

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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LAW. Andrew & Sons (later trading as J, M & A Law) Bridle Path, BRAFIELD

It was in 1864 that Andrew Law entered this world and later in life he operated a carrier's business from his home in Bridle Path, Brafield, using horse-drawn transport. Andrew and his wife Mary had two sons, the eldest being James and the youngest Charles William. For some reason Andrew was always known as "Tan" Law and his sons as "Jim" and "Bill".

Tan Law's first motor vehicle was a model T Ford which became registered BD 5247 on 10th January 1921. Tan bought only the chassis and mounted the box van body from his horse-drawn carrier's vehicle onto the Ford chassis. After operating this vehicle for a few months Tan Law approached Ben Hasker of Northampton to build a charabanc body to fit the Ford T chassis, so that it could be used for both passenger and goods work as the occasion demanded.



Andrew Law's first motorised passenger vehicle was this model T Ford registered BD 5247 in January 1921 and bodied by Ben Hasker of Northampton.

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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During 1921 Tan's youngest son Bill joined his father in the business and he obtained a Hackney Carriage driver's licence on 16th January 1922. In the mean time Tan Law had applied to Northampton Borough Council Watch Committee to be granted a Hackney Carriage Licence to pick up and set down passengers in Derngate, Northampton and this was granted with effect from 24th February 1922. It can be assumed that it was at about this time that Tan and Bill Law commenced a passenger service between Brafield and Northampton on Wednesday and Saturday market days only.

Tan Law's eldest son, Jim, also joined the business at some stage prior to 1925 and on 16th April 1924 a Fiat saloon bus with twenty-seater Hasker body was purchased and registered BD 9150. This vehicle carried the name "Mary" on its sides and subsequently there was usually a "Mary" in the fleet, named after Andrew Law's wife. In 1925 a REO was added to the vehicle stock and this was again believed to have carried a 20-seater Hasker body. It was registered NH 6382 in June 1925 and was named "Renown".



Not much of the Hasker bodied Fiat - BD 9150 - can be seen on this photograph but it is better than nothing at all. The young girls are Molly and Maud Law, daughters of William Law.

It was probably when the Fiat was acquired that the Laws decided to operate workers' journeys from Brafield to Northampton and in 1925 consultations took place with Charles Knight of Denton with a view to starting the route from this latter village. As Knights' were not contemplating a workers' service at this stage, Laws' peak time route was operated from Denton.

In 1925 Bill Law and his wife Maud moved from Brafield to Centre View, Station Road, Cogenhoe but sadly, just a year later, Bill died at the age of thirty-seven and his share of

LAW. A & Sons, BRAFIELD

the business passed to his wife Maud. Although the business originated and traded in the father's name - A Law - it seems that when sons Bill and Jim joined, a formal partnership was not established. Instead, the three acted more as a co-operative, with each partner buying vehicles either singly or jointly and each operating parts of the local service timetable and retaining the revenue from their labours. After Bill's death, Maud ran her husband's former share and Maud's brother, Frank Gibson, drove for the firm. In later years the business traded as J, M and A Law.

With regard to the local bus service, the original operation was from Grendon, Castle Ashby, Whiston, Cogenhoe, Brafield, Little and Great Houghton to Northampton. The first terminal in Northampton was the Black Boy Hotel yard in Dychurch Lane, the bus also picking up in Derngate. The terminal was later moved to Derngate but in 1928 the Council altered the stopping point to be Becket's Well in Bedford Road. By the summer of 1927, at the latest, the service has been pushed further east to serve the villages of Easton Maudit and Bozeat. At December 1930 the timetable shown pages 5 and 6 was in operation when, particularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays, a quite intensive service was being provided on this rural route, taking three vehicles to cover the operations. It will be seen that the terminus in Northampton at this time was Cheyne Walk, presumably near its junction with the Bedford Road.

