

Source 4a

Extracts from a book written by James Town c1892.

Reminiscences of the old Coaching Days by James Town

Before the railways were introduced into this country, the travelling public were conveyed by coaching and posting to the different towns in the county. Worthing was highly favoured by the good coach service between Worthing and London. In the winter season there was one coach up to town and one down to Worthing every day; but the two...coach proprietors of Worthing, Mr. James Mitchell and Mr. William Colee, used to run in the summer season three extra coaches a day, to and from London.

Mr. James Mitchell drove the yellow coach named the Accommodation, and horsed it with four greys to Ashington. The coach office was in South Street, where Mr. James Baker's boot shop was. Mr. William Colee drove the Sovereign coach, the office being on the site of Messers. Chaplin's grocery establishment, also in South Street.

South Street was indeed a busy place, with the coaches running in and out of the town in the season. One coach left South Street for London at ten o'clock, another at eleven, another at twelve, and another at one o'clock; and they ran from London at the same hours for Worthing. Three coaches ran from Brighton to Portsmouth every day and the same from Portsmouth to Brighton. They all changed horses at Worthing.

You could get to any part of the country then as well as you can now, but not so quickly or cheaply. The fare by coach from Worthing to London was fifteen shillings outside and a guinea inside.

In the season of 1839, a coach left Worthing for London at six o'clock in the morning and got back to Worthing at ten at night.

A few words about when the old coaches gave up running to London. Mr. William Colee gave up the Sovereign coach in '43, and went into partnership with Mr. James Mitchell, and the Accommodation coach ran till October '45. In November of that year the first train ran into Worthing.