

Gateshead & District Omnibus Co. Ltd.

Gateshead & District Tramways Co. Ltd. 1883-1951



1883 - 1975

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Cover Illustration: No. 78 (HCN478) was a 1958 Leyland 'Titan' PD3/5 with MCCW 73-seat bodywork. (David Taylor).

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Authorised initially by the Gateshead & District Tramways Act of 1880 and owned by the Gateshead & District Tramways Company, the tramway opened in 1883 after a series of enabling acts and much opposition.

Centred on Gateshead High Street the system was mainly single-track and consisted of three routes; the first ran along Sunderland Road (where the Company had its depot) through Felling to Heworth, a distance of about 2¼ miles; the second ran to Low Fell via Durham Road, a distance of around 2½ miles and finally the third route ran to Teams via Mulgrave Terrace and Askew Road, a distance of around 1¼ miles.

The initial fleet consisted of 15 locomotives manufactured by the local firm of Black, Hawthorn & Co Ltd and 14 Falcon open-top bogie trailers. The livery used is unknown.

On the 12th November 1897 the British Electric Traction Company (BET) acquired the company and two years later, under the Gateshead & District Tramways Act of 1899 gained authority to electrify the system. The last steam cars ran on the 8th May 1901 and the electric service commenced the following day.

The first electric routes were the original steam routes with an additional route to Sheriff Hill which ran via Brunswick Street and the old Durham Road, around 1½ miles. This route was extended in October 1903

a further mile to Wrekenton and virtually completed the system. By this time branches to Saltwell Park and Benham (1901) and a branch off the Teams route to Dunston (1902) had been added.

The first electric cars were Nos. 1-10 (single-deck 4-wheel seating 28), Nos. 11-20 (single-deck combination bogie seating 42) and Nos. 21-45 (double-deck open-top bogie seating 55), all manufactured by the Electric Railway and Tramway Carriage Works of Preston and liveried in crimson and white.

In 1909 the Gateshead & District Tramway Act of that year gave the Company powers to operate motorbuses and trolleybuses and in May 1913 the first buses operated a service from the High Level Bridge to Chester-le-Street and services expanded rapidly. However, the formation of the Northern General Transport Company by the BET on 29th November 1913, in order to consolidate the whole of their north-eastern transport operations meant that Gateshead & District became a subsidiary of the new Company and, on 1st January 1914, Northern General took over responsibility for bus operations from the Gateshead company and the buses were transferred. It was to be 1950 before Gateshead were to resume bus services.

In 1922 the North Eastern Railways' High Level Bridge was adapted to take tramcars and provided a link between the Gateshead and Newcastle systems, the first through services commencing on the 12th January 1923. On the

10th October 1928 another link was established when the New Tyne Bridge was opened with double tram tracks.

In 1938 Gateshead Corporation, who had leased the system to the Company since its inception, was pushing for the withdrawal of the trams and their replacement by trolleybuses. The advent of World War II put any such thoughts on hold, but as soon as the War had ended the scheme was brought up again. The BET, who had no experience of running trolleybuses, procrastinated, but eventually were persuaded to draw up a scheme for the tramway replacement by trolleybuses. However, indecision amongst the proponents, gave the BET time to promote a new bill, substituting omnibuses for trolleybuses. There was, however, strong opposition from Gateshead Corporation, who still had the power to purchase the Company, although, finally, in March 1950, all differences were resolved and on 12th July 1950 the bill became law. The bill also changed the Company's name to the Gateshead & District Omnibus Company Ltd.

The first two services commenced immediately on agreement and on 5th March 1950 all the cross-Tyne tram services ceased and were replaced by motorbuses. Subsequently the trams were slowly withdrawn and replaced by buses until only the Dunston route remained. The final tram ran on this route on the 4th August 1951 and the tramcar era was over.

The first buses purchased in 1950 were of Guy manufacture, followed in

1951 by the purchase of a batch of Leyland buses, which quickly became the favoured marque. The dark maroon livery worn by the trams was adopted initially, although this was changed in 1965 to an attractive green livery similar to that used by the Tyneside Omnibus Company, another Northern General subsidiary. This continued until 1974 when some vehicles were painted in the yellow and cream livery of the Tyne & Wear PTE for operation within the PTE area.

