

**HOWARD. Percival Charles**  
**later P C Howard Ltd (496076)**  
**t/a The King's Cliffe Bus Service**  
**The Rosary**  
**KINGS CLIFFE**

The village of Apethorpe lies two miles south of King's Cliffe and it was here that Percival Charles Howard was born on 7th May 1906. Six months afterwards Connie Blake was born on 28th November 1906 at King's Cliffe and, later, Percy and Connie were destined to meet and they married on Christmas Day 1933. The couple had seven children - Christina (Tina), Hilda, Roy George, Bernard Charles, Margaret (Peggy), Percival William (Bill) and Anthony Frederick. The four boys were later to conduct and/or drive Percy Howard's buses and Bill also became a fitter. The eldest daughter - Tina - acted as a "clippie" from time to time.

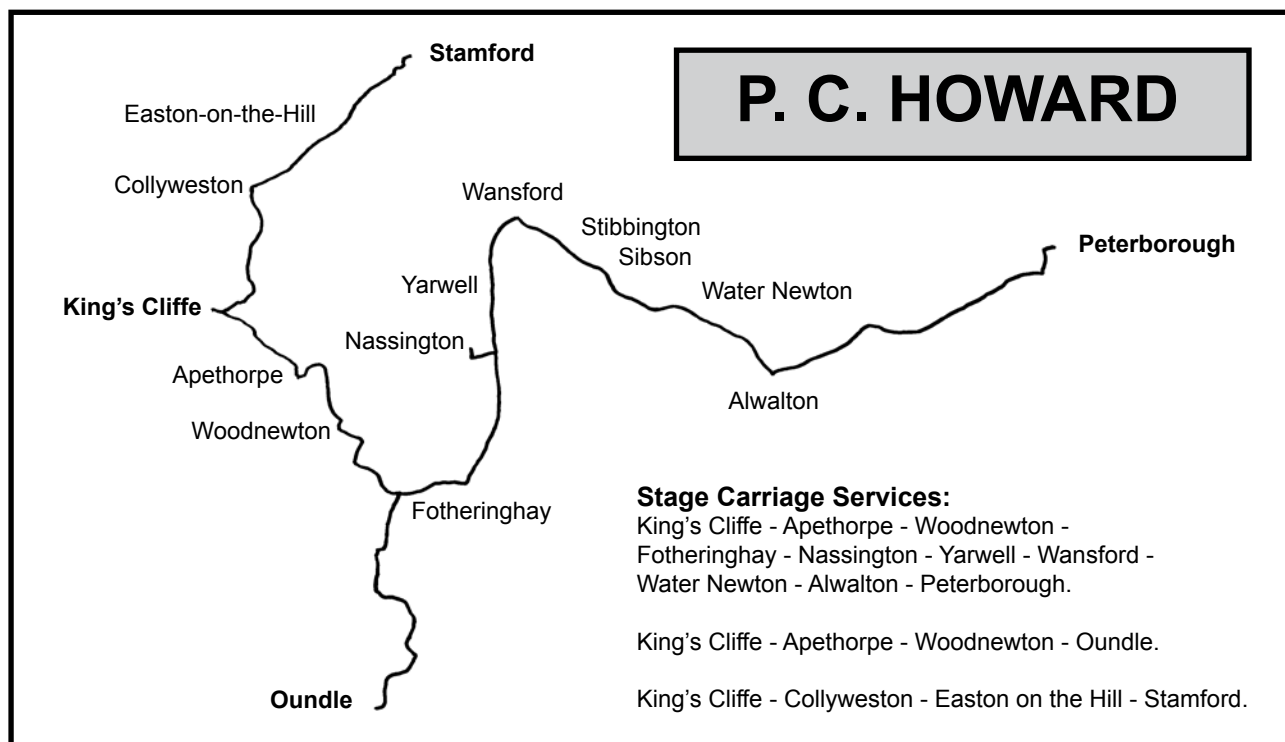
Percy Howard was a farmer by profession, working a number of local farms in the King's Cliffe area prior to the War. It was by chance that he entered the world of transport when, during the War, King's Cliffe airfield was being constructed and Percy bought four tipper lorries which he contracted out for use in connection with the construction of the aerodrome. After the War Percy gained a number of contracts from Northamptonshire County Council for the movement of road repairing materials and soon acquired more lorries for this type of work. Grass verge cutting and hedge trimming contracts also came Percy Howard's way in the post-War period.

