

Smiths of Reading

This was a large independent operator, with depot at Rose Kiln Lane, Reading.

They were primarily luxury coach operators, with a modern fleet of around 80 vehicles in 1960. However, they also operated contract services with an interesting fleet of around 25 second-hand double deckers, principally concerned with transportation of staff to and from AWRE Aldermaston. See full fleet list, 1937 - 1984 by D. J. Bradfield.

The convoy of double-deckers I saw on Staines Causeway one weekend in summer 1960 was undoubtedly a rail service replacement contract, Reading - Staines Central. This would also explain the even worse-than-usual traffic jams, if the railway was out of action (we could look in local newspapers to confirm the date and reason)

I visited the depot in Reading around Easter 1960, and photographed the following very old DD vehicles which were stored out of use at back of yard (may have been sold on to other contractors by then).....

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| BRY 266 | 1938 Leyland TD5c / Leyland | ex Leicester Corporation | |
| DKH 466 | 1938 Leyland TD5 / ECW | ex East Yorkshire | |
| FKO 203 | 1939 Leyland TD5 / Weymann | ex Maidstone & District | -1959 |
| FKO 207 | 1939 Leyland TD5 / Weymann | ex Maidstone & District | -1959 |
| EFJ 163 | 1938 Leyland TD5 / Leyland | ex Exeter Corporation | -1959 |

(the original photo has long since been lost)

Also present were **GAE 479** Bristol DD "No 171" owned by Gee, Walker, Slater (contractors) and several vehicles of messrs Chivers, Devizes (details not recorded). These were at the depot for maintenance work, which Smiths carried out for several other firms, using their well-equipped facilities here.

A select list of other vehicles in the Smiths fleet around 1960 follows.....

| Double Deckers | (some of those marked * were in the convoy seen at Staines) (P in 1st col denotes photo in album) | | years owned |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------|-------------|
| P * RN 8969 | 1940 Leyland TD7 / Leyland | ex Ribble | - 61 |
| ACK 132, 136, 142, 144, 149 | 1940 Leyland TD7 / Leyland | ex Ribble | - 60c |
| EDK 645 - 649 | 1940 Leyland TD7 / E. Electric | ex Rochdale C | 1956 - |
| EDK 650, 652, 653 | 1940 Leyland TD7 / ECW | ex Rochdale C | 1956 - |
| P * FXT 178, 229, 262, 283 | 1940 AEC Regent II / LPTB "RT" <i>(FXT 229 is preserved)</i> | ex London Transport | 1955 - 65 |
| P * OD 7493, 7510 | 1933 AEC Regent I / Brush | ex Devon General | 1958 - 61 |
| ACP 410 | 1947 AEC Regent III / Park Royal | ex Halifax C | 1959 - |
| ACP 627, 630 | 1948 AEC Regent III / Roe | ex Halifax C | 1959 - 65 |
| P * GAT 60, 67-69 | 1939 Leyland TD5 / ECW | ex East Yorkshire | 1958 - 62 |
| P JUG 623, 624, 626, 628-630 | 1946 Leyland PD1 / Roe | ex Leeds C | 1961 - 66 |
| KHY 392 | 1948 Leyland PD1 / BBW | ex Bristol Omnibus | 1960 - |
| P LAE 7, 14, 16, 18 | 1948 Leyland PD1 / ECW <i>LAE16 was converted to a tree-lopper 1963; kept until 1969</i> | ex Bristol Omnibus | 1960 - 63 |
| P LWL 306, 312, 318 | 1946 AEC Regent II / Park Royal | ex City of Oxford | 1957 - |
| P MWL 970 - 972 | 1947 AEC Regent II / Weymann | ex City of Oxford | 1960 - 63 |
| P OFC 376, 383, 385-8, 399 | 1949 AEC Regent III / Weymann | ex City of Oxford | 1961 - 69 |