Bus services since 1951 have been based on the former tram routes and apart from minor route variations, have been consolidated and remained fairly static since the tramway conversion, although, in common with other operators, a move to one man operation began in the late 1960's in order to cut rising costs and combat falling passenger numbers.

Gateshead was the first of the Northern General subsidiaries to operate the Leyland Atlantean, with a batch of ten arriving in 1959. Thereafter all double-deck buses were of this type, although the final two batches, in 1972 and 1974 were legally owned by Northern General and operated 'on hire' to Gateshead.

In 1968 the BET sold its bus interests to the Transport Holding Company (later the National Bus Company [NBC]) and Northern General Transport thus became a state-owned company. The NBC thought that the way forward was with larger operating units. Northern General had a number of

subsidiaries and the NBC, in its wisdom, decided that all should be absorbed into the parent company. As a result the assets and services of the Gateshead company passed to Northern General on the 1st January 1976, bringing to an end 92 years of separate tram and bus operations.

**Gateshead & District Tramways Co. Ltd.
Tram Fleet List
1883-1951**

Steam Locos

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

1883

1-6 Black Hawthorn

Withdrawn **1901** (1-6).

1884

7-12 Black Hawthorn

Withdrawn **1901** (7-12).

1885

13 Black Hawthorn

In 1885 a heavier locomotive was tried but proved to heavy for the tracks and was returned to the manufacturers.

Withdrawn **1901** (13).

1888

14-15 Black Hawthorn

Withdrawn **1901** (14-15).

Trailer Cars

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

1883-1884

1-14 Double-deck open-top bogie Falcon ??

Nos. 1-14 later enclosed (dates unknown).
Withdrawn 1901 (1-14).

1889

15-16 Double-deck enclosed bogie Lancaster Carriage & Wagon Co ??

Withdrawn 1901 (15-16).



Loco No. 3, built in 1883 by local builders Black, Hawthorn and an unidentified trailer car (possibly one of the two (15-16) built by the Lancaster Carriage & Wagon Company?) c. 1895 outside the depot in Sunderland Road. (LTHL collection).

Electric Cars

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

1901

1-10	Single-deck combination 4-wheel	Brill 21E	ERTCW	28
11-20	Single-deck combination bogie	Brill 22E	ERTCW	42
21-45	Double-deck open-top 4-wheel	Brill 21E	ERTCW	33/22

Nos. 2, 4, 8 and 10 converted for one-man operation and reduced to 26-seat at an unknown date.

No. 7 was rebuilt to 32-seat in 1920 following an accident and re-numbered 52.

Nos. 21-24, 26-44 rebuilt with balcony top covers in 1924-25.

No. 25 rebuilt to single-deck in 1923 and re-numbered 45 in 1925; used later as service car (snow-plough and salt-car).

