

The ex Southampton Guy Arabs



Provincial Bus Community

Provincial

Southampton had taken utility Guy Arabs during the war and like a number of other operators who, may all being well, not have considered Guys, it liked what it saw. When the tramway abandonment took place (the last tram running 1949) it turned to the Guy Arab III in a big way for their replacement. Deliveries started in 1948 and continued until 1954. During this time a total of 150 examples had been taken into stock, all Park Royal bodied. These buses were the main workhorses in Southampton until withdrawal started in the late 1950s, with the last example running until the early 1970s.

This is not the end of the story as some were converted to open top for tours of the docks and lasted longer than the closed top examples. A number of both open and closed top survive, unfortunately, none of the Provincial examples do.



Guy Arab 140 (FCR 441) in Southampton livery. This bus was to become No 16 when acquired by Provincial in 1965
Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection

In November 1962 the first batch were acquired by Provincial and these entered service in 1963. They were some of the earliest examples being from 1948. Provincial was already an Arab user, but its examples had the smaller Gardner 5LW engine. The Southampton ones had the 6LW engine. This may have been due to the more hilly terrain around Southampton, but more likely was due to Mr Orme-White's prudence.



No 64 (FCR 200) seen here have just passed through Fareham viaduct on delivery to Hoeford from Southampton in 1962. **Photo: Fred York**

Personal Experiences

I liked these vehicles as they were very closely related to the Guy bodied Arabs Provincial already had, and these were a favourite of mine. The first batch had their red leather seats replaced with green before entering service and interior panelling replaced with green Formica. However in 1965 one day I was waiting at the bus stop in Fareham West Street on my way home for lunch from school, when I saw a number of Southampton liveried Arab's go past, I assumed they were on their way to Hoeford. A few weeks later at the same spot No 40 (FCR 445) turned up now in Provincial livery, but the biggest surprise was on entering. The original seats had been left in red, but the entire interior had been refurbished in very brash patterned pink Formica, it had quite an effect on the eye. The only other pink interioered bus was no 14 the Ruston and Hornsby engined vehicle, but this was in a much more restrained pattern. I can still smell the new paint in No 40 if I think about it today !

Listing of Ex Southampton Guy Arabs acquired by Provincial

Registration No	Provincial Fleet No	SCT fleet number	Date to service	Withdrawn
FCR 198	62	108	1963	1970
FCR 199	63	109	1963	1971
FCR 200	64	110	1963	1971
FCR 201	65	111	1963	1971
FCR 440	48	139	1965	1970
FCR 441	16	140	1965	1970
FCR 442	19	141	1965	1971
FCR 445	40	144	1965	1972
FCR 446	41	145	1965	1972
FCR 447	49	146	1965	1972
FCR 452	11	151	1966	1970

FCR 443 (SCT 142) was also acquired in 1965 to be allocated fleet number 39 but never entered service, due to a cracked chassis. 11 (FCR 452) was bought a year later to fill the gap.



62 (FCR 198) seen here whilst working route 7 in Gosport. **Photo: Fred York**



63 (FCR 199) on the ramp at Hoeford for maintenance.

Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection



No 64 (FCR 200) in the later revised livery at Gosport Ferry.

Photo: Alistair Douglas



No 65 (FCR 201) seen at the Ferry shortly after repaint.

Photo : Ray Soper



Number 16 (FCR 441) in the company of another ex Southampton Arab seen at Hoeford. Not the tramlines still evident. **Photo Charles Chidwick**



19 (FCR 442) in the later livery at Hoeford. **Photo: Bob Gray**



39 (FCR443). This vehicle was found to have a cracked chassis, so never entered service. **Photo: Alan Cross Collection**



40 (FCR 445) **Photo: Fred York**



No 41 (FCR 446) on the A27 near Fareham railway station, about to take a left turn into Redlands Lane. **Photo: Fred York**



48 (FCR 440) seen here in Gosport **Photo: Fred York**



49 (FCR 447) of the second batch at Gosport ferry



11 (FCR 452) purchased as a replacement for FCR 443, seen at Gosport Ferry c. 1969.

Photo: Alistair Douglas

