Tring now being provided by an extension of routes 348/A. Overall, eight OMO RFs replaced nine Guys. This conversion brought home the fact that the GS class was on the way out. MA had been the largest operator of the type and since in the past conversions tended to be partial, this one was complete. However, the distinctive sound of a Perkins P6 was still to be heard in Chesham as HH continued to operate GSs on route 316.

Another total conversion that took place from the same date was at CM where five OMO RFs replaced the seven GSs that operated on routes 464, 465 and 485. Included in the total above was the one GS allocated to route 453 (Chelsham – Caterham)

allocated to other routes. One would have had to be in the right place to see such workings as many of them ran only once or twice a day, often very early in the morning or equally late at night, and even then in all probability over a very small section of the route. This practice was prevalent at most Country garages, particularly where an infrequent pattern of routes operated. During the 1960s such was the decline in public transport that more and more cases of jointly compiled schedules became apparent in a bid to contain operating costs. This practice remains much in evidence within the present day London Country regime but is still only in its relative infancy with London Buses.

1962 was the first year that express efforts were made to eradicate GS vehicles from the schedules. By the end of the year nineteen vehicles had been so removed and four garages had lost their complete allocations. Service reductions were throwing up surplus OMO RFs whilst the introduction of the new Routemaster Coaches (RMC-type) to Green Line routes was also providing a stock of RFs which, once suitably modified for OMO, could also be used for GS replacement.

Two minor changes took place during the first part of the year. At EP from 17th January one of the Guys allocated to routes 381/A was replaced by the usual OMO RF. A curious change was effected at NF from 25th May when one of the GSs allocated to



which was replaced by an RT made spare by reductions on other CM routes.

Finally, again from 24th October, EP said farewell to its last Guy for the second and final time. The remaining journeys worked by the GS on routes 381/A were now covered by the inevitable OMO RF.

The whole of the 1962 programme utilised RFs made redundant from Green Line work. Although a pretty hectic pace had been set, the events of the next few years slowed down considerably, although the replacement of the remaining Guys was always the underlying theme. Many of the GSs replaced throughout 1962 were put on the disposal list and the majority were sold for further service to independent operators who quickly appreciated their reliable and economical nature.

From 16th February 1963 a new GS route was introduced, operated by DG. Numbered 479, the service ran from Orpington Station to Biggin Hill on Saturdays only and employed one vehicle. This route was in fact the predecessor of today's R2 Roundabout service now operated by London Buses' subsidiary, Orpington Buses Ltd. The service was very short lived as an LT operation since on 15th June 1963 it was taken over by Orpington Rural Transport Association, a non-profit making undertaking formed by five local councillors.

A major change which occurred from 22nd May was the opening of the new garage at Harlow New Town (HA) replacing the smaller and ill-situated premises at Epping. There was, of course, a major restructuring of services in the area and the small number of rural routes were no exception. The 380, introduced only two years earlier, was withdrawn and replaced by an extension of route 388 from Hertford to Harlow, whilst the section from Harlow to Sawbridgeworth was repaced by an extension of route 390. At the same time a GS from the 388 allocation was replaced by an OMO RF.

Concurrent with the 380/388 alterations was the

Above: The rural nature of route 329A is apparent in this view taken at Datchworth. GS44 picks up a solitary passenger before proceeding on its cross country journey to Hitchin. J. G. S. Smith Above left: Thanks to jointly compiled schedules Guys once more appeared on route 333 in the 'sixties after having been initially replaced by RFs in October 1957. GS10 stands at Hertford Car Park prior to undertaking the short trip to Chapmore End. Author's collection

replacement of the SA Guy utilised on route 382 Mondays to Fridays by an OMO RF. The Saturday service was already OMO RF. Similarly, at HH, the one GS allocated to routes 317/A was replaced by an OMO RF. GSs were however to return in the not too distant future to both SA and HH.

At LH a slight expansion of GS operation reversed the trend set with the remainder of the May programme when an additional vehicle was allocated, replacing an OMO RF on route 481. This garage already had one GS on its books allocated as a 'special duplicate' with known workings on routes 422 and 481. Now, after a three and a half year lapse the 481 was once again scheduled for GS operation.

The last change of 1963 affected the remaining GS allocation at SV when route 807 lost its Guy in favour of the all conquering OMO RF from October, GSs never returning to that garage for service again.

A new form of GS 'replacement' appeared in 1964, with the total abandonment of two routes and their takeover by independent operators. The first to go was route 316 which had already been jointly operated with the Rover Bus Company of Bovingdon for some time. London Transport's participation in this service ceased on 6th May from which date the route became a wholly Rover Bus operation. (Rover Buses incidentally carried notices to the effect that Green Rover Tickets were not valid for travel on their service!) London Transport retained the section of the 316 which operated from the



The last operations at NF centred on routes 451 and 490. Seen at Gravesend near the end of its stage carriage days is GS28 on route 451. J. H. Blake



NF operated GSs until October 1969 and was the penultimate home for members of the class. Some journeys on trunk route 480 were GS operated as a means of getting a GS to and from Dartford for use on routes 450. GS46 poses alongside one of the now rare tubular bus shelters at Horns Cross on its way to Dartford. L. Rowe



Pictured at Hartley Court on 4th October 1969 GS55 became unlicensed at NF later the same month. Colin Stannard

Railway Station to St Paul's Road within the area of Hemel Hempstead New Town, and numbered it 316B keeping GS operation. At the same time as this alteration was the allocation, yet again, of a GS to routes 317/A replacing an OMO RF.

The other service surrendered to an independent was the 448, the last day of LT operation being 11th August. As with the 316, the service was already jointly operated with the independent concerned, in this case Tillingbourne Valley Motor Services which henceforth assumed responsibility for providing the whole service. Tillingbourne had previously purchased a number of surplus GSs from London Transport and operated them in a smart maroon livery. For a time prior to the takeover maroon Tillingbourne and green LT Guys had operated side by side. In the event some of the Tillingbourne examples remained in service until the early 1970s affording the passenger the opportunity of travelling by GS over a route long lost by London Transport. Tillingbourne however did not replace the 448A or the Peaslake – Ewhurst section of the 448, both of which were withdrawn.

Other alterations in 1964 involved the introduction of no less than two new GS routes and one OMO RF conversion. Firstly, from 6th May HA received its first ever GS allocation for new route 389 running between Harlow Town Station and Potter Street. This turned out to be another very short lived affair, the last day of operation being 12th January 1965.

6th May also saw the replacement of EG's Guys when route 494 received the ubiquitous OMO RF.

The withdrawal of Green Line route 703 (Wrotham – Amersham) prompted the introduction of new GS route 309A from 4th November, running between Chorleywood and Northwood Station and operated by GR. No additional vehicles were needed since the service was provided simply by diverting certain journeys from the Rickmansworth – Harefield section of route 309 to operate to Northwood instead.

After the withdrawal of route 389 (mentioned above) the next alteration of 1965 to affect the GS class involved their return to SA for use on route 382 from 1st February. Such re-conversions were a feature of Country Bus operations at the time and can only be explained by the assumption that there were short term shortages of OMO RFs. Routes such as the 317/A and 382 frequently had their allocations changed; indeed both had originally lost GSs only for them to return later.

From 2nd June another garage received GSs for the second time. This time it was GY which had had a brief flirtation with the class back in 1962 and then only for four months. GY operated its newly-acquired Guys on new route 399 which ran between Grays and Dartford through the Dartford Tunnel,

replacing the crew operated service numbered 300. Officially described as a limited stop service, a trip on a 399 could best be described as an exhilarating experience and rumour has it that one GS was 'doctored' to produce the desired effect! Nevertheless, despite the novelty, the route was no more successful than its predecessor though it surprisingly lasted some two years before withdrawal.

More retrenchment occurred from 2nd June with the replacement of the GS allocated to route 434 at CY by an OMO RF, whilst a fortnight later, from 16th June, one of the Guys allocated to the 388 at HG was similarly replaced. At the same time the service provided between Hertford and Harlow over route 388 was substantially reduced.

The programme of 3rd October saw the removal of the HH's Guy allocation from routes 316B and 317/A, additional OMO RFs providing the necessary cover. Similarly, CY lost its Guys from the same date when routes 852 were withdrawn without replacement. At Hertford the majority of GS journeys on route 331 (Hertford – Buntingford) were linked to route 386 thereby providing through facilities from Hertford to either Hitchin or Bishops Stortford. Basically instead of a bus leaving Hertford as a 331 and on arrival at Standen or Buntingford terminating and then transferring to route 386, the service ran as through journeys thereby extending route 386 from Standen to Hertford. Alterations were also made to routes 329/329A which surprisingly only lasted eight months before further restructuring. route 329A was withdrawn between Nup End and Hitchin but extended from Datchworth to Hertford via Nut Croft and route 329. At the same time route 329 was reduced from a Monday-Saturday operation to a Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays only service whilst the 329A ran only Tuesdays and Saturdays. This alteration left no service at all on a Thursday. Both routes operated from Hertford to Nup End, the 329 via Woolmer Green and the 329A via Datchworth. However, even at this late stage in the GS story the Country Bus Department still had a few surprises up its sleeve with the addition of High Wycombe (HE) to the ranks of Guy operators! One GS was allocated for a new route, numbered 442, linking High Wycombe Town Centre with the neighbouring Hicks Farm Estate. The allocation of this type in particular becomes more credible however when one realises that at the time HE was a wholly crew-operated garage and that the only other single-deck vehicles there were crew-operated RFs for Green Line work.

