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Cover Illustration: No. 11 (JTE496) was a 1948 Leyland PD2/1 with East Lancs H30/26R bodywork. (John Kaye).

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Rossendale Valley Tramways Company 1889-1908 Rawtenstall Corporation Transport 1908-1909

Authorised by the Rossendale Tramways Act of 1888 and owned and operated by the Rossendale Valley Tramways Company, this steam tramway consisted of a single line track built to 4ft gauge and ran south from Crawshawbooth along Burnley Road to Queens Square in Rawtenstall (where it was joined by an extension of the Accrington Steam Tramways line from the boundary at Lockgate), then turned east, following the line of the River Irwell, the road and the railway for 4½ miles to the neighbouring town of Bacup. The section between Rawtenstall and Bacup opened on the 31 January 1889, followed in 1891 by the line to Crawshawbooth, a total of just over 6½ miles.

The initial service was operated using 9 (Nos. 1-9), Thomas Green locomotives hauling Milnes double-deck bogie trailer cars (Nos. 1-10). Additions to the rolling stock were made in 1893 and 1894, when two more (Nos. 10-11) Green locos arrived, followed in 1901 by a similar engine (No. 12) purchased from Blackburn Corporation, along with additional Ashbury trailer cars (Nos. 11-12), also ex-Blackburn, in 1899.

Although no official records tell us of the tramway livery, there is in existence at least one tinted postcard dating from 1906, showing a trailer

car wearing a chocolate and cream livery hauled by a rather rusty (brown) steam loco (known locally as 'armoured trams' because of the metal cladding on the steam engine), which may possibly be an approximation of the actual livery.

The Company was purchased by the BET in 1900 and plans were made to electrify the system, but wrangling between Rawtenstall and Bacup councils delayed permission until the 21-year lease on the tramway had almost expired and the system was eventually purchased, jointly by both councils, on 1st October 1908, with Rawtenstall Corporation operating the system on behalf of both parties. The steam trams continued to be operated by the new owners until 22 July 1909, the last regular use of steam traction on a street tramway in Britain.

Steam Tram Fleet List 1889-1909

This listing is in the following format: Year into service; Fleet No; Manufacturer.

Steam Locomotives

1889	1-9	Thomas	Green
1893	10	Thomas	Green
1894	11	Thomas	Green
1901	12	Thomas	Green

No. 12 ex-Blackburn Corporation (fleet number unknown but Blackburn had 14 (Nos. 1-14), all were new in 1887). Withdrawn **1909** (1-12).

Trailer Cars

This listing is in the following format - Year into service; Fleet No; Type; Manufacturer; Seating.

1889	1-10	Double-deck enclosed bogie	Milnes	30/30?
1899	11-12	Double-deck enclosed bogie	Ashbury	30/30

Nos. 11-12 ex-Blackburn Corporation (fleet numbers unknown but Blackburn had 12 (Nos. 1-12), new 1887 or 1888). Withdrawn 1909 (1-12).



Thomas Green loco No. 6 of the Rossendale Valley Tramways Company towing a Milnes trailer car. The company was acquired by Rawtenstall Corporation in 1908 who continued to operate the tramway until electrification of the system the following year. (LTHL collection).

Rawtenstall Corporation Transport 1907-1968

Horse drawn coaches were running on regular services through Rawtenstall by at least 1824, when the mail coach 'John Bull' was recorded running to Skipton, Burnley and Colne every Saturday and Sunday afternoon and every Tuesday evening through Rawtenstall. 'The Union' ran daily to Colne, passing through Rawtenstall and Burnley en route (in the afternoon on Sunday, Thursday and Friday, and in the evening on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday).

Horse omnibuses had made an appearance in the area by 1864, when the Bacup Omnibus Conveyance and Livery Stable Company commenced operating between Bacup and Rochdale. Further services were subsequently provided to Haslingden, Burnley and Water. By 1881, they were advertising five journeys a day between Rawtenstall and neighbouring Bacup, operating from stables close by the Bishop Blaize Hotel in Rawtenstall centre.

