

TRANSPIRE

The Chesterfield Bus Society

NEWS SHEET No. 273

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The Little Operators of Brimington (Wetton and Doughty)

Brimington bus and coach operator notes

Dennis Vickers

Extracts from *Transpire New Sheets* 273 (21 July 2021 - pp. 8 - 12) and 271 (31 March 2021 - p. 4) relating to Brimington based Wetton's and Doughty's bus operations, both by Dennis Vickers.

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THE LITTLE OPERATORS OF BRIMINGTON

F. H. Doughty 1913 – 1959

In our March 2021 news sheet we mentioned the local bus operator of F. H. Doughty of Brimington, and are delighted that additional information has come in, giving a further insight into this interesting Chesterfield independent.

From a PSV Circle fleet list it would appear that their first bus was bought as early as 1913, this being R 2487, a 29 seater built by British Ensign. The second bus, again bought new, was of the same make and size but did not come until 1920, some seven years later. The fleet now began to expand with approx. a further eight buses being added between these first two and 1929 without any apparent withdrawals. All buses except one were bought new, and most served their whole lives with Doughty's before going for scrap, some giving over twenty years service. The only second hand acquisition was YG 7524 which had been new to Whiteley of Maltby in 1934, then via East Midland to Arthur Heeley of New Tupton before coming to Doughty's in 1948 and remaining for just 15 months, probably a stop-gap until further new buses could be added in 1949.

Two buses were taken by the War Department in 1940, Leyland Tiger CRA 758 and Leyland Cub DRB 793. The first 'disappeared', presumably a war victim, but the Cub returned to serve another operator until 1954. Because of the difficulties in obtaining further new buses immediately after the war, Leyland Tigers RA 8606 and RB 1842 received new Reeve and Kenning C32R bodies in 1947 and 1948, extending their lives to 24 and 23 years, and 1935 Leyland Lion BRA 143 was rebuilt to B32R by Reeve and Kenning after the war and it was still in the fleet in 1959. In December 1958 ownership of the company was transferred from F.H. Doughty to E.M.N. Doughty and E.J.K. Hopkinson.

To my knowledge, Doughty's only operated one bus route, this being from Brimington village (does anyone know the route here which probably went through some of the terraced back streets?) to Felkin Street in Chesterfield Town Centre. The remains of this street are currently alongside the Chesterfield Hotel at the railway station end of the footbridge over the Inner Relief Road. Did it extend further before this new road was built? An August 1932 booklet shows it running to the following timetable –