The pace of replacement was maintained throughout 1966, starting in the spring when one of the GSs allocated to the 308/329/386 group of routes at HG was replaced by an OMO RF, the official conversion date being 20th March. Two months later, from 15th

Top right: Route 308A was another infrequent HG operation but at least the service operated every weekday. GS65 is illustrated at Hertford Car Park. Colin Stannard Centre right: Windsor Castle stand provides a temporary resting place for GS77 on route 445. The 445 was converted to crew RF operation when the time came to effect GS replacement. J. Cowdery Bottom right: GR was the last to host the operation of GSs, retaining two examples for use on route 336A (and occasionally route 309). Some years before the end of operation GS50 is caught scuttling into Garston Garage after completing a duty on route 309. Note the position of the rear LT bullseye symbol; a more obvious location would have been on the rear door as on RFs. Alan Cross



May, HG featured once again with further alterations to routes 329/329A which had only received their last revision the previous October. Route 329 (Hertford – Woolmer Green – Nup End) was withdrawn with the journeys concerned being diverted via Nut Croft and Datchworth to Nup End instead over the course of route 329A. As a result route 329A was renumbered 329 and now operated Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. At this stage no further Guys were withdrawn from HG though a juggling of the remaining vehicles running did take place.

From 10th July the one GS allocation on route 450 was converted to OMO RF, although the remaining Guys at NF were to last a little longer. The last day of 1966 saw GSs removed from the schedules of two further garages. At DG, the largest operator of the class holding five vehicles for service plus spares, OMO RFs provided the necessary replacement on route 471. At WR the sole Guy on the strength of route 445 was replaced but this time rather surprisingly by a crew-operated RF! At first glance this conversion seems at odds with the policy of Country Bus management with its continual emphasis on economy, but if one scratches the surface, one will realise that the crew provided were from the Green Line allocation. It was found that there was sufficient time within the coach duty for a return trip to Datchet to be incorporated prior to setting off for the metropolis. Quite what the coach crews thought of this additional mileage within a duty is best left unrecorded, but the whole scheme overall saved one OMO duty which represented a worthwhile saving in the eyes of management. As a result of this the 445 fell into the unusual role of being the only Country bus route where one was able to purchase a Green Rover ticket issued from a Green Line Setright ticket machine: a situation which inevitably caused some comment whenever the aforementioned ticket was used on any other service!

Now that we have reached 1967, it is probably a good time to review what GS operation remained. A mere eight garages were left with GSs on their books with a total scheduled run-out of 14 Monday to Friday, 9 Saturday and 1 Sunday. The garages concerned were DS (433), GR (309/A, 336A), GY

(399), HE (442), HG (308/A, 329, 331, 333, 386, 388), LH (481), NF (451, 489, 490) and SA (382). Of these, HG and NF provided the most interest with an extensive operation on a number of routes, although particularly in the case of HG, some of these were just one or two odd journeys a day.

Route 399 operated for the last time on 12th May



The member of the class destined to be the last in passenger service was GS42 and it is seen here leaving Rickmansworth Station on one of its occasional forays to Loudwater Village in April 1971. The vehicle now carries a London Country Fleetname. Peter Graves

removing GY from the list of Guy operators. With this came the removal of the last Sunday operation of the class. From the following day one OMO RF replaced two GSs on routes 309/A whilst as part of the same scheme one morning journey on route 336A was extended from Rickmansworth to Northwood. From 8th July an OMO RF effected an economy at Nortfleet on routes 451 and 490 by replacing one GS and one crew RF, leaving the remainder of NF's much reduced GS allocation to linger on until 1969.

13th November saw the end of GS operations at HE and SA when routes 442 and 382 were respectively converted to OMO RF. The final change of the year took place at LH from 2nd December when route 481 succumbed to OMO RF.

1968 dawned with just four garages operating GSs. The first part of the year saw no change to the few remaining workings, and it was to be the 5th October programme which dealt the death blow at DS when route 433 was totally withdrawn. From the same date a start was made at HG on removing this once numerous class from the garage by the simple process of reducing the services which continued until 22nd November when its Guys ran for the last

time. From the following day one-man operations at this garage became entirely RF. In the meantime route 308A had been totally withdrawn, the last day of operation being 4th October. 15th February 1969 saw the remaining GS allocated to routes 309/A replaced by an OMO RF leaving just a solitary allocation at GR for route 336A, whilst from 4th October NF saw off its last Guys, leaving GR as the sole operator of this quaint and under-utilised class. Little was it realised at the time that GR would retain this honour until 30th March 1972!

An event which was to have far reaching effects on the future of the Country Bus Department but which only affected the GSs in the twilight of their careers was the formation of the National Bus Company on 1st January 1969 and the transfer of LT's Country Bus network to a separate operating subsidiary within the NBC from 1st January 1970. Initial changes were few and far between, but almost from the start the familiar gold 'London Transport' fleetnames were replaced by similar looking 'London Country' examples. As at 31st December 1969, fifteen GSs remained in LT capital stock. Of these GS12, 14, 17, 33, 36, 42, 45, 55, 64 and 66, were transferred to London Country stock, and of these GS12, 14, 45, 64 and 66 were never to run again, most being derelict hulks that lingered on for a few months before eventually being sold. Of the remainder GS36, 42 and 55 were trainer buses and 36 and



During 1964 GS82 was transferred to the service vehicle fleet and renumbered 1311CD, its use being officially described as a "Civil Defence Vehicle." Quite what purpose the bus actually fulfilled is far from clear but it was subsequently sold to Tillingbourne Valley Services for further PSV operation. 1311CD is illustrated here suggesting an air of intrigue! What goes on behind those screened windows?
R. H. G. Simpson



Many GSs ended up in the hands of other PSV operators who were quick to realise the potential of such vehicles. The following selection of photographs shows some examples of GSs working for their new owners.

GS40 and 41 were purchased by West Bromwich Corporation and lasted long enough with their new owners to be incorporated into the fleet of West Midlands PTE. GS41 is illustrated still in West Bromwich's livery of light and dark blue and cream. David Stutard



Staff transport appears to be the order of the day for GS5 seen passing a City of Oxford Motor Services office in the centre of Oxford.
R. F. Mack



Above: Corvedale Motors of Ludlow purchased a small number of GSs including GS61 illustrated in Corvedale's Yard.

Authors collection Above right: Southern Motorways of Emsworth were enthusiastic purchasers of the class and a considerable number came into their possession. GS75 is ready to depart on SM's Thorney Village service in June 1965.

Author's collection

Stevensons of Uttoxeter have always been keen purchasers of redundant London buses, their current fleet incorporating a large number of former DMS-type Fleetlines. In earlier days, in addition to the usual RT family vehicles, Stevensons' fleet contained former GS71 illustrated here at Stevensons' yard in Uttoxeter.

A. M. Lambert



Perhaps the best known GSs were those operated by Tillingbourne Valley Motor Services of Chilworth, Surrey which is best remembered for the fact that it took over the operation of LT route 448, a previously joint service. Tillingbourne's GSs were painted maroon and shown here is GS3, occupying the former 448 stand in Onslow Street Bus Station, Guildford. Author's collection



55 remained as such until withdrawal in November and August 1972 respectively. Of those remaining, GS17 and 33 were allocated to GR for use on route 336A although a serious mechanical defect prematurely terminated GS17's service career in March 1971. As a result GS42 was resurrected from the training school as a replacement.

The allocation for route 336A was worked for many years from its outstation in Loudwater village by a regular driver Mr Harry Cross. On Mr Cross's retirement during the early part of 1971 the use of the outstation ceased and for the last twelve months of the route's existence the GS travelled out from Garston each morning to take up service, again with a regular driver. The 336A had never been a particularly busy service serving as it did the private Loudwater Estate. Nevertheless following the announcement of 29th March 1972 as the last day of operation, enthusiasts began to flock to Rickmansworth to sample GS travel for the last time, the last week of operation being particularly busy. On the last day from mid-afternoon onwards the service was duplicated to cater for the crowds, probably for the first time ever! The two GSs in use (GS33 duplicate, GS42 service bus) became increasingly busy as the last journey approached and the author well remembers the extended journey time of the last service run as each vehicle vied to be the last one in. Various laps of honour were made of Loudwater before a very late GS42 achieved fame as the very last London Country GS to operate in service, arriving at the garage shortly after GS33.

Of the GSs transferred to London Country, only GS17, 33, 36, 42 and 55 were to carry London Country fleetnames. The five vehicles remaining in LT stock were employed on staff bus duties and all retained green livery and London Transport fleetnames. Primarily used for staff transport to Chiswick Works, the vehicles were allocated to Plumstead (AM) and Abbey Wood (AW) together with an outstation at, of all places, Reigate (RG) London Country garage, giving rise to the sight of green vehicles still carrying their 'proper' fleetname at a Country garage. These staff buses continued to be GSs until 1973 when a start was made on replacement, initially using surplus RFs. The last of all to operate was GS52 allocated to AW which survived until April 1974, by which time it was being employed on the Aldenham staff bus duties.

