

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

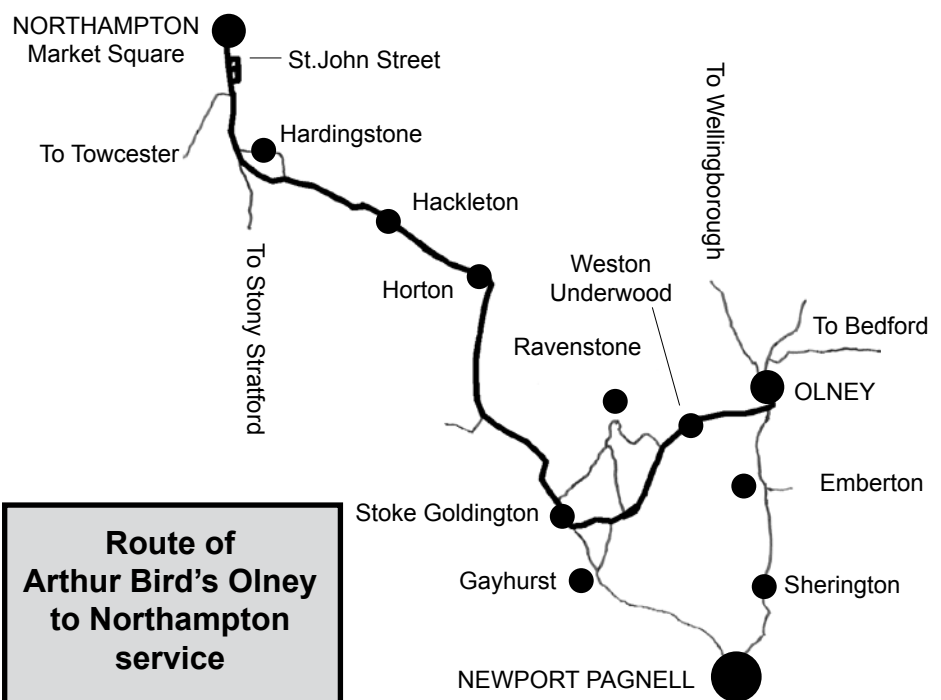
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## **BIRD. Arthur W.** **10/11 Foundry Street,** **NORTHAMPTON**

Arthur Bird started operating passenger vehicles in 1921 and his first Hackney Carriage licence was granted by Northampton Borough Council in October 1921. As far as it can be ascertained Bird's initial enterprise was to run excursions from Northampton Market Square, but by June 1922 he had applied for, and had been granted, licences for two charabancs to run from the Market Square or St. John Street. Private hire additionally formed a substantial part of Bird's business.

A significant development came in October 1922 when Arthur Bird made application to the Borough Council to open up a new bus service between "Olney, Hackleton, Stoke Goldington, Weston Underwood and Northampton", picking up and setting down at St. John Street. The buses already licensed to this operator were to be used on the service. The order in which the above villages were listed in the Watch Committee minutes was illogical and from Olney buses would have proceeded via Weston Underwood, Stoke Goldington, Horton and Hackleton to Northampton.

The licence for vehicles to stand in St. John Street for the Olney service was granted from 9th October 1922 and it is presumed the route commenced at this time. A further motor charabanc was licensed on 15th January 1923 and operations continued in this way until February 1926 when Messrs Allchin & Son of Northampton took over Arthur Bird's business.



Bygone Buses of Northamptonshire is compiled by R M Warwick, "Torestyn" 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.

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BIRD, Arthur W. - Northampton



*This advertisement was placed in the Northampton Daily Chronicle in November 1922 and rather strangely makes mention of A W Bird having no connection with any other firm of the same name. This must be a reference to Messrs G S & A Bird of 1 Abbey Street, Northampton who commenced business in the Autumn of 1922 - See paper NN-BI5.*

Details of Arthur Bird's fleet are sketchy but it is known that he operated a Straker-Squire, a Ford T, a Daimler saloon acquired from the Northampton Motor Omnibus Co Ltd and a Daimler charabanc registered XD 8239 that had originated in the London fleet of Samuelson's. Bird's livery was blue and cream and at one stage he named all his vehicles. The former Samuelson's charabanc was "Stella" whilst others were "Vera", "Gladys" and "Peggy". Vera, it is known, was a twenty seat Daimler which earlier in its life had been a London hearse. Both Gladys and Peggy were Ford Ts with Baico extensions, one of these being registered NH 3009 and the other probably R 4113.

Interestingly a gentleman by the name of Stevens drove the Ford T named Peggy and thereafter he was known as "Peggy" Stevens. He transferred from Bird's to Allchin's and later to United Counties, working as a driver for this latter firm until he retired and even at that late date was still known as "Peggy" Stevens.



This illustration shows XD 8239, a Daimler Y-type charabanc which Bird named Stella. It is seen here when owned by G E Richardson of Hartwell who retained the vehicle's name as others in his fleet similarly carried female names.

**BIRD. Arthur W. - Northampton**

**Rolling Stock:**

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
NH 1881	Straker-Squire Ford	T					?	2/21	by 2/26		No further owner	
	Daimler		4558		B		?	?	by 2/26	N.M.O.Co Ltd		
XD 8238	Daimler	Y			Ch27			4/24	by 2/26	Machell, SW9	Richardson, Hartwell	1
	Daimler				B20		?	?	by 2/26		Barnes, Foster's Booth	2
(R 4113?)	Ford T (Baico)				B14D		-/20	?	by 2/26		Surridge, Harpole (10/26)	3
(NH 3009?)	Ford T (Baico)	23hp			B14D		?	?	by 2/26		No further owner (Last licensed 1/37)	3

NOTES: 1 - Originally Samuelson, London - Named "Stella".  
 2 - Former London hearse.  
 3 - The two Ford Ts were named "Gladys" and "Peggy". One was registered NH3009 and the other may have been R4113. One vehicle was acquired in January 1923.

The operation of buses and charabancs formed only part of Arthur Bird's business. He was a dealer in all kinds of motor vehicles and hired out bicycles. In March 1921 he announced that he had no more motors for sale but that he would come up smiling when the slump was over! The very next month he had a King saloon, a Peugeot coupe, a 1915 Calcott, a Lacre ton van and a 30cwt army lorry in top hole condition for sale!

Below is a facsimile of one of Arthur Bird's business postcards.

