

# You see them everywhere

Bedford commercial vehicles since 1931



issued by Vauxhall Motors Limited, Luton, England



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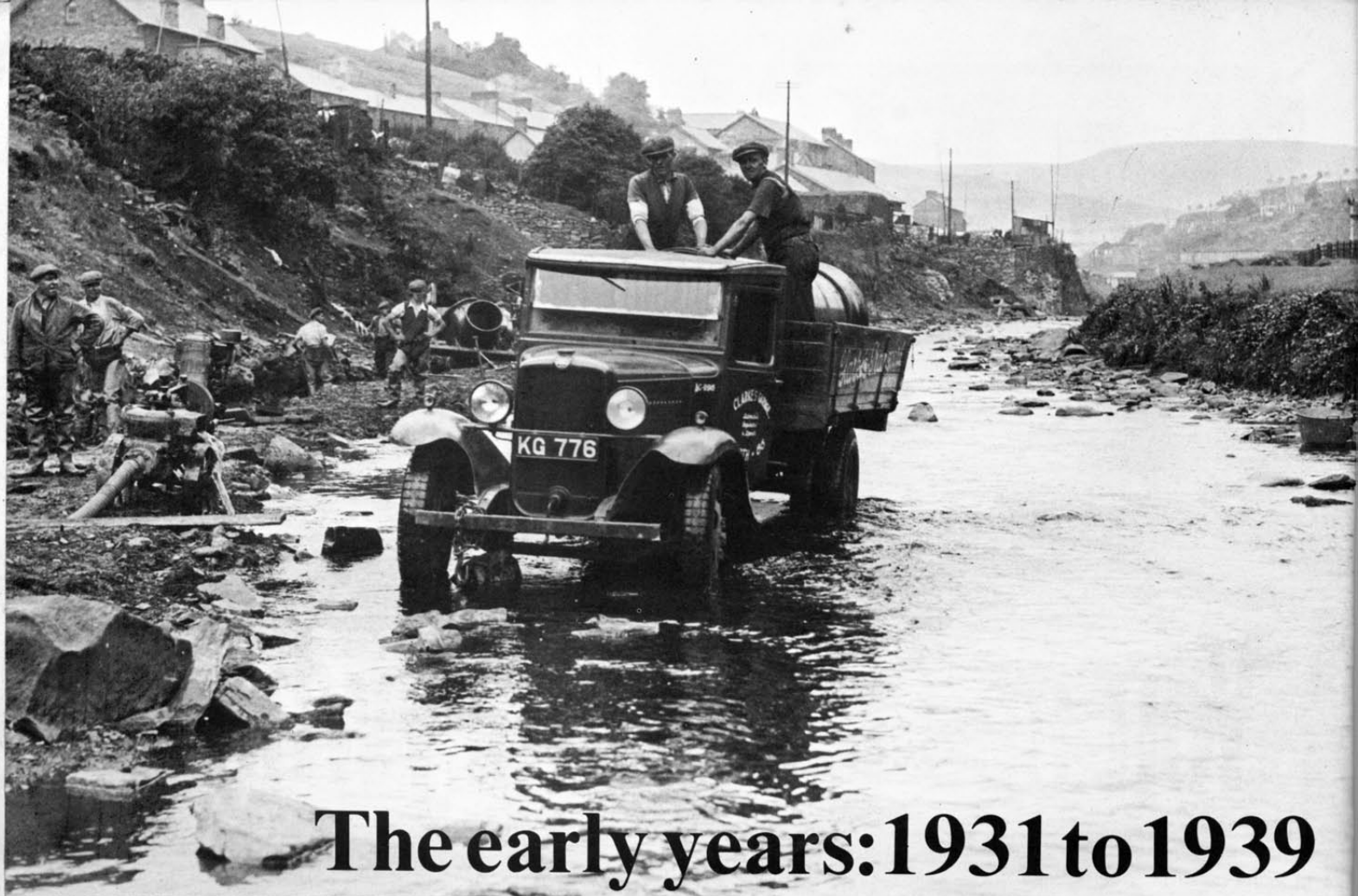
## A history of Bedford commercial vehicles since 1931

First published October 1978, to mark the appearance of the 3 millionth Bedford commercial vehicle produced since April 1931.

*Picture details: top, the original 1931 2-ton model and the latest TM 38-tonne tractor unit. Below, a 1931 14-seater bus flanked by current 53-seater Bedfords from Duple (left) and Plaxton.*



Produced and published by the Public Relations Department, Vauxhall Motors Limited, Luton, England.



## The early years: 1931 to 1939

*Bedford: in 1931, a brand new name in the commercial-vehicle world. A name chosen by a company already firmly established in the car business. A name that, in a very short time, became known in many parts of the world. Since 1931 that name has appeared on three million vehicles – vans, trucks, buses and coaches.*

The standard, factory-bodied 2-tonner (upper picture) as it appeared in 1931. This one is the shorter version – the 131 in-wheelbase WHG. For five months the truck seen above carried pipes for a Rhondda Valley sewage scheme along the bed of the River Taff. Picture below shows variety of cab styles even in 1931; only the vehicles second and third from right have the standard factory cab.



THE FIRST COMMERCIAL VEHICLE to bear the name Bedford appeared in April 1931. It was built at the Luton factory of Vauxhall Motors. At first only the one model was marketed, a 2-tonner – though two wheel-base variants were available.

Why the name Bedford, for the first venture by Vauxhall Motors into the goods-vehicle market? A theory put forward by some vehicle historians links the 1931 newcomer to a little-known Bedford Buick car of about 1912 – a coachwork job by the London-based Bedford Motor Co. on Buick car chassis imported from General Motors of America.

Yet Vauxhall Motors had itself used the name Bedford for one of its saloon car bodies on the L-type 14/40 chassis, in the 1922-27 period, probably before the company became part of General Motors in 1925.

Boardroom minutes and other records of the 1930-31 period are unhelpful on this point of the name. The simplest and most obvious explanation is by far the most likely – that the Bedford took its name from the county in which Vauxhall Motors had operated since 1905.

Another mistaken impression is that the first Bedford was nothing more than a Chevrolet under another label. British-built Chevrolets had been produced at Luton since 1929. Certainly

there were distinct similarities between Bedford and Chevrolet, especially in looks. There were distinct differences as well, especially in mechanical areas such as rear wheels and axles, and the Bedford's pressure lubricating system for big-end bearings. By the end of 1931 Bedford had ousted the 12 cwt and 30 cwt Chevrolets from the Luton assembly lines.

So much for the new baby's name and lineage. The Luton-designed, Luton-built Bedford was to prove – and in a very short time – a major new contender in the British truck market.

That very first model, the 2-tonner, was offered in two wheelbase versions, the WHG at 131 in. and the WLG at 157 in. The 6-cylinder petrol engine was an overhead-valve unit of 3 177 cc, giving 44 bhp at 2 400 rpm. It was RAC-rated at 26.33 hp. Power was transmitted through a 4-speed crash gearbox – a unit that gave out a rather distinctive noise that was a feature of Bedford trucks for some years.

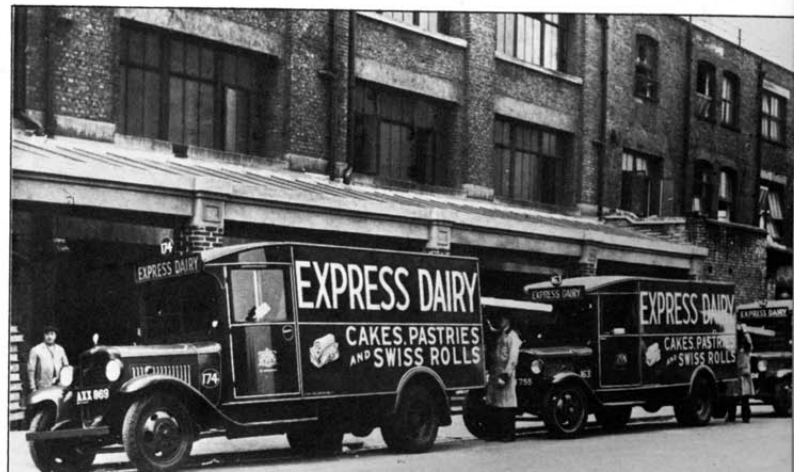
The Bedford was launched into a market that was largely dominated by much heavier vehicles. A 2-tonner was rather a rarity, but it soon became apparent that Vauxhall Motors had got their sales pitch exactly right. Success was immediate and continuing; the Bedford was a hit from the start.

The keen prices helped secure this success. The short-wheelbase 2-ton chassis/cab cost only £198, the longer model £210. Complete factory-built dropside trucks cost only £240 and £260 respectively, on short and long chassis. Bedford had arrived.

Before that year of 1931 was out, Bedford had secured a foothold in the bus and coach market as well. In August there appeared the WHB and WLB chassis – modified versions of the two truck chassis, for 14- and 20-seater bus and coach bodies. The 14-seater



The owner of the 2-tonner above seems to have taken very literally the 1933/34 Bedford claim as "the truck for a 50% overload". The vehicle is actually a Carrimore artic outfit based on the 2-ton short chassis, with a load of hops from Kent to London. Below, short- and long-wheelbase 2-tonners; the vehicle on the left is a very early Bedford, registered before the end of 1931. The Express Dairy vans feature a very deep windscreen and, apparently, sliding door windows.





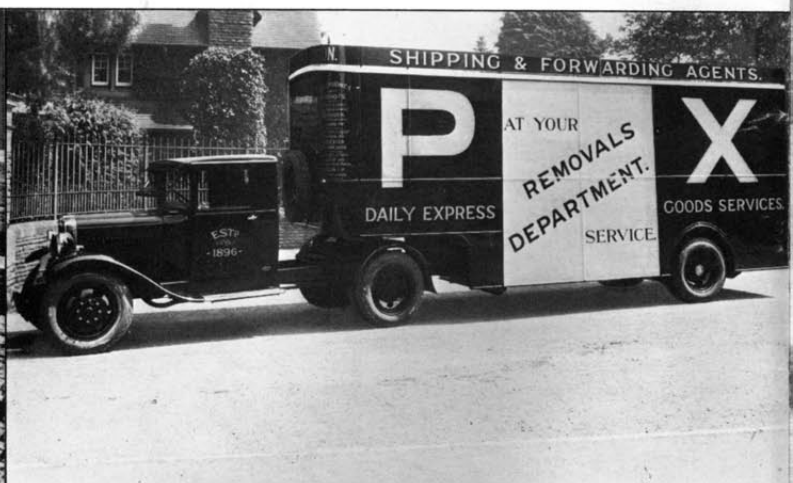
Another big name that was soon appearing on Bedfords (upper picture). Pickfords are still major users of Bedfords; when the picture above was taken they had 100 Bedfords in their fleet. Note the one-

piece windscreen and the 'peak' at the front of the roof. Yet another big-name customer was Fyffes, early buyers of the WS 30 cwt model introduced in 1932 (lower picture).



Six-wheeler conversions (above) and articulated outfits appeared during Bedford's very first year. Both Baico and Spurling soon offered chassis extensions and third axles. Oddly, the very early 2-tonner at left above sported single rear wheels, unlike the more usual twin

wheels on both rear axles. Modified 2-ton chassis for semi-trailer operation, like the two shown below, were offered by Carrimore and Scammell during Bedford's first year. The first purpose-built Bedford tractor unit did not appear until 1939.





In August 1931 came modified versions of the 2-ton chassis for bus bodywork, the WHB for 14-seater bodies, the WLB for 20-seaters. The Waveney-bodied 14-seater (above) was the very first bus to be built on this chassis; it has now been faithfully restored by Bedford dealers Arlington Motors. The Plymouth owner of the Duple-bodied 20-seater (below) called the Bedford "far and away the best 20-seater on the market".



chassis cost only £250, the 20-seater version £265. Both were designed to meet current Ministry of Transport regulations for passenger-carrying vehicles.

By August 1931 both Baico and Spurling were offering chassis extensions with a third axle on the 2-ton Bedfords, while Spenborough were producing three-way tipping gear and bodies.

The original 2-ton models remained virtually unchanged until 1935, though the WHB 14-seater chassis was not produced after 1933 – demand for a 14-seater bus or coach was inadequate. Thus by the end of that first year, Bedford was already very firmly established and steadily winning new customers.

A novel demonstration of the new Bedford's reliability was put on in November 1931. Bedford dealers Atlas of Newport ran a fully laden truck non-stop for three days and nights. It was quite literally non-stop – petrol and water were put in while the truck moved along in first gear. Flooded roads, Monmouthshire mountains and poor surfaces failed to stop the test, during which the 30 mph-limited Bedford covered 1 268 miles and won considerable praise.

One more high note brought Bedford's first year to an end. In the last quarter of 1931, 52% of all 14-20 seater buses and coaches registered in Britain were Bedford – and the WHB and WLB chassis had not been launched until August.

WITH THE ORIGINAL 2-tonner established, and attracting customers in Europe and in Commonwealth countries as well, Bedford took another step forward early the following year. In April 1932 two additional models arrived – the 30 cwt WS chassis and the 12 cwt Light Delivery Van.

