

## **RICHARDSON'S COACHES**

**George Edmund Richardson**

**Charles George Griffin**

**George Albert James Richardson**

**The Garage**

**HARTWELL**

The story of George Edmund Richardson's foray into the bus operating world in the years before the Second World War have been recorded in paper NN-RI3. From this document it may be recalled that Richardson had run into financial difficulties and had been obliged to sell his bus operations, with United Counties purchasing the Goodwill of the various routes in March 1932. No vehicles were taken by United Counties, these being returned to suppliers or sold by George Richardson.

The petrol retailing and vehicle repair side of George Richardson's business continued, although during the War years activities must have declined greatly and it is known that United Counties outstationed a number of buses in Richardson's garage during the hostilities, either as a dispersal measure or to keep them out of sight of the military requisitioning authorities.

The next character in this story is Charles George Griffin, a native of Northampton who was born on 22nd February 1918. In the early 1930s Charlie Griffin joined the workforce of Arthur Mulliner Ltd, the well-known and highly respected Northampton car and coach body building concern. Here Charlie was employed as a sheet metal worker and he gained considerable experience and expertise as a coach builder, a craft that was to be of great value to him in his later career.

An interesting story is told that in the 1939/40 period Charlie Griffin needed to refill his car with petrol whilst out in the Hartwell area. He called into Richardson's garage for this

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purpose and was served by George Richardson's daughter Stella. This chance meeting led to further visits, culminating in Charlie and Stella marrying in April 1943. Later on the couple, to whom the letter "P" must have been significant, had five children - Peter, Patricia, Pamela, Philip and Petula.

Meanwhile Charlie Griffin, who was unable to join the fighting forces due to a serious leg injury, was directed to move to Croydon to work in a munitions factory. This preceded his marriage, so after April 1943, Stella also moved to Croydon to be with her husband. After the War the munitions work ceased and the Griffins moved back to the Northamptonshire area to a property just over the Buckinghamshire border, in Haversham. It is the Author's understanding, although it has not been possible to acquire confirmation, that Charlie then went to work for Major Allday at his Horton Motor Works, where he was able to put his coach building skills to good use. Major Allday was a dealer who bought up secondhand rolling stock, often accident or war damaged, and reconditioned and repaired both chassis and bodies. Often a coach would leave the Horton Works with a completely different body to that with which it arrived.

By the late 1940s George Richardson was in his mid-50s and the Hartwell garage business was in a somewhat rundown state. With a view to revitalising the business George Richardson and Charlie Griffin entered a partnership and the future of Richardson's Garage was assured.

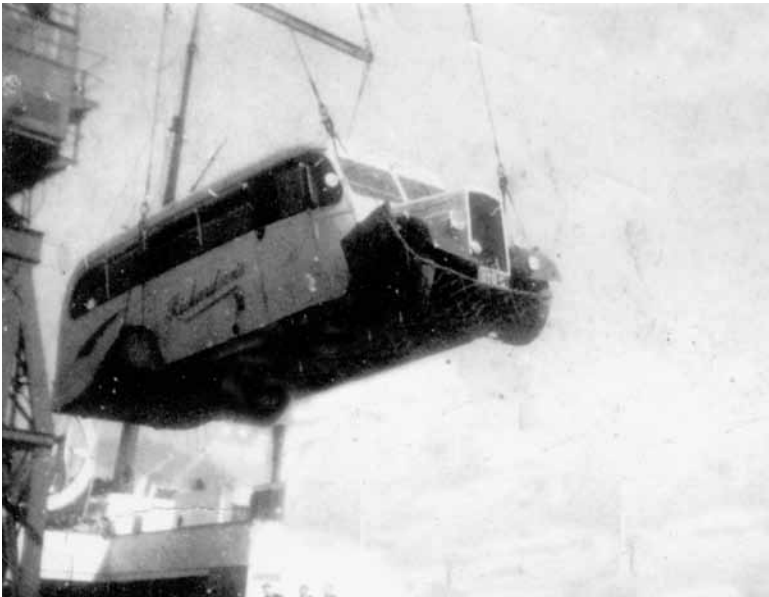
Unfortunately the Author has been unable to establish exactly when Richardson's Garage operated its first bus, but all the evidence suggests that it was circa 1949/50 that three coaches were obtained. With Charlie Griffin's association with Horton Motor Works it is not surprising that the first two vehicles, at least, were sourced from Major Allday. These comprised a forward-control Leyland Cub with a twenty-six seat Burlingham body - FD 9601 - and an A.E.C. Regal with a thirty-two seat Burlingham body, this latter coach being registered AAO 151. The Leyland Cub was almost certainly an accident victim which was no doubt obtained cheaply and apparently extensively rebuilt by Charlie Griffin. Soon afterwards another Leyland Cub, but this time a normal-control model, was purchased. This carried a twenty-five seat Duple body and was registered DTO 16. This Cub had started life with Skills of Nottingham but having been commandeered during the War, had been allocated to the National Fire Service. It is probable that when released DTO 16 was acquired by Major Allday, via whom it came to Richardson's.

