

CAMBRIDGE MEMORIES

BACKGROUND

Going up to Cambridge as an undergraduate in October 1968 was a huge step for a grammar school boy from an isolated corner of what is now Cumbria.

Autumn 1968 was a watershed in another important sense, as with the end of steam on British Railways, a source of fascination for so many of my generation had been taken away. The railway scene in late 1968 seemed depressing and boring and my interest in contemporary railway matters never returned.

At my local Ribble garage in Ulverston, what had been an interesting bus scene five or six years previously had also undergone a huge change, with the previously varied allocation now reduced to a uniform selection of 36-foot PSU3 Leopards and little else.

Emmanuel College was ideally placed for a bus enthusiast, especially my accommodation in North Court, overlooking Drummer Street bus station, which was the terminal point of almost all the country bus services. North Court is the imposing building to be seen as the background of so many bus photographs of Cambridge.

The majority of the city services, on the other hand, were routed along St Andrews Street which runs in a north-west to south-easterly direction right past the main gate at the front of the college. The routes in question were Eastern Counties routes 101, 102/133, 105 and 106, all worked by predominantly elderly Bristol double deckers.

Having arrived at my room in the early evening that day in early October, I soon became aware of a hum of idling vehicles outside, and putting my head out of the window I saw a procession of buses crawling around the bus station – mostly red Eastern Counties ones (like the 101 I had caught from the Railway Station) but also the intriguing ex-Ribble 'White Lady' PD2 coaches now operated by Premier Travel.

The following year (1969-70) I was lucky enough to have a third-floor room with a 'fly on the wall' view of the action in the bus station. My notes of the operations have survived and are particularly detailed for that year.

THE BUS FLEETS IN 1969/70

Eastern Counties

In 1968 the bus scene was most memorable for seeing the last days of the old Bristol K5G's which worked mainly on the city services and exclusively on the 102/133 until it was rerouted away from the narrow streets in the city centre in 1969. There were some 15 when I arrived – all with HPW and KNG registrations – they all had been retired within 18 months or so. The last was LKH (HPW) 135.

There were more of the wider KSW5G's which had LNG, MAH and OVF marks. Similar looking at first sight were two rebodied veterans LKH150 and 247 which carried registrations FAH106 and FNG145. These last two also disappeared quickly but the KSW's lingered a bit longer.

East Anglia being exceedingly flat, Eastern Counties had standardised until 1965/66 on Bristols with the sluggish but economical Gardner 5LW engine. All the double deckers, including large numbers

of LD and FS Lodekkas, had this engine and produced a characteristic deep rumbling sound which in my memory will always be inseparable from the city of Cambridge. It simply wasn't the same going back a few years later to find the place taken over by blue Leyland Nationals and VR's.

The FLF's which had appeared since 1966 must have been a tremendous change, for the passengers with their 70 seats and forward entrances but also for the crews as their Gardner 6-cylinder engines (which sounded quite different) afforded a greatly enhanced standard of performance.

On the single-deck side, Eastern Counties were a little more up to date – all the Bristol L types had already gone by 1968, although a number were still to be seen around the city working for contractors. However there were about 8 examples of the LC class of Bristol SC saloons with Gardner 4LK engines.

Eastern Counties had never gone in for many of the LS model, most of those working in Cambridge in 1969/70 being second-hand vehicles. The later MW was however ubiquitous, specifically the MW5G which was the staple of the country routes. There were small numbers of RESL, RELL and LH saloons – additional new vehicles of the last two models appeared during my Cambridge years.

As far as coaches were concerned the front line vehicles on the London and Norwich express services which ran all year were the classic Bristol RELH's. In summer when there was not only considerable duplication but also many seasonal routes, with older vehicles appearing in the shape of LS and MW coaches – and when these were insufficient hired coaches from the likes of Burtons of Haverhill were common.

The great majority of the Eastern Counties buses seen in Cambridge were allocated to the large Hills Road garage not far from the railway station. Many of these however, particularly the saloons, were outstationed at a number of subdepots in the outlying towns and villages.

The allocation of vehicles to routes was hugely unpredictable and fascinating, particularly in respect of the country routes at the busier times.

Premier Travel

In contrast to the situation a few years previously the Premier Travel fleet was by 1968 highly standardised. The double deck fleet consisted of the well-known ex-Ribble 'White Ladies' of which there were 11 of the original batch of 20 Leyland PD2's. The single deck saloon fleet of ex-LT RF's had by 1969 been largely replaced by a batch of ex-Devon General Reliances.

The coach fleet consisted entirely of AEC Reliances, and when I arrived at Cambridge there were just two main types – the fine Alexander Y-types which had been bought at a rate of two a year since 1964 and acted as front line coaches, plus an assortment of older, mostly second-hand Burlingham Seagull models dating back to the 1950's. By 1972 when I left, some newer second-hand Reliance coaches had appeared in the shape of Harrington and Duple-bodied vehicles from fleets such as Northern General and Yorks of Northampton.

Allocation of vehicles (and crews) to particular workings was in many cases very predictable, in total contrast to Eastern Counties. Nevertheless this was a most charismatic fleet which was impossible to ignore and from an observer's point of view acted as a perfect counterpoint to the bigger company.

Burwell and District

Burwell and District had a small smart fleet of 15 or so vehicles, several of them ex-demonstrators. As far as the stage services into Cambridge were concerned the front line vehicles were 2 Daimler Fleetlines and an AEC Renown. There were several older Daimler CV series double deckers and an assortment of AEC Reliances and Daimler single deckers (mostly coaches), of which the newer ones were seen quite frequently.

Whippet

Whippet had an extensive fleet but in Cambridge we only saw the tip of the iceberg. Smart Atlantean FEW1D was a common visitor on the stage services from north-west of the city, as was NEG589F, a dual-purpose Bedford. Otherwise we mostly saw rather dull nearly new Plaxton-bodied Bedford coaches. The large fleet of second-hand double deckers (including the odd RLH) very seldom appeared at Drummer Street and presumably busied themselves on contract work nearer their base at Hilton.

United Counties

The United Counties fleet was a large one of course with all the usual Tilling group standard types. On the one service which came into Drummer Street bus station, the 175, the small Biggleswade garage would provide a variety of rolling stock, in 1969-70 most commonly an LS saloon, but sometimes an RE or an MW or a Lodekka. The long route 128 terminated at the Railway Station and traversed the opposite side of the city – on the few occasions I saw it a Lodekka was provided. There was also a rail-replacement service 428 from Bedford, on which I first arrived in Cambridge in October 1968. Naturally this also ran to the Railway Station and it came nowhere near Drummer Street – as was the nature of these things this service did not thrive and lasted for a limited period.

Other Independents

The famous Kenzies fleet from Shepreth south of the city had a variety of well turned out coaches, mostly Bedfords, the most remarkable being OB JBY804, which even then was quite a scarce type.

Coaches of Millers at nearby Foxton were seen less often and tended to be rather more varied, both in type and in livery.

From north of the city came Youngs of Rampton, in a distinctive red and grey livery. Youngs had an interesting and varied fleet including several double deckers.

A large independent coach firm in Cambridge itself was Progressive, with some modern Plaxton-bodied Bedfords but also elderly second-hand vehicles including K-type Bristols.

Percivals was a small operator whose vehicles regularly visited the bus station on the Oxford route shared with Premier Travel. There was an associated company in Oxford and coaches from there appeared too. Vehicles presented a somewhat downmarket appearance, especially in comparison with Premier Travel. Generally rather elderly lightweights, they did not have a standard livery but were in various shades of blue and white or cream.

Non-PSV's

The non-PSV's which could be seen around Cambridge in those days were quite interesting. Some were seen regularly at predictable times and places, others turned up unexpectedly.

Although Eastern Counties still had some late-40's Bristol K double deckers soldiering on, by 1968 the single deck equivalents, L5G's with rear-entrance ECW saloon bodywork, had all gone, but a number were still around the city, notably operated by Sindalls, the builders, whose KNG723 was seen frequently. Sindalls later acquired Beadle-bodied Tiger Cubs from Southdown and OUF139 was the commonest Sindall vehicle in my later years.

Camtiles were still running an orange lowbridge ex-Eastern Counties K5G, FAH104. According to my PSV Circle news sheets this had a 1945 chassis and 1953 body.

Two unusual AEC Regals (PVX104, a Regal III with Watson bodywork and a Transun-bodied Regal IV UNO408) with Simplex of Sawston were occasionally seen but were later supplanted by less interesting Bedford SB's.

A coach of Metals Research from Melbourn was seen regularly – at first it was VUP99, a Yeates-bodied Bedford SBG, but this later was replaced on its regular run by an older vehicle in the shape of CHJ415, a Bedford OB/Duple.

Mowlems ran several elderly Reliance coaches but a vehicle of associated company Rattee and Kett was a more frequent sighting – OTT45, a former Royal Blue Bristol LS coach.

THE SERVICES OPERATED

Eastern Counties ran all the city routes which generally operated throughout the day at a headway of typically 10 minutes and with few exceptions were worked by double deckers.

