

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-SU1A

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SUMMERLY. John W & Walter, t/a Summerly Bros. 50 King Street, DESBOROUGH

John and Walter Summerly, who traded as Summerly Bros, commenced bus operation in 1922 using a Ford T lorry-cum-bus. Whether or not Summerly Bros operated lorries prior to carrying passengers is unknown to the Author but they owned two Ford T vehicles prior to the 1922 start date for bus operation. The first Ford T was registered BD 3393 and is believed to have dated from 1919, whilst the second was BD 5226 which was new in February 1921. It was this latter vehicle that was licensed as both goods and hackney and is undoubtedly the Summerly's first passenger vehicle.

The service initially offered by Summerly Bros ran between Desborough, Rothwell and Kettering and by 1925, at the latest, had been extended in a northerly direction to Market Harborough. As early as September 1922 Summerly Bros had been granted a Hackney Carriage licence by Northampton Borough Council for a saloon bus and a month later an application to stand a Ford charabus at Regent Square in connection with a Northampton - Kettering - Desborough service was deferred by the Watch Committee and doesn't appear to have been considered further.

June 1922 saw the purchase of another Ford T with dual van/14 seater bodywork, registered BD 6756, whilst on 1st December 1922 a Vulcan registered BD 7131 was purchased new by Summerly Bros but it is not clear whether it was a bus as it ended its life with Walter Summerly in September 1930 as a van.

Summerly's next three vehicle purchases were definitely all passenger stock and were twenty-six seater Lancia Pentaiotas. They were registered RP 264, RP 2140 and RP 4091 respectively on 30th December 1924, 9th February 1926 and 4th April 1927. RP 264 and one, if not both the others, were bodied by Hall Lewis of Park Royal, London.

Apart from the local bus service, private hire formed a large part of the Summerly's business. With the advent of the 1926 Coal Strike John and Walter Summerly commenced a regular summer Saturdays coach service from Desborough to Great Yarmouth and this was continued in subsequent years.

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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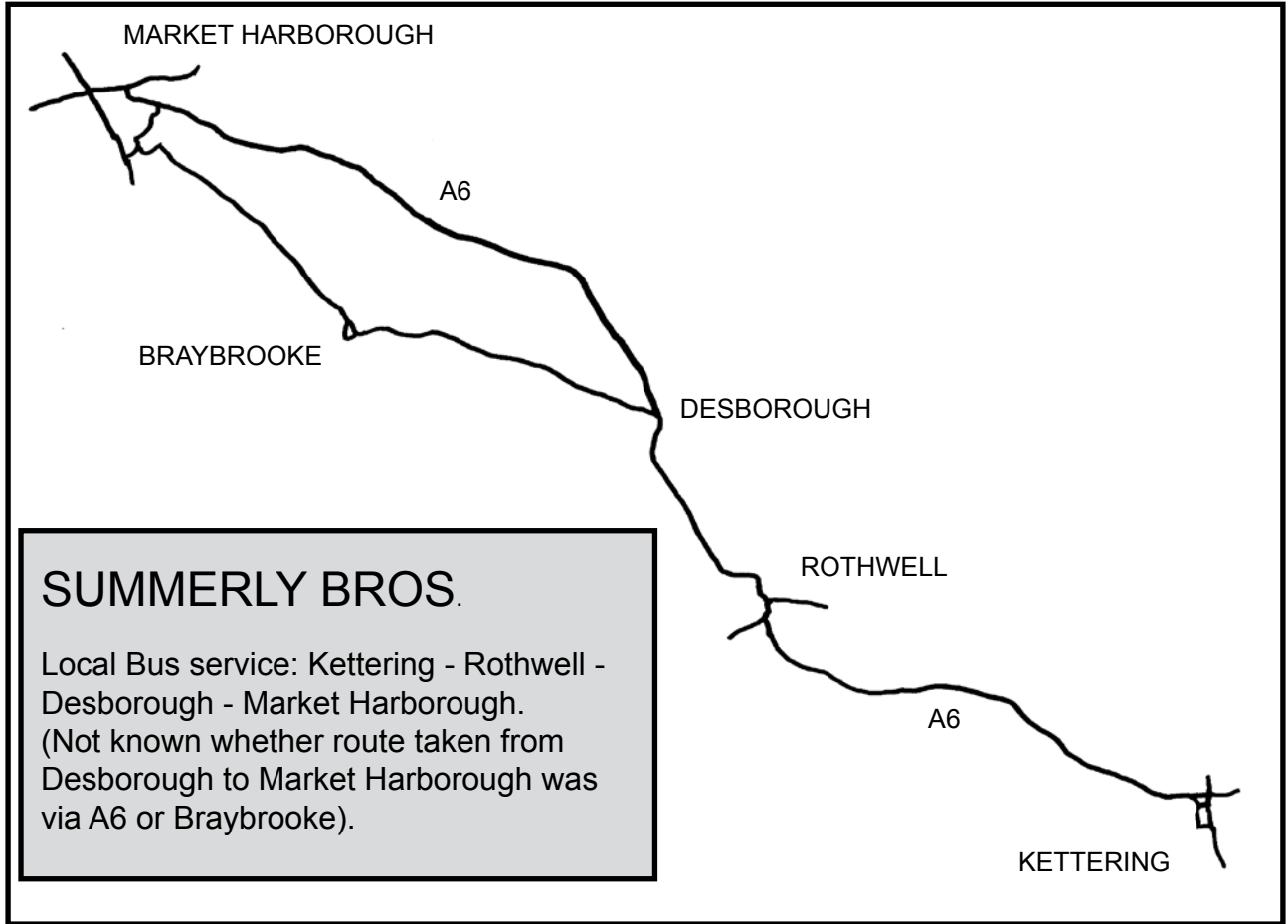


