

West Bridgford U. D. C.



1914 - 1968

ORR 140

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Cover Illustration: No. 21 (ORR140) is a 1954 AEC Regent III with Willowbrook 55-seat lowbridge bodywork, now in preservation. (LTHL collection).

First Published 2015 by the Local Transport History Library. Second Edition 2018.

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West Bridgford was a small community that lay to the south of Nottingham, across the River Trent. Although Nottingham Corporation operated a tramway system it did not reach as far as West Bridgford, but stopped just short on the city side of the Trent Bridge. As a result the town council decided to promote a Bill in Parliament, which would give them powers to operate motorbuses to connect with the Nottingham tramway system, and, after overcoming objections, the Bill was passed on 14th July 1913.

Some six months later, on the 28th January 1914, the first service commenced. Five Dennis chassis had been purchased (Nos. 1-5), with Dodson open-top 33-seat bodies, and the first vehicle was put to work connecting the Nottingham Corporation trams at Trent Bridge to Julian Road, via Radcliffe Road and Trent Boulevard. Two days later, on the 30th January 1914, a second service between Trent Bridge and Caernarvon Road, via Musters Road and Melton Road was opened, and, on the 14th February 1914, a third service from the Three Lamps on North Road, via Loughborough Road to Trent Bridge was inaugurated. On the 11th May 1914 a further service from the Trent Bridge to Trevelyan Road commenced, but just over one month later, the service to the Three Lamps was discontinued due to lack of patronage.

Two months later the Great War of 1914-1918 broke out and by November of that year all of West Bridgford's chassis had been impressed by the War Department, leaving the little UDC with no bus fleet. The Council learned that chain-driven vehicles were not being commandeered by the War Office, and so five such chassis were purchased

from Alldays & Onions and fitted with the Dodson bodies and registrations that had been retained from the original Dennis chassis, becoming the new numbers 1-5. As the vehicles arrived so the services were resumed, with the Trent Boulevard service being the first on the 8th February 1915.

In October 1915 a sixth vehicle, another Alldays & Onions chain-driven chassis was delivered, but due to a revision of routes was virtually redundant, since it took only five of the buses to work the services. As a result the Loughborough Road route was re-introduced in December to provide work for the extra vehicle, but by 1917 had been abandoned again. This time a diversion from the Caernarvon Road route via Loughborough Road was introduced on alternate journeys.

Following the end of the War, the existing fleet was renovated and repainted but was still inadequate for the increase in passenger numbers. An order was placed for two Straker-Squire double-deckers for delivery, but such was the demand for new buses after the War that it was not until 1920 that they were finally delivered, by which time more buses had been ordered.

By 1925 West Bridgford was under attack from private operators, including Barton Brothers, who operated a service from private land in Nottingham to West Bridgford, which circumvented the stage carriage provisions. It did not involve a change of vehicles at Trent Bridge and was therefore more convenient for passengers. In time the Barton service began to affect the finances of both Nottingham and West Bridgford

Transport Departments, virtually forcing the two neighbouring authorities into joint running, which finally commenced on 18th March 1928 when the new joint service (No. 11) from the Greyfriar Gate terminus in Nottingham to Melton Road began. Numbered 11 to 15, the five joint services required each authority to provide fifteen buses, thirteen for service and two spares. West Bridgford had purchased ten vehicles in 1927-1928 in preparation, a mixture of ADC and AEC single-deck chassis, all of which sported Hall Lewis 32-seat dual entrance bodies.

During 1930 there were several changes to the joint routes; the terminus of the No. 11 service was moved to Valley Road and all the journeys via Loughborough Road were transferred to service 15, which had to be revised accordingly. Journeys dropped from the 15 route were covered by a new service No. 24, which ran along Bridgford Road and Musters Road, terminating at the Melton Road junction. All these service changes resulted in an increase in West Bridgford's takings and an agreement had to be reached with Nottingham Corporation Transport about dividing the revenue. Around this time it was found that the single-deckers purchased a few years earlier were becoming inadequate for the increase in passenger traffic and so a return to double-deckers was made and all subsequent orders (except for a solitary AEC Regal in 1947) were for double-deck vehicles, although in 1967 with passenger numbers falling, single-deckers once more made an appearance. The first new double-deckers were two ST-type AEC Regents (Nos. 18-19) with Ransomes H27/22R bodywork, delivered in 1930 with four more Brush-bodied AEC Regents (Nos. 20-23) arriving in 1932-33. In 1934 the first oil-engined vehicles arrived sporting Park Royal bodywork with

Birmingham-style straight staircases, which became the standard for all deliveries until 1949.