During my entire time at Cambridge, Magdalene Bridge in the city centre was closed to buses and other heavy vehicles. This meant that some of the city buses, such as the 106, which otherwise would have crossed the bridge, were subject to a particularly long and inconvenient diversion.

Neither Routes 101 (Chesterton-Railway Station) nor 105 (Newnham-Beaumont Road) ran past Drummer Street, but Route 106 (Girton Corner-Red Cross) could be seen, but only in the evening peak when, southbound only, it bypassed the congested city centre area and took a short cut along Emmanuel Road and Emmanuel Street.

Route 102 (Coldhams Lane/St Thomas's Road-Meadowlands/Keynes Road) passed the bus station in the southbound direction throughout the day and with 8 buses per hour was the most frequent route; curiously in the northbound direction, half the journeys (those destined for Keynes Road) ran as 133's rather than 102's. It tended to have the oldest buses – in fact until 1969 when it was diverted away from the narrow King Street routing in the city centre, it was worked exclusively by veteran 7ft 6in K5G's.

Route 115 (Trumpington-Kings Hedges Road) was less frequent, every 15-20 minutes, requiring 4 buses, invariably 2 FLF Lodekkas alternating with older vehicles, usually LD Lodekkas.

Route 130 consisted of two separate services – the circular shuttle to North Arbury estate requiring 2 FLF's which ran every 20 minutes, each vehicle turning up every 40 minutes. The other

130 was a more conventional service (Coldhams Lane-Alex Wood Road) which did not come near Drummer Street. Neither did Route 139 (New Hospital-Impington) nor the infrequent single-deck worked Route 129 (Peas Hill-Oakington).

Route 131 was the only city route to use the bus station – it terminated in Bay 15, the furthest from the main part of the bus station. Alternate buses ran to Cherry Hinton Church and Colville Road.

The mainstay of the country routes was the standard MW saloon (coded LM), supplemented by a handful (but an increasing one) of Bristol RE saloons of classes RS, RL and RLE, a few older LS's and the SC4LK's which tended to work the quieter routes. However in peak hours anything could appear, from the oldest Bristol K-type double-decker to an RE coach which had strayed from the London express.

In the northerly direction Route 104 provided a largely half-hourly service to Cottenham or Willingham in the Fens, with a few much longer journeys to March. Moving clockwise to the east there was the 109 to Ely, mainly following the A10 trunk road.

To the east of Cambridge lies Newmarket, and although Eastern Counties ran several services in this direction none was very frequent or busy. However the villages to the north of the main A45 Newmarket road were served by Burwell and District's distinctive fleet and a little to the south was Premier Travel's 44 route which during the day shuttled between Drummer Street and Fulbourn with a few mainly early and late journeys projected to Kedington or Withersfield nearer the operating base at Haverhill.

The main road service to Haverhill south-east of Cambridge was provided by Eastern Counties as Route 113. South of Cambridge, Saffron Walden was served by trunk route 112, and a busy shorter route in the same direction, the 103, served Sawston and Pampisford. Premier Travel provided a varied selection of infrequent service to the south and south-west of the city.

The main road route along the A10 towards London was Route 108 which terminated at Royston. This was nominally a joint service, with Premier providing a few journeys.

To the west of Cambridge ran Route 118, mostly terminating at the village of Longstowe, as well as United Counties Route 175 to Biggleswade (plus the long United Counties Route 128 to Northampton which terminated at the Railway Station).

To the north-west of the city there was an assortment of services provided by both Eastern Counties and Whippet, while the hourly trunk service 151 to Peterborough via Huntingdon was largely worked by late-model FS Lodekkas from Peterborough garage. They never seemed to be in a hurry to leave on their slow run on the long straight road to Peterborough.

All country services from the north approached the bus station from Emmanuel Road and those from the south along Parker Street. Sometimes terminating buses would avoid coming right into the often congested bus station and would turn left to drop off their passengers in Emmanuel Street; from there it was just another left turn and then a long straight drive to the Eastern Counties garage in Hills Road.

One of the idiosyncrasies of Eastern Counties was the use of 'Service' or 'Relief' as a destination, which was all very well with Cambridge-bound buses which were invariably heading for Drummer Street and for service buses shown in the timetable. However, although I suppose regular travellers would know where a relief bus was going, to the outside observer it was by no means clear how

far a '108 Relief' or a '112 Relief' was heading.

ALLOCATION OF VEHICLES TO ROUTES

In comparison to what I later came to regard as the norm at London Transport there was a fascinating variety in the vehicles allocated to the various routes.

On Friday 5 June 1970 I logged all that departed on a selection of routes.

Infrequent route 136 to Haverhill diverged from the main Haverhill route 113 at Bartlow. On Fridays there was just one departure at 4.10, covered by standard FS LFS123 (FVF123C).

City route 139 (New Hospital-Impington) did not come near Drummer Street bus station but I did note two buses on the route on 5 June – LH saloon LH701 (VVF701H) and standard MW LM974 (474BNG).

Looking now at the generally quiet and infrequent route 143 to Stapleford south of the city, there were 7 departures covered by 6 vehicles of 6 different types: -

- 7.48 FLF350 (ONG350F) – FLF normally used on city routes
- 9.15 LM605 (AAH912B) – standard MW saloon
- 11.50 LM587 (LAX638) – ex Red & White LS6G saloon
- 12.50 LM587 (LAX638) - ditto
- 3.40 VR377 (UAH377G) - VR
- 5.10 LC562 (6562AH) – SC4LK saloon
- 5.45 LE758 (PVF758) – LS coach downgraded to bus.

Route 150 was a similarly quiet back road route to Waterbeach on the road to Ely, and on the same day that had the following departures: -

- 9.20 LE758)
- 12.20 LC562) see above
- 2.35 LM587)
- 4.50 LM932 (WPW632) – early MW saloon
- 6.05 RL672 (PPW672F) – RELL saloon
- 9.25 RS657 (KVF657E) – RESL saloon.

As can be seen three of the same vehicles from the 143 also turned up on this route. Unlike the 143 there was no appearance of any double deckers at peak times.

Long trunk route 151 to Peterborough was operated by vehicles from both Cambridge and Peterborough garages. Unlike many of the Eastern Counties routes there was some pattern to the timetable, with buses generally departing at 15 minutes past the hour. On this occasion all but one departure was seen, the starred vehicles indicating those from Peterborough garage:

- 6.53 LFS124 (GNG124C) – late FS5G
- 8.05 RLE867 (WPW867H) – nearly new dual-purpose RE (to Huntingdon only)
- 10.15 RLE867
- 11.05 RS650* (KVF650E) – RESL saloon (limited stop journey)
- 12.15 FLF347* (MNG347E) - FLF6G
- 2.15 RLE867
- 3.15 LFS116* (FAH116C) – late FS5G

4.15 FLF347*
5.15 FLF493 (MAH493E) - FLF6G
6.15 RLE867
6.50 ??? (limited stop journey)
7.15 LFS116*
9.25 FLF347*

Turning now to infrequent route 153 to St Ives via Dry Drayton, there were on Fridays just two departures, with the following vehicles on this occasion : -

4.15 LKD230 (OVF230) – early LD (to Dry Drayton only).
5.50 LM619 (DVF119C) – standard MW saloon.

Route 156 had 3 departures to Somersham at 10.10, 1.35 and 5.00, all covered by LH saloon LH688 (RAH688F).

The main road route 166 to Newmarket had just one daily departure at 4.55, and on this day it was worked by standard MW saloon LM627 (FAH627C).

OUTSTATIONS

With the bulk of the passenger flow going into Cambridge in the morning and out in the evening, it was clearly sensible for some of the buses operating country routes to be based at the outer ends of the routes. In fact quite a substantial proportion of the Cambridge allocation was based away from the main Hills Road garage. Most of the outstationed buses were the standard MW saloons. They did of course change over frequently but in June 1970 the allocation of the 'subdepots' appeared to be as follows:

Saffron Walden LM627 (FAH627C), LM644(KAH644D).
Haverhill LM586 (LAX633), LM989 (489DPW).
Longstowe LM600 (600ENG), LM626 (EVF626C).
Burwell LM979 (479BVF).
Cottenham LM621 (ENG121C), RS649 (KVF649E).
St Ives LC562 (6562AH), LH899 (WNG899H), LM605 (AAH912B), LM619 (DVF119C).
Royston FLF494 (MAH494E), LC523 (TVF523), LM587 (LAX638), LM613 (CPW613B).

I cannot be certain of the exact location of these outstations.

NORTH COURT 1969-1970

In my first year I was in Q Staircase of North Court at Emmanuel, which meant that I could hear the hum of traffic from Drummer Street but had to lean out of the window for a very restricted view of the end of the bus station.

In my second year I had the incredible luck, from a bus enthusiast's perspective, of having a top floor room on X Staircase overlooking the bus station. I certainly made full use of the view and made numerous detailed observations.

Drummer Street bus station has been reorganised since my years at Cambridge. The arrangement in 1969-70 is shown in the accompanying diagram (not to scale). Country routes from the north all arrived via Emmanuel Road, while those from the south came along Parker Street.