Depart Brimington

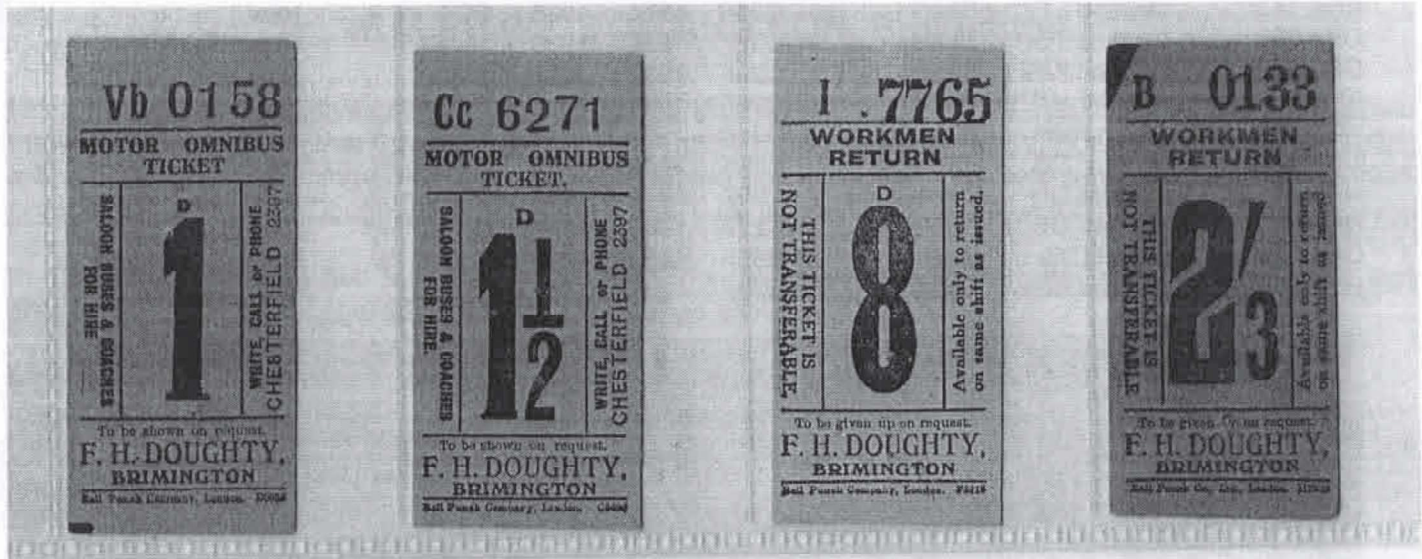
Monday to Friday : 8.30am & every 30 minutes until 10.30pm plus, on Mondays only every 15 minutes after 4.30pm and on Fridays only every 15 minutes between 4.30pm and 7.30pm
 Saturday : 8.30am & every 30 minutes until 12noon, then every 15 minutes until 11.00pm
 Sunday : 2.00pm & every 30 minutes until 5.30pm, then every 15 minutes until 10.30pm

Depart Chesterfield, Felkin Street

Monday to Friday : 8.45am & every 30 minutes until 10.45pm plus, on Mondays only every 15 minutes after 4.45pm and on Fridays only every 15 minutes between 4.45pm and 7.45pm
 Saturday : 8.45am & every 30 minutes until 12.15pm, then every 15 minutes until 11.15pm
 Sunday : 2.15pm & every 30 minutes until 5.45pm then every 15 minutes until 10.45pm

From this it would appear that just one bus would be required to operate the 30 minute frequency and two when on the 15 minute schedule. It is interesting that it started fairly late in the morning and that the highest frequency was in the evening, so it would appear to have mainly run for shoppers and evening entertainment. I guess that most of the 'working men' in Brimington would be on shift work, either in collieries or factories. As mentioned in my previous notes I suspect that Doughty's catered for them by providing contract services to the pits and the works, thus the higher value bus tickets in my collection. Almost all the fleet was coach seated and I can imagine day excursions to the coast being offered at weekends.

David Kelly's grandma recalls riding on Doughty's bus to and from town, and that it was a friendly route with the drivers knowing the regular passengers. To the end they issued Bell Punch tickets and a few samples are reproduced below.



The 1d and 1½d tickets would have been used on the local Chesterfield to Brimington bus service. The 8d and 2/3d tickets are Workmen Returns and would have been issued on contract services – note the wording on these two tickets “Available only to return on same shift as issued”

Both Chesterfield Transport and East Midland also linked the Town Centre with Brimington and Doughty's eventually sold out to Chesterfield Transport in November 1959, who acquired all six remaining vehicles. The oldest, 1935 Leyland Lion BRA 143, was probably used for a few months and then sold in March 1960, and it ended its life with an unidentified showman. Albion ORA 391 and Bedford SB PRB 486 became nos. 51 and 52 in the Chesterfield Corporation fleet. Both were sold in January 1964, 51 going to R.D. Cox of Bilston and is last reported as being still there, but derelict, in 1967. 52 was operated by Luxicoaches of Borrowash until 1968 and finished its life at Cedric Garage, Wivenhoe, Essex.

