

# A comparison of The Peterson Eccles with other early Eccles caravans

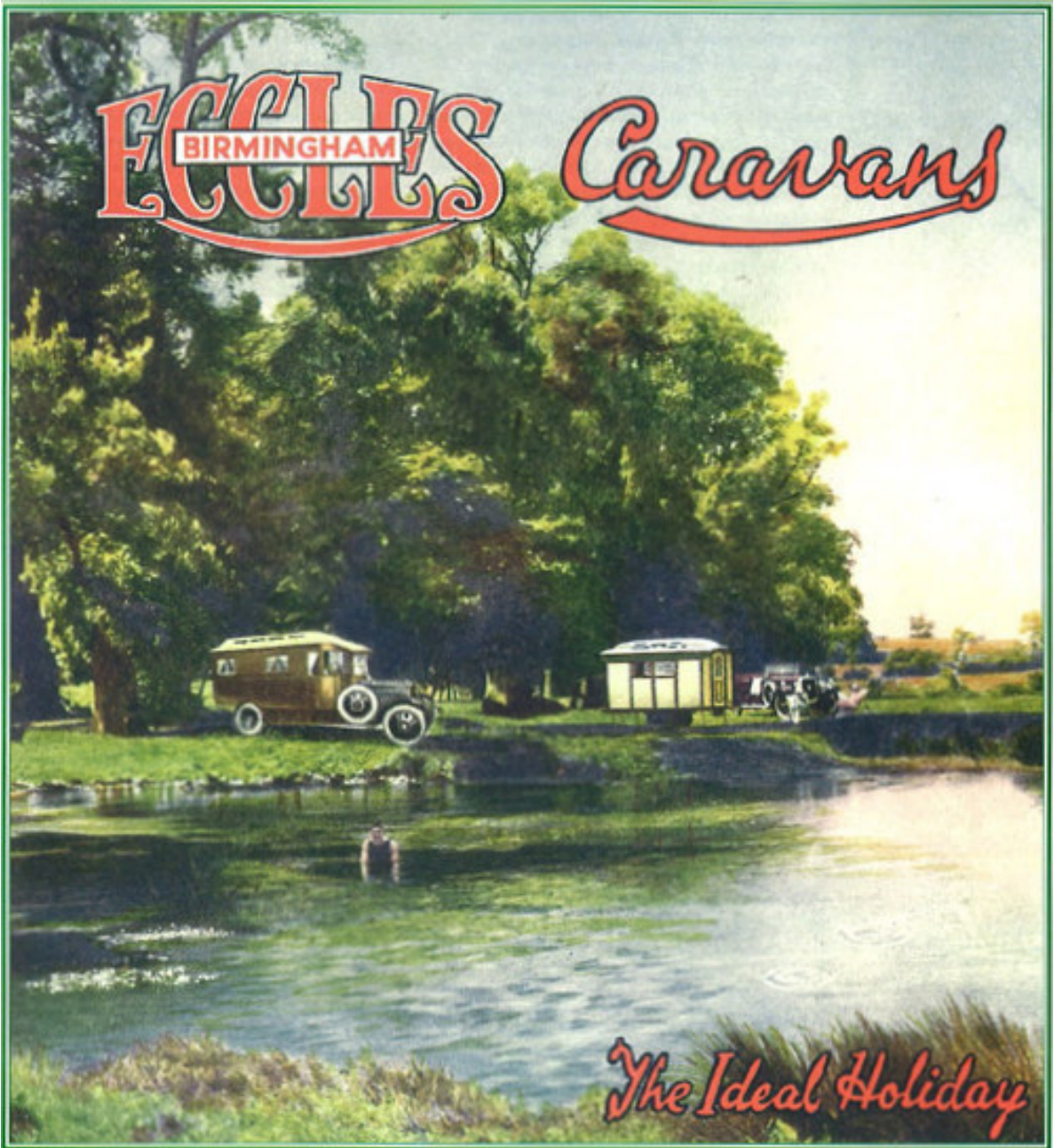


The Peterson Eccles

“Collectors are always looking for the very best example.”