The WS was really a lighter version of the 2-ton WHG, having the same 131 in. wheelbase and the same 26.33 hp 6-cylinder petrol engine. Distinctive features were the disc wheels and single rear wheels. The 30 cwt chassis sold for a mere £175, a dropside truck for £210.

The basic Light Delivery Van was model VYC, with 106 in. wheelbase and taking the 16.9 hp 6-cylinder engine then fitted to the Vauxhall Cadet saloon. Model VXC offered the option of the Bedford 26.33 hp power unit. For £168 the 16.9 hp VYC



included 12-volt electrics, chrome-plated radiator and 3-speed gearbox. In chassis-only form the price was only £135. These V-type vans were to remain in production until 1935, when a larger engine replaced the 16.9 hp Cadet unit.

An interesting variant offered on the 12 cwt Light Delivery chassis was a 7-seater 'Rural Bus', at only £210. Literature of the time said that "in a few minutes the seats can be fastened to the roof (!) so that the entire floor space is available for carrying luggage or goods." Sounds ingenious.

At a Board meeting in April 1932, just a year after the first Bedford appeared, the Chairman of Vauxhall Motors listed the countries to which Vauxhalls and Bedfords were being exported. These included Japan and China, Iceland and Borneo, as well as many European and Commonwealth countries. A major export achievement was scored in mid-1932, when Vauxhall shipped an order for 88 Bedford 2-tonners to Russia.

It was to be another year before another model was added to the Bedford range. Meanwhile, late in 1932, significant improvements were made to two factory-built vans, the 30 cwt WS and the 2-ton short (WHG). Main

The WS 30 cwt truck (above), bought new soon after the model's introduction in April 1932, was in daily use by the original owner near Dundee until mid-1977. The Carr's vehicles (above right) are a WS 30 cwt van and a 1934 wire-wheeled VYC 12 cwt Light Delivery van; the original 1932 12 cwt van had disc wheels, as did the WS model.

improvement was an increase in load space to 250 cu ft, with bodies that were longer, wider and higher. Prices were unchanged at £230 (30 cwt) and £260 (2-ton).

Sales results in 1932 endorsed the early success recorded by Bedford. Over 12 000 Bedfords were sold in the year; 65% of all buses and coaches in the 9-20 seater category licensed in Britain in 1932 were Bedford.

June 1932 did see another 'birth' – the first issue of *Bedford Transport Magazine*, published monthly by Vauxhall Motors. This took the place of an earlier publication, called *Chevrolet & Bedford Magazine*, which had originally been born in May 1930 as the *Chevrolet Magazine*. The two earlier magazines had been published with the approval of General Motors Ltd. but were in no way connected with that company.

*Bedford Transport Magazine* changed that odd situation. It was edited and produced by Vauxhall. Apart from a break during the 1939-45 war, the magazine was continuously published until July 1977.

NEXT BIG STEP for Bedford came in June 1933. This was the introduction of an 8 cwt van, the first in a long line of car-derived vans carrying the Bedford name. The line continues to this day with the HA van (Viva derived) and the Chevonne.

The new 8 cwt van was derived from the 12 and 14 hp Vauxhall Light Six saloons introduced that year. The

Disc wheels were a feature of the original 1932 12 cwt van (below right). The standard (VYC) model had the 16.9 hp Vauxhall Cadet engine, while the VXC offered the Bedford 26.3 hp truck engine as an option. The 7-seater Rural Bus (below) was a dual-purpose goods/passenger version of the standard 12 cwt van. Both 12 and 30 cwt models were to have a long production run.





standard van (model ASYC) took the 12 hp engine, though the 14 hp engine was an option (model ASXC). At £155 the 12 hp model was the cheapest 6-cylinder goods vehicle on the market. The 8 cwt remained in production virtually unchanged except in detail right up to 1939. It gave 85 cu ft beside the driver. It also brought synchromesh gearchanges to Bedford users – there was synchro on top and third in the 4-speed box.

Sales of Bedfords reached 16 000 in 1933, with a very healthy proportion going for export. Even by the end of 1933 Bedfords were being operated all over the world, and the boxing of 'knocked-down' vehicles for assembly overseas was a major operation at the Luton factory.

**BEDFORD CREATED** something of a sensation at the Commercial Vehicle Show in London in November 1933. The new 3-ton models unveiled were to set the pattern for virtually all medium-sized commercial vehicles in Britain for the next 20 years or so, and

took Bedford into the early 1950's with few major changes.

The newcomer, shown in November but not due for production until the spring of 1934, was the WT 3-tonner. Its outstanding feature – and one that was soon to be widely copied by other makers – was the semi-forward-control layout. The long, narrow bonnet of earlier models gave way to a much shorter one, allowing longer body length within similar wheelbases.

This new layout was achieved by moving the engine forward, positioning the centre line of the engine directly over the front axle. In earlier models the engine sat well behind the front axle. The new layout gave real advantages in looks, engine accessibility and load distribution, and was an instant success.

The WT inherited the well-tryed 26.33 hp 6-cylinder engine of earlier 2-tonners, though power output was now up to 64 bhp, mainly due to a new downdraught carburettor, itself a pretty advanced feature for that time. The shorter chassis (WTH) had a 111 in. wheelbase, the WTL retaining the 157 in. wheelbase of the original WLG 2-ton model.

The new 3-ton Bedford was remarkable in another way too. It remained

under the magic 2½-ton-unladen barrier, so that it could still travel at 30 mph. Over this 2½-ton limit vehicles were restricted to 20 mph.

Prices were still keen too: a 3-ton short chassis/cab cost £270, the longer version (WTL) cost £285. This trend-setting new model was to strengthen even further Bedford's hold on the light/medium goods-vehicle market – so much so, as already mentioned, that no major changes in model design were called for until well after the 1939-45 war.

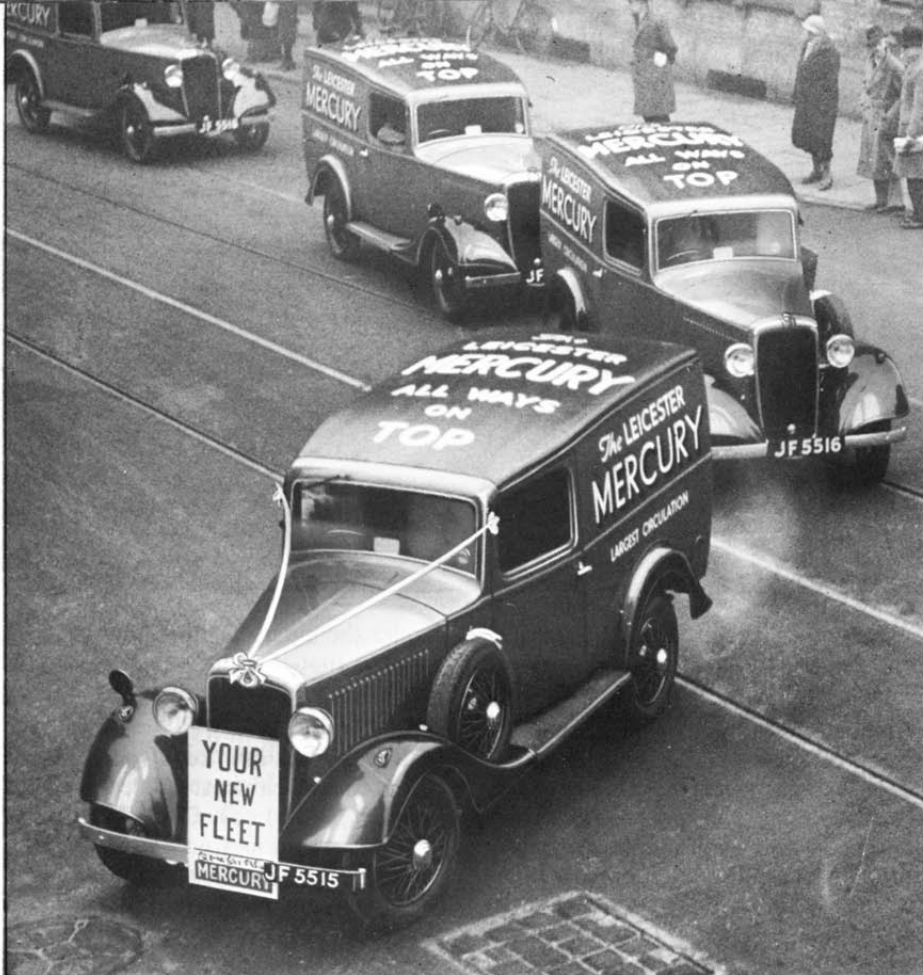
There was another feature of this new Bedford that remained in the memory for many years. It soon became known – and was even advertised – as the truck for a 50% overload. Doubtless in those days of less stringent regulations the 50% overload was widely exceeded by many operators, especially in the tipper field where the shorter model (the 111 in. WTH) soon became a popular tool.

Oddly, the original 30 cwt and 2-ton models were not given the semi-forward-control treatment. In fact it was late in 1935 before they received a facelift.

Two other 1934 arrivals deserve passing mention. In July 1934 the Bedford Drivers Club was born – and







Variations on the 8 cwt van theme. The 12 hp ASYC and 14 hp variant (ASXC) appeared in mid-1933, and were built until 1939. The earliest models had small chromed hubs and a single windscreen wiper. Top picture shows standard 1933 vans. Centre, a neat milk-delivery conversion. The 8 cwt chassis in the lower picture carries a platform truck body; it was used by a Halifax firm on fairly gruelling delivery runs to remote farms in the Yorkshire moors.

soon became another Bedford innovation to be copied by other makers. The club offered free insurance to drivers, and rapidly built up a chain of approved eating-places and rest-houses. The BDC remained a lively, popular and widely supported adjunct to Bedford activity until the harshness of economic pressures led to its disbandment in 1968.

The other 1934 arrival was the advertising slogan "You See Them Everywhere". This bold – and fully justified – claim survived even longer than the Bedford Drivers Club. It would be just as true today as it ever was.

A LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE of the introduction of the WT 3-tonner had to be a new bus/coach chassis to replace the earlier 20-seater WLB. This arrived late in 1935 – the 167 in.-wheelbase WTB for 26-seater bodies. It too won instant success and was soon taking 55% of the UK coach market. It was on this famous chassis that Duple built the first Vista body, a luxury 25-seater which appeared early in 1937. (A more detailed history of Bedford bus and coach chassis is given in a separate publication.)

The late-'35 facelift given to the 30 cwt (WS) and 2-ton (WHG and WLG) models brought them more in line with the 'bulldog' looks of the 3-tonner. While they did not get the complete semi-forward-control treatment – their bonnets were still long – they matched the 3-tonner in general looks. Engines, radiators and cabs were moved forward and wheelbases reduced. The 30 cwt and 2-ton short went to 120 in. wheelbase (from 131 in.) and the 2-ton long from 157 in. to 143 in. At the same time all models except the 8 cwt van took a revised radiator grille with vertical slats.

The December 1935 issue of *Bedford Transport Magazine*, describing the revised models, came right out with the 'overload' claim: "*Bedford 2-ton, 3-ton and 30-cwt chassis (with approved body allowances) are guaranteed for a margin of 50 per cent over their respective nominal rated capacities*".

AFTER A BUSY SPELL of new and revised models, Bedford settled down to consolidate its tremendous success. By 1935 the VYC and VXC 12 cwt vans of 17 hp and 26 hp had given way to the 20 hp BYC and 26 hp BXC. The change reflected no more than the

# The LONG-LIFE RANGE

## BEDFORD'S ANSWER TO YOUR TRANSPORT PROBLEM

There's a BEDFORD to answer your transport problem. There are over forty different standard models for payloads from 8 cwt up to 3 tons with bodies to meet the needs of almost every trade. Each model was specially designed for its job of work and will give years of hard service. Built up to the famous Vickers standard they have high-grade specifications, set the price and surprising low.

The BEDFORD 8 cwt. and 12 cwt. Delivery vans are among the simplest and most practical vans on the roads today. Their front-wheel drive gear change and 2 1/2 ton of useful load are the equal of a high-class passenger car in operation and performance.

For strength and rigidity the 12 cwt. is a typical BEDFORD. With its steel chassis, powerful engine and robust bodies it is ideal for general utility work. The four mechanical and motor bodies BEDFORD has to offer are built to last. The 12 cwt. motor van has 2 1/2 cwt. of useful load. There are also two improvements over the new motor van of the same weight.

For heavier utility work the BEDFORD 3-tonner. The special specially made type of goods receptacle body adds plus to the available engine, with an chassis weight of under 8500 lbs. for load it carries within the 4500 lbs. GVW. (gross vehicle weight) standard for a 3-tonner.

• If you wish a motor van or truck with a BEDFORD chassis, consult your nearest BEDFORD agent. The name of the agent is given on the back of this advertisement.

• BEDFORD TRUCKS LIMITED, 100, BRIDGE STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.