Now that we have completed our chronological survey of GS operation let us deal with various items associated with the class not covered above: namely blinds, ticket machines, 'strange visitors' and rumours!

As far as blinds were concerned the vehicles were equipped with standard size single deck apertures both front and rear which displayed identical route information. However, from 1958 simplified rear

blinds were introduced at certain garages whereby a number of displays were converted to lazy format, presumably at the request of the operating staff. The change of intermediate points from upper to lower case lettering occurred in 1962 but many examples of upper case displays lasted right up until the last days of operation. Indeed, GR's blinds for route 336A were in upper case lettering to the bitter end. In common with the rest of the fleet, route numbers alone tended to be displayed at the rear from about May 1964 onwards, on the remaining Guys.

Initially drivers of GSs were issued with Bell Punch ticket machines, later graduating to Gibson machines (a type not normally associated with one-man operated vehicles) mounted on a bracket. In the early sixties some GSs were observed with their drivers using Ultimate machines, and this was a feature until eventual withdrawal. It appears that different circumstances prevailed at different garages as there appeared to be an equal share of both Gibson and Ultimate machines throughout the fleet. Indeed the last GSs in service at GR carried Gibson machines to the end. Although it is dangerous to make assumptions, it would appear that as jointly compiled schedules were in force at most garages Ultimate machines were issued where the driver concerned worked on both GS and RF types in one duty since Gibson machines were unsuitable for use on RF vehicles (unless a conductor was carried).

'Strange visitors' seem not to have been widely documented for the class but nevertheless a few gems do exist. Pride of place (for which there is photographic evidence) must be the use of a NF Guy on Green Line route 725 one Bank Holiday Monday. Novelty apart, one imagines that the driver concerned knew all about it at the end of his shift! GR provided some interest notably towards the end of the allocation at that garage. A crew-operated example found itself on route 321 one busy Saturday in 1971 running as a duplicate, whilst appearances on route 309 after its conversion to RF, initially common at first, declined as the supply of suitably trained drivers diminished. Perhaps best of all is the report (unconfirmed) of a crew-operated example working on central area route 210 one Bank Holiday as a duplicate for Hampstead Fair. Surely someone somewhere must have photographed this operation?

We come finally to the matter of rumours, the majority of which always concerned the operation of GSs on Central Area routes with a consequent repaint into red livery. Various routes had been mooted over the years, starting as early as 1954 when following delivery a considerable number of vehicles were surplus to requirements. At the time Walton Bridge, served by routes 218 and 264, was subject to a weight restriction and this added fuel to the fire. However, nothing transpired and it was

some ten years later before this particular rumour resurfaced, this time with respect to a bailey bridge over the River Mole between Cobham and Downside Common on route 215A. This would have entailed vehicles operating on route 215 also since these routes were a very early example of jointly compiled schedules in the Central Area. Again this was not to be; in fact route 215A was withdrawn shortly afterwards. The use of GSs was next mooted in relation to route 54, there being a similar restriction at the bridge over the Hayes branch line in Croydon Road, Elmers End. Suffice to say no GSs were ever transferred to Central area service (other than for staff bus purposes) and none ever received red livery, although this hasn't stopped various preservationists from painting their vehicles in Central Area colours! The 'red GS' rumour remains as one of those interesting London Bus 'might have beens' which unfortunately failed to come to fruition.

With hindsight it is apparent that eighty-four vehicles were far too many to be used efficiently and there always were a considerable number of spares. Management did not foresee that it was only a matter

of time before the larger RF vehicles could be used for one-man operation with a subsequent saving in resources. History repeated itself in the mid-seventies when both London Transport and London Country ordered substantial numbers of Bristol LH single deckers, the majority of which soon became surplus to requirements for the same reasons as the GSs did almost twenty years earlier!

In conclusion I would like to thank all those who have assisted in the preparation of this article. Laurie Akehurst, Lawrie Bowles and Peter Graves deserve a particular mention together with Ken Glazier whose *25 Years Ago* articles in previous LBMs provided invaluable assistance.

Finally may I make this appeal? For many years I have been attempting to gather together a collection of photographs featuring every GS vehicle operating in LT service. This project seems to have ground to a halt in the last few years as the supply of photographs has dried up. If any reader therefore has photographs of GS 11, 22, 32, 40, 43, 49, 50, 52, 61, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70, 72, 82 and 84 I would be particularly interested in purchasing a copy. Readers may contact me via the editor and all postage costs will be refunded.

Appendix 1

Allocation of GSs as at 17th October 1956

ROUTE	TERMINALS		M/F	SAT	SUN	REMARKS
309	Rickmansworth – Harefield	GR	1GS	1GS	1GS	Includes journeys on 361.
316	Chesham – Hemel Hempstead	HH	2GS	2GS	2GS	Joint operation with Rover Bus Services.
319	Watford – Sarratt					
319A	Watford – Two Waters	GR	{1GS 3RF	1GS 3RF	– –	GR54 to be allocated GS.
319B	Chipperfield – Two Waters					
319C	Watford – Two Waters					
319D	Watford – Langleybury School					
329	Hertford – Nup End	HG	1GS	2GS	1GS	329A runs Tues & Sats only. Includes jnys on 333, 372, 386 and 388.
329A	Datchworth – Hitchin					
333	Hertford – Chapmore End	HG	3GS	4GS	3GS	Includes jnys on 310, 329 & 388.
333B	Hertford – Ware Park Hosp					
336A	Rickmansworth – Loudwater	GR	1GS	1GS	–	Outstationed at Loudwater Village.
348	Chesham Moor – Buckland Comm	MA	6GS	5GS	2GS	Buses also work on 397. Includes jnys on 394/A/B and 398, School & Private Hire Contracts.
348A	Chesham – Pond Park Estate					
361	Rickmansworth – Chorleywood	GR	2GS	1GS	1GS	Includes journeys on 309.
373	Penn - Holtspur	MA	*	*	*	Worked by buses ex-398/A allocation.
381	Epping – Toothill	EP	1GS	1GS	–	
383	Hitchin – Weston	HN	1GS	1GS	1GS	
386	Hitchin – Bishops Stortford	HG	1GS	2RF	1GS	386 runs Tues, Thurs, Sats & Suns. 386A runs Thurs, Sats & Suns. Inc jny on 331
386A	Hertford – Buntingford					
387	Tring – Aldbury	TG	{1GS 1T	1GS	1GS	
388	Sawbridgeworth – Mardley Hill	HG	4GS	4GS	2GS	Includes journeys on 333.
393	Harlow – Hoddesdon	EP	2GS	2GS	1GS	
397	Chesham – Tring	MA	*	*	*	Worked by buses ex-348/A allocation.
398	Amersham – Beaconsfield	MA	4GS	3GS	3GS	Buses also work 373. Inc jnys 348 and 397.
398A	Amersham – Winchmore Hill					
433	Ranmore – Coldharbour	DS	1GS	1GS	1GS	

continued over

ROUTE	TERMINALS	GAR	M/F	SAT	SUN	NOTES
442	Slough – Farnham Royal	WR	1GS	1GS	–	Includes journeys on route 445.
448	Guildford – Ewhurst	GF	4GS	4GS	3GS	{ 448 jointly operated with Tillingbourne Valley Services.
448A	Guildford – Pewley Way					{ RT type restricted to Sth Holmwood – Chart Downs section.
449	South Holmwood – Ewhurst	DS	{1GS {1RT	1GS 1RT	1GS –	Includes journeys on 480.
450	Dartford – Gravesend	NF	2GS	1GS	1GS	Buses also work 490 and 492.
451	Gravesend – Hartley Court	NF	5GS	4GS	–	Includes jnys on 450 and 480A.
452	Dartford – West Kingsdown	NF	–	1GS	1GS	Includes jnys 450 and 480.
464	Holland – Westerham	CM	8GS	6GS	4GS	Includes journeys on route 403.
465	Holland – Edenbridge					
485	Westerham – Edenbridge					
471	Orpington Circular	DG	{5GS {1RT	4GS –	2GS 1RT	
479	Dartford – Farningham	SJ	1GS	1GS	1GS	
481	Epsom – Wells Estate	LH	1GS	1GS		
490	Gravesend – Hartley Court	NF	*	*	1GS	Mon-Sat service provided by buses ex-451.
492	Gravesend – West Kingdown	NF	*	–	–	Runs Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri only buses ex-451.
494	East Grinstead – Oxted	EG	1GS	1GS	1GS	
807	Letchworth – Stevenage	HN	1GS	1GS	–	
852	Crawley – Horsham	CY	1GS	1GS	–	
SPECIAL DUPLICATES:		DS	–	1GS	1GS	
		EP	1GS	–	–	
		HH	–	1GS	–	
		HG	1GS	–	–	Duplicate allocated Thursdays only.
		LH	1GS	1GS	–	
		MA	1GS	1GS	–	
TOTAL SCHEDULED GS ALLOCATIONS:			68	63	38	

Onslow Street Bus Station at Guildford provides the setting for this late 1950s view of GS66 picking up a healthy load on route 448. The vehicle has already passed through its first overhaul and has lost the polished aluminium surround to the radiator grill. Author's collection



