

Wemyss & District Tramways Company Ltd



1906 - 1932

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Cover Illustration: Brush-built car No. 1 dating from 1906 passes the ruins of Macduff Castle on a rural section of the track near East Wemyss. (LTHL collection).

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This single-track 3ft 6ins gauge tramway was promoted and built under the Wemyss Tramways Order of 1905 by the local Laird, Randolph Wemyss and ran from Gallatown in Kirkcaldy through the villages of East and West Wemyss, Buckhaven then along Wellesley Road through Methil to Leven where it terminated in Durie Street. For the most part it ran on the Laird's own land on sleepered track on a fenced off right of way. It was financed by the Laird's Wemyss Coal Company and operated by the Wemyss & District Tramways Company (becoming a limited company in March 1907).

The line opened on 25 August 1906 with the initial rolling stock consisting of 9 (Nos. 1-9) Brush single-deck saloon cars liveried in Wemyss mustard yellow (although this was changed in 1913 to maroon and cream). The depot was at Aberhill in Leven. On 27 September 1906 services were extended by agreement with Kirkcaldy Corporation for running rights over the section between Gallatown and Whitecauseway in Kirkcaldy town centre, a distance of around 2½ miles. As a result four more identical cars (Nos. 10-13) were added to the fleet to cope with the extra demand, although the agreement only lasted until 15 January 1917.

In 1907 four long bogie cars (Nos. 14-17), built by Milnes Voss and seating 45, were purchased specifically for the transport of miners. They were owned by the Wemyss Coal Company but were used on Company services when not required for miners transport.

By the time of the Great War in 1914 private motorbus operators had appeared on the scene and the competition increased dramatically after cessation of hostilities in 1918 and waiting passengers were poached from the Company's trams.

The Company was acquired by the Balfour-Beatty Group in 1922 and that year they purchased three Tilling-Stevens petrol electric buses to combat the private motorbus operators. From September 1923 they operated an extended route along the tramway.

Two more long bogie cars (Nos. 18-19) were purchased in 1925 manufactured by Brush and seating 45.

In 1926 the Company purchased the General Motor Carrying Company (GMC) of Kirkcaldy, its principal rival, the GMC remaining a subsidiary, although the tramway company continued to operate buses under its own name.

Two 40-seat bogie cars (Nos. 20-21) purchased from the Potteries Electric Traction Company joined the fleet in 1928, before the final purchases in 1931 of eight double-deck cars from Kirkcaldy Corporation (Nos. 22-29), which were cut down to single-deck, completed the tramcar fleet.

Wemyss & District had been acquired by the Scottish Motor Traction Company in 1929, although it was maintained as a nominally separate company. It continued to operate the tramway until 30 January 1932 (when the final tram ran) and operated its own buses until June 1932 when they were absorbed into the General Motor Carrying Company fleet, which had been retained as a subsidiary by the new owners before they were eventually transferred from the GMC into the main fleet in May 1937.

Tram Fleet List 1906-1932

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

1906

1-9	Single-deck saloon 4-wheel	Brush AA	Brush	28
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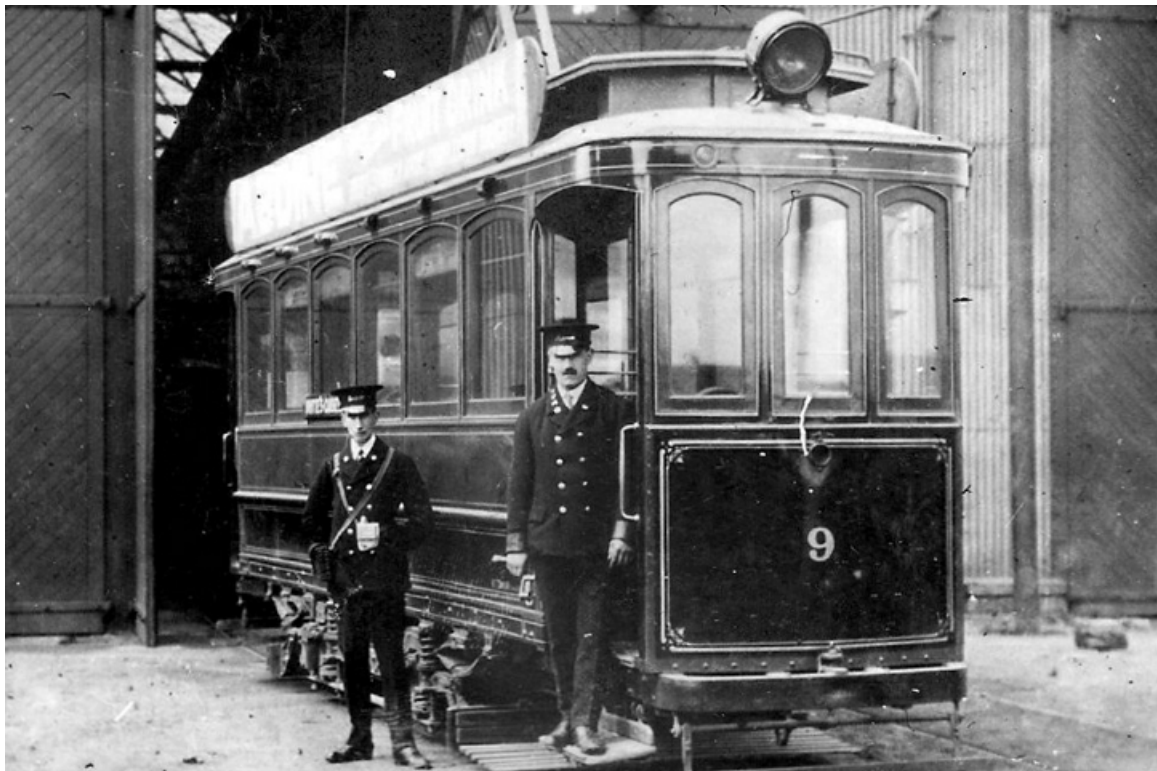
Withdrawn 1932 (1-9).

