

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-LA8
Page 1

LAWMAN. Jesse

Well Street, FINEDON

The story leading to the formation of Lawman's Coaches of Finedon goes back to 1916 when Jesse Lawman was born on 22nd July. On leaving school in 1930, Jesse joined Messrs. Shelton & Amey's Garage in Wellingborough Road, Finedon, where he trained as a mechanic. Having learnt the trade Jesse transferred to Central Motors at Kettering and, after a year or two, to John White's Shoe Factory at Higham Ferrers, where he drove lorries and looked after the mechanical needs of White's fleet. Early in the War, Jesse Lawman joined Brooklands Aviation at their Sywell factory where he spent a number of years working on aero engines.

At the conclusion of hostilities Jesse became self-employed and started a taxi business from premises in Ivy Lane, Finedon. In 1947 he transferred to a site in Well Street which comprised a yard and a collection of farm buildings which could be used as garages. The taxi business prospered and Jesse Lawman's next move was to purchase a second-hand coach in 1948, registered CS 4012. This vehicle was a Bedford WTB equipped with twenty-five seat Duple bodywork. It had been registered new to Johnathan Stewart of Saltcoats who was one of the people participating in the A1 Service co-operative in south-west Scotland. About a year later, another Bedford but this time an OWB model, was acquired in June 1949 from T A Barker & Son of Wellingborough, who replaced his coach with a brand new model. Curiously, this second Bedford also originated from Scotland and was registered ACS 978, seating twenty-eight passengers in its S.M.T. body.

The next development in the Lawman business came early in 1950 when Jesse bought the Vulcan coach registered ERP 969 from T A Barker & Son of Wellingborough, when this firm ceased operating its coach. The Vulcan was not very old, having been registered as recently as 18th June 1949 and it carried a twenty-nine seat coach body built by the Kettering firm of A E Smith & Son.

Jesse Lawman was so pleased with his latest acquisition that he ordered another similar coach body from Smith's, but this time fitted to a Seddon chassis. The coach was registered FRP 71 on 5th April 1950 and it seated thirty-one passengers. In the way described above, Jesse Lawman built up his fleet to four coaches within a couple of years and he adopted a livery of maroon and cream for his fleet, although it is possible that CS 4012 was painted dark blue with even darker blue reliefs.

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.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-LA8

Page 2

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON



Jesse Lawman's first coach was CS 4012, a 1936 Bedford WTB with 25-seat Duple bodywork. It was photographed at the Well Street premises in 1951.



Vulcan 6PF registered ERP 969 with A E Smith of Kettering coachwork was bought secondhand by Jesse Lawman from Barker & Son of Wellingborough.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-LA8
Page 3

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON



Purchased brand new by Jesse Lawman was FRP 71, which was a Seddon MkIV with 31-seat coachwork by Messrs. A E Smith & Son of Kettering.



A rear view of Seddon FRP 71 photographed when new.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-LA8