Returning to the subject of vehicles, the next acquisition is likely to have been a Graham Bros registered RP 2081 on 19th January 1926. At an unknown date a second-hand Dodge registered XN 9692 was acquired and this event may have happened during 1926. On 17th



January 1927 a Laffly (French) single-deck twenty-seater bus was bought and registered RP 3662. This latter vehicle, a make rarely found in Northamptonshire, carried the name "Queen of the Road" on its sides.

Left: This bus is believed to have been the second-hand Dodge acquired by the Law's and registered XN 9692.

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An unidentified Law's bus. Mary Law is the lady in the white blouse in the back row, left of the rear nearside window.



This photograph depicts Jim Law standing to the nearside of his Ford timber lorry NV 3400. To the left of the picture is a 19th century railway carriage used by Jim Law.

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LAW'S MOTOR BUS SERVICE between BOZEAT GRENDON, BRAFIELD, & NORTHAMPTON

LEAVE	MON., TUES., THUR., & FRI.					SUNDAYS.									
	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.				
Bozeat	9 10	—	2 15	—	—	11 20	—	1 25	2 45	—	7 35	8 25	—	—	
Easton Maudit ...	9 15	—	2 20	—	—	11 25	—	1 30	2 50	—	7 40	8 30	—	—	
Grendon	9 20	—	2 25	6 07	55	11 30	—	1 35	2 55	—	7 45	8 35	—	—	
Castle Ahsby	9 25	—	2 30	6 58	0	11 35	—	1 40	3 0	—	7 50	8 40	—	—	
Whiston	9 30	—	2 35	6 10	8 5	11 40	—	1 45	3 5	—	7 55	8 45	—	—	
Cogenhoe	9 35	12 30	2 40	6 15	8 10	11 45	—	1 50	3 10	—	8 0	8 50	—	—	
Brafield	9 40	12 35	2 45	6 20	8 15	11 50	1 20	1 55	3 15	5 30	8 5	9 0	9 10	—	
Little Houghton ..	9 45	12 40	2 50	6 25	8 20	11 55	1 25	2 0	3 20	5 35	8 10	9 5	9 15	—	
Great Houghton ..	9 48	12 45	2 55	6 28	8 23	12 0	1 28	2 3	3 23	5 38	8 15	9 15	9 20	—	
Northampton ar.	9 55	12 53	3 5	6 35	8 25	12 5	1 35	2 10	3 30	5 45	8 20	9 20	9 30	—	
Northampton ...	8 20	10 35	1 20	4 20	7 58	45	10 30	12 10	1 50	2 30	3 35	6 25	8 20	9 25	10 15
Great Houghton	8 27	10 42	1 27	4 27	7 10	52	10 35	12 17	1 52	2 37	3 42	6 27	8 27	9 32	10 22
Little Houghton	8 30	10 45	1 30	4 30	7 15	55	10 40	12 20	2 0	2 40	3 45	6 30	8 30	9 35	10 25
Brafield	8 35	10 50	1 35	4 35	7 20	9 10	10 45	12 25	2 5	2 45	3 50	6 35	8 40	9 40	10 30
Cogenhoe	8 40	10 57	1 40	4 40	7 25	9 15	10 50	1 0	2 10	2 50	—	6 40	—	9 45	—
Whiston	8 44	—	1 45	4 45	7 30	9 10	10 55	—	2 15	2 55	—	6 45	—	9 50	—
Castle Ashby ...	8 50	—	1 50	4 50	7 35	9 15	11 0	—	2 20	3 0	—	6 50	—	9 55	—
Grendon	8 55	—	1 55	—	7 40	9 20	11 5	—	1 10	2 25	3 5	—	6 55	—	10 0
Easton Maudit	9 0	—	2 0	—	—	9 25	11 10	—	—	2 30	3 10	—	7 0	—	10 5
Bozeat	9 5	—	2 5	—	—	9 30	11 15	—	1 20	2 35	3 15	—	7 5	—	10 15

M. LAW'S MOTOR BUS SERVICE between BOZEAT, GRENDON, BRAFIELD, AND NORTHAMPTON.

Passengers taken up and set down at Cheyne Walk until further notice.

