

MEADOWS. John

Regent House, Victoria Street,
BURTON LATIMER

The story of John Meadows' involvement in bus operations is very much linked with the activities of Harold and Walter Frost of Kettering, as, for a period of around six years the three gentlemen were in partnership trading as Meadows & Frost or M & F Motor Services.

John Meadows was born at Titchmarsh, near Thrapston, in 1868 and on leaving school before he was eleven, worked for a number of local farmers scaring birds, tending sheep and taking animals to market at Thrapston. Later he had various occupations, working on the railway, in a brewery, in a brickyard and in an ironstone quarry.

After his marriage to Sabina Wright of Peterborough, the couple moved to London where they kept a fish and chip shop. In due course John Meadows and his wife returned to Northamptonshire by the late 1890s and settled at Burton Latimer where John became a coal merchant and had his own wagons at Burton Latimer railway station. In addition to coal he also carted flour and corn for Wallis's Mill, which is now the site of the Weetabix complex. John Meadows rented a number of local fields in which he grew crops or kept cattle.

In 1900, John Meadows had two houses built in Victoria Street, Burton Latimer and he lived in one of them. In 1911 he purchased an acre of land at the end of Victoria Street for £50 and built Regent House, a large double-fronted property, and on the surrounding land he kept pigs, hens and cattle. John and Sabina Meadows had four children - John, Lilian, Annie and James - and it was the youngest son that later became involved with bus operation when the firm traded as J Meadows & Son.

Towards the end of the War John Meadows obtained a Halley motor lorry registered LR 7619 for use in connection with his cartage work. It is understood that this vehicle was used as a passenger carrying vehicle after the War, when a covered top and wooden seats were bolted to the lorry body structure. This early vehicle had difficulty in negotiating Barton Seagrave hill on the service it provided between Burton Latimer and Kettering and it was not uncommon for passengers to have to alight and walk up the hill, sometimes pushing the vehicle.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

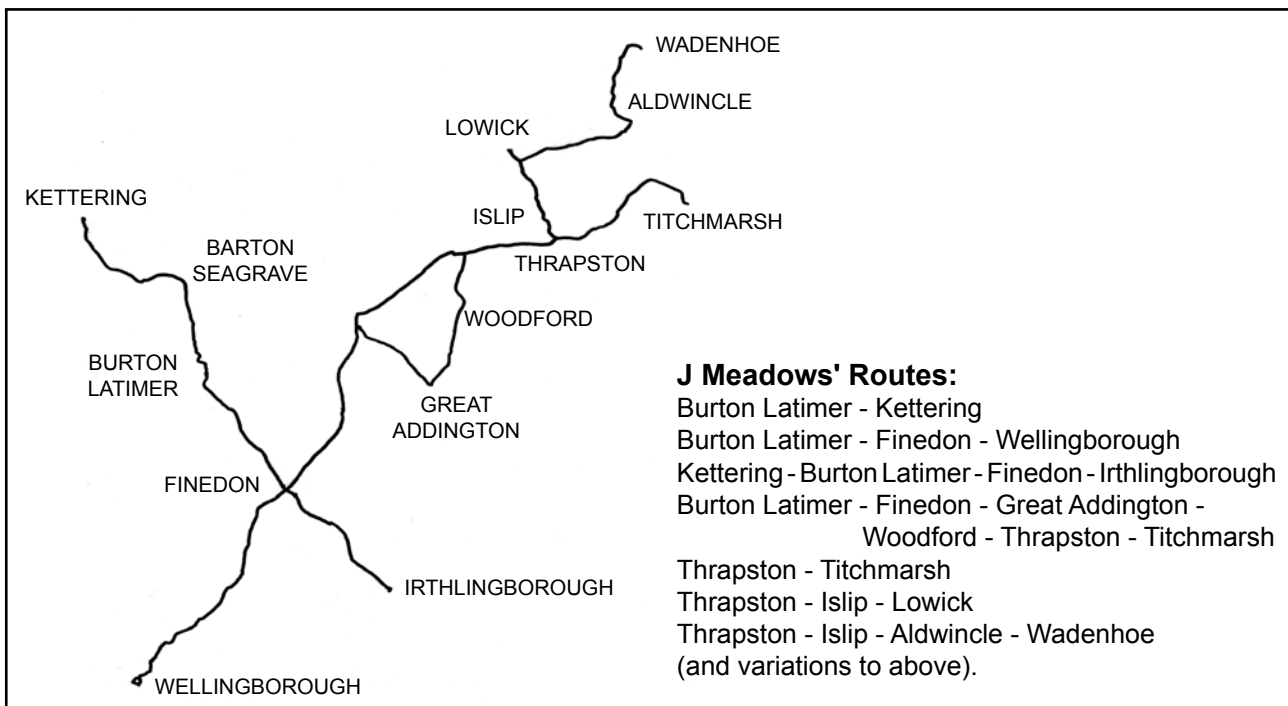
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MEADOWS, John - BURTON LATIMER



