

Counties Road Car Company Limited, based at Dogs Head Street, Ipswich. This constituent gave the new company its name. Thomas Tilling Ltd. had started operating in the Ipswich area in June 1919 and these services were transferred to the Road Car Company when it was formed on the 30th August 1919 by Tilling and British Automobile Traction. Control of this company passed to the LNER in the December of 1929.

The third area to come under the new company's control was that of the services of the Ortona Motor Company Limited, Cambridge. This company had been registered since 28th March 1908 to take over the business formerly operated by Mr J.B. Walford who traded as "Ortona Motor Company". This business had received a boost when the Cambridge Street Tramways ceased to operate. On 20th February 1914 (the last day of the trams) the Ortona Company received a licence from the Cambridge Watch Committee to operate six more buses to meet the expected demand from the public. The Company's offices were at 112 Hills Road, Cambridge, the present local depot of Eastern Counties. December 1929 also saw the control of the Company pass jointly to the LMSR and LNER.

The fourth operating area to come under the new Company's auspices was that of the Peterborough Electric Traction Company Limited. This company operated electric trams and it first operated buses on the 20th April 1913. In May 1928, control of the company passed to Thomas Tilling and the British Automobile Traction and in December 1929, some shares were purchased by the LMSR and LNER.

Before the amalgamation there had always been uncertainty with regard to the fact that operators could hold on to their routes. Other operators would try and contest the more lucrative routes. The best way of maintaining one's route before a stable system of licensing operators over a route came into force, was to buy the opposition up and to expand one's own services. This can be seen in the expansion of the routes of United Automobile. In 1919, there four daily services from Norwich and in 1923, eleven services from Norwich with two services not daily.

It can be seen that the four separate undertakings were very closely linked by ownership at this time and it was decided to merge all four into one new company. This company would counteract the uncertainties spoken of above, and perhaps more important, the new company would be a better economic unit for its owners than the four smaller concerns. The new company had Norwich as its headquarters, its offices being at 79 Thorpe Road and a maintenance garage adjacent in Cremore Lane.

There was no drastic change when the new company began operating its services. For some people it might have meant a different coloured bus arriving at the stop and of course in three areas the fleet name had changed, but the travelling public would probably only have noticed one important change. The route number was altered but even this was done in such a way that would not confuse people. The Norwich area being the first area, retained its route numbers but the other areas were given different prefixes to denote the areas. Thus Cambridge area services were in the 100 series, Ipswich 200 and Peterborough 300. Thus it can be seen that people on the Ipswich to Stowmarket route, that had previously been route 4 of the Eastern Counties Road Car Co, now travelled on route 204.

The routes did not alter therefore within each area and this is mainly due to the fact that there was no appreciable change in the centres of population to warrant re-organising the routes. Nor did the company organise any extra through services between the four areas. There were only two through services existing in 1931 and they still operate today. They are the Norwich to Ipswich (Service 14, now service 671) and the Cambridge to Peterborough (Service 151).

Apart from carrying people the new company continued the practices of the former companies of carrying parcels. This service was extended over the whole area and so it was possible for example, for a parcel to go from Ipswich to