Appendix II – Vehicle Details and Allocation History

GS Vehicle Allocations

GS	Regn. No.	LT Body No.	ECW Body No.*	Guy Chassis No.	Date taken into stock	Allocation history (<i>italics denote overhaul date</i>)
1	MXX301	8166	6347	44208	8/10/53.	10/53CMt, 10/53CM, 4/56, 4/56CM, 9/59, 9/59CM, 10/62RGU, <i>Sold 3/63.</i>
2	MXX302	8167	6348	44209	2/10/53.	10/53HNt, 10/53HN, 8/55HG, 3/56, 3/56HN, 4/59SV, 6/59, 7/59SV, 10/62GYu, <i>Sold 6/63</i>
3	MXX303	8168	6349	44619	8/10/53.	10/53CMt, 10/53CM, 2/56RGU, 3/56, 3/56CM, 9/59, 9/59CM, 10/62RGU, <i>Sold 3/63.</i>
4	MXX304	8169	6352	44620	12/10/53.	10/53HGt, 10/53DGt, 12/53MAt, 12/53MA, 3/56, 3/56CM, 10/58RGU, 11/58CM, 8/59, 8/59CM, 10/62RGU, <i>Sold 3/63.</i>
5	MXX305	8170	6350	44621	12/10/53.	10/53LHt, 10/53LH, 4/56, 4/56HG, 9/58HN, 4/59SV, 10/59, 10/59SV, 11/60HG, 10/62GYu, <i>Sold 9/63.</i>
6	MXX306	8171	6351	44624	16/10/53.	10/53CM, 5/56, 5/56CM, 12/59, 12/59CM, 10/62RGU, 11/62DS, 2/63WRt, 5/63GRt, 6/63GRu, <i>Sold 7/63.</i>
7	MXX307	8172	6357	44704	23/10/53.	11/53CM, 5/56, 5/56CM, 11/59RGU, 12/59, 1/60CM, 10/62NFu, <i>Sold 6/63.</i>
8	MXX308	8173	6353	44706	12/10/53.	10/53HNt, 10/53HN, 5/56, 5/56CM, 10/59, 11/59CM, 10/62NFu, <i>Sold 5/63.</i>
9	MXX309	8174	6355	44708	12/10/53.	10/53CMt, 10/53CM, 5/56, 5/56HG, 4/59REu, 5/59HG, 11/59, 11/59SVu, 12/59SV, 10/61SA, 10/61MA, 10/61GR, 11/61HG, 10/62GYu, <i>Sold 6/63.</i>
10	MXX310	8175	6360	44710	23/10/53.	11/53CM, 6/56, 6/56HG, 2/59REu, 5/60, 5/60HGu, 6/60HG, 1/65HGu, 3/65, 3/65RGU, 4/65DG, 1/67GYu, 2/67NF, 7/67NFu, 12/67AMS, 4/69AMu, 4/69GYu, 10/69RGs, 10/73WKu, <i>Sold 10/73.</i>
11	MXX311	8176	6358	44712	20/10/53.	10/53CM, 12/54DSu, 2/55DS, 2/56RGU, 4/56, 4/56CM, 10/59, 10/59CM, 10/62NFu, <i>Sold 6/63.</i>
12	MXX312	8177	6361	44714	30/10/53.	11/53HG, 6/56, 6/56LH, 1/59CY, 1/60, 1/60CY, 10/63CYu, 10/63DSu, 4/64LHt, 6/64LHu, 10/64, 11/64CY, 10/65CYu, 2/66RGt, 10/69RGU, 9/70GRu, <i>Sold 4/71.</i>
13	MXX313	8178	6356	44716	16/10/53.	10/53CM, 6/56, 6/56SJ, 2/59LH, 5/60, 5/60LH, 12/64LHu, 2/65, 2/65HGu, 3/65HG, 11/68HGu, 12/68GYu, 3/69AMu, 4/69AMS, 8/69AWs, 2/70AWu, 2/71AWs, 1/72AWu, 8/72AWs, 4/73AWu, <i>Sold 5/74.</i>
14	MXX314	8179	6354	44718	16/10/53.	10/53CM, 6/56, 6/56HG, 11/59REu, 2/60, 2/60REu, 3/60HG, 10/64HGu, 11/64, 12/64LH, 12/67LHu, 9/70GRu, <i>Sold 4/71.</i>
15	MXX315	8180	6359	44720	20/10/53.	10/53CM, 2/54CMu, 4/54RGU, 6/54CM, 6/56, 6/56HG, 10/57HN, 4/59SV, 12/59REu, 3/60, 3/60HG, 2/63HGu, 6/63GYu, 5/64HA, 9/64CY, 11/64CYu, 1/65, 1/65GRu, 2/65GR, 2/69GRu, <i>Sold 3/69.</i>
16	MXX316	8181	6363	44737	23/10/53.	11/53HG, 7/56, 7/56MA, 9/56EP, 6/57MA, 10/57GR, 11/57TG, 12/57HHu, 2/58TG, 8/58MA, 1/59DS, 7/59CM, 12/59CY, 3/60RGU, 7/60, 7/60DGU, 8/60DG, 11/64DG, 5/65RGU, 9/65GYu, <i>Sold 1/66.</i>
17	MXX317	8182	6362	44752	4/11/53.	11/53LH, 7/56, 7/56HH, 6/60, 7/60HH, 2/63HHu, 4/63GRu, 2/65GR, 2/65GRu, 4/65, 5/65GR, 3/71GYu, 4/71GRu, <i>Sold 3/73.</i>
18	MXX318	8183	6364	44753	23/10/53.	11/53HG, 7/56, 7/56HG, 3/60REu, 8/60, 8/60DGU, 9/60DG, 8/64DGU, 9/64RGU, 8/65AMS, 2/66AMu, <i>Sold 3/66.</i>
19	MXX319	8184	6365	44760	23/10/53.	11/53HG, 8/56, 8/56HG, 3/60REu, 5/60HH, 8/60, 9/60DGU, 10/60DG, 12/61WR, 12/61WRu, 11/63DG, 8/64DGU, 9/64RGU, <i>Sold 12/64.</i>
20	MXX320	8185	6366	44766	4/11/53.	11/53SJ, 8/56, 8/56HG, 10/57DG, 9/60, 10/60HG, 9/62GR, 9/62MA, 9/62GY, 10/62CY, 10/62WR, 9/64WRu, <i>Sold 2/65.</i>
21	MXX321	8186	6369	44770	4/11/53.	11/53HG, 9/56, 9/56DG, 12/59NF, 1/60MAs, 1/60HDs, 8/61, 8/61GRu, 9/61GR, 8/64GFu, 8/64RGs, 3/65CY, 4/65CYu, 6/65, 6/65GYu, 7/65GY, 4/67SA, 10/67SAu, 11/67HE, 2/68GRu, <i>Sold 12/68.</i>
22	MXX322	8187	6368	44774	30/10/53.	11/53HG, 10/56, 10/56DG, 12/60, 12/60DG, 10/64DGU, 12/64DG, 1/65DGU, <i>Sold 5/65.</i>
23	MXX323	8188	6367	44776	30/10/53.	11/53HG, 10/56, 10/56DG, 10/60, 10/60DG, 12/64DGU, <i>Sold 1/65.</i>
24	MXX324	8189	6370	44794	11/11/53.	11/53DG, 10/56, 10/56MA, 11/56DG, 2/61DGU, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 6/61.</i>
25	MXX325	8190	6371	44797	11/11/53.	11/53DG, 10/56, 10/56GF, 1/61, 2/61GF, 8/64GFu, <i>Sold 10/64.</i>
26	MXX326	8191	6372	44800	6/11/53.	11/53SJ, 12/56, 12/56EP, 3/57MA, 4/57EG, 6/57NF, 8/59CM, 10/59RGU, 2/60HH, 3/60HHu, 4/60HHt, 11/60GRu, 1/61HH, 10/61, 10/61GF, 8/64GFu, 10/64DG, 4/65DGU, 4/65RGU, 6/65RGs, 2/67RGU, <i>Sold 1/68.</i>