In October 1947 Percy Howard bought Rosary Farm at King's Cliffe and moved to The Rosary at this time. Having established himself as a haulage contractor in addition to his farming interests it was not unnatural that when King's Cliffe bus operator - William Henry Salt - came to retire in June 1948 that Percy Howard should buy Salt's Bedford utility bus and the goodwill of his Road Service Licences.

The exact date of acquisition in June 1948 has not been established but Percy Howard applied to the Traffic Commissioners for three stage-carriage and one excursions and tours licences early in the month. The stage-carriage licences were for a Friday only King's Cliffe, Cross Keys to Stamford, Station Road service proceeding via Collyweston and

### HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE

Easton-on-the-Hill; a Wednesday and Saturday service from King's Cliffe, Cross Keys to Peterborough, Bishops Road Car Park service via Apethorpe, Woodnewton, Fotheringhay, Nassington, Yarwell, Wansford, Water Newton and Alwalton; and a Thursday only King's Cliffe, The Cross to Oundle service proceeding via Apethorpe and Woodnewton. Each of the above services were precisely those operated by W H Salt as was the Excursions & Tours licence starting from King's Cliffe, The Cross which permitted operation only to Skegness and Wicksteed Park with pick-ups at Blatherwycke, Apethorpe, Woodnewton and Fotheringhay.



Just a month later, during July 1948, Percy Howard applied to take over Salt's express service licence for workers journeys on weekdays running in the morning at 7.00am from King's Cliffe to Peterborough and returning at 6.00pm at night. This service proceeded direct from Fotheringhay to Peterborough via A605.

The vehicle taken over by Percy Howard from William Salt was a 1944 Bedford OWB equipped with a wooden seated Duple utility body. At some stage the seating was reduced from 32 to 30 and cushions were attached to the seats. Fortunately a photograph of the vehicle in P C Howard's livery of two-tone blue and white has survived and is shown on page four.

Percy Howard quickly obtained another vehicle and he picked up a former Whippet Coaches Bedford WTB with Strachan body seating twenty-eight passengers on coach seats. It was registered EEW 756 and was acquired in August 1948. For the following year Percy bought a second-hand 1931 Daimler CF6 which he acquired from N&S Coaches of Kibworth. This particular vehicle, registered ATP 120, carried a thirty-one seat Duple coach body. Meanwhile Percy Howard had ordered a brand new Seddon coach through Messrs

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### THE KING'S CLIFFE BUS.

#### TIME TABLE.

##### *KING'S CLIFFE to PETERBOROUGH.*

|                                  |    |    | Weds. & Sat. | Weds. & Sat. | Sat.      | Sat.      |
|----------------------------------|----|----|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| KING'S CLIFFE <i>depart</i>      | .. | .. | 9.15 a.m.    | 1.30 p.m.    | 4.30 p.m. | 6.30 p.m. |
| Apethorpe                        | .. | .. | 9.20         | 1.35         | 4.35      | 6.35      |
| Woodnewton                       | .. | .. | 9.25         | 1.40         | 4.40      | 6.40      |
| Fotheringhay                     | .. | .. | 9.30         | 1.50         | 4.50      | 6.50      |
| Nassington                       | .. | .. | 9.40         | 2.0          | 5.0       | 7.0       |
| Yarwell                          | .. | .. | 9.50         | 2.5          | 5.5       | 7.5       |
| Wansford                         | .. | .. | 9.55         | 2.10         | 5.10      | 7.10      |
| Waternewton                      | .. | .. | 10.5         | 2.15         | 5.15      | 7.15      |
| Alwalton                         | .. | .. | 10.10        | 2.20         | 5.20      | 7.20      |
| PETERBOROUGH <i>arrive</i>       | .. | .. | 10.20 a.m.   | 2.30 p.m.    | 5.30 p.m. | 7.30 p.m. |
| <i>(Central Omnibus station)</i> |    |    |              |              |           |           |

