

CHURCH. Edward

t/a E Church and/or Royal Blue from 1922-1945 or
Royal Blue Coach & Transport Co. Ltd. (398742) from 1945-1967.

9 New Road, PYTCHLEY

The principal character in this story is Edward Church who was born in Kettering on 10th October 1898 and resided at Pytchley. During the First World War he volunteered for Army service, despite a disability affecting one of his legs, and after demobilisation he went to work as a clerk for the Midland Railway Company at Kettering station.

It seems that Ted Church was friendly with Alan Timpson of the well-known Kettering boot and shoe manufacturing company William Timpson & Co. Ltd., as a result of which Ted bought what was described as a Ford charabanc from a Mr George Meadows of Luton, for the sum of £185. With this vehicle he proceeded to operate a service from Orlingbury and Pytchley to Kettering, Bath Road, principally for employees of Timpson's factory. The new service was evidently successful as a second Ford T was promptly bought and used to augment the Orlingbury – Pytchley – Kettering service. With the flexibility of a second vehicle, Ted Church increased his opportunity to undertake private hire work in the locality, particularly at weekends.

There is little doubt that the year 1922 was an eventful one for Ted Church as, in addition to starting his transport business, he married Elsie Spencer in the same year. Ted and Elsie were destined to have two sons and Richard Walter Church was born on 8th January 1924 and Eric Edward Church was born on 15th October 1929. Both sons were to participate in the family business in later years, whilst Elsie Church acted as a clipper from at least 1926 and, later on, Dick's wife – Peggy – undertook similar duties.

At an unknown date in the 1920s, Ted Church obtained permission to erect a wooden garage alongside his home at 9 New Road, Pytchley. The original structure housed one vehicle whilst later extensions permitted a total of three vehicles to be parked under cover. Space for parking additional buses in the open was also available on the site. Probably in 1923 or 1924, Ted Church augmented his fleet with a Daimler, but no further details of this vehicle are known. It seems the business was financially successful as Ted was able to purchase a brand new Guy twenty-seat bus from Victoria Park Garage, Leicester and this was registered RP 2821 on 5th June 1926. It was a fine looking machine as the photograph overleaf testifies.

Bygone Buses of Northamptonshire is compiled by R M Warwick, "Forestyn" 101 Broadway East, Northampton NN3 2PP, who would be pleased to be advised of any additional information relating to the above operator. The records of the PSV Circle and the Omnibus Society have been consulted extensively for this series and acknowledgement and thanks are due to these organisations.

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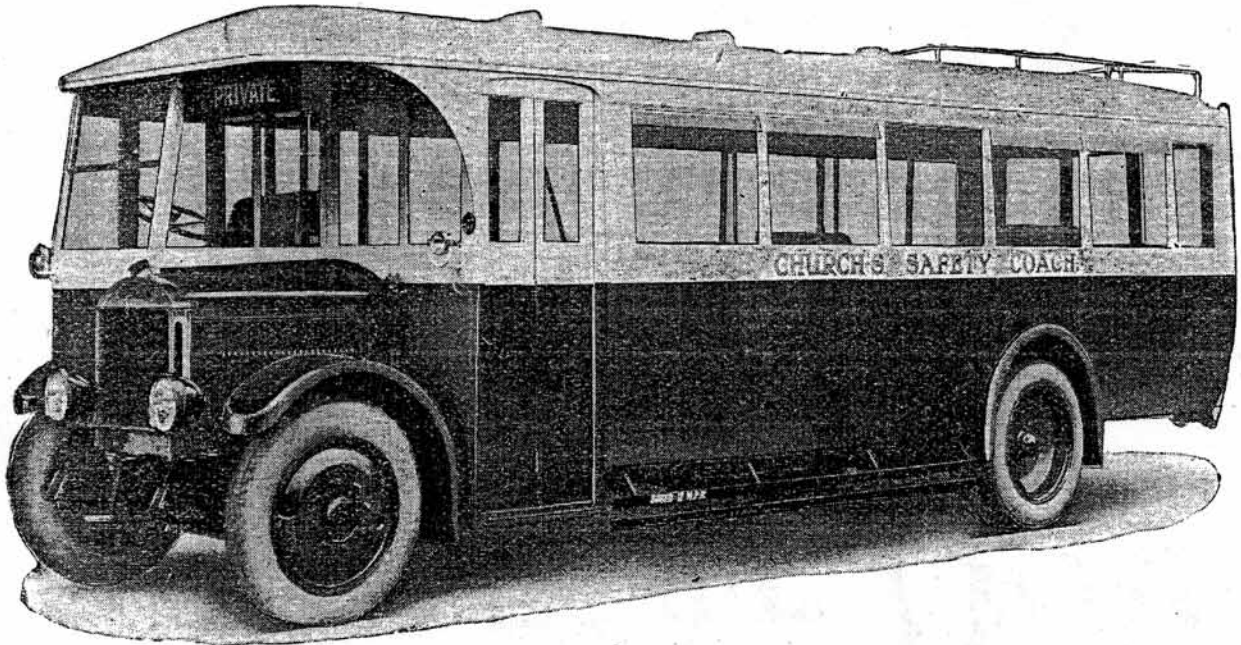


Handsome Guy RP 2821 stands outside Ted Church's house at Pytchley and carries the legend "CHURCH'S SAFETY COACHES" on its waistrail. The original garage can be seen on the extreme left of the picture.

In the following year, 1927, Ted Church bought a second-hand Manchester lorry from a Harry Gamble of Harrington who was a local haulier. Manchester lorries were built in the U.S.A. by Willys-Overland-Crossley Ltd and assembled in England at Heaton Chapel, Stockport. The lorry was acquired for the purpose of transporting coal from Kettering Rail Station to Messrs. Timpson's Factory and also to the premises of Kettering Cartons Ltd and the Avondale Leather Company. At other times the lorry was used to transport leather waste and such like from Timpson's Factory and in this way the road haulage side of Ted Church's business was commenced.

Returning to the passenger side of the story, Ted Church added a Maudslay ML3A with Vickers of Crayford, Kent, thirty-two seater bodywork to his fleet in May 1928 and this machine was registered RP 5988 on 22nd of that month. It seems likely that this was also supplied by the Victoria Park Garage at Leicester as a Vickers advertisement appearing in the Commercial Motors magazine of the time wrongly attributes the vehicle to Church's Safety Coaches, Leicester. At this time the buses were painted a rather unpleasant "North Sea" green rather than the royal blue which followed in the 1930s. Photographic evidence shows that this Maudslay was given the fleet number "2", so it is reasonable to assume that the Guy RP 2821 was numbered "1". It is interesting that both the Guy and the Maudslay were fitted with Dorman-Ricardo diesel engines in the early 1930s but these were not particularly successful, were most difficult to start, and were replaced by petrol engines a year or two later.

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This view of RP 5988 Church's Maudsaly ML3A with its Vickers bodywork was taken from a contemporary advertisement placed in Commercial Motor by Messrs Vickers of Crayford, Kent. It was numbered 2 in Church's fleet. (Photo courtesy Commercial Motor).

The lorry fleet increased with the addition of a one-ton Morris with an "ON" registration and, later on, an ex-Dunlop Tyre Company's Austin van was added to the fleet which then remained constant until the beginning of the War.