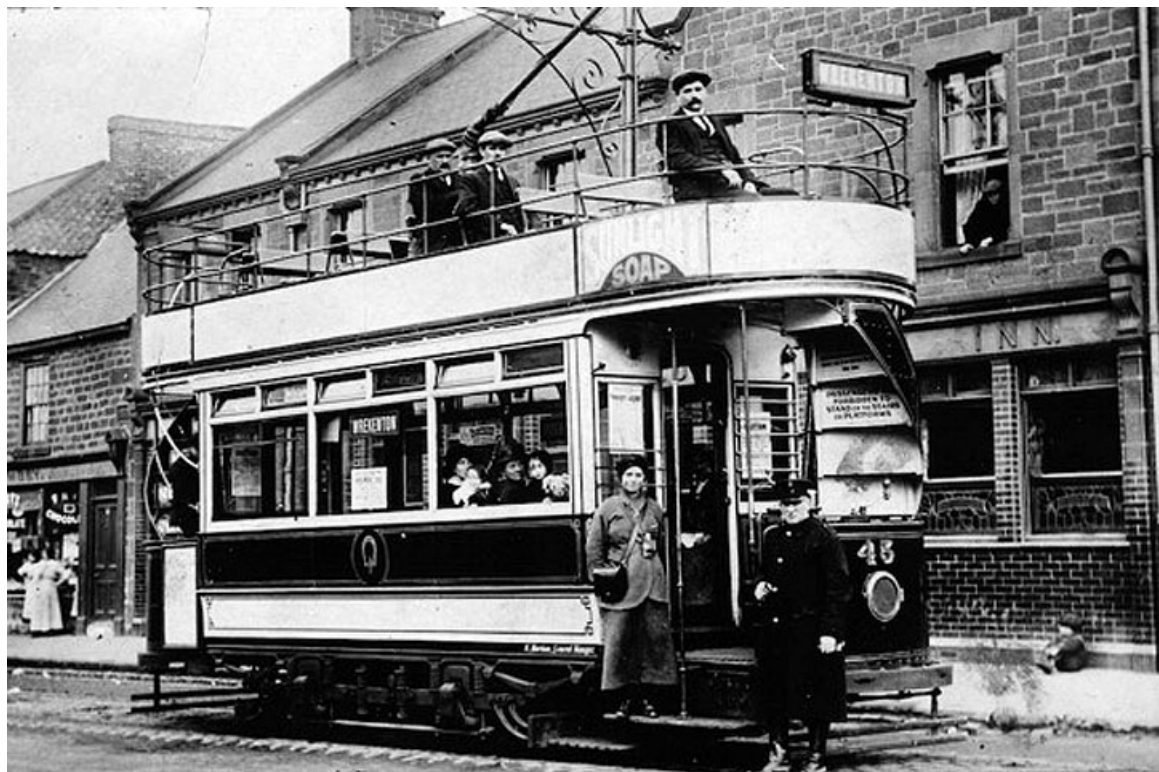
No. 35 was on loan to Jarrow & District Electric Traction Co Ltd from 1911 until purchased in 1914.

No. 45 rebuilt c.1919 to single-deck; re-numbered 51 in 1925.

Withdrawn **1914** (35), **by 1923** (24, 29-31, 33, 36-38, 42), **between 1923 and 1928** (1-6, 8-10), **by 1925** (11-20), **1945** (45[51]), **1947** (7[52], 21-23, 26-28, 32, 34, 39-41, 43-44).



No. 12 was a 1901 single-deck combination bogie car built by the Electric Tramway and Railway Carriage Works of Preston and seating 42. (G. S. Hearse).



One of 25 four-wheel open-top double-deck cars purchased in 1901 was No. 45, built by ERTCW and seating 55. It was converted to single-deck c. 1919 and re-numbered 51 in 1925. This photo dates from during WWI as evidenced by the female conductress. (LTHL collection).

1902

46-50 Single-deck combination bogie Milnes Max Traction Milnes 38

Withdrawn **1947** (46-50).

1907

53 Single-deck saloon bogie Brill 22E G&DT 44

No. 51 was a water car. It was later re-numbered 51A c.1917-1918. (No.52 was ex-No. 7 of 1901).

No. 53 was converted to one-man operation in 1912; re-seated to 48 in 1926.

