

## SCROXTON. Charles Henry 8 Portland Road, RUSHDEN

Edward Scroxton, a native of Rushden who moved to Podington in Bedfordshire when he got married but returned to Rushden some years later, had two sons and two daughters. His two sons were named Charles Henry and Herbert and both featured prominently in the field of transport in the Rushden area, as a result of which, confusion can easily occur with regard to the particular activities in which each brother was engaged. Herbert Scroxton – always known as Bert – was probably the most widely known of the two as he later ran lorries which many of the older inhabitants of Rushden remember. Bert's story is considered further in paper NN-SC2.

However, Edward Scroxton and his two sons set up a furniture packing and removal business in the mid 1890s, based at 14 Portland Road, Rushden - the Scroxton family address. In September 1910 the business was sold to Alfred Packwood, a Carting Contractor, Coal & Firewood Merchant of 50 Park Road, Rushden and Bert Scroxton managed this enterprise for Alfred Packwood.

The subject of this paper – Charles Henry Scroxton – always known as Harry, operated passenger vehicles. Harry was born on 8th July 1881 and in the early part of the twentieth century started business with a horse and trap which he used principally to convey people arriving by train at Sharnbrook Station, to the Rushden area. Whilst engaged in this work Harry met Lillian Perkins whom he courted but in 1909 the two fell out and Lillian married William Case whilst Harry, on 3rd July 1909, married Annie Mabel Jacques. At this point Harry moved from his parents house at 14 Portland Road to 84 Crabb Street, from which address he continued his business in which he was described as a "Job Master". Meanwhile, the lady whom Harry had earlier courted and who in due course had married William Case had given birth to a son, in November 1909, whom she Christened Clifford. In 1916, William Case died, whilst his wife was again pregnant and in 1917 Harry Scroxton and his wife adopted Clifford Case when he was seven. It is generally believed that Clifford was in fact Harry's son.

As Harry Scroxton's horse drawn transport business grew he came to own quite a number of horses. At about the same time that his domestic upheaval was occurring it appears that

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

## NN-SC1

Page 2

### SCROXTON Charles Henry, RUSHDEN

a cat infected Harry's entire stock of horses with mange and all had to be destroyed! This catastrophe led Harry Scroxton to experiment with motorised transport and in May 1917 he bought a Clydesdale 35hp lorry onto which seats could be fitted for passenger work. It was registered BD 3563 on 1st May with the chassis being painted red and the body blue with white lettering. Many service personnel at this time gained valuable knowledge of mechanical vehicles through their War service, but Harry Scroxton did not have this advantage as he was medically unfit for military service. However, once owning motor vehicles, Harry established a carrier's service between Rushden and Leicester.

At an unknown date Harry and his wife moved from Crabb Street to 8 Portland Road, Rushden where undoubtedly he took advantage of the land and buildings available at the rear of these premises for stabling and garaging. What is known, however, is that in 1922 Anne Elizabeth Whitby bought the whole of the Portland Road site comprising numbers 6, 8 and 10 plus the land, stables and sheds behind the houses. Annie Whitby was the wife of Thomas Whitby, who also ran buses and who is the subject of a separate paper NN-WH1. The Whitby's occupied number 6 Portland Road and presumably moved at this time, or slightly earlier, from their previous address in Rushden. At the same time Thomas Whitby & Sons announced that they had taken over Harry Scroxton's Rushden to Leicester carrier's service. A couple of years later number 8 Portland Road was sold to Annie Mabel Scroxton in 1924.

