

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-RO5

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## ROGERS. Edgar Stanley 89 High Street West, IRTHLINGBOROUGH

Reports of Edgar Stanley Rogers indicate that he was a highly intelligent man, well educated, and he traded as a Consulting Engineer. It is believed he came from London and first lived in the Broadway at Kettering but operated his business from Pytchley Road. During the 1914-18 War he was closely involved with aero engines and what he didn't know about them was probably not worth knowing.

Sometime in the mid 1920s Rogers moved to 89 High Street West, Irthlingborough - a large rambling house set in its own grounds. It was from this address that Edgar Rogers operated a bus, which he garaged in a lean-to shed attached to his home. A small workshop also formed part of the site. The vehicle Rogers owned was a hybrid REO which is said to have been constructed by the makers from sections of a variety of REO models. The chassis and radiator came from a Major whilst the vehicle's 6-cylinder engine was a special unit. The gear box and rear axle were both of Pullman design. When completed, the chassis was delivered to Edgar Rogers and a Metcalfe body was transferred from a four-cylinder REO Speed Wagon that was considered to be under-powered. The body had a particularly attractive interior which was constructed of polished mahogany and fitted with grey leather seats. The lights were in the form of a flower with open petals with the bulb in the centre and a brown lino covered floor completed the delightful interior of the saloon. The completed vehicle was registered RP 619 on 1st May 1925, painted in a shade of maroon known as purple-brown.

Well over 90% of Edgar Rogers' business comprised the carriage of private hire parties but he did have a contract to transport Rushden Town Football Club to all away matches. Rogers is also known to have operated occasional excursions from Irthlingborough to Wellingborough and Rushden on a speculative basis for ready cash.

Edgar Rogers, with his London connections, was probably well aware of the so-called "Pirate" operators in the Capital and the way in which some of them organised themselves. Rogers had a "grand plan" for his future in which he anticipated he would increase his fleet to six or seven vehicles, trading as "Super Saloons". He also planned to form an association of small independent operators to either pool their operations or to

Bygone Buses of Northamptonshire is compiled by R M Warwick, "Forestyn" 101 Broadway East, Northampton NN3 2PP, who would be pleased to be advised of any additional information relating to the above operator. The records of the PSV Circle and the Omnibus Society have been consulted extensively for this series and acknowledgement and thanks are due to these organisations.

ROGERS E S - IRTHLINGBOROUGH



*E S Rogers' REO - RP 619 - with Metcalfe bodywork being driven on private hire by George Robbins.*

act as a co-operative. Rogers envisaged the association having a central workshop for major repairs with himself as Engineer-in-Chief. All engineering parts and supplies would be bought in bulk to save money. In the event Edgar Rogers' grand plan did not get off the ground, probably because few of the one-man/one-bus operators could either afford an initial pooling fee or be convinced of the wisdom of the course of action propounded by Rogers. Had the plan succeeded, how interesting events might have been!

As far as can be ascertained, Rogers operated only the REO but it must remain a possibility that he also ran the REO Speed Wagon from which the Metcalfes body was taken for transfer to RP 619. Rogers probably ceased running late in 1928 and at this point RP 619 was advertised for sale and in liaison with a Mr Skinner - a Leicestershire based REO dealer - arrangements were made for Roger's vehicle to be demonstrated to William Rose of Holbeach St John's, Lincolnshire. RP 619 was taken to Bishops Road Car Park at Peterborough for the demonstration and this clinched the deal, with Rose taking it into his fleet and operating it until June 1932. Edgar Rogers eventually moved elsewhere in Irthlingborough and after suffering nervous strain he retired and eventually passed away.

### **Rolling Stock:**

RP 619 - REO - 120489 - Metcalfes - B20F - New 5/25. Withdrawn c 10/28 and sold through Skinner (Dealer), Leicestershire to W. Rose, Holbeach St John's. Last licensed 6/32.

*For his assistance with information for this paper I am grateful to George Robbins who at one time worked for Edgar Stanley Rogers and learned a great deal from him. Mr Robbins clearly remembers Rogers telling him "There are only two ways to do a job - right and wrong - and if you don't start right you won't finish right."*