With the onset of World War II in 1939, services had to be curtailed, due to shortages of staff and fuel, most initially ceasing at 9.00 pm, but by 1940 the last bus was around 10.30pm to alleviate overcrowding. Works services introduced for the duration of the conflict included services from the LNER Station at Gedling to the Ministry of Supply at Rudlington, and to Ransomes and Marles factory at the quaintly named Bunny.

Following the end of the War, services slowly began to get back to normal, although restrictions continued until 1947 due to the demand for new buses. By this time the West Bridgford fleet was entirely double-deck and numbered 21 vehicles, some of which were loaned to Nottingham Corporation to meet the demands of increased postwar traffic.

The first single-deck vehicle for a number of years was purchased in 1947. It was an AEC Regal (No. 26) with Brush dual-purpose 35-seat bodywork, for use on a new service (No. 1), which, in the event, turned out to be poorly used and was drastically reduced in late 1949.

Early in the 1950's Nottingham Corporation began to build Clifton Estate on land between Ruddington, Clifton, Wilford and the River Trent in an area already served by Barton Brothers and South Notts. Since the only suitable access was via the Trent

Bridge and West Bridgford, the plans by Nottingham Corporation to run buses to serve the new estate were opposed by both existing operators and by West Bridgford UDC, through whose operating area the new route would pass. In the end, after a lengthy battle in the Traffic Courts, Nottingham won the right to operate around 50% of the journeys with South Notts and West Bridgford 25% each. The new estate could only be reached via a low railway bridge, necessitating the use of lowbridge double-deckers, and so West Bridgford arranged for two of the 1936 AEC Regents to be converted to lowbridge layout by Willowbrook in 1952, with a third in 1953.

In 1958 the Clifton Bridge was opened and Nottingham Corporation applied to run their share of the Clifton Estate routes over the new bridge, as did South Notts. When the Nottingham application was granted, but the South Notts application refused, the Company produced a joint timetable with West Bridgford UDC encouraging people to travel via Trent Bridge on the joint operators vehicles.

By 1960 West Bridgford was still an avid AEC customer, ordering more AEC Regents, this time the Mark V model, bodied by East Lancashire, who were to be favoured with all the remaining orders from West Bridgford. In 1962 a rear-engined Daimler demonstrator (7000HP) made an appearance, but the Council decided to remain loyal to the conventional front-engined double-decker.

Towards the end of the 1960's, in common with most operators, the small undertaking was experiencing a drop in the amount of people travelling by bus and three AEC Swift

single-deckers were ordered. The intention was to operate them as one-man vehicles in order to reduce operating costs, but the Transport Department was prevented from doing so by union pressure. In the end the Council decided to cut its losses and dispose of the undertaking, and it was eventually sold to Nottingham Corporation, the last West Bridgford UDC vehicles running on the night of Saturday 28th September 1968. The last service (No. 21) being operated at 11.05pm from South Parade to Alford Road by AEC Regent V No. 38, bringing to an end over 50 years of municipal operation by West Bridgford UDC.

Bibliography: West Bridgford UDC Passenger Transport Department, Alan Oxley, Robin Hood Publishing 2000; West Bridgford UDC, Roy Marshall, Buses No. 408 March 1989.

Bus Fleet List 1914-1968

This listing is in the format- Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

1914

1-5; AL3017-3021; Dennis; ? ; Dodson; O18/15RO

Withdrawn 1914 (Chassis impressed by War Department; bodies and registrations to new Nos. 1-5 in 1915).

1915

**1-5; AL3017-3021; Alldays & Onions; ? ; Dodson O18/15RO
6; AL4316; Alldays & Onions; ? ; Starey's & Woolley's; O18/15RO**

Withdrawn 1920 (1-5), 1921 (6).

1916

7; AL4656; Alldays & Onions; ? ; Starey's & Woolley's; O18/15RO

Withdrawn 1921.