GS	Regn. No.	LT Body No.	ECW Body No.*	Guy Chassis No.	Date taken into stock	Allocation history (<i>italics denote overhaul date</i>)
27	MXX327	8192	6374	44803	11/11/53.	11/53DG, <i>11/56</i> , 11/56DG, 11/60CM, 12/60GF, 3/61GFu, <i>5/61</i> , 5/61REu, 6/61EP, 10/62HG, 9/64HGu, 10/64GYu, <i>Sold 12/64</i> .
28	MXX328	8193	6379	44806	12/11/53.	11/53DG, <i>12/56</i> , 12/56GR, 2/57NF, 8/58GR, 1/59HH, 2/61GR, 5/61GRu, 6/61MA, <i>9/61</i> , 10/61MA, 11/61GR, 3/63GRu, 9/64GR, 5/65GRu, 6/65GY, 7/65GYu, <i>8/65</i> , 8/65HEu, 10/65HE, 11/67HEu, 11/67GRu, 1/68NF, 6/68NFu, 12/68CMu, 7/69AMs, 8/69AWs, 8/70RGs, 2/73RGu, <i>Sold 3/74</i> .
29	MXX329	8194	6375	44809	6/11/53.	11/53DG, <i>11/56</i> , 11/56DS, 5/60EP, <i>5/61</i> , 6/61HG, 11/63HGu, 2/64GYu, 5/64HA, 1/65HAu, 1/65REu, <i>Sold 4/65</i> .
30	MXX330	8195	6376	44812	12/11/53.	11/53GFu, 12/53GF, <i>11/56</i> , 11/56GF, 3/57NF, 9/57GR, 10/58MA, 11/58WR, 1/59LH, 11/59DGu, 12/59DG, 3/61DGu, <i>6/61</i> , 6/61MAu, 7/61MA, 10/62GR, 9/64GRu, <i>Sold 1/65</i> .
31	MXX331	8196	6380	44817	12/11/53.	11/53GFu, 12/53GF, 7/56MA, <i>11/56</i> , 11/56MA, 5/61MAu, <i>7/61</i> , 8/61MA, 10/62GR, 9/64GRu, <i>Sold 3/65</i> .
32	MXX332	8197	6373	44819	6/11/53.	11/53DG, <i>1/57</i> , 1/57EP, 2/57GF, 2/57MA, 5/57EG, 8/57DS, 11/57SJ, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 6/61</i> .
33	MXX333	8198	6377	44823	13/11/53.	11/53GFu, 12/53GF, <i>1/57</i> , 1/57MA, 5/57GF, 7/57MA, 2/58TG, <i>12/61</i> , 1/62MA, 1/62TG, 7/62MA, 10/62HG, 1/63SV, 1/63HG, 4/64HGu, 10/64GYu, 4/65HFu, <i>10/65</i> , 10/65GRu, 11/65GR, 4/72GRu, <i>Sold 6/72</i> .
34	MXX334	8199	6407	44816	11/12/53.	12/53MA, <i>4/57</i> , 4/57MA, 9/61GR, <i>6/62</i> , 6/62GYu, 7/62GY, 10/62HG, 5/63HGu, 6/63GYu, 9/64HG, 2/65GRt, 7/69GRu, <i>Sold 11/69</i> .
35	MXX335	8200	6378	44829	13/11/53.	11/53GFu, 12/53GF, <i>2/57</i> , 2/57GF, <i>1/62</i> , 1/62GF, 8/63CY, 1/64GF, 9/64WR, 2/66AMs, 2/67AMu, 2/67AWu, <i>Sold 1/68</i> .
36	MXX336	8201	6385	44826	17/11/53.	11/53DSu, 12/53DS, <i>12/56</i> , 12/56GF, <i>11/61</i> , 11/61GRu, 12/61GF, 8/64GFu, 10/64DG, 9/65DGu, 9/65GYu, <i>11/65</i> , 11/65CSu, 11/65GYu, 11/65GY, 5/67NF, 10/69NFu, 4/70SAu, 11/72GRu, <i>Sold 3/73</i> .
37	MXX337	8202	6383	44832	17/11/53.	11/53DSu, 12/53DS, 9/55RGu, 10/55DS, 10/55CM, 11/55RGu, 1/56CM, <i>12/56</i> , 12/56CM, 10/57EP, 6/59REu, 9/59SV, 11/59HG, 6/60REu, <i>Sold 6/61</i> .
38	MXX338	8203	6384	44835	17/11/53.	11/53EPu, 12/53EP, <i>10/56</i> , 10/56CM, 1/60RGu, <i>2/61</i> , 2/61DGu, 3/61DG, 3/65DGu, <i>Sold 5/65</i> .
39	MXX339	8204	6381	44840	13/11/53.	12/53GF, 3/57, 3/57GF, 5/59SV, <i>2/62</i> , 2/62GRu, 3/62MA, 6/62EG, 2/63DS, 1/67RGu, <i>Sold 6/68</i> .
40	MXX340	8205	6386	44845	26/11/53.	12/53EP, <i>1/57</i> , 1/57CM, 3/57EP, 12/58GR, 1/59WR, 6/59GFu, 1/60WR, 8/60GFu, <i>Sold 1/61</i> .
41	MXX341	8206	6389	44851	17/11/53.	11/53DSu, 12/53DS, <i>1/57</i> , 1/57DS, ?/EP, 12/58REu, <i>Sold 1/61</i> .
42	MXX342	8207	6382	44856	13/11/53.	12/53DS, 2/55GR, <i>2/57</i> , 2/57GR, <i>12/61</i> , 12/61GR, 2/62MA, 10/62HH, 5/64HAu, 5/64HHu, 5/64HHt, 7/64HHu, 8/64GRu, 9/64GR, 11/65GRu, <i>1/66</i> , 1/66WRu, 2/66WR, 1/67DS, 10/68DSu, 7/69GRt, 8/69GRu, 10/69GRt, 1/70RGu, 4/70GRt, 3/71GR, 4/72GRu, <i>Sold 6/72</i> .
43	MXX343	8208	6387	44862	26/11/53.	12/53EP, 3/57, 3/57EP, 7/58REu, <i>Sold 5/61</i> .
44	MXX344	8209	6390	44865	26/11/53.	12/53EP, 5/57, 5/57EP, 11/57HG, 10/60REu, 2/61AWs, 2/61NXs, 3/61NXu, 4/61EP, 1/62REu, <i>4/62</i> , 4/62DS, 10/64HG, 8/66HGu, 9/66HFu, <i>Sold 3/68</i> .
45	MXX345	8210	6388	44868	26/11/53.	12/53NF, 11/54NFu, 3/55DS, 5/55NF, 2/56DS, <i>10/57</i> , 10/57RGu, 11/57DS, <i>12/62</i> , 12/62DS, 2/63WRu, 3/63HG, 3/65RGs, 4/69RGu, <i>Sold 4/71</i> .
46	MXX346	8211	6391	44874	26/11/53.	12/53NF, <i>6/57</i> , 6/57NF, <i>6/62</i> , 6/62NF, 2/67NFu, <i>Sold 3/68</i> .
47	MXX347	8212	6392	44893	27/11/53.	12/53NF, 10/55CM, 3/57, 3/57CM, 1/60RGu, <i>4/62</i> , 4/62HDs, 5/62EG, 9/62NF, 2/66NFu, 9/66RGu, <i>Sold 6/67</i> .
48	MXX348	8213	6393	44920	26/11/53.	12/53NF, <i>8/57</i> , 8/57NF, <i>10/62</i> , 10/62SAu, 11/62SA, 1/63LH, 2/63LHu, 4/63RGs, 6/63RGu, <i>Sold 12/63</i> .
49	MXX349	8214	6394	44923	27/11/53.	12/53NF, <i>4/57</i> , 4/57NF, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 5/61</i> .
50	MXX350	8215	6402	44935	9/12/53.	12/53MA, <i>5/57</i> , 5/57MA, <i>3/62</i> , 3/62MA, 4/62GR, 12/62HG, 3/63HGu, 4/63AWs, 3/67AWu, 8/67NFu, <i>Sold 8/68</i> .
51	MXX351	8216	6395	44939	27/11/53.	12/53NF, <i>5/57</i> , 5/57NF, 8/59CM, 10/59RGu, 2/60CY, 9/60RGu, 11/60NXs, 2/61NXu, 3/61NFu, 7/61MAu, 10/61TG, 1/62Ma, 10/62HH, 10/65HHu, 5/66GRu, <i>Sold 1/68</i> .
52	MXX352	8217	6403	44943	11/12/53.	12/53MA, <i>8/57</i> , 8/57MA, 10/62SA, 11/62GRu, <i>2/63</i> , 2/63GRu, 4/63DG, 7/63RGs, 8/63RGu, 8/64DG, 1/67GYu, 6/68HG, 10/68HGu, 10/68HG, 12/68GYu, 3/69RGu, 4/69RGs, 8/70AWs, 8/72AWu, 5/73AWs, 4/74AWu, <i>Sold 8/74</i> .
53	MXX353	8218	6396	44947	27/11/53.	12/53NF, <i>6/57</i> , 6/57NF, <i>8/62</i> , 8/62NF, 5/67NFu, <i>Sold 8/68</i> .
54	MXX354	8219	6399	44952	2/12/53.	12/53NF, <i>8/57</i> , 8/57NF, <i>11/62</i> , 11/62GRu, 12/62GR, 3/63CY, 8/63GF, 1/64GY, 9/64HA, 1/65SA, 4/67GY, 5/67NF, 9/69NFu, <i>Sold 11/69</i> .