In the period of my stay buses used to move around the centre island in a clockwise direction. With buses parked at most of the bays at busy times as well as alongside the centre island on the far side (habitually Premier Travel PD2's on layover) it was often a long slow business for buses to manoeuvre their way around, with reversing often being required at the terminal end.

The departure bays were arranged around the outside of the bus station, with buses parking parallel to the kerb. Of the 15 bays Bays 1 to 5 were against North Court, starting at Emmanuel Street which had been widened so that the rearmost bay, Bay 1, serving United Counties route 175, was of very restricted size and buses could protrude out slightly into the street. Bays 2 to 5 were of a more adequate size, and my room directly overlooked Bay 2.

Beyond the centre island were Bays 6 to 11, arranged in an arc beside a large green space known as Christ's Pieces. The remaining four bays, numbered 12 to 15, beyond the pedestrian crossing, were actually outside the bus station proper but in the continuation of Parker Street linking up with Emmanuel Street. These streets themselves carried quite heavy general traffic as well as a handful of city bus routes which did not use the bus station - these were the 102, 115 and 130 plus the 106 in the evening peak only; these routes all came up Emmanuel Road from the north and turned right into Parker Street. My window offered a clear view of all this traffic.

The allocation of bus routes to bays was as follows :

Bay 1 Burwell 3 to Toft, Little Eversden.
United Cos 175 to Harlton, Biggleswade.

Bay 2 108 to Foxton, Royston.
Premier 1 to Fowlmere, Royston.
Premier 2 to Foxton, Royston.
Premier 27 to Shelford, Barkway.

Bay 3 110 to Fulbourn, Wilbrahams.
Premier 44 to Fulbourn, Stradishall.
Premier 45 to Fulbourn, Kedington.

Bay 4 112 to Whittlesford, Saffron Walden.
112 to Shelfords, Hinxton.
118 to Bourn, Caxton.
Associated Mobs to Banbury, Cheltenham.

Bay 5 120 to Barton, Eversdens.
162 to Dullingham, Newmarket.
166 to Bottisham, Newmarket.
E to London

Bay 6 150 to Horningsea, Waterbeach.
151 to Huntingdon, Peterborough.
E to Bury St Edmunds, Norwich.

Bay 7 111 to Bottisham, Burwell
122 to Burwell, Soham.
Burwell 1 to Swaffhams, Burwell.

- Bay 8 107 to Long Stanton, St Ives.
156 to Over, St Ives.
Burwell 4 to Burwell, Soham.
Burwell 11 to Burwell, Isleham.
- Bay 9 114 to Teversham, Newmarket.
119 to Bassingbourn, Royston.
153 to Coton, Dry Drayton, St Ives.
- Bay 10 103 to Shelford, Sawston.
Premier 9 to Sawston, Chrishall.
- Bay 11 104 to Histon, Cottenham.
137 to Cottenham, March.
155 to Cottenham, St Ives.
- Bay 12 109 to Waterbeach, Ely.
149 to Wilburton, Ely.
- Bay 13 113 to Linton, Haverhill.
136 to Bartlow, Haverhill.
- Bay 14 143 to Shelford, Stapleford.
Whippet 1 to Papworth, Hilton.
- Bay 15 131 to Cherry Hinton.

These details were as shown on the stands in 1968 – in fact some of these routes were defunct or no longer ran to the places shown.

With all or most bays occupied, plus others possibly waiting in the middle, at certain times in the evening things became very congested. In particular there was a simultaneous exodus at 4.15, after which there was something of a lull until a further busy period between 5 and 6.

The morning peak was even more concentrated, between about 8.30 and 9, but the problems then were rather different, with the numerous simultaneous arrivals queueing back along Parker Street to gain entry to the bus station. Most of them did not then need to hang about and disappeared to Hills Road garage or elsewhere after unloading their passengers.

Saturdays tended to be quite busy through the entire day, and summer Saturdays, with a multitude of additional express services, many using coaches on hire from smaller operators, were absolutely fascinating to observe.

Otherwise the bus station could be reasonably quiet, but there were usually a few buses parked up awaiting their next duties.

AN HOUR IN SUMMER 1970

Let us travel back in time to an early summer's evening and observe from my window in North Court for the hour from 6 to 7pm. The date is Monday 15 June, and, having recently finished exams, I have taken full advantage of a free day at the end of term to study bus operations on a typical summer weekday. I had been up early to see the first bus movements of the day at Drummer

Street at 6.35 am – looking back this does not seem very early, but there really were no overnight or early morning services. Later in the morning I took a bus trip to Royston, in those days a small town on the main road to London – no bypasses or M11 then!

Back at Drummer Street, between 5 and 6 there has been the usual exodus of buses on all the country routes. The Premier Travel PD2's, which have been in evidence all day in and around the bus station, have all disappeared south to their garages for the night.

The bus departures and arrivals due between 6 and 7 are as listed below (Eastern Counties unless otherwise stated) with a brief summary of the type and direction of route. The frequency of departures falls away rapidly after 6.30.

SCHEDULED DEPARTURES

6.00	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
6.05	122	Ely	Long indirect country	N
6.05	143	Stapleford	Short country	S
6.05	150	Waterbeach	Short country	NE
6.05	Whippet 1	St Ives	Country	NW
6.10	113	Haverhill	Trunk country	SE
6.15	103	Sawston	Country	S
6.15	Premier 2	Royston	Trunk country	SW
6.15	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
6.15	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
6.15	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
6.20	104	Cottenham	Country	N
6.20	110	Little Wilbraham	Country	SE
6.20	112	Saffron Walden	Trunk country	S
6.25	118	Longstowe	Country	W
6.25	Un Cos 175	Biggleswade	Country	W
6.35	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
6.45	107	St Ives	Country	NW

SCHEDULED ARRIVALS

6.00	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
6.00	143	Stapleford	Short country	S
6.02	Whippet 1	St Ives	Country	NW
6.07	156	Over	Country	NW
6.09	118	Longstowe	Country	W
6.09	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
6.10	146	Royston	Trunk country	SW
6.10	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
6.12	104	Cottenham	Country	N
6.15	113	Haverhill	Trunk country	SE
6.17	103	Sawston	Country	S
6.20	Un Cos 175	Biggleswade	Country	W
6.21	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
6.21	104	Willingham	Country	N
6.27	112	Duxford	Trunk country	S
6.33	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
6.36	107	St Ives	Country	NW

6.37	Burwell 11	Isleham	Country	E
6.42	104	Cottenham	Country	N
6.45	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
6.53	153	Dry Drayton	Country	NW
6.54	107	Oakington	Country	NW
6.55	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
6.56	143	Stapleford	Short country	S
6.56	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
6.56	103	Pampisford	Country	S
6.57	120	Great Eversden	Country	W

There are still 8 buses and coaches in Drummer Street as the clocks strike 6. Directly under my window in Bay 2 is Yelloway Reliance/Plaxton KDK800F, one of the regulars on the joint Premier/Yelloway route from the North West, tonight presumably a Cambridge-terminating relief to the main Premier coach. Beside it is Premier Travel lightweight Reliance saloon 198 (VDV805) waiting on the 6.15 departure to Royston – this mainly hourly route, known by Eastern Counties as Route 108, is in fact joint with Premier who work just a handful of journeys. In front of 198, standard Eastern Counties MW5G LM979 (479 BVF) is standing behind Premier Reliance/Alexander 180 (DCE800C), which is awaiting departure to Clacton on the joint service from the North West.

Two Eastern Counties single deckers are standing side by side at the terminal end of the bus station. SC4LK saloon LC540 (VVF540) stands awaiting its departure time at 6.05 on route 150 to Waterbeach, typical of the quieter routes frequented by these elderly buses. Facing the terminal end is a contrasting vehicle, RLE867 (WVW867H), a smart recently delivered dual purpose RELL6G.

The bays on the far side of the bus station are all empty, but at the outer end of the centre island a coach stands in the usual departure point of the joint Premier/Percivals service to Oxford- tonight the vehicle for the 6.15 departure is Premier Reliance/Harrington Cavalier 191 (KCN916). At the stand farthest away, Stand 15, veteran Eastern Counties KSW LKH267 (LNG267) prepares to set off to Cherry Hinton Church on the 6.00 131 departure.

At 6.00 identical LKH269 (LNG269) comes up Emmanuel Road and turns into Emmanuel Street on the 102 to St Thomas' Road.

Two minutes later at 6.02 there is a flurry of activity as Eastern Counties FLF352 (ONG352F) comes the other way on route 115 to Kings Hedges Road. Meanwhile LKH267 trundles away towards Cherry Hinton. Two buses appear from the north down Emmanuel Road – Whippet UFL498H, a modern Bedford VAL/Plaxton on the route from St Ives, and another of the SC saloons, LC562 (6562AH), which has returned after working a relief journey on Ely Route 109 as far as Waterbeach. The Whippet coach goes right round the bus station to Bay 14 to set down any passengers, and the SC pauses for a couple of minutes beside the Clacton coach.

At 6.03 the Yelloway coach departs empty, heading up Emmanuel Road, and LM979 moves round to Bay 7 to prepare for departure to Burwell on infrequent service 111.

