

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

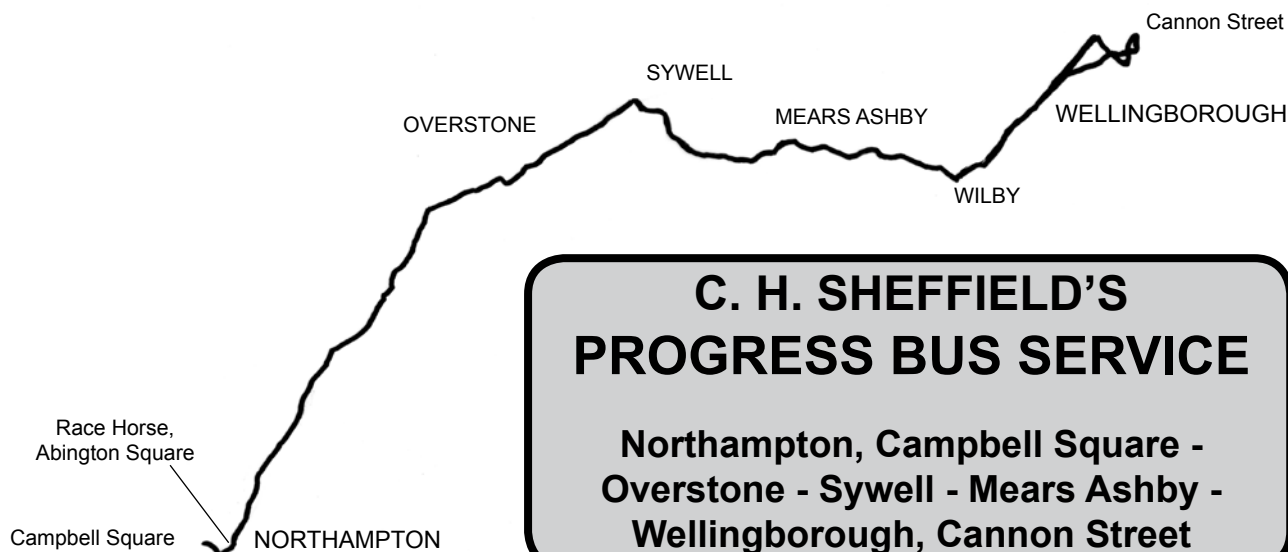
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SHEFFIELD. Charles Henry t/a "Progress" Bus Service 77, Military Road, NORTHAMPTON

Charles Henry Sheffield was first granted a Hackney Carriage driver's licence by the Watch Committee of Northampton Borough Council on 14th June 1924. At about this time he acquired a charabanc with which he operated excursions and tours from Northampton Market Square and was soon running a service to Wellingborough via Overstone, Sywell, Mears Ashby and Wilby on Wednesdays and Saturdays, which were market days in both Wellingborough and Northampton.

Whilst United Counties Omnibus & Road Transport Co. Ltd. was the main provider of service between Northampton and Wellingborough along the main A45 road, the Company was not at this time running via Overstone, Sywell and Mears Ashby, this route being introduced at an unknown date in the 1925 - 7 period. When introduced, instead of proceeding from Mears Ashby via Wilby to Wellingborough, the United Counties route took in Earls Barton and Doddington.



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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SHEFFIELD. C. H. (Progress), N'PTON
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In all probability Sheffield operated lorries prior to venturing with passenger transport. Indeed the advertisement reproduced below appeared in All Saints Northampton Church Blotter/Calendar and Year Book for 1925. As this would have been printed in the latter months of 1924 and depicts a line drawing of a lorry, the above assumption seems reasonable. As will be seen from the advertisement, pneumatic-tyred charabancs of distinction were on offer to the public from Sheffield's only address of 77 Military Road, Northampton.

'Phone 124	C. H. SHEFFIELD	'Phone 124
BUS SERVICE TO OVERSTONE SYWELL MEARS ASHBY WELLINGBORO' EVERY WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY	PNEUMATIC-TYRED CHARABANCS OF DISTINCTION FOR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PARTIES 	REMOVALS AND HAULAGE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION UNDER PERSONAL SUPERVISION
<i>Only Address: 77 MILITARY RD.</i>		

Vehicles:

With regard to vehicles, the advert printed in 1924 speaks of charabancs, in the plural, being available. No records in the Borough Council Watch Committee minutes have been found prior to 16th March 1925 when a Hackney Carriage licence was granted for twelve months for what was described as a 14-seater saloon which was to replace another one. The licence entitled Sheffield to ply for hire from Campbell Square and the Market Square, Northampton.