##### *PETERBOROUGH to KING'S CLIFFE.*

|                             |    |    | Weds. & Sat. | Weds. & Sat. | Sat.      | Sat.      |
|-----------------------------|----|----|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| PETERBOROUGH <i>depart</i>  | .. | .. | 12.30 p.m.   | 5.30 p.m.    | 6.30 p.m. | 9.15 p.m. |
| Alwalton                    | .. | .. | 12.40        | 5.40         | 6.40      | 9.25      |
| Waternewton                 | .. | .. | 12.50        | 5.50         | 6.50      | 9.35      |
| Wansford                    | .. | .. | 12.55        | 5.55         | 6.55      | 9.40      |
| Yarwell                     | .. | .. | 1.0          | 6.0          | 7.0       | 9.45      |
| Nassington                  | .. | .. | 1.5          | 6.5          | 7.5       | 9.50      |
| Fotheringhay                | .. | .. | 1.10         | 6.10         | 7.10      | 10.0      |
| Woodnewton                  | .. | .. | 1.15         | 6.15         | 7.15      | 10.5      |
| Apethorpe                   | .. | .. | 1.20         | 6.20         | 7.20      | 10.10     |
| KING'S CLIFFE <i>arrive</i> | .. | .. | 1.30         | 6.30         | 7.30      | 10.15     |

##### *DAILY SERVICE TO PETERBOROUGH FROM KING'S CLIFFE.*

|                             |    |    |          |                            |    |          |
|-----------------------------|----|----|----------|----------------------------|----|----------|
| KING'S CLIFFE <i>depart</i> | .. | .. | 7.0 a.m. |                            |    |          |
| Apethorpe                   | .. | .. | 7.5      |                            |    |          |
| Woodnewton                  | .. | .. | 7.10     |                            |    |          |
| Fotheringhay                | .. | .. | 7.15     |                            |    |          |
| PETERBOROUGH <i>arrive</i>  | .. | .. | 7.50     |                            |    |          |
|                             |    |    |          | PETERBOROUGH <i>depart</i> | .. | 6.0 p.m. |

##### *TUESDAY EVENING SERVICE.*

|                             |    |    |            |
|-----------------------------|----|----|------------|
| KING'S CLIFFE <i>depart</i> | .. | .. | 6.30 p.m.  |
| Apethorpe                   | .. | .. | 6.35       |
| Woodnewton                  | .. | .. | 6.40       |
| Fotheringhay                | .. | .. | 6.50       |
| Nassington                  | .. | .. | 7.0        |
| Yarwell                     | .. | .. | 7.5        |
| Wansford                    | .. | .. | 7.10       |
| Waternewton                 | .. | .. | 7.15       |
| Alwalton                    | .. | .. | 7.20       |
| PETERBOROUGH <i>arrive</i>  | .. | .. | 7.30       |
| PETERBOROUGH <i>depart</i>  | .. | .. | 10.30 p.m. |
| KING'S CLIFFE <i>arrive</i> | .. | .. | 11.30 p.m. |

A facsimile of Percy Howard's Peterborough timetable circa October 1948.

# Bygone Buses

of  
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HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE



*Percy Howard's first bus was this Wartime Bedford OWB registered CBD 940, fitted with a utility Duple body and inherited from William Henry Salt in June 1948.*

*(Photos above and below courtesy R Marshall)*

Douglas Weir Ltd of Leicester and the chassis of this machine was bodied by Smith's of Kettering with one of their twenty-nine seat coach bodies. The Seddon was registered FBD 380 on 27th July 1949 and it gave about two-and-a-half year's service.