8 CWT

12 CWT

3 TON

2 TON

30 CWT

- These models shown here—
- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 8 CWT. VAN (2 1/2 ton engine, 15 cwt. load, low loading gear)  | £155 |
| 12 CWT. VAN (2 1/2 ton engine, 18 cwt. load, low loading gear) | £175 |
| 2 TON. VAN (2 1/2 ton engine, 20 cwt. load, low loading gear)  | £237 |
| 3 TON. VAN (2 1/2 ton engine, 25 cwt. load, low loading gear)  | £246 |
| 1 TON. VAN (2 1/2 ton engine, 10 cwt. load, low loading gear)  | £310 |



### By Comparison the finest Commercial Proposition —

First shown publicly in November 1933, the new WT 3-tonner set the standard for medium trucks for the next 20 years. The forward-mounted engine and split windscreen were distinguishing features. Reproduced above is a two-page spread from a 1934 Bedford catalogue, showing the model range. Below left is the first 3-tonner

delivered to a retail customer, at work in a Sussex sandpit. Below right, a fully laden (probably overladen!) 3-tonner demonstrates its pulling power on the notorious (and then unmetalled) Park Rash hill in the Yorkshire Dales. The 1 in 4 gradient includes a very tight turn halfway up.





The WTB chassis for 26-seater coaches arrived in 1935. Top picture shows a 1937-built WTB in front, with three WLB 20-seaters behind it, the leading one dating from 1932. Centre: the second-generation WS 30 cwt on the left has the forward-mounted engine and revised radiator grille introduced in late 1935; the other four vans are on the original 30 cwt chassis. The 2-tonner in the lower picture also has the new bonnet and forward engine of late 1935; the six-wheeler conversion gives this one a very rugged look. Even with the forward-mounted engine the 30-cwt and 2-ton models still had longer bonnets than the 3-tonners.

arrival of the Vauxhall Big Six saloons to join the smaller Light Sixes; the van's looks were little changed from the earlier V models. The 8 cwt A-type vans, with 12 or 14 hp engines, soldiered on.

By the end of 1937 Bedford truck sales were topping 26 000 a year (light vans excluded) and the 3-ton WT was proving a runaway success.

Until March 1938 the smallest Bedford van was the 8 cwt A-type, taking the 12 or 14 hp Vauxhall car engine. The arrival in 1937 of the 10 hp H-type Vauxhall gave the chance for a new light van. This was the 5/6 cwt HC, claimed to give over 35 mpg fully laden and offering 70 cu ft of load space. This was the first 4-cylinder Bedford and the first to have independent front suspension. Costing £140, the HC was the most sophisticated van in this class.

The HC remained in production until mid-1948; Bedford's next offering in the 5 cwt van sector would not appear for another 17 years, when the Viva-derived HA van was launched in 1964.

IN THE SUMMER of 1938 important changes were made to the W models. They were given a much-improved 27.34 hp engine, developing 72 bhp against the 64 bhp of the previous unit. There was a totally different radiator grille and the general front-end appearance was tidied up. The changes also applied to the WTB 26-seater bus/coach chassis. One additional



Based on the H-type Vauxhall saloon, the HC 5/6 cwt van (top picture) appeared early in 1938 and was claimed to give 35 mpg fully laden. The 6 cwt Utility Wagon (above) based on the HC was launched in 1939. The larger, 10/12 cwt JC van looked almost exactly like the HC. Two pictures below show some of the main changes made to the W models in mid-1938. Behind the more modern radiator grille sat a more powerful, 72 bhp engine. The radiator filler cap was now out of sight under the bonnet. The 30 cwt WS still sported its original disc wheels; lower picture shows a 3-ton short tipper complete with A.R.P. equipment. Note the difference in bonnet lengths between the 30 cwt and 3-ton models.



model was a factory-built hydraulic tipper on the 3-ton short (111 in. wheelbase) chassis, selling at £330.

WHEN 1939 WAS ushered in, Bedford had a number of new offerings in the pipeline – including a new range to replace the W models that first appeared in 1931. Though all these new models were announced before war was declared, real production had to wait until 1945.

In January 1939 came the 6 cwt Utility Wagon, a wooden-bodied pick-up version of the 10 hp HC van. Then in June came a larger version of the HC, the 10/12 cwt JC van with the 105 in. wheelbase and the 12 hp engine of the Vauxhall. The arrival of the JC van saw the demise of the AS 8 cwt and the BY 12 cwt vans, by now rather dated in looks, having been in production since 1933 and 1932 respectively with few major changes. The HC and JC were virtually identical in looks, the JC being slightly longer (it gave 120 cu ft of load space against the 70 cu ft of the HC on its 94 in. wheelbase).

By 1939 there was nothing new about articulated Bedfords. From 1931 specialist conversions had been offered, notably by Carrimore and later Scammell. These were merely ordinary truck chassis modified to make tractor units for use with semi-trailers.

In the spring of 1939, though, there appeared the first purpose-built Bedford tractor unit, a joint venture with Scammell. This offered a gross laden weight of up to 12 tons; payload of 8 tons was feasible with the '3-ton' tractor, or 6 tons with the smaller '2-ton' tractor.

SUMMER OF 1939 brought the revised range that replaced the highly successful W models – the models that, with constant improvement rather than major changes, had been going since 1931. One thing that, between 1931 and 1939, had changed very little was the value-for-money that Bedford represented. In May 1931 a 2-ton short chassis (WHG) cost £198; by May 1939, the equivalent chassis (still WHG) cost only £207. Those were the days when inflation meant pumping up the tyres, not the price!

Since production of the new K, M and O Bedfords for civilian use did not really get under way properly until 1945, we leave the details of them to a later section, after taking a brief look at the vehicles produced during the war years.



***To Mecca,  
the hard way***

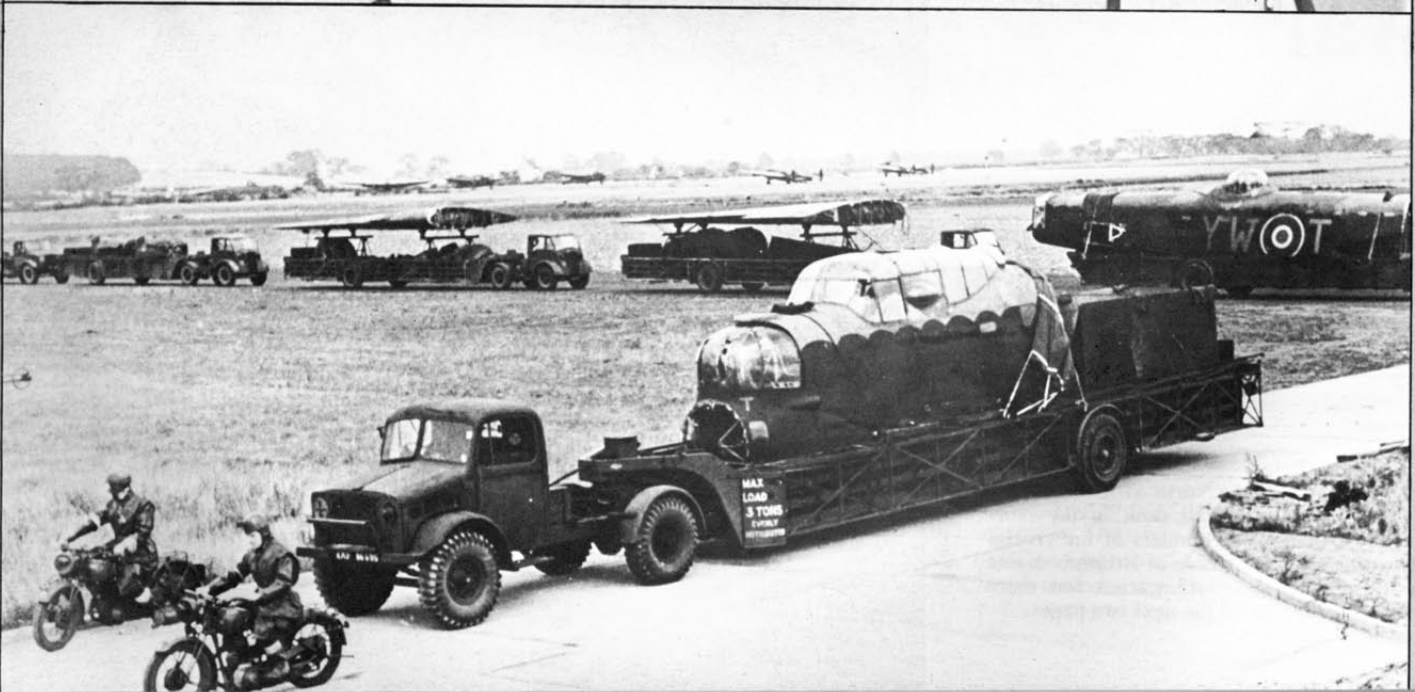
*From its very earliest days Bedford was much in demand in overseas markets. In the early and mid-30's docking facilities were not always up to par; on this Red Sea dhow are two boxed Bedfords, looking somewhat precarious. They had been unloaded from a cargo ship at Djeddah, the port for Mecca. In other places rafts and surf-boats were used to get Bedfords ashore. To this day Bedford is a strong seller in many of the Arab countries.*



# Going to war

A Bedford QL in the North African desert, a Bedford-built Churchill tank in the Normandy landings – reminders of the crucial role played by the whole of Britain's motor industry in the 1939-45 war. A few more reminders appear on the next two pages.







More than 250 000 Bedford trucks were built for the armed services, and 5 640 Churchill tanks – some of the latter built at ‘shadow’ factories from Luton-made parts. The WD vehicles came in a wide variety of shapes and body types; the large flat front was a major feature. The first 120 hp tank engine was built at Luton, from drawing board to test bed, in only 89 days; biggest Bedford engine until then was the 27 hp truck unit. At left, a batch of MW 15 cwt trucks ready to leave Luton, and a tractor unit coupled to a ‘Queen Mary’ aircraft trailer. This page: a 15 cwt pick-up disembarks from a beach landing craft; Churchill tanks adapted to make mobile bridges; and a QL heads a victory celebration parade through the streets of Luton in 1945. The 209 096 total on the display was in fact an under-estimate – or a mis-reading of the records! There was time later to get the sums right, when the celebrations had tailed off.





**Enter the  
first Bedford  
5-tonner**





The OS and OL 5-tonners made a great name for themselves. The long-wheelbase (157 in.) model in the big picture was photographed in the New Zealand wool country, the smart job in the upper picture, also a long-wheelbase one, at home in Britain. Note the distinctive new cab and radiator grille. The Wimpey 5-ton tippers above are on the shorter (111 in.) OSB chassis. Picture immediately below shows the K 30 cwt with Spurmobus passenger body. The ML 2/3-ton trucks in the lower picture reveal the slightly longer bonnet still given to the lighter-weight Bedfords of the mid-'40's. Even the 5-ton O models were within the £30 tax, 30 mph legal bracket that applied when they were first introduced.



PRODUCTION OF NORMAL 'civilian' Bedfords had been suspended during the war, while the Luton factory turned out a huge variety of vehicles and other material to Government contracts. Essential civilian needs had to be met, though, and a number of new trucks were sold to private operators in Britain. Yet even these 'civilian' units wore the distinctive flat-front military look – a look that became familiar to servicemen in so many parts of the world.

Towards the end of 1945 the Luton factory switched back to normal production. The 1939-launched K, M and O models were put back on the line; the HC and JC light and medium vans did not reappear until 1946.

The K replaced the 30 cwt WS, and was uprated to the new 30/40 cwt level; the M 2/3-tonners took over from the WH and WL; the earlier WT 3-tonners became the OS and OL 3/4-ton models; and, for the first time ever, Bedford went into the 5-ton bracket with the OSB and OLB. There was also the OSS tractor unit and the OB 26/32-seater bus/coach chassis.

Mechanically, the K, M and O models were little changed from their W equivalents. Load ratings were higher and hydraulic brakes were an innovation. Even the new 5-tonners weighed only 2½ tons unladen and so came into the 30 mph bracket.

Main visual difference lay in the new cab, with its two-piece windscreen of shallow V formation. For the period this new cab was a very advanced design, bringing new levels of comfort, quiet and visibility to the driver. The new passenger chassis, the OB, had a wheelbase of 174 in. and this one was to become famous as one of the most successful bus/coach chassis ever built. The Bedford OB was the foundation of many of today's coach fleets, and there are still a few OBs in regular use to this day.

SO BEDFORD WENT into the post-war market with a range going from 5/6 cwt to 5 tons in payload rating, and up to 8 tons with the Bedford-Scammell tractor unit. The K, M and O models advanced Bedford's already strong hold on domestic and export markets; they remained in production from 1945 until 1953.

By October 1946 the 10 000th Bedford to be exported since the end of the war left Luton for Istanbul. Most of those 10 000 exports were the new 5-ton O models.