Whether or not Richardson's Coaches secured any contract work in the first instance is uncertain and the firm may well have relied just on private hires. In January 1951 application was made to the Traffic Commissioners for a Tuesday and Friday express service running from Hartwell Garage to Towcester Cinema, picking up at Hartwell, Ashton, Stoke Bruerne and Shutlanger but following objections from United Counties the licence was refused. A month later an application for an Excursions and Tours licence was submitted to the Commissioners, picking up at Hartwell, Ashton, Roade, Quinton and Wootton on nine day tours. This time Richardson's were more successful,

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despite objections from United Counties, F H Bellham, Premier Travel and the London Midland Railway. The licence for one coach was granted with various amendments aimed at satisfying the objectors.

Richardson's Coaches were very early operators of Continental private hires, their first foray overseas taking place in April 1951 when a party of twenty boys and four adults from Northampton Grammar School were taken on Leyland Cub DTO 16 on a fortnight's tour of the Pyrenees, driven by Charlie Griffin. The coach performed well, despite its radiator frequently boiling on the mountainous roads and the need for a replacement fuel pump on the return journey. Subsequently numerous Continental tours were arranged and operated for a variety of local schools and for private hire parties.



*Two views of DTO 16 - the Leyland Cub KPZ2 with Duple coachwork being craned onto the cross-channel ferry "DINARD" at Dover, en route for France and Spain in April 1951.*



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*Another view  
of Leyland  
Cub DTO  
16 with its  
radiator un-  
fortunately  
obscured by  
a Grammar  
S c h o o l  
m a s t e r !*



In November 1951 Richardson's Coaches applied to the Traffic Commissioners to add twenty-nine new excursions to the licence granted earlier in the year and to increase the vehicle allowance to two per day. The move attracted objections from both United Counties and British Rail as some of the destinations duplicated those already served by these operators. The Commissioners, in their wisdom, partially granted the application, but for one vehicle only, adding picking up restrictions on a number of tours and refusing others altogether. A partial success for Richardson's but no more applications were made until September 1953 when Richardson's Coaches again applied for an express service licence, this time to convey people between Shutlanger and Towcester Cinema on Tuesday evenings. This application was not contested and the licence was duly granted. At the same time an application was made to add a Dover excursion to the Hartwell licence, to facilitate trips to the Continent (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and France). This excursion was for 12 and 14 day holidays and included a picking up point at Northampton, Market Square. Needless to say, the application attracted widespread opposition from other operators which included Blue Cars, Redline Continental Motorways, Barton Transport, United Counties and British Rail. In fact the application was withdrawn prior to a decision being reached by the Traffic Commissioners.

It was in January 1955 that Richardson's Coaches started its long association with Pianoforte Supplies Ltd of Roade, which firm organised coach transport to bring its workers into the Roade factory from surrounding areas. It was at this time that Richardson's were awarded a contract for a vehicle operating an assisted travel scheme to carry only Pianoforte employees on an express carriage service licence from Gayton Church via Rothersthorpe, Milton and Blisworth to Roade. Application was made at the

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*This facsimile of one of Richardson's adverts that was placed in the Northampton Independent in August 1953 advises the public of the firm's capability of organising Continental Tours for the 1954 season.*

same time for a similar service from Northampton, Guildhall Road via the A508 to the Pianoforte factory but it is unclear whether this ever operated. If it did, the contract was short lived. Concurrently a third express service was applied for and granted, for a coach to convey passengers from Northampton, Market Square to the Cornhill Ballroom via Kisingbury and Bugbrooke on Saturday nights. Only ticket holders for the dances could be carried.

The intake of rolling stock during the rest of the 1950s saw quite a variety of British chassis manufacturers products and even more examples of different coachbuilders wares. In total another sixteen secondhand machines are known to have been purchased, comprising 8 A.E.Cs; 3 Leylands; 1 Thornycroft; 1 Maudslay; 1 Vulcan; 1 Commer and 1 Dennis. In terms of bodywork, coaches built by Burlingham (2); Bellhouse Hartwell (2) and Duple (2) were taken into stock together with single examples of the products of Shearing, Harrington, C P-J (Crawford Prince-Johnson), Black & White, Metalcraft, Plaxton, Brookes, Wilks & Meade, Whitson and Associated Coach Builders all recorded. The Black & White bodied coach GVT 138 had a tail fin similar to those fitted to many Harrington bodied vehicles.

The majority of this rolling stock was kept for several years before being replaced, although one of the A.E.C. Regals - ACX 368 - was acquired only for spares and was not operated in service. Another Regal, registered KKA 24, was acquired from Grose Ltd of Northampton to cover an additional school contract won for the Summer term of 1959 and used only for a month or two until its certificate of Fitness expired. Only four photographs of the above mentioned coaches can be illustrated and these are shown on the following pages.