Page 4

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON



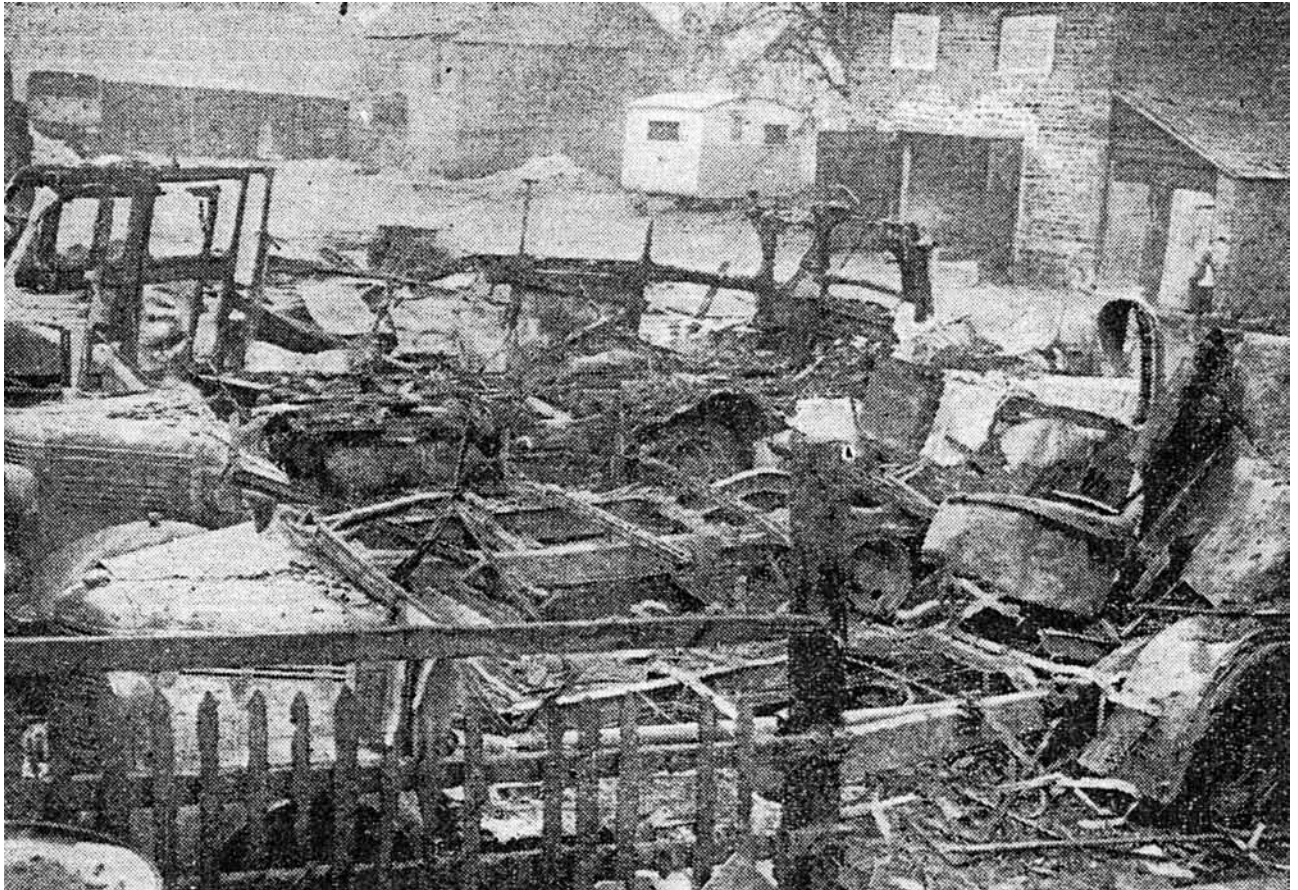
The interior of the Smith bodied Seddon registered FRP 71.



A general view of Jesse Lawman's Well Street operating base showing some of the separate farm buildings which were each used for garaging different classes of vehicle. Again FRP 71 features in this picture.

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON

In March 1952 disaster struck. Jesse Lawman returned to his garage on Saturday evening, 1st March, after using one of the Bedford's - probably CS 4012 - on a private hire. After refuelling the vehicle Jesse drove the coach into its allotted parking space in the garage when he saw a flash reflected in an adjoining coach. Evidently the resulting fire spread quickly and Jesse Lawman was lucky to escape for as he scrambled clear, he was almost trapped by the flames which shot from under the coach. After phoning the Wellingborough fire brigade Jesse Lawman gave precedence to driving clear the parked vehicles belonging to owners other than himself, that were allowed to garage at Well Street. Jesse was, however, able to save the Vulcan coach which was parked at the end of the line and separated from the fire by the Seddon. He had just got it clear when the garage roof collapsed. The two Bedfords and the new Seddon were all destroyed although the chassis of the Seddon was subsequently salvaged.



Devastation at Well Street Garage, Finedon. In the foreground are the remains of Bedford ACS 978 and behind is the wreckage of Bedford CS 4012, the bus in which it is believed the fire started. Behind CS 4012 is all that was left of Seddon FRP 71.

(Photo courtesy Kettering Leader)

After the fire, a second-hand Bedford was quickly drafted into the fleet to assist the firm in overcoming its immediate difficulties in covering pre-booked private hires. The vehicle in question was registered AUX 776 and it seated twenty-six passengers in its Duple body.

