

Douglas Corporation Transport



1902 - 1976

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Cover Illustration: Douglas Corporation No. 64 (JMN725), a 1949 AEC Regent III with Northern Counties 56-seat bodywork. (Paul Haywood).

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The first tramway in Douglas opened on the 7 August 1876, under the authority of the Douglas Bay Tramway Act of the same year. The tramway in its original form ran from the Iron Pier (which was demolished in 1894), north to Burnt Mill Hill, before being extended south along Douglas Bay promenade to Victoria Pier, a distance of just over $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. It was promoted by retired civil engineer, Thomas Lightfoot, who sold his interest to the Isle of Man Tramway in 1882, who in turn sold the tramway to the Isle of Man Tramways and Electric Power Company Limited in 1894. Douglas Corporation acquired the horse tramway on 2 January 1902, when the company went into liquidation. At the same time the Corporation acquired the Upper Douglas Tramway from the same company, but closed the line down on 19 August 1929 rather than invest in heavy expenditure to replace the worn out cable tramway. The old cable tramway depot in York Road later became the municipal bus depot. New cars continued to be purchased for the horse tramway from 1902 to 1935, by which time it had become a summer only service.

The first motorbuses were purchased in 1914. No. 1 (MN589) was a normal control Tilling-Stevens, whilst No. 2 (MN590) was a Straker-Squire. Both had 25-seat bodywork. It was not until 1920 that further vehicles were purchased, all of which were manufactured by Tilling-Stevens, ostensibly to take over winter operations of the cable tramway (which they did from 1921, and permanently on withdrawal of the service in 1929) and the horse tramway (from 1927). Although the exact routes on which these and

subsequent vehicles were operating is uncertain, the following services are known to have operated before 1932; Victoria Pier to Derby Castle (commenced 1926); Victoria Pier to York Road, via Bucks Road; a circular service (in both directions) from Victoria Pier via Peel Road, St. Ninians, Governor's Bridge, Holiday Camp, Broadway and the Promenades returning to Victoria Pier, and from Victoria Pier to Peel Road via North Quay and the Railway Station.

In 1933, Douglas Corporation purchased their first AEC Regents (Nos. 41-42), which were to be the precursors of an affinity for AEC double-deckers that lasted until the demise of the Corporation some 43 years later.

Two years later, in 1935, the Corporation purchased two Vulcan low-loaders with 40-seat toastrack bodies, probably as an experiment to see if they were suitable for replacement of the horse trams. In the event no further orders were placed, although the low-loaders served for 22 years, being withdrawn in 1957.

By the outbreak of World War Two in 1939, a total of 21 local services were operated, although some were short workings of existing routes, and destination numbers began to appear for the first time. During the war years the fleet was strengthened by the delivery of two Bedford OWB's (Nos. 15-16), and three Daimler CWA6's (Nos. 51-53) with wooden slatted

seats (which they retained until withdrawal in 1970). After the cessation of hostilities, Douglas Corporation returned to its favoured AEC Regent and 6 were delivered in 1947 with another 12 following in the next two years.

The network of services operated by the Corporation was comprehensive, particularly in summer when extra services were operated, but was restricted to within the borough. In 1949 an Act was passed allowing the Corporation to operate buses up to two miles outside the borough boundary, previously forbidden, and licences were acquired to operate the new routes. At the time Douglas Corporation buses operating wholly within the borough boundary did not need a road fund licence, but those that operated on the new routes outside the boundary did. As an economy measure only sufficient vehicles required to operate these services were taxed and they carried the letters 'EA' (for Extended Area) next to the fleet number. This practice ceased in 1964 when the need for road fund licences for Douglas Corporation vehicles was removed altogether by the Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) Act.

During the 1950's and 1960's the seasonal variability of the route network placed enormous demands on the Corporation's vehicles in summer, but only modest demands from the resident population in the winter months. Although this meant that vehicle life was extended somewhat, the necessity to maintain a large fleet, which was used only fully during the

summer season, caused the Corporation to run up substantial losses and, from the mid-fifties, periodic attempts to dispose of the undertaking were made. As a result new vehicles were purchased only rarely and in smaller numbers. In 1950 three Leyland Comets with Park Royal B30F bodywork (Nos. 20-22) were added to the fleet and the following year two AEC Regal IV's, used by AEC for demonstration purposes were acquired. No further vehicles were purchased for six years, until, in 1957, four AEC Regent V's (Nos. 72-75) and five Mulliner-bodied Guy Otters (Nos. 8-12) arrived, followed the next year by two AEC Reliances (Nos. 32-33). It was to be another six years before further new vehicles were purchased.

In order to economise further, a move to one-man operation was proposed, and in 1970, eight Leyland Tiger Cubs (Nos. 34-41) were purchased from Lancashire United Transport in order to accelerate the changeover.