WEDNESDAYS.

LEAVE	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.		
Bozeat ...	—	9 5	—	—	11 5	—	—	1 5	—	2 40	3 35	—	—	—	7 25	—	
E. Maudit	—	9 10	—	—	11 10	—	—	1 10	—	2 45	3 40	—	—	—	7 30	—	
Grendon ...	—	9 15	—	—	11 15	12 5	—	1 15	—	2 50	3 45	—	—	6 07	7 35	8 30	
C. Ashby	—	—	9 35	—	11 20	12 10	—	1 20	—	2 55	3 50	—	—	6 57	7 40	8 35	
Whiston ...	—	9 25	9 40	—	11 25	12 15	—	1 25	—	3 0	3 55	—	—	6 10	7 45	8 40	
Cogenhoe	—	9 30	9 45	—	11 30	12 20	—	1 30	—	3 5	4 0	—	5 06	15	7 50	8 45	
Brafield ...	9 20	9 35	9 50	10 35	11 35	12 25	1 10	1 35	2 15	3 10	4 5	5 4	20	5 6	30	7 55	8 50
L. Ho'ton	9 25	9 40	9 55	10 40	11 40	12 30	1 15	1 40	2 20	3 15	4 10	4 25	5 10	6 35	8 0	8 55	
G. Ho'ton	9 30	9 43	9 58	10 43	11 43	12 33	1 18	1 43	2 23	3 20	4 13	4 28	5 13	6 40	8 5	9 0	
N'ton ar.	9 40	9 50	10 5	10 50	11 50	12 40	1 25	1 50	2 30	3 25	4 20	4 35	5 20	6 45	8 10	9 5	
Northampton	9 45	10 15	10 55	11 25	12 15	12 30	1 0	1 50	2 45	3 25	4 20	4 30	6 30	7 5	8 45	—	
G. Houghton	9 50	10 25	11 5	11 35	12 22	12 37	1 7	1 55	2 52	3 32	4 25	4 40	6 37	7 10	8 52	—	
L. Houghton	9 55	10 30	11 10	12 40	12 25	12 40	1 10	2 0	2 55	3 35	4 30	4 45	6 40	7 15	8 55	—	
Brafield	10 0	10 35	11 15	12 45	12 30	12 45	1 15	2 5	3 0	4 0	4 35	4 50	6 45	7 20	9 0	—	
Cogenhoe	—	10 40	—	—	11 50	12 35	—	—	1 20	2 10	3 5	—	4 40	5 50	7 25	9 5	
Whiston	—	10 45	—	—	11 55	12 40	—	—	2 15	3 10	—	4 45	—	6 55	7 30	9 10	
Castle Ashby	—	10 50	—	—	12 0	12 45	—	—	2 20	3 15	—	4 50	—	7 0	7 35	9 15	
Grendon	—	10 55	—	—	12 5	12 50	—	—	2 25	3 20	—	4 55	—	7 5	7 40	9 20	
Easton Maudit	—	11 0	—	—	12 55	—	—	—	2 30	3 25	—	—	—	7 10	7 45	9 25	
Bozeat	—	11 5	—	—	1 0	—	—	—	2 35	3 30	—	—	—	7 15	7 50	9 30	

Late Bus leaves Northampton at 10-30 p.m.

Timetable for December 1930 taken from Mark's ABC Railway and Bus Guide for Northampton & District.