1920

**8-9; AL7991-7992; Straker Squire; ? ; General Seating; O25/21RO
10; AL8921; Straker Squire; ? ; Straker Squire; O25/21RO**

No. 10 re-numbered 5 in 1926.

Withdrawn 1926 (9, 10[5]), 1927 (8).

1921

11; AL8922; Straker Squire; ? ; Straker Squire; O25/21RO

No. 11 re-numbered 6 in 1926.

Withdrawn 1926 (11[6]).



West Bridgford No. 7 (AL4656) was this 1916 Alldays & Onions with Starey's & Woolley's (of Nottingham) 33-seat double-deck bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1921. (LTHL collection).

1922

1; NN2615; Straker Squire; ? ; Straker Squire OL54RO
12; NN2353; Straker Squire; A6179; Straker Squire; OL54RO

No. 12 re-numbered 4 in 1926.
Withdrawn 1927 (1, 12[4]).

1923

2; NN6000; Straker Squire; A6329; Straker Squire; O52RO

Withdrawn 1928.

1924

3; NN7000; Straker Squire; ? ; Straker Squire; O52RO
7; NN9000; Straker Squire; ? ; Straker Squire; O52RO

Withdrawn 1927 (7), 1928 (3).

1926

**5-6; RR5201-5202; AEC 413; 413111/16; Northern Counties; B30R
9; RR5203; AEC 413; 413114; Northern Counties; B30R
10-11; RR3585-3586; AEC 409; 409034/33; Brush; H54RO**

Withdrawn 1933 (11), 1934 (5-6), 1936 (9-10).

1927

**8; RR5722; AEC 413; 413212; Northern Counties; B30R
12; RR7634; ADC 416A; 416406; Hall Lewis; B32D
14-16; RR7635-7637; ADC 416A; 416404-05/07; Hall Lewis; B32D**

Withdrawn 1936 (8), 1937 (12, 14, 16), 1938 (15).

1928

1; RR8112; ADC 416A; 416515; Hall Lewis; B32D
2-3; RR8715-8716; ADC 416A; 416752-53; Hall Lewis; B32D
4; RR8115; ADC 416A; 416516; Hall Lewis; B32D
7; RR8113; ADC 416A; 416517; Hall Lewis; B32D
17; RR9386; AEC 416; 416950; Hall Lewis; B32D

Withdrawn 1938 (7), 1939 (1-4, 17).

1930

18-19; VO3877-3878; AEC Regent; 661767-68; Ransomes; H27/22R

Withdrawn 1940 (18), 1947 (19).

1932

20-21; VO6818-6819; AEC Regent; 6611721-22; Brush; H28/24R

Withdrawn 1947 (20-21).

1933

22-23; VO9371-9372; AEC Regent; 6612057-58; Brush; H30/26R

Withdrawn 1948 (22-23).

1934

5-6; ARR831-832; AEC Regent; 06612770/69; Park Royal; H27/25R

Withdrawn 1949 (5-6).

1935

**11; BNN924; AEC Regent; 06613643; Park Royal; H31/25R
24; BNN925; AEC Regent; 06613644; Park Royal; H31/25R**

Withdrawn 1949 (11, 24).

1936

8-10; CRR91-93; AEC Regent; 06614384-86; Park Royal; H31/25R

Nos. 8-9 rebuilt by Willowbrook to L27/25R in 1952.
Withdrawn 1957 (8-10).

1937

12; DRR9; AEC Regent; 06615292; Park Royal; H31/25R
14; DRR10; AEC Regent; 06615293; Park Royal; H31/25R
16; DRR11; AEC Regent; 06615294; Park Royal; H31/25R

Withdrawn 1960 (12, 14), 1962 (16).

1938

7; ENN699; AEC Regent; 06616026; Park Royal; H31/25R
15; ENN700; AEC Regent; 06616027; Park Royal; H31/25R

Withdrawn 1962 (7), 1963 (15).



1938 AEC Regent with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork No. 15 (ENN700) gave 25 years of service before being withdrawn in 1963. (LTHL collection).

1939

1; FNN101; AEC Regent; 06616908; Park Royal; H31/25R
4; FNN102; AEC Regent; 06616909; Park Royal; H31/25R

No. 4 rebuilt by Willowbrook to L27/25R in 1953.
Withdrawn 1963 (1), 1965 (4).