Meanwhile, on 4th April 1931, Ted Church bought his most notable vehicle – NV 30. This was a Maudsley ML3BC equipped with a body built by the Wellingborough coachbuilders Messrs. York, Ward & Rowlatt. It seated thirty-two passengers and included a smoking compartment. It is possible that this was the first machine to appear in the firm's royal blue/ivory livery although "Royal Blue Coaches" had been used as a trading name from at least 1928. It is almost certain that the Guy RP 2821 and Maudslays RP 5988 and NV 30 progressively replaced the original two Ford Ts and Daimler buses. The two Ford Ts remained on site in the garage adjoining Ted Church's New Road, Pytchley house during the early 1930s, where they were used as store sheds.

Following the passing of the 1930 Road Traffic Act, Ted Church applied for Road Service Licences to cover his existing operations which were local services from Orlingbury via Pytchley to Kettering, Timpson's Factory - *Daily*; Kettering, Dalkeith Place to Kettering Isolation Hospital - *Fridays and Sundays*, and Kettering, Argyle Street to Kettering, Regent Street on certain weekdays. Ted Church was probably not operating excursions and tours to any significant extent prior to the Traffic Act and whilst his original 1931 application for an excursions and tours licence was withdrawn, a replacement application

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SUNDAY

Dept.	ORLINGBURY	PYTCHLEY	KETTERING MARKET ST	REGENT STREET	TIMPSON FACTORY
	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
Dept. ORLINGBURY
" PYTCHLEY
" KETTERING MARKET ST
" REGENT STREET
" TIMPSON FACTORY

Dept.	ORLINGBURY	PYTCHLEY	KETTERING MARKET ST	REGENT STREET	TIMPSON FACTORY
	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
Dept. ORLINGBURY
" PYTCHLEY
" KETTERING MARKET ST
" REGENT STREET
" TIMPSON FACTORY

FRIDAY

Dept.	ORLINGBURY	PYTCHLEY	KETTERING MARKET ST	REGENT STREET	TIMPSON FACTORY
	am	am	am	am	Noon
Dept. ORLINGBURY
" PYTCHLEY
" KETTERING MARKET ST
" REGENT STREET
" TIMPSON FACTORY

* Duplicate Service.

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY ONLY

Dept.	ORLINGBURY	PYTCHLEY	KETTERING MARKET T.	REGENT STREET	TIMPSON FACTORY
	am	am	am	am	noon
Dept. ORLINGBURY
" PYTCHLEY
" KETTERING MARKET T.
" REGENT STREET
Arr. TIMPSON FACTORY

* Runs from Oct. 1st to March 31st only. § Wednesdays & Fridays only.

SATURDAY

Dept.	ORLINGBURY	PYTCHLEY	KETTERING MARKET ST	REGENT STREET	TIMPSON FACTORY
	am	am	am	am	am
Dept. ORLINGBURY
" PYTCHLEY
" KETTERING MARKET ST
" REGENT STREET
Arr. TIMPSON FACTORY

* Duplicate Service.

PRICE 1d. BACH.

SUMMER TIME TABLE



Operating from APRIL 1st to OCTOBER 30th.



Royal Blue Coaches
(KETTERING)

Proprietor - E. CHURCH.

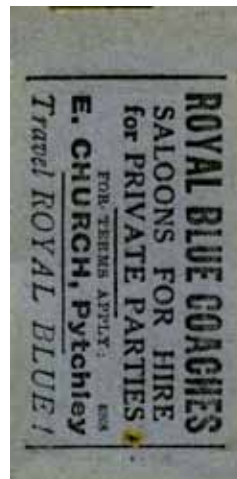
Phone KETTERING 10x3.

Facsimile of Church's timetable showing the Orlingbury - Pytchley - Kettering service circa 1928. The telephone number of Kettering 10x3 is shown on the booklet cover and this changed to Broughton 44 when the Post Office opened its Broughton exchange in May 1929.

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made in January 1932 was granted for tours starting from Kettering and picking up in Pytchley and Orlingbury. Also in January 1932, application was made to the Traffic Commissioners to operate a Kettering, Windmill Avenue to Timpson's Factory route on Mondays to Fridays and a Kettering, Argyle Street to Rockingham Road Football Ground service on occasions of home matches.

At the end of 1932 a licence was obtained to run late night services from the Regent Street Dance Hall and, about a year later, a new Pytchley – Orlingbury – Little Harrowden – Burton Latimer service was commenced to transport workers from the villages to shoe and clothing factories as well as to the Weetabix factory at Burton Latimer. The morning bus left Pytchley at 6.50am on Mondays to Saturdays, returning from Burton Latimer, Station Road at 5.20pm on Mondays to Fridays and at 12.05pm on Saturdays. Incidentally, punch type tickets were used on the stage-carriage services and at least one, if not all the ticket punches, were of Bell Punch manufacture. This ticketing system remained in use throughout Royal Blue's history.

