

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-PA5

Page 1

PARKER. William Arthur (Ltd)

Somerset Villa

(166541)

Park Road

KETTERING

Most carrier's businesses after the First World War started with a single vehicle and, if successful, possibly graduated to limited company status if such action was seen as the best way forward. Not so with William Parker of Kettering, as he started with a limited company, which was soon liquidated, and then he continued to trade on his own account!

The Author assumes that in 1920 William Arthur Parker was a young man and that his father - George Thomas Parker who was a Leather Merchant - together with Frank Wright - a Kettering Boot Manufacturer - set up William Parker in business as a carrier possibly with guaranteed work from both of the above older men. In any event, a company called W. A. Parker Ltd was incorporated on 16th April 1920 with a nominal capital of £2,000 divided into 2,000 Shares of £1 each. The Directors and Shareholders at this time were:-

George Thomas Parker	- 100 Shares
William Arthur Parker	- 1 Share
Frank Wright	- <u>400 Shares</u>
	501 Shares

If any future profits were to be distributed in proportion to the Shareholding, William Parker would have had little incentive to make a success of the business. However, in the month preceding the formation of the Company William Parker acquired a reconditioned Leyland lorry/bus that was possibly an X-type dating from the 1912-1914 period and registered XA 8263. By April 1920 he was advertising this Leyland lorry-cum-bus as being available for hire on Saturdays for parties of up to thirty people. This machine's availability on Saturdays only suggests that Parker had guaranteed cartage work on Mondays to Fridays which may, or may not, have originated from either his father's or Frank Wright's businesses. By November 1920 William Parker was advertising a "New Covered Motor for Passengers and Goods", so presumably at this time he acquired a second motor vehicle, but no details of it are known.

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.

PARKER, William Arthur - KETTERING

W. A. PARKER'S
NEW COVERED MOTOR for PASSENGERS
and GOODS
Will run on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd.
TO
SHARNBROOK ODELL, and HARROLD.
3/6 Return Goods charged extra
Leave Dalkeith place 10.15 a.m. ; return 6 p.m.
Bookings WARREN'S, Tobacconist, Dalkeith
place, and SOMERSET VILLA, Park road.

W. A. Parker's advertisement that was inserted in the Evening Telegraph of 2nd November 1920 shows that the firm was running an excursion to Sharnbrook, Odell and Harrold at a fare of 3/6d (17½p) return. Interestingly it also says that "goods are charged extra".

For just how long operations were carried out by W. A. Parker Ltd is open to conjecture. Parker's last advertisement that included "Ltd" in the title appeared in the Kettering Evening Telegraph in July 1920. As will be seen from the November 1920 advertisement depicted above, the use of the word "Ltd" had by then been dropped. What the events were that led to this are not clear. Perhaps the two major shareholders exercised too strong an influence for William Parker's liking? Whatever the case the Company structure appears to have been considered inappropriate by the Directors after such a remarkably short period. Accordingly, by Special Resolutions made on 28th May 1921 and confirmed on 13th June 1921 the Company was wound up voluntarily with Harry Hodge of Market Street, Kettering being appointed Liquidator. The winding-up mechanism was completed on 18th November 1921.

Thereafter William Parker traded, presumably solely, as W. A. Parker and by the summer of 1921 Parker had purchased another vehicle, again of unknown manufacture, but it must have carried a charabanc body as by July 1921 William Parker was advertising both a "new motor" and "char-a-banc trips" for parties of up to thirty people.

Evidently trade must have continued at a satisfactory level as in October 1921 it is known that Parker purchased from Leyland Motors Ltd a rebuilt RAF type chassis with a dual covered lorry-cum-bus body. This machine was registered BD 65 on 14th October 1921 and fortunately Leyland took a photograph of it prior to delivery.

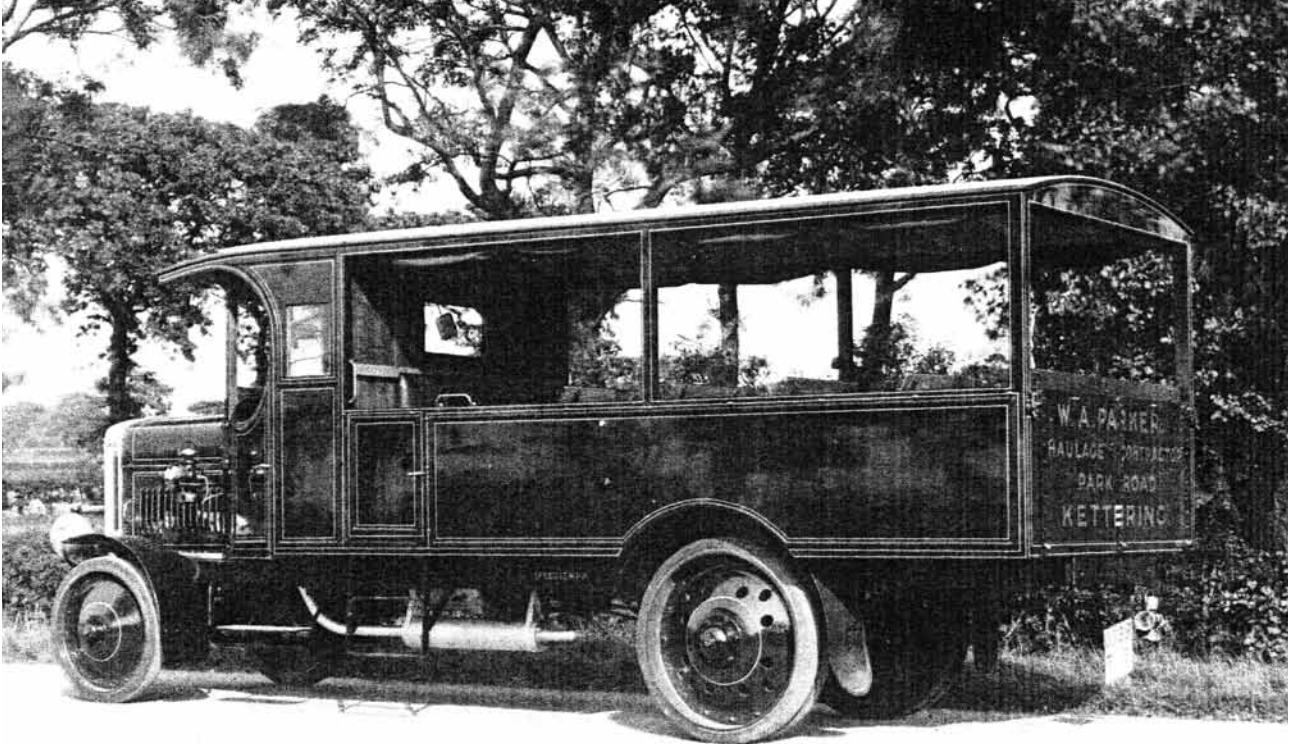
Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-PA5

Page 3

PARKER, William Arthur - KETTERING



Photographed by Leyland Motors prior to despatch to William Parker of Kettering was this rebuilt RAF chassis with Leyland bodywork that was later registered as BD 65. As can be seen, it was fitted with crossbench seats and a front entrance.

(Photo courtesy Mike Sutcliffe collection).

As well as private hires, William Parker advertised a number of excursions including ten-day breaks at Bournemouth picking up also at Wellingborough and Northampton. Journeys to Bournemouth in BD 65 and its predecessors must have been quite an adventure in the 1921/2 period.

W. A. PARKER,
PARK ROAD, KETTERING,
Begs to announce that, having purchased from
Messrs. Luck and Andrew, Ltd., their
Victory Char-a-banc
WILL BE PLEASED TO BOOK PARTIES.
BOOK EARLY AND AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT.

An interesting development occurred in March 1922 when Messrs Luck & Andrew Ltd of Kettering (NN-LU2) ceased their excursions and private hire operations and at this time William Parker purchased the "Victory" charabanc owned by Luck and Andrew. Thereafter Parker retained the Victory title and advertised his excursions under this name. The charabanc referred to was registered BD 951 and was a Thornycroft J-type.

Left: William Parker advises the public of his acquisition of "Victory" from Luck & Andrew Ltd in this March 1922 advertisement.

PARKER. William Arthur - KETTERING

For the following year's operations William Parker bought a Lancia coach which was registered BD 7643 on 21st April 1923. This vehicle seated twenty passengers, was equipped with pneumatic tyres and was named "Majestic". Thereafter William Parker advertised only his Majestic motor coach which in itself suggests that the charabanc named Victory was sold and this is confirmed by the appearance of Victory within the Bagshaw fleet by March 1923. As far as it is known Parker operated only one passenger vehicle at a time, with most older vehicles reverting to goods haulage duties.

W. A. PARKER'S
NEW UP-TO-DATE 20-SEATER,
PNEUMATIC TYRED MOTOR COACH,
"MAJESTIC"
Will run to WEMBLEY STADIUM,
Cup Final,
SATURDAY, APRIL 28th.
First-class LUNCHEON and TEA arranged
at Watford.
Particulars and Bookings—
"SOMERSET VILLA," PARK ROAD,
KETTERING.
All Trips Personally Conducted.

Left: One of William Parker's advertisements for his "Majestic" Lancia motor coach.

It appears that William Parker ceased his passenger operations, at least, at the end of September 1923. Kettering had a number of charabanc operators and it is difficult to believe there was sufficient traffic to support them all. For example, Messrs Bagshaw & Sons, Percy Kerr and Robert Orsborn to mention but three were all well established. As mentioned above, the Thornycroft charabanc passed to Bagshaw & Sons by March 1923 so it is possible, but not confirmed, that later in the year Bagshaw's purchased Parker's business interests, both passenger and goods.

Rolling Stock:

Regn. No.	Chassis	Type	Chassis No.	Body	Seats	Dates			Former Owner	Disposal	Nts
						New	S/H	W/D			
XA 8263	Leyland	40hp	?	?	Lorry/ Bus 30	?	3/20	?	—	?	1
?	?	?	?	?	Lorry/ Bus	?	by 10/20	?	?	?	
?	?	?	?	?	Ch29	?	by 7/21	?	?	?	
BD 65	Leyland	RAF	21034	Leyland	Lorry/ Bus 30F	10/21	—	?	—	?	2
BD 951	Thornycroft	J	5470	?	Ch 29	6/21	3/22	By 3/23	Luck & Andrew Ltd, Kettering	Bagshaw & Sons, Kettering	3
BD 7643	Lancia	?	142	?	C20	4/23	—	?	—	?	4

Notes: 1 - XA 8263 was probably an X-type dating from circa 1912-14.

2 - BD 65 last owned by Express Transport Services, Wellingborough and last licensed as a goods vehicle.

3 - BD 951 named "Victory". Passed to Bagshaw & Sons, Kettering by 3/23 who retained the "Victory" name but with the seating shown as 28. Last licensed to Bagshaw 10/31.

4 - BD 7643 named "Majestic". Last licensed as a goods vehicle to C Howard, Whitby - 3/35.