On 13th December 1926, Hackney Carriage licences were granted until 25th March 1927 for two 14-seaters, again to operate from Campbell Square and Market Square and one of these was for a replacement machine. Sheffield is, however, known to have purchased a model T Ford from Messrs. Henry Oliver of George Row, Northampton (Dealer) for £121 and this machine was delivered on 31st January 1925, but whether it was a lorry or a bus is not known.

Service:

Evidently the service from Northampton via Overstone, Sywell, Mears Ashby and Wilby to Wellingborough was initially a success and Sheffield marketed it under the title of "Progress" Bus Service, increasing the route from Wednesdays and Saturdays to a daily operation, providing quite a good range of timings which would require a second vehicle to be brought into service on Saturday evenings. The date of the timetable reproduced overleaf is not known but it must have been circa 1927. It will be seen that a parcels and goods collection and delivery service was provided on Mondays to Fridays including the use of agents at Northampton and Wellingborough.

SHEFFIELD. C. H. (Progress), N'PTON

Clearly the competition from United Counties and others took its toll on the "Progress" service and as far as can be ascertained Sheffield ceased trading sometime in 1927.

The author traced Charles Henry Sheffield in 1971 and there appeared to be some residual bitterness over forty years after his bus operation had ceased. In a letter, Mr Sheffield wrote - "In reply to your letter received this morning regarding Bus Services it is true I did run a Bus Service between Northampton and Wellingborough via Sywell and Mears Ashby - but that was 44 years ago and had to give up like some of the other private people owing to opposition by the large companies, and that is all I wish to say concerning Bus services."

Northampton to Wellingborough via Overstone, Sywell & Mears Ashby.

"Progress" Bus Service leaves Campbell Square, Northampton
and Cannon Street, Wellingborough.

	MON. TUES. THURS. FRI.				SATURDAYS.							
	AM	N'N	PM		AM	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
Northampton dep.	7 45	12 0	5 0		7 45	11 0	1230	3 0	5 30	6 30	7 30	9 0
Overstone ...	8 0	12 15	5 15		8 0	1120	1250	3 20	5 50	6 50	7 50	9 20
Sywell ...	8 10	12 25	5 25		8 10	1130	1 0	3 30	6 0	7 0	8 0	9 30
Mears Ashby ...	8 20	12 30	5 35		8 20	1140	1 20	3 45	6 10	7 10	8 10	9 40
Wellingborough arr.	8 40	12 45	5 55		8 40	...	1 40	4 0	6 30	7 30	8 30	...
Wellingborough dep.	8 50	1 0	6 5		9 0	...	1 45	4 15	6 45	7 45	9 10	...
Mears Ashby ...	9 10	1 20	6 20		9 30	1145	2 0	4 35	7 0	8 5	9 25	10 0
Sywell ...	9 20	1 30	6 35		9 40	1155	2 10	4 55	7 10	8 15	9 35	10 10
Overstone ...	9 40	1 40	6 45		9 50	12 5	2 20	5 5	7 20	8 25	9 45	10 20
Northampton arr.	10 0	2 0	7 0		10 10	12 25	2 40	5 25	7 30	8 45	10 0	10 40
	WEDNESDAYS.				SUNDAYS.							
	AM	PM	PM	PM	AM	PM	PM	PM				
Northampton dep.	8 0	12 15	3 15	6 0	11 0	2 30	5 15	8 0	...			
Overstone ...	8 15	12 30	3 30	6 15	11 20	2 45	5 30	8 15	...			
Sywell ...	8 25	12 40	3 40	6 25	11 30	2 55	5 40	8 25	...			
Mears Ashby ...	8 35	12 50	3 50	6 35	11 40	3 0	5 50	8 35	...			
Wellingborough arr.	8 55	1 15	4 10	7 0	12 0	3 20	6 10	8 55	...			
Wellingborough dep.	9 30	2 0	4 30	7 0	12 5	3 30	6 20	9 0	...			
Mears Ashby ...	10 0	2 20	4 50	7 20	12 20	3 50	6 40	9 20	...			
Sywell ...	10 10	2 30	5 0	7 30	12 30	4 0	6 50	9 30	...			
Overstone ...	10 20	2 40	5 10	7 40	12 40	4 5	7 0	9 40	...			
Northampton arr.	10 40	3 0	5 30	8 0	1 0	4 20	7 20	10 0	...			

Goods and Parcels will be collected and delivered daily (Saturdays and Sundays excepted) at Moderate Charges, or may be left at the "Race Horse," Abington Square, Northampton and the "Cambridge" Hotel, Wellingborough.

THE VICTORY PRESS, OAKWOOD RD.

Facsimile of C H Sheffield's "Progress" Bus Service Timetable c1927.