By 1975 the number of services operated had been reduced to just 17, and on 1 October 1976, the buses of Douglas Corporation were absorbed into the newly formed Isle of Man National Transport Limited, along with those of the Isle of Man Road Services company and municipal bus transport in Douglas came to an end after almost 75 years.

The horse trams, however, were retained by the Corporation as a tourist attraction and continued to ply their trade along the promenade during the summer season.

Douglas Corporation Tramways 1902-1976

Note: This fleet list covers the period 1902-1976 concurrent with the municipal bus operation, although the horse trams continued to be operated after 1976.

This listing is in the format - Year into stock; Fleet No; Type; Builder; Seating.

1902

2-6	Double-deck open-top	Starbuck	32
7-8	Open toastrack	Starbuck	36
9-11	Open toastrack	Starbuck	32
12	Open toastrack	Milnes	32
13-18	Double-deck open-top	Metropolitan	42
19-26	Open toastrack	Milnes	32
27-29	Single-deck saloon	Milnes	30
30-31	Open toastrack	Milnes	32
32-37	Covered toastrack	Milnes	32
38-40	Open toastrack	Milnes	32

1902 (continued)

Nos. 2-3 new 1876; No. 2 re-seated to 36 at a later date; No. 3 re-seated to 34 at a later date.

No. 4 new 1882; re-seated to 34 at a later date.

Nos. 5-6 new 1883; re-seated to 34 at a later date.

Nos. 7-8 new 1884; re-seated to 42 at a later date.

Nos. 9-10 new 1885; No. 10 lengthened and seating increased to 40 in 1935.

No. 11 new 1886.

No. 12 new 1888.

Nos. 13-18 new 1883 (ex-South Shields Tramway Co. in 1897); No. 13 re-numbered 14 in 1908, re-seated to 44 at a later date; Nos. 17-18 rebuilt to single-deck saloon in 1906; No. 18 rebuilt back to double-deck during the 80's.

Nos. 19-20, new 1889.

Nos. 21-22, new 1890; No. 21 lengthened and seating increased to 40 in 1936; No. 22 covered in 1908.

Nos. 23-26, new 1891; Nos. 23-24 covered in 1908 and 1910 respectively.

Nos. 27-29, new 1892.

Nos. 30-31, new 1894.

Nos. 32-37, new 1896; No. 36 lengthened and seating increased to 40 in 1908.

Nos. 2-37 ex-Isle of Man Tramways and Electric Power Company, 1st January 1902.

1902 (continued)

No. 38-40 lengthened and seating increased to 40 in 1934 (39), 1937 (38) or 1939 (40).

Withdrawn **1908** (14), **1915** (16), **1917** (17), **1924** (7), **1949** (2-6), 8, 13[14], 15, 19, 20), **1950** (30), **1952** (9, 23-25), **1974** (26), **1976** (11, 22).

The remainder were still in service at 1/10/1976.

1905

41-42	Open toastrack	Milnes Voss	32
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Nos. 41-42 lengthened and seating increased to 40 in 1934 (41) and 1938 (42).

Still in service at 1/10/1976.

1907

43-44	Covered toastrack	UEC	40
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Still in service at 1/10/1976.



No. 12 is a George Milnes built open toastrack dating from 1888, seen here during the tramway's centenary celebrations in 1976. (David Mitchell).



Douglas horse tram No. 27 built in 1892 by George Milnes & Company and seating 30. (John Blannin).

1908

45	Covered toastrack	Milnes Voss	40
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Still in service at 1/10/1976.

1909

46	Covered toastrack	Milnes Voss	40
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Still in service at 1/10/1976.

1911

47	Covered toastrack	Milnes Voss	40
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Withdrawn **1976** (47).

1913

1 Single-deck saloon Milnes Voss 30

Still in service at 1/10/1976.

1935

48-50 Convertible saloon/toastrack Vulcan 27/34

Seats 27 as a saloon and 34 as a toastrack.

Still in service at 1/10/1976.



1913 Milnes Voss 30-seat single-deck saloon car No. 1 (David Mitchell).

Bus Fleet List 1914-1976

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

1914

1	MN589	Tilling-Stevens TS3	?	Tilling	B25R
2	MN590	Straker-Squire	?	Strachans	B25R

Withdrawn 1920 (1-2).

1920

3-6	MN1328-31	Tilling-Stevens TS3A	?	Dodson	B28R
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Withdrawn 1930 (3-6).



No. 2 (MN590) was a 1914 Straker-Squire with Strachans 25-seat bodywork. (LTHL collection).

