

Bygone Buses

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SHERRATT. John Herbert **t/a JCS Coaches** **12 Stocks Lane** **CORBY**

John Sherratt was born on 1st May 1920, lived in Kettering and was employed at the Corby Steel Works. Whilst there he undertook part-time driving for Harry Graveling who traded as Fleetway Coaches, as described in paper NN-GR3A. In 1955 John Sherratt left the British Steel Corporation to work full-time for Graveling and soon became his right-hand man. Soon after this time Harry Graveling took over the Elmington Garage and Filling Station which provided space for parking some of his coaches engaged on school contract work centring on Oundle. At the time Harry Graveling moved house to Elmington, John Sherratt and his wife Irene moved to 12 Stocks Lane, Corby to manage the operations based on this town. Stocks Lane was a residential property and the coaches were parked at the corner of Lloyds Road/ Rockingham Road.

Unfortunately Harry Graveling was taken ill and died in 1956 when the business passed to his wife Edith who continued for the next three years whilst simultaneously running down the operation. On 1st July 1959 John Sherratt purchased the former Fleetway Coaches business from Edith Graveling for £2,500 and inherited two Bedford OBs and one SB in the process. These were registered GTX 551, FBC 904 and AEK 149 as illustrated on the following pages.

Whilst the Sherratt family lived at 12 Stocks Lane they did not purchase the property from Mrs Graveling and in July 1959 moved to 91 Bideford Square, Corby where an office was run from this address. Shortly afterwards the operation moved to 10 High Street, Corby which property had a third-of-an-acre of land at the rear which could be used as a coach parking ground on which ten vehicles could potentially be accommodated. Whilst John Sherratt operated the business, his wife Irene looked after the clerical side of the outfit. John and Irene had two daughters - Jacqueline and Carolyn and it was decided that the initials of the two girls 'J' and 'C' combined with the 'S' of Sherratt would be used as the trading name JCS Coaches.

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GTX 551 was a Bedford OB with the usual Duple Vista twenty-nine seat coach body that was taken over by JCS Coaches from Edith Graveling.

(Photo courtesy D M Bailey).



This Duple Vista bodied Bedford OB registered FBC 904 was also taken over from Mrs Graveling by John Sherratt in July 1959.

(Photo courtesy M A Sutcliffe).

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*The third former Fleetway Coaches' Bedford was AEK 149, an example of the Bedford SB model mounted with thirty-five seater Yeates Riviera coachwork.
(Photo courtesy D M Bailey).*

Over the next seven years a dozen second-hand coaches joined the fleet either as additional or replacement stock. Generally Commer Avengers were preferred but also examples of Bedford, Leyland, Albion and Ford manufacture were acquired along with a Trojan minibus. It was in 1966 that John Sherratt bought his first new vehicle which was a twenty-five seat Bedford J3LZ10 Reall bodied midibus registered GNV 957D. At this point the JCS fleet numbered seven vehicles.

Contract operations were JCS Coaches' speciality, with literally dozens being run over the years. Initially two contracts were secured by JCS Coaches, one to take workers from Corby to Frears Biscuits at Oadby and the other to transport workers from Corby to Market Harborough for Golden Wonder Crisps. In due course United States Airmen were conveyed from Corby and Kettering to Molesworth and Alconbury as also were construction workers. A contract for Auster Beagle Aircraft Works at Rearsby in Leicestershire was combined with a school contract operating between Church and Tur Langton and Kibworth. For many years workers were conveyed to the Keyston Turkey Farm whilst others travelled from Corby and Kettering to the Mettoy Factory at Northampton. Numerous Corby firms also required works transport such as Aquascutum, London Fashions, Webbs Foods and Neilsons and all hired JCS coaches over the years.

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This Bedford SB registered YMV 81 carrying thirty-three seater Duple Vega bodywork was the first coach John Sherratt bought after acquiring the three former Fleetway vehicles. It was new in 1953, purchased by JCS Coaches in 1960 and operated for three years. (Photo courtesy R H G Simpson).

Towards the end of 1966 John Sherratt applied to the Traffic Commissioners for an Express Service licence to operate between Corporation Street, Corby and the USAF base at Alconbury via Kettering and Thrapston on Sunday and Wednesday evenings or via Burton Latimer, Finedon and Thrapston on Friday and Saturday evenings. This was duly granted by the Commissioners in February 1967 under reference TER 5694/1 and continued with various modifications until December 1977.