The three Bedford OB's were not operated by Chesterfield Transport, going to Kirkby, dealer. MRA 602 was operated by Furness of High Green before ending with a contractor in Barnsley. NRB 891 went to Stoke-on-Trent Welfare Services, being still there in 1973. NNU 461 became well known locally for she operated with Websters of Hognaston until 1971 on their Ashbourne and Matlock area services. She was then bought by Charlie Swallow, a Sheffield Transport inspector, for use on outings for Sheffield enthusiasts visiting a number of rallies, plus the end of Bradford trolleybuses in 1972, and culminating in a trip, driven by Dennis Vickers, to film the trams in Brussels, Belgium. Charlie never intended to preserve NNU, and sold her in 1974 to the Norwich Transport Group. The registration was later transferred to a Vauxhall private car LRR 101K and, in December 1975, NNU was re-registered YVG 368. She appears to have been scrapped shortly afterwards.

In the preparation of this article I am grateful to Greg Lilleker and his notes in Transpire news sheet no. 9, to Andrew Bagshaw for the loan of PSV Circle histories, and to Phil Grocock who recommended that I buy an August 1932 local timetable booklet from ebay.

F. H. Doughty Full Fleet List

| Registration | Chassis | Body | Seats | New | Aqrd | W'drawn | Previous Owner |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-------|------|------|---------|----------------|
| R 2487 | British Ensign | ? | 29 | 1913 | 1913 | 1930 | New |
| R 2567 | British Ensign | ? | 29 | 1920 | 1920 | 1932 | New |
| R 3270 | AEC | ? | 28 | 1921 | 1921 | 1931 | New |
| NU 761 | Karrier | ? | 14 | 1923 | 1923 | ? | New |
| RA 1268 | Leyland PLSC1 | Leyland | B31F | 1926 | 1926 | 1948 | New |
| RA 1961 | Leyland PLSC1 | Leyland | B31F | 1927 | 1927 | 1944 | New |
| RA 3075 | Leyland PLC1 | Leyland | B26F | 1927 | 1927 | 1942 | New |
| RA 6133 | Leyland PLC1 | Reeve & Kenning | B26F | 1928 | 1928 | 1948 | New |
| RA 6608 | GMC T20 | ? | B20 | 1928 | 1928 | 1939 | New |
| RA 8114 | Chevrolet | ? | B14 | 1929 | 1929 | 1937 | New |
| RA 8606 | Leyland TS2 | United | C31F | 1929 | 1929 | 1953 | New |
| RB 1842 | Leyland TS2 | United | C31F | 1930 | 1930 | 1953 | New |
| ? | Minerva | United | C— | 1930 | 1930 | ? | New |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|---------|------|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| RB 5886 | Bedford WHB | ? | C14F | 1932 | 1932 | 1952 | New |
| BRA 143 | Leyland LT7 | Beadle | C32R | 1935 | 1935 | CCT | New |
| CRA 758 | Leyland TS7 | Beadle | C32F | 1936 | 1936 | 1940 | New |
| DRB 793 | Leyland KPZ1 | Beadle | C20F | 1937 | 1937 | 1940 | New |
| ERB 850 | Bedford WTB | Duple | C26F | 1938 | 1938 | 1942 | New |
| YG 7524 | Albion PW67 | Plaxton | C35R | 1934 | 1948 | 1949 | A. Heeley, New Tupton |
| MRA 602 | Bedford OB | Duple | C29F | 1948 | 1948 | CCT | New |
| NNU 461 | Bedford OB | Duple | C29F | 1949 | 1949 | CCT | New |
| NRB 891 | Bedford OB | Duple | C29F | 1949 | 1949 | CCT | New |
| ORA 391 | Albion CX9 | Street | C35F | 1950 | 1950 | CCT | New |
| PRB 486 | Bedford SB | Duple | C33F | 1951 | 1951 | CCT | New |



After Chesterfield Transport took over Doughty's, Bedford OB NNU 461 passed to Websters of Hognaston from 1959 to 1971. It was then bought by enthusiasts in Sheffield before sale to a transport group in Norwich in 1974.