John Meadows' Halley lorry registered LR 7619, with which he operated his first bus service from Burton Latimer to Kettering in 1919. The photo was taken on the land at the rear of Regent House, Burton Latimer. John Meadows' daughter Lilian sits at the wheel of the truck and his son James is the lad in the back of the vehicle.



A route diagram of John Meadows' services.

MEADOWS, John - BURTON LATIMER

In March 1920 John Meadows bought a W&G chassis which probably carried a charabanc body and the name "Pansy" on its rear panel and this vehicle was registered BD 4218. By June 1920 Meadows was making an application to Wellingborough Urban District Council for permission to stand a bus within the town and this was granted for one vehicle, with subsequent renewals to June 1921 when a fourteen-seater was specified. Presumably John Meadows provided a link from Burton Latimer via Finedon to Wellingborough from this period on Wednesday market days. By November 1920 Meadows was operating a morning bus from Irthlingborough to Kettering via Finedon and Burton Latimer, departing from Irthlingborough at 8.30am.

John Meadows also inaugurated a number of routes in the Thrapston area and in August 1921 he commenced running a Tuesday market day bus from Burton Latimer via Finedon to Thrapston. Although initially routed directly from Finedon to Thrapston via A510/A604 roads, by March 1922 it had been diverted to serve Great Addington and Woodford. By this time it ran on Saturdays as well as Tuesdays. On Saturdays, whilst the bus was laying over at Thrapston, it was used to ply between Thrapston and Wadenhoe, Lowick or Titchmarsh. The following was the timetable in operation in May 1922.

THRAPSTON & DISTRICT 'BUS SERVICE.

TIME TABLE. TUESDAYS.

Leave	a.m.	Return	p.m.
Burton Latimer	10.25	From Thrapston	
Finedon	10.40	to	
Thrapston	11.15	Burton Latimer...	4.0
Titchmarsh, arr.	11.30		

SATURDAYS.

BURTON LATIMER AND THRAPSTON.			
Leave	p.m.	Return	p.m.
Burton Latimer...	3.0	Thrapston	10.0
Finedon	3.10	Woodford	10.20
Addington	3.30	Addington	10.30
Woodford	3.45	Finedon	10.50
Thrapston, arr.	4.0	Burton Lat., arr.	11.0

THRAPSTON AND WADENHOE.

Leave	p.m.	p.m.	Leave	p.m.	p.m.
Thrapston	4.25	8.55	Wadenhoe	5.0	9.25
Islip	4.35	9.0	Aldwinkle	5.10	9.35
Aldwinkle	4.45	9.15	Islip	5.25	9.50
Wadenhoe	4.55	9.25	Thrapston	5.30	9.55

THRAPSTON AND LOWICK.

Leave	p.m.	p.m.	Leave	p.m.	p.m.
Thrapston	5.30	8.20	Lowick	5.45	8.35
Islip	5.35	8.25	Islip	5.55	8.45
Lowick	5.40	8.35	Thrapston	6.0	8.50

THRAPSTON AND TITCHMARSH.

Leave	p.m.	p.m.	Leave	p.m.	p.m.
Thrapston	4.0	8.0	Titchmarsh	4.15	8.10
Titchmarsh	4.15	8.10	Thrapston	4.30	8.20

JOHN MEADOWS, Proprietor.
BURTON LATIMER.

Bygone Buses

of
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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MEADOWS, John - BURTON LATIMER

Ring up 28



Burton Latimer.

RIDE IN A SALOON
— ON PNEUMATIC TYRES —
FOR COMFORT.

PARTIES OF 20 CATERED FOR.

: JOHN MEADOWS, :
Victoria Street, Burton Latimer.

A facsimile of one of John Meadows' adverts which included a picture of one of his Lancia saloons which is most likely to have been BD 8270. This same design may also have been printed on card for advertising purposes.