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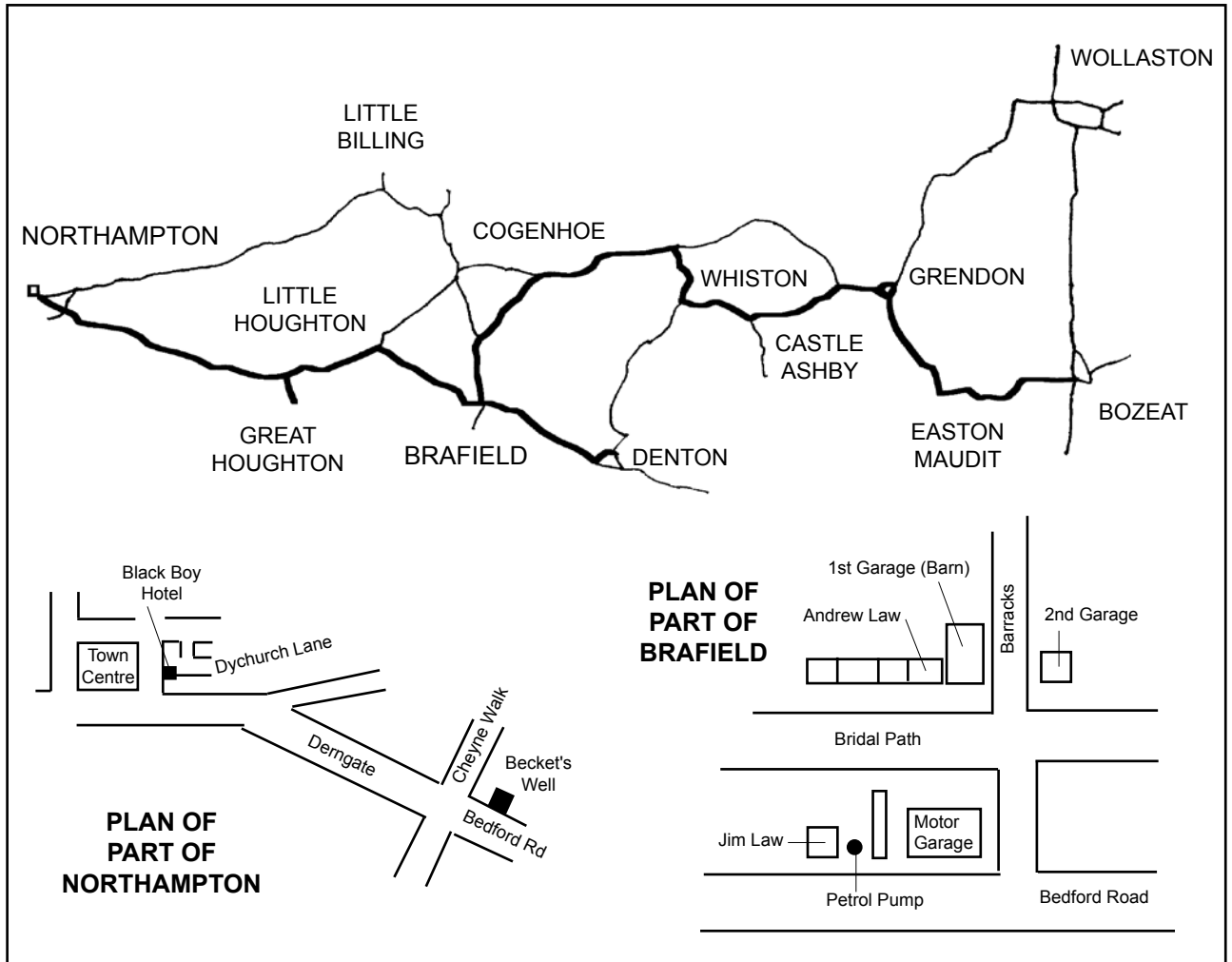
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M. LAW'S—NORTHAMPTON AND BOZEAT. SATURDAYS.