LC562 moves round to Bay 12 at 6.04 while FLF486 (KPW486E), one of those that works on the country services, arrives on time from the south on the 103 from Stapleford, going straight round to Stand 10.

At 6.05 the main 109 service bus from Ely arrives in the shape of one of the older MW's LM938 (WPW638), pulling 5 minutes early into Bay 4.

After a slight lull, at 6.07 a returning 108 from Royston, LM613 (CPW613B), appears along Parker Street but does not enter the bus station, opting to turn left into Emmanuel Street to take the quickest route to Hills Road garage. Meanwhile LC562 moves forward to Bay 13 to take up the next departure on Haverhill route 113.

At 6.08 the 150 Waterbeach bus (due 6.05), LC540, departs, as does the Whippet coach on Route 1 back to St Ives – also due out at 6.05. RLE 867 moves forward to Bay 6 in readiness for the 6.15 151 departure to Peterborough.

There are two further departures at 6.09 – Premier Travel 180 on the express to Clacton and LM979 on the 111 to Burwell. Another of the standard MW5G saloons, LM600 (600ENG), takes 180's place off Bay 4, having arrived on time on service 118 from Longstowe to the west of the city.

Yet another MW turns up at 6.10 – LM627 (FAH627C) – 5 minutes early from Haverhill on Route 113. It stops off Bay 3 to take up its next working on Saffron Walden route 112. Meanwhile another of Cambridge's 1951 batch of KSW's, LKH268 (LNG268) passes 4 minutes late on the 102 to Coldhams Lane.

Another Lodekka, LFS47(47CNG), one of the two with open platforms, appears from the south on Route 103 at 18.12. This is the arrival from Sawston due at 1815. It pauses just ahead of Bay 5 to set down its passengers.

At 6.13 LM938 moves round the bus station to behind Bay 12.

Now two more LFS Lodekkas appear along Emmanuel Road on city services – LFS20 (1120PW) and LFS44 (44CNG). The first of these is on Route 106 to Red Cross – this route is unusual in that it only comes this way in the evening peak – otherwise it uses the more congested streets in the city centre. LFS44 is the third 102 we have seen and it is heading for St Thomas Road (alternate journeys heading there and Coldhams Lane through the day). Both of these head out of sight along Emmanuel Street, accompanied by a third Lodekka, the empty 103, LFS47, bound for Hills Road garage.

After another short lull, at 6.16 LM938 moves forward onto Bay 12 and starts to take on passengers for the 109 departure. Running 7 minutes late, a 131 arrives along Parker Street from Colville Road – one of the older Lodekkas LKD192 (VVF192) – and goes right round to the frontmost stand, Bay 15.

At 6.17 the 151 to Peterborough, due at 6.15 – RLE867 – departs from Bay 6, and in contrast LC561 leaves on the 113 to Haverhill due out 7 minutes earlier, while FLF486 leaves with the 6.15 103 departure to Sawston.

At 6.18 the Premier Travel Cavalier, 191, leaves for Oxford and LM938 head off into the Fens on the 109 Ely departure. Both of these were due out at 6.15.

The last of the group of 6.15 departures leaves at 6.19 – Premier Reliance saloon 198 to Royston on Route 2 and LKD192 back to Colville Road on the 131. Two buses appear from the north, both on Route 104, strangely running in reverse sequence. First is the 6.25 arrival from Willingham, LFS107 (DNG107C) which goes right down to the terminal end of the bus station. Following this is the 6.15 from Cottenham, one of the stylish RESL saloons new in 1967, RS649 (KVF649E), which

goes onto the 104 stand on Bay 10.

At 6.20 FLF351 (ONG351F) comes along Emmanuel Road and sweeps by on circular city service 130 from North Arbury Estate.

The next departure, a minute later at 6.21, is LM627 on the 6.20 departure on route 112 to Saffron Walden, while United Counties green FS6G Lodekka 708 (HBD708D) arrives from Biggleswade, tucking itself into the shortened stand 1 adjacent to Emmanuel Street. LD5G LKD207 (VVF207) passes south along Emmanuel Road and Emmanuel Street on the 115 city service to Trumpington, running about 9 minutes late.

At 6.23 boxy LH saloon LH689 (RAH689F) rushes in from Emmanuel Street to Bay 3 to belatedly take up service on the 6.20 110 to Little Wilbraham.

Next bus to appear down Emmanuel Road, at 6.24, is KSW5G LKH321 (MAH321) on the 102 to Coldhams Lane, followed a minute later by FLF352 on the 115 heading back from Kings Hedges Road to Trumpington. RS649 on the 6.20 104 departure for Cottenham departs 5 minutes late.

At 6.26 nearly-new LH899 (WNG899H) appears from the Fens on route 107 from St Ives, running 11 minutes early, and goes onto Bay 8. Another LD appears along Parker Street, LKD198 (VVF198), on the 131 from Cherry Hinton, 5 minutes late, which heads straight up Emmanuel Street bound for the garage. Another 102, open-platform Lodekka LFS49 (49CNG) comes down Emmanuel Road, heading for St Thomas Road slightly early and soon catching up with the previous 102 only 2 minutes ahead.

The 6.25 118 departure to Longstowe leaves at 6.27 – LM600 from Bay 4. Only a minute behind the previous 131, LKD214 (VVF214) arrives 6 minutes early from Colville Road and goes onto the 131 stand on Bay 15.

At 6.28 LH689 sets off for Little Wilbraham on route 110 some 8 minutes behind time – no doubt the passengers are in for a bumpy ride as it makes up time on the flat country roads. Another FS Lodekka, LFS95 (CVF295B) passes by at 6.29 on city service 106 to Red Cross. The Associated Motorways coach from Cheltenham to Norwich was due at 6.25 – this evening it is 4 minutes before time, the vehicle being Black & White Motorways 254 (DDG254C), a Harrington bodied PSU3 Leopard, which goes onto Bay 5 to take its scheduled half-hour break.

At 6.31 two modern buses arrive from the south on country routes. First to appear is FLF493 (MAH493E) from Duxford on Route 112; some 4 minutes behind time it goes round to stand at Bay 10. Next comes RELL saloon RL672 (PPW672F) arriving back on a 143 from Stapleford, which follows the double decker round before parking just ahead of it on Bay 11. At 6.32 the United Counties Lodekka departs rather belatedly on the 6.25 175 to Biggleswade.

After a brief lull a 115 comes round the corner from Emmanuel Street at 6.35 and hurries north towards its terminal of Kings Hedges Road. The vehicle is FLF450 (HPW450D) which appears practically daily on this city route.

At 6.36 LKD214 moves off from the furthest stand, Bay 15, on a 131 departure to Cherry Hinton. Meanwhile FS5G LFS35 (2935PW) comes south off Emmanuel Road and continues its journey on route 102 to Coldhams Lane, followed closely by Burwell & District JER938F, a modern AEC Reliance/Plaxton coach, on an arrival from Isleham which goes onto Bay 7.

At 6.37 KSW LKH267 reappears from Cherry Hinton on Route 131, running 8 minutes early and

hurrying straight into Emmanuel Street on its way to the garage.

At 6.39 a further two contrasting vehicles arrive from the north. First is FLF349 (ONG349F) on Route 130 from North Arbury Estate ; this is one of the regulars on this FLF-worked route but is on its last trip of the day to the City Centre before disappearing to Hills Road garage. Following the FLF is LS6G saloon LM588 (MAX102) on Route 104 from Cottenham, which is 7 minutes early and also goes straight up Emmanuel Street towards the garage. Eastern Counties bought few LS saloons and this is a recent second-hand acquisition from Welsh operator Red & White.

At 6.42 another bus appears down Emmanuel Road on 8-buses-per-hour city route 102, another FS5G, LFS18 (1118PW). This one is bound for St Thomas' Road. Following it is sister vehicle LFS17 (1117PW) on a 151 short working from Dry Drayton which enters the bus station and waits near Bay 5 for a couple of minutes before heading off empty along Parker Street. Meanwhile at 6.43 RL672 has left empty along Emmanuel Street.

At 6.44 the express from London (Route E) arrives on time at Bay 4. The vehicle is as usual one of the comfortable RELH coaches, on this occasion RE878 (AAH126B).

At 6.47 another FS, LFS115 (FAH115C) arrives 4 minutes early on the long 151 route from Peterborough. This vehicle from Peterborough garage is typical of the allocation to this route and it goes onto its stand on Bay 6. From the south along Parker Street comes a 103 from Pampisford in the shape of Lodekka FLF350 (ONG350F). Running 7 minutes early it pauses off Bay 5. Meanwhile LH899 leaves on the 6.45 107 departure to St Ives.

At 6.48 a very rare vehicle puts in an appearance, although it does not come near the bus station but turns right from Parker Street into Emmanuel Road. This is UNO408, a non-PSV operated by Simplex, an AEC Regal IV with unusual Trans-United coachwork.