– Expert, Antique Road Show, BBC television

# ECCLES BIRMINGHAM Caravans



*The Ideal Holiday*

**The Autocar** 4<sup>D</sup>

FOUNDED 1899

MOTOR CARAVANS  
TRAILER CARAVANS  
COLLAPSIBLE  
TRAILER CARAVANS  
LUGGAGE TRAILERS

**EGGLES**  
THE HALL MARK OF QUALITY  
EGGLES MOTOR CARAVANS, LTD  
STIRCHLEY, BIRMINGHAM

DUNLOP TYRES FITTED AS STANDARD

**EGGLES** BIRMINGHAM *Caravans*

**Vintage & Classic Caravans**  
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*The Hall-mark of Quality*

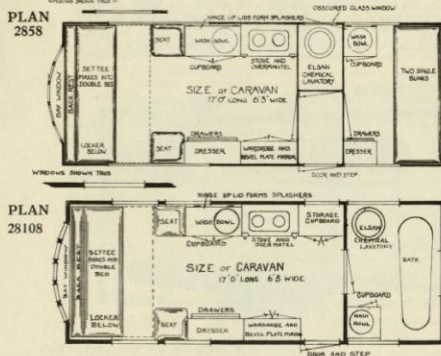
# ECCLES de Luxe Living Caravans ON FOUR WHEELS



ECCLES  
FOUR-WHEEL  
LIVING VAN,  
17 FT. LONG



Interior Eccles Living Van showing  
the settee which turns over to form a  
double-bed, also a stove and overmantel.  
Behind is a large airing cupboard.  
Many of these Vans are fitted with a  
coil range.



As our de Luxe models, on four wheels, pneumatic tyres, with lantern roof. Suitable for trailing with motor lorry. Completely furnished and equipped as our de Luxe models.

**PLAN 2858** 17' long  
Pannelled in steel armoured plywood, light French-polished .. £375  
Ditto, in jacobean coloured oak polish, with leaded windows and bay window at front .. £400  
Double walls, extra in each case .. £35  
Aluminium armoured plywood, extra in each case .. £20  
If built on four wheels with iron tyres the prices will be less  
We can also build this Caravan more on the lines of our plain models without lantern roof and interior furniture, arranged to give stove, wash-bowl sink and wardrobe, no chemical lavatory but beds for six people. Price in steel armoured plywood, light polish .. £300

**PLAN 28108** 17' long  
With Bathroom fitted with 4 ft. bath. Roof Tank, and geyser for Hot Water .. £410  
Pannelled in steel armoured plywood, light French polished .. £410  
Ditto, in Jacobean coloured Oak finish, with leaded windows and bay window at front .. £435

Double walls and other prices as for plan 2858 on this page. Extra as above



# ECCLES Vans and Living Wagons which have been built for Showmen.



- 1.—An attractive little ECCLES Van on a ten Ford chassis, used for the distribution of leaflets and the posting of bills.
- 2.—ECCLES 11ft. Living Wagon painted in crimson lake, picked out in real English gold leaf.
- 3.—ECCLES 11ft. Living Wagon. Note the pan boxes under the back.
- 4.—Interior of ECCLES Living Wagon with Hostess No. 35 range, overmantel. This wagon was built with our turn-over pattern of settee bed.
- 5.—Interior of ECCLES Showman's Living Wagon with hand-painted ceiling.
- 6.—Interior of ECCLES Showman's Wagon with showman's type of bed place. The interior of this wagon was lined with French-polished oak.

Plans, particulars and prices of any of these Caravans on application.



## *Evidence of Classic Living Wagons of the era of The Peterson Eccles*

### THE 1926 ECCLES AT THE NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM, BEAULIEU, UK



In the words of Angela Cox, the museum's specialist curator for their caravan collection, the Eccles in their museum (above) is ***“very plain indeed compared to the detailing in [The Peterson Eccles]”***. She also added that “the more detailed vans such as your example would have been built to order with specific requirements added to basic designs”.

