

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-HE1

Page 1

## HEAD, Joseph Edwin (Dick) & TOYNTON, Jack Milton Arms LUTTON

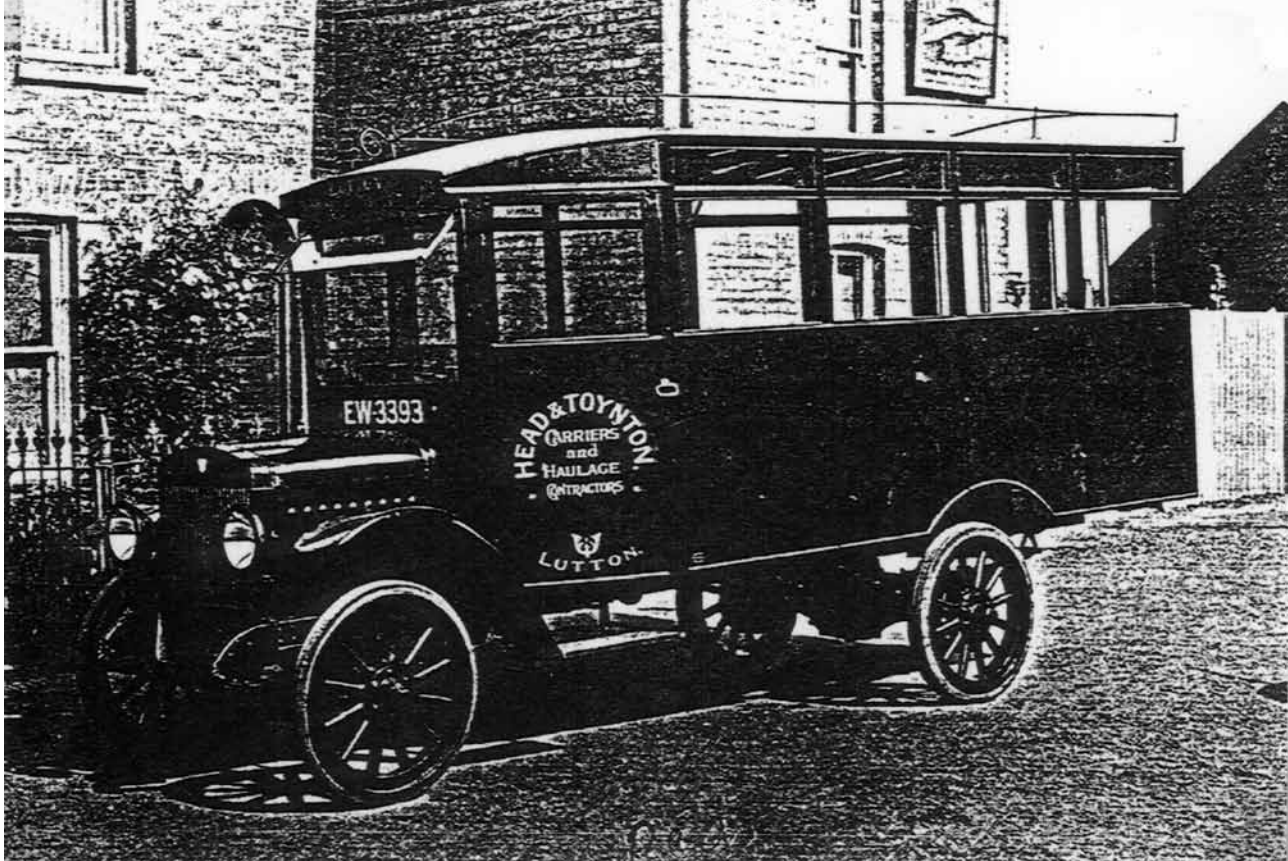
The village of Lutton in north-east Northamptonshire had a number of carriers in the latter half of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth. One of these listed in 1903 was Joseph Head but sadly his life was soon cut short which forced his wife Mary to continue the business until the beginning of the 1914-18 War. However, one of Joseph and Mary Head's sons, Edwin, who served in the armed forces during the Great War returned to civilian life in Lutton in 1919 and started his own carriers business using a former Army Thornycroft lorry. As was usual for carriers' services, passengers were conveyed as well as goods and Edwin's operation was no exception, as his tarpaulin-covered lorry ventured its way to Peterborough on Wednesday and Saturday market days and to Oundle on Thursdays. In reality Edwin Head's passengers travelled in sheer luxury for the time as, instead of the usual wooden forms provided as benches, his Thornycroft was graced with longitudinally placed upholstered seats that had seen earlier service in a cinema!