FLF350 drives round the bus station at 6.49 and heads off down Emmanuel Street, meeting MW saloon LM621 (ENG121C) which arrives from the garage and goes onto Bay 13 to form the late-running 6.45 113 departure to Haverhill. Also Cambridge's first Bristol VR, VR374 (UAH374G) appears from the north on Route 107 from Oakington (due at 6.54) and sets off its passengers near Bay 4 before leaving via Parker Street.

At 6.50 elderly Lodekka LKD192 (VVF192) arrives back from Colville Road on Route 131, some 6 minutes early, and moves round to the far stand on Bay 15. Meanwhile LM621 hurries away towards Haverhill and early Bristol LH LH688 (RAH688F) arrives 7 minutes early from west of the city on country route 120 from Great Eversden, turning straight into Emmanuel Street instead of entering the bus station proper

At 6.51 LD Lodekka LKD207 (VVF207) appears again back from Trumpington on Route 115, having made up all its lost time and bound now for Kings Hedges Road.

At 6.54 an FS5G Lodekka rounds the corner on yet another 102, this time a short working to Radegund Road – LFS77 (AAH615B) – while sister vehicle LFS107 (DNG107C) reverses from the terminal end of the bus station and goes onto Bay 11.

Things are quietening down now. At 6.56 another of the ex-Red & White LS saloons puts in an appearance, this time LS587 (LAX638) arriving on the 108 from Royston and running 9 minutes early. This bus too does not bother to enter the bus station but heads left up Emmanuel Street.

The southbound 115 appears at 6.57, heading for Trumpington. It is FLF450 (HPW450D) seen only

22 minutes ago heading north and now 5 minutes early. Meanwhile the Black & White coach departs for Norwich 2 minutes late.

The final arrival in the hour, at 6.59, is Ely-allocated MW saloon LM629 (FAH629C) on the 7.05 109 arrival from Ely. It sets down its passengers off Bay 4.

So, at the end of the hour, what remains in the bus station? 7 buses and coaches are now present, and although I did not make a note of their subsequent movements it is quite easy to deduce the departing services which they were forming.

Starting at the front, on Bay 15 LKD192 is due out at 7.00 on the 131 to Colville Road. LFS107 on Bay 11 is the 7.05 104 departure to Cottenham and behind it on Bay 10 FLF493 is ready to leave for Sawston on Route 103. Burwell JER938F is also due out at 7.00, returning to its base from Bay 7, while on Bay 6 behind waits LFS115 on the 7.15 departure to Peterborough on Route 151.

Turning now to the near side of the bus station adjacent to my observation point, London coach RE878 is ready to leave at 7.00. Alongside it LM629 will move round to Bay 12 to take up service at 7.15 on the 109 back to Ely.

The hour at Drummer Street has seen an average level of activity, with 54 individual buses and coaches, 45 of which were Eastern Counties vehicles.

Of the latter there were 27 double deckers (7 FLF, 11 FS and 4 LD Lodekkas, 4 KSW's and one VR), 17 single deck buses (7 MW's, 2 ex-Red & White LS's, 2 SC4LK's, 3 LH's, one short RE and 2 long RE's, one of them being a dual-purpose vehicle) and one coach (RE).

There have been 3 Premier Travel AEC Reliances (one bus, 2 coaches), a United Counties Lodekka, single coaches from Burwell & District, Whippet, Yelloway and Black & White and finally an elderly non-PSV of Simplex.

50 MINUTES IN NOVEMBER IN A SNOWSTORM

A little shorter than my usual observation period of an hour, this late morning session is interesting because it took place during a steady northerly blizzard, with about an inch of snow on the ground. The date was Saturday 29 November.

Later in fact the situation became much worse, with country services running up to 40 minutes late and city services completely out of order. In the early afternoon all roads in sight were blocked at times by lines of traffic. Shortly after 2.00 the snow stopped and there was a gradual return to normal. At the height of the blizzard it was impossible to see the destination blinds of most vehicles. However between 11.10 and 12.00, as we shall see, things had not really got too bad.

Let us return now to that cold morning, when at 11.10 the bus station is fairly quiet with just 7 buses present.

The bus departures and arrivals due between 11.10 and 12.00 are as listed below (Eastern Counties unless otherwise stated).

SCHEDULED DEPARTURES

11.12	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
11.15	108	Royston	Trunk country	SW

11.15	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
11.15	Premier 9	Sawston	Country	S
11.20	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
11.20	118	Great Gransden	Country	W
11.20	Whippet 1	St Ives	Country	NW
11.24	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
11.30	162	Newmarket	Country	E
11.35	104	Cottenham	Country	N
11.36	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
11.40	103	Sawston	Country	S
11.40	107	Long Stanton	Country	NW
11.40	113	Haverhill	Trunk country	SE
11.40	153	Coton	Short country	W
11.45	Burwell 1	Burwell	Country	NE
11.45	Whippet 1	Hilton	Country	NW
11.45	Premier 1	Duxford Aerodrome	Country	S
11.48	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
11.50	143	Stapleford	Short country	S
11.55	110	Little Wilbraham	Short country	E

SCHEDULED ARRIVALS

11.13	Whippet 1	Caldecote Turn	Short country	NW
11.14	118	Bourn	Country	W
11.15	111	Newmarket	Country	E
11.16	104	Cottenham	Country	N
11.21	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
11.27	103	Sawston	Country	S
11.33	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
11.45	Premier 1	Fowlmere	Country	S
11.45	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
11.46	104	Cottenham	Country	N
11.50	112	Saffron Walden	Trunk country	S
11.50	Premier 44	Fulbourn	Short country	SE
11.52	Premier 9	Stapleford	Short country	S
11.55	Un Cos 175	Biggleswade	Country	W
11.55	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
11.56	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
11.57	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
11.57	113	Haverhill	Trunk country	SE

At Bay 2 LH688 (RAH688F) waits on the 108 service to Royston. Standing off Bay 3 is Premier Travel White Lady 146 (DCK204), one of Haverhill's allocation, which does not turn a wheel before mid-day.

An unidentifiable snow-covered LFS Lodekka from Peterborough stands on Bay 6, just behind Ely's MW saloon LM956 (3018AH) awaiting departure on Route 122. Another MW, LM600 (600ENG), sits tucked in on the far side of the centre island. A second White Lady, Premier 145 (DCK214) is on Bay 10, and up at Bay 15 the next 131 awaits departure in the shape of Lodekka LFS55 (55CPW).

Nothing happens until 11.12, when LFS55 leaves on time for Cherry Hinton. MW saloon LM989

(489DPW) arrives from the garage along Parker Street and takes up position in Bay 4.

At 11.13 yet another MW arrives, on Service 118 from Bourn, due a minute later. LM979 (479BVF) goes around to Bay 8.

After another slight lull LM956 leaves at 11.15, 10 minutes late, on the 122 to Soham. A minute later, in a flurry of activity, Premier PD2 145 leaves on the 11.15 Route 9 departure to Sawston, a Whippet Bedford VAM/Plaxton RFL774G arrives from the north and goes onto its stand on Bay 14, Premier Travel Reliance/Harrington Cavalier coach 192 (KCN917) turns up along Emmanuel Street and stops beside LM989, and Eastern Counties KSW LKH311 (MAH311) passes some 10 minutes late on city service 102 to Coldhams Lane.

At 11.17 there are two more departures: the unidentified LFS on the 151 to Peterborough, and, performing a most unusual manoeuvre, a three-point turn to avoid going right round the centre island, LH688 on the 108 to Royston. Both vehicles are starting their journey two minutes late.

At 11.19 LM600 moves over to Bay 11 for a departure on Route 104, the Whippet Bedford departs along Parker Street, and FLF445 (GVF445D) goes by on the northbound 115 to Kings Hedges Road, 3 minutes late.

After its brief stay in the bus station the Premier Travel Cavalier leaves along Parker Street at 11.20. Curiously, a second identical Whippet Bedford, RFL771G, arrives along Emmanuel Road and goes onto the stand at Bay 14; the timetable shows one arrival due at 11.13, and it is not clear why two vehicles have appeared. A 131 from Colville Road arrives and moves round to Bay 15 – elderly LD5G Lodekka LKD188 (UNG188).

At 11.21 short RE saloon RS657 (KVF657E) arrives 5 minutes late on the 104 from Cottenham and sets down its passengers on Bay 5. Meanwhile LM989 leaves on the 118 to Great Gransden.

After a brief lull the second Whippet coach leaves along Emmanuel Road at 11.23, passing a late-running 102 city service in the shape of KSW LKH266 (LNG266), bound for St Thomas Road and 11 minutes behind time. This is followed at 11.26 by FLF351 (ONG351F) on the short 130 route from North Arbury.

The 109 from Ely due at 11.15 appears down Emmanuel Road at 11.27 – it is Ely garage's new RELL6G RL704 (TVF704G). It is followed by an unidentifiable Premier Travel Reliance/Alexander Y-type, which turns left into Parker Street.

At 11.29 LKD188 sets off back for Colville Road on service 131.

FLF484 (KPW484E) is normally allocated to Ely but evidently it is on loan to Hills Road garage as it appears at 11.30 on a 103 arrival from Sawston, just 3 minutes late, and it moves onto the 103 stand on Bay 10. Shortly afterwards RL704 moves round to Bay 12 in preparation for returning to Ely.