The 'Princess Alice', a wagonette owned by the proprietor of the Commercial Hotel, Haslingden, ran a scheduled service connecting Baxenden with Rawtenstall via Haslingden in the 1880's, but ceased around 1887 when steam trams began operating between the same points.

In November 1887 the Accrington Steam Tramways Company opened a line from Queens Square in Rawtenstall town centre to Lockgate as an extension of the Company's steam tramway from Accrington. This section was constructed under powers originally intended to authorise an extension of the Manchester, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham Steam Tramway Company line coming from Bacup and Rochdale, but this part of the MBRO system was never built.

In 1889 a second steam tramway opened. Authorised by the Rossendale Tramways Act of 1888 and operated by the Rossendale Valley Tramways Company, it was a single line track joining Crawshawbooth, just north of the town, and Bacup to the east, via Queen's Square in Rawtenstall town centre, where it connected with the line to Lockgate.

By now the Bacup Omnibus Conveyance and Livery Stables had become the Rossendale Division Carriage Company Ltd and by 1907 was operating a double-deck motorbus between Rawtenstall and the Burnley (Summit) terminus. It was abandoned around the time of the opening of the electric tramway extension to Loveclough. Although the company introduced further routes (Bacup to Deerplay, and Bacup to Sharneyford) the intervention of the First World War brought these activities to a halt and subsequently the Company dropped the stage services in favour of the coaching trade.

On 16 December 1907, Rawtenstall Corporation inaugurated a motorbus route along the Lumb Valley from Waterfoot to Water, using a single open-top

double-deck Ryknield. It was joined in February 1908 by a second similar vehicle. Liveried in blue and cream, they proved unsatisfactory and the service was withdrawn in September 1910, although one (FA157) saw subsequent service as a Corporation tower wagon until the demise of the tramways around 1932.

In January 1908 Rawtenstall Corporation acquired the portion of the Accrington Steam Tramway Company's line that lay within its boundary, and on the 1 October 1908 Rawtenstall and Bacup Councils jointly purchased the Rossendale Steam Tramway Company and commenced electrification of the system, although the steam trams continued to run until 22 July 1909, memorable as the last regular use of steam traction on a street tramway in Britain.

On the 15 May 1909, the first section of electric track to open was that to Crawshawbooth and the newly constructed extension to Loveclough, %-mile further north towards Burnley, which was never reached, despite proposals for an extension to Burnley's Summit terminus. The two termini were connected by a horse bus service, operated by a Mr Hargreaves, until he was ousted by the motorbus.

On 23 July 1909, the Bacup to Lockgate section of the old steam tramway was opened to the electric trams, but agreement on the through running of cars to Accrington was not reached until 1 April 1910; in the meantime

passengers were forced to change cars at Lockgate to continue their journey. Finally, an extension to Water, branching from the Bacup line at Waterfoot was opened on the 21 January 1911 to complete the 11¾-mile single-track system.

The initial rolling stock consisted of 16 (Nos. 1-16), top-covered double-deck cars from the United Electric Company of Preston. Two similar double-deckers (Nos. 17-18) arrived in 1912, along with six (Nos. 19-24) single-deck cars, equipped with magnetic and slipper brakes, primarily for the steep route to Water. The final additions came in 1922 with a batch of eight (Nos. 25-32) Brush-built fully enclosed double-deckers.

In September 1923, Ribble Motor Services, who had extended their sphere of operations as far as Blackburn over the previous few years and now had an eye on the major towns to the south, submitted applications for routes from Burnley through Rawtenstall to Bolton, to Bury and to Rochdale, as well as a route through Bacup to Todmorden. Rawtenstall Corporation declined to issue any licences and instead approved the promotion of a Bill in the next session of Parliament, authorising the Corporation to operate motorbuses themselves. Bacup Council similarly declined the Ribble proposal but approved a simultaneous request by Todmorden Corporation to operate via the town to Burnley.