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*A rear view of LLG 368 which was a Leyland Titan TD3 that started life with Oldham Corporation as BU 8439 in 1935 as a double deck vehicle. It was rebodied with thirty-three seat Harrington coachwork shown in this picture in December 1948 when it was re-registered LLG 368.*



*One of the two Bellhouse Hartwell bodied coaches in Richardson's fleet is shown here. Registered LOJ 77 it was an A.E.C. Regal IV and it seated thirty-seven passengers.*

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*Charlie Griffin can be seen with one of his coaches which in this instance was PUP 996, an A.E.C. Reliance with forty-one seat Burlingham Seagull body.*



*A side view of PUP 996, a machine that also visited Europe on occasions.*

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Interestingly in May 1956 Richardson's Coaches applied for an express service licence to run between Towcester, Town Hall and Pianoforte Supplies Ltd, Roade, that had previously been granted to Tommy Cooper of Roade Main Garage Ltd. With this operation came a Vulcan thirty-one seater coach carrying a body build by the Syston firm of Crawford Prince-Johnson Ltd. It seems likely that Richardson's may have acquired this vehicle, registered FNR 424, as early as December 1953 and operated on hire to Roade Main Garage, as the health of Tommy Cooper was deteriorating by this time and he wished to dispose of his two coach operations. Richardson's application to the Traffic Commissioners also noted the addition of George Richardson's son - George Albert James Richardson (always known as Jim) - to the partnership. Jim Richardson looked after the mechanical needs of the coach fleet.



*Fortunately young Peter Griffin, apparently dressed as a pirate, had his photograph taken alongside the Vulcan FNR 424, otherwise this interesting coach could not be illustrated.*

A new school was built at Roade and opened in September 1956 and to which Richardson's Coaches operated many home to school contracts over the years. School work fitted in neatly with works contracts to provide a sound financial footing for Richardson's Coaches. School contracts were operated prior to this date and also to several other schools, notably Towcester Grammar School.



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*A circa 1955 Richardson's letterhead.*

One of the firms founders, George Edmund Richardson, died on 26th November 1956 which left just Charlie Griffin and Jim Richardson in partnership.

In August 1957 Richardson's Coaches gained a new contract, this time providing transport between Hanslope, Cock Inn via Haversham, Hartwell, Ashton, Stoke Bruerne and Shutlanger to the Plessey Company's works at Towcester. Once again it was an Assisted Travel scheme for Plessey employees only, which required an Express Service Licence from the Traffic Commissioners. Assisted Travel Schemes were those where the hire of the vehicle was paid for as a whole by Plessey (or Pianoforte Supplies) who deducted the approved fares from their employees' wages.

January 1958 saw the commitment of an additional coach to the Pianoforte Supplies Ltd contract operation, when a vehicle starting from Newport Pagnell, Market Hill with picking up points at New Bradwell, Wolverton and Castlethorpe was introduced. Yet another Pianoforte Supplies contract was secured towards the end of 1959, this time starting from Potterspury, High Street. The required application to the Traffic Commissioners for an express carriage licence was followed in February 1960 by a request to the Commissioners to add another fifteen excursions to the existing Hartwell licence. Much of what was required was duly licensed but with some amendments being imposed.

The opening of the first stretch of the Motorway M1 in 1959 saw the start of the expansion of United Counties' express service network, to London in the first instance and for Leicester and Nottingham as the motorway was completed further north. This expansion was to lead to United Counties having a requirement to supplement its own

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coaches by the use of hired vehicles and over the years Richardson's became the port of first call for United Counties in the Northampton area. An excellent relationship existed between the two operators and literally thousands of journeys were operated to London, Brighton, Eastbourne, Ramsgate, Leicester and Nottingham on United Counties behalf as well as to Bournemouth and Portsmouth on Associated Motorways services. This work lasted until 1973 when National Express took over United Counties' licences and thereafter Richardson's association with National Express was more remote and declined in quantity.

It may be recalled that since 1955 Richardson's Coaches had operated a service from Northampton to the Cornhill Ballroom on Saturday evenings, but the licence for this service due for renewal in February 1961, was surrendered. Very shortly afterwards a similar facility was applied for to operate between Northampton, Campbell Square and Blisworth Hotel on Saturday evenings, but this application was objected to by United Counties as public transport facilities were provided on its Northampton to Towcester route. The Traffic Commissioners upheld United Counties' objection and refused Richardson's application.

During the early 1960s the rail line between London Northampton and Birmingham was being electrified and the engineering work associated with this project provided Richardson's Coaches with opportunities to provide a number of contract coaches for British Rail's workforce.

During the period 1960 to 1964 thirteen vehicles were taken out of stock, were disposed of and replaced by fourteen incoming vehicles. Richardson's Coaches bought their first new coach in 1960 when VBD 7 took to the road in February. It comprised a Ford 570E chassis and a Burlingham Seagull 60 body which looked very attractive but was possibly not as satisfactory as was hoped. Many coaches with this type of Burlingham body suffered severe water ingress around the full length perspex-like roof light. Whether or not Richardson's example suffered this problem is not known to the Author but the coach was retained for only four years. Next followed half-a-dozen secondhand purchases, one of which was a Bristol K6A double decker with bodywork by Saunders of Anglesey. Registered JKM 915 this double decker had started life with Maidstone & District in 1948 and was bought by Richardson's for contract work in connection with the electrification of the Euston to Birmingham rail line and to convey pupils to Towcester Grammar School. On these latter journeys George Richardson's wife, May, acted as conductress to guard the rear platform and to keep some semblance of order on the vehicle. Interestingly, Charlie Griffin and Jim Richardson found they had to undertake tree lopping from the roof of JKM 915 on the Shutlanger road, to enable the double-decker to be used.

