

Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Company



1873 - 1929

Contents

- Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Co - Fleet History 1873-1929 Page 3
- Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Co - Tram Fleet List 1901-1929 Page 6
- Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Co - Bus Fleet List 1911-1914 Page 11
-

Cover Illustration: Rebuilt car No. 36 travels down Cathcart Street, Greenock in the early 1900's. (LTHL collection).

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Built and owned by the Vale of Clyde Tramways Company under the Vale of Clyde Tramways Act 1871 the first section of this single-track horse tramway opened on 18 July 1873 and when completed connected Ashton via Albert Street through the centre of Gourock and along Shore Street, Chapel Street and Cardwell Street to the Gourock/Greenock boundary, the final section opening on 1 November 1873. The remainder of the system from the Gourock/Greenock boundary through Greenock via Eldon Street, Brougham Street, Grey Place, West Blackhall Street, Hamilton Street and Cathcart Street to Rue End Street was promoted and owned by the Greenock Police Board under the Greenock Street Tramways Act of 1871 and leased to the Vale of Clyde Tramways. The Greenock section opened on 7 July 1873 with 10 (Nos. 1-10) open-top double deck cars from the Tramway Car & Works Company of Glasgow operating from a depot off Chapel Street, Gourock and liveried in red and cream. The total length of the tramway was around 4 miles.

In 1886 a continuation of the line was proposed by the Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Company and subsequently authorised by the Greenock and Port Glasgow Tramways Act of 1887. The new double-track section ran from the centre of Greenock along Main Street and Great Hamilton Street through Ladyburn and into Port Glasgow and opened on 29 November 1889. It was worked as a separate service by the Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Company until 15 May 1893 when the company took over the Vale of Clyde's lease on the section to the Greenock boundary and (following the sale of

the Gourock section to the Gourock Police Commissioners) from February 1894, the lease on the final section.

On 8 June 1898 the British Electric Traction Co Ltd (BET) made a provisional agreement to acquire the Greenock & Port Glasgow Tramways Company and replaced the horse cars with 30 (Nos. 1-30) Brush-built open-top double-deckers liveried in dark red and white. In July 1902 a new depot for the electric cars was opened in Ladyburn. The 4ft 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins gauge line was rebuilt and electrified to double-track throughout (apart from about 500yds of single track in central Greenock and just the last three quarters of a mile in Gourock being single track with three passing loops).

In 1913 the Company acquired the motorbus operations of James McKerrow who was trading as Largs and West Coast Motor Services which included routes from Largs to Greenock and Gourock (with short workings to Wemyss Bay); Largs to Saltcoats via Ardrossan and a daily summer service to Inverary from Dunoon that went via Strachur.

On 1 January 1914 the newly formed Scottish General Transport Company took over the bus operations from all of the BET's tramway companies in Scotland (including those of the Greenock and Port Glasgow Tramway Company), leaving them to concentrate on running the tramways.

By the 1920's the tramway was incurring heavy losses and was offered to Greenock Council who refused the offer and as a result the Company

obtained an Act in 1928 that authorised the abandonment of the trams and their replacement with motorbuses, which duly occurred the following year with the last tram running on 15 July 1929.

Tram Fleet List 1901-1929

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

1901

1-30 Double-deck open-top bogie Brush B Brush 44/30

No. 10 rebuilt at a later date and re-seated to 46/30.

No. 11 fitted with top-cover c.1926 and re-seated to 46/30.

No. 27 fitted with top-cover 1904 and re-seated to 48/30.

