

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-ED1
Page 1

EDWARDS George Leonard


8 Lumber Lane,
PAULERSPURY

George Leonard Edwards was born on 20th January 1896 at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire and by the time he was seventeen he was driving a 1906 vintage Star car whilst employed as a gentleman's chauffeur by Sir Gilbert Greenall at Knipton, Grantham. During the first World War Lenny Edwards joined the Royal Army Service Corp and fought with Kitchener's First Army in France and Belgium. Demobilised on 9th May 1919, Lenny Edwards came to Paulerspury in Northamptonshire, a village three miles south-east of Towcester.

No. 8339 Motor Car Act, 1903.
COUNTY OF LEICESTER.

Licence to Drive a Motor Car or Motor Cycle.

George Leonard Edwards
of *Briary Cottage, Knipton, Grantham*
is hereby licensed to drive a MOTOR CAR or MOTOR CYCLE for the period
of Twelve Months from the *18th* day of *April* 191*3* until the
17th day of *April* 191*4* inclusive, the Fee of Five Shillings
having been paid.

 *Geo Rowlett*
Deputy Clerk to the Leicestershire County Council.

Facsimile of Lenny Edwards driving licence of April 1913.

Edwards immediately approached the Surplus Government Property Disposal Board with a view to purchasing an ex-War Department lorry. In fact he bought a solid-tyred Daimler CC registered LH 9347 which is said to have once been a London bus which was commandeered during the War and used by the Navy as a lorry. It was in lorry form that Lenny Edwards bought LH 9347 in November 1919 and he arranged for Mr A W Lepper, the Paulerspury village carpenter, to build an ash body to fit on top of the lorry sides to convert the Daimler into a bus. Bench seating was fitted to accommodate 24 passengers inside and two by the driver. Access was by way of a ladder at the rear of the vehicle,

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.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY

which was painted dark green all over apart from the window frames which were white. The part of the body built by A W Lepper was subsequently used as a garden shed and is still in existence, but not accessible, today (1990s).