Probably the best-loved and best-remembered coach of all time – the OB Bedford with Duple Vista body. Bodies for up to 32 passengers were built on the OB, though 26/29 seaters were the most common. Many coach builders produced bus and coach bodies for this 174 in.-wheelbase chassis. The one on the left is seen doing a mid-winter bus service run in the hills of central Wales. Two smaller pictures above show examples of the rather flamboyant coachwork built on the OB by Continental firms. The upper one has a 26-seater body by Louis Maes of Belgium; the lower vehicle, also Belgian-bodied, features enormous side windows and roof quarter-lights. A number of OB coaches are still in regular use to this day; some have been appearing at the annual Blackpool and Brighton coach rallies in recent years – and attracting much nostalgic admiration.

Late in 1946 the 5/6 cwt HC van was given the 12 hp engine already used in the 10/12 cwt JC model. The little HC went on until September 1948, when it was finally dropped.

AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE in Bedford progress was reached on October 22, 1947. On that day the then Minister of Supply drove off the half-millionth Bedford produced at Luton. Also in the cab for the drive-off was the Vauxhall employee who had driven off the very first Bedford, back in early 1931.

The late '40s were quiet years, in terms of new models. The K, M and O trucks just went on heaping success on success, at home and abroad. Autumn of 1948 saw the last of the HC van, while the 10/12 cwt JC was redesignated PC and took a 3-speed gearbox with steering-column gearchange. Visually the JC and PC were virtually indistinguishable. From 1948 the PC was Bedford's only offering in the light-van sector; it remained in production until the arrival of the CA van in 1952.

AT THIS POINT one comes up against one of those minor inconsistencies in the Bedford story. When the K model replaced the earlier WS 30 cwt, it was referred to as a 30/40 cwt model – still with single rear wheels and those quaint no-hole disc wheels. Yet by October 1948, the K was back to being a 30 cwt job, having shed the extra 10 cwt rating at some hard-to-determine point.

However, late summer of '48 saw the K van offered with sliding load-space doors at each side, the first time this space-saving feature had been offered on a standard factory body. Cab doors were still of the hinged, slam-type design.

The spring of 1950 ushered in the new 'Extra Duty' engine for all truck models. Basically similar to the older 28 hp unit, this new 6-cylinder engine developed more power – up to 84 bhp. The 30 cwt and 2/3 ton models had a 76 bhp version of the same engine.

By now the Luton plant was almost bursting at the seams: almost 39 000 Bedfords had been produced in 1949, in the plant that also turned out over 45 000 Vauxhall cars. So a £10 million expansion project was launched, to be spread over four years. First stage was a new 19½-acre production building.



Interesting body styles on the K, M and O Bedfords. The flat-fronted roundsman's delivery vans (top) are on the K 30 cwt chassis. The smartly liveried job in the centre, on a 5-ton chassis, has a bonnet-less, full-tilt cab conversion designed by Nevilles. Note the long hinges just below each headlamp. The Eagle 10 cu yd refuse collector, lower picture, also on a 5-ton long chassis, shows how the Neville tilt cab gave really clear access to the engine and the whole of the large crew-cab.



## Years of expansion: 1950-1959

*The 7-ton 'Big Bedfords'; complete new truck plant opened; the famous CA van arrives; Bedford's own diesel engines; new normal-control TJ range – a busy decade, which saw the one millionth Bedford built.*

THE 1950 COMMERCIAL MOTOR SHOW in London launched Bedford into a whole new ball-game. The S-type 'Big Bedfords' first seen at the show took the range into the 7-ton-payload bracket at one stride. In fact the S-type created a virtual new class of goods vehicles – 4-wheelers capable of carrying a full 7 tons and still within the 30 mph category.

These so-called Big Bedfords also put the make, for the first time, into the full forward-control class – if you discount the military QL 4 × 4 models produced for the services during the war.

The S-types came in four wheelbase variants, with factory-built bodies for the truck/tipper models. There was the 116 in.-wheelbase chassis, a 156 in. model, the 86 in. Bedford/Scammel 10-ton tractor unit, and the 206 in. SB bus/coach chassis for 33-seater bodies. The rather bulbous, rather high, one-piece cab was to remain a familiar sight on the roads for many years.

Also brand new was the 300 cu in, 110 bhp petrol engine introduced with these Big Bedfords. New too were the 4-speed synchromesh gearbox and hypoid rear axle, used for the first time on low-priced trucks in this weight class. Little wonder these new Bedfords were accorded star status at their first public appearance. The S models were to continue in production until late in 1960, when the TK arrived to take over the forward-control section of the Bedford range.

Soon after the S models went into production, in the new 19½-acre extension at the Luton plant, the smaller Bedfords underwent changes too. The K, M and O models were given new payload ratings: the 2/3-ton M models became 3-tonners, the 3/4-ton OS and OL models became 4-tonners, while the OSB and OLB remained as 5-tonners. The 30 cwt K chassis continued. The K, M and O Bedfords had, earlier in 1950, been given the 'Extra Duty' 28 hp petrol engine.



Pictures here represent the four original S-type 7-tonners. Facing page, the short-wheelbase tipper version; top here, the 10-ton tractor unit; centre, the 156 in.-wheelbase rigid for a full 7-ton payload; lower, the 206 in.-wheelbase SB bus/coach chassis, this one with Plaxton body. The S models were Bedford's first civilian trucks with the full forward-control treatment.

All the K, M and O chassis now had gearboxes with synchromesh on top, third and second gears, like their S-type bigger brothers. The 4- and 5-ton O models also took the hypoid rear axle. Distinguishing features of these latest K, M and O models were the larger radiator badge and the black-painted vertical centre strip on the radiator grille, to replace the earlier chrome strip.

Prices had risen a little over the years, naturally, yet even in late 1950 a complete factory-built dropside truck on the larger (156 in.) S-type chassis cost only £780 – plus that controversial purchase tax, at £175 on the 7-ton-long Bedfords. A 33-seater Duple Vega coach on the 206 in. SB chassis cost a mere £2190 (no purchase tax on bus/coach jobs). A 3-ton-long dropside (M chassis) could still be bought for £505 list price (plus p.t.) – not so much more than the £310 quoted for the WTL 3-tonner of 1934, 16 years earlier.

As it turned out, 1950 was an unfortunate time to bring out a much-wanted 7-ton range. Despite strong customer demand, S-type production had to be cut back because of a national shortage of sheet steel.

During 1950, a total of 40 429 Bedfords was built, with 63% of this output going for export.

BIG NEWS OF 1952 was labelled CA. This was an entirely new light van, to replace the car-derived PC which, since 1948, had been Bedford's sole offering in the light-van field.

The CA really was big news. It was the first Bedford light van designed as a van, not modified from a Vauxhall passenger car. It was a purpose-built job with many new features.

The original 1952 CA came in one form only, a 10/12 cwt van of 90 in. wheelbase offering 135 cu ft of load space. It featured semi-forward-control, sliding doors each side, an all-steel body and lively performance. Power unit was the 1507 cc 'square' engine used in the Vauxhall E-type Wyvern saloon. The CA was sold for a basic £400, purchase tax adding an extra £81.

CA success was immediate, expanding and long-lasting. Between 1952 and the end of the run in 1969, over 370 000 CA vans were sold all over the world. In its various 'facelift' and larger forms the CA appeared in a bewildering variety of body styles – ambulances and buses, ice-cream vans and mobile shops, tower wagons and

livestock carriers, mini-pantechnicons and tippers; the list seemed endless, the popularity unwaning. To this day you can see hundreds of these ubiquitous little vans earning their keep for a wide variety of operators. No wonder *Commercial Motor* in its road-test in July '52 called the CA "the roundsman's joy".

1952 also saw the arrival of the 4-wheel-drive military vehicle based on the S-type forward-control chassis. Designated the R-type, it was a 3-ton general-purpose vehicle that was bought for military service by many countries around the world. The R-type 4 × 4 remained in production until 1970, 10 years after the S-type models were discontinued.

FOR 15 YEARS THE K, M and O models had given splendid service as the lightweight, normal-control members of the Bedford range. Over 412 000 of them had gone into service at home and abroad. Some, notably OB coaches, are still at work.

In the spring of 1953 came their successors, the A models, called the Middleweight Bedfords. Inheriting most of the mechanical features of the K, M and O models, the latest jobs featured an entirely new all-steel integral cab – a complete breakaway from the narrow-nosed earlier models. The wide, high cab had two-piece windscreen, horizontal 3-slat grille and sidelamps incorporated in a decorative wing flash.

There were four basic chassis, ranging in wheelbase from 119 to 167 in.; even the 8-ton tractor unit shared the chassis of the 4-ton short truck. Standard power unit was the Extra Duty petrol engine, in 76 bhp form for the 20/25 cwt and 3-ton models, the heavier chassis taking the 84 bhp variant.

For the first time ever, Bedford offered a fully approved, factory-fitted diesel engine option. The Perkins P6V unit was available in the 4- and 5-ton models (including the tractor unit). Later in 1953 the Perkins R6, 108 bhp



Surely one of the most successful commercial vehicles ever – the 10/12 cwt CA van launched in 1952. In a 17-year production run the CA appeared in an astonishing variety of bodywork and roles, and sold over 370 000 all over the world. The CA underwent several changes in looks, size and specification. It also proved a great success in the motor-caravan field and as a nimble personnel carrier. Two pictures below show the 4-wheel-drive military R-type (left) with the S cab, and the later civilian version on which twin rear wheels could be specified. The Laing vehicle below, with single rear wheels, helped build the M1 motorway.

diesel engine became available in all the S-type 7-tonners and the SB bus/coach chassis, as an option to Bedford's own 300 cu in petrol unit, by now rated at 115 bhp.

In 1954 sales of all Bedfords reached 58 292, and more space was needed in which to build them. Work was already well in hand to build a huge new truck plant at Dunstable, an extension to the existing Parts and Accessories complex already there. The first Bedford built at the new Dunstable factory rolled off the line on August 2, 1955.

Soon after the new plant opened, Bedford announced important changes to the highly successful SB bus/coach chassis. Wheelbase went from 206 to 216 in., which meant that 41-seater coach bodies could be built on it and still remain within the current 30 ft maximum length required by law. The Bedford 300 cu in petrol engine or the Perkins R6 diesel remained available. Another option was an Eaton 2-speed axle. Very soon Duple were offering their new Super Vega coach body on this longer chassis.





CA's as newspaper vans were common; as London-type taxis (left) rare. This is a Grosvenor conversion. Below, three models from the A range which took over the normal-control side from the K, M and O

models in 1953. Known as the Middleweights, they introduced the first-ever diesel engine option in Bedfords, the Perkins P6V. Note the contest (below) between the A models and their predecessors.

By mid-1956 the diesel-engine option had been extended to the smaller A-type normal-control models. The Perkins P4 unit, developing 55 bhp, was offered in the 25/30 cwt and 2/3-ton models (the A2 model had been re-rated from 20/25 cwt to the higher figure).

Further minor changes to the A models were also made later in 1956. The 25/30 cwt model was replaced by 25 cwt and 35 cwt chassis, the 2/3-tonner became a 2-tonner, and a new long-wheelbase 3-tonner was introduced. All four offered the Perkins P4 diesel-engine option.



AT THIS POINT things begin to get a little complicated for the vehicle historian. Early in 1957 the entire Bedford range received a major shakeup, with new model designations, additional models, revised ratings and looks, and big news on the engine front. Hitherto things had been relatively simple, but 1957 marked the start of a real widening and diversification in the range – up to 50 models were offered after the changes at the beginning of that year.

A brief summary of the new model line-up must suffice here. The normal-control models (the lightweight and middleweight trucks) were redesignated the D-types and were visually similar to the previous A-types. The D models were 25 and 35 cwt, 2-ton and 3-ton lightweights, and 4-, 5- and 6-ton middleweights, with an 8-ton tractor unit.

New forward-control models, the C-types, were 4-, 5- and 6-ton trucks, having a slightly revised version of the existing S-type cab.

The 6-ton models mentioned, in both normal-control (D) and forward-control (C) versions, were entirely new models, plugging the gap between the earlier A-type 5-tonners and the 7-ton Big Bedfords. The 6-tonners, D and C types, came in four wheelbase variants, from 120 in. to 167 in.







The latest S-type cab, also used on the C models, was distinguished by a new chrome surround to the radiator grille and by the name Bedford boldly carried on the top of the radiator grille. The middleweight, normal-control D-types (4-tonners upwards) took the same cab as their smaller brothers but with slightly wider grille slats and with a chrome strip as the upper slat.

Unchanged in broad specification were the CA van, the SB passenger chassis and the R-type 4 × 4.

Undoubtedly the biggest news of 1957, though, was the arrival of Bedford's own home-built diesel engine. At last Bedford had a diesel engine to match the 'outside' units available previously.

This first-ever Bedford oiler was a 300 cu in 6-cylinder, vertical 4-stroke unit developing 97 bhp at 23800 rpm, with a very flat torque curve – over 200 lb ft was produced as low down as 800 rpm. This engine had a very long and successful production run, and was in effect the parent for other, later Bedford diesels.