GS	Regn. No.	LT Body No.	ECW Body No.*	Guy Chassis No.	Date taken into stock	Allocation history (<i>italics denote overhaul date</i>)
55	MXX355	8220	6397	44957	9/12/53.	12/53MA, 3/57, 3/57MA, 9/61, 9/61MA, 10/62HH, 3/63GR, 2/65GRu, 8/65, 8/65DGu, 9/65DG, 1/67GYu, 2/67GR, 5/67HG, 10/68HGu, 12/68GYu, 9/69NF, 10/69NFu, 4/70RGt, 8/72RGu, <i>Sold 12/72.</i>
56	MXX356	8221	6401	44961	11/12/53.	12/53MA, 9/57, 9/57MA, 10/62SV, 11/62GYu, 1/63, 1/63MAu, 3/63GRu, 8/63RGs, 8/64RGu, 10/64DG, 1/67GYu, 2/67AMs, 7/67AMu, 7/67AWu, 8/67NFu, 12/68CMu, <i>Sold 9/69.</i>
57	MXX357	8222	6398	44965	2/12/53.	12/53NF, 9/57, 9/57NF, 12/62, 12/62RGu, 1/63CY, 3/63GR, 5/67NF, 1/68NFu, 12/68CMu, <i>Sold 5/69</i>
58	MXX358	8223	6400	44971	9/12/53.	12/53EG, 6/57, 6/57RGu, 8/57EG, 7/62, 7/62RGu, 8/62NF, 5/67NFu, <i>Sold 9/68.</i>
59	MXX359	8224	6404	44975	9/12/53.	12/53EG, 10/54EP, 6/57, 6/57EG, 8/62, 9/62EG, 5/64EGu, 8/64DG, 1/67Yu, <i>Sold 12/69.</i>
60	MXX360	8225	6405	44979	9/12/53.	12/53MA, 4/57, 4/57MA, 2/62, 3/62GRu, 4/62GR, 2/67GRu, <i>Sold 9/69.</i>
61	MXX361	8226	6406	44983	16/12/53.	12/53MA, 1/58, 1/58MA, 9/58Gt Yarmouth, 7/59GMu, 8/59GYu, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 4/61.</i>
62	MXX362	8227	6408	44985	16/12/53.	12/53MA, 8/54GR, 10/57, 10/57GR, 9/62MA, 10/62TGs, 11/62GRu, 5/63, 5/63GRu, 9/63TGs, 12/64DG, 1/67GYu, 2/67RGs, 2/73RGu, <i>Sold 10/73.</i>
63	MXX363	8228	6410	44988	18/12/53.	1/54HN, 2/58, 2/58LSu, 3/58HN, 9/58Gt Yarmouth, 7/59GMu, 8/59GYu, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 5/61.</i>
64	MXX364	8229	6409	44994	11/12/53.	12/53MA, 7/57, 7/57MA, 10/62, 10/62MAu, 11/62SV, 9/63SVu, 10/63HGu, 10/63SV, 3/64SVu, 4/64HG, 5/67HGu, 7/67SVu, 10/67HFu, 12/68GYu, 8/70GRu, <i>Sold 4/71</i>
65	MXX365	8230	6411	44995	11/12/53.	12/53MA, 11/57, 11/57MA, 12/62, 12/62MA, 1/63HG, 6/68HGu, 10/68WKu, <i>Sold 7/69.</i>
66	MXX366	8231	6413	44998	11/12/53.	12/53MA, 7/56GF, 6/57, 6/57GF, 9/62, 10/62NFu, 11/62NF, 5/67NFu, 7/67AMs, 12/67AMu, 1/68AMs, 7/69AMu, 8/69GRt, 10/69GRu, <i>Sold 4/71.</i>
67	MXX367	8232	6412	44999	16/12/53.	1/54GR, 2/54GRu, 5/54GR, 9/58, 9/58GR, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 5/63.</i>
68	MXX368	8233	6414	45018	18/12/53.	1/54TG, 4/58, 4/58TG, 10/58Gt Yarmouth, 7/59GMu, 8/59GYu, 4/60TG, 5/60TG, 7/60HH, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 3/63.</i>
69	MXX369	8234	6419	45019	23/12/53.	2/54GRu, 5/54GR, 8/54MA, 10/58, 10/58MA, 10/62GRu, 1/63GR, 2/63HGt, 3/63GRu, <i>Sold 5/63.</i>
70	MXX370	8235	6416	45029	18/12/53.	1/54TG, 7/56GR, 12/57, 12/57GR, 9/58Gt Yarmouth, 7/59GMu, 8/59GYu, 2/61REu, <i>Sold 4/61.</i>
71	MXX371	8236	6415	45030	18/12/53.	2/54GRu, 6/54Gr, 10/58, 10/58GR, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 3/65.</i>
72	MXX372	8237	6418	45031	23/12/53.	1/54GRu, 4/54EP, 5/54HG, 4/58, 4/58HG, 8/58Gt Yarmouth, 7/59GMu, 8/59GYu, 11/59SA, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 3/63.</i>
73	MXX373	8238	6417	45034	22/12/53.	2/54GRu, 4/54HG, 12/55EP, 1/56HG, 6/58, 7/58HG, 10/62GYu, 4/65HFu, <i>Sold 9/66.</i>
74	MXX374	8239	6424	45035	12/ 1/54.	1/54GRu, 4/54HG, 8/58, 9/58HG, 12/62REu, 6/63GYu, <i>Sold 9/63.</i>
75	MXX375	8240	6420	45039	?	2/54GRu, 6/54GR, 11/54GRu, 12/54GR, 1/56MA, 11/58, 11/58MA, 8/62GRu, 9/62MA, 10/62GRu, 11/62TGt, 9/63TG, <i>Sold 11/63.</i>
76	MXX376	8241	6421	45043	?	2/54GRu, 6/54GR, 12/58, 12/58GR, 6/62GY, 7/62REu, 10/62GF, 10/62DG, 11/62DG, <i>Sold 5/64.</i>
77	MXX377	8242	6423	45045	22/12/53.	1/54GRu, 7/54WR, 1/59, 1/59WR, 10/62WRu, 11/62RGu, <i>Sold 5/64.</i>
78	MXX378	8243	6425	45046	?	2/54GRu, 6/54GR, 2/59, 3/59DG, 5/61DG, 6/61HDs, 2/63GRt, 4/63GRu, <i>Sold 1/64.</i>
79	MXX379	8244	6422	45051	12/ 1/54.	1/54GRu, 8/54RGu, 11/54NF, 3/59, 4/59NF, 11/62NFu, <i>Sold 6/63.</i>
80	MXX380	8245	6427	45053	21/ 1/54.	4/54WKu, 5/54GRu, 7/54WR, 10/56HN, 3/58HG, 9/58GR, 2/59, 2/59GR, 5/59GRt, 11/59HH, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 10/63.</i>
81	MXX381	8246	6426	45055	14/ 1/54.	2/54GRu, 8/54RGu, 12/54CY, 1/59RGu, 4/59, 4/59RGu, 5/59CM, 10/62NFu, <i>Sold 10/64.</i>
82	MXX382	8247	6428	45061	14/ 1/54.	2/54GRu, 8/54RGu, 12/54CY, 8/55DS, 4/59, 4/59DS, 2/63DSu, 9/63WRu, 10/63DSu, Transferred to service vehicle fleet as 1311CD from 2/64.
83	MXX383	8248	6429	45063	12/ 1/54.	2/54GRu, 8/54RGu, 12/54CY, 5/55DS, 7/56HH, 5/59, 5/59HH, 10/62GRu, <i>Sold 12/63.</i>
84	MXX384	8249	6430	45066	21/ 1/54.	2/54GRu, 8/54RGu, 1/56LH, 3/59, 3/59LH, 6/60CY, 1/63CYu, 5/63WRu, 6/63RGu, <i>Sold 3/64.</i>

u – unlicensed.

t – Training Bus.

s – Staff Bus.

* – Chassis Nos. prefixed with NLLVP and suffixed with P.

Beyond the Witching Hour

When midnight has struck (and sometimes a bit before!) strange transformations come about and well known routes and terminals take on different aspects under cover of darkness



With the closure of Wandsworth (WD) from 11th July Ds from Sutton (A) reigned supreme on routes N68 and N88 replacing Ms. Showing an appropriate ultimate DMS2448 prepares to leave Canada House and the nocturnal crowds for its home base . . .

. . . in contrast M886 stands in the deserted forecourt of Stanmore Station on 4th October displaying a destination hardly associated with that point during the day. From 25th September the N59 was altered at both ends having been cut back from Watford to Stanmore, rerouted between Edgware and Golders Green and extended beyond Victoria to West Dulwich, not to mention being reallocated to Westbourne Park (X).
Both R. J. Waterhouse

T266 exudes brightness in Trafalgar Square as it copes with a nocturnal bus-jam in order to reach stop C outside the National Gallery. The N96 was the subject of a much needed upgrading to double-deck operation when Ts began at T on 6th June.

R. J. Waterhouse



As the sun rises the spell begins to wear off as T386 is caught near St. Pancras Station on 11th October. The N93 gained an allocation of one T from Chalk Farm (CF) from 26th September on Friday/Saturday nights.

R. J. Waterhouse



In full daylight buses in their nocturnal garb look a little out of place, and in any case the graffiti reappears. L87 rests at New Cross (NX) the morning after on 21st June.

Malcolm E. Papes



Deregulation and London Country

I – London Country North West by R. S. Godfrey

The splitting of London Country Bus Services on 7th September 1986 into four companies coupled with deregulation from 26th October 1986 has given rise to some interesting developments in the towns and villages surrounding Greater London. In this feature we shall review the effect of the Transport Act upon the areas which became the responsibility of London Country North West (LCNW). These include Slough/Windsor in the south, High Wycombe/Amersham/Chesham in the west and Hemel Hempstead/Watford/Borehamwood to the north and east.

Under the Transport Act 1985, operators had to register a list of routes, days of operation and associated frequencies they wished to run without county revenue support (i.e. the company's commercially viable network), whilst unregistered services and journeys were left to the appropriate County Councils to offer them for open tender. Forty-two days notice is required to be given to both the Traffic Commissioners and the County Council regarding cessation of a commercial service.