Edwin Head's mother, Mary, kept the Milton Arms at Lutton and it was from the yard of this public house that Edwin, always known as Dick, operated his business. A galvanised iron shed was erected on this site to house his lorry and, later, his buses. Interestingly, the former cinema seats used in the Thornycroft were later installed in the tap room of the Milton Arms! Nothing reusable was wasted in those days.

The new motorised carrier service was considerably faster than previous horse-drawn enterprises and as a result attracted ever-increasing numbers of passengers. By 1923 it was clear to Dick Head that his clientele required something better than a tarpaulin-covered lorry for their weekly trips into Oundle or Peterborough. Clearly a purpose-built bus was needed but this involved an outlay of two or three hundreds pounds which, no doubt, was too much for Dick on his own. Consequently he entered a partnership with Jack Toynton, son of the Lutton village blacksmith, George Toynton and on 7th July 1923 the pair purchased a brand new Maxwell twelve or fourteen-seat bus which was registered EW 3393. Henceforth they traded as Head & Toynton, Carriers and Haulage Contractors.

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.

### HEAD & TOYNTON - Lutton



*Head & Toynton's attractive Maxwell saloon bus EW 3393 which probably seated twelve passengers and retained accommodation for goods behind the rear passenger seats.*

To accommodate goods, the vehicle was fitted with a rear drop-down backboard which could be secured with chains to take the weight of heavier freight items. The livery of the Maxwell was olive green and thus, EW 3393 inaugurated the first real bus services from Lutton via Polebrook to Oundle and from Lutton via Folksworth and Norman Cross to Peterborough.

In fact Bert Saville, author of a local book titled "Mucky Lutton" recalls as a toddler being taken to Peterborough Bridge Fair by his grandmother on Head & Toynton's Maxwell. He writes:- "It was dark when we left Emerton's Yard (the bus terminus at Peterborough) for Lutton. The main road to Norman Cross had a fair surface, but from there on the road through Folksworth and Washingley was single track and had many pot holes. The Maxwell had electric lighting: whilst this illuminated the pot holes, they were not lit in sufficient time for Edwin to miss them. This would have been of small consequence except there were more passengers than could be accommodated inside and several young men were standing outside on the backboard. The journey was punctuated by their cries of alarm each time the bus lurched when a wheel dropped into a pot hole. It was a journey which several Lutton people remembered for the rest of their lives."

### HEAD & TOYNTON - Lutton

Evidently passenger numbers continued to increase and three years later a larger bus was required. This time a twenty-seat Dennis was purchased through Messrs G H Skinner of Cowbit Road, Spalding and registered RP 2718 on 6th June 1926. It is understood that this machine replaced the Maxwell which was subsequently used by others as an agricultural vehicle, ending its days in the Wisbech area in January 1935.

Edwin Head and Jack Toynton continued their partnership until either late in 1928 or early in 1929 when Edwin left Lutton and moved to become licensee of the Fox at Catworth. At about the same time the Toynton family moved to Molesworth to take over a blacksmith's business there. Head & Toynton were certainly still trading in July 1928 as Dick Head was reported for a road traffic irregularity whilst driving RP 2718 at this time.

However, this was not the end of the tale and, whilst not taking over the carriers business, Edwin's nephew - Tom Head - soon filled the gap left at Lutton by the cessation of Head & Toynton's bus operations. Tom Head's interesting story will be related in paper NN-HE1A.



*This photograph of a group of Lutton men taken at the Milton Arms, shows Edwin Head on the left of the back row, with Tom Head and Jack Toynton on the right of the front row.*

*I am indebted to Bert Saville, formerly of Lutton, for his valued assistance in the research of this paper.*

### HEAD & TOYNTON - Lutton

#### Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
?	Thornycroft	?		?	Lorry/ bus	-	?	-/19	7/23	War Department		
EW 3393	Maxwell	?	434743	?	B12F?	-	7/23	-	6/26	-		1
RP 2718	Dennis	?	50525	?	B20F	-	6/26	-	-/28	Supplied by G H Skinner, Spalding		2

NOTES: 1 - Last owned by J Farrow, Bowthorpe Hall, Wisbech and last licensed 1/35.  
2 - Last owned by E Dorman, Stanground and last licensed as goods vehicle 6/32.