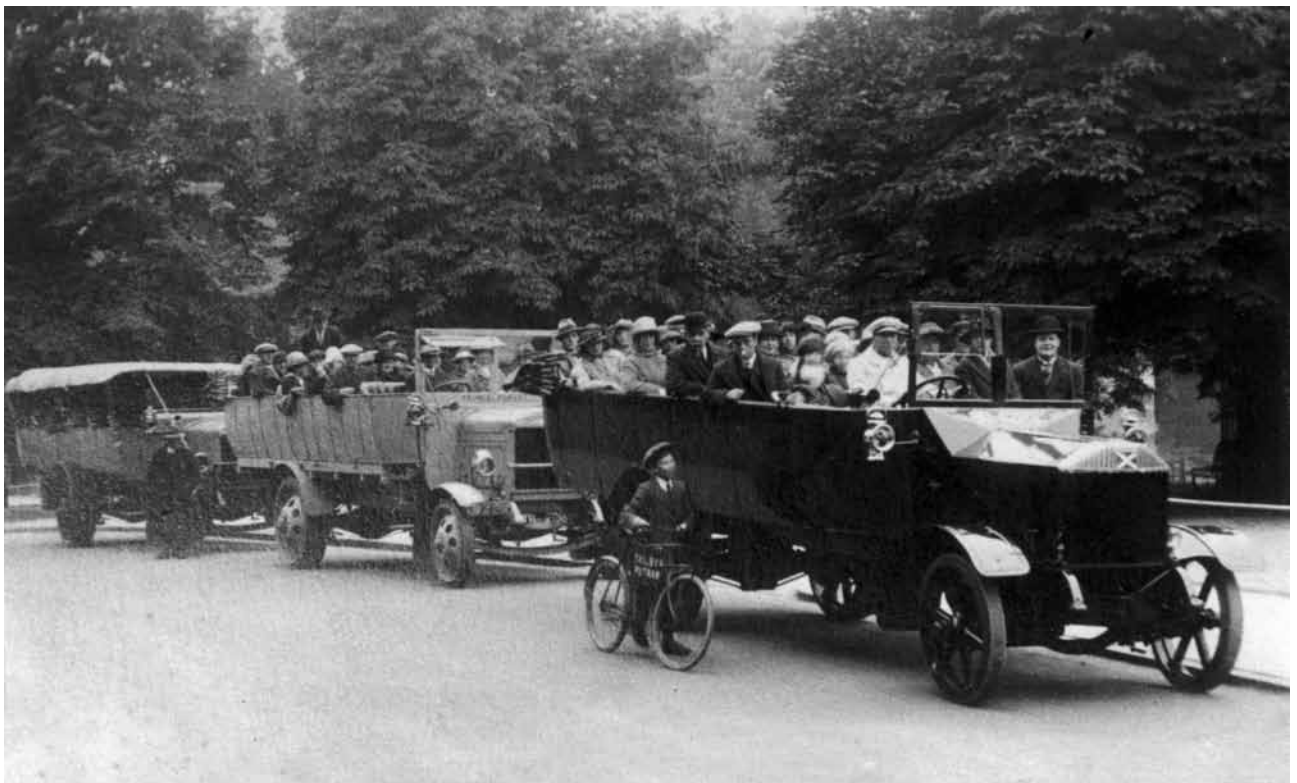
Harry Scroxton continued the passenger side of his business and he bought a Thornycroft 40hp charabanc which seated around twenty-three passengers on 7th June 1919 when it was registered BD 1220. The vehicle was apparently light green picked out in black. Harry Scroxton operated private hires with his two vehicles and on the occasions when more



*Thornycroft charabanc BD 1220 was well loaded when it was photographed outside "The Bell Inn" at Odell, in Bedfordshire, in 1919. Possibly the vehicle depicted at the rear of BD 1220 was conveying passengers that could not be squeezed into the charabanc.*

SCROXTON Charles Henry, RUSHDEN

were required he called in vehicles from his friend Alfred Jackson of Earls Barton. In February 1920 Harry Scroxton disposed of his Thornycroft charabanc BD 1220 to Thomas Whitby of Rushden, who was shortly to become a neighbour. With the money received from this sale, together with fresh capital, Harry Scroxton bought another new charabanc. The model chosen was a 40hp Caledon which seated about twenty-three passengers and which was registered BD 4283 on 25th March 1920. This vehicle, too, was painted green and picked out in black.