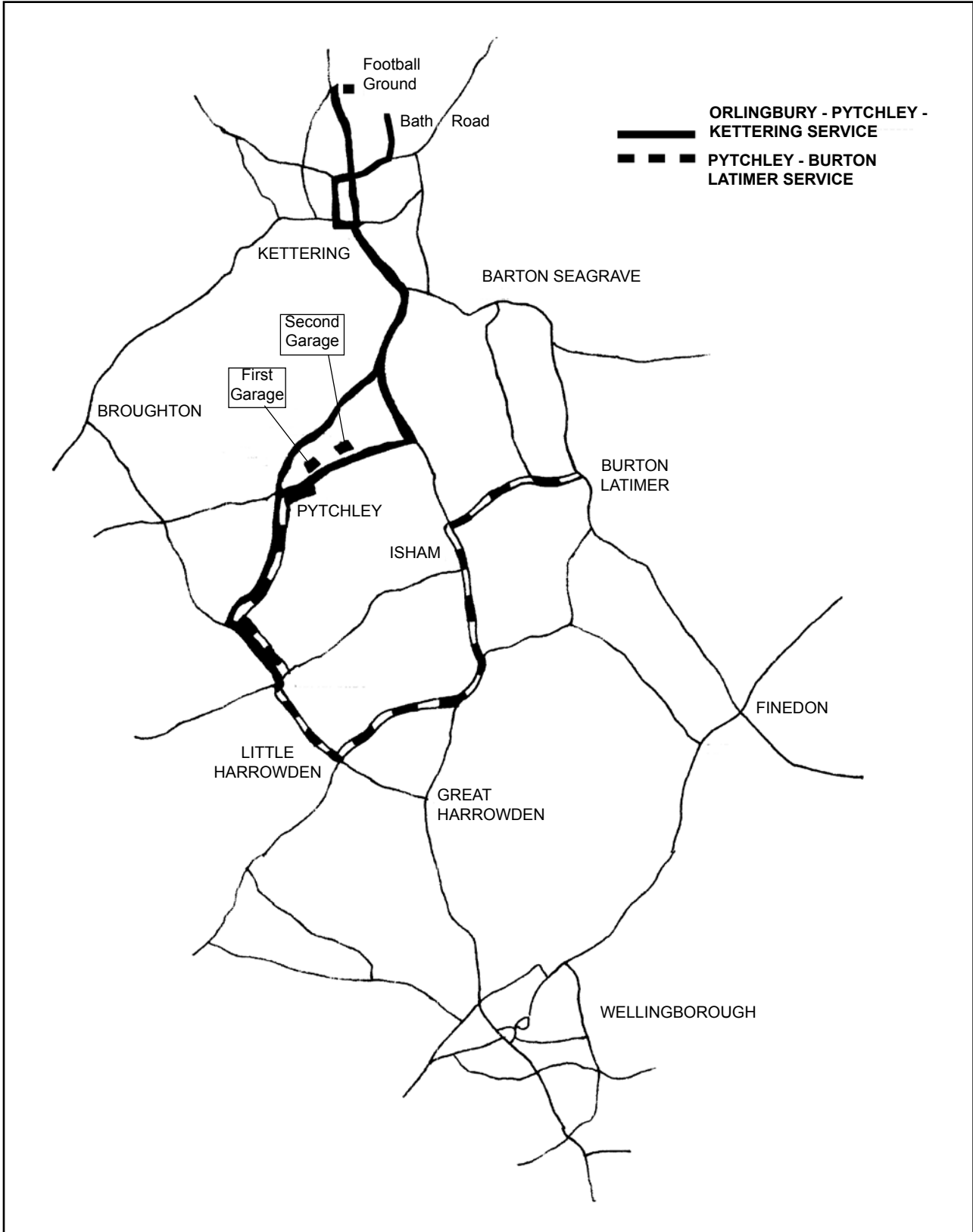


Examples of Royal Blue Coaches punch tickets printed on Bell Punch block D0354. The varieties illustrated are a 3d cerise single and a 5d orange return. The reverse of the ticket shows Royal Blue's own advertising.

September 1935 saw the commencement of a schools service which could convey fare-paying passengers between Pytchley and Broughton direct. In the following year Ted Church consolidated his excursion and tours operations by obtaining a licence for trips originating in Orlingbury and picking up at either Pytchley or the Harrowdens as appropriate. This licence, with the Kettering one, allowed Royal Blue to operate its excursion programme more logically from a vehicle routeing point of view.

In order to operate the excursion and tours authorised to him under his Road Service Licence it was necessary for Ted Church to acquire additional rolling stock. In this connection Ted bought a fourteen-seater Morris registered RP 7852 from Fred Buckby of Rothwell, in 1932, to release Maudslay NV 30 for more or less full time coaching work. At some stage in its short life with Royal Blue, Morris RP 7852 ventured towards Skegness, but unfortunately it collided with an Austin Seven car *en route* and tipped over, thus ending its career with Ted Church after giving less than a year's service. In 1933 a Thornycroft registered RP 2522, dating from 1926, seating twenty passengers in its York,

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A diagram of the main Royal Blue routes.

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Ward and Rowlatt body was acquired from the same Rothwell operator as the Morris mentioned above. It seems that Ted Church and Fred Buckby developed a good working relationship and often helped each other in times of difficulty. The Morris was last licensed by Ted Church in June 1933 and the Thornycroft in September 1934. The opportunity arose in November 1934 for Ted Church to purchase a second-hand Maudslay ML3 with N.C.M.E. thirty-two seater bus body, from Tom Mann of Whitwick, Leicestershire. This bus was registered WK 3896 and it dated from 1927, having been first registered in December of that year.



This 1926 Thornycroft A1 registered RP 2522 and mounted with a twenty-seat York, Ward & Rowlatt body was bought by Ted Church from Fred Buckby of Rothwell, with whom it is seen here, and gave eighteen months service to its new owner.

By 1935 Ted Church's original Maudslay – RP 5988 – needed to be replaced and to achieve this aim another Maudslay was purchased on 1st June of that year. This was NV 4998, an ML3K model which carried Brush thirty-two seat coachwork. It was destined to serve the firm well during its life with Royal Blue even though it had to be reconditioned later in its career. The year 1936 saw the arrival of a second-hand Commer Centaur which had previously been operated by Housden of Loughborough. Registered JU 326, this Commer had been new in 1932 and carried a twenty-seater Willowbrook body. Two other vehicles were bought second-hand before the War and the first of these was acquired in 1938, being a G.M.C. coach that had earlier been operated by Barton Transport of Chilwell. This machine was registered VO 5268. The second vehicle was a Reo Speedwagon acquired from Kettering operator Bagshaw & Sons, but strangely enough it contained no seats. Ted Church intended to fit a set but the work was never undertaken and the coach was not operated.

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NV4998 was a Maudslay ML3K fitted with a Brush thirty-two seat coach body. It was a handsome beast when new as is apparent from this photograph.

(Photo courtesy J F Higham / Omnibus Society collection)



Another view of Maudslay NV 4998 but this time a post-War photograph taken after body restoration by Messrs. Spite of Thrapston and also after being fitted with a Guy radiator cap!

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Prior to the War, Ted Church was able to purchase two new Bedford coaches. The first was registered ARP 251 on 25th March 1939 and was a WTB model which carried a Willowbrook twenty-six seat body. The second vehicle comprised a Bedford WLG goods chassis supplied by Messrs Grose Ltd of Northampton, to which was fitted the twenty-seat Willowbrook coach body taken from the Commer JU 326 acquired a few years earlier. The resulting machine was registered ARP 812 on 2nd June 1939 but its springing was too solid for a coach vehicle, so it gave passengers a poor ride and was never popular with either drivers or passengers.



Willowbrook bodied vehicles seem to have been favoured by Royal Blue in the pre-War years although not all were acquired new. Bedford WTB - ARP 251 - was one such vehicle with a Willowbrook body, which also happened to be bought new. The picture above was taken at Kettering Library, courtesy of J F Higham / Omnibus Society whilst the view to the right was taken alongside Ted Church's house at Pytchley.



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Royal Blue Ser. (Church).												
Kettering & Orlingbury												
Holidays to Thursdays												
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
TIMPSON FACT.	725				1 25			515				
Regent Street	730	8 0	835	1120	1 30	350	520					
LIBRARY	735	8 5	840	1130	2 0	4 5	530	615		7 5	9 0	10 0
Pytchley	750	915	855	1145	2 15	420	545	830		715	915	1015
ORLINGBURY	8 0				2 25	405	550			725	925	1025
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	N.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
ORLINGBURY	650	810			225		445	550		725	930	
Pytchley	7 0	820	1015	12 0	235	420	455	6 0		845	735	840
KETTERING (M.St.)	715	830	1030	1215	245	430	5 5	610		655	745	950
Regent Street	720	835	1035	1220	250	435	510			750		
TIMPSON FACT.	725				440	515				750		
Fridays												
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
TIMPSON FACT.	725				1 20			515				
Regent Street	730	8 0	835	1120	1 25	250		520				
LIBRARY	735	8 5	840	1130	2 0	3 40	4 5	530	615	7 5	9 0	10 0
Pytchley	750	915	855	1145	2 15	315	355	420	545	630	715	815
ORLINGBURY	8 0				2 25	400	550			725	925	1025
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	N.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
ORLINGBURY	650	810	10 0		150		445	550		725	930	
Pytchley	7 0	820	1015	12 0	1 0	2 20	420	455	6 0	845	735	830
KETTERING (M.St.)	715	830	1030	1215	1 15	215	330	430	5 5	610	655	745
Regent Street	720	835	1035	1220	2 20	435	510			750		
TIMPSON FACT.	725				440	515				750		
Sundays												
	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
KETTERING (R.St.)	150	220								9 55		
Library	2 0	230			350	515			630	740		815
Pytchley	215	245			4 5	530			645	755		830
ORLINGBURY	220	250			540				655			825
	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
ORLINGBURY					225		545			715		930
Pytchley	130	2 0	235		3 0	5 0	6 0		725	8 0	830	940
Kettering (M.St.)	140	215	245		315	515	615		740	815	845	950
KETTERING (R.St.)	145	220	250		320					955		

Extra Buses (Mons. to Thurs.) dep. Argyle St. for Regent St. at 145 p.m., returning at 350 p.m.