1922

7	MN1879	Tilling-Stevens TS3A	?	Tilling	B26R
8	MN1880	Tilling-Stevens TS3A	?	Dodson	O49R

No. 8 re-seated to O48R in 1935.
Withdrawn **1930** (7), **1938** (8).

1923

9-10	MN2614-15	Tilling-Stevens TS3A	?/2826	Tilling	B26R
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Withdrawn **1935** (9-10).

1924

11-12	MN3376-77	Tilling-Stevens TS3A	?/?	Tilling	B26R
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Withdrawn **1937** (12), **1941** (11).

1925

13-16 MN3956-59 Tilling-Stevens TS3A ?/?/?/? Tilling B26R

Withdrawn **1937** (15-16), **1938** (13-14).

1926

17 MN4484 Vulcan ? Vulcan T27
18-19 MN4542-43 Tilling-Stevens TS6 ?/? Northern Counties B33R

No. 17 re-numbered 3 in 1935.

Withdrawn **1939** (18), **1945** (19), **1948** (17[3]).

1927

20-23 MN5084-87 Tilling-Stevens TS6 ?/?/?/? Northern Counties B33R

Withdrawn **1939** (22), **1945** (20-21, 23).



No. 17 (MN4484) was a 1926 Vulcan toastrack with Vulcan 27-seat bodywork which was sold to a farmer and used as a store after withdrawal in 1948. Photographed in 1956 it still looked in good condition but had been scrapped by 1969. (Peter Caunt).

1928

24-26 MN5495-97 Tilling-Stevens TS6 ?/3799/98 Northern Counties B34R
27-29 MN5498-5500 Tilling-Stevens TS6 3800/08/03 Northern Counties B34R

Withdrawn 1948 (24), 1949 (25-29).

1929

30-33 MN6122-25 Tilling-Stevens TS6 3805/7/4/6 Northern Counties B34R

Withdrawn 1948 (32), 1949 (30-31, 33).

1930

34-40 MN6748-54 Tilling-Stevens TS17A 6114-20 Northern Counties B34R

Withdrawn 1944 (36), 1945 (34-35, 37-40).

1933

41-42 MN8690-91 AEC Regent 6612146-47 Northern Counties H26/26R

Withdrawn **1957** (41-42).

1934

43-45 MN9517-19 AEC Regent 6612716-18 Northern Counties H26/26R

Withdrawn **1957** (43), **1958** (44), **1963** (45).

1935

1-2	MAN123-24 Vulcan Low-loader	2744/43	Vulcan	F40T
46	MAN122 AEC Regent	6613575	Northern Counties	H26/26R

Nos. 1-2 re-seated to F32T in 1946; these vehicles had folding screens along the nearside, which were fixed in place in 1946, the vehicles becoming FB32F.

Withdrawn **1957** (1-2), **1963** (46).



No. 2 (MAN124) was a 1935 Vulcan Lowloader with Vulcan toasterack bodywork showing the folding screens which were fixed in place in 1946. (Peter Caunt).

1936

9-10 BMN255-56 Leyland KPZ1 5984-85 Park Royal B20F

Withdrawn **1958** (9), **1959** (10).

1937

11-12 BMN868-69 Leyland KPZ1 7134-35 Park Royal B20F
47-48 BMN866-67 AEC Regent 6614444-45 Northern Counties H27/25R

Withdrawn **1958** (12), **1959** (11), **1964** (47-48).

1938

8 CMN709 Leyland KPZ1 200208 Park Royal B20F
49 CMN710 AEC Regent 6616127 Northern Counties H27/25R

Withdrawn **1957** (8), **1964** (49).

1939

14	DMN585	Leyland KPZ3	201269	Park Royal	B20F
50	DMN650	AEC Regent	06615965	Northern Counties	H27/25R

Withdrawn 1957 (14), 1967 (50).

1944

15-16	FMN899-900	Bedford OWB	22705/23958	Duple	B26F
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No. 16 re-seated to B24F in 1952.

Withdrawn 1957 (15-16).

1945

51-52	FMN954-55	Daimler CWA6	12010/09	Duple	H30/26R
53	GMN242	Daimler CWA6	12306	Duple	H30/26R

Withdrawn 1970 (51-53).



No. 52 (originally registered FMN955) was a 1945 Daimler CWA6 with Duple H30/26R bodywork, in preservation at the time of this photograph and registered FWW188J. (LTHL collection).

1947

54-55 GMN905-06 AEC Regent III 0961186-87 Northern Counties H30/25R

56-59 HMN687-90 AEC Regent III 09612066/63-65 Northern Counties H30/26R

Withdrawn **1971** (54-55), **1974** (56-59).

1948

60-63 JMN724-27 AEC Regent III 09612067-70 Northern Counties H30/26R

Nos. 60-61, 63 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (retaining fleet numbers).