In May 1968 Corby Development Corporation compulsorily purchased the land at the rear of 10 High Street which caused John Sherratt to seek alternative parking arrangements. An area of land in Station Road, Corby was leased from British Rail and on which, in the following year, Messrs Titmuss of Wellingborough erected a 4-bay garage containing a pit. The rest of the fleet was parked in the open at this yard. In May 1972 the house and office at 10 High Street was vacated and the Sherratts moved to 1 Dixon Walk, Corby where, again, the office was run from the house. Dixon Walk, incidentally, was built on the site of the yard at the rear of 10, High Street where the coaches had previously parked.

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In December 1970 JCS Coaches applied for its second road service licence which was duly granted by the Traffic Commissioners early in 1971 under reference TER 5694/2. It was for an 'Assisted Travel' service for Messrs Mettoy Co Ltd of Northampton and conveyed workers from Corby and various points to Northampton on the days on which the factory was open. This operation continued until 1980 when the requirement for such a licence was no longer needed.

Eight years were to elapse between John Sherratt purchasing his first new vehicle in 1966 and his second in 1974. During the intervening period fifteen previously used vehicles were taken into stock as replacements for expired coaches. With the exception of two Bedford chassis all the rest were various models of Fords, which clearly John Sherratt found to be satisfactory. JCS Coaches second new machine was a Ford Transit twelve-seater minibus which became registered PNV 589M. At this point the fleet size was six and remained constant for quite a number of years, seldom increasing or decreasing by more than one vehicle.



JCS Coaches' new Ford Transit twelve-seater minibus PNV 589M is shown in this press advert along with Ford R226/Duple Viceroy fifty-three seater coach BKP 592K.

Following the purchase of a new minibus in 1974 all future fleet acquisitions during the 1970s were previously used stock. In fact another seven Ford coaches or minibuses were purchased and at the end of 1979 the fleet total stood at five machines.

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JCS Coaches third road service licence, reference TER 5694/3, was applied for in 1977 and was for a Friday, Saturday and Bank Holiday service between Corby, Alexandra Road and the Lakenheath USAF Base operating via Alconbury and was to convey passengers attending dances at the two USAF bases. The service replaced that originally granted in 1967 as TER 5694/1, the new licence expiring in 1980 when changes to the licensing system obviated the need for Express Service licences.

During the 1980s previously used rolling stock acquisitions were the order of the day although one brand new Mercedes midibus was bought in 1988 when F405 CKU put in an appearance. Otherwise Ford continued to be the favoured chassis builder when some seventeen various models found their way into the JCS fleet. A total of twenty-three used vehicles were acquired in the 1980s and the remaining six comprised two Leyland Leopards, three Bedford YMTs and an AEC Reliance. For a time the fleet totalled eight vehicles but ended the period under review at seven.



HRP 2N was a Ford R1114 mounted with a Plaxton Panorama Elite body bought by JCS Coaches in January 1985 and was photographed at the Station Road, Corby depot where the four-bay garage John Sherratt had erected on the site can be seen in the background.

Until 1982 JCS Coaches had been owned solely by John Sherratt but the structure of the business was changed in this year when a partnership between John and Irene Sherratt was formed. This was not to last for long as on 1st August 1984 Irene decided she would take things a little easier and duly retired. In the meantime,

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however, Michael Burton who had previously been a coach salesman for Tricentrol and an auto electrician by trade, came to work for JCS Coaches in 1974, intending to stay for only a short time. However, the attraction of Jacqueline Sherratt proved too much for him and the couple married in 1976. Mike Burton played an increasingly important role in the business and replaced Irene Sherratt as a partner from 1st August 1984.



This Plaxton Panorama Elite bodied Ford R192 registered RCX 714G was bought by JCS as a non-runner in 1983 but was refurbished and served the firm well for three years.



On the left is AAY 299K which was a Duple Viceroy bodied Ford R192 previously owned by Nesbit of Somerby whilst on the right is GUR 417N a Ford R1114 with Duple Dominant coachwork.

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John Sherratt certainly liked his Fords and in this photograph a Plaxton Supreme bodied R1014 is represented by FDH 722T bought in 1987 when eight years old.



Two Ford R1114 models carrying Plaxton Supreme coachwork and registered respectively as MMJ 11/2P were bought when eleven years old by JCS Coaches. In this illustration MMJ 12P is depicted.