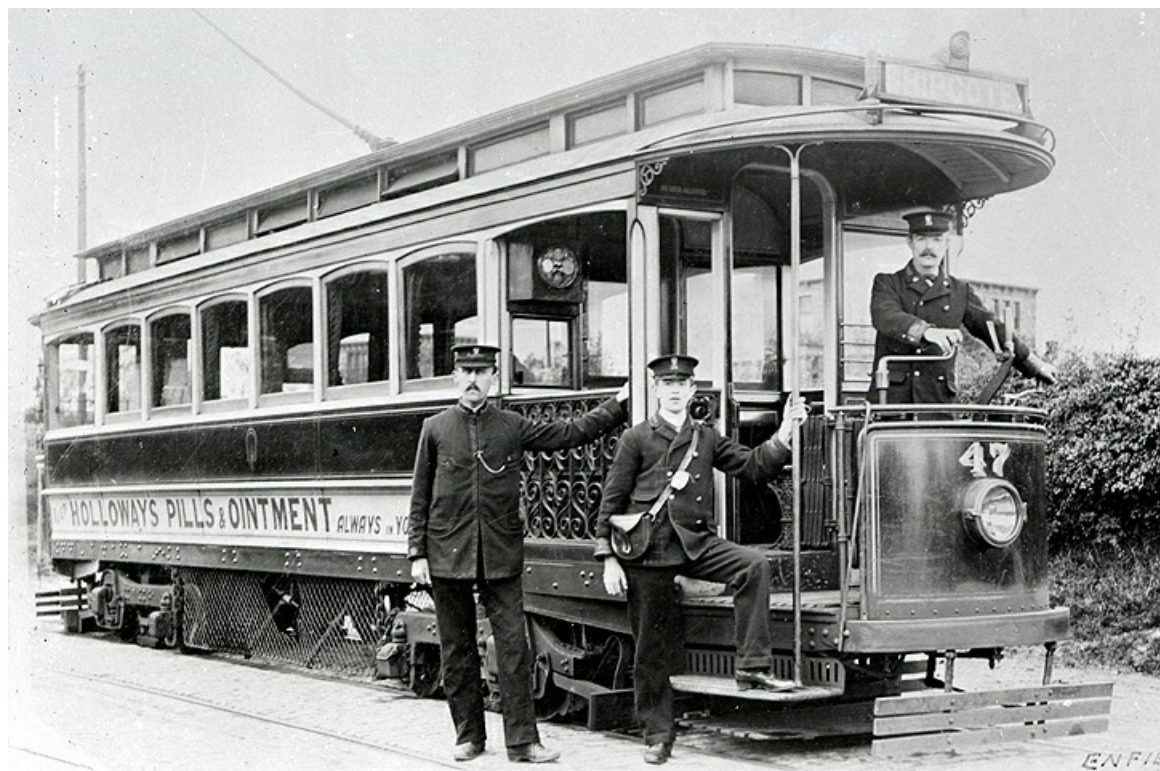
Withdrawn **1947** (53).

1913

54-55 Single-deck saloon bogie Brill 39E G&DT 44

Nos. 54-55 rebuilt and re-seated to 48 in 1926.

Withdrawn **1947** (54, 55).



No. 47 was a 1902 Milnes-built single-deck combination car on maximum traction bogies and seating 38. (LTHL collection).

1920

15	Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 22E	Max Traction	G&DT	48
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Withdrawn by **1951** (15).

1921

13	Single-deck bogie	Brill 22E	Max Traction	G&DT	48
56-60	Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 39E		Brush	48

Withdrawn by **1951** (13), **1951** (56-60).



No. 56 was one of five Brush-built single-deck bogie cars built in 1921 and seated 48. (LTHL collection).

1922

24-25	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Milnes	36/22
29-30	Double-deck open-top 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Liverpool	26/20
31	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Cravens	36/22
33	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Milnes	36/22
35	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Craven	36/22
36-37	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Milnes	36/22
38	Double-deck open-top 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Liverpool	26/20
42	Double-deck top-covered 4-wheel	Brill 21E	Craven	36/22

Nos. 24-25, 33, 36-37 ex-Sheffield Corporation (new 1899; Nos. 16, 35, 37, 38, 74 [order unknown]).

Nos. 31, 38, 42 ex-Sheffield Corporation (new 1901; Nos. 176, 182, 186 [order unknown]).

Nos. 29-30, 38 ex-Liverpool Corporation (new 1899; Nos. 479-481). All top-covered in 1925.

Withdrawn **1947** (35), **1950-1951** (24-25, 29-30, 31, 33, 36-38, 42).



No. 25 was an 1899 Milnes-built double-deck 4-wheel canopy car that came second-hand from Sheffield Corporation in 1922 and survived until the end of the system in 1951. (LTHL collection).

1923

1	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	Brush 48
2-4	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
16-18	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
19	Single-deck bogie	Brill 22E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
20	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	Brush 48
61-67	Double-deck enclosed 4-wheel	Brill 21E		Brush 44/26

Withdrawn by 1951 (1-4, 16-20), 1951 (61-67).

1925

10-11	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
12	Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 22E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
14	Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	G&DT 48
17	Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 39E	Max Traction	G&DT 48

Withdrawn by 1951 (10-12, 14, 17).

1927

5-6	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	
		Max Traction G&DT	48
8-9	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	
		Max Traction G&DT	48

Withdrawn **by 1951** (5-6, 8-9).**1928**

7	Single-deck bogie	Brill 39E	
		Max Traction G&DT	48

Withdrawn **by 1951** (7).**1947**

35	Double-deck enclosed 4-wheel	Brill 21E	English Electric 42/22
68-72	Double-deck enclosed 4-wheel	Brill 21E	English Electric 42/22

Nos. 35, 68-72 ex-Oldham Corporation (Nos. 24, 122, 125, 128, 18, 17 respectively; new 1924 [24, 18, 17] or 1926 [122, 125, 128]).

