

Bamber Bridge Motor Service (R. Prescott & Sons)



1929 - 1967

Contents

Bamber Bridge Motor Service - Fleet History 1929-1967	Page 3
Bamber Bridge Motor Service - Bus Fleet List 1929-1967	Page 8

No. 3 (GCU573) was a 1962 Leyland L2 'Leopard' with Duple C43F coachwork that came second-hand from the Hall Brothers of South Shields fleet in 1965. (Prescott family collection).

© The Local Transport History Library 2025. (www.lthlibrary.org.uk)
For personal use only. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or distributed in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise without the express written permission of the publisher. In all cases this notice must remain intact. All rights reserved. First published 2024. Second edition 2025.

PDF-277-2

Richard Prescott was born in Cuerden, Bamber Bridge on 16 May 1881, the son of James and Margaret Prescott. As a young man Richard became an apprentice cycle maker and around the turn of the century opened his own bicycle shop at 325 Station Road, Bamber Bridge.

During the Great War he joined the Royal Flying Corps where he was trained as a skilled fitter.

After the cessation of hostilities he used his new skills to commence a business servicing and repairing motor vehicles from premises at 361 Station Road, Bamber Bridge, which he fitted with a pit and sectional sliding door to admit small vehicles.

John Cooke had commenced a bus service between Bamber Bridge and Preston in 1924 trading as Cooke's Service and Richard Prescott became involved in maintaining and servicing the motorbuses. A garage was built at the rear of the building to accommodate the larger vehicles.

John Cooke was in competition with a number of other operators who were also operating the Bamber Bridge to Preston route including Dallas Services Ltd; Brookhouse Motors and Ribble Motor Services and was struggling to survive. He had not paid any invoices for a while and had run up a considerable bill. In May 1929, rather than face bankruptcy, he

offered his business to Richard Prescott in lieu of payment, which he reluctantly accepted to stave off possible bankruptcy himself. Richard never intended or even wanted to run a bus service but now he had been somewhat forced into it he was determined that he would make the best of it.

Four vehicles were inherited from Cooke and were numbered 1-4. The fleet name adopted was the Bamber Bridge Motor Service and was always shortened to B.B.M.S. on the vehicles. Because of BBMS' practice of re-using fleet numbers as vehicles were withdrawn, No. 8 was the highest fleet number ever used. The vehicles carried a smart red, black and cream livery.

BBMS operated daily stage carriage services between Hob Inn, Bamber Bridge to Preston and from Watering Pool Lane (Brownedge Road), Bamber Bridge to Preston, terminating at Starch House Square. These remained the only stage carriage services operated during the lifetime of the company. Licences for tours and excursions from Bamber Bridge, Gregson Lane, Higher Walton and Four Lane Ends were held and served the seaside resorts of Llandudno, Rhyl, Bridlington, Morecambe, Blackpool and Southport as well as the tourist centres of Edinburgh, York and the Lake District amongst others. These were generally run between Easter and October each year.

The business was always a family run affair originating with Richard Prescott as sole proprietor, although subsequently his sons James and Thomas became involved and continued the business until its demise.

The first new vehicle for BBMS was No. 3 (TF2693), a Leyland LT2 'Lion' with Leyland B32F bodywork purchased in 1930.

BBMS' first double-decker was No. 4 (TJ8147) a Leyland TD3 'Titan' with Leyland L27/26R bodywork in 1935; BBMS were always restricted to low-height double-deckers, due to the height of the garage entrance. Thereafter Leyland vehicles predominated in the fleet.

In 1935 BBMS was given a helping hand when two of its rivals, Dallas Services Ltd and Brookhouse Motors were both acquired by Ribble Motor Services. BBMS always had a good working relationship with Ribble Motor Services and serious competition never took place.

During World War II the almost obligatory Guy Arab utility double-decker with Roe 55-seat bodywork arrived, followed by several more in peace time. BBMS double-deckers were always crew operated although it was reported in the press that on 1 September 1941 Preston Bench fined two BBMS conductors £2 each for allowing their buses to carry excess passengers, although in mitigation it was stated that the Bench

appreciated the wartime difficulties of conductors but stressed the danger of overcrowding. One vehicle carried 85 persons, 32 too many, whilst the other bus had 81 passengers.

James Prescott is quoted as saying that he held the 'wartime record' for overcrowding when the last bus back to Bamber Bridge one Saturday night carried over 100 passengers; fortunately this was not observed by the authorities! This was later in World War II when there was an American base in Bamber Bridge and he did not wish to leave service men stranded.

Following the cessation of hostilities there was a demand for tours and excursions as people tried to forget the rigours of wartime conditions and wanted to get away. BBMS purchased their first purpose built coach in order to cope with this increased postwar demand. No. 8 (HTJ862) was a Guy Arab III with Santus C33F coachwork and it was followed by another Guy Arab III coach in 1948.