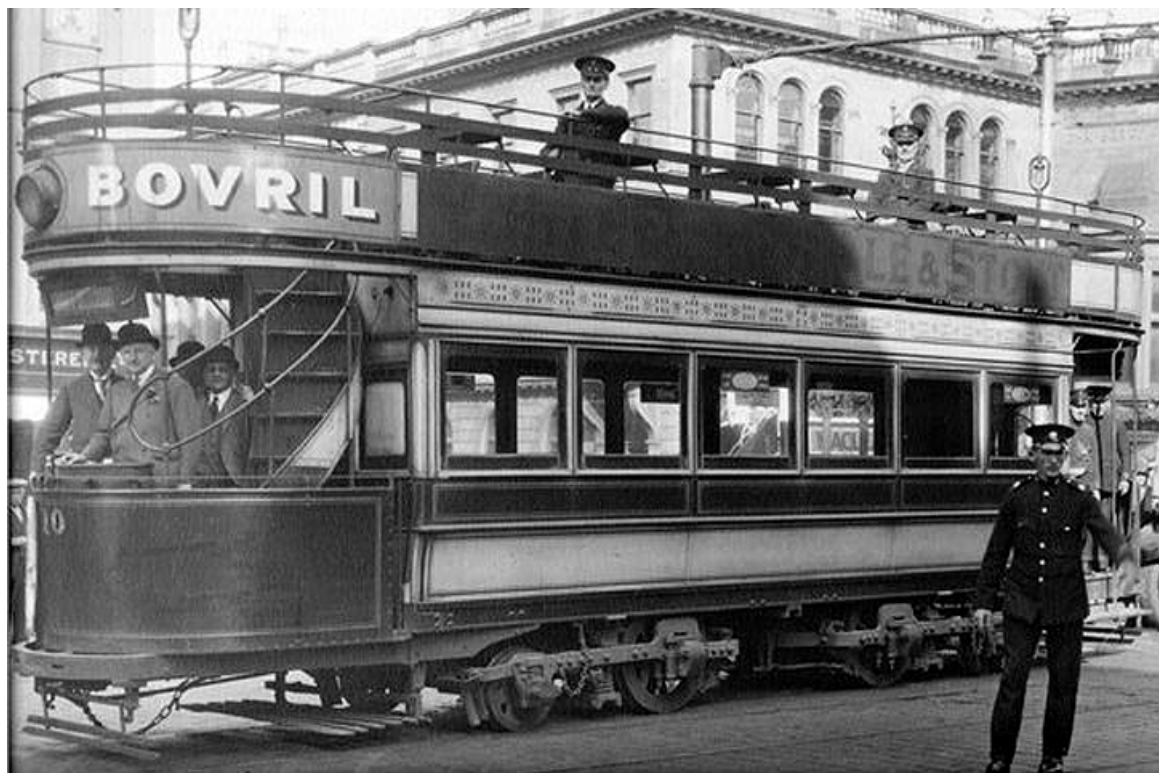
Withdrawn **by 1929** (1-30).

1904

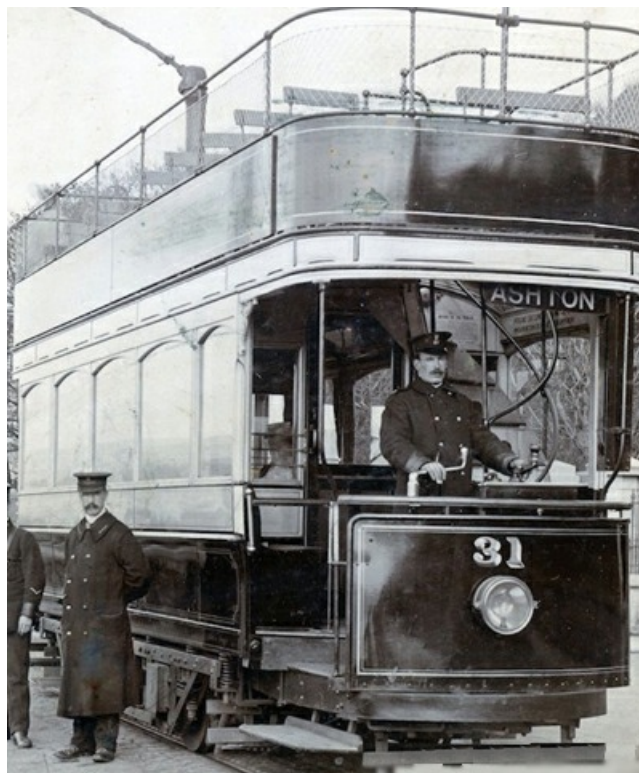
31-36 Single-deck combination L&C Radial Brush 30

Nos. 31-36 rebuilt in 1906 to double-deck open-top with extended canopy seating 26/24; Nos. 35-36 later top-covered and re-seated to 28/24.