Former RB61 complete with 'cherished' registration and misspelt blind pulls away from Amersham Garage on a crisp spring morning earlier in the year. Heyfordian no longer operate this journey. R. S. Godfrey



Nightingale's Mercedes minibus was caught outside Datchet on 10th October, a day of fairly considerable flooding in the area. The vehicle boasts black on white blinds, and on this occasion no passengers. R. S. Godfrey



During the vehicle shortages of the late 'seventies Staines (ST) played host to Daimler Roadliners (not a type exactly renowned for its reliability) on loan from Bournemouth Corporation. They operated between 22nd November 1975 – 2nd October 1976 and during this period 56 was caught emerging from Slough Bus Station into the April sunlight



..... though more traditional types appeared on route 460 at the same time. RF655 waits patiently at Slough on the same day (10th April) as a passenger no doubt asks its driver why she has had to wait two hours for the 81 whilst all those 460s kept coming along! Both Eamonn Kentell





R. S. Godfrey

Former London Country routes 349 and 394 linking Tring and Chesham are now operated by Red Rover with Optares, and have been renumbered R49/94.165 passes a former LT stop at Cholesbury, the flag of which proclaims the identity of the new operator.
R. S. Godfrey



Reference to pages 19-20 of LBM54 will show what could be expected on the 349 and 394 in London Country days. Providing another such example BL20 leaves Chesham on a short working to Chartridge on what appears to be a journey largely patronised by schoolchildren. S. Fennell

In Slough and the surrounding areas, LCNW registered as commercially viable every route in the form of a network basically similar to that existing before the 1985 changes with the exception of route 68 between Slough and Northborough. Berkshire County Council awarded this service to Nightingale Travel of Gerrards Cross (using the revised number of 668).

However, in the summer of 1987, a minor reappraisal of the commercially registered network in this area saw the registrations of the entire Sunday network at Slough, with the southern half of the 460 (Slough-Wraysbury) being surrendered.

Berkshire, not renowned for its enthusiasm for subsidising public transport, tendered these services

(with the exception of route 444 which was tendered by Buckinghamshire County Council), resulting in LCNW retaining the Sunday services (at half the previous frequency), whilst Nightingale Travel gained the Slough – Wraysbury service under the revised 560 number. This operator is currently using a Leyland Cub midibus (C812 KBT) and a Mercedes minibus (C828 HRL) on its two services, the former vehicle having been acquired from West Yorkshire PTE.

A further item of note, although not directly affecting LCNW, took place earlier in the year, when an established independent operator, Imperial of Windsor, withdrew its Windsor and Dedworth local services which passed to the Berks Bucks Bus

Co (previously Alder Valley North) on a part commercial and part tendered basis from 25th January 1987.

Moving northwards into Buckinghamshire, LCNW fared relatively well considering that large sections of the network around Amersham and Chesham were left unregistered. An idea of what was to come under deregulation had already appeared in May 1986 when an afternoon journey from Chesham to Weedon Hill Cottages on the 359 passed to Prestwood Travel of Great Kingshill, using an ex-LCBS RS vehicle (see LBM 58). In the event Buckinghamshire was in favour of preserving the status quo with regard to both operators and services and LCNW retained the majority of their existing services.

Red Rover Buses of Aylesbury however took over operations on the rural 349/394 services (re-numbered 49 and 94 respectively) between Tring and Chesham using brand new Optare City Pacers. The rather odd sight of LT-style bus stop flags with Red Rover stickers applied can now be observed at some of the more remote points along the route. In spite of the loss of the 349/394, LCNW did gain a Tuesday and Friday contract operation, numbered 377, serving Beaconsfield, Holtspur and Knotty Green using a BN vehicle – although the Knotty Green loop ceased after operation on 22nd May 1987.

The long established Rover Bus Service of Chesham retained its service between Chesham and Hemel Hempstead via Latimer (route 51) or more often Lye Green (route 52), whilst Blunderbus of High Wycombe and Martins of Bourne End now work their pre-deregulation school services around Amersham as public routes.

Since 26th October 1986 LCNW has operated Buckinghamshire contract service 354 (basically the unregistered northern end of the 353 between Chesham and Berkhamsted). Certain Monday to Friday journeys were re-tendered from 26th January 1987 with Heyfordian of Upper Heyford obtaining the contract using one of their many ex-LCBS RB coaches based at Great Kingshill. The affair was a brief one, however, as Heyfordian surrendered the contract and the journeys reverted to LCNW under a new contract from 27th July 1987, although an additional afternoon journey was awarded to J & L International of Amersham from the same date.

In High Wycombe very little of note has occurred since deregulation. Route 326 was originally registered by Alder Valley North as a minibus operation. This proposal fell through and the previous

Rover Bus Service of Chesham was well established in the area long before deregulation was thought of, and it jointly operated route 316 with London Transport from 5th April 1944 until the latter withdrew in 1964. The Plaxton bodied Bedford picks up in Bovington on 10th October. R. S. Godfrey





AN806, looking smart with correctly set blinds, passes through Redbourne on former Luton and District route 46 linking Hemel Hempstead and Luton via Markyate. The vehicle originated with Greater Manchester Transport. LCNW



MBS16 operates Hemel Hempstead commercial minibus route M1 in Queens Square, Adeyfield. This route, interworked with the peak hour M2, has apparently been very successful. Whatever else one may think about these vehicles, it remains the case that they are notable for their simple but neat blinds and smart appearance. LCNW



This view of SBN260 at Grove Hill is of interest since it is comparatively rare for LCNW vehicles to show Hertfordshire contract boards. On re-tender the Monday to Saturday services on the H2, H4 and H5, along with the Sunday service on the H37 and H38, became minibus operated from 31st October. R. S. Godfrey

Leesway Coaches of Oxhey is now the proud operator of school service 833 and uses former DMS1604 for this purpose with blinds showing greater detail than that provided by its predecessor. The vehicle was caught in Prestwick Road, South Oxhey on 5th December 1986. R. S. Godfrey



The Bushey Belle is operated by Mullany's of Watford and follows a complicated configuration linking various parts of Bushey with the shops in the High Street and Watford. This Mercedes minibus is seen in Reddings Avenue, Bushey and looks smart in its white and blue livery. Barry J. Smith



Although this Premier Albanian Iveco shows Chipperfield it will actually terminate at Sarratt when it leaves Rickmansworth Station, where it is seen waiting on a fine October morning. Barry J. Smith



jointly operated service remains, with each operator running a non-competitive timetable, a situation not strictly in accordance with the intentions of the Transport Act!

In Watford and Hemel Hempstead, LCNW not only retained the majority of its unregistered operations, but also gained the Luton-Markyate-Hemel Hempstead 46 route from Luton and District and the Tuesday and Friday service on route 212 from Elstree Aerodrome to Watford previously operated by Mullany's Coaches of Watford. LCNW also regained journeys on route 319 operated by Premier Albanian of Watford linking Bucks Hill with Watford after only twelve months' operation by the independent. A minor casualty was the loss of route 833 (Carpenders Park-Queens School/St Michaels School) to Leesway Coaches of Oxhey, upon which ex-LT DMS1604 has been a regular performer, complete with all three blind apertures in use! The service was recently re-tendered by Hertfordshire County Council but with no change of operator.

The comprehensive set of services provided by LCNW in these two towns has limited independent endeavours. Indeed, Premier Albanian lost its school contract 286 service linking Rickmansworth (Berry Lane) and Croxley Green (Manor Way) to LCNW from 8th September though this undertaking still operates the Tuesday and Thursday shopper service 318 running between Sarratt and Rickmansworth. On the other side of town Mullany's Coaches has been using a Mercedes minibus on the BB1 contract service (dubbed 'Bushey Belle') linking North Bushey and Bushey and, since 13th July 1987, North Bushey and Watford. Recent tenders awarded by Hertfordshire have seen Mullany's obtain from 26th October 1987 the afternoon LCNW 336 journey from Watford to Chorleywood (together with a new reciprocal journey in the morning) and a week later the LCNW 831 school route passed to the same operator.

9th February 1987 saw an event of greater note when C & S Travel of Hillingdon started running a commercial service between Uxbridge and Harefield thereby competing directly with LCNW's existing 347/8 services. An ex-Nottingham Fleetline was used at first, but the engine seized soon afterwards and the service is now run using a collection of coaches of varying ages. LCNW attempted to counter this first, and up to now, only commercial intrusion into its area, by reducing fares over the relevant section of the route and altering its timetable. More recently it has made an attempt to improve timekeeping on the 347/8 by terminating the service at Abbots Langley in lieu of Hemel Hempstead.

In the same area, a reappraisal of the Sunday commercial service operated by LCNW on route W4 saw Len Wright obtain the new tendered contract

from 12th July 1987 using new Leyland Lynxes. Whilst one appreciates that there is little love lost between competing operators, the snipping off of the Sunday portion of the W4 timetable panels by LCNW was probably not what the Transport Minister envisaged when the Act was first drawn up!