The other five used coaches referred to above comprised two A.E.C. Reliances, one with a Roe Dalesman body and the other carrying Duple Elizabethan coachwork, respectively registered VNU 720 and RAL 359; a Gurney Nutting bodied Maudslay Marathon

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*This fine Bristol K6A registered JKM 915, with Saunders fifty-six seat bodywork was photographed at Richardson's Hartwell depot. It was the firm's one and only double decker and was kept for a little over two years. (Photo courtesy T Richardson).*

bearing the number LOB 626; and two Ford 570Es with either Burlingham Seagull or Duple Yeoman bodies. These were registered YWR 95 and XAX 41 respectively. Incidentally, one of the A.E.C. Reliances purchased had originated with Robin Hood Coaches of Nottingham and had been overturned in an accident prior to purchase by Richardson's. Rebuilding the badly damaged side of RAL 359 was no problem to Charlie Griffin! A couple of the above coaches can be illustrated on the next page.

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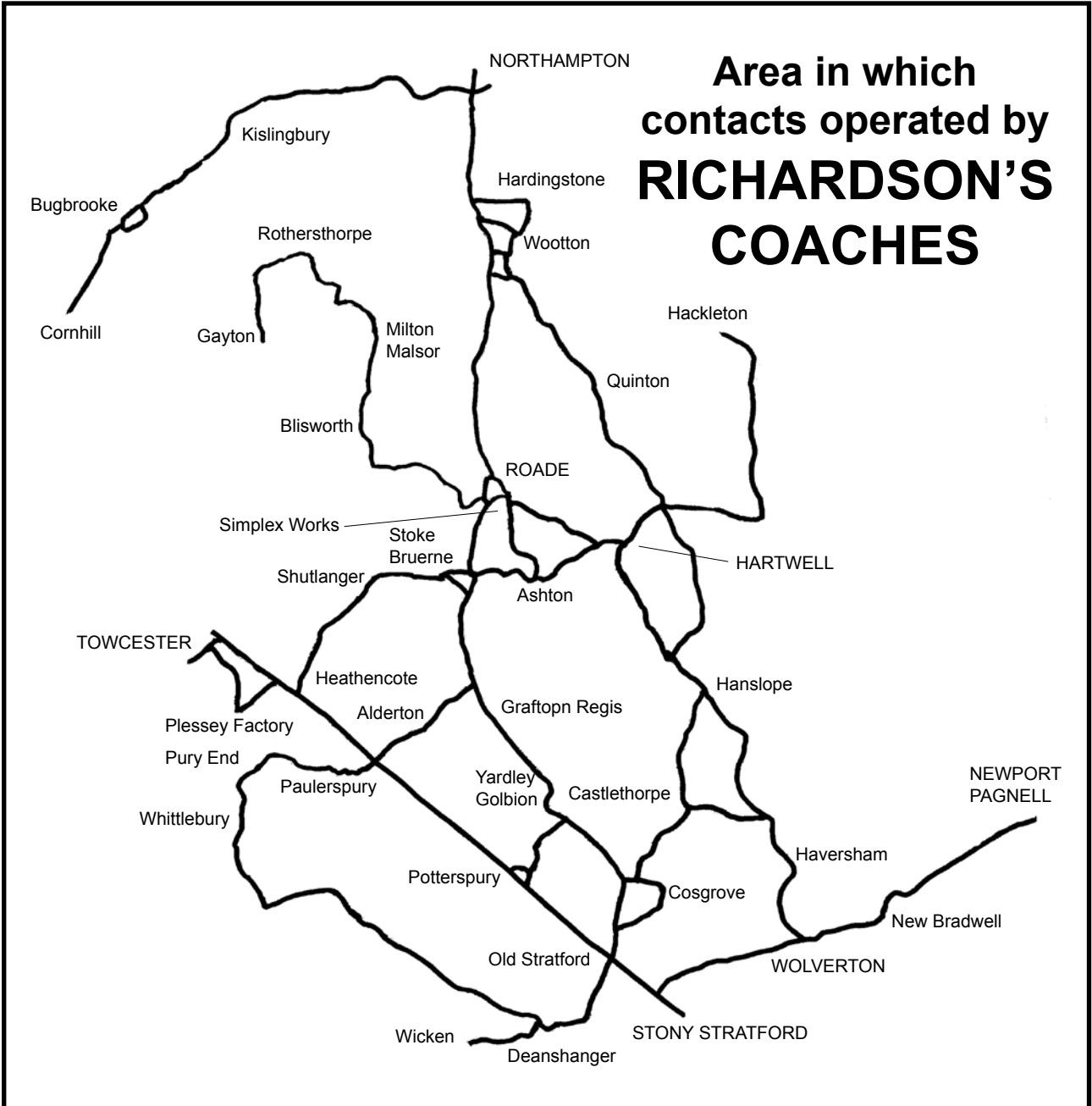


*A.E.C. Reliance/Roe Dalesman VNU 720 can be seen here at Gloucester Green, Oxford carrying an "On Hire to United Counties" sticker. Although United Counties made the booking, the coach was operating on hire to Associated Motorways and heading for either Bournemouth or Portsmouth. (Photo courtesy Photobus).*



*The version of the Burlingham Seagull body carried by YWR 95, a Ford 570E, was far less elegant than the original Seagull design of coachwork. This coach wore the green and cream livery in which it was purchased rather than the standard red and cream colours of Richardson's Coaches.*