Postwar passenger loadings decreased regularly as private motoring increased and, as was the case with most operators, it was followed by the inevitable fares increases. Economies had to be made which resulted in service revisions which resulted in the loss of more passengers.

Eventually, with the remaining partners, James and Thomas Prescott,

approaching retirement age and no other family members wishing to join the business, the decision was made to sell the company.

On 1 April 1967 the Bamber Bridge Motor Service was taken over by Ribble Motor Services, who also acquired three vehicles, bringing almost 40 years of the Bamber Bridge Motor Service to an end.

Bus Fleet List 1929-1967

This listing is in the format - Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

1929

1	CK3600	Guy B	B1561	??	B25F
2	CK3685	Guy B	B1816	??	B26F
3	TC9719	Leyland A13	35105	??	B26F
4	TE4253	Guy ?	22332	??	B26F

Nos. 1-4 ex-JH Cooke (new 1924, 1925, 1924[to Whalley, Leyland], 1928 respectively).

Withdrawn 1930 (3), 1931 (1), 1934 (2), by 1935 (4).



TE4253 came with the business of John Cooke in 1929. It was a 26-seat Guy with bodywork by an unknown coachbuilder dating from 1928. It was numbered 4 in the Bamber Bridge fleet. (Prescott family collection).

1930

3	TF2693	Leyland LT2	51234	Leyland	B32F
----------	---------------	--------------------	--------------	----------------	-------------

Withdrawn **1950** (3).

1931

1	CK4380	Leyland LT2	51169	Leyland	B30F
5	CK4381	Leyland LT2	51170	Leyland	B30F
6?	NW8041	Guy B	B1621	Guy	B26F

Nos. 1, 5 ex-Scout Motors, Preston (Nos. 17-18; new 1930).
NW8041 ex-Samuel Ledgard (new 1924); fleet number also quoted as both 3 and 5 but both are unlikely; the Guy body was extensively rebuilt by Ledgard.

Withdrawn **by 1935** (6?), **1937** (1, 5).

1934

2	TJ5388	Leyland LT5A	3981	Burlingham	B36F
----------	---------------	---------------------	-------------	-------------------	-------------

Withdrawn **1948** (2).



The first new vehicle for Bamber Bridge was this 1930 Leyland LT2 No. 3 (TF2693) with Leyland B32F bodywork. (Preston Digital Archive).

1935

4	TJ8147	Leyland TD3	5797	Leyland	L27/26R
6	ATD596	Leyland TD4	8581	Leyland	L27/26R

Withdrawn 1951 (4), 1952 (6).

1937

5	BTF262	Leyland LT7	13596	Fowler	B35F
---	--------	-------------	-------	--------	------

Withdrawn 1955 (5).

1938

1	CK4050	Leyland TD1	70366	Leyland	L27/24R
---	--------	-------------	-------	---------	---------

No.1 ex-Preston Corporation (No. 66; new 1928).

Withdrawn 1946 (1).



No. 1 (CK4050) was a 1928 Leyland TD1 acquired second-hand from Preston Corporation in 1938. It carried Leyland 51-seat lowbridge bodywork. (Prescott family collection).

1944

7	FTE568	Guy Arab II	FD27098	Roe	L27/28R
----------	---------------	--------------------	----------------	------------	----------------

Withdrawn **1956** (7).

1946

1	GTF418	Leyland PD1	461644	Leyland	L27/26R
----------	---------------	--------------------	---------------	----------------	----------------

No. 1 fitted with platform doors in 3/57.
Withdrawn **1966** (1).

1947

8	HTJ862	Guy Arab III	FD32904	Santus	C33F
----------	---------------	---------------------	----------------	---------------	-------------

Withdrawn **1957** (8).

1948

2	JTF763	Guy Arab III	FD33157M	Barnard	C33F
----------	---------------	---------------------	-----------------	----------------	-------------

Withdrawn **1950** (2).



No. 1 (GTF418) was a 1946 Leyland PD1 with Leyland 53-seat bodywork, seen here in Starch House Square, Preston alongside several Scout Motor Services vehicles. (LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones).

1949

3	KTD979	Guy Vixen	LLV41059	Barnard	C29F
----------	---------------	------------------	-----------------	----------------	-------------

Withdrawn by **1963** (3).

1950

2	LTJ119	Leyland PS1/1	495804	Burlingham	FC33F
4	BRD755	Guy Arab I	FD25644	Strachans	L27/28R

No. 4 ex-Reading Corporation (No. 7; new 1943).

Withdrawn **1955** (4), **1958** (2).

1952

6	ATD776	Leyland TD4	9259	Burlingham	L27/24R
----------	---------------	--------------------	-------------	-------------------	----------------

No. 6 ex-Fishwick & Sons (No. 6; new 1935); fitted with 1935 Leyland L27/26R body ex-No. 4 in 1953.

Withdrawn **1957** (6).



