



Advertising On Provincial Buses



Provincial Bus Community



This article covers the period up to the NBC takeover in 1970.

The advertisements carried on Provincial buses consisted of roughly three categories, large national companies (Dulux, Rentaset, Butlins etc), local companies, and Provincials own advertising. This was applied either by hand painting, paper, or later, vinyl. I have broken down the types of adverts into three separate categories, Side panel adverts, staircase panel adverts and other smaller advertising. Provincials own advertising for private hire etc is covered on a separate page "Travel by Provincial"

Side Panel Adverts

These were carried by most double deckers, the exceptions being the ex Red & White Guy Arabs acquired for the Foster Wheeler contract (77,78 etc). Where no advert was present, the company tended to paint the advertising area in a lighter matt green colour until a new one was applied. You very rarely saw a blank advertising panel in the same colour as the rest of the bus, except when new. Some buses had an advert for life (or at least a very long time). Examples of this are Guy Arab 21 (KOR 463) which carried a nearside advert for Jeffrey's Furnishers of Fareham, 70 (SCG 622) with an advert for Trustees Savings bank. Another long lived advert was for Wheelers Timber Merchants, but I cannot remember which vehicles carried this apart from 65 (FCR 201). Other local adverts were for Brickwoods brewery, Gosport Drapery Bazaar, Browns Pork Sausages, Friary/Meux's Ales. In the less politically correct days of the 1940s,50s,60s cigarette advertising was also widely carried.

Other local firms included :-

Gosport Motors, South Street

Robert Bell Motor Cycles, Forton Rd

Keasts Prams, High St, Gosport

Tudor Restaurant, Stoke Rd

Phillips & Son (Ladies Wear), Fareham

John Cole (Carpets & Furniture), Fareham

Dodges of Fareham - The Fashion Fabric Store

Foxes Furniture & Carpets, Gosport

Fareham Glass Ltd

United Pompey Ales

Handleys, Southsea

Portsmouth Building Society

NS Shoe Repairs, High Street, Gosport

Smith & Vospers Bakers

Upfields Drapers

R.G.Turner (cycles), 183/5 Stoke Rd, Gosport

The time taken to create the hand painted adverts sometimes resulted in buses being sent out with the advert only partially completed. This resulted in the public having to guess what the final message was going to be as it was gradually completed over a number of days. I particularly remember this with the Dulux advert with the border of individual flowers which must have taken a lot of work to complete.

Single deckers carried no side advertising until the Seddons arrived and even then they did not carry side adverts until NBC days.



AEC Regent 51 (DOU 428) showing the United Pompey Ales advert at the Ferry, date unknown but early to mid 1950s.

Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection



Guy/Deutz 78 (884 HHO), in the revised livery with re-designed grille at the ferry, 25 August 1971. The Advert is for NS Shoe Repairs. **Photo: Phil Moth**



Guy/Deutz 72 (HHA 84) at the Ferry in June 1970 displaying the the Fox's furniture and carpets adverts. **Photo: J.P.Bennett**



No 11 (FHO 603), with original body, waiting to leave Gosport Ferry for Elson in November 1953, showing the Keast's advert on the nearside.

Photo: Stephen Didymus collection

Personal Memories

Below are some personal recollections of Provincial adverts. I would be happy to include anyone else's if you have any. Please email to the usual address. (See home page).

"The large painted adverts were amazing especially since the coachpainter could be found on Sundays with a picture not much bigger than the size of his palm applying the design. Others well remembered include Erskine Motors, also carried before and during the war, some extending over that extra window on the offside of the Park Royal Regents. One that was very popular for a time was the Gas advert. On the sides of the buses this could be Get up-to-date with Gas as gas competed for custom with electricity. These gas ads were unusual in that they were a sort of large goldish lettering on the panel, no background. Inside the buses an advert was placed at the top of the bulkhead behind the driver on each side. These were quite attractive and included Aylings Bread and a famous saying Gas is Cheap in Gosport which was always altered by 'artists' to read Gas WAs cheap in Gosport." **David Whitaker**

"Another variation on the Gas theme was "Gas Cooks For The Nation", also in the late 50s there was an advert containing a stylised flower followed by by GAS - it's perfect cooking. This was carried by Regents 13 & 64 plus Guy 9." **Stephen Didymus**



Ex Nottingham AEC Regent 64 (ETV 778) at Gregson Avenue shops showing the above mentioned Gas Advert.
Photo: Stephen Didymus collection



AEC Regent 36 (BOR 768) at the Ferry on 16 July 1950, displaying the other gas advert.
Photo: John C. Gillham



An older photo of ex Southdown Leyland NN No.18 (CD 5115) from the 1930s displaying a gas advert .

Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection



The gas advert was also displayed internally, as can be seen in this view inside the lower saloon of "Old Bill" No. 20 CD 7045.

Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection



Guy Arab 19 (FCR 442) showing the matt green blank panel at Hoeford.

Photo: Cliff Essex

Staircase Panel Adverts

These were either circular or rectangular, and were always for local firms. I suspect they were all hand painted but cannot be sure. Examples include :-

Beagley's wool and fancy goods shop West St, Fareham

Dyer's of Brockhurst (electrical shop)

Murray's mens wear of West Street Fareham

J Exton of Gosport (government surplus stores)

Pasquale hair stylists of Fareham

Kenway's Ltd, Home Furnishers, 176 West St Fareham

E.Hodges Cycles, 154, West St, Fareham

Dyer's Dairies

A & C Barnes, Coal Merchants, Gosport Station

Pet's Supply Stores, Westbury Rd, Fareham

Upfield's Drapery

Erskine Motors

Social history note !

Below are my very crude sketches of a couple of these. If you are too young to know what a "Weltus 3 collar shirt" is let me explain. Shirts used to be supplied with separate collars. In those days when men wore three piece suits, shirts and ties for every occasion, including leisure activities, (like sitting on the beach in summer !), the collars tended to get grubby very quickly. With 3 collars supplied with the afore mentioned shirts, you could change the collar without changing the shirt, thus saving washing. Seems strange these days !!



Other Smaller Adverts

The panel above the lower rear window was also used for advertising. One the most common adverts applied here was for Edwards garage which was adjacent to Hoeford



48 (FCR 440) in West Street Fareham on route 17 showing the Edwards advert.

Photo: Bob Gray

Inside vehicles, a number a small paper sticker adverts (mostly local) were applied to the coving panels. One I particularly remember in the late 1950s, early 1960s was bemoaning the amount of fuel tax operators had to pay. It took the form of a rocket with a heavy weight attached and had the line "This rocket would never get to the moon if it carried the tax bus fuel does" The window over the longitudinal seat always carried a small poster for the two main cinemas in Gosport and Fareham, the Ritz and the Embassy, giving details of the films showing that week.



This photo of the interior of the lower saloon of AEC Regent No. 10 (FHO 602), shows how the front bulkhead was used for advertising. The lower bulkhead carried advertising for local firms, such as here for Purver's removals, the portion between the windows usually carried an advert for Provincial's private hire activities.

Photo: Stephen Didymus Collection

