

press carried photographs of the company's fleet from time to time. In March 1933 AH200-9 were shown. They were Leyland TD2s with the company's own 56 seat bodywork built at Lowestoft. Some of these were stripped of their original bodies, the chassis reconditioned and were fitted with new ECW bodies during 1949 and lasted in service until the late 1950s. In August 1933 there appeared in the Eastern Daily Press a photograph of the Forecourt of Thorpe Station. There were crowds of people waiting to catch a bus to start their summer holidays. The picture, demonstrated the need for a new bus station in Norwich and three years later this was achieved.

Whilst the company was enlarging its fleet of stage carriage and express vehicles and building better facilities for its passengers, it did not alter the company's drive for economy. There was always a very careful consideration of the cost and receipt relationship. For example, if it cost 1/-d per mile to operate a bus, the company charged 1/1d per mile to recover that cost. The drive for economy in the 1930s however, left the company with a reputation that has not really left them today. The economy drive was taken to the point of fitting small fuel injectors into the engine and cutting out one of the cylinders in the engine. Thus instead of the usual Leyland or AEC or Bristol engines there was an "Eastern Counties Special". The idea was that by this action, the power of the engine was cut and less fuel was used. Economy had been successful by this action but the passengers were treated to a labourious ride and the manufacturers' frequent repairs. The failure of the engines was for the manufacturers' embarrassing, so much so, that Leylands put an advertisement in the 'Commercial Motor' during the 1930s stating that their engine performance was not to be judged by the vehicles of Eastern Counties Bus Company. Leylands also required the Company to replace the Leyland legend on the radiator with that of the company's. In fact Bristols, AECs and other types of vehicles then operated received the "Eastern Counties" badge on their radiators.

The body building works at Lowestoft was reorganised in 1936 and became a separate company - Eastern Counties Coachworks Ltd. In 1937 the name again was changed to the present day title of Eastern Coachworks Ltd.

(c) The Fleet in the years up to the Second World War

At its formation the company owned 544 vehicles and included a varied selection of makes. The vehicles were fairly modern and so standardisation was not practicable. The operating area was relatively flat and this helped to keep the chassis in good running order when compared with operators whose services were in hilly country. Thus when the original bodies wore out, the company embarked on a programme of rebodging both single and double decker vehicles. In some cases single decker chassis had double deck bodies fitted to them. From 1936 the buses received new Gardner 4LW oil engines (single deckers) or Gardner 5LW oil engines (double deckers). These engines replaced the petrol engines and only the oldest members of the fleet escaped this rehabilitation. This programme ceased during the war years, after which only a few vehicles were so treated. The varied selection of chassis can be seen in this list of vehicles inherited at the formation of the company.

From United - 226 vehicles comprising:

AEC	Albion	Leyland TS3 & TD1
ADC	Tilling Stevens	Thornycroft

In addition, Bristol, Gilford, Daimler, Graham Bros. and Graham Dodge chassis were owned by United having originally been in the fleet of Eastern Motorways, Norwich which had been purchased by the United company in 1930/1.

From Eastern Counties Road Car Company - 133 vehicles comprising:

Tilling Stevens petrol electric
Tilling Stevens