No. 2 (LTJ119) was a 1950 Leyland PS1/1 'Tiger' with Burlingham full-fronted 33-seat coachwork. (Prescott family collection).



No. 4 (BRD755) was a 1943 Guy Arab I with Strachans L27/28R utility bodywork purchased in 1950 when just 7 years old. It gave another 5 years service with BBMS. (Dennis Marshall).

1954

3	STD373	Bedford SBG	27324	Duple	C36F
4	UTC762	AEC Regent III	9613S4922	East Lancs	L27/28RD

Withdrawn 1963 (3), 1967 (4).

1955

5	BEN302	Bedford SB	10051	Duple	C35F
---	--------	------------	-------	-------	------

No. 5 ex-Auty's Tours, Bury (new 1952).
Withdrawn 1959 (5).

1956

6	GTJ955	Leyland PD1	462923	Leyland	L27/26R
7	GTF476	Leyland PD1	461643	Leyland	L27/26R

Nos. 6-7 ex-Corless & Sons, Coppull (Nos. 5, 1; new 1947, 1946 respectively); fitted with platform doors in 3/57.
Withdrawn 1963 (6-7).



No. 6 (GTJ955) was formerly in the fleet of Corless of Coppull and was a 1947 Leyland PD1 with Leyland 53-seat lowbridge bodywork. It was fitted with platform doors in 1957. (LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones).

1959

2	DRN356	Leyland PSU1/15	505540	Duple	C41F
5	DRN357	Leyland PSU1/11	505636	Duple	C41F

Nos. 2, 5 ex-Scout Motor Services (new 1951).
Withdrawn 1963 (5), 1964 (2).

1960

8	661KTJ	Leyland PDR1/1	590503	Weymann	L39/34F
---	--------	----------------	--------	---------	---------

No. 8 ex-Leyland demonstrator (new 1959); to Ribble Motor Services 4/67;
re-numbered 1968.



No. 5 (DRN357) was a Leyland PSU1/11 'Leopard' with Duple 'Roadmaster' C41F coachwork, formerly in the fleet of Scout Motor Services, Preston. (Prescott family collection).



No. 8 (661KYJ) was a 1959 Leyland PDR1/1 with Weymann L39/34F bodywork, formerly a Leyland demonstrator that was acquired in 1960. (LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones).

1963

3	OCK169	Bedford SB1	80644	Plaxton	C41F
6	747EUS	Albion LR1	62100C	Alexander	H41/31F
7	2295TE	Leyland PDR1/1	622768	Weymann	L39/33F

No. 3 ex-Premier Motor Tours, Preston (new 1960).

No. 6 ex-Albion demonstrator (new 1963); to Ribble Motor Service 4/67; re-numbered 1967.

No. 7 to Ribble Motor Services 4/67; re-numbered 1966.

Withdrawn **1965** (3).

1964

2	TNL322	Bedford SB1	86851	Plaxton	C41F
---	--------	-------------	-------	---------	------

No. 2 ex-Galleys Motors, Newcastle (No. 1; new 1961).

Withdrawn **1967** (2).



No. 6 (747EUS) was an Albion Lowlander LR1 with Alexander 72-seat bodywork, the only highbridge layout bus operated by BBMS. (LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones).



No. 7 (2295TE) standing in Starch House Square was a 1963 Leyland PDR1/1 'Atlantean' with Weymann 72-seat lowbridge bodywork. (LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones).



Joining the coach fleet in 1964 was No. 2 (TNL322) a 1961 Bedford SB1 with Plaxton C41F coachwork that came second-hand from Galleys Motors of Newcastle. (Prescott family collection).

1965

3 GCU573 Leyland L2 620037 Duple C43F

No. 3 ex-Hall Brothers, South Shields (new 1962).
Withdrawn **1967** (3).

1966

1 HJN844 Leyland PD2/20 540909 Weymann L30/28RD

No. 1 ex-Southend Corporation (No. 284; new 1954).
Withdrawn **1967** (1).



No. 1 (HJN844) was an ex-Southend Corporation Leyland PD2/20 with Weymann 58-seat lowbridge bodywork, the final vehicle purchased by BBMS. The gentleman at the rear is Jim Prescott one of the owners. (Prescott family collection).



The PSV Circle provides members with up to date information on all aspects of bus and coach operations in the UK.

A wide range of publications is produced including operator fleet histories and current fleet lists.

CLICK HERE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO

© Local Transport History Library 2025

Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.
Our general email address is: lth.library@gmail.com

In producing this booklet reference has been made to the following publications: Commercial Motor Archive, various editions; PSV Circle Fleet History 2PC19, 1984. Additional information kindly provided by Jim Prescott.

Photographs from the LTHL collection via Malcolm Jones and courtesy the Prescott family collection, Preston Digital Archive, Dennis Marshall.

Series Editor: Peter Gould (secretary.lthl@gmail.com).