On the 9 August 1924, motorbuses were introduced on services between Rawtenstall and Newchurch, and Rawtenstall via Loveclough to Burnley (but due to the refusal of Burnley Corporation to issue the necessary licences it could operate only as far as the tram terminus at the Summit. Passengers had to change to a Burnley tram to travel onward). The initial motorbus fleet consisted of 6 (Nos. 33-38) Leyland SG9's with Leyland B40D bodies in a maroon and cream livery with gold lining out.

On the 1 September 1924 the Edenfield to Rawtenstall (Railway Station) route operated by Ramsbottom UDC was acquired along with two Thornycroft vehicles. Shortly afterwards the Corporation extended the service south from Edenfield to nearby Bury and joined it with the route to Burnley (Summit), the through route being operated jointly from 21 November 1924 by Bury, Ramsbottom and Rawtenstall Corporations, although it ceased on 31 March 1932, leaving just the Bury to Rawtenstall section jointly operated.

In 1928, Rawtenstall Corporation commenced an express bus service, following the tram route, from Bacup to Accrington, via Rawtenstall and Haslingden. The service was worked jointly with both Accrington and Haslingden Corporations and sounded the death knell for the tram service.

In 1929, the decision was taken to abandon the trams altogether. On the 1 May 1930, the express service became a stage carriage service replacing

the trams completely, and in 1931 the Loveclough tram service ceased, followed on the 31 March 1932 by that to Water, although the official closing ceremony did not take place until 7 days later on the 7 April 1932.

By this time a further bus route had been introduced - from Waterfoot to Cowpe, although disagreement with Bacup Council caused a halt to the service. In June 1930, after Bacup Council had at last agreed to Rawtenstall Corporation operating services within its boundary, a route from Waterfoot through Stacksteads and then via New Line to Britannia, commenced.

The first double-deckers in the fleet since the Ryknields arrived in 1931. Nos. 53-57 (TF4236-37; TF6081-82; TF6856) were Leyland TD1's with Leyland H27/24R bodywork, a combination that was to be favoured until Leyland ceased bodybuilding, although Leyland chassis continued to be purchased until the demise of the Corporation in 1968.

Following the initial flurry of applications, the Rawtenstall Corporation route network settled down to enjoy a long period of stability with little change.

The obligatory Guy Arab (No. 37; FTD450) arrived during the Second World

War. The only non-Leyland vehicle in the fleet it lasted remarkably well and was withdrawn in 1964 after 21 years service.

In 1949, the General Manager of Rawtenstall also assumed responsibility for the operations of Haslingden Corporation. Over the following years various schemes were mooted for the amalgamation of the two fleets (along with that of nearby Ramsbottom UDC, which also shared the same General Manager), but nothing came of them.

During the 1960's Todmorden JOC withdrew the Todmorden to Burnley service that had been operating since the early 1920's and Rawtenstall Corporation was called upon to provide replacement services between Bacup and Sharneyford, and Bacup and Burnley (jointly with Ribble Motor Services).

It was not until the 1 April 1968 that the Rawtenstall and Haslingden fleets finally joined together (Ramsbottom having decided to go it alone) to form the Rossendale Joint Transport Committee, ending over 60 years of operations by Rawtenstall Corporation.

Tram Fleet List 1909-1932

This listing is in the following format - Tear into service; Fleet No; Type; Trucks; Body; Seating.

1909

1-16 Double-deck balcony 4-wheel Preston UEC 22/29

Withdrawn **1932** (1-16).

1912

17-18 Double-deck balcony 4-wheel Brill UEC 22/28 19-24 Single-deck 4-wheel Preston UEC 30

Withdrawn 1932 (17-24).

1922

25-32 Double-deck enclosed bogie Brush Burnley Brush 30/42

Withdrawn 1932 (25-32).



The first electric trams in the fleet included No. 3, this 1909 United Electric Car built 4wheel double-deck with balcony top cover. (LTHL collection).



No. 19 was one of the 6 single-deck trams in the fleet - primarily for use on the Water route. It was built by the United Electric Car Company of Preston and seated 30. (LTHL collection).