Bozeat	—	8 55	—	—	10 45	—	—	1 10	—			
East. Maudit	—	9 0	—	—	10 50	—	—	1 15	—			
Grendon	—	9 5	—	—	10 55	—	12 45	1 20	—			
Castle Ashby	—	—	9 35	—	11 0	—	12 50	1 25	—			
Whiston	—	9 15	9 40	—	11 5	—	12 55	1 30	—			
Cogenhoe	—	9 20	9 45	—	11 10	—	1 0	1 35	—			
Brafield	9 10	9 24	9 50	10 35	11 15	12 35	1 5	1 40	—			
L. Houghton	9 15	9 27	9 55	10 40	11 20	12 40	1 10	1 45	—			
G. Houghton	9 18	9 30	9 58	10 43	11 25	12 45	1 15	1 48	—			
Northampton	9 40	9 45	10 10	10 10	48 11	35 12	50 1	20 1	55 —			
Bozeat	—	2 40	—	3 35	—	—	4 45	6 0	7 20	8 20	9 20	—
E. Mdit	—	2 45	—	3 40	—	—	4 50	6 5	7 25	8 25	9 25	—
Grend n	—	2 50	—	3 45	—	—	4 55	6 10	7 30	8 30	9 30	9 35
Cas. Ash	1 35	2 55	—	3 50	—	—	5 06	15 7	35 8	35 9	35 9	40
Whist'n	1 40	3 0	—	3 55	—	—	5 56	20 7	40 8	40 9	40 9	45
Cognh'e	1 45	3 5	—	4 0	—	5 05	10 6	25 7	45 8	45 9	45 9	50
Brafield	1 50	3 10	3 04	5 4	30 5	5 5	15 6	30 7	50 8	50 9	50 9	55
Lit. Ho.	1 55	3 15	3 54	10 4	35 5	10 5	20 6	35 7	55 8	55 9	55 10	0
Gt. Ho.	2 03	20 3	10 4	13 4	38 5	15 5	23 6	40 7	58 9	0 10	0 10	5
N'ton...	2 10	3 25	3 15	4 20	4 45	5 25	5 30	6 45	8 10	9 5	10 10	10 15
Northampton	9 55	10 15	11 15	12 15	12 25	1 0	1 45	2 30	2 45	2 30	2 45	—
G. Houghton	10 0	10 22	11 22	12 20	12 28	1 7	1 50	2 37	2 52	2 37	2 52	—
L. Houghton	10 5	10 25	11 25	12 25	12 32	1 12	1 55	2 40	2 55	2 40	2 55	—
Brafield	10 10	10 30	11 30	12 30	12 40	1 17	2 0	2 45	3 0	2 45	3 0	—
Cogenhoe	10 15	—	11 35	—	—	—	1 22	2 5	—	—	3 5	—
Whiston	10 20	—	11 40	—	12 50	1 27	2 10	—	3 10	—	3 10	—
Castle Ashby	10 25	—	11 45	—	12 55	1 32	2 15	—	3 15	—	3 15	—
Grendon	10 30	—	11 50	—	1 0	—	2 20	—	3 20	—	3 20	—
East. Maudit	10 35	—	—	—	1 5	—	2 25	—	3 25	—	3 25	—
Bozeat	10 40	—	—	—	1 10	—	2 30	—	3 30	—	3 30	—
N'ton...	3 45	4 54	30 5	15 6	30 7	30 8	10 8	30 9	0 10	30 11	0	—
Gt. Ho.	3 52	4 12	4 37	5 20	6 37	7 37	8 17	8 37	9 7	10 37	11 7	—
Lit. Ho.	3 55	4 15	4 40	5 25	6 40	7 40	8 20	8 40	9 10	10 40	11 10	—
Brafield	4 0	4 20	4 45	5 30	6 45	7 45	8 25	8 45	9 15	10 45	11 15	—
Cognh'e	4 5	—	4 50	5 35	6 50	7 50	—	8 50	9 20	10 50	11 20	—
Whist'n	4 10	—	—	5 40	6 55	7 55	—	8 55	9 25	10 55	11 25	—
Cas. Ash	4 15	—	—	5 45	7 0	8 0	—	9 0	9 30	11 0	11 30	—
Grend n	4 20	—	—	5 50	7 5	8 5	—	9 5	9 35	11 5	11 35	—
E. Mdit	4 25	—	—	5 55	7 10	8 10	—	9 10	9 40	11 10	11 40	—
Bozeat	4 30	—	—	6 0	7 15	8 15	—	9 15	9 45	11 15	11 45	—

Timetable for December 1930 taken from Mark's ABC Railway and Bus Guide for Northampton & District.