Withdrawn **1951** (35, 68-72).



Ex-Oldham car No. 70 built by English Electric in 1926 and purchased by Gateshead in 1947. Seen here at Wrekenton in 1949. (G. S. Hearse).

1948

73-74	Single-deck saloon bogie	Peckham P25 Max Traction	Hurst Nelson	40
75	Single-deck saloon bogie	Peckham P25 Max Traction	Hurst Nelson	42
76	Single-deck saloon bogie	Peckham P25 Max Traction	Hurst Nelson	40
77	Single-deck saloon bogie	Peckham P25 Max Traction	Hurst Nelson	38

Nos. 73-77 ex-Newcastle Corporation (Nos. 80, 43, 54, 88, 52 respectively; new 1901). All had been extensively rebuilt by Newcastle Corporation.

Withdrawn 1951 (73-77).

Motor Buses

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

1913

-	J1205	Straker-Squire CO	961	Immisch	016/16R0
-	J2115-18	Straker-Squire CO	926/25/24/60	Immisch	016/16R0
-	J2119-22	Straker-Squire CO	927-28/30/29	Birch	B28R
-	J2336-40	Daimler CC	561/42/59/64-65	Dodson	016/16R0
-	J2382-86	Daimler CC	358/567/250/566/255	Dodson	016/16R0
-	J2452-56	Daimler CC	238/568/479/342/257	Dodson	016/16R0
-	J2502-03	Daimler CC	244/296	Dodson	016/16R0
-	J2548	Daimler CC	226	Dodson	016/16R0

All motor buses were transferred to Northern General Transport Company on 1st January 1914. J2548 was delivered in November 1913 and may not have operated for Gateshead (three vehicles were hired to Kidderminster & District Electric Light & Traction Co Ltd from November 1913 and J2548 may have been one of those, the other two are unknown but possibly J2502-2503).

1914

- J2504-05	Daimler CD	700/616	Brush	B30R
- J2542-47	Daimler CD	609/19/755/611/778/02	Brush	B30R
- J2549-50	Daimler CD	706/05	Central	016/16R0
- J2553	Daimler CD	735	Central	016/16R0

All motor buses were transferred to Northern General Transport Company on 1st January 1914.

J2504-2505, J2542-2547, J2549-2450, J2553 were on order and were delivered to Northern General in 1914 and did not operate for Gateshead & District.

Gateshead & District Omnibus Co Ltd 1950-1975

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

1950

1-5	BCN601-05	Guy Arab III	FD70205-07/09/10	Guy/Park Royal	H30/26R
6-11	BCN606-11	Guy Arab III	FD70228-31/38/44	Guy/Park Royal	H30/26R
12-15	BCN612-15	Guy Arab III	FD70252-53/55/57	Guy/Park Royal	H30/26R
16-19	BCN616-19	Guy Arab III	FD70258-59/62-63	Guy/Park Royal	H30/26R
20	BCN620	Guy Arab III	FD70265	Guy/Park Royal	H30/26R
21-24	BCN821-24	Guy Arab III	FD70317/21-22/66	NCB	H30/26R
25-26	BCD825-26	Guy Arab III	FD70369-70	NCB	H30/26R
27-30	BCN868-71	Guy Arab III	FD70508/21-22/34	Brush	H30/26R
31-34	BCN872-75	Guy Arab III	FD70536/38/42/44	Brush	H30/26R
35	BCN876	Guy Arab III	FD70546	Brush	H30/26R

Nos. 1-20 were built by Guy on Park Royal frames.

Nos. 1-13 transferred to Northern General in 1959 (re-numbered 1900-1912 respectively).

1950 (continued)

Nos. 14-26 transferred to Northern General in 1960 (re-numbered 1936-1948 respectively).

Nos. 27-32 transferred to Northern General in 1962 (re-numbered 2036-2041 respectively).

Withdrawn **1962** (34), **1963** (33, 35).