Bus Fleet List 1907-1968

This list is in the following format - Year into service; Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

1907

- FA157 Ryknield 40/50 hp ?? ?? 016/18RO

Withdrawn 1910 (FA157).

1908

- FA159 Ryknield 40/50 hp ?? ?? 016/18RO

Withdrawn 1910 (FA159).

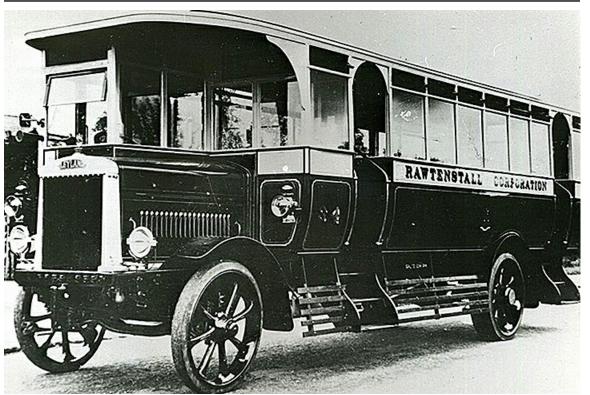


Rawtenstall's first bus was FA157 a 1907 Ryknield with 34-seat bodywork by an unknown builder. (LTHL collection).

33-36	TC9001-04	Leyland SG9	13031-34	Leyland	B40D
37-38	TC9690-91	Leyland SG9	13074-75	Leyland	B40D
39	TC5979	Thornycroft J	10478	Roe	B26F
40	TC4907	Thornycroft J	9271	Roe	B26D

Nos. 39-40 ex-Ramsbottom UDC (Nos. 10, 9; new 1924 and 1923 respectively); re-numbered 45-46 respectively (in 1927?). There are varying reports about these vehicles from a number of sources. Rawtenstall Corporation records show them to have been purchased in 9/24 and taken out of service in 1927 for rebuilding. It is possible that TC780 (Ramsbottom UDC No. 8 - another Thornycroft J, which was withdrawn by Ramsbottom in 1927) was used, possibly for spares, during this period as this vehicle is also mentioned by some sources as being in Rawtenstall at this time. TC4907 is reported to have been returned to service bearing fleet number 46. The fate of TC5979 is unclear. The PSV Circle quote from a fleet list dated October 1928 that describes No. 45 as TC780 OR TC5979, which seems to suggest that TC780 was at Rawtenstall, but also suggests that whichever vehicle was to bear the fleet number 45 was not then operational. It is known that one vehicle was in a partially dismantled state when sold and it remains a possibility that rebuilding was not completed and that the vehicle never re-entered service.

Withdrawn 1929 (39-40[45-46]), 1931 (33-35, 37), 1933 (36, 38).



No. 34 (TC9002), one of the initial Leyland SG9's with Leyland 40-seat dual-entrance bodywork that were used to re-introduced bus services in 1924. (LTHL collection).

41-42 TD2950-51 Leyland SG11 13218-19 Leyland B36D

Withdrawn 1933 (41-42).

1927

39-40	TD8926-27	Leyland PLSC1	45597-98	Leyland	B29F
43-44	TD8678-79	Leyland PLSC1	45595-96	Leyland	B31R

Withdrawn 1934 (40, 44), 1937 (39, 43).

1930

47	TF1099	Leyland TS2	61121	Leyland	B30R
48	TF1181	Leyland TS2	61122	Leyland	B30R
49-52	TF1182-85	Leyland LT1	50790-92/99	Leyland	B30R

No. 51 re-seated to B32R at a later date. Withdrawn **1938** (49-52), **1939** (48), **1940** (47).



No. 41 (TD2950) was a 1925 Leyland SG11 with Leyland 36-seat dual-entrance bodywork. The forward entrance is barely visible in this photograph although the gap in the guard rail gives away the location. (LTHL collection).