*This most attractive A E Smith bodied Seddon MkIV was new to Percy Howard in July 1949 but in this case was photographed after passing to Gresswell's of Billingborough in 1952.*

HOWARD, Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE



*Another view of the Smith bodied Seddon FBD 380, again in Gresswell's ownership, but this time photographed at Stirling Corner in 1952.*

Returning to the subject of the stage-carriage services, Percy Howard added an extra Saturday return trip from King's Cliffe to Peterborough in October 1948 and made other minor alterations to the timetable. In the following year Percy applied to the Traffic Commissioners to reinstate the King's Cliffe R.A.F. Station to Stamford evening weekdays service that Salt had provided during the War but subsequently discontinued. The required licence was duly granted but it is not believed it operated for long and the licence was not renewed. At the same time that the above application was made to the Traffic Commissioners Percy Howard also applied both to extend his normal King's Cliffe to Stamford service to start from Woodnewton, operating via Apethorpe, and to introduce a Sunday service on the Peterborough route, comprising two return journeys. For some reason United Counties objected to the Stamford service extension but the Traffic Commissioners granted Percy Howard his required licences, although there is little evidence to suggest the Sunday service remained for long.

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■ HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE ■  
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In April 1950 a second-hand Seddon registered FWN 238 was added to the fleet. This time it carried a Longford body and it had earlier operated for Davies of Port Talbot.

On 1st June 1951 the limited company of "P C Howard Ltd" was formed by Percy Howard and John Arthur Johnson, a civil engineer of Stamford. The Share Capital of the company was £10,000 divided into 10,000 shares of £1 each, with the above two gentlemen and Connie Howard becoming Directors. By July 1958 Johnson had ceased to be a director which left Percy and his wife Connie Howard controlling the Company. By 1963 at the latest the shareholdings in P C Howard Ltd were in the hands of the following members of the Howard family:-

Percy - 2,501 Shares

Connie - 251 Shares

Roy, Bernard, Bill and Anthony - 250 Shares each.

Total - 3,752 Shares.

Percy Howard's next development came when he was awarded contracts to supply transport services from the King's Cliffe area to the Stamford Works of Messrs. Blackstone & Co Ltd. Three vehicles were required, one to operate from King's Cliffe via Collyweston and Easton-on-the Hill to Stamford, the second to run from Woodnewton via Nassington, Yarwell and Wansford to Stamford and the third to run from Sibson Camp to Stamford. Percy Howard applied for Express Service Licences for the three routes in December 1951 and all were assisted travel schemes on which only employees of Messrs Blackstone's could travel. The three routes ran for about eight or nine years, the licences not being renewed on 1st December 1960 when due.

To operate the services, additional rolling stock was required and to fill this need a pair of pre-War Bedford WTBs with Duple 25-seat coach bodies was acquired directly from W H Shimmin of Douglas, Isle of Man. These arrived in King's Cliffe in January 1952 and became registered HBD 292/3 having previously been BMN 204 and CMN 83 whilst in the Isle of Man, where they apparently seated only twenty passengers, but accommodated twenty-five whilst running for P C Howard Ltd.

At the same time as the above events were progressing, Percy Howard was negotiating with Eastern Counties Omnibus Co Ltd with regard to the sale of the Goodwill of his stage-carriage and express service licences to the latter Company. Percy Howard found it difficult to earn much profit on the very rural operations with which he was concerned, especially at the time when car ownership was beginning to increase. Eastern Counties applied to the Traffic Commissioners in December 1951 to take over Howard's Woodnewton-Stamford; King's Cliffe - Peterborough; King's Cliffe - Oundle and workers' express King's Cliffe - Peterborough licences without modification and these were duly granted in January 1952. Thereafter Eastern Counties outstationed a vehicle in Percy Howard's yard at King's Cliffe. Percy Howard however continued to hold his Excursions & Tours licence until 28th February 1955 after which time it was not renewed. Whether any excursions were operated between 1952 and 1955 is another matter.

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: HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE :  
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Between 1952 and 1955 Percy Howard bought four more second-hand buses and coaches. First Seddon FBD 380 was part-exchanged with operator Gresswell of Billingborough in January 1952 for a Wartime utility bodied Bedford OWB with Duple bodywork registered ATL 653. Second, a Bedford OB registered ECA 907 and carrying standard Duple Vista twenty-nine seat coachwork was purchased in about May 1953. Next, early in 1954, FJW 101 was obtained and this again was a Bedford OB but this time with Mulliner coachwork seating twenty-eight. In May 1955 Percy Howard traded in his two utility Bedford OWBs registered CBD 940 and ATL 653 to dealer Philip Errington of Evington and in exchange took a 1947 Bedford OB registered DUT 448 that had come to Errington's from A L Ward of Oakham.