John Meadows also provided special Christmas Day services between Kettering, Burton Latimer and Finedon to Wellingborough; between Irthlingborough, Finedon, Burton Latimer and Kettering; and between Finedon, Burton Latimer and Kettering respectively for the years 1921 to 1923 when other operators were not running services

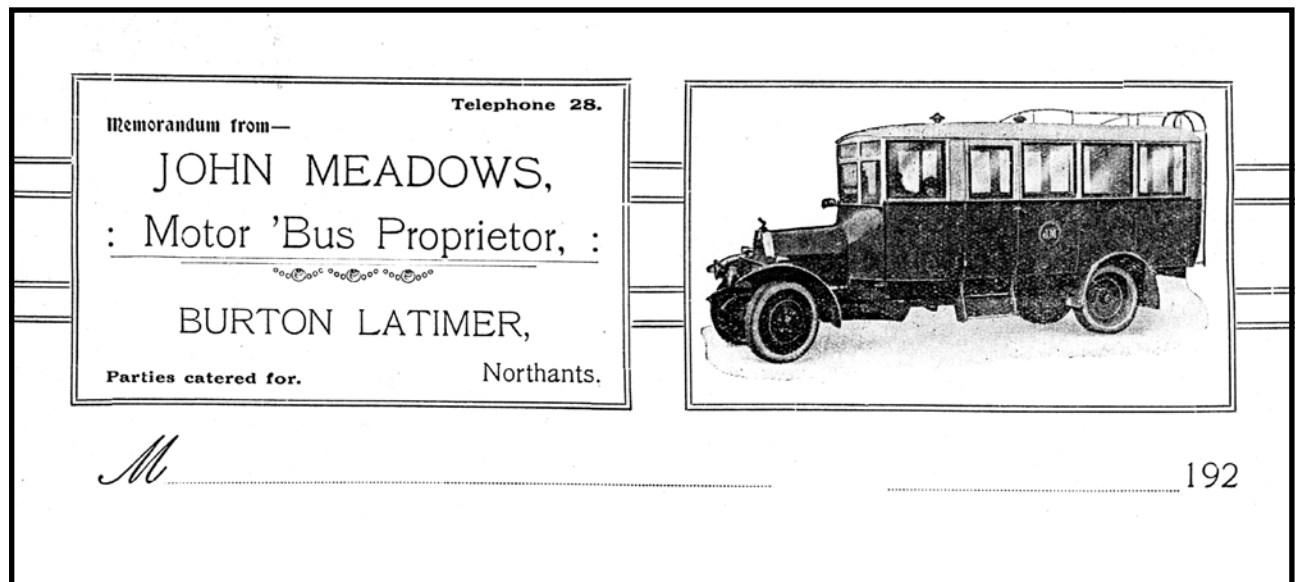
Applications were also lodged with the Northampton Borough Council Watch Committee during the June 1921 to March 1925 period for a motor charabanc or saloon to stand at Campbell Square but this is thought to have been an occasional excursion type of operation.

MEADOWS, John - BURTON LATIMER

During the period up to 1924 John Meadows is known to have purchased at least five new buses and he may have acquired others second hand. He bought two Thornycroft machines which were registered BD 4763 and BD 6177 respectively on 2nd July 1920 and 13th February 1922. John Meadows then turned to Lancia for the supply of his next two buses which were registered BD 8270 in August 1923 and BD 9688 on 1st July 1924. The latter vehicle was followed only weeks later by BD 9735, registered on 9th of the same month, being another example of W&G DuCros products built at Acton.

John Meadows built a large brick garage at the rear and to the side of Regent House to house his fleet and this building has survived to the present day.

At an unknown date in the latter half of 1924, John Meadows decided to join forces with brothers Harold and Walter Frost of Kettering to form **Meadows & Frost or M & F Motor Services** and the story of this partnership is continued in paper NN-ME2.



A facsimile of one of John Meadows' letterheads dating from the early 1920s.

STOCK NO.	REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
		MAKE	TYPE	NUMBER	MAKE	TYPE & SEATS	NUMBER	NEW	S/H	W/D			
LR 7619		Halley				Lorry/ B--R Chara?		c-/17	c-/18	?			
BD 4218		W & G		10095				3/20	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	1
BD 4763		Thornycroft	BT 30HP	8178		B14?		7/20	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	
BD 6177		Thornycroft		3139				2/22	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	
BD 8270		Lancia		SM12751		20		8/23	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	2
BD 9688		Lancia	Pentaiota	505		26		7/24	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	3
BD 9735		W & G		13768		B26		7/24	-	-/24		Meadows & Frost, Kettering	

Notes: 1 - BD 4218 probably named "Pansy" by Meadows.
 2 - Livery of BD 8270 - blue and black.
 3 - Livery of BD 9688 - red and cream