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Another new Ford 570E coach was bought by Richardson's in 1962, registered 8 GMJ and sported a Duple Yeoman body. A few months later a similar machine numbered 9349 MK joined the fleet and was followed by a pair of, by 1963/4, elderly A.E.C. Regal IVs for contract work. One, registered ECF 305, carried a Gurney Nutting body whilst the other - GFR 795 - was fitted with E.C.W. coachwork that had originally come from a Tillings Transport vehicle. A pair of new Ford 570E chassis was acquired in February 1964, carrying Duple Trooper bodies and these were registered ABD 5/6B and were front-line rolling stock. For the period in question, that just leaves NKH 1 which was another elderly A.E.C. Regal IV, this time with Plaxton Venturer forty-one seat bodywork. This was retained for just a couple of years.

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*Representing the two 1964 Duple Trooper bodied Ford 570Es is this photograph of ABD 5B, again photographed at Hartwell. (Photo courtesy M R Knight).*

In February 1962 Pianoforte Supplies Ltd rearranged their transport requirements, which meant that Richardson's Newport Pagnell and Potterspury contracts were given revised routes and two new services were introduced. The new services started from Whittlebury and proceeded via Pury End, Paulerspury and Alderton whilst the Deanshanger coach operated via Old Stratford, Potterspury, Yardley Gobion and Grafton Regis to Roade. As with all these Simplex Works contracts, they ran on Mondays to Fridays and Saturday mornings.

As previously mentioned, Richardson's Coaches undertook many Continental hires over the years. Roade School operated an exchange scheme each year with a German school; John Clare and Cliftonville Schools in Northampton and Duston School were regular hirers of Richardson's Coaches for their trips abroad.

A further new Pianoforte Supplies Ltd contract was introduced in February 1966 by Richardson's Coaches on the same basis as the previous ones. The new licence started from Haversham, Brookfield Road and uplifted passengers at New Bradwell, Wolverton, Stony Stratford, Old Stratford, Potterspury and Yardley Gobion. Concurrently a contract with Hackleton British Legion Club was entered into to supply a coach on alternate Tuesdays to run between Castlethorpe, Hanslope and Hartwell to Hackleton Village Hall for Bingo sessions, returning afterwards. Again no fares were collected on the vehicle.

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During the five years between 1965 and 1969 Richardson's Coaches bought four new coaches - one in each year to 1968 - and no used vehicles were acquired. The four new coaches replaced five older machines. For 1965 delivery a Ford 676E chassis was chosen onto which was mounted a Duple Mariner body which provided the firm with its first fifty-two seater coach. This machine took the registration EBD 4C when licenced in May 1965. The choice of chassis then moved in favour of Bedford VAM5s in 1966 and 1967 when HBD 21D and LNV 3E respectively entered the fleet. The VAM5s were powered by Bedford 330 engines and both carried forty-five seat Duple bodies with the "D" registered coach being equipped with Bella Venture coachwork and the "E" registered machine carrying a Viceroy body. The last of the quartet of new vehicles came in 1968 as PNV 7F which again was a Bedford, but this time a VAM 70 model, which utilised the larger Bedford 466 engine. A Plaxton Panorama body was selected for PNV 7F and it was operated for nine years.



*EBD 4C, the Duple Mariner bodied Ford 676E is illustrated here with its very useful fifty-two seating capacity. (Photo courtesy M R Knight).*

*Prior to 1968 Richardson's Coaches seldom operated Plaxton bodied coaches, but their experience with PNV 7F, a Panorama bodied Bedford VAM 70, was to lead to more Plaxton being sourced in the 1970s.*



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Rolling stock intake during the five years from 1970-4 comprised new vehicles only, with one acquisition in both 1970 and 1971, two in 1972, one in 1973 and again two in 1974. These seven new machines replaced the same number of older coaches. The chosen model for 1970 delivery was a Duple Viceroy 37 bodied Ford R192 seating forty-five passengers and registered VNV 63H in April of that year. In May 1971 a Ford R226 registered YRP 32J was acquired, to which was fitted Plaxton Panorama Elite II fifty-three seat coachwork. The R226 replaced the 676E model in the Ford range, using a more powerful engine.

*This illustration of VNV 63H provides an example of a Ford R192 with Duple Viceroy 37 bodywork.*



*Plaxton coachwork was chosen in 1971 for mounting onto the chassis of YRP 32J, a Ford R226.*



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The finances of Richardson's Coaches permitted the purchase of two new coaches in 1972 when another Ford R226 and a Bedford SB5 were selected. The Ford DBD 28K was fitted with a fifty-three seat Plaxton Panorama Elite II body whilst the Bedford, registered EBD 432K, received forty-one seat Plaxton Panorama Elite III coachwork. In the following year, 1973, HRP 119L put in an appearance at Hartwell, being yet another Ford R226 but this time with a Plaxton Elite III fifty-three seat body. As mentioned before, two new coaches were bought in 1974 and both were Ford R1114 chassis. Surprisingly, the first - PRP 749M - carried flamboyant Caetano Estoril II bodywork seating fifty-three passengers although the second R1114 chassis was mounted with the more traditional Plaxton Panorama Elite III coachwork and became registered GNV 111N.