*Vehicles of Caledon manufacture were rarely seen in Northamptonshire but the large St. Andrew's Cross trade mark used by this firm can clearly be seen on the radiator of BD 4283 as it stands at Rushden Green, now the site of the War Memorial, prior to departing with Horace Wright's shoe factory outing to Cambridge in 1920. The vehicle behind – NH 2108 – was a Thornycroft belonging to Messrs Bagshaw of Kettering and behind that is another Thornycroft likely to have been either NH 2118 belonging to Jackson of Earls Barton or BD 5440 belonging to Asher Abbott of Rushden, presumably subcontracted by Harry Scroxton. Incidentally, the lad with the cycle was Clifford Case.*

Following the conclusion of the 1920 operating season, Harry Scroxton sold his original Clydesdale lorry-cum-bus to his brother Bert for use as a lorry. The Clydesdale's replacement was a Thornycroft charabanc which joined the fleet in February 1921 when on 21st of that month it was registered BD 5473. This time a red and black livery was chosen. As far as is known, the fleet remained static at this point for three years until March 1924 when a Maxwell was bought on 17th March and registered BD 9004. It is not so far evident whether this vehicle carried a saloon or a charabanc body but the registration records show that it was painted in a blue livery.

# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NN-SC1

Page 4

SCROXTON Charles Henry, RUSHDEN



*Harry Scroxton's second Thornycroft charabanc was BD 5473 and it is pictured here carrying scholars of St Mary's School. No doubt a second charabanc was being used on this occasion also, to convey the people standing alongside BD 5473.*

The next vehicle to be taken into stock was RP 2250 which was a 19-seat REO Pullman supplied by Messrs Allchin of Northampton. It had both front and rear passenger doors and was registered new on 24th March 1926. This vehicle and the earlier acquired Maxwell replaced Caledon BD 4283 and Thornycroft BD 5473 in Harry Scroxton's fleet.



*REO Pullman—RP 2250—had the words “Sun Saloon” painted on the sides of its coachwork and it is seen here with gleaming paintwork with Harry Scroxton standing alongside in equally immaculate white smock and cap.*



# Bygone Buses

of  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

## NN-SC1

Page 6

SCROXTON Charles Henry, RUSHDEN



*Harry Scroxton's handsome twenty-six seat Grose bodied Leyland Lion Cub registered NV 3606 is shown in this illustration. The horseshoe emblem on the side contains the initials C.H.S.*

### Rolling Stock:

REGN. NO.	CHASSIS			BODY			DATES			PREVIOUS OWNER	INITIAL DISPOSAL	NOTES
	MAKE	TYPE	NO.	MAKE	TYPE/ SEATS	NO.	NEW	S/H	W/D			
BD 3563	Clydesdale	35hp			Lorry/ bus		5/17	—	11/20	Supplied W Rinman, London (Dealer).	Bert Scroxton, Rushden T Whitby, Rushden	1
BD 1220	Thornycroft	J - 40hp	4018		Chara 23		6/19	—	2/20			
BD 4283	Caledon	40hp			Chara 23		3/20	—	3/24?			
BD 5473	Thornycroft	J	8533		Chara 23		2/21	—	3/26?			2
BD 9004	Maxwell		360059		?		3/24	—	?			3
RP 2250	REO	Pullman	1877		C19D		3/26	—	3/34?	Supplied Allchin, N'pton (Dealer)		4
?	G.M.C.											
NV 3606	Leyland	Lion Cub SKP5	3037	Grose	C26F		3/34	—	4/38		Birch Bros, Kentish Town	6

- Notes:
- 1 - Whilst basically a lorry, this vehicle was used as a public conveyance.
  - 2 - Last owned by F Odell, Bedford and last licensed as a goods vehicle 7/36.
  - 3 - Last owned by A Nutt, Buckhurst Hill, Essex and last licensed 6/30.
  - 4 - Last owned by J Morris, Steeple Claydon and last licensed 6/47.
  - 5 - It is possible that Scroxton operated a G.M.C. which was painted orange and had "Sun Saloon" on the sides
  - 6 - The chassis number 2695 is also quoted for this vehicle and Burlingham given as the coachbuilder.

SCROXTON Charles Henry, RUSHDEN

Since the publication of this paper in 2002, revised in 2014, the photograph reproduced below has come to light. It depicts Charles Scroxton's Thornycroft J-type charabanc registered BD 5473 which is said to be engaged on a Band of Hope outing and photographed at the junction of Manton Road/ Park Road, Rushden. The driver was Bert Scroxton.