53-54	TF4236-37	Leyland TD1	71854/81	Leyland	H27/24R
55-56	TF6081-82	Leyland TD1	72212-13	Leyland	H27/24R
57	TF6856	Leyland TD1	72305	Leyland	H27/24R
58-59	TF6857-58	Leyland TS1	61934-35	Leyland	B30R
60-62	TF6859-61	Leyland LT3	51763-65	Leyland	B36R

Nos. 53-57 re-seated to H30/24R at a later date. Withdrawn **1939** (58-59), **1945** (53, 60), **1946** (56), **1947** (54-55, 61-62), **1948** (57).

1932

1-10	TF7894-903	Leyland TD2	1102-11	Leyland	H27/24R
11-12	TF8372-73	Leyland TD2	1114-15	Leyland	H27/24R
13-14	TF9180-81	Leyland TD2	1112-13	Leyland	H27/24R

Withdrawn 1947 (14), 1948 (3, 11-13), 1949 (1-2, 4-10).



No. 61 (TF6860), a 1931 Leyland LT3 with Leyland B36R bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1947 and subsequently used as a snowplough. (LTHL collection).



1931 all-Leyland TD1 No. 54 (TF4237) with 51-seat bodywork when new. It was later re-seated for 54 passengers and remained in the fleet until 1947. (LTHL collection).

15-16 TJ569-70 Leyland TD2 2399-400 Leyland H30/24R 17-18 TJ2468-69 Leyland TD3 3023-24 Northern Counties H30/24R

Nos. 17-18 re-bodied by Northern Coachbuilders to H30/26R in 1944 and 1945 respectively. Withdrawn **1943** (15), **1947** (16), **1952** (18), **1953** (17).

1934

19-20 TJ6673-74 Leyland TD3c 4800-01 Leyland

H30/24R

Nos. 19-20 re-seated to H30/26R at a later date. Withdrawn **1949** (19), **1950** (20).

1935

21-22 ATC121-22 Leyland TD4 7644-45 Leyland

H28/26R

Nos. 21-22 re-bodied by Burlingham to $\rm H30/26R$ in 1946 and 1947 respectively. Withdrawn 1955 (21-22).

23-24	BTB19-20	Leyland TD4	10496-97	Leyland	H30/26R
25	BTB120	Leyland TD4	10498	Leyland	H30/26R
26	BTB119	Leyland TD4c	10495	Leyland	H30/24R

Withdrawn **1953** (23-26).

1937

27-28 CTB713-14 Leyland TD5c 13957-58 Leyland H30/24R

Withdrawn 1955 (28), 1956 (27).

1938

29-34 CTJ161-66 Leyland TD5c 17575-80 Leyland H30/24R 45-46 DTD249-50 Leyland TS8c 301712-13 Leyland B36R

Withdrawn **1953** (45), **1955** (30, 33), **1956** (32), **1957** (46), **1958** (29, 31, 34).

35-36 DTJ56-57 Leyland TD5c 302712-13 Leyland H30/25R 50-52 DTJ58-60 Leyland TS8c 302714-16 Leyland B36R

Withdrawn 1954 (50), 1955 (51), 1959 (35-36), 1960 (52).

1943

37 FTD450 Guy Arab II FD26165 Massey H30/26R

No. 37 re-bodied by East Lancs to H30/26R in 1951. Withdrawn **1964** (37).

1947

38-40	GTD501-03	Leyland PD1A	461611/21-22	Alexander	H30/26R
41-43	HTF361-63	Leyland PD2/1	472031/33/111	Leyland	H30/26R
44-49	HTF364-67	Leyland PD2/1	472032/30/112/62	Leyland	H30/26R

No. 42 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet number).

Withdrawn 1964 (38-40), 1965 (41, 44), 1966 (43, 47-49).



No. 50 (DTJ58) is a 1939 Leyland TS8c with Leyland 36-seat rear entrance body, now in preservation. (LTHL collection).



Seen leaving the Cattle Market Bus Station in Burnley in 1959 is 1947 all-Leyland PD2/1 No. 45 (HTF365). (John Kaye).

