

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-B02

Page 1

BONHAM, George & Ann later t/a Ann Bonham & Son 10 Broad Street NORTHAMPTON

The Funeral Directors - Ann Bonham & Son - must surely be one of Northampton's longest established businesses and the organisation is still operating today even if not under Bonham family ownership. The firm was founded in 1850 by George Bonham who established himself as a cab proprietor at premises at 10 Broad Street, Northampton. Additionally he undertook funeral arrangements and hired out horses, ponies, carriages and traps. Unfortunately he died whilst still young but his widow - Ann - born in 1824 and formerly a native of Long Buckby, proved more than capable of running and developing the business. At one time she is said to have owned forty horses, not only for the carriages and brakes but also for furniture removals and the conveyance of Royal Mail.



Reproduction of a woodcut of one of Ann Bonham's horse-drawn furniture vans.

Ann Bonham was joined in the business by her son Frederick Bonham, when the trading name of "Ann Bonham & Son" was adopted. Prior to the First World War the firm experimented with motorised transport for various aspects of their work although such vehicles were initially resisted by the public for funerals.

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.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-B02

Page 2

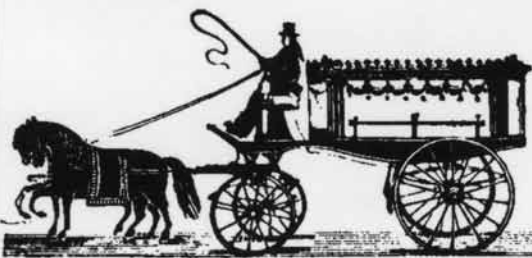
BONHAM, Ann & Son - NORTHAMPTON

WHERE TO SHOP AT NORTHAMPTON.

Telephone 0438. Established 1850.

Ann Bonham & Son,


**Complete Undertakers and—
Funeral Carriage Proprietors,
10, Broad Street, NORTHAMPTON.**



Open or Closed
Cars on Rubber
Tyres.

*
The Trade
supplied in Town
or Country on
Moderate Terms.

Brakes of all descriptions for Picnic & Pleasure Parties.
Landaus on Rubber Tyres.



Furniture Removers to all Parts.
ESTIMATES FREE.

A facsimile of an advertisement used by Ann Bonham in 1907.

By September 1913 one, if not two, convertible Lacre lorries had been purchased for the furniture removals side of the business. These vehicles were registered NH 102 and NH 122 and the former, at least, could soon be converted to carry passengers by the installation of bench seating. Illustrations of NH 102 in charabanc form soon appeared in local advertisements from September 1913 onwards. These advertisements intimated that Ann Bonham & Son had "Powerful Motor Char-a-Banc" available for touring and picnic parties at "moderate terms". It is not entirely clear whether NH 122 was used as a passenger-carrying vehicle but in all probability it was.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-B02

Page 3

BONHAM, Ann & Son - NORTHAMPTON



Ann Bonham's Lacres NH 102 and NH 122 pose for the camera at Queen Eleanor Cross, London Road, Northampton circa 1913/4.



Lacre NH 102 is shown in this view in charabanc form with seating for approximately twenty-six passengers.