A couple of rather poor shots taken on a Polaroid camera of NNU 461 in the Grand Plaza and near our hotel in Brussels, Belgium.

RALPH WETTON AND SON, Brimington

I know a lot less about this concern which also operated from Brimington, as their fleet list does not appear in a PSV Circle history that I own. However the August 1932 timetable booklet does show them as running a bus service from Brimington Common to Chesterfield Town Centre which also terminated in Felkin Street, presumably alongside Doughty's bus, though it would be interesting to know which route was followed.

In 1932 this route was not daily, but ran only on Monday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, and it was only on Saturday that it operated all day. The timings were as follows –

Mondays

Depart Brimington Common at 2.00pm and every hour until 10.00pm
Depart Chesterfield Felkin Street at 2.30pm, 3.45, 5.30, 6.30, 7.30, 8.45, 9.30, 10.10pm

Wednesdays

Just one journey from Brimington Common at 6.00pm, returning from Town at 9.00pm

Saturdays

Depart Brimington Common at 9.30am, 10.30, 1.15pm, 2.00 & hourly until 8.00, 8.50 & 9.40pm
Depart Chesterfield Felkin Street at 10.00am, 11.00, 1.45pm, 2.30 & hourly until 8.30, 9.15, 10.00, 10.30 & 11.00pm

Sundays

Just 3 journeys from Brimington Common at 6.00pm, 9.00 & 10.00pm & 2 journeys from Town at 9.30 & 10.20pm

Thus it seems to have been provided for afternoon market day shoppers on Mondays and Saturdays and for evening entertainment, probably at the Town Centre cinemas. I suspect the route may have been more regular during the boom period for buses after World War II. It would appear that only one bus was required for the above service but, with a fleet strength of up to five, I assume that again a number of colliery and works contracts were operated.

The only fleet details I have are for buses owned in 1952, and for two vehicles that passed from Wetton to Hulleys after the War. VO 5457 had a very chequered history being new to Retford Coachways in 1931 with a Taylor B32F body. It passed to East Midland in 1935 where, in 1939, it was fitted with a 1935 Leyland B35R body from another East Midland bus. In 1945 it was acquired by Wetton but, in 1946, it was again sold on to Hulleys. VO 5603 had a less adventurous life, simply being new to East Midland in 1931, passing to Wetton in 1945 and onwards to Hulleys in 1948. The other buses listed below were in the fleet in 1952 and it is interesting that all were bought second-hand, unlike the Doughty fleet where all but one were purchased new.

It is said that Wetton's were taken over in 1964 jointly by Chesterfield Corporation and East Midland. I can find no record of any of their buses in the Chesterfield Transport fleet, so did East Midland acquire any Wetton vehicles or were they all deemed to be too old to operate? Reproduced below is the only Wetton's bus ticket that I possess, and the only known photograph which is of VO 5457 with Hulleys (which was also shown in our March issue). Any additional information would be much appreciated.

Once again I am grateful to Greg Lilleker and his notes in Transpire news sheet no. 9.

Ralph Wetton and Son. Partial Fleet List

| Registration | Classis | Body | Seats | New | Acqrd | W'drwn | Previous Owner |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------|------|-------|--------|-----------------------|
| VO 5457 | AEC Regal | Leyland (1935) | B35R | 1931 | 1945 | 1946 | East Midland M.S. |
| VO 5603 | AEC Regal | Brush | B32F | 1931 | 1945 | 1948 | East Midland M.S. |
| BTE 892 | Bedford WTB | Duple Vista | C26F | 1937 | 1951 | | Williamson, Leicester |
| MDH 681 | Bedford OB | Duple Vista | C29F | 1949 | 1950 | | Pearson, Walsall |
| MWB 497 | Bedford OB | Duple Vista | C29F | 1950 | 1951 | | Littlewood, Sheffield |
| MNA 180 | Bedford SB | Duple Vega | C33F | 1951 | 1951 | | Boyd, Manchester |
| NWB 502 | Bedford SB | Plaxton | C33F | 1951 | 1951 | | Littlewood, Sheffield |



POSTSCRIPT TO HULLEYS

Including a Fleet List of the first 100 years



On Thursday 29th April, the actual 100th birthday date of Hulleys, Chesterfield PD2 225 and Chesterfield/Whites Leopard 306 were used on duplicate journeys on service 170. 225 appears at Baslow, Nether End with one of Hulleys last remaining Dennis Darts, while 306 crosses the bridge over the River Wye in Bakewell.