1907

10-13	Single-deck saloon 4-wheel	Brush AA	Brush	28
14-17	Single-deck saloon bogie	M&G	Milnes Voss	45

Nos. 14-17 had sides which could be removed; the cars being converted to a toastrack configuration; they were later fixed in position.

Withdrawn 1932 (10-17).



Car 9 was one of the original nine cars that were purchased for commencement of services in 1906. It was a Brush-built 28-seat single-deck saloon and lasted until the end of the system in 1932. (LTHL collection).

1925

18-19 Single-deck saloon bogie	Brush Max Tract	Brush	45
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Withdrawn **1932** (18-19).

1928

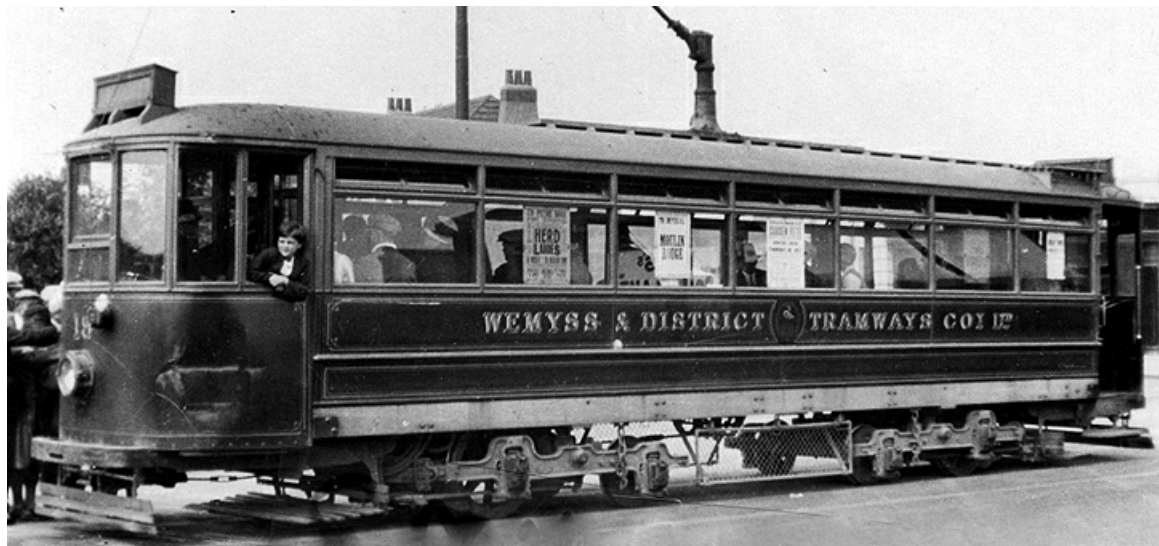
20 Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 22E	Midland CW	40
21 Single-deck saloon bogie	Brill 22E	Brush	40

Nos. 20-21 ex-Potteries Electric Traction Co (Nos. 82, 95?; new 1900).
Withdrawn **1932** (20-21).

1931

22-25 Single-deck saloon 4-wheel	HN 21E	Hurst Nelson	28?
26-29 Single-deck saloon 4-wheel	Milnes	Milnes	28?