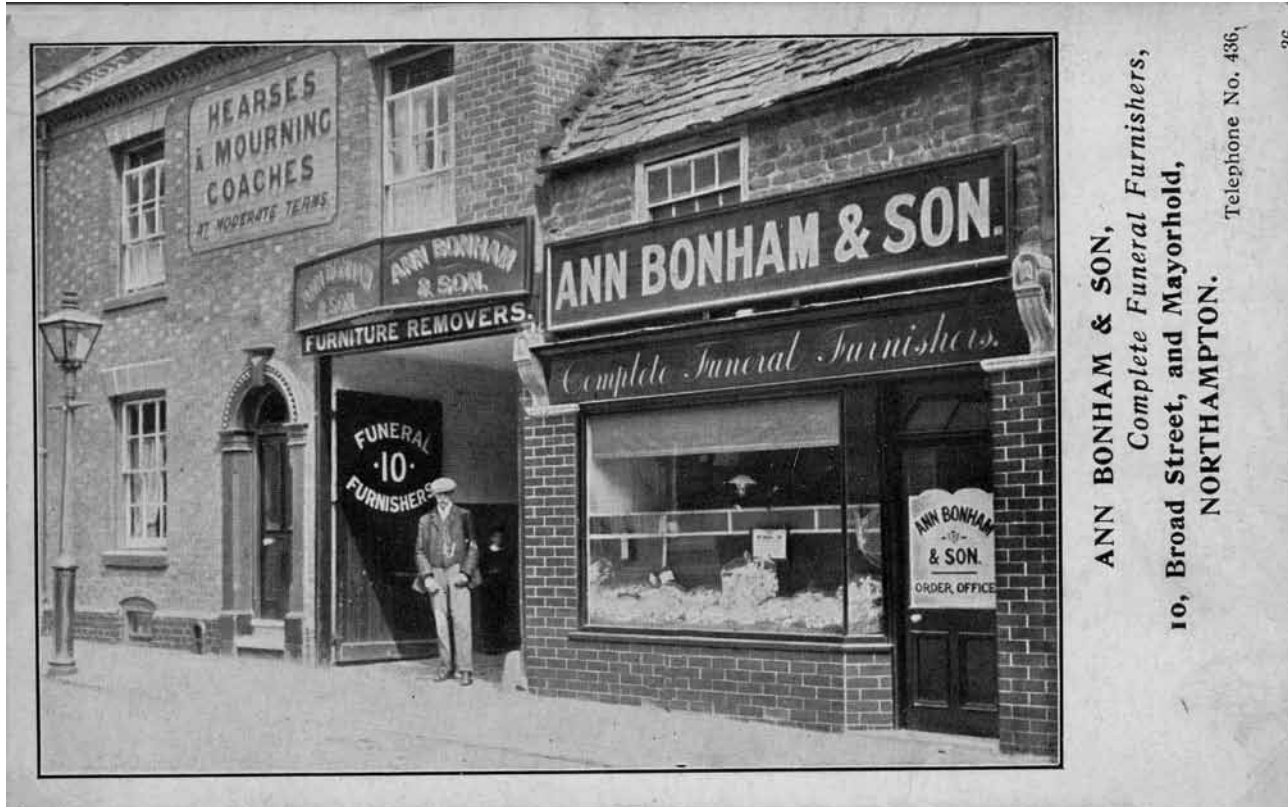
Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-BO2

Page 4

BONHAM, Ann & Son - NORTHAMPTON



An advertising postcard issued by Ann Bonham & Son showing their Broad Street premises, probably just prior to the First World War.

The business of Ann Bonham & Son continued throughout the First World War with the Lacre lorries-cum-charabancs but in May 1922 a former Samuelson Transport Company's Daimler Y-type dating from 1917, but registered XD 8132 in May 1921, was purchased from Slough Lorries & Components to modernise Bonham's fleet. On arrival at Northampton it was given the name "Felix" and it is assumed this name was painted on the vehicle. Whether or not it came to Bonham's painted in a vivid green livery is not clear, but it was certainly in such a startling colour when operated from Northampton Market Square by its new owners. Incidentally, Bonham's first applied to Northampton Borough Council Watch Committee for a Hackney Carriage Licence in March 1914 and this was granted for a stand at Regent Square. There are no records of Bonham's having been granted Hackney Carriage licences after 1923 although the firm was still advertising the availability of its charabanc in 1925. By April 1926 the Daimler charabanc XD 8132 was licensed as a goods vehicle and was replaced in July 1926 by another Daimler weighing 4 tons 8 cwt and taking the registration NH 7180. This vehicle also took the name "Felix" from its predecessor, as demonstrated by the advertisement from the Northampton Daily Chronicle of 16th July 1927 shown here.