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Route diagram of Laws' service and plans of Northampton termini and Brafield.

On the last day of January 1928 another Graham Bros twenty-seater saloon bus was purchased new and registered RP 5335. It is possible that the first Graham Bros vehicle - RP 2081 - was traded in part exchange although this is not certain. In the following year a twenty-seater Bean was bought and registered RP 8957 in May of that year. From photographic evidence it seems most likely that Willowbrook of Loughborough supplied the body for this vehicle which was the latest in the fleet to carry the name "Mary".

The Laws' final new vehicle was a Bedford WLB supplied and bodied by Grose of Northampton. It was registered NV 611 on 8th September 1931 and once again seated twenty passengers.

In the early years there was no standard livery for the buses but as the firm became longer established the colours of red and brown were adopted.

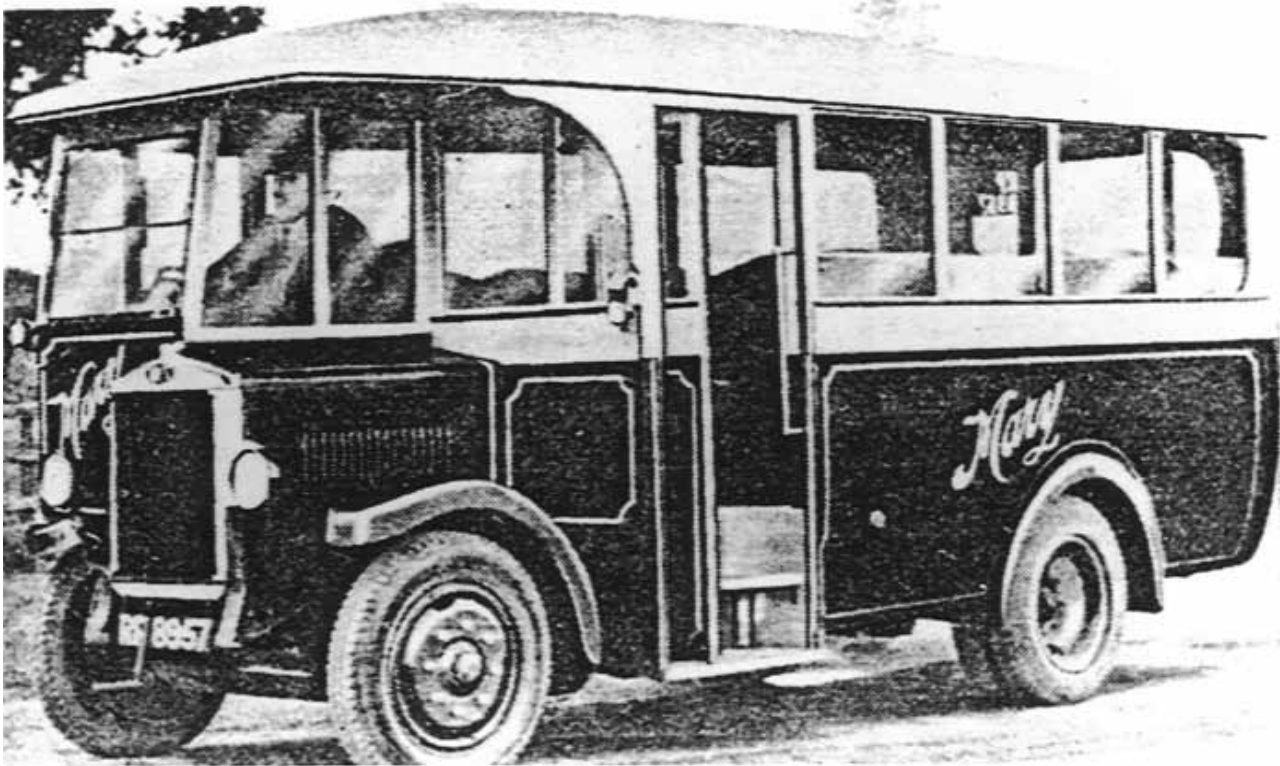
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RP 8957 was a Bean carrying what is believed to be a Willowbrook body. The photograph of this attractive bus was taken soon after the vehicle was new in 1930.

