

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-WI3

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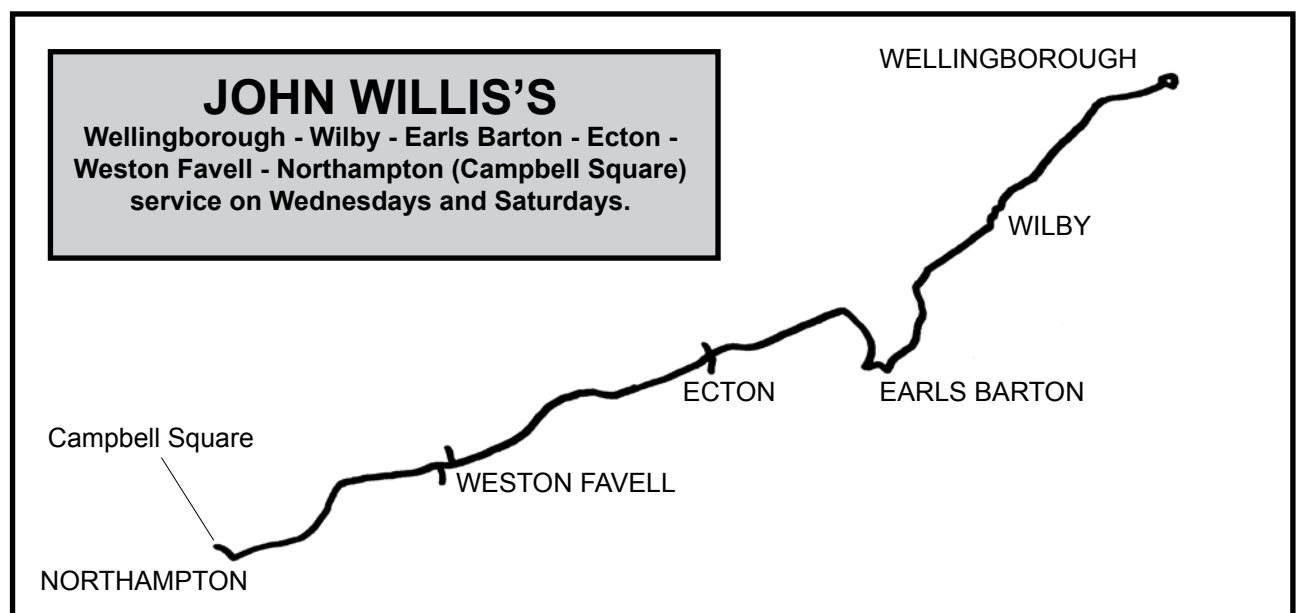
WILLIS. John

Wellingborough Road

EARLS BARTON

John Willis of Earls Barton was principally a carrier and in Lea's Northampton Directory of 1914 he is recorded as providing a service from Earls Barton to Weston Favell and Northampton, terminating at the Cross Keys public house in Sheep Street each day except Thursdays.

It was not until after the first World War that John Willis ventured into motorised passenger carrying when he applied to Northampton Borough Council Watch Committee in May 1919 for a Hackney Carriage Licence. No details are given in this application but two months later Willis was granted a licence to ply for hire from Campbell Square, Northampton on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Similarly, in September 1919, John Willis approached Wellingborough Urban District Council, which granted a licence for one bus to seat twenty-eight passengers. It is understood that for a short period Willis provided a local bus service between Wellingborough, Wilby, Earls Barton, Ecton, Weston Favell and Northampton but because of the well established and frequent service covering almost the entire route, run by the Wellingborough Motor Omnibus Co Ltd, Willis's operation was not financially successful and was soon withdrawn.



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.

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WILLIS. John - EARLS BARTON

Full details of John Willis's passenger vehicles are not available, but he certainly acquired a covered charabanc from George Keeber of Wellingborough (NN-KE3) in February 1919, that had until very recently been operated by Alf Jackson of Earls Barton (NN-JA1). This machine, registered BD 1872, was a 30-horsepower Lacre which Willis later converted to lorry form and kept until 1929. Willis also bought a brewer's dray from Campbell Praed & Co Ltd of Wellingborough in the 1920s and this was another Lacre which was registered BD 1793. It is not thought that this vehicle was used for passenger work. Furthermore John Willis is known to have run a Thornycroft charabanc which was probably the twenty-eight seater bus referred to by the Wellingborough Urban District Council.

As stated previously, John Willis ran passenger vehicles for only a short period before reverting to his core carrier's business. He may also have operated taxis.



The Lacre covered charabanc BD 1872 photographed whilst in Alfred Jackson's ownership and standing outside the Stag's Head at Earls Barton.

Rolling Stock:

Regn. No.	Chassis	Type	Chassis No.	Body	Seats	Dates			Former Owner	Disposal	Notes
						New	S/H	W/D			
BD 1872	Lacre	30hp	20824	?	Chara/ Lorry	5/13	2/19	1/29	G Keeber, Wellingborough	No further owner	
?	Thornycroft	40hp	?	?	CH 28	?	by 9/19	?	?	?	
BD 1793	Lacre	30hp	20843	?	Lorry	3/13	?	1/31	Campbell Praed & Co Ltd, W'borough	No further owner	