A London express service due to arrive from Norwich at 11.24 finally turns up at 11.32, not too bad considering the weather – instead of the usual RE today it is an MW coach LS808 (3808PW), albeit to the more modern styling introduced in the early 1960's. It goes to the London stand on Bay 4. Meanwhile RS657 moves round to Bay 9 to take up service on Route 153.

At 11.34 the next bus on the 5-buses-per-hour 131 arrives from Cherry Hinton Church, just a minute behind time, late-model KSW5G LKH168 (OVF168), and as usual it goes round to Bay 15.

In contrast FLF349 (ONG349F) on the southbound 115 to Foster Road (Trumpington) is 7 minutes late.

The London coach LS808 gets on its way at 11.35, 5 minutes down, having spent half its allotted 6 minutes at Drummer Street.

At 11.37 an MW saloon from Newmarket, LM602 (AAH102B) arrives empty along Emmanuel Road and goes to Bay 5 for infrequent service 162. SC4LK saloon LC533 (TVF533) comes in via Emmanuel Street and goes onto Bay 7.

Three buses depart at 11.38 : LM600 from Bay 11 on the 104 to Cottenham (due 11.35), RL704 from Bay 12 on the 109 to Ely, 18 minutes late, and LKH168 back To Cherry Hinton on the 11.36 131 departure.

At 11.40 FLF484 leaves on time on Route 103 to Sawston. A minute later three single deckers leave together – LM979 from Bay 8 on the 107 to Long Stanton, RS657 on a 153 to Coton from Bay 9 and LM602 from Bay 5 on the 162 run to Newmarket – the first two were due out at 11.40 but the Newmarket bus is running rather late, having been due off at 11.30.

Yet another of Whippet's 'RFL' Bedfords, RFL775G, appears along Parker Street at 11.41, to leave 3 minutes later along Emmanuel Road.

FLF491 (LAH491E) arrives along Emmanuel Street at 11.43 and leaves a minute later on the 11.40 Haverhill departure on Service 113. Also at 11.43 two city services pass – LFS77 (AAH615B) is 15 minutes late on the 102 to St Thomas Road, while early VR, VR374 (UAH374G), goes in the other direction on Service 115 to Kings Hedges Road – at this time VR's are fairly uncommon on city services – today it is about 12 minutes behind time.

FLF350 (ONG350F) is doing better on the 130 North Arbury route. Due at 11.43 it passes just a couple of minutes late. Also at 11.45 Burwell & District Fleetline 9DER arrives along Parker Street, goes onto Bay 7 and leaves at 11.47 (2 minutes late) for Burwell after its passengers have boarded,

FLF445 returns at 11.47 on the southbound 115 to Trumpington, now 5 minutes late.

The next 102 to Coldhams Lane, due at 11.36, is 12 minutes behind time – it is another of the surviving KSW's, LKH310 (MAH310). The next northbound 115 to Kings Hedges Road, FLF450 (HPW450D), due at 11.46, is just 3 minutes late, only 6 minutes behind the preceding VR. Also at 11.49 one of the ex-Red & White LS saloons arrives empty along Parker Street – LM587 (LAX638).

At 11.50 another Bristol SC, LC522 (TVF522), arrives along Emmanuel Street and goes on to Bay 14 for Service 143. In the other direction, from Emmanuel Road and into Emmanuel Street, comes MW6G coach LS831 (APW831B), probably empty.

The Premier Travel bus from Fowlmere was due to arrive at 11.45 and depart immediately for Duxford. Today it is PD2 White Lady 137 (DCK211), and it arrives 6 minutes late, spends 4 minutes at Bay 2 and leaves 10 minutes late at 11.55.

Meanwhile open-platform FS LFS49 (49CNG) turns up at 11.52 on the 131 from Cherry Hinton, 7 minutes behind time, and at 11.53 LC522 leaves on the 11.50 143 departure to Stapleford.

At 11.55 two MW saloons arrive along Parker Street to take up service on the Haverhill routes –

LM605 (AAH912B) to Bay 13 for infrequent service 136 and LM970 (8009VF) to Bay 12 behind it for the main road 113 service. LM587 moves round to the far side of the bus station and disappears from view.

LFS49 starts its journey back to Cherry Hinton on route 131 at 11.56, 8 minutes late, while Burwell & District's AEC Renown 7552MX arrives empty along Parker Street and goes onto Bay 7.

At 11.57 another MW saloon, unidentifiable under a cover of snow, arrives along Parker Street and goes to Bay 2 for route 110.

Three more Eastern Counties buses arrive along Parker Street at 11.58 : LFS55 (55CPW) is back from Cherry Hinton on the 131 only a minute late. The other two buses, both elderly, are arriving from the garage : 1954 LS coach LE758 (PVF758) (reclassified from LS and repainted as a dual-purpose LE) to Bay 5 and early Lodekka LKD230 (OVF230) to Bay 12 for a rare outing into the country on Route 109.

A BUSY SUMMER SATURDAY MORNING

University terms were such that I was never able to see proceedings in the peak of the summer holiday season. However, by the end of the Easter term things were getting rather interesting at weekends. Such a day was Saturday 30 May 1970, when I recorded detailed observations between 10.00 and 11.00. This was the weekend after the Bank Holiday and was quite a warm day with hazy sunshine.

The bus station is quite busy at the beginning of the hour, with 10 buses and 3 coaches present.

At this time on a summer Saturday morning the bus station is particularly busy with coaches, which tend to take over Bays 1 to 5, with some of the normal service buses which use those bays exiled to the far side of the bus station. In order to avoid the slow traversal of the congested bus station, buses on city route 131 take a lengthy diversion along Gonville Place to arrive at their stand via St Andrews Street and Emmanuel Street.

SCHEDULED BUS DEPARTURES

10.00	109	Waterbeach	Short country	N
10.00	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
10.00	118	Bourn	Country	W
10.00	Un Cos 175	Biggleswade	Country	W
10.05	104	Cottenham	Country	N
10.10	156	Somersham	Country	NW
10.12	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
10.15	Premier 2	Royston	Trunk country	SW
10.15	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
10.20	103	Sawston	Country	S
10.20	Whippet 1	Caldecote Turn	Short country	NW
10.24	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
10.25	Premier 1	Fowlmere	Country	S
10.30	104	March	Long country	N
10.30	Burwell 1	Burwell	Country	NE
10.30	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
10.30	112	Saffron Walden	Trunk country	S
10.35	104	Cottenham	Country	N

10.35	Premier 44	Fulbourn	Short country	SE
10.36	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
10.40	113	Haverhill	Trunk country	SE
10.48	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
10.50	114	Newmarket	Country	E
10.50	119	Royston	Country	SW

SCHEDULED BUS ARRIVALS

10.00	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
10.06	122	Ely	Long indirect country	N
10.06	143	Stapleford	Short country	S
10.09	119	Bassingbourn	Country	SW
10.09	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
10.09	104	March	Long country	N
10.10	108	Royston	Trunk country	SW
10.10	112	Saffron Walden	Trunk country	S
10.12	Burwell 11	Isleham	Country	NE
10.12	Whippet 1	St Ives	Country	NW
10.15	104	Willingham	Country	N
10.15	Premier 1	Duxford Aerodrome	Country	S
10.16	103	Pampisford	Country	S
10.16	110	Little Wilbraham	Short country	E
10.17	120	Great Eversden	Country	W
10.18	136	Haverhill	Country	SE
10.20	109	Ely	Trunk country	N
10.21	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
10.22	Burwell 1	Burwell	Country	NE
10.25	150	Waterbeach	Short country	NE
10.32	153	St Ives	Country	NW
10.33	131	Colville Road	City route	SE
10.34	107	Willingham	Country	NW
10.40	Premier 1	Fowlmere	Country	S
10.45	104	Histon	Short country	N
10.45	131	Cherry Hinton Church	City route	SE
10.50	Premier 44	Withersfield	Country	SE
10.51	151	Peterborough	Long trunk country	NW
10.52	Burwell 3	Little Eversden	Country	W
10.54	109	Waterbeach	Short country	N
10.54	Premier 9	Chrishall	Country	S
10.57	131	Colville Road	City route	SE

Looking clockwise round the bus station, at 10.00 we find on its usual Bay 1 United Counties MW6G saloon 141 (TBD141) awaiting departure to Biggleswade on route 175. Immediately ahead of it on Bay 2 stands a Black & White coach 215 (4215AD) – a Duple-bodied Reliance dating from 1960 - and in front of that at Bay 3 stands Eastern Counties' early RELL saloon RL673 (PPW673F). On Bay 5 there is another coach, this one being one of Burton's of Haverhill, NCF770, an elderly Bedford SB3/Duple of 1959; Burton's coaches are common performers as summer Saturday relief coaches on Eastern Counties express services.

Just arriving at Bay 6 from its home base of Peterborough on the 151 is Lodekka LFS116 (FAH116C). Obscured by the centre island are two Eastern Counties saloons, MW LM619

(DVFI 19C) and RESL RS649 (KVF649E).