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON

It was not, apparently, in particularly good condition, but in the circumstances even this emergency stop-gap purchase was most welcome. At the same time Jesse Lawman took the opportunity to buy a second-hand Dennis Lancet coach which was being disposed of by Messrs. Hayfield Bros. of Newport Pagnell. This was EKV 365 and it had a Dennis body which seated thirty-two passengers. The acquisition of AUX 776 and EKV 365 brought the fleet strength back up to three coaches as, it will be recalled, Vulcan ERP 969 had survived the flames that destroyed the garage.



Dennis Lancet EKV 365 was photographed when in the ownership of Hayfield Bros. of Newport Pagnell. However, it gave Jesse Lawman four years of good service before it was sold.

In order to re-establish himself as an operator of four coaches, which number Jesse Lawman felt was about the right for his business, he placed an order for a brand new Bedford SB coach. To fit onto this chassis, a Duple Vega body was specified which accommodated thirty-seven passengers. The vehicle came into Jesse Lawman's possession late in 1952 and it was allocated the registration number HBD 909. It proved to be Jesse's last acquisition of a new vehicle and it was adorned in the firm's maroon and cream colours.

It will be recalled that Bedford WTB/Duple AUX 776 was not a front line coach and in 1954 Jesse Lawman took the opportunity to buy a 1948 Bedford OB from Messrs. York Bros.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-LA8

Page 7

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON

of Northampton when that firm disposed of EBD 300. This coach carried a standard Duple Vista twenty-nine seat body and it remained in York's dark and light blue livery throughout the time it was operated by Lawman. EBD 300's original ship name of "H.M.S. Shropshire" was replaced by the legend "Overland Pullman" which seemed a somewhat extravagant claim when applied to a Bedford OB.



The last new coach to be purchased by Jesse Lawman was this attractive Duple Vega bodied Bedford SB registered HBD 909. (Photograph courtesy of D M Bailey).



This Bedford OB with Duple Vista bodywork was acquired from Messrs York Bros. of Northampton in 1954. (Photograph courtesy of D M Bailey).

LAWMAN. Jesse - FINEDON

Throughout the period Jesse Lawman operated coaches he undertook private hire work only and operated no regular services and held no excursion and tours licences. He did operate school swimming contracts from a number of local schools, taking children to Wilby Lido for their swimming lessons. On Saturdays he often hired coaches to United Counties for duplication on that Company's seasonal coastal services. In addition to coaches, the operation of taxis and private hire cars formed part of Jesse Lawman's business and he also undertook general vehicle repairs and retailed petrol.

Jesse, whose home address was 44 Cromer Road, Finedon, continued in business with his four coaches until about 1956 when the Dennis was declared redundant and it ended up with a Showman. In 1959 Jesse ceased to trade and later on he went to work for Messrs. York Bros. of Northampton and later still for Messrs. Shelton-Orsborn of Wollaston before he was tragically killed in a motor accident.

Thanks are due to Mrs. Joan Lawman and her eldest son, Nigel, for their recollections of Jesse Lawman's coaching activities.

Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
CS 4012	Bedford	WTB	110605	Duple	C25F	7243	6/36	c-/48	3/52	T H Smith, Groby	Destroyed by fire	1
ACS 978	Bedford	OWB	10787	Hendonian S.M.T.	C28F	-	-/42	6/49	3/52	T A Barker & Son, Wellingborough	Destroyed by fire	2
ERP 969	Vulcan	6PF	4569	Smith	FC29F	-	6/49	-/50	-/59	T A Barker & Son, Wellingborough	/R.D.Cook, Woodford Gn.	3
FRP 71	Seddon	MkIV	2942	Smith	FC31F	-	4/50	-	3/52		Destroyed by fire	
AUX 776	Bedford	WTB2	14167	Duple	C26F		-/39	c3/52	c-/53	Blueline, Dagenham		
EKX 365	Dennis	Lancet	175352	Dennis	C32F		-/38	c3/52	c-/56	Hayfield Bros., Newport Pagnell	Showman	
HBD 909	Bedford	SB	9832	Duple Vega	C37F	1011/54 46571	-/52	-	-/59		/E Shaw, Maxey	
EBD 300	Bedford	OB	69266	Duple Vista	C29F		1/48	-/54	-/59	York Bros. (Northampton)Ltd.	/E Shaw, Maxey	

Notes: 1 - Originally owned by J Stewart, Saltcoats (A1 Service).
 2 - Originally owned by Western S.M.T., Kilmarnock.
 3 - Chassis salvaged and rebuilt as a lorry.