Photos : IAN MOORCROFT

THE COLOURS OF FIRST SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S LOCAL IDENTITIES



ABOVE: First South Yorkshire vehicles in the new livery are starting to become more numerous, although there are many small variations to the branding carried on the stripe to the rear. 'Full Monty' branded 34782 (YN08 NLZ) is seen departing Meadowhall on 20th May 2021, working service X10 to Salisbury Road.

BELOW: Doncaster red liveried buses appear in Sheffield on service X78 - as seen here as 36226 (BD12 TBO) demonstrates, as it heads towards Sheffield at Meadowhall on 20th May 2021.

Photos: DAVID ROBINSON



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Since making these arrangements we have learned that the Bus Event in Gaydon, Warwickshire, is also take place on the same date. However the two events are very different in character and we are delighted that a good number of entries have already been received for our Rowsley rally.

We are grateful to Phillip Grocock who is keeping the Gathering's excellent website up-to-date and, once again, entrants are able to book in their bus on-line. To keep informed of all the arrangements please do visit www.peakparkrally.wordpress.com.

Next News Sheet

The next News Sheet (No. 272) will be published on 26th May 2021

Transpire Website

Phil Grocock, as always, is keeping the Transpire website updated and passes any notes and queries to the appropriate officer, and we are grateful to Phil for his help in this way. To visit our website please visit www.transpirebus.org.

Preservation of former Chesterfield Transport, East Midland Motor Services Ltd. and Hulley's Vehicles

As with the rest of us, our preserved buses are all currently in 'lock-down' but most are visited occasionally to ensure they can be in action again when they can return to the road. We hope to have more optimistic news in our next news sheet.

F. H. DOUGHTY, BRIMINGTON

During the winter period I have begun the marathon task of sorting out my vast collection of pre-decimal bus tickets, and have found some punch tickets from F. H. Doughty of Brimington. I believe that this small operator housed his buses in a yard reached through a narrow driveway between the shops at Brimington, where there is now a car repair workshops. David's grandma tells of riding on 'Doughty's old buses' from her Brimington home to town.

However, in addition to the single tickets of a few pence, there are also workman's return tickets of higher values of up to 2 shillings and 3 pence, which would be far higher than the return fare to town, and thus I assume that Doughty's operated longer routes also, and suspect that these would be to local collieries. I did have the honour of driving one of Doughty's buses, though did not realise it at the time. A colleague, Charlie Swallow, bought Bedford OB NNU 461 from Websters of Hognaston for a holiday to Brussels, Belgium in 1972. This bus had been new to Doughty's in May 1949.

A 1962 Chesterfield Transport fleet list, published in news sheet no. 35, shows the following two buses as being acquired from Doughty's when they purchased the company in 1960 –

| | | | | | |
|----|---------|------|---------------|--------|------|
| 51 | ORA 391 | 1950 | Albion Victor | Street | C35F |
| 52 | PRB 486 | 1951 | Bedford SB | Duple | C33F |

Every ticket has the following inscription on the back – "No liability can be accepted that the published starting and arrival times of the vehicles will be maintained. F. H. Doughty". I wonder just how reliable were Doughty's buses?

We would be very interested to hear more details of this local company and its operations.

HULLEYS CENTENARY

The 100th birthday of the purchase of Hulleys' first bus falls on 29th April 2021, and the following notes record the amazing history of this well loved concern. The story will be concluded in our May issue.