As is their habit, two Premier Travel 'White Ladies' are parked on the far side of the centre island, namely 141 (DCK205) and 187 (DCK219). At the outer end of the centre island Yelloway AEC Reliance/Harrington CDK857C awaits departure on the joint (with Premier) service to Blackpool.

A third Premier Travel PD2, 137(DCK211) is on Bay 10, and ahead of it on Bay 11 is another Eastern Counties MW saloon LM626 (EVF626C) on the 104 route to Cottenham. Finally, on Bay 12 on the far side of the pedestrian crossing waits ex-Bristol Omnibus LS LM579 (PHW920) on the 109 Waterbeach service.

On the dot at 10.00 the LS leaves for Waterbeach. A minute later FLF349 (ONG349F) rounds the corner on the 130 North Arbury service and goes up Emmanuel Street.

At 10.02 the FLF is followed by elderly KSW LKH311 (MAH311) on the 115 city service to Trumpington. RL673 leaves on its 118 service to Bourn, due out at 10.00. The Black & White coach moves forward on to Bay 4 and in behind it to Bay 3 comes a relief coach from Norwich on the Associated Motorways service to Cheltenham – Eastern Counties MW coach LS809 (3809PW).

The burst of activity continues with LD LKD207 (VVF207) passing by at 10.03 on a 102 to St Thomas Road running about 5 minutes late. Meanwhile an unidentified FLF on a 143 from Stapleford arrives along Parker Street but avoids the congested bus station by turning straight into Emmanuel Street. RS649 moves forward to Bay 9 to take up service on Route 156 and LM619 leaves empty along Parker Street.

At 10.05 the United Counties saloon leaves 5 minutes late for Biggleswade, and ex-Red & White LS LM587 (LAX638) appears 5 minutes early on the 112 from Saffron Walden ; rather than come into the bus station it turns left into Emmanuel Street to unload its passengers. In a more unusual movement that all the 131's are performing this morning, LFS55 (55CPW) arrives from Cherry Hinton via Emmanuel Street instead of its normal Parker Street routeing – this means that the buses do not have to perform the full circuit of the congested bus station.

LFS55 is already running late. With only 3 minutes scheduled stand time there is no chance to recover and it leaves at 10.07 for Cherry Hinton, 7 minutes behind time. The following 131 from Colville Road, LFS70 (70DPW), has caught up and rounds the corner from Emmanuel Street at 10.07. Whippet Bedford VAL70/Plaxton SWP734F, arrives from the north and makes its way round the bus station to its stand on Bay 14. A more interesting vehicle, unusual Burwell & District Daimler double decker PHP220 arrives along Parker Street working service 11 from Isleham and running 5 minutes ahead of time; it goes onto Bay 7 for its next departure to Burwell. This vehicle, an ex-demonstration Daimler CVG6/Northern Counties dating from 1955, is not a very frequent visitor to Cambridge.

At 10.08 MW saloon LM950 (3012AH) arrives on a 119 from Bassingbourn and turns straight into Emmanuel Street. A minute later the 104 to Cottenham – LM626 – departs.

Things now start to get really busy, with a variety of coaches arriving on the Saturday express services and the circulation around the bus station becoming very sluggish.

KSW LKH312 (MAH312) appears down Emmanuel Road at 10.10 on the 10-minute frequency 102, this journey, due at 10.08, bound for Coldhams Lane. Three Eastern Counties buses on country routes arrive from the south along Parker Street. Two are FLF Lodekkas, both running 6 minutes early : FLF486 (KPW486E) on a 110 from Little Wilbraham, which avoids the bus station and goes

straight up Emmanuel Street, and FLF484 (KPW484E), normally based at Ely, but today on a 103 from Pampisford, which works its way round to Bay 11 for its return journey. The third of the trio, on the infrequent back-road route 136 from Haverhill, is ex-Red & White LS6G saloon LM587 (LAX638) running some 8 minutes ahead of time, and this too turns left into Emmanuel Street.

At 10.11 the Burtons coach NCF770 departs along Parker Street on an unidentified relief express working. RS649 leaves a minute late on its 156 departure to Somersham. One of Eastern Counties' numerous MW coaches, LS801 (4827VF), arrives on Route D (Felixstowe-Peterborough) and parks on the Peterborough stand (6) beside the Lodekka waiting to leave on the 151 stage service.

Three more coaches arrive at 10.12. Two are further MW coaches – LS794 (7794NG) arrives on Route C (Hunstanton-London) and goes to the end of the bus station to load and unload, and LS806 (3806PW) arrives from Peterborough on route D bound for Felixstowe, working its way round the bus station to Bay 9. The third coach, Premier Travel Reliance/Burlingham Seagull 171 (83UME) appears empty via Parker Street but, the driver presumably finding the stands too congested, departs whence it has come, to return a little later. Also at 10.12 two more country services arrive from the south along Parker Street – MW saloon LM600 (600ENG) two minutes late on the hourly 108 from Royston, which parks opposite Bay 2, and LH702 (VVF702H) on the 10.17 120 arrival from Great Eversden, which avoids the bus station by turning left into Emmanuel Street.

At 10.13 two more modern coaches put in an appearance. Premier Travel Reliance/Alexander Y-type 186 (FCE133D) arrives empty along Parker Street and waits off Bay 3, while on an unexplained working Eastern Counties RE coach RE896 (SVF896G) comes in empty along Parker Street only to depart empty along Emmanuel Street after doing a circuit of the bus station.

Ely-based MW saloon LM956 (3018AH) arrives 5 minutes late at 10.14 on the busy 104 route from March and gradually moves round to Bay 12. It is followed immediately by an unidentified LH on a shorter 104 working from Willingham which is a little early and turns left into Emmanuel Street. LFS70 meanwhile leaves on the 10.12 departure on city service 131 to Colville Road.

At 10.15 Whippet Bedford VAM70/Plaxton RFL770G arrives on Route 1 from St Ives and gradually makes its way round to its stand on Bay 14.

At 10.16 Premier Travel 'White Lady' 137 (DCK211) leaves on the 10.15 Royston departure, one of the few workings covered by Premier on this joint service with Eastern Counties. Sister vehicle 140 (DCK208) arrives from Duxford Aerodrome and parks by bays 1 and 2. A relief on Route 109 from Waterbeach arrives from the north – Lodekka FLF352 (ONG352F), as others before it, turns left into Emmanuel Street to avoid the congestion.

Eastern Counties RE coach RE886 (GPW886D) arrives at 10.17 on express route Z from Peterborough to Clacton and waits opposite bay 5. At 10.18 the main 109 service from Ely arrives, worked by VR375 (UAH375G), allocated to Ely. It goes round the bus station and parks behind Bay 12.

At 10.19 another 102 passes by, this one just a minute late and heading for St Thomas Road – LD Lodekka LKD214 (VVF214). More interesting is Midland Red 4830(830HHA), once a CM5T motorway coach dating from 1961, dead on time with an express service from Southend to Birmingham, which moves round to Bay 9.

At 10.20 LFS116 leaves Bay 6 on the 10.15 departure on the long route 151 to Peterborough;

slackly timed along the straight main road, the 151 usually leaves several minutes behind time. In the same general direction Whippet coach SWP734F leaves Bay 14 on a circular journey on Route 1. Meanwhile LM600 trundles round the bus station to the Haverhill stand on Bay 13 and Premier White Lady 140 moves forward onto Bay 3. Burwell & District Fleetline DEB484C arrives on a service from Burwell, taking up position on Bay 8. FLF351 (ONG351F) passes by on city route 115 to Trumpington.

Two buses arrive at 10.21. First comes elderly Lodekka LKD182 (UNGI82) on the 131 from Cherry Hinton. It arrives via Emmanuel Street like the previous 131 arrivals. Another Whippet Bedford VAM70/Plaxton coach, RFL771G, arrives down Emmanuel Road, on an unidentified working.

At 10.22 FLF484 leaves on the 10.20 103 departure to Sawston. Premier Travel coach 186 reverses into Bay 1 and LS801 takes the place of the now-departed Peterborough LFS on Bay 6. FLF350 (ONG350F) goes by on the circular North Arbury city service.

RE886 on the Peterborough-Clacton service moves beside LS801 at 10.23 and three more coaches arrive. First comes Whittle RNT418H, a Duple Viceroy-bodied Bedford VAM70, acting as a relief on the Premier Birmingham-Clacton route, which arrives via Emmanuel Road and waits off Bay 3. Behind it comes another stranger in the shape of Black & White 269 (HDG369D), a Leopard PSU3/Plaxton, on a Norwich-Cheltenham Associated Motorways working; this parks right behind the Whittle coach off Bay 2. Thirdly, on an unknown working, is Royal Blue 2356 (394TUO), a 1964 Bristol RELH6G/ECW coach, which also arrives from Emmanuel Road and waits off Bay 5. More mundanely, MW saloon LM970 (8009VF) arrives on a 150 from Waterbeach and goes straight up Emmanuel Street.