1951

36-40	CCN136-40	Leyland	PD2/3	505804/11/05/37/683	Leyland	H30/26R
41-45	CCN141-45	Leyland	PD2/3	505808/10/685/806/09	Leyland	H30/26R
46-47	CCN146-47	Leyland	PD2/3	505861/687	Leyland	H30/26R
48-52	CCN148-52	Leyland	PD2/3	505876/682/877-78/62	Leyland	H30/26R
53-58	CCN153-58	Leyland	PD2/3	505688/807/63/681/86/84	Leyland	H30/26R
59-64	CCN159-64	Leyland	PD2/1	505767/75/46/68/7173/76	Leyland	H30/26R
65-72	CCN165-72	Leyland	PD2/1	507147/74/78/69/72/70/77	Leyland	H30/26R

Nos. 36-45 and Nos. 50-58 were re-seated to H33/26R in 1960-61.

Nos. 39-41, 43, 69 transferred to Northern General in 1963 (re-numbered 2080-2084 respectively).

Nos. 46-49 transferred to Northern General in 1952 (re-numbered 1479-1482 respectively).

Nos. 59-72 were re-seated to H32/26R in 1961.

Withdrawn **1964** (37-38, 42, 44, 52-53, 66), **1965** (36, 45, 50-51, 54-65, 67-68, 70-71), **1966** (72).



No. 71 (CCN171), a 1951 Leyland 'Titan' PD2/1 with Leyland 56-seat bodywork, seen here at Newcastle Central Station in July 1959. (John Boylett courtesy John Kaye).

1955

73-74 ECN973-74 Guy Arab IV FD72784-85 MCCW H35/28R

Nos. 73-74 transferred to Northern General in 1/63 (re-numbered 2050-51 respectively).

1958

75-79 HCN475-79 Leyland PD3/5 580466-67/27/26/65 MCCW H41/32R

Withdrawn **1970** (76-77), **1971** (79), **1974** (75, 78).

1959

80-84 KCN180-84 Leyland PDR1/1 591391/500/09/499/511 Alexander H44/34F

85-89 KCN185-89 Leyland PDR1/1 591529/10/498/528/49 Alexander H44/34F

Withdrawn **1971** (86), **1972** (81-84, 87), **1975** (80, 85, 88-89).



No. 80 (KCN180) was numerically the first Leyland PDR1/1 'Atlantean' in the Gateshead fleet. It carried Alexander 78-seat bodywork and is seen here in Gateshead in June 1972. (Donald Hudson).

1960

90-96	KCN890-96	Leyland	PDR1/1	593166/73/76/600035-38	Roe	H44/34F
97-99	KCN897-99	Leyland	PDR1/1	600041/44/47	Roe	H44/34F

Withdrawn **1971** (90, 94), **1972** (92-93, 96, 98-99), **1973** (95, 97), **1975** (91).

1961

100-105	NCN800-05	Leyland	PDR1/1	611131/499-501/31-32	Roe	H44/33F
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No. 103 was converted to open-top in April 1970.
Withdrawn **1973** (100), **1974** (101-105).

1962

106-110	OCN606-10	Leyland	PDR1/1	622100-04	MCW	H44/33F
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Withdrawn **1974** (106-07), **1975** (108-110).



No. 108 (OCN608), a 1962 Leyland PDR1/1 with MCW 77-seat bodywork, seen here in Bewick Street, Newcastle in May 1969. (Donald Hudson).

1963

111-113	PCN811-13	Leyland	PDR1/1	L01931-33	Weymann	H44/33F
114-115	PCN814-15	Leyland	PDR1/1	L01934-35	Weymann	H43/32F

Withdrawn 1973 (115), 1975 (111-114).

1964

116-119	ACN416-19B	Leyland	PDR1/1	L22108/99/65/109	Alexander	H43/32F
120-122	ACN420-22B	Leyland	PDR1/1	L21791-92/22200	Alexander	H43/32F

Withdrawn 1975 (116-122).

1965

123-126	BCN523-26C	Leyland	PDR1/1	L25147-48/40118-19	Alexander	H43/32F
127-130	BCN527-30C	Leyland	PDR1/1	L40212-13/334-35	Alexander	H43/32F
131-132	BCN131-32C	Leyland	PDR1/1	L40542-43	Alexander	H43/32F
133-137	CCN333-37C	Leyland	PDR1/1	L43397-99/491-92	Alexander	H44/34F

Nos. 131-137 transferred to Northern General in 1970 (re-numbered 2213, 2312, 2310, 2311, 2309, 2306, 2304 respectively).