Single Deck Buses

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------|
| WS 8028, 8039 | 1936 Leyland LZ2 / Alexander | ex Scottish M. Tract. | - 59 |
| | <i>(re-built as FF by Smiths; there may have been others; photo in CB11, p8)</i> | | |
| BRR 926 | 1936 Leyland TS7 / ECW | ex East Midland | - 61 |
| CRD 585 | 1937 Leyland TS7 / Burlingham | <i>(new)</i> | 1937 - 61 |
| P DTT 484 | 1937 Bedford WTB / Duple | | |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|---------------------|-----------|
| P | AJ 8340 | 1937 Bedford WTB / Duple | | |
| | EDP 262 | 1949 Dennis Lancet / Strachan | <i>(new)</i> | 1949 - 64 |
| | EOU 475 | 1947 Dennis Lancet / Strachan | ex Aldershot & Dist | 1958 - 64 |
| | | <i>(was rebuilt as FC by Smiths in 1959)</i> | | |
| P | FHT 76 - 78 | 1938 Dennis Lancet / BBW | ex Bristol Omnibus | 1951 - 59 |

Coaches - Dennis Lancet / Duple..... *(total 18)*

new in:-

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------|------|------------------------|-----------|
| | CDL 804 | 1939 | ex Moss, Sandown | |
| | KJH 900 | 1949 | ex Thurgood, Ware | 1949 - 63 |
| P | HYN 490 | 1947 | ex Clarkes, London E16 | |
| P | EDP 818 - 820 | 1950 | <i>(new)</i> | 1950 - 64 |
| P | KJH 510 | 1948 | ex Bunt, Hatfield | 1951 - 66 |
| P | KGT 18 | 1949 | ex Clarkes, London E16 | 1951 - 66 |
| | JTB 99 | 1947 | ex Turner, Chorley | 1951 - 63 |
| | HTE 290 | 1947 | ex Turner, Chorley | 1952 - 62 |
| P | KXX 329 | 1949 | ex Clarkes, London E16 | 1952 - 64 |
| P | LYH 416 | 1950 | ex Clarkes, London E16 | 1952 - 66 |
| P | JXC 778 | 1948 | ex Clarkes, London E16 | |
| P | BBV 622 | 1947 | ex Cronshaw, Hendon | 1955 - |
| P | BCB 477, 478 | 1948 | ex Cronshaw, Hendon | 1955 - |
| | JXK 539, 540 | 1948 | ex Manchester Co-op | 1958 - |

Coaches - AEC Regal half-cab.....

(total 7)

(body)

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| P | CU 4737 | 1947 | ex Hall, South Shields | Plaxton | |
| | JFC 776, 778 - 780 | 1939 | ex City of Oxford MS | Weyman | 1957 - 62 |
| P | HTJ 857 | 1948 | ex Comrose Ltd <i>(rebuilt to FC)</i> | Alexander | 1958 - 64 |
| | RC 8743 | 1946 | ex Trent MT | Duple | 1958 - |

Coaches - Bedford OB / Duple.....

(total 10)

| | | | | |
|---|----------------|------|------------------------|-----------|
| | CRD 649 | 1947 | <i>(new)</i> | 1947 - 63 |
| | DRD 820 | 1949 | <i>(new)</i> | 1949 - 64 |
| P | EDP 95 | 1949 | <i>(new)</i> | 1949 - 67 |
| | EDP 757 | 1949 | <i>(new)</i> | 1949 - 63 |
| | EDP 924 | 1949 | <i>(new)</i> | 1949 - 61 |
| P | ERD 808 | 1950 | <i>(new)</i> | 1950 - 63 |
| | URE 216 | 1950 | ex Greatorex, Stafford | 1952 - 66 |
| P | RVW 370 | 1950 | ex Edwards, Rainham | 1952 - 63 |
| | AEJ 813 | 1950 | ex Daniel, Aberystwyth | 1952 - 66 |
| | NUM 13 | 1950 | ex Neil, Leeds | 1955 - 64 |

Coaches - Bedford SB / Duple.....