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Registered F405 CKU and purchased new in September 1988 was this 26-seater Whittaker bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D midibus which gave JCS Coaches over seven years service.

Prior to the introduction of the 1985 Transport Act, JCS Coaches applied for only one further Road Service licence and this occurred in June 1986 and was for an 'Assisted Travel' scheme for Remus Clothing of Corby, carrying workers from various points around Corby to their factory on Mondays to Fridays for an 8.00am start and 5.00pm finish. The Traffic Commissioners reference for this operation was TER 5694/4.

Unfortunately John Sherratt died on 9th January 1989 and his daughter Jacqueline inherited her father's 50% share in the business of JCS Coaches, which thereafter continued as a second generation husband and wife team. At the time of writing this firm is still very much in business providing transport for the good people of the Corby district.

Thanks are extended to John and Irene Sherratt and to Mike and Jacqueline Burton for their assistance, advice and loan of photographs used in this paper.

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		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
	GTX 551	Bedford	OB	57064	Duple Vista	C29F	48278	9/47	7/59	by 11/60	Graveling, Corby	Mobile Shop	
	FBC 904	Bedford	OB	76874	Duple Vista	C29F	44515	6/48	7/59	10/62	Graveling, Corby	?, Stoke-on-Trent	
	AEK 149	Bedford	SB	10476	Yeates Riviera	C35F	321	12/52	7/59	by 4/65	Graveling, Corby	Lambretta-Trojan, Croydon	
	YMV 81	Bedford	SB	6107	Duple Vega	C33F	1009/31	4/53	10/60	11/63	Wilder, Feltham	W S Yeates, Loughborough	
	DRN 929	Leyland	Tiger PSU11/15	502383	Bellhouse Hartwell	C41C	—	5/51	3/61	6/61	Abbott, Blackpool	Goode & Holyoak, Kinver	
	VDH 447	Commer	Avenger III	T85A0121	Duple Vega	C41F	1057/48	6/55	7/61	1/67	Cobholm, Gt Yarmouth	?	
	JNV 398	Albion	Victor FT39AN	73719E	Duple	FC33F	131/13	-/54	11/61	8/63	F. Coales, Aldwinckle	Turnbull, Lockerbie	
	547 VRE	Commer	Avenger IV	94A0178	Duple Vega	C41F	1091/21	4/58	10/62	c4/65	Greatrex, Stafford	Barker, Mablethorpe	
	VTD 224	Commer	Avenger III	T85A0113	Plaxton Venturer	C41F	2599	5/55	5/63	2/66	Cumming, Upholland	Nadder Valley, Tisbury	
	VTE 914	Commer	Avenger III	T85A0042	Trans-United	C41F	—	6/55	11/63	4/65	Clews, Birmingham	Simonds, Botesdale	
	VUP 148	Commer	Avenger IV	94A0004	Plaxton Consort I	C41F	2955	3/57	6/64	5/68	Wheeler, Leicester	Ives, Weston-on-Trent	
	XOG 790	Commer	Avenger IV	94A8021	Duple Vega	C41F	1106/39	4/59	7/64	4/66	Chivers, Midsomer Norton	Groom, Long Sutton	
	9299 RE	Commer	Avenger IV	94A0369	Duple Corinthian	C41F	1121/23	3/60	5/65	5/67	Smith & Ball, Waterhouses	Burnside, Leicester	
	480 BNT	Ford	570E	510E78217	Duple Yeoman	C41F	1151/61	7/62	9/65	8/68	Wheeler, Leicester	Dorset C C Education Cttee	
	PCK 879	Trojan	19	1509816	Yeates	B13F	—	3/61	by1/66	2/66	Bon Chance, Preston	County, Brentwood	
	GNV 957D	Bedford	J3LZ10	195091	Reall Grosvenor	C25F	—	2/66	—	11/71	—	Higgs & Hill, Contractor	
	538 BUA	Ford	570E	L80B830830	Plaxton Embassy I	C41F	622106	4/62	5/66	2/69	Rogers, Leeds	Edwards, Llanwrst	
	571 TTD	Ford	570E	510E48282	Burlingham Seagull 61	C41F	7238	4/61	1/67	2/69	Prestwich, Audenshaw	Don Everall, Wolverhampton	
	CDU 86B	Ford	676E	L80B838085	Duple Marauder	C52F	1174/39	6/64	6/67	5/70	Bonas, Coventry	Swinard, Ashford	
	3988 WX	Ford	570E	510E54994	Plaxton Embassy I	C41F	602345	11/60	5/68	4/73	Ives, Weston-on-Trent	Kane, Lesmahagow	
	1016 MF	Ford	570E	510E60829	Duple Yeoman	C41F	1139/193	2/61	5/68	10/71	Rowson, South Harrow	?	
	7594 DA	Ford	570E	510E40563	Burlingham Seagull 60	C41F	7169	5/60	7/68	5/71	Ubique, London W9	?	