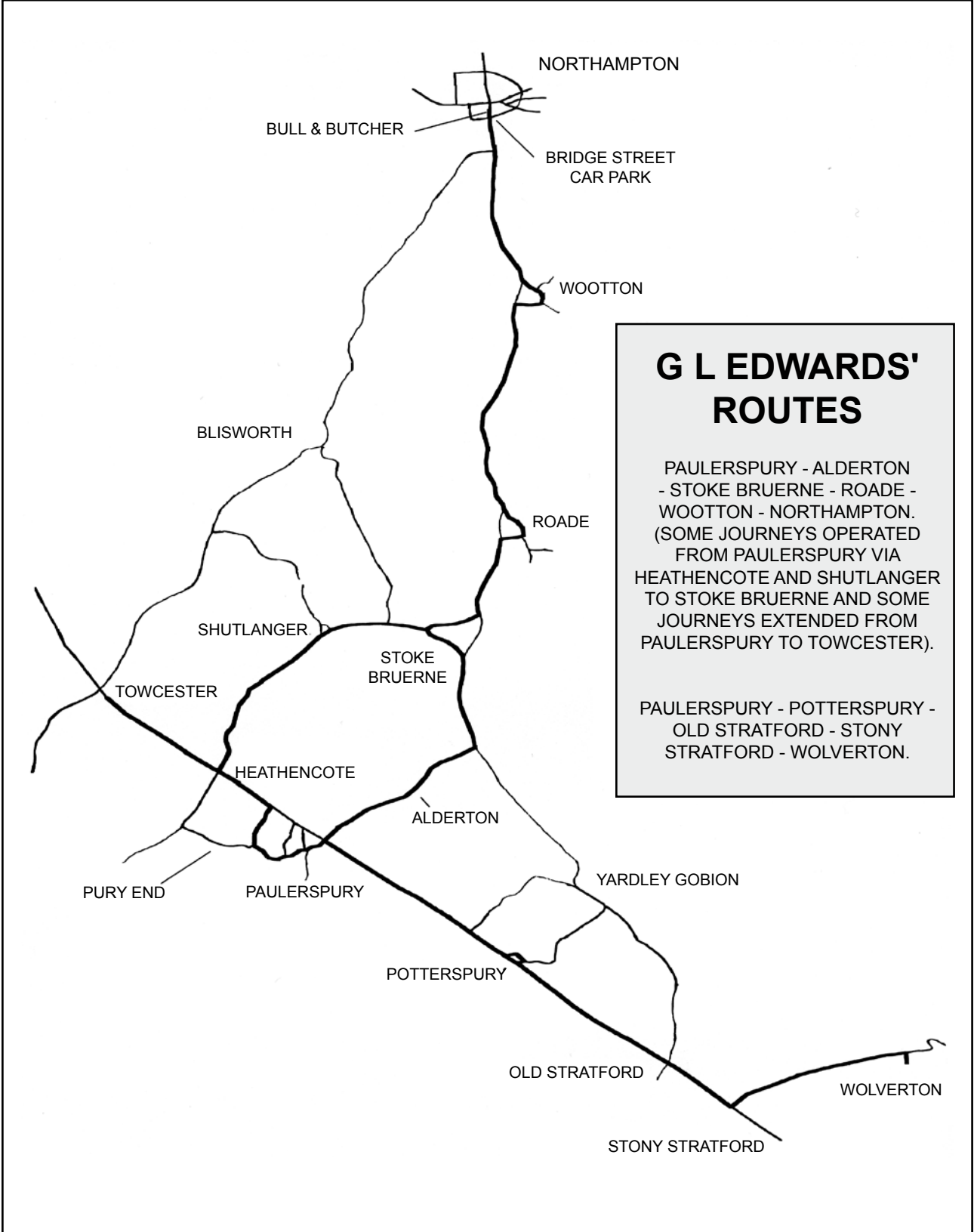


Lenny Edwards was photographed in 1919 standing proudly beside his Daimler CC registered LH 9347. The lorry format of the vehicle can be seen clearly, whilst the upper section of the bodywork was locally constructed by Mr Lepper.

From 1st August 1919 George Leonard Edwards inaugurated a bus service from Paulerspury to Northampton proceeding via Alderton, Stoke Bruerne, Roade and Wootton. The route terminated in Northampton on waste ground situated between Bridge Street and Cattle Market Road in an area officially known as the Municipal Car Park. As far as it can be ascertained the service was provided on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays only, from the beginning, and it remained much the same throughout the thirty-three years Lenny Edwards ran his bus. During the 1930s when Road Service Licensing was introduced, various special services to flower shows, Church fetes and a Paulerspury - Towcester Races service were applied for from the Traffic Commissioners and duly granted. In 1934 the main route was extended from Paulerspury to Towcester on a Saturday evening journey. The Northampton terminus was moved, probably early in 1938 to the Bull & Butcher Yard in Bridge Street. In addition to the bus route a parcels service was operated on Fridays between Paulerspury and Northampton.

Lenny Edwards's timetable, current in 1938, shows all journeys operating via Alderton whereas the proprietor stated that on Saturdays a diversion was taken via Shutlanger instead of Alderton. For a short time in the 1920s Lenny Edwards pioneered a Friday route from Paulerspury via A5 Watling Street to Stony Stratford and Wolverton Market but loadings were always disappointing and the service was short-lived.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY



G L EDWARDS' ROUTES

PAULERSPURY - ALDERTON - STOKE BRUERNE - ROADE - WOOTTON - NORTHAMPTON. (SOME JOURNEYS OPERATED FROM PAULERSPURY VIA HEATHENCOTE AND SHUTLANGER TO STOKE BRUERNE AND SOME JOURNEYS EXTENDED FROM PAULERSPURY TO TOWCESTER).

PAULERSPURY - POTTERS PURY - OLD STRATFORD - STONY STRATFORD - WOLVERTON.

George Leonard Edwards' stage-carriage routes.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY

In 1934 Mr Edwards applied to the Traffic Commissioners to operate a return facility from Paulerspury to Northampton on Fridays and after objection by the Railways the route was granted with the condition attached to the licence that only passengers travelling to either Paulerspury or Northampton were carried. Edward's timetable shows this operation had been withdrawn prior to 1938.

G. L. EDWARDS BUS TIME TABLE BETWEEN Paulerspury & Northampton (“Bull & Butcher” Bridge Street)

WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY.

Leave				Sats. only.
Paulerspury	9.45	1.15	5.0	7.45
Alderton	9.50	1.20	5.5	via
Stoke Bruerne	10.0	1.30	5.15	Towcester
George Hotel, Roade	10.5	1.35	5.20	8.0 p.m.
Crown Inn, Wootton	10.15	1.45	5.30	Fare 4d.
Northampton arrive	10.25	1.55	5.40	8.45
Leave				Sats. only.
Northampton	12.30	3.30	5.50	9.0 p.m.
Crown Inn, Wootton	12.40	3.40	6.0	9.10
George Hotel, Roade	12.50	3.50	6.10	9.20
Stoke Bruerne	12.55	3.55	6.15	9.25
Alderton	1.5	4.5	6.25	9.35
Paulerspury arrive	1.10	4.10	6.30	9.40 p.m.