(total 6)

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------|----------------------------|-----------|
| | NUR 17 | 1952 | ex Simmonds, Letchworth | 1955 - 65 |
| | WMP 260 | 1952 | ex Venture, London NW2 | 1955 - 65 |
| | WMP 815 | 1952 | ex Venture, London NW2 | 1955 - 64 |
| | YMV 70, 71 | 1953 | ex Venture, London NW2 | 1957 - 65 |
| | YMG 766 | 1953 | ex Griffin Park, Brentford | - 64 |

Coaches - Bedford SBG / Duple.....

(total 15)

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------|
| | JDP 516 | 1954 | <i>(new)</i> | 1954 - 67 |
| P | KMO 681 | 1955 | ex Cody, Bracknell | 1955 - 64 |
| | MDP 352, 449, 673 | 1956 | <i>(new)</i> | 1956 - 66 |
| | NRD 50, 371 | 1957 | <i>(new)</i> | 1957 - 66 |

| | | | |
|----------------|------|-------------------------|-----------|
| PJJ 281 | 1955 | ex Wally's, Brighton | 1958 - 66 |
| 551 HMF | 1956 | ex J.S. London N7 | 1958 - 66 |
| MVD 91 | 1956 | ex Hutchinson, Overtown | 1958 - 66 |
| 197 HMD | 1956 | ex Monico, London NW5 | 1959 - 66 |
| 601 KMT | 1957 | ex Alexander, Enfield | 1962 - 67 |
| OGT 309 | 1955 | ex Rickards, London W2 | 1962 - 65 |
| OLU 528 | 1955 | ex Rickards, London W2 | 1962 - 66 |
| 996 BMD | 1955 | ex Frames, London WC2 | 1962 - 67 |

Coaches - AEC Reliance / Duple..... *(total 14)*

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|--------------|-----------|
| JDP 517 - 520 | 1954 | <i>(new)</i> | 1954 - 72 |
| JRD 990 | 1955 | <i>(new)</i> | 1955 - 75 |
| KRD 342 | 1955 | <i>(new)</i> | 1955 - 75 |
| RRD 325, 326 | 1959 | <i>(new)</i> | 1959 - 75 |
| SDP 88 | 1959 | <i>(new)</i> | 1959 - 78 |
| URD 997 - 999 | 1960 | <i>(new)</i> | 1960 - 78 |
| XDP 537, 538 | 1961 | <i>(new)</i> | 1961 - 77 |

Coaches - Bedford SB3 / Duple..... *(total 19)*

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------|
| ORD 250 | 1958 | <i>(new)</i> | 1958 - 69 |
| RRD 327 - 331 | 1958 | <i>(new)</i> | 1958 - 69 |
| UMJ 333 | 1958 | ex Baxter, Moggerhange | 1959 - |
| 8 PMP | 1958 | ex J.M. London N7 | 1960 - 68 |
| RNT 786 | 1958 | ex Hampson, Oswestry | 1960 - 69 |
| VDP 730 | 1960 | <i>(new)</i> | 1960 - 67 |
| 169 BAF | 1958 | ex Crimson, St. Ives | 1961 - 67 |
| 643 BCV | 1958 | ex Crimson, St. Ives | 1961 - 67 |
| 508 PML | 1958 | ex Radio Coaches, London E10 | 1961 - 67 |
| 515 PML | 1958 | ex FRC, London | 1961 - 68 |
| WLB 413, 414 | 1958 | ex Monico, London NW5 | 1961 - 70 |
| YRD 615 | 1958 | <i>(new)</i> | 1958 - 67 |
| XDG 211 | 1960 | ex Renown, Bristol | 1962 - 73 |
| 5695 DP | 1962 | <i>(new)</i> | 1962 - 70 |

Coaches - Bedford SB8 / Duple..... *(total 6)*

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 374 BXM | 1961 | ex Wootten, London SE16 | 1961 - 72 |
| 1112, 1113, 1699, 1700 DP | 1962 | <i>(new)</i> | 1962 - 70 |
| | | <i>(1699 DP is preserved)</i> | |
| 5698 ML | 1962 | ex Wootten, London SE16 | 1962 - 73 |