There was other engine news too in early 1957. The 'old faithful' Extra Duty petrol unit was much revised and became the 214 cu in unit with 100 bhp available (16 bhp more than before). The 300 cu in petrol engine, born in 1950, received some improvements as well, including a new cylinder block.

Thus five power units were now offered in the truck range – Bedford's new 300 cu in diesel, the 300 and 214 cu in petrol engines, and still the Perkins

P4 192 cu in and the R6 340 cu in oilers for certain models.

After such a massive reorganisation and expansion of the range, things settled down for a short while – though in true Bedford fashion, there was always something new or something improved around the corner. As it transpired the D-types were to be a short, transitional range – even as they were introduced their replacements were well advanced in the design studios.

For the rest of 1957 and most of 1958, a brief list of changes will suffice. The CA van took the revised 1507 cc engine and all-synchro gearbox fitted to the new F-type Vauxhall Victor. The Leyland 0.350 diesel engine became a third power-unit choice for the S-type trucks and SB bus/coach chassis.

Late in 1957 there came a second Bedford-made diesel engine, the 200 cu in 'Economy Diesel' for the 25 cwt to 3-ton chassis, giving 64 bhp at 2800 rpm. Also at this time, Bedford introduced its own 2-speed axle as an option on all models from 4-tonners up (except for the SB). Finally, the CA van was given 15 in. wheels in place of the original 16 in., thus giving the van still lower loading height.

All in all, 1957 was quite a year for Bedford. And the changes continued: early in 1958 the Bedford 300 diesel became available in the S-type 7-tonners and 10-ton tractor and the SB chassis. The R-type 4-wheel-drive civilian model became available with twin rear wheels for increased payload.

**Left: three faces (and phases) of the Middleweights. Top, the original 1953 A-type, with sidelamps incorporated in a decorative wing flash. Centre, the 1956 front, with sidelights on the wing tops and a shallow 'hump' down the bonnet centre. Lower, the three heavier models (the D-type 4-, 5- and 6-ton) took this new front in late 1957, the lighter Middleweights retaining the 1956 cab front. Below, the new-look S-type cab from late 1957 – this one neatly modified by a Swiss steel merchant. Note the unusual windscreen-wiper mounting.**





Above, the 1957 new-look radiator grille on an S-type 7-ton tipper and (right) on a C-type 5-tonner. The 4-, 5- and 6-ton C models shared the looks of the S-type 'Big Bedfords'. Lower picture is of a 12-seater Spurling crew car on a D-type 25 cwt chassis.

**ON MAY 28, 1958, the Bedford range passed another milestone – its one millionth vehicle, an S-type 7-tonner with Bedford diesel engine. Of that first million, 360 000 had been exported.**

For the 1958 Commercial Motor Show, Bedford produced a complete new normal-control range. The TJ models went from 25 cwt to 7-ton in payload, with an 8-ton tractor unit. The 11 basic models spanned a wheel-base bracket from 119 to 179 in.

Mechanically, the TJ models carried on the broad specification of their D-type predecessors. But they certainly broke new ground in style, in comfort and in driver convenience. The two TJ cabs (differing only in front-end detail) had deep screens, sharply sloping bonnets and a modern, almost car-like, feel about them.

The TJ ushered in several important advances. One was a low-loading 4-tonner, using the 16 in. wheels common to the lighter models. Another





The new look in normal-control Bedfords, first seen at the 1958 show. Picture above shows the two TJ cab versions – vertical grille slats and headlamp ‘eyebrows’ up to the 4-tonners, horizontal slats for the heavier jobs (on the left in the picture above, taken in Denmark). Top picture, facing page, shows four generations of bonneted Bedfords

working on a site in the West Indies. The four models seen are, from left, a late '30s WT, a D-type, a TJ and a post-war O-type. The TJ is still Bedford's normal-control offering, produced now for overseas markets. While still visually the same as the original models, today's TJ trucks have inherited a host of mechanical advances.



Two pictures above show tippers from both ends of the TJ range. At left, one of the earliest TJ 7-tonners to go into service; at right, a neat 3-tonner on the 119 in. chassis. The smaller TJ models for the domestic market had the direction indicators on the front wings. Note the deep windscreen and sharply sloping bonnet. Below: for years this

Lancashire operator ran a large – and very immaculate – fleet of box vans on the 35 cwt TJ chassis, many of which are still in service. Right up to the 4-ton model the TJ came with 16 in. wheels for really low loading heights. The success of the TJ is still being endorsed by sales in many important overseas markets.





was a new 7-ton tipper, the first such on a Bedford bonneted chassis. Yet another was a 7-ton 16 ft-long drop-side truck for longer delivery runs.

Very tight turning circles and the low platform heights made the TJ trucks popular with drivers, as did the low-step, roomy 3-man cab. The TJ was – and still is, for export markets – a driver's vehicle.

The TJ range is still in production to this day, visually very much like the 1958 trucks but much developed and improved mechanically. These days it is produced for export markets only – bonneted trucks are still favoured in many places, especially in some of the so-called developing countries.

In 1959 came two important advances on the 10/12 cwt CA van. First, a one-piece curved windscreen and revised grille. A little later came another CA model, with a longer wheelbase – 102 in. against the shorter van's 90 in. This gave 20% more load space (171 cu ft in all) and a 39 in.-wide sliding-door opening. In the seven years since it appeared the CA had achieved real success at home and abroad; the arrival of the longer version stretched its appeal still further.

Another 1959 advance came late in the year – an S-type Big Bedford tractor unit for a 12-ton payload. This was powered by the Leyland 351 cu in diesel engine – a sure clue, to those who studied such things, that a bigger Bedford-made diesel than the existing 300 cu in engine must be on the stocks. At the same time came a 168 in.-wheelbase 7-ton S model designed to take an 18ft body.

Thus the 50's ended, with the Bedford range enlarged and improved almost beyond recognition over the previous 10 years. The 60's were to start on a high note as well.

**In 1959 the highly successful CA van took a new grille and one-piece windscreen. Even more importantly, the original 90 in. wheelbase model was joined by a longer version (102 in.) that gave a fifth more load space.**





## A decade of new models: 1960-1969

THE BEDFORD RANGE moved into the 60's with probably the biggest advance ever made in forward-control trucks. Launched at the 1960 Commercial Show, the brand-new TK models introduced the cab-ahead-of-engine concept, a bold new approach to cab/engine layout that was soon to be copied by other makers.

Instead of sitting alongside the driver in the cab, the TK engine sat in its own compartment behind the driver and outside the cab. The immense gains in space, comfort and noise-reduction were immediately apparent. No wonder a writer in *Commercial Motor* said: "A new range which I predict will sweep the world".

From this point on, incidentally, this brief history of Bedford becomes still more condensed. Advances and additions, new models and variants, have been so numerous through the 60's and 70's that it is not feasible to chronicle them in detail here. Hopefully too Bedford's more recent history is better known than its earlier years.

Apart from its trend-setting cab, the TK brought other novel features as well – like the 16 in. wheels right up to the 5-tonners, 17 in. wheels for the 6-tonner, giving entry-step heights as low as 19 in. and low loading heights too.

Initially there were 12 TK models, from 3-ton rigid to 12-ton tractor

units. With most there was a choice of 4- or 5-speed gearbox, and a petrol or diesel engine choice on all but the 12-ton tractor.

Above all else, though, what the TK introduced was a new concept in driver comfort. Almost car-like in its furnishing, the deep, wide TK cab gave the forward-control truck a complete new standard in driver working conditions.

The first production TK rolled out of the Dunstable plant on August 4, 1960. Success was immediated and continuing. The TK is still in production, and is as familiar on our roads as any other vehicle has ever been. And on roads overseas as well. Naturally the range has grown, improved and advanced. Many new models and variants have been added, many changes made, but the TK cab remains as distinctive today as it did in 1960.

Of the earlier S models, two remained in production – the SB bus/coach chassis and the 4-wheel-drive R type, which retained the S cab for some years.

Almost as an afterthought in that busy period of 1960, a new normal-

**Bold in looks, and bold in concept too – the TK introduced the cab-ahead-of-engine design which immediately drew favourable comment. The basic design, with a host of detail improvements, is still in production. At left, one of the first TK trucks to go into service, a 5-tonner with the 16 in. wheels that gave such low loading heights.**



Four newcomers from the early '60s. Top, the JO  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton pick-up, with TJ cab and 2651 cc Vauxhall car engine. Second, a standard 5 cu yd tipper on the 131 in. wheelbase civilian version of the R-type  $4 \times 4$ . Third, a 29-seater Duple Vista on the VAS bus/coach chassis introduced in 1961 and (lower picture) this mobile library represents the many other kinds of commercial bodywork built on the VAS.

control Bedford appeared. The JO model was an unorthodox animal, a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton pick-up marrying the lighter TJ cab to the 2651 cc 6-cylinder petrol engine of current Vauxhall cars. This was probably the fastest  $\frac{1}{2}$ -tonner on the market; it was not, however, a resounding success and did not remain in production very long.

While the TK range tended to hog the Bedford headlines at this time, advances were being made with other models too. In mid-1961 the Perkins Four-99 diesel engine became an option for the CA vans.

More importantly perhaps, in late summer of '61 came a junior partner for the SB bus/coach chassis. The VAS chassis, with 164 in. wheelbase, was designed for 29/30-seater bodies. It came with 214 cu in petrol or 300 cu in diesel engine. Both Duple and Plaxton designed really smart bodies for the VAS - Duple's offering introduced the name Bella Vista.

Early in 1962, two more Bedford diesel engines arrived - the 220 and 330 cu in units. They joined the existing 200 and 300 cu in units introduced in 1957. At the same time, the CA van became the first British-made light van to offer an all-synchromesh 4-speed gearbox.

THE 1962 COMMERCIAL SHOW heralded another boldly unorthodox move from Bedford. This was the VAL twin-steer coach chassis, a completely new concept in the bus/coach world. The 231 in.-wheelbase 3-axle chassis was remarkable in having 16 in. wheels, allowing a low floor height and easy door-ahead-of-axle entry.

The VAL was designed to take advantage of new regulations permitting 36 ft-long coaches. Up to 55 passengers could be carried - usually 52 in luxury-coach bodies, 55 in service-bus form. The Leyland 400 cu in diesel drove through a 5-speed overdrive-top gearbox. Before long goods-carrying bodies were being built on this chassis - pantechicons, mobile salesrooms, horseboxes and the like.





The VAL, launched in 1962, was an unconventional, but very successful, approach to a bus/coach chassis. The twin-steer, 3-axle layout and the 16 in. wheels were bold innovations. Above is an early Plaxton-bodied VAL. Very soon bodybuilders were mounting a variety of special bodies on this chassis, such as the mobile showroom at right and the unorthodox caravan transporter.

Also at the 1962 Show, more TK models were launched – an 8-ton rigid, a 7 cu yd tipper and a heavy-duty tractor unit. All were powered by the Leyland 400 cu in diesel engine – a comparable Bedford unit was still some way off.

During 1963 and 1964 there were further improvements to the CA vans, and new Bedford/Boughton 6-wheelers for 10/12-ton payloads, based on 7-ton TK chassis.

In the small-van business Bedford's earlier offerings had been car-derived models. The 8 cwt AS models first launched in 1933 evolved from the 12 and 14 hp Vauxhall Light Six saloons. They remained in production until 1939. Their replacement, first announced in 1938, was the 5/6 cwt HC, derived from the integrally built H-type Vauxhall. The HC went out of the picture in 1948.

In late summer of 1964 Bedford was back in the car-derived small-van market with the HA. Two models were offered, the 6 cwt and 8 cwt, based on the successful HA Viva saloon. They offered 70 cu ft of load space, real economy, car-type comfort and low initial cost. As this is being written the HA is still with us, virtually identical in looks to the 1964 jobs but with many advances and changes under the skin.

New models and variants continued to expand the customer appeal of the



TK range, which was proving an outstanding success at home and abroad. Bedford's next major development came in mid-1965, with the arrival of the 193 in.-wheelbase VAM bus/coach chassis. This was designed for front-entrance 41/45-seat bodywork, and completed the V trio of passenger chassis, slotting in between the VAS and VAL. Thus Bedford bus/coach chassis now covered the 29 to 55-seater bracket – not forgetting the various 12-seater passenger carriers being built on the CA van chassis.

In the same year (1965) there were still more additions to the TK range – lightweight models for payloads of 30 cwt, 2 and 3 tons, and a 120 in.-wheelbase tipper with an 11½-ton gross weight.

Show-time 1966 saw the biggest expansion yet in the forward-control range. Eight new chassis were introduced; they were designated KM, though in effect they were an upward extension of the TK models. Main visual difference was the hefty double bumper of the KM jobs.

KM took Bedford for the first time into the 16-ton-gross 2-axle field. The KM range actually spanned the 14/22-ton gw bracket. Included was the longest 2-axle Bedford yet – the 224 in.-wheelbase KMH for bodywork up to 22 ft long.