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		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
	AFR 27B	Bedford	VAL14	1453	Harrington Legionaire	C52F	2991	6/64	8/68	4/71	Cosy, Meadowfield	Morris, Bearwood	
	KMX 117B	Ford	570E	L80D433763	Duple Trooper	C41F	1186/8	12/64	4/69	5/72	Hillside, Luton	Waters, Addlestone	
	CUP 435B	Ford	570E	L80D429285G	Plaxton Embassy III	C41F	642381	6/64	10/69	4/71	Pleasureways, Altrincham	Robinson, Oakington	
	ELB 709C	Ford	676E	L80D439344T	Duple Mariner	C52F	1187/44	5/65	5/71	9/77	Davis, London W11	?	
	ELB 710C	Ford	676E	L80D439359J	Duple Mariner	C52F	1187/52	5/65	5/71	2/74	Davis, London W11	Robinson, Stewkley	
	CCE 923C	Bedford	VAS1	1928	Plaxton Embassy IV	C29F	653028	5/65	10/71	10/75	Lincoln Pilgrim Tours, Lincoln	McGonagle, Belfast	
	LNF 777G	Ford	Transit	BC05HY58194	Williams Deansgate	12		11/68	1/72	1/74	Jacques, Stockport	?	
	NWP 194E	Ford	R192	BC04FP40227	Plaxton Panorama i	C45F	672737	2/67	6/72	2/76	Field, Blackheath	Byrne, Kilcock	
	MYJ 990D	Ford	R192	BC04ED22809	Duple Empress	C45F	1203/86	5/66	2/73	7/77	Evans, Bulkington	?	
	PNV 589M	Ford	Transit	BCO5xx53466	Moseley Envoy	C12F		1/74	—	by 5/78	Supplied A. Moseley, Loughborough	Harris, Armadale	
	RKJ 106G	Ford	R226	BC04HK45409	Duple Viceroy 37	C53F	201/41	4/69	3/74	5/77	Tricentrol, Shefford/ Summerbee, Southampton	Nash, Nuneaton	
	KDU 474D	Ford	R226	BC04FY25043	Duple Mariner	C52F	1204/93	7/66	10/75	1/80	Don Everall, Wolverhampton/ Hibberd, Wendover	?	
	DWE 952H	Ford	R192	BC04JP57864	Duple Viceroy	C45F	1227/82	3/70	3/76	5/78	Feather, Bradford	Ponsford & Abigail, Bradninch	
	BKP 592K	Ford	R226	BC04LS43908	Duple Viceroy	C53F	240/54	12/71	2/77	by 5/86	Mycok, Monyash	?	
	NKJ 766F	Ford	R192	BC04GD18388	Duple Viceroy	C45F	1216/27	1/68	5/77	5/79	Grimes, Gerrards Cross	?	
	DLJ 799L	Ford	Transit	BC05ME60098	Tricentrol	C12F		2/73	10/78	1/81	Mott, Upton	McPhee, Corby	
	AUK 601H	Ford	R226	BC04JG57900	Plaxton	C53F	708708	11/70	7/79	9/81	Mayers, Cheadle Heath	Copeland, Meir	
	WVH 722J	Ford	R192	BC04KG50616	Plaxton Pan Elite II	C45F	712582	8/71	1/80	9/81	Olsen, Strood	West Midland T T A, Kingswinford	
	YLD 775G	Leyland	Leopard PSU3A/4R	901955	Plaxton	C51F	693382	7/69	4/80	7/82	E F Burton. London N3	North, Sherburn/ Holt, Newport	
	NND 964P	Ford	Transit	BC05SB68204	Dormobile	B16F	3226	5/76	3/81	5/85	Goodman, Peterborough	Brandon, Blackmore End	
	GUR 417N	Ford	R1114	BC04PB54530	Duple Dominant	C53F	523/4308	1/75	5/81	8/85	Don Everall, W'hampton/ Gibbard, Woburn Sands	Prospect, Lye	