1945

25; GNN410; Daimler CWA6; 12127; Brush; H30/26R

Withdrawn 1967.



No. 4 (FNN102) was a 1939 AEC Regent originally with Park Royal highbridge 56-seat bodywork, but seen here after it was rebuilt by Willowbrook with a lowbridge 52-seat body in 1953. (LTHL collection).

1947

2-3; HNN772-773; AEC Regent III; 09611681-82; Park Royal; H31/25R
17-20; HNN774-777; AEC Regent III; 09611683/1755-57; Park Royal;
H31/25R
26; HNN781; AEC Regal; 06625210; Brush; DP35F

Nos. 2-3, 17-18, 20 to Nottingham Corporation Transport (NCT) 9/68; re-numbered 168-169, 172-174 respectively.

No. 19 re-seated to H33/27R by 1962.

Withdrawn 1955 (26), 1962 (19).

1949

5-6; KAL684-685; AEC Regent III; 9612E4228-29; Park Royal; H31/25R
22-23; KAL686-687; AEC Regent III; 9612E4230-31; Park Royal; H31/25R

Nos. 5-6, 22-23 re-seated to H33/27R by 1963; to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 170-171, 175-176 respectively.



No. 26 (HNN781) was a 1947 AEC Regal with Brush dual-purpose 35-seat bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1955. (LTHL collection).



1949 AEC Regent III No. 22 (KAL686) with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork. It became Nottingham Corporation No. 175 in 1968. (LTHL collection).

1954

11; ORR139; AEC Regent III; 6812A086; Willowbrook; L27/28R
21; ORR140; AEC Regent III; 6812A087; Willowbrook; L27/28R

Nos. 11, 21 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 198-199 respectively.

1955

24; CCX777; Daimler CWA6; 12193; Duple; L27/28R
27; CCX779; Daimler CWA6; 12195; Duple; L27/28R
28-30; TRR951-953; AEC Regent V; MD3RV051-53; Park Royal; H33/28R

Nos. 24, 27 ex-Huddersfield JOC (Nos. 217, 219 respectively, both new 1945)

Nos. 28-30 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 274-276 respectively.

Withdrawn 1965 (27), 1967 (24).

1958

31-33; XVO329-331; AEC Regent V; MD2RA463-65; Reading; L31/28R

Nos. 31-33 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 200-202 respectively.



No. 29 (TRR952) was a 1955 AEC Regent V with Park Royal 61-seat bodywork. It passed to Nottingham Corporation in 1968 and re-numbered 275. (LTHL collection).

1960

34-35; 334-335GNN; AEC Regent V; 2D2RA942-43; East Lancs; H35/28R

Nos. 34-35 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 277-278 respectively.

1962

36; 136NAL; AEC Regent V; 2D2RA1142; East Lancs; H37/28R

38; 138NAL; AEC Regent V; 2D2RA1143; East Lancs; H37/28R

Nos. 36, 38 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 279-280 respectively.

1963

19; ACP421; AEC Regent III; 09611275; Park Royal; H33/26R

No. 19 ex-Halifax Corporation (No. 47, new 1945); received seats from former No. 19 (HNN776).

Withdrawn 1967.



Ex-Halifax Corporation 1945 AEC Regent III (ACP421) with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork was acquired in 1963 and numbered 19. The former No. 19 had been withdrawn in 1962 and the seats from this vehicle were fitted to ACP421. (LTHL collection).

1964

39-40; 639-640UVO; AEC Regent V; 2D2RA1511-12; East Lancs; H37/28R

Nos. 39-40 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 281-282 respectively.

1965

41-42; BRR241-42C; AEC Renown; 3B2RA185-86; East Lancs; H44/31F

Nos. 41-42 to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 393-394 respectively.

1967

43-45; NAL543-45F; AEC Swift; MP2R090-92; East Lancs; B46F

Nos. 43-45 originally carried registration nos. KRR243-245E when delivered but entered service as shown; to NCT 9/68; re-numbered 704-706 respectively.



In 1967 West Bridgford ordered 3 AEC Swift single-deckers, No. 44 (NAL544F) with East Lancs 46-seat bodywork is seen here en route to Clifton. It passed to Nottingham Corporation in 1968 as their No. 705. (LTHL collection).

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Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.
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