With the KM came a duplicated air-pressure braking system, power steering, an improved 'suspension' driver's seat and dual headlamps.

Much more importantly, though,



New models, additional variants, appeared regularly right through the 1960s. Three Bedford/Boughton 6-wheelers (above) for 10/12-ton payloads were announced in 1963, based on 7-ton TK chassis. The all new HA van appeared in 1964. Bottom picture here shows an HA alongside the recently revised CA van, and a 35 cwt van body on the TJ chassis. At left, an ingenious little motor-caravan conversion of the HA by Martin Walter, who devised a number of modifications to the basic HA, including personnel carriers and high-top models. At the right, a 4-wheel-drive version of the TJ truck chassis designed for a 30 cwt payload yet available with 300 cu in petrol or 330 cu in diesel engine. This one was introduced in mid-1964. And while the flow of new models and variants continued, existing Bedford models were constantly being improved and refined — examples were the larger engine for the CA vans, more special-duty TK chassis, and a 5-speed overdrive gearbox for some TK models and the VAS.







the KM brought an entirely new Bedford diesel engine, the 466 cu in unit developing 145 bhp gross. Thus at last there was a Bedford-built diesel engine to suit all the truck and bus/coach chassis in the range, including the heaviest. At the same time another new Bedford diesel arrived, the 381 cu in unit, basically similar to the 466 engine.

About a year later (late 1967) the 466 cu in engine was available in the VAL twin-steer bus/coach chassis, while a de luxe cab was fitted to some of the KM chassis. By now too KM tractor units were available for 24-ton-gross semi-trailer operation.

1968 was, by Bedford standards, a quiet year for new models. In the summer came two new TK 'urban' tractor units, for local-delivery work requiring articulated operation. Soon after came four factory-built 6-wheelers in the KM range, going up to 22 tons gross weight.

MARCH 24, 1969 MARKED yet another milestone in Bedford progress. On that day Tony Wedgwood Benn MP drove off the 1½-millionth Bedford truck, a KM 16-tonner. That this was an export model was appropriate, since 49% of that 1½ million Bedfords had been exported. In the previous year (1968) as much as 62% of Bedford production had gone overseas, to 118 countries.

The 60's came to a close on a high note, just as they had started for Bedford (with the TK). From August 1969 it was a case of "for CA read CF". After 17 years and 370 445 units, CA bowed out and CF took over.

CF came in five basic models, with 25 different chassis/body permutations. These were 14, 18, 22, 25 and 35 cwt models, two wheelbases (106 and 126 in.) and sliding or hinged cab doors. Two petrol and two diesel engines were used in the initial range. The 35 cwt model was identified by twin rear wheels. The CF is still in production, still a strong seller.

The 1960's had certainly seen many new Bedfords. The range had grown, demand had grown as well. The 1970's have seen similar growth, and have also seen Bedford enter the really big, heavy-truck market.

Interesting 1968 newcomers to the growing TK range were two 'urban tractors', for medium weight load deliveries in built-up areas. The joint Bedford/Tasker design involved shortening 4- and 5-ton TK chassis to a wheelbase of 84 in. for really good manoeuvrability. Lower picture represents the 1965 extension of the TK range into lightweight models, for 30 cwt, 2- and 3-ton payloads. These lighter TK chassis obviously met the needs of many smaller transport operators.





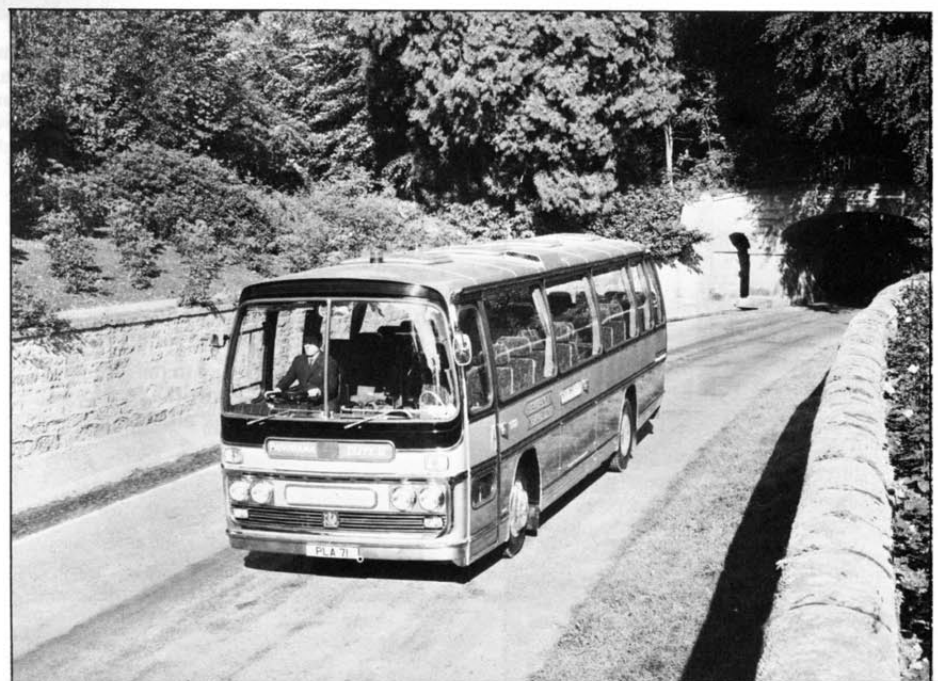
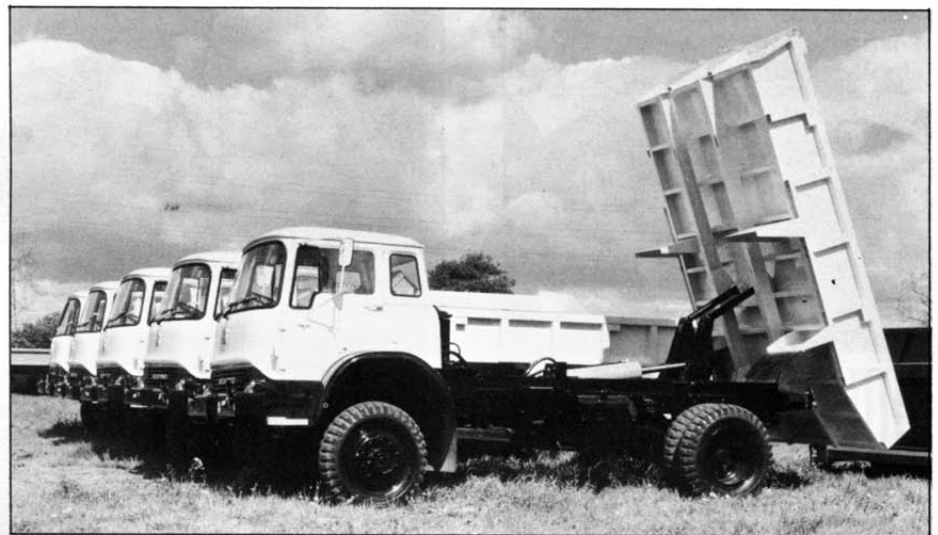
Paired headlamps and the hefty double bumper (top picture) immediately identify the KM models introduced in 1966. The eight new chassis spanned the 14 to 22 tons gross bracket, and took Bedford for the first time into the 16-ton-gross 2-axle area. Just as importantly, the KM ushered in a brand-new Bedford engine, the 466 cu in diesel unit. No longer was it necessary to fit other makers' diesels into the heavier Bedfords. The picture immediately above is of a body by Alexander of Falkirk on the new VAM bus/coach chassis launched in 1965. This chassis, for 41/45-seater bodies with front entrance, fitted neatly between the VAS and VAL. The body shown here is a service bus for Highland Omnibuses, with a special compartment for freight at the rear. Left above, a 6-wheeler conversion of the KD chassis for 11½ tons gross. Two TK and two KM factory-built 6-wheelers appeared in mid-1968; this one has 16 in. wheels and the single headlamps of the standard TK cab; the KM double-bumper was the customer's choice. Lower left, this is certainly a KM 6-wheeler – the twin headlamps are unmistakable. The single-drive 3-axle KMs were designed for operation at 20 and 22 tons gross.

While the text here refers to the late-1969 introduction of the CF van, this history takes a small degree of licence and puts the picture of the CF at the head of the next chapter, covering the 1970s. The CF was, after all, from the very start a van for the '70s.



# Towards the 3 millionth

*CF builds on CA success; more models in TK/KM range; TM takes Bedford to 44 tonnes gross; stylish new small van; ½ millionth TK produced; new models for the 1980s.*



Newcomers for the 70s; top, the CF van was actually announced late in 1969, and replaced the successful CA models. Upper right, the M-type 4 x 4, taking the familiar TK cab. These have the twin rear wheels of the civilian version. Lower right, a Plaxton Elite 45-seater luxury coach on the YRQ chassis, first Bedford chassis with underfloor engine mounted midships.



THE 1970'S HAVE SEEN continued expansion of the entire Bedford range, with many new or revised models. Because of the scope of this growth, and since the more recent history of the range is better known, this account now becomes still more condensed; we shall deal only with the major highlights.

The 70's began with the arrival of the third 4-wheel-drive model, the M-type military/civilian vehicle taking the now familiar TK cab. The first 4 x 4 Bedford, the famous military QL, appeared in 1941-42. In 1952 came the R-type, with the Big Bedford S-type cab.

Next arrival, in the summer of 1970, was the YRQ bus/coach chassis for 45-seater bodywork. This too broke new ground for Bedford: the engine was mounted midships, below the body floor, giving real benefits in silence and passenger enjoyment. The new 193 in. chassis shared many components of the earlier VAM front-engine chassis.

In April 1971 Bedford reached another milestone - 40 years of production. Other 1971 news included an automatic transmission option on some CA vans; three new double-drive 6-wheeler KM trucks for 20/22-ton gross-weight operation; and a larger engine (1 256 cc) for HA vans. Shortly afterwards, at the end of 1971, the Post Office placed its first of several large orders for HA vans - 2 000 in the first batch. More big orders were to follow.

Summer of '72 saw the twin-steer VAL (launched in late 1962) make way for another under-floor mid-engined bus/coach chassis. The YRT joined the YRQ, and became Bedford's challenger in the 11-metre, 53-seater coach market.

At the 1972 Earls Court show, the Bedford stand had its usual share of new models. Perhaps the most significant was the 32-ton tractor unit, the most powerful Bedford yet built. In essence, this was a marriage of the KM cab and a Detroit Diesel 6V-71 engine, foreshadowing the use of this well-proven power unit two years later in the TM models. Also at the '72 show was the improved TK/KM cab; a new 16-ton, 148 in.-wheelbase KM tipper chassis; the higher-payload HA van (up from 8 to 10 cwt); and the Mark 2,

**Top: breweries, soft-drink makers and many others in the distribution trades welcomed the 14½-ton-gross twin-steer version of the TK announced in 1973. Centre, to replace the VAL bus/coach chassis in 1972 came the YRT for 11 metre bodywork. The example here has a Moseley Continental Estoril body built by Caetano of Portugal. Lower, three double-drive KM 6-wheelers were announced in 1971 for operation at 20/22 tons gross. The Forestry Commission were early buyers of these rugged vehicles.**



C.F. FORDHAM

CAMBRIDGE

BEDFORD

KGV 282P

STOWMARKET 1953  
SUFFOLK ENGLAND

Crane Freeroad

Crane Freeroad



Since the first TM models were shown publicly in 1974, the range has grown to over 40 models, going from 16 to 44 tonnes gross. At left, a 32-ton tractor unit with regular D cab. This page, top: the TM range includes 2-axle 'rigids' for drawbar-trailer operation at 32 tons gross. Centre: one of the 6-wheeler TM chassis available for 24-ton-gross operation. Lower, the TM 3800 tractor unit, capable of operating

above the current UK 32-ton-gross legal limit, is powered by the Detroit Diesel 8V-71 engine. The example shown has the full-width cab with sleeper conversion by an 'outside' bodybuilder. The TM 4400 tractor unit added to the range in 1977, for gross-weight operation at 44 tonnes, is available for certain overseas markets where these higher weight limits apply.



The good-looking Chevanne (top picture), introduced at the 1976 Commercial Motor Show, is based on the highly successful Chevette hatchback. Above, this prototype of a 30-tonne double-drive TM tipper was also revealed in 1976. Below, latest in the line of 4-wheel-drive military Bedfords, the TM 4 × 4. Towards the end of 1977 the Ministry of Defence placed an order for 2000 of these go-anywhere vehicles. A civilian version will also be produced at the same time.



466 cu in Bedford diesel, in three different power-output versions.

Early in 1973, the Post Office followed up its first order for 2000 HA vans with another, this time for 3200 units. Soon after this, Bedford began to export CF vans to West Germany, a major breakthrough into a rich but difficult market. At about the same time came news of a £25 million project to increase truck-build capacity at the Dunstable plant. The increase was needed to bring in the TM range of heavy trucks, to be launched publicly a year later.