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		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
GEG 96N	Ford	R1114	BC04PP69840	Plaxton Pan Elite III	C53F	7411FC035	11/74	9/81	by 12/90	Don Everall, W'hampton/ Duncan, Sawtry	?		
PDK 306S	Ford	Transit	BD05SL65845	Moseley Envoy	12		8/77	4/82	by 4/84	Morbey, Tickhill	Smith, Corby Glen		
RCX 714G	Ford	R192	BC04HD45389	Plaxton Pan Elite	C45F	692665	4/69	by 4/83	c4/86	North, Sherburn/ Wildman, Leeds	Ellis, Coventry		
AAV 299K	Ford	R192	BC04KG53744	Duple Viceroy	C45F	228/79	8/71	by11/83	by 5/86	Nesbit, Somerby	?		
KLU 422V	Ford	Transit	BDVPWS 327640	Robin Hood	B16F		2/80	by9/84	by 5/87	Brooklyn, London SW13	Garrett, Tonbridge		
HRV 2N	Ford	R1114	BC04PR61585	Plaxton Pan Elite	C53F	7811FC 081M	3/75	1/85	9/88	Midland Fox, Leicester (7001)	Clark, Barnsley		
OOO 298K	Ford	R192	BC04LL48463	Willowbrook	DP49F	70873	9/71	-/85	9/86	Smith, Horsfield	Belgrave, Leicester		
REF 903L	Ford	R226	BC04ML63119	Plaxton Pan Elite II	C49F	732696	7/73	11/85	4/87	Belgrave, Leicester	Belgrave, Leicester		
JEC 590T to XPW 197 by 12/86 YPL 64T	Bedford	YMT	JW451033	Duple Dominant II	C53F	917/2525	3/79	4/86	12/90	West Kingsdown Coach Hire	Scrapped after fire		
PTM 647M to 8957 GZ by 12/86 B239 RBA	A.E.C.	Reliance 760	6U2R37681	Duple Dominant II	C53F	942/5728	1/79	5/86	12/89	Harty, Cosham	Almev, Eastcote		
	Ford	R1114	BC04ND62420	Plaxton Elite III	C53F	7411FC067	4/74	by 9/86	4/87	Ellis, Coventry	Belgrave, Leicester		
	Ford	Transit	BDVPEK55780	Dixon Lomas	C16F	—	9/84	by12/86	5/88	Dolphin, Norwich	Roberts, Burry Port		
LAY 604P	Ford	R1114	BC04RD67405	Plaxton Elite III	C53F	7511FX530	9/75	by12/86	by 12/88	N&S Coaches/ Midland Fox (7004)	Coach Services, Thetford		
MMJ 11P	Ford	R1114	BC04RC59202	Plaxton Supreme	C49F	7611FX505	12/75	6/87	2/90	N&S Coaches/ Midland Fox (7002)	Wigley, Carlton		
MMJ 12P	Ford	R1114	BC04RC59809	Plaxton Supreme	C49F	7611FX506	12/75	6/87	2/90	N&S Coaches/ Midland Fox (7003)	Wigley, Carlton		
FDH 722T	Ford	R1014	BCRSUB 362420	Plaxton Supreme	C45F	7910FC014	4/79	7/87	8/89	Payne, Little Paxton	Wacton, Bromyard		
OKY 70R	Bedford	YMT	GW453500	Duple Dominant II	C53F	717/2538	4/77	by 8/88	by 5/91	Carter, St.Michael's-on-Wyre	Scrapped		
F405 CKU	Mercedes Benz	609D	668063-20- 858502	Whittaker	C26F	—	9/88	—	1/96	Supplied, Europa Coachs, Doncaster	Brown, Wheathampstead		
LVS 436P	Leyland	Leopard PSU5A/4R	7504663	Plaxtpn Supreme	C50F	7612LC 022AM	3/76	by10/88	9/90	Brightman, London NW7	Simons, Hanslope		
XNM 823S	Bedford	YMT	HW450343	Duple Dominant II	C53F	817/2488	4/78	4/89	by12/90	Belgrave, Leicester	Scrapped		

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