As the 1950s progressed, Percy Howard expanded his contract operations and amongst the work obtained were contracts for:

- Mowlem - King's Cliffe and area to Wittering for Airfield redevelopment.
- A J Lovett - King's Cliffe and area to Wittering for Airfield redevelopment.
- Monk - King's Cliffe and area to Wittering for Airfield redevelopment.
- Mowlem - King's Cliffe and area to Corby for major housing development.
- Dowsett - King's Cliffe and area to Tallington concrete works.
- French - King's Cliffe to Alconbury for runway extension.

Education contracts were also provided over the years to various local schools in the King's Cliffe area.

In the 1960s P C Howard Ltd purchased three replacement coaches, two of which were Bedford SBGs - one with a Yeates Riviera body and registered DEN 326 - and the other with a Duple Vega body and registered LJY 558. These were acquired in 1961 and 1964 respectively and the latter vehicle replaced the elderly Bedford ECA 907. The year 1965 saw a change of allegiance to Ford chassis when 510 CON with Burlingham Seagull 61 body was obtained.

Unfortunately Percy Howard died on 10th May 1968 and his Shareholding in the Company passed to the control of his Executors as did the Shares of his wife Connie at the time of her death in May 1975. Thereafter the four sons, Roy, Bernard, Bill and Anthony became the owners.

Just two more coaches were taken into stock by P C Howard Ltd when in July 1972 Ford - 510 CON - was replaced by another Ford registered DPM 144C with fifty-two seater Duple Mariner body and in September 1973 another Ford joined the fleet, this time with a Duple Viceroy body seating 45 passengers and registered ONR 685F.

By 1976 the Directors of P C Howard Ltd decided it was no longer worth their while running coaches when their main business involved the operation of a number of enterprises connected with transport, warehousing and distribution along with various

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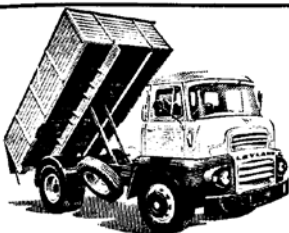
HOWARD, Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE



*This photograph shows the Duple Viceroy bodied Ford R192 registered ONR 685F in the livery of Johnson's Motors of Rushden who operated it prior to P C Howard Ltd.*

other activities concerned with farming and pig-rearing. The coach business was of interest to Bill Clapham, the Stamford operator, and in August 1976 arrangements were agreed to sell the remaining three coaches and contract services to Mr Clapham, thus ending the Howard's twenty-eight year's connection with passenger transport.

*I am indebted to various members of the Howard family for details of their transport activities.*



### P. C. HOWARD LTD.

HAULAGE CONTRACTORS  
COACH PROPRIETORS

*Coach Hire for all occasions — Distance no object  
Local and Long Distance Haulage  
Farm Haulage — We Carry Anything - Anywhere*

King's Cliffe, Peterborough, Northants . Tel. King's Cliffe 218



*Facsimile of one of P C Howard's advertisements showing a Yeates bodied coach presumably based on the appearance of the Bedford SBG registered DEN 326, acquired in June 1961.*



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of  
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**HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE**

'Phone : King's Cliffe 218

For Private Hire

—  
Distance no object



Telegrams : "Howard," King's Cliffe

Football Teams and  
Seaside Parties, etc.  
Catered for

## **HOWARD'S COACHES**

(Proprietor : P. C. HOWARD)

**The "Rosary," KING'S CLIFFE, Peterborough, Northants.**

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*Facsimile of one of P C Howard's letter headings of the late 1940s. The coach depicted on this document was not one of Howard's models.*