Leave	SUNDAYS.		Fare	
Paulerspury	1.0	8.30		
Alderton	1.5	8.35	2d.	
Stoke Bruerne	1.15	8.45	4d.	
George Hotel, Roade	1.20	8.50	6d.	
Crown Inn, Wootton	1.30	9.0	9d	
Northampton arrive	1.40	9.10	1/-	
Leave				Return Fare
Northampton	1.45	9.15		
Crown Inn, Wootton	1.55	9.25	3d.	
George Hotel, Roade	2.5	9.35	6d.	
Stoke Bruerne	2.10	9.40	8d.	1/2
Alderton	2.20	9.50	10d.	1/7
Paulerspury arrive	2.25	9.55	1/-	1/10

Fridays Parcels Leave Bull & Butcher at 3-30 p.m.

Although every endeavour will be made to maintain a regular Service, the Proprietor will not hold himself responsible for any inconvenience caused by unavoidable delay.

VICTORY PRESS, N'PTON.



This timetable of G L Edward's Paulerspury - Northampton service was current in September 1938.

Lenny Edwards' Daimler gave good service and in the early years Leonard's mother acted as conductress until she retired in 1927. Thereafter Lenny's wife took over these duties and continued for twenty-five years until the business was sold. Bell Punch titled punch tickets were used for many years although stock tickets (i.e. without the operator's title) were more common in latter years.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY

The aging Daimler LH 9347 gave way on 25th March 1928 to a Morris Commercial registered RP 5639, fitted with an all-alloy body built by Messrs Short Bros of Rochester, who also had a depot at Bedford, and supplied through Messrs Groom's Garage of Towcester. This vehicle was licensed as a 20-seater but in fact had seats for only eighteen passengers. The livery was blue up to the waistband and white above.



Morris Commercial RP 5639 photographed at Lumber Lane, Paulerspury in the late 1920s. It was fitted with a Short body.

Strangely, Lenny Edwards retained the Morris Commercial for less than two years. It was replaced on 29th November 1929 by a twenty-seater blue and white G.M.C., the chassis of which was supplied through Marlborough Motors of St.Albans, but the manufacturer of the body is not known for certain. One suggestion is that Messrs Grose Ltd of Northampton was the builder and Grose certainly built the body of a consecutively registered G.M.C. but the bodies were not identical.



The only photograph of G.M.C. - RP 8162 to have come to light is this head-on view.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY

The G.M.C. met Lenny Edwards requirements for five years after which time he bought a 20-seater Dennis Ace which was licensed on 31st December 1934 and entered revenue earning service on 1st January 1935. This time Messrs Willowbrook of Loughborough built the body for the Dennis "Pig" and it was attractively painted in a livery of grey with white window surrounds and a green roof and waistband.



Dennis Ace NV 4727 was photographed with Lenny Edwards and his wife in the yard of the Bull & Butcher public house.

The Dennis Ace continued to operate the Northampton service until 1952 during which time the service remained virtually unaltered from its pre-War timings. By the early 1950s Mr and Mrs Edwards were wishing to take things a little easier and Lenny Edwards approached Arthur Basford of Basford's Coaches Ltd, Greens Norton with a view to selling the route. Arrangements were agreed and in November 1951 Arthur Basford applied to the Traffic Commissioners to renew Edward's licence with modification in Basford's Coaches name. In addition to the Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday operations Basford's ran the route on Tuesdays and a new licence was eventually granted to Basford's who took over on 3rd February 1952. The Dennis Ace was purchased by Basford's Coaches who used it only in emergencies until its Road Fund licence expired in September 1952.

EDWARDS G Leonard - PAULERSPURY

Throughout Lenny Edward's career he had also operated one or two private hire cars and he continued to run these after disposing of his bus service. In the early days he carried many loads of corn, furniture and other goods in the Daimler lorry/bus and on one occasion he conveyed a dead horse! Amongst Lenny Edwards cars were examples of Daimler, Fiat, Vauxhall and three Hillmans. Lenny Edwards probably held a record for reliability for it is said that in the thirty-three years he provided the bus service he failed to operate the route on only one occasion, when he was ill.

The author interviewed the late George Leonard Edwards many years ago and without his willing assistance this account would not have been possible.

Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
LH 9347	Daimler	CC			B26R		-/14	11/19	3/28	War Department		1
RP 5639	Morris		3770	Short	B20F		3/28	-	11/29	Supp. Groom, Towcester.		2
RP 8162	G.M.C.		1915241	Grose?	B20F		11/29	-	12/34	Supp. Marlborough Motors, St.Albans.		3
NV 4727	Dennis	Ace	200375	Willowbrook	B20F	2737	12/34	-	2/52	Supp Yeates, Loughborough.	Basford's Coaches, Greens Norton	4

- Notes: 1 - Said to have been a London bus originally. Commandeered by War Department and used as a lorry by the Navy. Top part of body built by A W Lepper, Paulerspury.
 2 - Licensed to seat 20 but fitted with seats for 18. Last licensed to B J Stanbridge, Luton 12/32.
 3 - Last licensed to S A Smith, Baginton 12/36.
 4 - Last licensed by Basford's Coaches Ltd., 9/52.