Revisions made from 5th September 1987 saw further reductions to the commercial network in Watford which highlighted the intriguing policy of Hertfordshire towards deregulation. These changes included the reduction in the commercial frequency between peaks on routes W1/2 between Garston/Kingswood and Watford from four to three buses per hour. Since Hertfordshire's current practice is to restore frequencies to the same level as that prevailing before deregulation, they therefore demanded the restoration of a fifteen minute service on these routes and introduced one tendered journey per hour to maintain the desired level of service. Buses to Watford now depart from Kingswood at 04, 14, 24 and 44 minutes past the hour. Whilst this may be good news for the passengers concerned, the newly introduced tendered journey takes passengers away from the commercial journeys registered by LCNW, resulting in these latter journeys becoming less profitable. The long term effect of this will, no doubt, be further reductions to the commercial frequency until eventually the whole service is operated under contract by Hertfordshire and subsidised by local ratepayers. It is interesting to note that had Slough been in Hertfordshire, its new Sunday frequencies would conceivably be double those regarded as adequate by Berkshire. Other aspects of Hertfordshire's policy will be examined when London Country North East (LCNE) is featured in a later article.

More mundane happenings that occurred at the same time included the acquisition by LCNW of the contract operations on LCNE school routes 827/8 from Kinsbourne Green to Nicholas Breakspear and Townsend Schools in St. Albans. Rover Bus Service obtained the 818 contract service from LCNW which was, prior to deregulation, one of the many school journeys on route 319.

The last area to be considered is that lying to the north of Hemel Hempstead. The 317 and 387 services had already been lost in January 1985 to Tates - B & B of Potten End and Red Rover respectively, before LCNW came into being. Tates - B & B is currently operating on ex-West Yorkshire Road Car Bristol RELL6L (OWT 775M) on what has now become the 30/31 service between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead via Gaddesden or Nettleden respectively.

The only service initially lost in this area upon deregulation was the single school journey each way on route 273, between Tring Lodge and St. Thomas More School in Berkhamsted, which passed over to

C & S (it stands for 'Comfort & Security') Travel uses this Plaxton bodied Ford on its commercial service between Haresfield and Uxbridge. VRY 732S is seen in the latter place on the 10th April. R. J. Waterhouse



Just to remind you of how things used to be on the 347, RT3752 leaves Hemel Hempstead in 1975. This vehicle was notable for the fact that it was the last London Country RT to be overhauled by Aldenham and the only RT to be painted in the then new Company colours of Lincoln Green and yellow.

Eamonn Kentell



Routemaster operation came to an end on the 347/A on 2nd September 1978 RMC1481 was photographed in Uxbridge in 1976. Eamonn Kentell





In its blue and white livery this ex-West Yorkshire Road Car Bristol RELL6L of Tates-B&B Service is seen waiting in Hemel Hempstead Bus Station on 24th June. Although there can be no question about the Hertfordshire contract, the numbers (30/31) allocated by the Council to B&B's Berkhamstead - Hemel Hempstead service are never, so far as is known, shown on vehicles. R. S. Godfrey



Len Wright uses his new Lynxes, intended for LRT 81, on the Sunday contract service on LCNW W4. D753 DLO speeds down St. Albans Road, Watford on 26th July. R. J. Waterhouse

G & A Smiths Coaches of Wigginton, although a new contract award from 27th April 1987 enabled LCNW to regain this service.

Chiltern Ramblers Bus 327 was won this summer on tender from LCNW by Red Rover which renumbered it as route 29. The Sunday service on Green Line route 768 between Hemel Hempstead and Aylesbury passed on tender to Marshall's

Coaches of Leighton Buzzard as route 502 from 26th July 1987, and connects at Hemel Hempstead with existing LCNW routes 501, 758 and 759. Publicity for this change of operators was non-existent as the tender was awarded by Hertfordshire only five days before the revised schedules were due to commence. The lateness in some tender awards by this authority caused initial problems for LCNW upon deregula-



Red Rover Optare 165 carries a good load on 2nd August as it crosses the Grand Union Canal at Northchurch on route R29, the successor to LCNW's Chiltern Rambler 327.
R. S. Godfrey



Although there is nothing to show where this Ford operated by Marshalls of Leighton Buzzard is bound for on 2nd August at Hemel Hempstead Bus Station, the Volvo currently used on its contract route 502 does in fact display a destination board. This route is the Sunday version of Green Line 768.
R. S. Godfrey

tion, as it was not known how many drivers would be required.

One unusual development on 27th July 1987 saw express route 508 converted from a Hertfordshire contract operation to a LCNW commercial operation.

Although it could hardly be said that any major commercial challenge has been mounted against LCNW, the company has nevertheless coped with deregulation without any major problems and has retained its basic network substantially unscathed. Finally may I acknowledge the kind assistance of LCNW and David Stewart in the preparation of this article.

Loughton Update

Apart from 235s the Woodford/Loughton area no longer sees red London buses, whereas until May last year it saw virtually nothing but. Arrival at Loughton Station is these days quite a colourful experience. The following selection shows something of what the area has currently on offer.



From 16th August the section of the 250 previously operated by Sampsons between Loughton Station and South Woodford was taken over by Cullinans and renumbered 249. The service is normally operated by a couple of Bristol RESL6Ls with Marshall Camagna Two B45F bodies ex-Southdown, one of which is seen near its destination in August. It is not unheard of for a crew-operated minibus to appear on this service. Ramon Hefford



On the same date West's introduced Monday to Saturday service 204 between Loughton Station and Debden Broadway to cover the withdrawal of half the service on Eastern National route 20 north of Loughton Station and to provide a guaranteed service within Essex in the light of frequent cancellations on the 20 and 167. Former Eastern Counties Leyland National LN557 was photographed at Loughton in August. Ramon Hefford



Double-deckers made a welcome return to route 179 with its transfer to Grey-Green from 17th October, although as often as not Leyland Lynxes are the order of the day. At the same time the 179A was taken over by this operator and re-numbered 379. Former Greater Manchester Fleetline 496 in the Grey-Green fleet has Northern Counties bodywork and is seen off-loading in Barking on the first day.

..... The Grey-Green operation is however mainly in the hands of Leyland Lynxes in orange, white and brown livery, represented here by 888 in Woodford Avenue, Gants Hill. Both R. J. Waterhouse



On Sundays Eastern National reverses the allocation for routes 20, 275 and 206 with the result that Leyland Nationals appear on the first two routes and VRs on the 206, this being the first time that double-deckers have been used on this particular route. Walthamstow Central Station is the location of 3124 on 21st June.

Malcolm E. Papes



Letter to the Editor

The Overground Story

Sir,

I very much enjoyed D W K Jones' article on Overground in LBM61. It is always pleasant to read a bus history that does not have an LGOC bias and this was no exception. Inevitably some errors have crept in, and in the interests of historical accuracy may I make the following points?

I doubt very much whether Overground introduced the number 284 to the Hadley Highstone-Victoria route in May 1924 as implied by the author. The London Traffic Act was not passed until 7th August 1924, and it is unlikely that any fine detail work, such as allocating route numbers, had been undertaken by that date. As the article states, the Commissioner of Police allocated the number 284 on 6th October; the first List of Approved Routes was not published until November. Mr Jones writes about the application of '4' to the Muswell Hill route: even so it seems improbable that Mr Dangerfield chose the number 284 when no number above 199 had ever been used in London at that time. What then was the correct number of the Hadley route before the London Traffic Act?

I would like to correct the caption to the photo of the ST on page 34 of the article. I am all in favour of extended captions to tell a story, but care must be taken to avoid squeezing out the facts! The caption implies that the diversion of the 135 via Finchley took place at the same time as the change of terminal to New Barnet Station. This was not so: the latter event was in March 1937, the former not until January 1938. Also, the bus is going to Pimlico, and this was yet another alteration, one month later. In fact the first Pimlico terminus was at Grosvenor Road, and then Chichester Street from April 1938. The 135 had just twenty five months' stability before becoming a war victim.

Yours faithfully,

E Relton, Ilford, Essex

D W K Jones comments:

I cannot recall any other number than '284' appearing on an Overground vehicle from the start. That is not to say that there was no other; but I lived on the route and recall black on white '284', some examples having 'North London Assoc' above or below. The '284' was smaller than the '284A' later adopted and resembled the plaques used as route numbers midway along the upper-deck rails. What other number would have been appropriate? 27 and 127 were used by some, but the Overground route had less affinity with this route than others which penetrated to Hadley Highstone.

On page 33, incidentally, the registration of Birch Dennis GU 6436 was incorrectly printed as GU 6463. On page 14 the photograph of the Northern Straker-Squire should have been attributed to me and on page 16 the Dennis XW 5379 should have been attributed to W Noel Jackson.

OBITUARY

ERNEST MASTERMAN, whose photographs have graced many historical features in LBM, died earlier this year following a stroke at Easter. He had retired to Holt in Norfolk for some years but had been an active enthusiast (especially for the London scene) for most of the century. In 1929 he was one of a handful instrumental in founding the Omnibus Society, the longest established of societies for enthusiasts. He was taking good quality photographs from at least the early 'twenties until the War, and often said how eccentric he felt leaping into the road with bulky camera in those far off days. Fortunately his widow Peggy, to whom we offer our condolences, values the contribution he made to recording the earlier days, and his efforts should still be available to give pleasure and instruction to modern collectors.

M.E.P.

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