FOR OVER 40 YEARS Bedfords had been classed as a range of vehicles for the light-to-medium weight category – though the ‘medium’ parameters had been steadily pushed upwards by additions like the KM 22/24-ton jobs. Since those early days of 1931 Bedford had kept aloof from the really heavy, so-called ‘premium’ end of the truck business.

All that changed in the autumn of 1974. The change was called TM. At a stroke, Bedford was now in among the ‘big boys’ of the home and Continental producers.

First stage of a 3-phase introduction, at the 1974 London show, ushered in eight TM models in the 16 to 32-ton-gross bracket – 4- and 6-wheeled rigids and tractor units. Power unit for these first eight was the Detroit Diesel 6V-71 unit. The all-new D-type cab was to be followed, in stages 2 and 3, by the F full-width cab and the H sleeper cab.

THE SECOND TM WAVE came in mid-1975, with nine more chassis in the 16 to 24-ton-gross range. At the same time came the new Bedford 500 diesel, available in the lighter end of the TM range. A year later the TM line-up was rounded off with 11 more models, bringing in the F and H wide cabs and taking Bedford into the 42 tonnes bracket (metrication had meanwhile caught up with us!). All 11 stage 3 models took the 297 bhp Detroit Diesel 8V-71 power unit.

Thus, with TM models in full production at Dunstable, Bedford had reached a new pinnacle. There were Bedfords now going from the 6 cwt HA van right through the spectrum to the 42-tonne TM tractor unit.

While TM was stealing the major

headlines in 1974-1976, other additions were being made. At the '76 Show Bedford introduced the Chevonne, an attractive  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton-payload van with the style and comfort of the Vauxhall Chevette. Then there was a prototype for a 4-wheel-drive CF van, and a novel concept in passenger transport, the JJL midi-bus. This stylish vehicle features integral body/chassis design, with the 330 cu in diesel engine mounted transversely at the rear and driving through a fully automatic transmission. There were also further improvements to CF vans, including the GM 2.1 litre diesel-engine option.

All this confident surge in Bedford

products was reflected in sales results. In 1976 Bedford out-sold all other trucks in the UK market. The year before, Bedford had once again been Britain's top export truck, sending abroad over 70% of the trucks built at Dunstable.

We round off this history with some of the more recent additions. Late in 1977 Bedford secured a Ministry of Defence order for 2000 of the latest in the family of 4-wheel-drive trucks, the TM 4 x 4 military vehicle, a civilian version of which is also to be produced. 1977 also saw the introduction of the TM 4400 tractor unit for 44 tonnes gross, powered by the 8V-92 turbocharged Detroit Diesel – the largest

and most powerful Bedfords ever built.

June 1978 marked yet another Bedford milestone. The  $\frac{1}{2}$ -millionth TK was built – and appropriately at one of General Motors overseas plants, Portugal in the case. Appropriate, because so many of those  $\frac{1}{2}$ -million TKs have been exported, either as complete chassis built at Dunstable or as 'knocked-down' jobs for assembly overseas.

As this is being written, another significant milestone is in sight – production of the three-millionth Bedford. Looking ahead just a little further, the Bedford commercial vehicle reaches its 50th birthday in 1981.

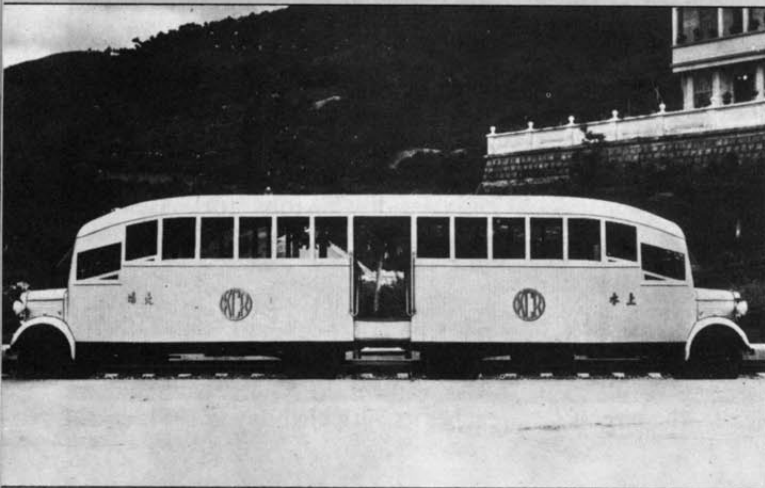
## Staying out in front . . .

*The advanced Bedford JJL Midi-Bus is only one example of the forward-looking concepts being developed by Bedford designers and engineers – concepts that will take Bedford strongly into the 1980s. Even as the production of the 3-millionth Bedford is recorded, progress towards the 4-million-mark is being made. Bedford is the first British truck make to top the 2-million total; the 'milestone' 3-million is made up with a million Bedford vans.*





# Oddly enough . . .



**ON THE RAILS:** The weird creation above was made up of two Bedford chassis mounted back-to-back. The device had train wheels and ran on the Kowloon Canton railway in China. The S-type at right



was mounted on a rail bogie, its engine had three carburetors and it spent many years hauling 50-ton loads of timber in a New Zealand lumber siding with 1 in 10 gradients.



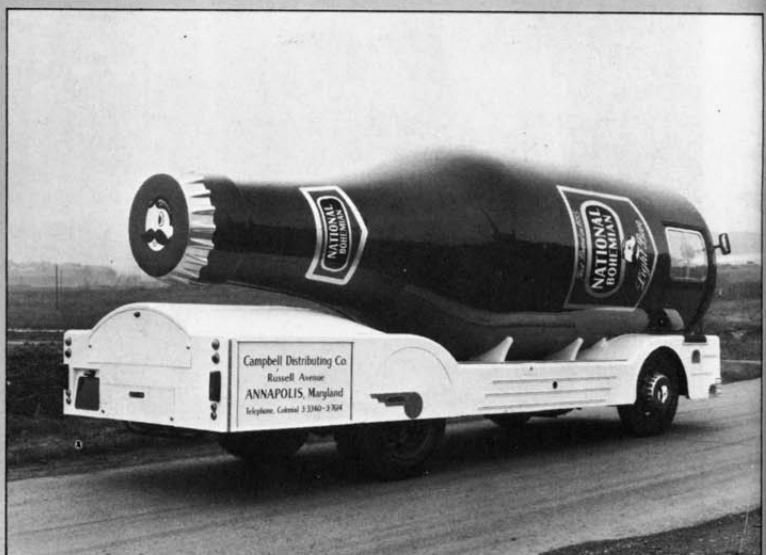
**ONLY 50% OVERLOAD?:** The early 1930s claim on overloading made for Bedford seems to have been very liberally interpreted. The bus/truck at left, in Cyprus, must have had stability as well as load



problems while the sawdust-carrying 3-tonner at right looks more than 50% overloaded even without the drawbar trailer. Today's much more rigid regulations do at least prevent such hazards.



**INVENTIVE GENIUS:** A Middlesex firm used to convert B-type 12 cwt vans in the 1930s, fit twin rear wheels to them and use them for mowing racecourses, golf courses and the like. The 'bottle' at right,



apparently built in the UK for an American firm, was one of a number of similar advertising gimmicks mounted on truck chassis. One wonders what load was carried - if any!

## Curiosities from the Bedford photographic archives



**SAHIBS ON SAFARI:** Both these strange conversions are based on V-type 12 cwt vans of about 1935 vintage. Both were used on long, rugged African expeditions; the one on the left was photographed at



Kano before starting a trans-Sahara run to England. Not much weight allowance, on a 12 cwt chassis, for even the most basic creature comforts on such tough runs.



**BODIES UNBEAUTIFUL:** Beneath that ugly barrel body on the left is a WS 30 cwt chassis of the earliest type – certainly pre-1935. Eyecatching certainly – which was the idea. The 10-seater vehicle at



right was built in New Zealand on an early WL2 2-ton chassis. When is a truck not a bus not a car? When it's all three in one, presumably! The days of these odd vehicles seem to have gone now.



**"BOXES, LITTLE BOXES":** Not very beautiful, but certainly functional; the little mobile sweet-shop at left is on the original 12 cwt V-type van chassis of 1932/33 – note the disc wheels. Picture at right is



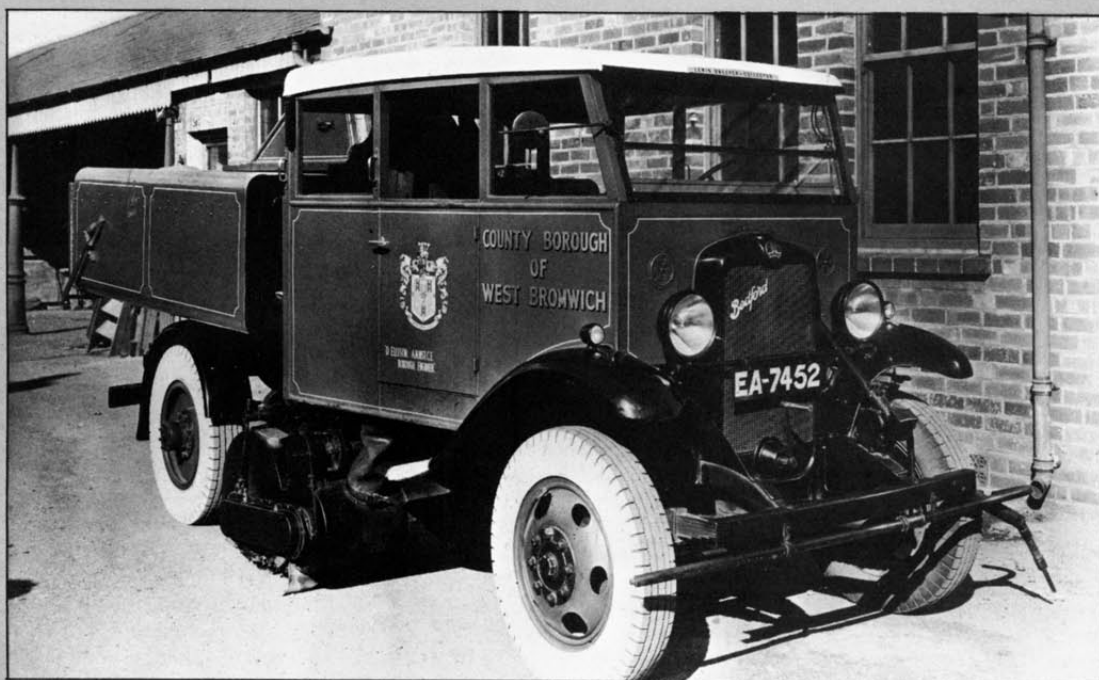
a mild piece of editorial licence – the basis of the 'glasshouse' ice-cream van is a 1936 DX Vauxhall saloon, which before its transformation worked for a number of years as a taxi.

... and  
more  
oddy



**UP FOR T'CUPI**: This O-type 3-tonner weighed well over 2 tons without its passengers, yet here it rests on just four bone china teacups. Sir John Wedgwood, of the famous pottery company, had the Bedford resting on the four teacups to prove the strength of his firm's chinaware. Nice ones, Sir!

**RARE BIRD**: Almost unrecognisable as a very early WH 2-tonner is this Lewin sweeper-collector. Note the single rear wheels, left-hand drive and the exposed steering column. The crew-cab certainly looks spacious; presumably there were two doors in the near side.

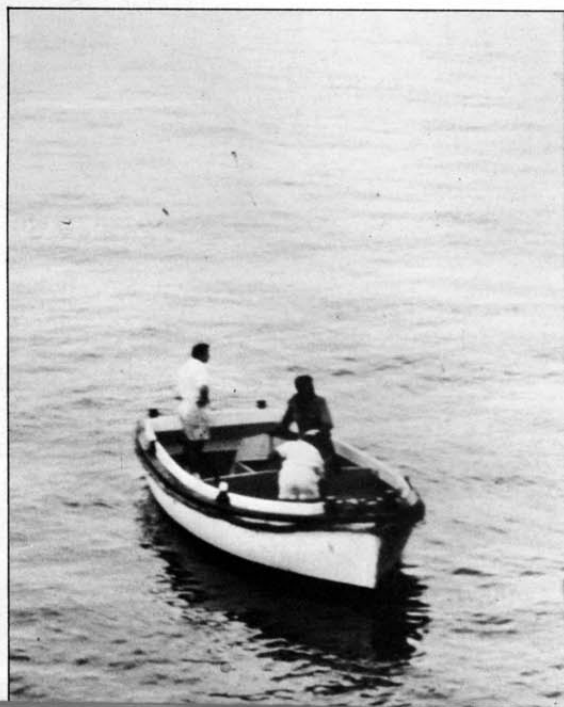


**WATER BABY**: No ferry job, this; the 1935 30 cwt Bedford actually powered the boat as well. Drive was taken from the jacked-up rear wheels, via two supplementary gearboxes, to the two boat screws. Even the steering-wheel steered the amphibian. Ten minutes' work made the Bedford a normal road vehicle again. The outfit was often seen on the Thames just after the second world war.