*DBD 28K was another Ford R226/Plaxton coach virtually identical to the previous year's example, YRP 32J.*



*The updated Plaxton Panorama Elite III body graced the Ford R226 chassis of HRP 119L delivered in January 1973. It was photographed near St. Matthew's Church in Northampton in 1974.*

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*A refreshing change of bodywork for the Richardson's fleet came in 1974 with the delivery of this Caetano Estoril II bodied Ford R1114, registered PRP 749M.*



*Another Ford R1114 can be seen in this view of GNV 111N, but mounted with Plaxton Panorama Elite III coachwork.*

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Richardson's contract licence to operate between Hanslope and Towcester, Plessey's Factory was not renewed in June 1972, indicating it probably ceased some time prior to this date.

A revision to Pianoforte Supples contract requirements was noted in September 1977 when three new Express Service licences were applied for. The first was from Deanshanger and routed via Whittlebury, Pury End, Paulerspury and Alderton whilst the second was from Newport Pagnell via New Bradwell, Wolverton, Stony Stratford, Old Stratford, Yardley Gobion and Grafton Regis. The third new licence covered the Towcester, Town Hall via Heathcote Turn route to Road. The reduced facilities required at the Simplex Works by these three new routes saw the surrendering of the licences for the previous services starting from Towcester, Whittlebury, Deanshanger, Newport Pagnell and Wolverton.

For the rest of the period during which Richardson's Coaches were extant, two second-hand and six new coaches were acquired. In 1975 a second Ford with Caetano Estoril II coachwork was bought secondhand having previously been in the ownership of Davies of Cheltenham and registered NDD 998M. For 1976 delivery a pair of Bedford YMTs with Duple Dominant coachwork were selected and these took the registrations NNH 608P and RRP 892R on delivery. Clearly pleased with these last two machines, another similar coach registered WNH 283S was ordered for 1977 and, two years later, yet another which became FRP 251T.



*NDD 998M was a secondhand acquisition made in 1975 of a Ford R226 fitted with a Caetano Estoril II body and photographed at Hartwell in May 1975.*

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The first Ford/Caetano Estoril registered PRP 749M, bought by Richardson's in 1974, had rusted quite badly by the end of the decade, so it was decided to replace it with a Bedford YMT with Unicar body, acquired secondhand in January 1980. This machine was registered GJU 120V, having first been used by Mellor of Narborough. Richardson's penultimate vehicle purchase was a Faro bodied Fiat which seated just twenty-five passengers and this was registered SNV 77W in October 1980. Richardson's final acquisition, in September 1981, comprised a Bedford YNT chassis and a Duple Dominant IV fifty-three seat body, which collected the registration BBD 93X.



*One of two 1976 Bedford YMT / Duple Dominant coaches was NNH 608P.*

*The second 1976 Duple Dominant bodied Bedford YMT was registered RRP 892R.*



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*By 1977 when WNH 283S was new, the Duple Dominant II body was current and fitted to a Bedford YMT chassis for Richardson's.*



*GJU 120V, a Unicar bodied Bedford YMT was purchased specifically to replace PRP 749M which had suffered considerable corrosion since being new in 1974. This photograph was taken in August 1982 after the coach had passed to Soul's of Olney.*

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*This photograph of SNV 77W, the Faro bodied Fiat bought by Richardson's Coaches in 1980 was used regularly on the Northampton to Eastbourne summer coastal service. The photograph was also taken after the coach had been acquired by Soul's in January 1982. Soul's retained the Richardson name for a short time.*

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*Richardson's final coach - BBD 93X - the Duple bodied Bedford YNT can be seen on the left of this photograph depicted on one of Soul's brochures.*

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The introduction of the 1980 Transport Act removed the need for excursions and tours to be licensed, which enabled Richardson's Coaches to surrender their Hartwell licence and have complete freedom of operation within the new legal framework. Similarly the Roade contract express service licences were dispensed with under the new Act.

When National Express withdrew the summer seasonal service it operated between Northampton and Eastbourne, Richardson's Coaches stepped in to provide a replacement facility starting in May 1981. Soul's of Olney continued it in the following year.

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*A facsimile of Richardson's Northampton - Eastbourne leaflet of 1981.*

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The final licence applied for from the Traffic Commissioners by Richardson's Coaches was for a shopping service from Wicken Post Office via Deanshanger, Old Stratford, Potterspury, Shutlanger, Stoke Bruerne, Ashton and Roade to Northampton, St. John Street on Wednesday mornings. This service commenced on 29th April 1981 leaving Wicken at 9.05 am and returning from Northampton at 12.30 pm. Local passengers between Stoke Bruerne and Northampton could not be carried on this route introduced in conjunction with Northamptonshire County Council.



*A punch type ticket as used by Richardson's Coaches on the Wicken to Northampton service.*

By the end of 1981 Charlie Griffin in particular, who was nearly 63 years of age, felt he had had enough of running coaches at a period when rules and regulations together with increasing legislation and officialdom were becoming too much, so arrangements were made with the North Bucks operator Soul's of Olney to acquire Richardson's coach business and the nine vehicles then being operated with effect from Saturday 9th January 1982. Thus ended over thirty year's of exemplary operation by Richardson's Coaches.