11-12	JTE496-97	Leyland PD2/1	471169/383	East Lancs	H30/26R
13-14	JTE498-99	Leyland PD2/1	480904-05	East Lancs	H30/26R
15	JTJ568	Leyland PD2/1	481695	East Lancs	H30/26R

Withdrawn 1962 (13), 1963 (14), 1965 (11-12), 1966 (15).

1949

1-3	KTE721-23	Leyland PD2/1	492574/73/3109	Leyland	H30/26R
4-7	KTE724-27	Leyland PD2/1	492974/3108/240/110	Leyland	H30/26R
8-10	KTE728-30	Leyland PD2/1	492972/3239/38	Leyland	H30/26R
53-54	KTD755-56	Leyland PS1	462817-18	East Lancs	B34R

Nos. 1-10 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).

Withdrawn 1963 (54), 1964 (53).



1949 Leyland PD1 No. 7 (KTE727). It passed to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee in 1968 retaining its original fleet number. (LTHL collection).

55-56 MTB848-49 Leyland PS2/1 500192-93 East Lancs B35R

No. 56 rebuilt to B35F in 1962.

Nos. 55-56 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).

1951

16 NTD529 Leyland PD2/1 511127 Leyland H30/26R

No. 16 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet number).

1953

17-19	RTC821-23	Leyland PD2/12	532075/77/76	Leyland	H31/25R
20	RTE534	Leyland PD2/12	531014	East Lancs	H31/28R
24-26	RTE535-37	Leyland PD2/12	531015-17	East Lancs	H31/28R

Nos. 24-26 re-numbered 21-23 respectively in 1/64.

Nos. 17-20, 24-26[21-23] to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee) 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).



1950 Leyland PS2/1 No. 55 (MTB848) with East Lancs B35R bodywork is seen in Haslingden Road, Rawtenstall in September 1958. This vehicle is now in preservation. (John Kaye).

57 RTB49 Leyland PSUC1/1 515177 Weymann B44F 60-65 VTJ731-36 Leyland PD2/20 550953-58 East Lancs H31/28R

No. 57 ex-Leyland demonstrator (new 1953; the Weymann body was originally on demonstrator OTD301 but was fitted to RTB49 when the chassis was scrapped).

Nos. 60-65 re-numbered 24-29 in 1/64.

Nos. 57, 60-65[24-29] to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).

1958

58 466FTJ Leyland PSUC1/5 584768 East Lancs B43F

No. 58 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet number).



No. 24 (VTJ731) was a 1955 Leyland PD2/20 with an East Lancs 59-seat body. Originally numbered 60 it was re-numbered in 1964 and is seen here in Bacup in 1971 then part of the Rossendale Joint Transport fleet. (John Kaye).

59 738NTD Leyland PSUC1/5 597025 East Lancs B43F

No. 59 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet number).

1963

52 MTC255 Leyland PSU1/13 50119 Roe B44F

No. 52 ex-Ramsbottom UDC (No. 26, new 1950); to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet number).

1964

30-33 FTE630-33B Leyland PD3/4 L04407-10 East Lancs H41/32F 50-51 FTE650-51B Leyland L1 L04295-96 East Lancs B44F

Nos. 30-33, 50-51 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet nos).

34-37 MTJ434-37C Leyland PD3/4 L25149-50/40119/1709 East Lancs H41/32F

Nos. 34-37 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).

1966

38-41 XTJ938-41D Leyland PD3/4 L62399-400/412-13 East Lancs H41/32F

Nos. 38-41 to Rossendale Joint Transport Committee 4/68 (retaining same fleet numbers).



No. 35 (MTJ435C) was a 1965 Leyland PD3/4 with East Lancs 73-seat bodywork. (LTHL collection).

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Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.

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In producing this booklet reference has been made to the following publications; The Directory of British Tramways, Turner, PSL, 1996; Trams in the North West, Hesketh, Ian Allan, 1995; PSV Circle Fleet History PC/PC4A, 1987; Hyndburn & Rossendale - 75 Years of Municipal Operation, Deegan, Omnibus Society, 1982.

Photographs courtesy John Kaye.

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