Withdrawn **1976** (62).



No. 61 (JMN725) was a 1948 AEC Regent III with Northern Counties 56-seat bodywork, seen here in Douglas Bus Station in 1975. (Paul Haywood).

1949

64-65 KMN835-36 AEC Regent III 9612E2071-72 Northern Counties H30/26R
66-68 KMN837-39 AEC Regent III 9612E4490/89/91 Northern Counties H30/26R
69-72 KMN840-42 AEC Regent III 9612E4493-94/92 Northern Counties H30/26R

Nos. 64, 67-69 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (retaining fleet numbers).

Withdrawn 1974 (65), 1976 (66, 70-71).

1950

20-22 KMN518-20 Leyland CP01 491728/0414/1807 Park Royal B30F

Withdrawn 1968 (20-22).



No. 20 (KMN518) was a 1950 Leyland CP01 'Comet' with Park Royal 30-seat bus body. It was withdrawn in 1968. (LTHL collection).

1951

30	NMN201	AEC Regal IV	9821E029	Willowbrook	B42F
31	NMN355	AEC Regal IV	U137523	Park Royal	B38F

Nos. 30-31 ex-AEC demonstrators (both new 1950); No. 30 was originally intended for delivery to City of Oxford Motor Services (No. 730; OJ0730), but was retained by AEC as a demonstrator; No. 31 was originally registered VMK271; No. 30 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (retaining fleet number).

Withdrawn **1974** (31).

1957

8-10	WMN484-86	Guy Otter	NLL0DP47291P/52P/80P	Mulliner	B26F
11-12	WMN487-88	Guy Otter	NLL0DP47259P/88P	Mulliner	B26F
72-75	VMN664-67	AEC Regent V	D2RA349-50/52/51	Metro-Cammell	H30/26R

Nos. 72-75 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 164-167 respectively).

Withdrawn **1970** (8-12).



No. 31 (NMN355) was a 1950 AEC Regal IV with Park Royal B38F bodywork. It was originally an AEC demonstrator and was purchased in 1951. (LTHL collection).

1958

32	XMN290	AEC Reliance	MU2RA1942	Mulliner	B42F
33	XMN289	AEC Reliance	MU2RA1941	Mulliner	B42F

Nos. 32-33 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 190, 189 respectively).

1964

1-3	8122-24MN	AEC Regent V	2D2RA1533-35	Metro-Cammell	H37/27F
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Nos. 1-3 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 122-124 respectively).

1965

4	679BMN	AEC Regent V	2D2RA1697	Willowbrook	H37/27F
5	677BMN	AEC Regent V	2D2RA1698	Willowbrook	H37/27F

Nos. 4-5 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 179, 177 respectively).

Douglas Corporation Transport 1902-1976



Douglas Corporation No. 33 (XMN289) a 1958 AEC Reliance with unusual Mulliner 42-seat bodywork. (Donald Hudson).

1966

6-7 899-900EMN Bedford VAS1 6847048/692 Duple B30F

Nos. 6-7 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 99-100 respectively).

1968

14-15 409-10LMN AEC Regent V 3D2RA2023-24 Willowbrook H37/27F

Nos. 14-15 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 109-110 respectively).

Douglas Corporation Transport 1902-1976



Douglas No. 7 (900EMN) a 1966 Bedford VAS1 with Duple Midland bodywork at Douglas Bus Station in July 1976. (Donald Hudson).

1970

34	227UMN	Leyland PSUC1/2	574223	Duple	DP41F
35-37	229-31UMN	Leyland PSUC1/2	574036-37/84542	Duple	DP41F
38-40	232-34UMN	Leyland PSUC1/2	574035/84541/43	Duple	DP41F
41	238UMN	Leyland PSUC1/2	584544	Duple	DP41F

Nos. 34-41 ex-Lancashire United Transport (Nos. 624, 622-623, 627, 621, 626, 628-629 respectively, new 1957 [624, 622-623, 621] or 1958 [627, 626, 628-629]).

Nos. 34-36, 38, 41 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (retaining fleet numbers).

Withdrawn **1974** (37, 39-40).

1974

16	MAN51B	Bedford YRQ	DW456271	Willowbrook	B47F
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No. 16 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 51).



Douglas Corporation No 35 (229UMN) a 1957 Leyland Tiger Cub PSUC1/2 with Duple Midland bodywork, one of 8 vehicles acquired from Lancashire United in 1970. (Donald Hudson).

1975

17	MAN52B	Bedford YRQ	DW457130	Willowbrook	B47F
18-19	MAN138-39B	Bedford YRQ	DW456924/7143	Willowbrook	B47F

Nos. 17-19 to Isle of Man National Transport Ltd. 10/76 (re-numbered 52, 138-139 respectively).

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