*The Author is grateful to the late Charlie Griffin and his sons and daughters for information enthusiastically given to enable the story of Richardson's Coaches to be produced.*



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*A facsimile of an early Richardson's letterhead. This one was used in January 1952 when G E Richardson and C G Griffin were Directors.*



*A facsimile of a Richardson's business card of the mid 1950s.*

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RICHARDSON'S COACHES - HARTWELL

STOCK NO.	REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
	FD 9601	Leyland	Cub SKP3	4115	Burlingham/ Rbt Griffin	C26R	?	5/35	-/49?	?	Horton Motor Works	Scrapped	
	AAO 151	A.E.C.	Regal	6621540	Burlingham	C32R	?	3/34	11/50	6/53	Horton Motor Works/ Cumberland M S (83)		
	DTO 16	Leyland	Cub KPZ2	7225	Duple	C25F	8939	4/37	by 3/51	11/55	National Fire Service/ Skill, Nottingham	Everall, W'hampton	
	UJ 5240	Thornycroft	Cygnets	25110	Shearing	C32F	—	-/35	8/51		Everall, W'hampton/ Salopia, Whitchurch		1
	CJW 724	Maudslay	SF40 Magna	6016P	Burlingham	C35C	?	5/39	4/52	12/55	Everall, W'hampton/ Ellis Wednesfield	Hay store, Ashton	
	LLG 368	Leyland	Titan TD3	5498	Harrington (12/48)	FC33F	433	6/35	10/53	2/60	Abbott, Timperley	Everall, W'hampton	2
	FNR 424	Vulcan	6PF	4654	C P-J	FC31F	—	9/49	12/53	12/59	Cooper, Roade	Caravan	3
	GVT 138	Leyland	Tiger TS8	301962	Black & White	C33F	—	3/39	by 9/54	11/59	Everall, W'hampton/ Potteries M S (chassis)	Caravan	
	LOJ 77	A.E.C.	Regal IV	9821E458	Bellhouse Hartwell	C37C	—	-/51	-/55	c5/62	Everall, W'hampton/	Gott, Bradford	
	HJW 871	Leyland	Royal Tiger PSU1	501622	Metalcraft	C43C	160	-/50	by 3/56	12/58	Dickson, Stoke Mandeville	Buckmaster, Leighton Buzzard	
	HTY 818	Commer	Avenger III	T85A0011	Plaxton Venturer	C37F	2606	4/55	8/56	1/61	Everall, W'hampton/ Armstrong, Westerhope	Neale, Teddington	
	MKV 202	A.E.C.	Regal IV	9822E1480	Bellhouse Hartwell	C37C	—	6/53	4/58	12/61	B T S, Coventry	Desmond, Blarney	
	VH 9203	A.E.C.	Regal	06621943	Brookes	FC33F	—	7/36	by 9/58	9/60	Kirkby, Anston/ George, Willaston	Webster, Pattishall	4
	ACX 366	A.E.C.	Regal	06621702	Wilks & Meade	C33F	—	3/37	7/58	7/58	Shephardson, Barton-on-Humber	Nicholson Garage, Hartwell	5
	PUP 996	A.E.C.	Reliance	MU3RV076	Burlingham Seagull	C41C	5804	-/55	1/59	12/62	Beeline, West Hartlepool	Saunders, Waddesdon	
	HCE 667	A.E.C.	Regent	06616093	Whitson	C33F	—	7/49	by 2/59	c10/61	Horton Motor Works/ George, Willaston	Marriott, Rushden	6
	AHE 243	A.E.C.	Regal	06624205	A.C.B.	C33F	—	-/46	by 5/59	by -/65	Campbell, Nottingham		
	LDU 586	Dennis	Lancet III	898J3	Duple A	FC35F	55427/2	7/51	7/59	3/64	Hart, Donisthorpe		

- Notes:** 1 - UJ 5340 probably acquired from Horton Motor Works.  
2 - LLG 368 originally Oldham Corporation 89 - BU 8439. Rebodyed and reregistered LLG 368 12/48.  
3 - FNR 424 - body by Crawford Prince-Johnson Ltd, Syston.  
4 - VH 9203 - the Brookes body was new post-War. Originally Brush B32R.  
5 - ACX 366 acquired for spares only and not operated.  
6 - HCE 667 was originally Sheffield 359 - EWJ 459. Rebodyed -/49 for Harris, Cambridge.