§ Thro' to Orlingbury on Weds only.

Royal Blue Ser (Church).												
Kettering & Orlingbury												
Saturdays												
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
TIMPSON FACT.	7 25				1150							
Regent Street	7 30	8 0			8 35						3 0	3 50
LIBRARY	7 35	8 5			8 40	11 0			12 5	1 0	2 0	5 10
Pytchley	7 50	8 15			8 55	1115			1215	1 15	2 15	3 20
ORLINGBURY	8 0				9 0				1225		2 25	3 30
	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
LIBRARY	5 15	5 40			6 20	7 5			8 0	8 30	9 0	10 11 0
Pytchley	5 25	5 50			6 35	7 15			8 15	8 40	9 15	1015
ORLINGBURY	5 30	6 0			6 45	7 25			8 25	9 0	9 25	1025
	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
ORLINGBURY	5 50	8 10			1230				1240	1 30	2 25	3 20
Pytchley	7 0	8 20			1015	1115			1240	1 30	2 35	3 20
KETTERING (M.St.)	7 15	8 30			1030	1130			1255	1 45	2 45	3 35
Regent Street	7 20	8 35			1135						2 50	3 40
TIMPSON FACT.	7 25				1140							
	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.
ORLINGBURY	4 45				5 55				7 25		9 30	
Pytchley	5 0	5 30			6 50	8 45			7 35	8 15	8 40	9 10
KETTERING (M.St.)	5 15	5 40			6 20	6 55			7 50	8 25	8 55	9 10

Facsimile of Royal Blue's
Timetable for June 1939 taken from
Thompson's Kettering Rail and Bus
Time Table & Guide.

Following the outbreak of War, the Military Authorities decided they fancied Ted Church's two Maudslay vehicles registered NV 30 and NV 4998 and promptly commandeered them in 1940. Major Brooks, the Requisitioning Officer, inspected NV 4998 at Pytchley and proclaimed it "all sound" whereafter it had to be taken to the R.A.S.C. receiving Unit at Malvern on 2nd July 1940. Incidentally, the original Manchester lorry was also taken at this time and the Morris lorry was replaced by another Manchester lorry that had previously been operated as a covered van by confectionary manufacturers Munn's of Kettering and converted to lorry form for Ted Church's operation. To replace one of the coaches commandeered, Ted Church again persuaded his good friend Fred Buckby to dispose of another of his vehicles and this time Willowbrook bodied Dennis Lancet NV 2241 joined the Royal Blue fleet in 1940 or thereabouts. During the remainder of the War a further three vehicles were obtained second-hand. First was a normal control Maudslay which seated twenty-five passengers and about which no further information has come to light other than that it was acquired circa 1942. It was used mainly for the transport of construction workers. Next a former Ribble all Leyland Lion PLSC3 model with thirty-two seat bus body was obtained from Leeds dealer W North in August 1943 and, around about 1944, a T.S.M. coach was acquired from Knight's of Northampton. As the only vehicle of this manufacture known to have been operated by Knight's was KO 2664, it is likely that this was the bus in question.

Maudslay coach NV 30 was released by the Military Authorities in 1944 in quite a poor state but in the following year was reconditioned and whilst the bus could be used, the body had about reached the end of its useful life. When conditions were right, NV 30 was sent to Thurgood's of Ware to be rebodied, at a cost of £1500, and it returned to service in 1948. Maudslay NV 4998 was also released in 1944 and had to be collected from the

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Steventon Army Depot near Newbury. It had a broken crankshaft and the body was not good as most of the windows had been removed and replaced by canvas sheets, so that the rain had damaged the interior and seats. Messrs Spite of Thrapston was given the job of rebuilding and refurbishing this coach. Incidentally, NV 30 had its petrol engine replaced by a Gardner 4LW unit in about 1950, fitted by North Derbyshire Engineering Ltd of Darley Dale.



What a splendid picture of the Dennis Lancet NV 2241 that Ted Church bought from Fred Buckby of Rothwell early on during the War! In this case the thirty-two seat coachwork was by Willowbrook of Loughborough. (Photo courtesy J F Higham / Omnibus Society)



Thurgood rebodied Maudslay NV 30 rounds the corner at Pytchley in the mid-1950s with Ted Church driving.

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An offside view of Maudslay NV 30 photographed in September 1958 many years after being rebodied by Thurgood of Ware. (Photo courtesy D M Bailey)



An interesting nearside view of Maudslay NV 30 taken whilst operating in service along Newland Street, Kettering.

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During the War Royal Blue's stage carriage services continued, but all excursions and tours and most private hires soon ceased. Contracts were obtained to transport construction workers from Kettering to the Benefield, Grafton Underwood and Chelveston aerodrome sites and to move Prisoners of War from Weekley to the various locations around the district to which they were required for farm maintenance work. Another war time contract was obtained from British Insulated Calenders Cables to convey electricians from the Kettering district to lay cables at the various aerodromes being constructed in the vicinity. At the time, Chelveston, Kimbolton and Staughton were some of the destinations to which Church's operated.

At the end of the War, Ted Church decided he would set up a limited company under which to operate his business. Accordingly, on 21st September 1945, the Royal Blue Coach & Transport Company Limited was incorporated with a nominal capital of £20,000. In fact only 5000 Shares of £1 each were subscribed, with Ted Church and his wife Elsie each holding 43% of the Shares and sons Dick and Eric each holding 7% of the Shares.

In the post-War years, new rolling stock could not easily be obtained so Ted Church turned his attention to purchasing a number of second-hand machines to allow him to keep pace with the increasing demand for private hire and excursions. Five buses and



This Maudslay ML3E was bought from York Bros. of Northampton when that firm disposed of it in 1947. UT 9560 was fitted with a Willowbrook body and it was photographed on this occasion at Orlingbury Green.

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coaches were taken into stock, the first being an ex-Tailby & George Maudslay ML3E with Willowbrook coachwork, registered RB 4504, and this was purchased in October 1946. In the following year, three Maudslay vehicles were picked up from Messrs. York Bros. of Northampton and these were WD 2702, UT 9560 and UU 1092. Two of the three Maudslays were fitted with Willowbrook bodies whilst UU 1092 carried a Burlingham coach body. Incidentally, both RB 4504 and UT 9560 contained smoking compartments. Last, but not least, in about 1948 Buckby's Coaches of Rothwell supplied Ted Church with NV 3913, which was a 1934 Dennis Ace which was also equipped with Willowbrook bodywork.



Burlingham bodied Maudslay ML4B registered UU 1092 was well travelled, its previous owner being York Bros of Northampton who parted with it to Ted Church after the War.



This Willowbrook bodied Dennis Ace NV 3913 was new to Fred Buckby of Rothwell in 1934 and came via Leslie Adams, successor to Buckby's Coaches, to Ted Church around about 1948.
(Photo: R Marshall collection)

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Services operated in the post-war period included an evening contract for the W.R.V.S. to convey and chaperone young ladies from Kettering to the U.S.A.F bases at Molesworth and later, Alconbury. A school contract was obtained to transport children from Loddington to Broughton School, for which purpose the Dennis Ace NV 3913 was acquired. Two other school contracts, one from Grafton Underwood to Cranford School and the other from Cranford to Kettering Schools were also undertaken. The excursions and tours licence held pre-War by W G Keach of Kettering was transferred to Royal Blue by means of a Defence Permit in the immediate post-War period and later consolidated into the Company's Kettering excursions and tours licence. In November 1947 a Kettering town service was jointly applied for with United Counties, to operate between Highfield Road and the Library on a daily basis. For the next twenty years Royal Blue operated four return morning trips on the particular town service concerned. Tours and private hires were frequently operated for American Forces based at Molesworth and Alconbury. Church's regularly ran two buses on contract to Timpson's factory to convey workers from Corby to Kettering in the mornings and returning in the evenings. A similar contract to convey workers from Corby to Kettering and return was provided for Kettering clothing manufactures Messrs. Wallace & Linnell Ltd.

In the post-War years the fleet of Royal Blue grew to such an extent that the original garage at New Road, Pytchley – which had since become known as Isham Road – was no longer adequate to house and service the fleet of buses and lorries. Ted Church took steps to acquire a site on the outskirts of the village, in Isham Road, and the purchase was made in 1947. In due course a permit was obtained to construct a purpose built garage and this was completed and opened in 1949. Eleven years later Ted and Elsie Church built a bungalow on part of the site and moved from their original house in 1960.

Royal Blue Coach & Transport Co. Ltd. received its first new vehicle after the War, in June 1949, when a Duple Vista bodied Bedford OB was delivered and registered ERP 922. This was followed in 1950 by two more new machines, the first of which was a fine Leyland Tiger carrying Whitson full-fronted thirty-three seat coachwork. This was registered FNV 557 and shortly afterwards FNV 999, another Bedford OB/Duple Vista combination, entered the fleet. The next three years witnessed the delivery of one new coach per year and the models chosen were Leyland Tigers with fully-fronted Yeates bodywork for 1951 and 1952 delivery and a Bedford SBG with handsome Burlingham Seagull bodywork for

the 1953 season. The registration numbers of these three coaches were GNV 999, HBD 499 and JBD 919 respectively. During the same period Royal Blue needed another vehicle to work on the stage carriage and contract services and in 1951 Ted Church picked up a 1939 Bedford WTB with Duple twenty-six seat body from Farrow's Coaches of Melton Mowbray. This vehicle, registered BJU 93, operated in Farrow's livery for the whole time it was with Church's.

PHONE : BROUGHTON 44.

ROYAL BLUE COACHES,
PYTCHLEY AND
KETTERING.

PRESENTED BY.....

CHURCH. Edward, PYTCHLEY



The first new bus delivered after the War was ERP 922, a Bedford OB with standard Duple Vista 29-seat bodywork. During the seventeen years Royal Blue owned this vehicle it was a regular performer on the stage-carriage services and proved a most reliable machine. This picture was taken at Kettering Library. (Photo courtesy R H G Simpson)



This distinctive Leyland Tiger coach carried a body built by Whitson to a fully-fronted design. FNV 557 seated thirty-three passengers and has since been preserved, albeit not painted in the livery in which it was adorned whilst with Royal Blue. The location for this photograph was Humberstone Gate, Leicester. (Photo courtesy R Marshall)

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Royal Blue's second Bedford OB with Duple Vista bodywork was FNV 999, new in June 1950. On this occasion it was photographed whilst operating the local stage carriage service at Orlingbury Green. (Photo courtesy T Roberts)



GNV 999 was a Leyland Tiger PS2 fitted with a rather pleasant fully-fronted Yeates coach body seating thirty-five passengers. It was new to Royal Blue in April 1951.

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In contrast to GNV 999, the March 1952 delivery of a Yeates bodied Leyland Tiger PS2 in the shape of HBD 499, with its enormous fender and excessive chrome decorative strips gave this coach a somewhat ungainly appearance. The picture was taken at Church's Pytchley garage.
(Photo courtesy T Roberts)



The timeless design of the Burlingham Seagull body is apparent in this view of Royal Blue's Bedford SBG registered JBD 919.
(Photo courtesy T Roberts)

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KETTERING — PYTCHLEY — ORLINGBURY ROYAL BLUE BUS SERVICE TABLE 48

WEEKDAYS	
	a.m. a.m. a.m. S NS S S F NFS S F S
Timpson's Factory	7 25 1145 120 125
Regent Street	7 30 7 53 8 40 1120 1150 p.m. 25 1 30 250 3 0
Dalkeith Place	7 32 7 55 8 42 1055 1122 1155 1255 27 1 32 150 253 3 5 338
Library	7 35 8 0 8 45 11 0 1130 12 5 0 1 30 2 0 2 03 0 310 340
Pytchley	7 45 8 10 9 0 1115 1145 1220 1 15 45 2 15 215 315 325 358
Orlingbury	8 15 1230 55 2 25 225

†-Not via Argyll Street. F-Friday. NFS-Not Friday or Saturday. NS-Not Saturday. S-Saturday.

(continued on next page)

WEEKDAYS—continued

	NF	F	NS	S	NS	S	p.m.	S	NS	S	S	p.m.	NS	S
Timpson's Factory	350	5 0	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15	5 15
Regent Street	350	5 0	5 15	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20	5 20
Dalkeith Place	355	4 0	5 7	5 10	5 25	6 15	7 27	5 755	855	9 55	9 59	9 59	9 59	9 59
Library	4 5	4 5	5 10	5 12	5 30	5 45	6 20	7 57	10 8	0 8	0 30	9 0	10 0	10 0
Pytchley	4 20	4 20	5 25	5 25	5 45	5 55	6 35	7 20	7 25	8 15	8 40	9 15	10 15	10 15
Orlingbury	4 30	4 30	5 35	5 35	5 55	6 0	7 25	7 30	8 25	9 25	10 25	10 25	10 25	10 25

WEEKDAYS—contd.

	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Timpson's Factory	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125
Regent Street	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055
Dalkeith Place	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0
Library	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0
Pytchley	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15
Orlingbury	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25

WEEKDAYS—contd.

	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Timpson's Factory	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125	1125
Regent Street	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055	1055
Dalkeith Place	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0
Library	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0	11 0
Pytchley	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15	11 15
Orlingbury	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25	11 25

WEEKDAYS	
	a.m. a.m. a.m. NFS FS S NS S S F NFS S F
Orlingbury	7 07 7 25 820 9 50 10 0 1115 12 0 1240 1302 0 235 235 318
Pytchley	7 13 7 48 833 10 3 10 13 1130 1213 1253 1 43 213 248 248 328
Market Street	7 15 7 50 835 10 5 10 15 1135 1215 1255 1 45 215 250 251 330
Dalkeith Place	7 20 7 53 840 1010 10F20 1140 1220 220 255 256
Regent Street	7 25 1145 1225
Timpson's Factory	7 25 1145 1225

WEEKDAYS—contd.		SUNDAY	
	S NS NS S S p.m. S p.m. S NS S NS S	a.m.	p.m.
Orlingbury	325 420 4 55 455 525 6 0 6 10 645 735 8 15 840 935 940	1125	550 720 825 9 30 1030
Pytchley	338 433 5 5 515 538 6 13 6120 658 748 748 825 853 948 953	1015 1130	10 0 2 0 3 0 5 0 6 0 725 835 9 40 1035
Market Street	340 435 5 7 510 540 6 15 6 22 7 0 750 750	1028	1013 213 313 513 613 738 848 9 53
Dalkeith Place	345 440 5 10	1030	215 315 515 615 740 850 9 55
Regent Street	345 440 5 10	1030	220 320
Timpson's Factory	345 440 5 10	1030	220 320

†-Not via Argyll Street. *—Limited to employees of Wm. Timpson's, and return ticket holders. ‡-Via Co-op factory. &-Via Bowling Green Road and Sheep Street, Kettering. F-Friday. FS-Friday, Saturday. NF-Not Friday. NFS-Not Friday or Saturday. NS or E-Not Saturday S-Saturday. W-Wednesday, NS-Wednesday, Saturday.

The Royal Blue timetable for May 1956 taken from Thompson's Kettering Rail and Bus Time Table and Guide.

By 1956 a further example of the Bedford OB chassis was obtained second-hand to replace the ex-Farrow Bedford. This vehicle was acquired from Dealer Kirkby of Anston and it was registered NNU 761, carrying an S.M.T. body built to Duple Vista design. NNU 761 remained in its previous operator's livery which was of a lighter shade of blue than Church's usual colour. The final new coach to be delivered during the 1950s was SBD 999, which was a Leyland Tiger Cub with Plaxton Consort bodywork which entered service with Royal Blue in January 1959.



This Bedford OB with S.M.T. body built to Duple design was registered NNU 761. New in May 1949, NNU761 was seven years old when it was imported into the Royal Blue fleet and it was never repainted in its new owner's colours. This photograph was taken outside the Westminster Bank in Sheep Street, Kettering. (Photo courtesy R H G Simpson)

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SBD 999 comprised a 1959 Leyland Tiger Cub chassis and a Plaxton Consort body seating forty-one passengers. On the occasion this photograph was taken in Oakwood Road, Northampton, SBD 999 had operated to the County Ground, a destination for which Royal Blue was licensed.
(Photo courtesy T Richardson)

For many years a Mr Kilsby, who owned a bakehouse and shop at the corner of Rockingham Road/King Street, Kettering, had been an agent for the sale of Royal Blue excursions and tours tickets. When Mr Kilsby retired, in the early 1960s, Royal Blue bought the premises, converted the bakehouse into a shop for leasing, but continued to use the original shop premises as a booking office until 1967.

The year 1960 saw, in April, the arrival of VNV 999, a forty-one seat Duple bodied Bedford SB1 coach, whilst in August of the same year the opportunity arose for Ted Church to purchase the goodwill of the excursions and tours licence held by Jim Adams of Rothwell. This permitted excursions to be operated from Kettering to destinations other than those for which Royal Blue already held licences. The transaction cost Royal Blue £6,000 but the sum included the purchase of three of Adams coaches. These were LTO 51, an A.E.C Regal III with Duple bodywork; JGE 426, an A.E.C. Regal IV with Burlingham Seagull bodywork and HRP 738, a Bedford SB also with Burlingham Seagull bodywork - see paper NN-AD2. Having just acquired the new Bedford VNV 999, the two A.E.C. Regals were of little use to Royal Blue and were not used but the Bedford SB was operated for a year or two. Yet another Bedford OB found its way into the fleet in November 1961 and the particular coach in question was registered GDL 75. It was acquired as a replacement for similar Bedford OB registered NNU 761, for use on the local stage carriage route.

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Looking immaculate when photographed new in April 1960 was VNV 999, a Bedford SB1 mounted with forty-one seat Duple Super Vega coachwork.

(Photo courtesy D M Bailey)



Another Bedford OB that failed to receive the Royal Blue colours was GDL 75. This Duple bodied vehicle was twelve years old when it joined the Church's fleet. (Photo T Roberts)

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A Leyland chassis was chosen for the 1961 vehicle intake when Leopard WRP 999, with Plaxton Panorama coachwork seating forty-one people, joined the fleet and, in effect, replaced the two A.E.C. Regals acquired from Adams but not used. Slightly earlier, a contract was obtained from Northamptonshire County Council to convey mentally handicapped children from villages surrounding Pytchley to Kettering and this necessitated the purchase of a minibus. YRP 873 - an Austin J2 with Kenex twelve seater body - was chosen for the job and this was delivered in November 1961. Prior to the arrival of this minibus, a 1938 Austin limousine was used to operate the contract. This was registered ABD 60 and had been obtained from Fred Buckby of Rothwell many years earlier.

Royal Blue Coach & Transport Co. Ltd. was to acquire only three more new coaches and these entered service in 1962, 1964 and 1965, being registered 299 BRP, BBD 999B and ENV 999C respectively. 299 BRP was a Leyland Leopard with fifty-one seat Plaxton Panorama coachwork whilst BBD 999B was a Bedford SB5 with Duple forty-one seat bodywork. ENV 999C was the baby of the three as this Bedford VAS1 model, with Duple coachwork, seated just twenty-nine passengers. Incidentally, 299 BRP cost Royal Blue £6,999, representing £3,000 for the chassis and £3,999 for the body.

The final rolling stock acquisition took place in two stages, in 1965 and 1966 respectively, when the Wellingborough haulage firm of W G Eales ceased operating coaches, selling them to Royal Blue. Two coaches were involved in the sale, the first being an elderly Bedford OB equipped with a 29-seat Duple Vista body in exceptionally good condition for its age, having had its bodywork refurbished, its seats re-upholstered and saloon heaters



Royal Blue's first Leyland Leopard was WRP 999, a Plaxton Panorama bodied example new in 1961 and seating forty-one passengers.

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299 BRP was a fifty-one seater Plaxton Panorama bodied Leyland Leopard which dated from 1962. It was parked in the courtyard of Windsor Castle when it was photographed.



*By the time this photograph of Bedford SB5/Duple Bella Vega coach BBD 999B was taken, the coach had passed to R L Orsborn & Sons of Wollaston, in whose fleet it was numbered 44.
(Photo courtesy R H G Simpson)*

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fitted whilst with Eales. The second was a Bedford SBG with Duple Vega 41-seat coachwork and registered ORY 551. As far as can be ascertained, Royal Blue did not use AVV 669 but it did operate ORY 551 to supply Messrs. W G Eales with its staff social club's transport requirements.

Unfortunately Ted Church died on 23rd August 1966 at the age of sixty-eight years and he left his Shares in the Royal Blue Coach and Transport Co. Ltd. to his two sons - Dick and Eric - in equal parts. His wife Elsie survived her husband by nine years before she, too, died on 15th March 1975. Even before Ted's death it was apparent to the Church family that they were spending more and more of their time on organising and running the passenger side of the business for shrinking financial returns. Both sons saw the way forward lay in the operation of lorries rather than buses and coaches and accordingly, with their mother, decided to sell their passenger operations.

It will be recalled that one of the Kettering town services was already jointly licensed with United Counties and therefore United Counties was the obvious buyer for the stage carriage network. A deal was struck whereby United Counties took over all the stage carriage operations with effect from 2nd April 1967 in exchange for a payment of £5,000. There were five Road Service Licences for which the goodwill was purchased and these were as follows:

- TER 3869/1 - Kettering, Dalkeith Place – Kettering, Rockingham Rd Hospital.
- TER 3869/2 - Orlingbury – Pytchley – Kettering, Timpson's Factory.
- TER 3869/3 - Kettering, Argyle Street – Kettering, Town Football Ground.
- TER 3869/4 - Kettering, Timpson's Factory – Kettering, Windmill Avenue.
- TER 3869/9 - Kettering, Library – Kettering, Bryant Road/Martin Road.

The coaching activities of Royal Blue were of greater interest to Messrs. York Bros. of Northampton and R L Orsborn & Son Ltd. of Wollaston than to United Counties. Negotiations therefore proceeded with both the former operators regarding the purchase of the coaches and excursions and tours licences but, in the event, Messrs. R L Orsborn & Son Ltd of London Road, Wollaston were the eventual purchasers and agreement for sale was made on 10th March 1967. The goodwill of the licences was valued at £14,000 and the following five primary licences, with twenty backing licences, were applied for by the purchasers:

- TER 3869/5 - Excursions & Tours starting from Kettering, Rockingham Road.
- TER 3869/7 - Excursions & Tours starting from Orlingbury Green.
- TER 3869/8 - Excursions & Tours starting from Kettering, Rockingham Road.
- TER 3969/11 - Excursions & Tours starting from Orlingbury Green.
- TER 3969/13 - Excursions & Tours starting from Kettering, Rockingham Road.

In addition, eight coaches changed hands in the deal and these were valued at £10,500. The registration numbers of the vehicles passing to R L Orsborn & Son Ltd were:

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JBD 919 - Bedford SB/Burlingham

VNV 999 - Bedford SB1/Duple

YRP 873 - Austin J2/Kenex

BBD 999B - Bedford SB5/Duple

SBD 999 - Leyland Tiger Cub/Plaxton

WRP 999 - Leyland Leopard/Plaxton

299 BRP - Leyland Leopard/Plaxton

ENV 999C - Bedford VAS1/Duple

So ended the Church family's involvement in the operation of buses and coaches in Northamptonshire after some forty-five years of public service. Dick and Eric Church continued to operate the haulage side of the Royal Blue Coach & Transport Company Limited, which later dropped the "Coach &" part of its title and at the time of writing these notes, in 1993, are still running two lorries from the site in Isham Road, Pytchley.

The road haulage fleet of Royal Blue is outside the scope of this brief history but, during the War, a 1936 Bedford lorry was acquired from A J Mackaness of Billing and a brand new Bedford lorry registered CBD 88 was purchased from Messrs. Grose Ltd of Northampton. After the War, Leyland Comets were favoured and the haulage side of the business was gradually built up until it reached a maximum of twenty-three lorries by the early 1970s. Much of the firm's work involved the carriage of coal and tarmac to and from Kettering and Cransley Furnaces when these were operating. In later years grain haulage formed the backbone of the firm's business.

POSTSCRIPT

The following is an extract from an article submitted by Mr D B Williams, a former resident of Pytchley, for inclusion in a Pytchley village history published a few years ago. It describes the last journey operated by Royal Blue and captures the flavour of the occasion:-

"In 1956 I went off to University and in due course found myself a job and became a car owner. Visits to Pytchley became less frequent and I no longer needed to remember the times of buses to Kettering. I did not lose touch or interest altogether, however, and so it was that I heard of Ted Church's death in 1966, and soon afterwards that the family was thinking seriously of giving up the bus operation side of the enterprise, that had provided an enormous service to the population of two villages since 1922, to concentrate on the road haulage business. Finally a phone call brought me back home on the evening of Saturday April 1st, 1967, with the express intention of travelling on the last "Royal Blue" return journey. Eric was the driver, and the vehicle a Bedford OB with the 999 registration number that the company tried to obtain on as many of its vehicles as possible. Although only half NV 30's age the vehicle was obviously near the end of its life-span. As it pulled up at the bus shelter, the engine stalled and all the lights went out. Clearly this came as no great surprise to Eric, who got up from behind the wheel, opened the bonnet, and, balanced on the near-side wing, delivered a hefty kick to the engine which immediately restarted accompanied by the lights.

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I had assumed that I would be the only passenger on the last Pytchley to Kettering run which, after all, only existed at all in order to provide a late Saturdays only bus back from Kettering for village revellers after the pubs had closed, and as Eric drove out of the village, welcoming me back and explaining which of the vehicles I remembered still remained, this seemed to be the case. But suddenly Eric stamped on the brake and stopped the bus in the middle of the road, then reversed it briskly until he was able to turn it round in a field gateway. In the excitement of greeting the company's only fan he had forgotten a regular passenger who was normally picked up at his own front door. We tore back into the village and stopped with a volley of hoots outside the appropriate house where we paused for a couple of minutes as the intending passenger ran out, then ran back in again to telephone and cancel the taxi which he had ordered when he saw us go by the first time. When we finally set out for Kettering we were running so late that there should have been little hope of the newcomer making his connection with the bus to Rothwell, but it was here that the peculiar quality of the "Royal Blue" really came into its own. Abandoning the normal route we nipped down Bowling Green Road, and into Northampton Road, pulling up directly opposite the Rothwell stop with a series of headlight flashes that warned the United Counties driver not to start until the passenger had changed vehicles. Not that it would have mattered unduly: as Eric said, "If he'd already gone we could have caught him up by the hospital easy." Eric then engaged in another diversion, to drop me off near my grandparents' house so that I could get myself a cup of coffee before the return journey. How typical that he should have thought of that, and for that matter, should have known where they lived.

I certainly wasn't the only passenger half an hour later - on the genuinely last "Royal Blue" bus service ever. It was crowded, and the passengers sang "We'll miss our little old blue bus" all the way home.

It was a thrifty "Royal Blue" habit to collect in return tickets and use them over and over again, but that night Eric sorted out a new one for me to keep as a souvenir. I still have it, and I still miss them. A Milton Keynes City Bus isn't the same thing at all."

I am indebted to both Dick and Eric Church for their willing co-operation in recording this history of Royal Blue.

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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			
		Ford	T			14			4/22	By-/28?	G H Meadows, Luton		
		Ford	T			14			-/22?	By-/31?			
		Daimler				?			-/23?	By-/26?			
1?	RP 2821	Guy		7916		B20F		6/26	-	6/36	Victoria Park Garage, Leic'ter	Farmer, Broughton	
2	RP 5988	Maudslay	ML3A	4365	Vickers	B32F		5/28	-	9/35			
3?	NV 30	Maudslay	ML3BC	4988	1 Y.W. & R. 2 Thurgood	C32F C31F B14F	506	4/31 10/48 7/29	- - -/32	9/61 6/33	H Buckby & Son, Rothwell		1
	RP 7852	Morris		1899							H Buckby & Son, Rothwell		
	RP 2522	Thornycroft	A1	12784	Y.W.& R.	B20F		4/26	3/33	9/34	H Buckby & Son, Rothwell		
	WK 3896	Maudslay	ML3	4217	N.C.M.E.	B32F		12/27	11/34	12/43	T Mann, Whitwick	Scrapped	
4	NV 4998	Maudslay	ML3K	5186	Brush	C33F		6/35	-	12/52			2
	JU 326	Commer	Centaur	46040	Willowbrook	C20F	2571	3/32	7/36	5/39			3
	VO 5268	G.M.C.	T30	308247	Rainforth	B20F		2/31	By6/38	-/45	/W Housden, Loughborough		
	?	Reo	Speed Wagon			?			c-/38	c-/38	/Barton Trans., Chilwell (245) Bagshaw & Sons (Kettg) Ltd		4
	ARP 251	Bedford	WTB	6457	Willowbrook	C26F	3129	3/39	-	c-/56		Weetabix Ltd., B Latimer	
	ARP 812	Bedford	WLG	18768	Willowbrook	C20F	2571	6/39	-	12/51	Grose Ltd. Northampton	Body - Hen Coop	3
	NV 2241	Dennis	Lancet I	170228	Willowbrook	C32F	2586	3/33	c-/40	By-/52	H Buckby & Son, Rothwell	Mobile Shop, Middleton	
	?	Maudslay				C25F		?	c-/42	c-/46		Hunt, Burton Latimer	5
	CK 3989	Leyland	Lion PLSC3 B9A	47006	Leyland	B32F		5/28	8/43	6/47	W North, Leeds /Ribble M S, Preston (526)		
	KO 2664	T.S.M.				C32F		5/27	c-/44	c-/47	H S Knight, Northampton		
	RB 4504	Maudslay	ML3E	5060	Willowbrook	B32F	2517	6/31	10/46	3/50	Tailby & George, Willington	(Derelict on premises -/56)	
	WD 2702	Maudslay	ML3E	4970	Willowbrook	B30F	2513	7/31	1/47	12/49	York Bros., Northampton	Scrapped	
	UT 9560	Maudslay	ML3E	5005	Willowbrook	B32F	2516	10/31	-/47	12/51	York Bros., Northampton	W S Yeates, Loughboro'?	
	UU 1092	Maudslay	ML4B	4632	Burlingham	C26F		5/29	-/47	12/49	York Bros., Northampton	W S Yeates, Loughboro'?	
	NV 3913	Dennis	Ace	200121	Willowbrook	B20F	2654	5/34	c-/48	c-/53	L J Adams, Rothwell	R Fossett's Circus, Duston	

Notes: 1 - Commandeered by War Department 1940 and returned c1944. Reconditioned 1945 and rebodied by Thurgood -/48. Fitted with Gardner 4LW engine c1950 and resealed C35F, probably at about the same time.

3 - Body transferred to ARP812 from JU326.

2 - Commandeered by War Department 2/7/40 and returned in poor condition 1944. Reconditioned by Spite, Thrapston and although legal lettering showed seating capacity of 32, it in fact seated 33 from this time.

4 - Not operated as vehicle contained no seats and none were fitted by Church.

5 - This was a normal control vehicle.

STOCK NO.	REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
ERP 922		Bedford	OB	107458	Duple Vista	C29F	44770	6/49	-	12/65	Errington, Evington	Bricklayer, B Latimer	
FNV 557		Leyland	Tiger PS2/3	496026	Whitson	FC33F	-	2/50	-	2/65	Ch. Ford & Slater, Leicester	/Day, West Mersea 6/70	
FNV 999		Bedford	OB	139465	Duple Vista	C29F	46516	6/50	-	3/67	Body - Whitson, W Drayton Errington, Evington		
GNV 999		Leyland	Tiger PS2/7	501342	Yeates	FC35F	241	4/51	-	6/66	W S Yeates, Loughborough	/Knill, Crossgates Tomkins (Farmer), Pytchley Mobile Shop	
BJU 93		Bedford	WTB	9417	Duple Hendonian	C26F	5342	1/39	7/51	-/56	Farrow, Melton Mowbray		
HBD 499		Leyland	Tiger PS2/13A	501262	Yeates	FC37F	251	3/52	-	3/67	W S Yeates, Loughborough	W A Cook (Farmer), Broughton Grange	
JBD 919		Bedford	SBG	16376	Burlingham Seagull	C35F	5556	6/53	-	3/67	Errington, Evington	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
NNU 761		Bedford	OB	95361/A	S.M.T. Vista	C29F	-	5/49	9/56	12/61	Kirkby, Anston/ E T White, Calver	(Derelict on site 3/67)	
SBD 999		Leyland	Tiger Cub PSUC1/2	578381	Plaxton Consort IV	C41F	582376	1/59	-	3/67	Ford & Slater, Leicester	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	1
VNV 999		Bedford	SB1	74482	Duple Vega	C41F	1120/212	4/60	-	3/67	Errington, Evington	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
LTO 51		A.E.C.	Regal III	9621E702	Duple "A"	C35F	45461	3/50	8/60	8/60	L J Adams, Rothwell		
JGE 426		A.E.C.	Regal IV	9821E641	Burlingham Seagull	C37C	4940	7/51	8/60	8/60	L J Adams, Rothwell	Sold at Auction, Measham	2
HRP 738		Bedford	SB	15566	Burlingham Seagull	C35F	5494	-/53	8/60	c-/62	L J Adams, Rothwell	/Bowles, Ford Sanders, Rushden	2
WRP 999		Leyland	Leopard L2	601161	Plaxton Panorama	C41F	602240	1/61	-	3/67	Ford & Slater, Leicester	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	3
YRP 873		Austin	152	J2BA80896	Kenex	B12F	-	11/61	-	3/67		R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
GDL 75		Bedford	OB	107035	Duple Vista	C29F	48857	5/49	11/61	3/67		/Charleswood, Dorking	
299 BRP		Leyland	Leopard PSU3/3R	621062	Plaxton Panorama	C51F	622006	6/62	-	3/67	/Jordan, Wantage Ch. Ford & Slater, Leics	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
BBD 999B		Bedford	SB5	95080	Duple Bella Vega	C41F	1170/402	6/64	-	3/67	Body. Plaxton Errington, Evington	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
ENV 999C		Bedford	VAS1	1938	Duple Bella Vista	C29F	1184/38	5/65	-	3/67	Errington, Evington	R L Orsborn & Sons, Wollaston	
AVV 669		Bedford	OB	92428	Duple V	C29F	52146	-/49	5/65	5/65	W G Eales, Wellingborough		2
ORY 551		Bedford	SBG	43490	Duple Vega	C41F	1060/160	3/56	4/66	3/67	W G Eales, Wellingborough	/Charleswood, Dorking	

NOTES:-
 1 - Exhibited at Earls Court 9/58.
 2 - Not operated by Royal Blue.
 3 - Exhibited at Earls Court 9/60.