### A 1926 ECCLES FORMERLY OWNED BY JOHN POCKETT



This is the earliest Eccles seen by John Pockett, one of the world's leading Vardo artists. It has wood panelling on the outside and 'T.D.' on the windows (T. Deadman were gypsy carpet hawkers). Colin Thorpe has restored this caravan and John Pockett painted the flower ceiling himself. The wagon now resides in Guilford, Surrey.



**A 1926 Eccles special caravan**



**A Late 1920's Eccles**



**Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, being presented with his Rolls Royce and Eccles Caravan at the 1929 World Jamboree**



**The Baden-Powell Eccles**

In 1929, during the 3rd World Scout Jamboree held at Arrowe Park, Liverpool, Lord Baden-Powell received as a present a new 20-horsepower Rolls-Royce car and an Eccles Caravan. This combination well served the Baden-Powells in their further travels around Europe.

The caravan was nicknamed Eccles and is now on display at Gilwell Park. The car, nicknamed Jam Roll, was sold after his death by Olave Baden-Powell in 1945. Jam Roll and Eccles were reunited at Gilwell for the 21st World Scout Jamboree in 2007. Recently it has been purchased on behalf of Scouting and is owned by a charity, B-P Jam Roll Ltd.



**A 1926 Eccles**



**1928 Eccles**  
photograph via the Historic Caravan Club



### A 1927 ECCLES

A wagon like this - smaller than the Peterson Eccles and incomparable in terms of craftsmanship and restoration - is on display at Gordon Boswell's Romany Museum in Spalding, Lincolnshire, for public viewing. In 2008 it was featured at the Antiques Roadshow (BBC television programme) from Wisley Gardens in 2008.

*Mr Boswell was highly impressed with the Peterson Eccles and thinks there will*

*be no more than a couple of caravans of similar style and age to it (but not necessarily quality) in the UK.*

### A 1927 (unconfirmed) ECCLES FORMERLEY OWNED BY JOHN POCKETT



John Pockett discovered the above Eccles in Yorkshire and bought it off Showman Owen Smith. John sold it to one Mike Leigh who sold it on to one Julian Wolfe.



It is pictured below left in state of incomplete restoration (internally and externally) and has not been returned to its original colours. These smaller Showman's Wagons were often used by fortune tellers who did not require so much space for equipment (just room for a crystal ball, a bird in a cage and a pack of cards) and could be towed by a large family saloon car instead of steam traction engines and large lorries. However, they had all the style and craftsmanship of the larger more expensive models.

**SIMILARLY STYLED WAGON TO THE PETERSON ECCLES, FORMERLY OWNED BY JOHN POCKETT**



The Eccles in the picture (photographed in the early 1980's) was, says John Pockett, "the best one I ever owned".

John said it was very similar to the Peterson Eccles, in terms of general style, except that the door is at one end rather than in the middle and it had low windows front and back. John bought it from an old Showman on the North Wales coast and lived in for around one year.

***He then sold it to Ronnie Lane (of the 'Small Faces' band to which Rod Stewart belonged).***

The wagon has since been in two museums, one in South Wales and another in Cornwall. Now it is owned by a traveller in the Midlands, one Raymond Clee. He is restoring it with John Pockett's help, as its condition has suffered considerably in the last 30 years or so.

***John Pockett said of the Peterson Eccles, "The Petersons are making a truly beautiful job of the restoration."***





*Outside the 4 acre single storey Eccles Factory in Hazelwell Lane, Stirchley, Birmingham, in the late 1920's.*

*Believed to be the first purpose built caravan factory of its kind in the world it was fitted with the latest high tech woodwork machinery. It was here that 'overrun brake systems' were invented and these are still fitted on caravans produced today.*

*During World War 11 orders for caravans virtually stopped however the Eccles factory survived by adapting to the war situation. Commissioned by the British Military Authorities the Eccles factory still produced caravan bodies but these were used as portable workshops and radio offices.*

*Post war production at the factory continued until 1960 when Eccles founder Bill Riley retired and sold the business to Sprite Caravans of Newmarket who in 1996 sold to the Swift Group.*

*Throughout this journey historical records relating to these unique caravans have fallen through the cracks of time, leaving only the mystery of a lost era of quality workmanship and breathtaking artistry.*

***2019 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the glorious Eccles brand.***

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