A WEEK IN YARMOUTH.

BOOK Your Journey by the "FELIX" Charabanc, leaving Northampton Saturday, July 30, returning Saturday, August 6. Fare 25/-

ANN BONHAM & SON,
10, Broad Street.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-B02

Page 5

BONHAM, Ann & Son - NORTHAMPTON

ANN BONHAM & SON

CHARABANC PROPRIETORS
and HAULAGE CONTRACTORS.

Expert Furniture Removers.

10, Broad Street,
NORTHAMPTON.

TELEPHONE 436.



*Rubber-tyred Hearses, Cars,
Coaches, Landaus, Broughams, &c.*

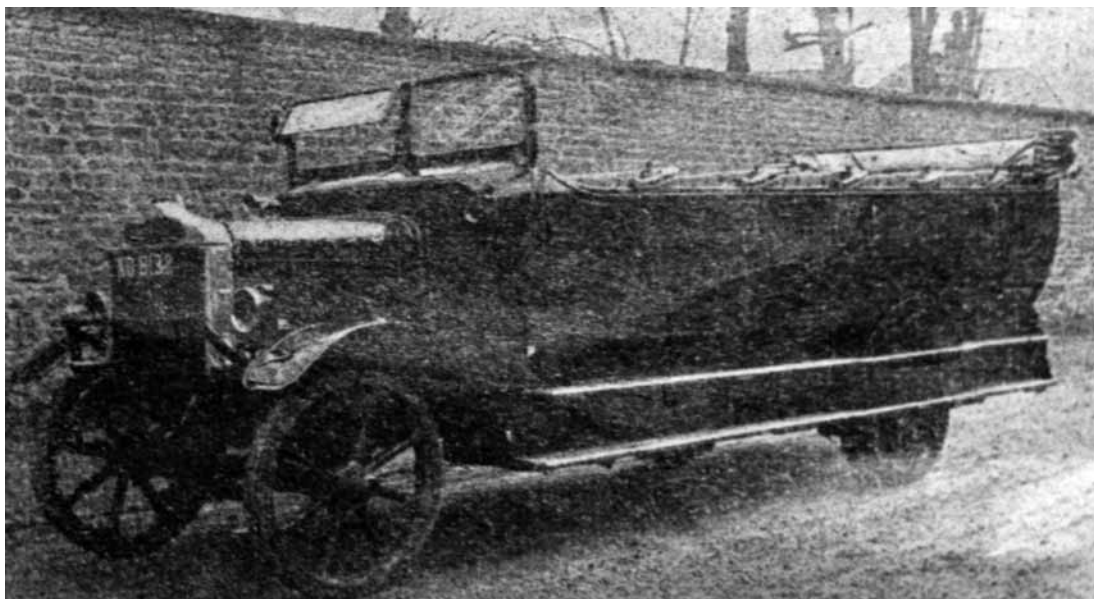
UNDERTAKERS FROM OTHER TOWNS
MAY RELY UPON EXPERT ASSISTANCE.

Special attention given to orders for St. Andrews Hospital,
Berrywood Asylum, Northampton General Hospital.

COFFINS MADE ON THE PREMISES.

CREMATIONS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT.

Ann Bonham's advertisement taken from an issue of Northamptonshire Past & Present of 1924 and which includes a picture of Daimler charabanc XD 8132.



An enlargement of the photograph of Bonham's Daimler charabanc XD 8132.