Hall Lewis bodied Lancia RP 264 was an extremely modern looking saloon in 1924 and it subsequently operated in the United Counties' fleet until 1932.

One of United Counties trunk routes was its Kettering - Rothwell - Desborough - Market Harborough service and no doubt the Summerly's realised that competing with such a strong rival was rather pointless. Accordingly John Summerly wrote to United Counties in November 1927 suggesting the Company should take over his vehicles and services. United Counties' accountants inspected the Summerly Bros books and on 5th March 1928 an Agreement between the parties was signed. The agreement was that the Goodwill of the business would be sold for a nominal sum provided John Summerly was given a position in the Company, as he intimated that he could greatly extend United Counties' private hire work. The Assignment of the business to United Counties also took place on 5th March 1928, when the sum of £1,100 was paid by United Counties, of which all but £5 represented the value of Lancias RP 264 and RP 4091 with spare parts.

John Summerly did in fact join United Counties as a Private Hire Representative and subsequently became closely involved with negotiating the acquisition of many independent operators' businesses by United Counties. Ultimately John Summerly managed the Company's Northampton depot until he resigned in October 1935. United Counties absorbed the Summerly's former bus route into its own Kettering to Market Harborough operations and also took on the seasonal Yarmouth service.

SUMMERLY Bros. - DESBOROUGH



Rolling Stock:

| Regn. No. | Chassis | Type | Chassis No. | Body | Seats | Body No. | Dates | | | Former Owner | Disposal | Notes |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------|-------|-----|---------|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | | New | S/H | W/D | | | |
| BD 3393 | Ford | T | 4602667 | | ? | | c-/19 | — | 12/24? | — | | 1 |
| BD 5226 | Ford | T | 3800256 | | Lorry/ Bus | | 2/21 | — | 2/26? | — | | 2 |
| BD 6756 | Ford | T | 5825034 | | Van/ 14 | | 6/22 | — | by -/28 | — | | 3 |
| BD 7131 | Vulcan | VSC | 2849 | | ? | | 12/22 | — | ? | — | | 4 |
| RP 264 | Lancia | Pentaiota | 659 | Hall Lewis | B26F | | 12/24 | — | 3/28 | — | United Counties (LA1) | |
| RP 2140 | Lancia | Pentaiota | 1065 | Hall Lewis? | B26 | | 2/26 | — | 4/27 | — | Clarke, Oudle | |
| RP 4091 | Lancia | Pentaiota | 1412 | Hall Lewis? | B26F | | 4/27 | — | 3/28 | — | United Counties (LA2) | |

- Notes:**
- 1 - Last owned as a goods vehicle by Lockys, Newport and Last licensed 1/30.
 - 2 - Last owned as a goods vehicle by G E Warren, Rushden and last licensed 1/30.
 - 3 - Last owned as a goods vehicle by Hygiene Mobile Catering Co, Kettering and last licensed 10/28.
 - 4 - Last owned as a van by Walter Summerly and last licensed 9/30.

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This picture taken at Desborough almost certainly depicts one of Summerly's Lancias - either RP 2140 or RP 4091 - with Lancia RP 264 behind.