

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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PECK, Arthur & Sons

later P.X. Ltd (294846)

WOLLASTON and from 1923

RUSHDEN

Arthur Peck started in business in 1896 when he bought an existing carriers business based in Wollaston. Initially he ran services twice a week to Wellingborough and similarly to Northampton. At this stage Arthur's motive power comprised a single horse-drawn brake, on which passengers as well as parcels were carried to Wellingborough and its railway stations. In due course Arthur Peck became a jobmaster and in 1913 moved to 1 Carnegie Street, Rushden and took over the business of a carrier running to Kettering and Northampton. It was at this stage that Arthur bought his first motor lorry which was a 1913 chain-driven Lacre registered NH 1017 which probably passed to Arthur Peck in June 1914 at which time there is evidence to suggest he was in partnership with a Mr Clark.

Rushden was at the centre of the boot and shoe industry and during the first World War there was an insatiable demand for boots for the armed forces. This in turn led to Arthur Peck inaugurating journeys from Northamptonshire to London to collect hides for the Leicester and Northants boot trade and in April 1918 a twice weekly service from Rushden to Leicester was commenced. Apart from the Lacre, Arthur Peck's earliest motor vehicles are unknown but towards the end of May 1918 he bought a 4-ton Straker-Squire lorry which was painted blue and lined out in yellow. This machine, registered BD 3606, was operated for two years prior to being sold to Messrs Arch, Beesley & Co of Market Harborough who, interestingly, fitted it with a bus body for use on their Market Harborough & District Motor Traction Co Ltd services. Other of Arthur Peck's early lorries were BD 4118 and BD 4862, both 36-40hp Leylands new in 1920 and painted red with yellow linings.

Arthur Peck had four sons, each of whom joined the family business as it expanded and in 1927 a new depot was built at Washbrook Road, Rushden, a site expanded considerably in later years. Growth continued for Peck's Transport and on 8th December 1934 the business was incorporated as a limited company entitled P.X. Ltd. Within a couple of years the firm was operating forty lorries on daily services to London and Suburbs, the Home Counties, Leicestershire, Northants, Bedfordshire and the East Midlands generally. In addition a co-ordinated service was operated to the South Coast

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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and agreements with other reputable firms enabled consignments of any size to be received for delivery to all parts of the country. Night Trunk Services were a special feature of P.X. Ltd. Further growth of P.X. Ltd is beyond the scope of this paper but the firm became a nationally important business which opened depots at such places as Leicester, Manchester, Northampton and Birmingham. After the War acquisitions in East Anglia brought about the formation of P.X. (Eastern) Ltd whilst the original company became P.X. (Carriers) Ltd. Inevitably, when carrier's businesses were Nationalised under the 1947 Transport Act. the P.X. companies, operating around two hundred vehicles and a hundred trailers, were incorporated within the British Road Services' network.

So far no mention has been made of the Peck's operating buses but, for the 1920 Season, passenger traffic was carried. In fact two of Arthur Peck's lorries were altered to accommodate seating and had wooden steps added at the rear and canvas hoods placed overhead. These were used in the evenings, if the weather was fine, for local trips around Rushden and for a Saturday service from Rushden to Bedford. On other occasions these vehicles ventured further afield to such places as Hunstanton and Skegness. Unfortunately it has not been established which of Peck's lorries were converted and licenced also as public conveyances. As far as it can be ascertained Peck's operated excursions only during 1920.



Instead of a bus, a P.X. articulated pantechnicon is illustrated. The Bedford tractor unit was registered NV 2735 on 31st July 1933 and the trailer was built by Grose Ltd of Northampton.