Withdrawn 1975 (123-130).



Sporting the distinctive styling of Alexander is No. 130 (BCN530C), a 1965 Leyland PDR1/1, standing in the sunshine in Bewick Street, Newcastle in October 1969. (Donald Hudson).

1966**138-142 CCN638-42D Leyland PDR1/1 L43523-24/620-22 Alexander H44/34F**

Nos. 138-142 transferred to Northern General in 1970 (re-numbered 2208, 2207, 2205, 2203, 2202 respectively).

1970

143	XUP259F	Leyland PDR1/1	703907	Alexander H45/30D
144	XUP258F	Leyland PDR1/1	703906	Alexander H45/30D
145	XUP257F	Leyland PDR1/1	703796	Alexander H45/30D
146	XUP256F	Leyland PDR1/1	703795	Alexander H45/30D
147	XUP255F	Leyland PDR1/1	703708	Alexander H45/30D
148	XUP254F	Leyland PDR1/1	703707	Alexander H47/30D
149	XUP262F	Leyland PDR1/1	800068	Alexander H45/30D
150-151	XUP263-64F	Leyland PDR1/1	800121-22	Alexander H45/30D
152	XUP260F	Leyland PDR1/1	800038	Alexander H45/30D
153	XUP265F	Leyland PDR1/1	800123	Alexander H45/30D
154	XUP261F	Leyland PDR1/1	800039	Alexander H45/30D

Nos. 143-154 transferred from Northern General (Nos. 2159, 2158, 2157, 2156, 2155, 2154, 2162, 2163-64, 2160, 2165, 2061 respectively; new 1968) in exchange for Nos. 131-142.

Withdrawn **1975** (143-154).



No. 145 (XUP257F) was a 1968 Alexander-bodied Leyland PDR1/1 that was transferred from Northern General in 1970. It was thought that the dual-door bodywork might help speed up loading on the high capacity Gateshead services. (David Taylor).

1971

155-160 LCN105-10K Bristol RELL6G RELL3/1537-41/57 ECW B44D

Nos. 155-160 transferred to Northern General in 1972 (re-numbered 2840-44 respectively).

1972

100L-102L NCN100-02L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7105000/243/001 ECW H45/27D
103L-105L NCN103-05L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7105124/244/46 ECW H45/27D
106L NCN106L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7104999 ECW H45/27D
107L-108L NCN107-08L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7105245/4997 ECW H45/27D
109L-110L NCN109-10L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7105122/4998 ECW H45/27D
111L-112L NCN111-12L Leyland PDR1A/1R 7105121/23 ECW H45/27D
2822-2823 LCN522-23K Daimler SRL-36 64262-63 Willowbrook B44D
2824-2827 NCN64-67L Daimler SRL-36 64264-67 Willowbrook B44D

Nos. 2822-27 re-numbered 4256-61 in 1975; these vehicles carried Northern General legal lettering from new; to Northern General 1/76 (as 4256-61).

Nos. 100-112L re-numbered 3224-36 in 1975; these vehicles carried Northern General legal lettering from new; to Northern General 1/76 (as 3224-36).



No. 155 (LCN105K) was a 1971 Bristol RELL6G with ECW 44-seat dual entrance bodywork. It did not remain at Gateshead long, being transferred to Northern General in 1972. (George Cropper courtesy Donald Hudson).

1974

201N-203N	RCN101-03N	Leyland	AN68/1R	7403509/717/508	Park Royal	H43/28D
204N-206N	RCN104-06N	Leyland	AN68/1R	7403511/716/14	Park Royal	H43/28D
207N-209N	RCN107-09N	Leyland	AN68/1R	7403718/19/047	Park Royal	H43/28D
210N-212N	RCN110-12N	Leyland	AN68/1R	7403510/07/12	Park Royal	H43/28D

Nos. 201-212N re-numbered 3275-86 in 1975; these vehicles carried Northern General legal lettering from new; to Northern General 1/76 (as 3275-86).

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Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.
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