At 10.24 LKD182 leaves Bay 15 on the 131 to Cherry Hinton, and Whippet coach RFL771G, having made a circuit of the bus station, also disappears along Parker Street.

Premier Travel Reliance/Harrington Cavalier 192 (KCN917) arrives along Parker Street at 10.25 on an express service from Birmingham to Southend, taking up position off Bay 1.

Whippet RFL770G leaves Bay 14, at 10.26, heading up Emmanuel Road. Yet another Eastern Counties coach arrives from Norwich on Service E – LS792 (7792NG), which waits off Bay 4.

The two most common Yelloway coaches visiting Cambridge are Reliance/Plaxton HDK510E and KDK800F, and both now arrive at 10.27 from Clacton via Parker Street on the Birmingham departures due at 10.30. HDK goes round to the far side of the centre island while KDK eventually parks off bay 3, replacing the Whittle coach which leaves for Clacton at 10.29. Meanwhile, at 10.28 while queueing to enter the bus station KDK is overtaken on the wrong side of the road by Lodekka LKD192 (VVF192) on city route 102 to Coldhams Lane and at 10.29 Premier Travel 187 (DCK219) leaves on the 10.25 Fowlmere departure.

At 10.30 saloon LH702 reappears along Parker Street and positions itself beside RE886 while it takes on passengers for the 112 Saffron Walden departure due out at 10.30. Meanwhile Black & White coach 269 shunts forward a couple of bays to wait off Bay 4. Royal Blue 2356 which has been waiting off Bay 5 leaves via Parker Street – working not recorded. Yelloway HDK510E moves round to park on the far side of the centre island. An unidentified SC4LK appears on a 153 arrival from St Ives and goes straight up Emmanuel Street to unload its passengers rather than enter the congested bus station.

VR375 leaves a minute late on the 10.30 109 departure to Ely. Premier Travel Reliance/Harrington

I92 makes the unusual manoeuvre of reversing into Emmanuel Street before leaving on the Southend express service due out at 10.25.

At 10.32 a 104 arrival from Willingham appears 2 minutes early – it is one of LH688 or 689 but in the hubbub of activity I miss the exact identity as it turns left up Emmanuel Street.

FLF445 (GVF445D), a daily performer on city route 115, passes by at 10.33, some 7 minutes late, on a northbound working to Kings Hedges Road, while LM956 heads back to the Fens, leaving 3 minutes late on its long 104 journey to March.

At 10.34 LH702 finally departs for Saffron Walden while FS5G Lodekka LFS73 (AAH173B) goes by on a 115 heading south to Trumpington, unlike the FLF 3 minutes ahead of time.

There is a flurry of activity at 10.35 as Yelloway Harrington-bodied Reliance CDK857C departs for Blackpool, Eastern Counties MW coach LS794 leaves for London on Service C, Premier 186 reverses into Emmanuel Street and leaves on what is thought to be a relief journey to Southend and Burwell Fleetline DEB484C leaves empty along Parker Street.

Burwell & District Daimler double decker PHP220 leaves at 10.36 on the 10.30 Burwell departure, and Eastern Counties LS792 leaves on Service E to London. After all these departures the bus station is looking somewhat less congested!

At 10.37 the 10.33 arrival from Colville Road, LFS44 (44CNG), appears along Emmanuel Street, pausing for just a minute on Bay 15 before returning whence it came. Newmarket-based Bristol SC saloon LC554 (300IAH) arrives empty via Parker Street and disappears from view over on the far side of the bus station. LS806 leaves along Emmanuel Road, bound for Felixstowe on Service D, accompanied by Yelloway HDK510E heading for Blackpool.

Ex-Red & White LS saloon LM587 reappears at 10.38 along Parker Street and goes onto the 104 stand on Bay 11 and at 10.39 Premier Travel Reliance/Seagull 171 (83UME) arrives via Emmanuel Street and takes up position off Bay 2 for the Heathrow Airport service.

At 10.40 LM600 moves off Bay 13 on time on the 113 to Haverhill. A minute later Premier Travel White Lady 141 departs on a 44 working to Fulbourn (due out at 10.35), meeting sister vehicle 143 (DCK217) arriving from Fowlmere on route 1, complete with a broken upstairs window, which goes onto Bay 2. FLF349 makes its second appearance on the 130 North Arbury circular, which takes 40 minutes to get round the circle.

Coach RE886 leaves along Parker Street at 10.42, 12 minutes late, bound for Clacton on route Z. Meanwhile another 102 for St Thomas Road passes by in the shape of LFS98 (DAH398B), running 4 minutes late.

KSW LKH311 passes again at 10.43, returning north to Kings Hedges Road on route 115, and ex-Red & White LS LM587 leaves somewhat late on the 10.35 104 departure to Cottenham.

After a rare lull of a couple of minutes, Lodekka LFS55 reappears along Emmanuel Street on the 131 from Cherry Hinton Church and goes onto Bay 15. Older Lodekka LFS33 (2933PW) goes the other way on another 102, to Coldhams Lane, 2 minutes early and not far behind LFS98.

Yelloway coach KDK800F leaves at 10.47 on another departure on the Blackpool express service due out at 10.30. MW saloon LM627 (FAH627C) arrives from Histon on a 104 and unloads its passengers off Bay 2 before going round the bus station and leaving along Emmanuel Street.

Two relief coaches on the Associated Motorways route to Cheltenham leave at 10.48 from Bays 5 and 4 – they are Black & White 215 and Eastern Counties LS809 respectively. The service coach, Black & White 269, moves forward onto Bay 5.

Midland Red 4830 departs at 10.49 from Bay 9 on its route to Birmingham. Burwell & District AEC Renown 7552MX appears on the Saturdays-only route from Eversden and leaves empty almost immediately along Parker Street. Late-model FS Lodekka LFS123 (FVF423C) arrives on the long 151 run from Peterborough and goes onto Bay 6 after unloading its passengers.

At 10.50 Bristol SC LC554 departs on time on route 114 to Newmarket. After a brief lull LFS55 leaves at 10.52 on the 10.48 131 departure to Cherry Hinton and Premier Travel Reliance/Seagull 171 departs 7 minutes late for London Airport via Emmanuel Street, initially with an open boot which is quickly spotted.

Black & White Motorways 269 leaves via Emmanuel Road on what is thought to have been the service coach on the Cheltenham express, due to leave at 10.52.

At 10.54 ex Bristol Omnibus LS saloon LS579 reappears from Waterbeach on the 109 and parks off Bay 1. Standard MW LM950 also reappears empty along Parker Street and goes round to Bay 11.

Premier White Lady 146 (DCK204) arrives a minute late on Route 9 from Chrishall at 10.55 and after unloading its passengers moves round to Bay 10. A minute later sister vehicle 140 follows it round from Bay 3 to Bay 9.

At 10.57 FLF445 passes again, 5 minutes late on a 115 journey to Trumpington. Ely-based early MW saloon LM938 (WPW638) turns up empty along Parker Street and parks between Bays 4 and 5. Newer MW LM605 (AAH912B) arrives from Haverhill on the 113 due at 11.00 and parks immediately behind.

LFS55 comes round the corner from Emmanuel Street at 10.58 on the 131 from Colville Road and goes onto its stand at Bay 15. LM950 arrives back along Parker Street for the 119 Bassingbourn departure which should have gone at 10.50 – it goes round to the far side of the bus station. An unidentified coach of Simmons of Grantham comes along Emmanuel Street, continuing up Emmanuel Road.

At 10.59 there is a flurry of activity with three arrivals in the bus station and two local services passing. The latter are FLF351 4 minutes early on the northbound 115 to Kings Hedges Road and in the opposite direction LFS20 (1120PW) on a 102 to St Thomas Road. An AEC Reliance/Plaxton coach of Sheffield United Tours, 347(AWA347B), arrives empty along Parker Street, followed by another White Lady, Premier 142 (DCK218) some 9 minutes late on a 44 arrival from Withersfield and regular London coach RE879 (GNG479C), also empty from Parker Street, today having an outing on Route J to Cromer due out at 11.10.

FOOTNOTE

By the time I left Cambridge in 1972 there had been some changes. Much of the Premier Travel fleet had been replaced – including most of the charismatic PD2 White Ladies, which were giving way to AEC Bridgemasters from Oxford of all places. The insipid white National Express colours were beginning to appear on Eastern Counties' coach fleet.

I have been back to Cambridge on only a handful of occasions since 1972. The traffic scene has changed immeasurably in the following years.

We have gone through the years of the Leyland National, plentiful Bristol VR's, National poppy red and then the light blue-liveried years of Cambus. We have seen park-and-ride, open top bus tours and widespread pedestrianisation in the city centre. Now there is the guided busway.

The bread-and-butter Stagecoach buses of today look little different from those anywhere else in the country. Buses now circulate differently around a rebuilt Drummer Street bus station.

But the most astonishing thing was for me to look up a year or two ago to what was once my window and find it obscured by trees which have grown hugely in four decades. Students in North Court will now have a severely restricted view of activity in the bus station. I am sure they do not mind – moreover I am not sure if I would have been upset to miss the succession of Enviros, Tridents and the like.