Nos. 22-29 ex-Kirkcaldy Corporation (probably Nos. 23-26[order unknown];
new 1902-1904 and from Nos. 1-26 batch[Nos. unknown]; new 1916); cut down
to single-deck as shown before entry into service.
Withdrawn **1932** (22-29).



Car No. 19 was a Brush-built bogie car dating from 1925 and seating 45, one of six similar cars purchased. (LTHL collection).

Bus Fleet List 1922-1932

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

1922

SP7216-18 Tilling-Stevens TS ??-?? Strachan & Brown B29F

SP7216-18 possibly numbered 1-3 (order unknown); SP7218 was numbered 3.
Withdrawn **1928** (SP7216-SP7217), **1930** (SP7218).

1923

SP8084-86 Tilling-Stevens TS5 ??/??/2831 Strachan & Brown B29F

Withdrawn **1930** (SP8084-SP8086).



SP8086 was a 1923 Tilling-Stevens TS5 with Strachan & Brown B29F bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1930. (LTHL collection).

1924

SP9168	Tilling-Stevens	TS3A	??	Strachan & Brown	Ch25
SP9217-18	Tilling-Stevens	TS3A	2250/??	Strachan & Brown	Ch25
SP9262	Tilling-Stevens	TS3A	??	Strachan & Brown	B29F
SP9278-79	Tilling-Stevens	TS3A	3217/??	Strachan & Brown	B29F

Withdrawn 1930 (SP9218, SP9279), 1931 (SP9168, SP9217, SP9262, SP9278).

1925

FG123-124	Halley QSX		2963/65	??	B20F
FG125-126	Halley QSX		2967-68	??	B20F
SP4224	Belsize		??	??	Ch??
SP4411	Crossley		??	??	??
SP5090	Halley?		??	??	??

SP4224, SP4411, SP5090 ex-Caley Bus Company, Leven (new 1920, 1920, 1921 respectively).

FG125 to General Motor Carrying Co, Kirkcaldy 6/32.

FG126 was numbered 6.

Withdrawn **unknown** (FG123-FG124, FG126, SP4411), **1928** (SP5090), **1931** (SP4224).



SP9168 had a 25-seat charabanc body by Strachan & Brown and is seen here carrying what appears to be a military band judging by the drum on the ground. (LTHL collection).

1926

FG1157	Albion?	??	??	??
FG1909	Albion PJ26	5012D	??	Ch19
FG1937-38	Albion PJ26	5010A/12A	Cowieson?	B25F
FG1939-40	Albion PJ26	5013A-13B	Cowieson?	B25F
SP4886	Daimler	??	??	??
SP8343	Daimler	??	??	??

FG1909, FG1937-FG1940 numbered 15-19 respectively; to General Motor Carrying Co, Kirkcaldy 6/32.

SP4886, SP8343 ex-Caley Bus Company, Leven (new 1920, 1923 respectively).
Withdrawn **1926** (SP8343), **1928** (FG1157, SP4886).

1927

SP4592	??	??	??	??
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SP4592 ex-Rolland, Leven (new 1920); no further details are known.
Withdrawn **1932** (SP4592).



FG1938 was a 1926 Albion PJ26 with B25F bodywork probably by Cowieson and numbered 16. (LTHL collection).

1928

FG4063-64	Halley JO	3066/68	??	B20F
FG4116	Halley QSX	3002	Cowieson	B20F
FG4117-18	Albion PJ26	5065B/65C	??	B25F

FG4063-FG4064 to General Motor Carrying Co, Kirkcaldy 6/32.

FG4116-FG4118 numbered 23, 22, 21 respectively; to General Motor Carrying Co, Kirkcaldy 6/32.

1929

SP2877	Halley	??	??	B32?
SP4901	Halley	??	??	Ch26
FG243	Minerva	??	??	B20?

SP2877, SP4901, FG243 ex-Scottish General Omnibus Co, Larbert (Nos. 82-84 respectively; new 1916, 1921, 1925 to Cousin's Motor Service, Culross respectively); SP2877, SP4901 to General Motor Carrying Co, Kirkcaldy 6/32.

Withdrawn **1931** (FG243).



This photograph is dated 1928 and purports to show FG4116 which was a 1928 Halley QSX with B20F bodywork by Cowieson, new to Wemyss & District that year. It is quoted as being transferred to the General Motor Carrying Co in 1932, although the GMC had been a subsidiary of Wemyss & District since 1926. (LTHL collection).

1930

SP6106 **Daimler?** ?? ?? ??

SP6106 ex-Caley Bus Company, Leven (new 1921).
Withdrawn **1932** (SP6106).

1931

FG4113 **Albion PK26** **5064G** ?? **B29F**

FG4113 ex-Peattie Brothers, Glenraig (new 1928); to General Motor
Carrying Co 6/32.

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Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.
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