# Bylon Buses

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

HOWARD. Percy Chas. - KING'S CLIFFE

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| STOCK NO. | REGN. NO. | CHASSIS |       |              | BODY                  |                |          | DATES |         |        | PREVIOUS OWNER                       | INITIAL DISPOSAL                         | NOTES |
|-----------|-----------|---------|-------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------|-------|---------|--------|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
|           |           | MAKE    | TYPE  | NUMBER       | MAKE                  | TYPE & SEATS   | NUMBER   | NEW   | S/H     | W/D    |                                      |  |       |
|           | CBD 940   | Bedford | OWB   | 23471        | Duple                 | UB32F to UB30F | 39000    | 11/44 | 6/48    | 5/55   | W H Salt, King's Cliffe              | Errington, Evington/Leicester Co-op      |       |
|           | EEW 756   | Bedford | WTB   | ?            | Strachan              | C28F           | —        | -/38  | 8/48    | ?      | Whippet Coaches, Hilton              | Mitchell Construction, Peterborough      | 1     |
|           | ATP 120   | Daimler | CF6   | 7472S        | Duple                 | C31F           | 8460     | 7/31  | 1/49    | 6/51   | N & S, Kibworth                      | Yorks Salvage, Leeds                     | 2     |
|           | FBD 380   | Seddon  | Mk.IV | 3284         | Smith                 | FC29F          | —        | 7/49  | —       | 1/52   | Supp D Weir Ltd., Leicester          | Gresswell, Billingborough                |       |
|           | FWN 238   | Seddon  | Mk.IV | 2943         | Longford              | C29F           | —        | -/47  | 4/50    | ?      | Davies, Port Talbot                  |  |       |
|           | HBD 292   | Bedford | WTB   | 110646       | Duple                 | C25F           | 7240     | 6/36  | 1/52    | 12/53  | W H Shimmin, Douglas                 | No further owner                         | 3     |
|           | HBD 293   | Bedford | WTB   | 111475       | Duple                 | C25F           | 8684     | 5/37  | 1/52    | c -/57 | W H Shimmin, Douglas                 | J Shepard, Hinckley                      | 4     |
|           | ATL 653   | Bedford | OWB   | 27207        | Duple                 | UB30F          | 41571    | 6/45  | 1/52    | 5/55   | Gresswell, Billingborough            | Errington, Evington/Leics Carriage Bldrs |       |
|           | ECA 907   | Bedford | OB    | 60415        | Duple Vista           | C29F           | 43594    | 10/47 | c -/53  | 6/64   | Peters, Llanarmon                    |  |       |
|           | FJW 101   | Bedford | OB    | 58269        | Mulliner              | DP28F          | T105     | 1/48  | by 3/54 | 8/59   | Worthington, Wolverhampton           | Adams, Blythe Bridge                     |       |
|           | DUT 448   | Bedford | OB    | 39827        | Duple Vista           | C29F           | 43472    | 2/47  | 5/55    | 11/57  | Errington, Evington/A L Ward, Oakham | Corvedale, Luton                         |       |
|           | DEN 326   | Bedford | SBG   | 35033        | Yeates Riviera III    | C36F           | 501      | 9/55  | 6/61    | 3/65   | Caven, Bury                          | Western Roadways, Patchway               |       |
|           | LJY 558   | Bedford | SBG   | 47161        | Duple Vega            | C41F           | 1060/208 | 5/56  | 6/64    | 8/76   | Hardy, Bromley                       | Clapham, Stamford                        |       |
|           | 510 CON   | Ford    | 570E  | 510E51886    | Burlingham Seagull 61 | C41F           | 7261     | 1/61  | 2/65    | 7/72   | Powell, Whiteheath                   |  |       |
|           | DPM 144C  | Ford    | 676E  | L80D 4376375 | Duple Mariner         | C52F           | 1187/15  | 3/65  | 7/72    | 8/76   | Davenport, Netherton                 | Clapham, Stamford                        |       |
|           | ONR 685F  | Ford    | R192  | BC04GL 19926 | Duple Viceroy         | C45F           | 1216/18  | 7/68  | 9/73    | 8/76   | Johnson, Rushden                     | Clapham, Stamford                        |       |

- NOTES:** 1 - EEW 756 originally registered BMR 124 to Morris, Trowbridge.  
 2 - ATP 120 originally registered VD 748 to Lanarkshire Traction, carrying a Hoyle B32 body. Sold to A Burnett & Sons, t/a Royal Blue, Southsea and rebodied Duple C31F 4/37 when re-registered ATP 120.  
 3 - HBD 292 originally registered BMN 204.  
 4 - HBD 293 originally registered CMN 83.