STOCK NO.	REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
KKA 24	A.E.C.	Regal III	9621E446	Duple A	C35F	51466	3/49	4/59	8/59	Grose, Northampton/ Adams, Rothwell	Webster, Pattishall		
VBD 7	Ford	570E	510E34926	Burlingham Seagull 60	C41F	?	2/60	—	2/64	—	Marchant, Cheltenham		
VNU 720	A.E.C.	Reliance	MU3RV098	Roe	C41C	GO 3813	6/54	6/60	c3/66	Latham, Kenton	Tapping, Tingewick		
LOB 626	Maudslay	Marathon III	79517	Dalesman Gurney Nutting	FC37F	—	9/50	by 8/60	12/61	Alpha, London N15	Cowley, Chesterfield		
JKM 915	Bristol	K6A	64.120	Saunders (Anglesey)	H30/26R	—	6/48	10/60	4/63	Maidstone & District (DH218)	Ementon, Cranfield		
RAL 359	A.E.C.	Reliance	MU3RV106	Duple	C41C	201/10	6/54	1/61	3/64	Robin Hood, Nottingham	Crook, Booker	1	
YWR 95	Ford	570E	510E22520	Elizabethan Burlingham Seagull V11	C41F	6911	7/59	11/61	3/67	Baddeley, Holmfirth (66)	Croot, Gt.Gransden	2	
XAX 41	Ford	570E	510E34098	Duple	C41F	1126/56	2/60	11/61	12/72	Wallace Arnold, Leeds	Webster, Pattishall		
8 GMJ	Ford	570E	510E76751	Yeoman	C41F	123/53	7/62	—	5/71	—	Henderson, Doncaster		
9349 MK	Ford	570E	510E58878	Yeoman	C41F	1139/159	2/61	12/62	11/67	Finchley Coaches, N12	Hart, Donisthorpe		
ECF 305	A.E.C.	Regal IV	9821E1299	Gurney Nutting	C41C	—	-/50	5/63	4/64	Croxley Coaches, Croxy Green	Broken up		
GFR 795	A.E.C.	Regal IV	9822E1446	E.C.W.	C41F	5483	-/52	2/64	4/66	Howells & Withers, Pontllanfraith	Aston, Marton	3	
ABD 5B	Ford	570E	L80B 836526	Duple	C41F	1173/48	2/64	—	4/70	—	Fullman, Derby		
ABD 6B	Ford	570E	L80B 836525	Trooper	C41F	1173/44	2/64	—	2/75	—	Carlton Club, Bletchley		
NKH 1	A.E.C.	Regal IV	9821E473	Plaxton	C41C	1840	6/52	4/64	3/66	Potteries M T (C805)	Aston, Marton		
EBD 4C	Ford	676E	L80E 439346	Venturer	C52F	1187/40	5/65	—	4/74	—	Farrow, Melton Mowbray		
HBD 21D	Bedford	VAM 5	6827159	Mariner	C45F	1205/031	3/66	—	5/72	—	Elsay, Gosberton		
LNV 3E	Bedford	VAM 5	6864938	Duple Bella Venture Viceroy	C45F	1208/034	3/67	—	2/72	—	Head, Luton		

Notes: 1 - RAL 359 had overturned with Robin Hood and purchased by Griffin & Richardson in damaged condition.

2 - YWR 95 retained its green/cream livery whilst with Griffin & Richardson.

3 - GFR 795 - the E.C.W. body came from Tilling's LYM 729 - A.E.C. Regal IV - and fitted 4/61.

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

RICHARDSON'S COACHES - HARTWELL

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STOCK NO.	REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
	PNV 7F	Bedford	VAM 70	7T456886	Plaxton Panorama	C45F	688276	6/68	—	7/77	—	Joyways, Bradford	
	VNV 63H	Ford	R192	BC04JR 49012	Duple Viceroy 37	C45F	1227/50	4/70	—	4/76	—	Marriott, Rushden	
	YRP 32J	Ford	R226	BC04JR 52979	Plaxton Pan. Elite II	C53F	712824	5/71	—	8/77	—	Sapwell, Olney	
	DBD 28K	Ford	R226	BC04KA 54178	Plaxton Pan. Elite II	C53F	728580	3/72	—	9/81	—	Canham, Whittlesey	
	EBD 432K	Bedford	SB5	2T471260	Plaxton Pan. Elite III	C41F	728149	5/72	—	10/74	—	White, Higham Ferrers Soul, Olney	
	HRP 119L	Ford	R226	BC04MR 45793	Plaxton Pan. Elite III	C53F	732556	1/73	—	1/82	—	Probeta, Portishead	
	PRP 749M	Ford	R1114	BC04NA 61894	Caetano Estoril II	C53F	74/27	4/74	—	1/80	—	Soul, Olney	
	GNV 111N	Ford	R1114	BC04PP 69040	Plaxton Pan. Elite III	C53F	7411FC 102	10/74	—	1/82	—	Davies, Cheltenham	
	NDD 998M	Ford	R226	BC04ML 63974	Caetano Estoril II	C53F	73/72	8/73	2/75	2/79	—	Nash, Nuneaton	
	NNH 608P	Bedford	YMT	FW452862	Duple Dominant	C53F	617/0476	4/76	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	
	RRP 892R	Bedford	YMT	FW456932	Duple Dominant	C53F	717/2336	12/76	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	
	WNH 283S	Bedford	YMT	FW457634	Duple Dominant II	C53F	717/2442	9/77	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	
	FRP 251T	Bedford	YMT	HW453788	Duple Dominant II	C53F	917/2406	2/79	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	
	GJU 120V	Bedford	YMT	JW451753	Unicar E780	C53F	BD30	8/79	1/80	1/82	Mellor, Narborough	Soul, Olney	
	SNV 77W	Fiat	60F10	101104	Faro	C25F	80151	10/80	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	
	BBD 93X	Bedford	YNT	LW452198	Duple Dominant IV	C53F	117/2670	9/81	—	1/82	—	Soul, Olney	

Notes: