

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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BUFFALO MOTOR OMNIBUS Company Limited (177298) 31 Market Square, NORTHAMPTON

The rather grandiose title of the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd suggests that its Directors had aspirations for the Company to achieve an important place in the local passenger transport scene, yet at no stage did the firm have either the financial clout or management expertise to suggest it could survive in the harsh world of reality for more than a short time and, sadly, it didn't.

The Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd was incorporated on 15th October 1921 with a nominal capital of £5,000 divided into 5,000 Shares of £1 each. The leading light in the venture was a John William Crane who kept the Horse & Jockey public house in Silver Street, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire. The Company was formed as a "Private Company" within the meaning of the Companies Acts of 1908 to 1917 and its members were restricted to fifty.

Seven Directors were appointed and these were as follows:-

William Joseph Ainge, 13 Regent Square, Northampton - Boot Maker
- 50 Shares

Alfred Leonard Bishop, Yardley Hastings - Commercial Clerk
- 100 Shares

John William Crane, Silver Street, Newport Pagnell - Licensed Victualler
- 50 Shares

William Richard Harris, Irthlingborough - Motor Engineer - 50 Shares

Walter Page, Ivy House Farm, Holcot - Farmer - 100 Shares

Frederick George Rich, Olney - Licensed Victualler - 50 Shares

Charles Leonard Robinson, Colwyn Road, Northampton - Leather Merchant
- 50 Shares

The Company Secretary was Henry Musk Beattie, Solicitor, whose office at 31 Market Square, Northampton also served as the Company's Registered Office.

During the period 15th October to 31st October 1921, apart from the 450 Shares issued to the above mentioned seven Directors, a further 410 Shares were allotted to eight other Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire men and women. Of particular interest

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.

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: **BUFFALO M.O.Co Ltd., N'HAMPTON** :
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amongst these was Mr B W H Davis of Lavendon, who invested £20 in the Company, and was later to run buses in his own right. On 8th November 1921 John William Crane purchased another 10 Shares whilst a new subscriber bought 5 and, on 31st December 1921, a further 51 Shares were allotted. The final Share transaction took place on 3rd May 1922 when Walter Page unwisely sunk another £20 of his savings in the Company. At this date the Issued Capital was £946.

The service operated by the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd ran from Newport Pagnell via Olney, Lavendon and Bozeat to Wellingborough and it is understood that the buses were parked at the Horse & Jockey at Newport Pagnell although there is a possibility that at least one may have been kept at Little Irchester. The "Travel by Road" Guide for June 1922 shows the following timetable:

Wednesdays, Saturdays & Sundays

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Newport Pagnell	10.50am	2.50pm	6.40pm
Olney	11.20am	3.20pm	7.10pm
Lavendon	11.35am	3.35pm	7.25pm
Bozeat	11.45am	3.45pm	7.35pm
Wellingborough	12.10pm	4.10pm	8.00pm

*

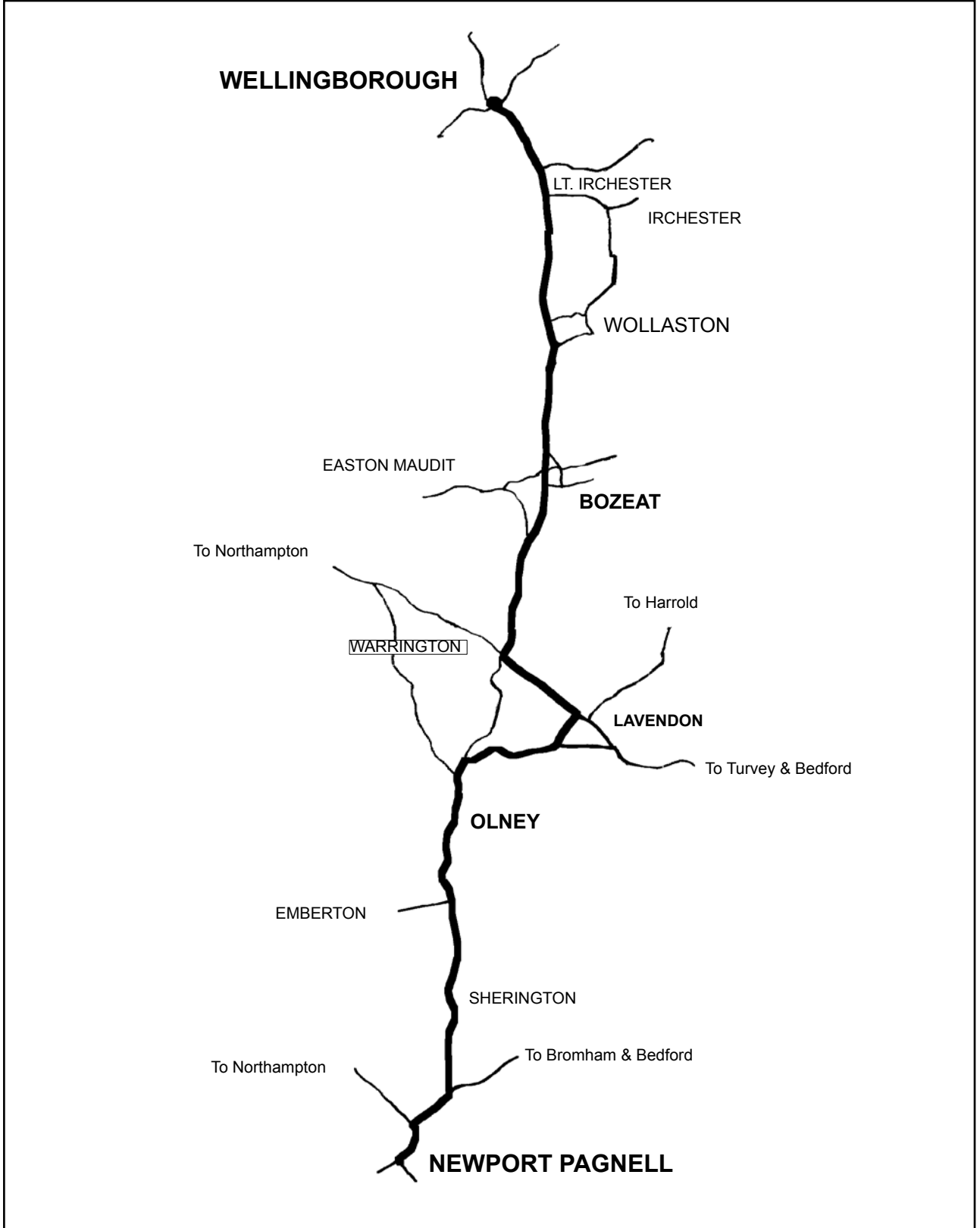
Wellingborough	1.20pm	4.50pm	8.50pm
Bozeat	1.45pm	5.15pm	9.15pm
Lavendon	1.55pm	5.25pm	9.25pm
Olney	2.10pm	5.40pm	9.40pm
Newport Pagnell	2.40pm	6.10pm	10.10pm

* Not Sundays

No doubt on other days of the week the vehicle(s) used by Buffalo were available for hire by private individuals.

The Buffalo Motor Omnibus Company Ltd is known to have operated four vehicles but the order in which they were acquired is not certain. Probably the first vehicle was a Ford T registered AC 9392. This was new in March 1921, being registered and supplied by the Rugby Autocar Company to an unknown operator. Buffalo probably bought this in October 1921 when it was just seven months old. It was a left-hand drive model carrying a 14-seater charabanc body with passenger access only from the nearside, with the exception of the front row of seats, where dual entrances were fitted.

In November 1921 a forty-seat Palladium registered BH 8089 was acquired and it is assumed this was a double-deck vehicle. Just a month later, another Palladium was bought and registered BD 694 and, curiously, this is recorded in registration notes as being last licensed in January 1922. Possibly it became the victim of an accident or was burnt out.



Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd route from Newport Pagnell to Wellingborough.

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This picture of the former Buffalo Motor Omnibus Company's Ford T registered AC 9392 was taken after the bus had been acquired by B W H Davis (depicted driving) and J A Bearman (standing by Davis's Motor Shop door).

It is also known that Buffalo, using an address at 9 Castle Street, Northampton owned a Straker-Squire saloon bus registered NH 2297 which almost certainly came from the Midland Motor Bus Company of Northampton.

It is interesting to note that the General Purposes Committee of Wellingborough Urban District Council considered a report by the Police, at their meeting of 25th January 1922, that an omnibus belonging to the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Company had not got the Council's licence number painted on it. It was resolved by the Committee that the Council inform the Company that unless the number was painted on within three days, proceedings would be taken.

Newport Pagnell could not have been an ideal town from which to operate buses in the 1921/2 period as the National Omnibus & Transport Co Ltd had routes to Olney, Bedford and Stony Stratford sewn up pretty well and various Northampton based firms of some years standing had the Northampton road covered. The Newport Pagnell to Wellingborough route was rural and rather tenuous, there never having been much affinity between the terminal towns likely to attract a lot of through traffic.

Evidently the firm did not prosper and the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd held an Extraordinary General Meeting of its Members at its Registered Office on 29th August

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1922 when the following Special resolutions were passed and confirmed at a subsequent E.G.M. on 14th September 1922:-

1. That the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd be wound up voluntarily and
2. That Mr Henry Musk Beattie is hereby appointed Liquidator.

The Company was duly dissolved on 24th February 1923.

Although the Buffalo Motor Omnibus Co Ltd was in business for less than a year it seems that on ceasing to trade at the end of August or early September 1922, Shareholders B W H Davis and J A Bearman formed a partnership based at Lavendon to operate the Lavendon to Wellingborough section of route. These gentlemen acquired Buffalo's Ford T - AC 9392, presumably bought from the Liquidator, and continued running the route.

In the interim period it is clear that Buffalo's Director John William Crane harboured ideas of expansion in the bus business and readers are referred to paper NN-CR3 for details of this gentleman's proposed activities. In addition, Shareholder William Joseph Ainge was concurrently operating his own charabanc in Northampton - see paper NN-AI1.

Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
AC 9392	Ford	T	3204097		Chara 14		3/21	10/21?	9/22		Davis & Bearman, Lavendon	1
BH 8089	Palladium		YE20418		O22/18R?		11/21	-	9/22?			
BD 694	Palladium		YEC20493		?		12/21	-	1/22			2
NH 2297	Straker-Squire	3t 12c			B		9/19	c-/21	9/22	Midland Motor Bus Co Northampton		3

Notes: 1 - AC 9392 last licensed 3/28 to Benwell, Prittlewell, Essex.
 2 - BD 694 last licensed 14/1/22.
 3 - NH 2297 last owned by Mrs C Folbigg, Buckden and last licensed as a goods vehicle 11/30. Scrapped 12/34.