# Exported to all five continents

Of the 3 million Bedfords built up to early October 1978, more than 1,370,000 have been exported. Ever since those early Bedford days of 1931, the make has always been a really strong favourite in many overseas territories. Markets have changed over the years – as have country names; some markets are now closed to British vehicles, but new ones have been opening up.

The pictures on the next four pages can show only a tiny cross-section of the places to which Bedfords have gone, and the enormous variety – even oddity – of the jobs for which they have been chosen. The two pictures here represent the two major ways in which Bedfords are shipped overseas. Some go in 'knocked down' form, with components crated for assembly in General Motors and other plants around the world. Others are shipped as complete vehicles, either with bodywork or as chassis/cabs. There are 19 plants around the world where 'knocked down' Bedfords are assembled.





# EUROPE

AUSTRIA



BELGIUM



DENMARK



GERMANY



HOLLAND



ITALY



NORWAY



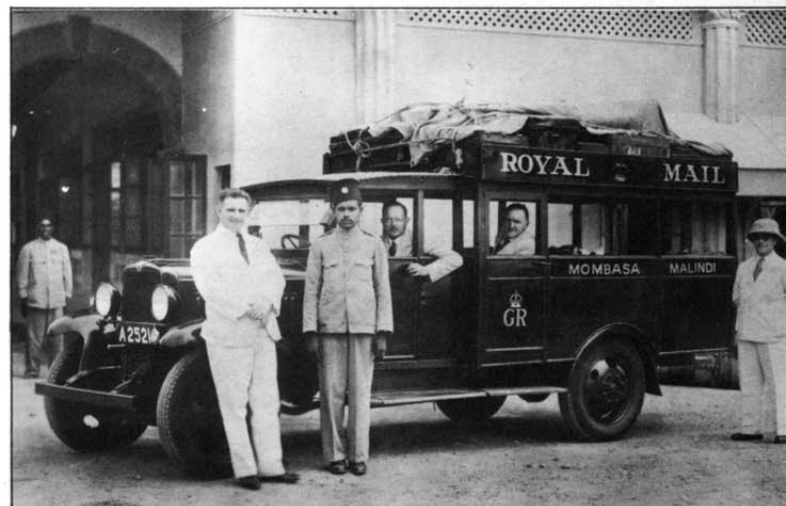
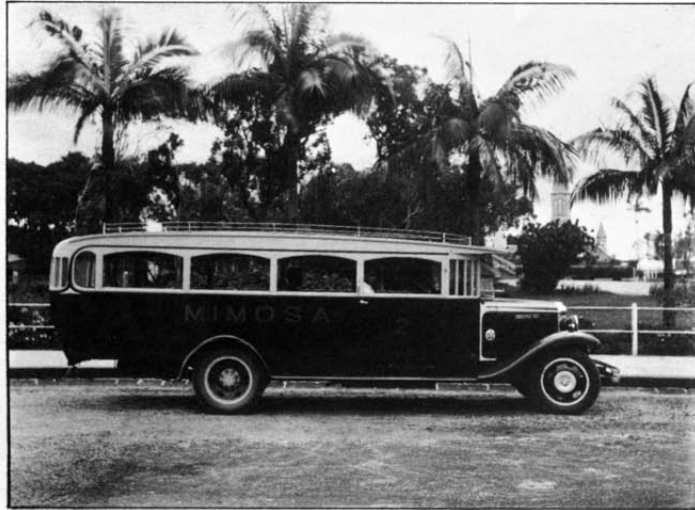
SWITZERLAND

# AFRICA

The TM in the upper picture was part of a large shipment sent out to the Sudan to work on a big new sugar refinery. The centre picture shows a locally bodied Bedford bus photographed in Mauritius. The chassis appears to be a WTB, first introduced in 1935. The three 34-seater buses in the lower picture, on 5-ton truck chassis, were operating in Northern Rhodesia, doing a 1000-mile service run between Chingola and Kasempa.

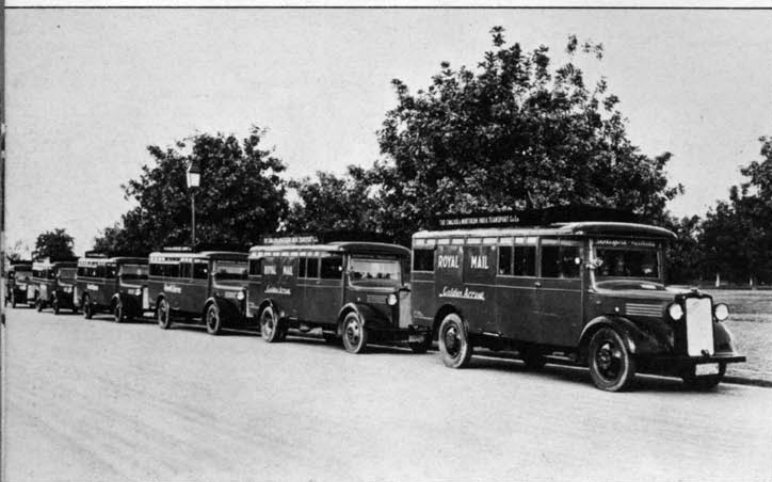
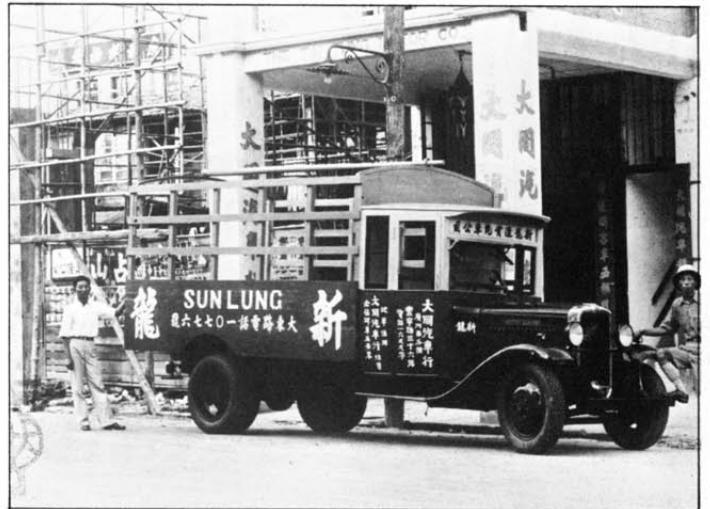


The O-type in the upper of the three pictures below had very rough conditions to put up with, while being used on oil exploration work in Tanganyika in 1954. Centre, two D-type tippers also in fairly rugged conditions, in this case the site of the Kariba Dam in Rhodesia. The Mombasa-Malindi mail coach in the lower picture was mounted on an early WLG 2-ton chassis. Comfort for the passengers must have been pretty minimal.



# ASIA

This row, from the top: these two 3-ton J-types were at work in Bangkok, Thailand; note the no-doors cabs. The J-type tractor unit, working in the forests of Malaya, was in fact a somewhat modified 6-ton truck chassis; another no-doors job. The Royal Mail coaches in the lower picture were working in northern India in the mid-1930s; most of them are on the WS 30cwt chassis. At right, from the top: this weird Bedford 'coach', seen in Japan in 1954, was a sort of news-gathering office complete with radio transmitter and reporters' room. Bedfords could be sold in China in the 1930s - this 2 tonner from the early days was one of many exported to that country. The long chassis line-up (third picture) was part of a delivery of 60 Bedfords to India. Also seen in India, the SB coaches in the lower picture, part of the Delhi Transport fleet.

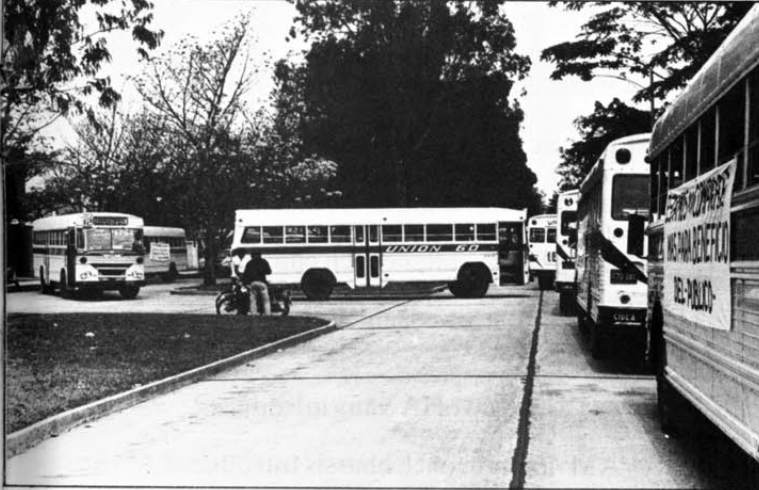


# AMERICA

# AUSTRALIA

South America has always been a much stronger market for Bedford than the north. The upper picture here shows a fleet of Bedford buses, with American Wayne bodies, operating in Guatemala. Below them, a fleet of 60 Bedford D-type 5-tonners in Brazil – the largest single fleet sale ever made in South America up to that time. Nearly 500 Bedfords were shipped to Brazil in 1956. Lower picture, an impressive display of CA vans used by the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation of Canada.

Both Australia and New Zealand have always been strong Bedford territories; there are General Motors plants assembling Bedfords in both countries. Top, this school bus on an SB chassis used to operate in Victoria province, Australia. Centre, a rather unorthodox KM in New Zealand, with a locally built 4-axle conversion; 8-wheel conversions have been common in Australia and New Zealand. Lower, another one in New Zealand, a local body on the very successful VAL chassis.





# Landmarks in the Bedford story

- 1931 Enter the first Bedfords; 2-ton trucks (WHG and WLG) and two bus chassis (WHB and WLB).
- 1932 30 cwt truck (WS) and 12 cwt vans (VY/VX) added to range. Bedfords accounted for half of all British commercial vehicle exports.
- 1933 3-ton trucks (WT), and 8 cwt vans (ASY, ASX) introduced.
- 1935 26-seater bus chassis (WTB) joins range.
- 1938 5/6 cwt van (HC) introduced.
- 1939 New 10/12 cwt van (JC) introduced. OB coach (briefly).
- 1939-45 Over 250 000 Bedford trucks built for Forces, plus 5 640 Churchill tanks.
- 1946 K, M and O models in production. Range now includes 5-ton trucks and tractor unit for articulated vehicles. OB 26-seater coach chassis.
- 1947 500 000th Bedford truck produced. First British manufacturer to reach that number.
- 1950 'Big Bedford' S-type 7-ton truck models and 10-ton tractor unit introduced - Bedford's first forward-control civilian models. 32/40-seater bus chassis (SB) added to range.
- 1952 10 cwt CA van introduced; first non-car derived light van from any British manufacturer. First 4 x 4 civilian truck introduced (the R-type).
- 1953 New A-type Middleweights replace K, M and O range.
- 1955 Production facilities greatly increased by transfer of truck production from Luton to Dunstable. 64 773 Bedfords produced; more in one year than any other British make.
- 1957 Two entirely new 6-ton truck models introduced (D and C models). Normal and forward control. First Bedford-built diesel engines introduced, the 300 cu in and 200 cu in units.
- 1958 1 000 000th Bedford comes off the line. TJ normal-control models introduced.
- 1960 TK trucks and tractor units introduced. Output of Bedfords exceeded 100 000 units a year for the first time.
- 1961 New VAS 30-seater coach chassis introduced.
- 1962 VAL twin-steer coach chassis introduced for 52/55 seaters.
- 1964 6 cwt and 8 cwt HA vans introduced.
- 1965 VAM 45-seat coach chassis introduced.
- 1966 KM range of heavy trucks takes Bedford into the 22/24-ton class.
- 1968 KM 6 x 2 introduced.
- 1969 2 000 000th Bedford produced - of which 1 500 000 were trucks. CF van range introduced.
- 1970 M-type 4 x 4 truck and first underfloor engine coach chassis introduced (YRQ).
- 1971 KM range expanded by introduction of 6 x 4 models.
- 1974 Introduction of first phase of TM range of premium trucks and tractor units (Detroit Diesel 6V-71 models).
- 1975 Phase 2 TMs introduced (500 engine models). Bedford's 500 engine for TK, KM and coach chassis. 140 in. wheelbase model added to CF range.
- 1976 Phase 3 TMs introduced (Detroit Diesel 8V-71 models). JJL Midi Bus announced. Van range widened by introductions of Chevanne. GM diesel engine introduced for CF range.
- 1978 The year of the three millionth.  
1 000 000th Bedford van built.  
2 000 000th Bedford truck built - of which over 500 000 were TKs. Record total for a British truck *make* and record total for British truck *model*.

# Towards the 4 million...



*October 1978 sees the production of the three millionth Bedford commercial vehicle. The success established by those first Bedfords, 47 years ago, has been maintained and developed in world markets. Tomorrow's Bedfords will build on that success; the picture here illustrates the advanced thinking that has always given Bedford a top place in the transport world. This is a design concept for a maximum-weight, long-haul vehicle of the future.*