(Photo courtesy Northampton Independent).

When Andrew Law first started operating his Ford T he garaged it in a barn which was adjacent to his house in Bridle Path. The barn could accommodate two vehicles and when the fleet exceeded this number a second shed was erected nearby, on common ground, and it was clad with corrugated iron. Jim Law lived in Bedford Road, Brafield where he ran a firewood business and at which property a petrol pump was situated which was used for refuelling the coaches.

With the passing of the 1930 Road Traffic Act, J, M and A Law applied to the Traffic Commissioners for a Road service Licence to continue the service of stage carriage operated by them between Bozeat, Easton Maudit, Grendon, Castle Ashby, Whiston, Cogenhoe, Brafield, Little Houghton, Great Houghton and Northampton. This was duly granted in November 1931.

By 1933 Andrew Law was 69 years of age and ready to retire. The service was subject to a considerable amount of competition, with York Bros running from Wollaston via Grendon and Cogenhoe to Northampton on a partially common route and Knight of Denton and Eastern National operating between Brafield and Northampton. Andrew, James and Maud Law therefore decided to sell their business to Frederick and George York of Cogenhoe.

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York Bros duly applied to the Traffic Commissioners in March 1933 to take over Law's service but Sarah Knight of Denton opposed the application on the grounds that it was unnecessary for York Bros to provide facilities between Brafield and Northampton. Following public inquiries by the Traffic Commissioners Knight's agreed to pay £500 of the purchase price for York Bros to forego the rights to pick up and set down passengers travelling entirely within the section of route Brafield to Northampton and the required Road Service Licence was granted in favour of York Bros with effect from 1st June 1933. The Laws' business, together with RP 5335, RP 8957, NV 611, two bell punch ticket machines and stocks of tickets and mechanical accessories changed hands for £1500. The Goodwill of the business was valued at £1000 and the vehicles and accessories at £500. So ended the Law family's operation of bus services.

I am most grateful to Mrs Maud Cooke, eldest daughter of William Law, for details of her family's history.

Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
BD 5247	Ford	T	4283195	Hasker	Ch14F		1/21	-	4/29		No subsequent operator	
BD 9150	Fiat		15	Hasker	B20F		4/24	-	1/27?		Last owner R Hamp, Northampton. L/L 3/29	1
NH 6382	REO			Hasker?	B20F?		6/25	-	3/33		No subsequent operator	2
RP 2081	Graham Bros		A425454		B20F?		1/26	-	1/28?		Last owner J Butcher Syresham. L/L 9/31	
XN 9692	Dodge				B20F?		5/23	c-/26	6/33		S J Knight, Denton	
RP 3662	Laffly	LG	186546		B20		1/27	-	3/31		No subsequent operator	3
RP 5335	Graham Bros		GB4927		B20		1/28	-	6/33		York Bros., Cogenhoe	
RP 8957	Bean			Willowbrook	B20F		5/30	-	6/33		York Bros., Cogenhoe	1
NV 611	Bedford	WLB	108028	Grose	C20F		9/31	-	6/33	Supplied Grose Ltd	York Bros., Cogenhoe	

Notes: 1 - Named "Mary".
2 - Named "Renown".
3 - Named "Queen of the Road".

Other vehicles - NH 1695 - Ford T 14cwt was last owned by W Law, Bus Proprietor, Cogenhoe in 12/27 but may not have been a Hackney Carriage.
NH 8739 - Wolseley lorry 1t 5c 56lb - 90759 - new 8/11/28 and last owned by James Law 30/6/41.