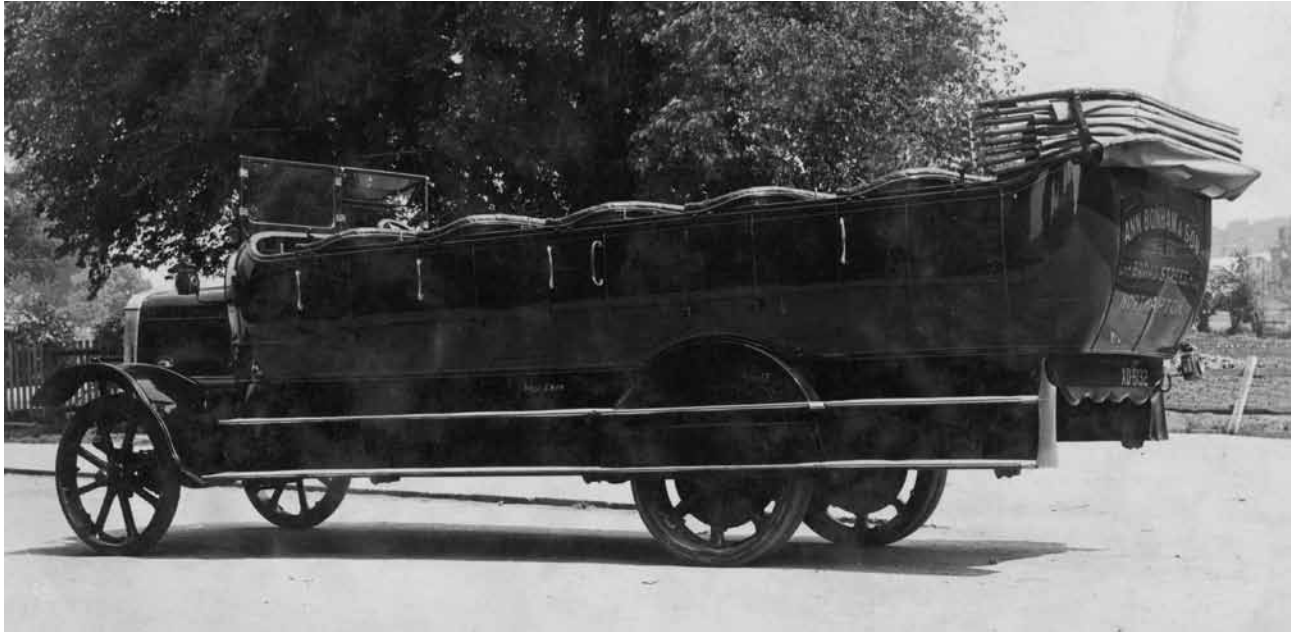
Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-B02

Page 6

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Another view of XD 8132, Ann Bonham & Son's Daimler Y-type charabanc, which the firm claimed could accommodate thirty passengers.

Bonhams continued to run excursions and private hires until the end of the 1929 season but retained the use of NH 7180 as a goods vehicle until October 1935. When the road haulage side of Bonham's business was closed is not known but, as time progressed, the Funeral Directing side of the organisation became the principal occupation of the firm as, indeed, it still is in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Monumental masonry was added to the diversity of Bonham's business and a showroom was opened at 71 St Giles' Street, Northampton which in later years became the firm's principal operating base.

Rolling Stock:

Regn. No.	Chassis	Type	Chassis No.	Body	Seats	Body No.	Dates			Former Owner	Disposal	Notes
							New	S/H	W/D			
NH 102	Lacre			?	Lorry/ Ch26		9/13	—	3/26	—	No further owner	
NH 122	Lacre			?	Lorry/ Ch26?		c9/13	—	10/35	—	No further owner	1
XD 8132	Daimler	Y	5659	?	Ch27		-/17	5/22	4/26	Slough Lorries & Components/ Samuelson Tpt Co Ltd, London (1206)	?	2
NH 7180	Daimler				Ch		7/26	—	9/29	—	No further owner	3

Notes: 1 - NH 122 not known if used as a charabanc.

2 - XD 8132 Names "Felix". Not used for passenger work after 4/26. Licensed as a goods vehicle thereafter.

3 - NH 7180 named "Felix". Not used for passenger work after 9/29. Licensed as a goods vehicle to 10/35.