Withdrawn **by 1929** (31-36).



Car 10 on the last day of tram services 15 July 1929. It was a 1904 Brush-built open-top bogie car and was the last tram to run in service. (LTHL collection).



No. 31 was originally a single-deck combination car and was rebuilt as a double-deck car in 1906 as seen here. (LTHL collection).

1906

37-39 Double-deck open-top **Brush Radial** **Brush** **36/22**

Withdrawn **by 1929** (37-39).

1908

40 Single-deck demi-car **Brill 21E** **UEC** **20**

No. 40 to Rothesay Tramways Company 1918.

1911

41-43 Double-deck top-covered **Brush Flexible** **Brush** **36/22**

Withdrawn **by 1929** (41-43).

1916

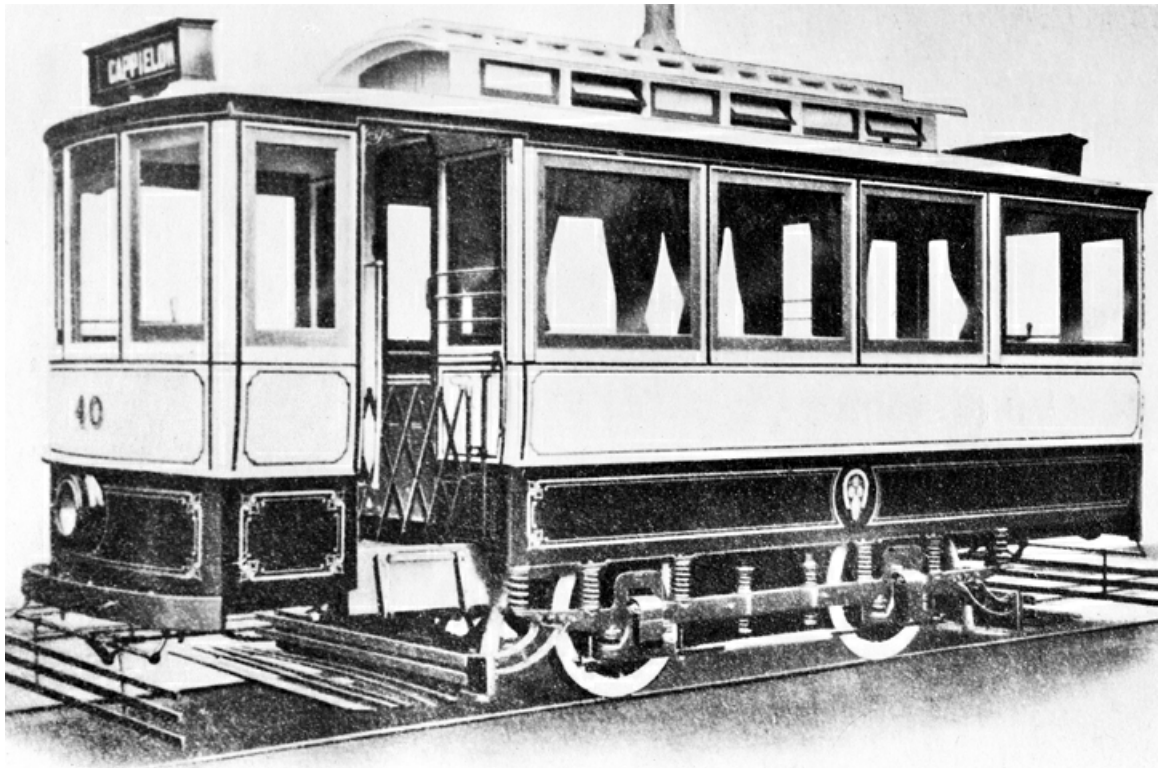
44-46 Double-deck open-top trailer **Brush** **Brush** **30/18**

47-48 Single-deck combination **Brill 21E** **ERTCW** **46**

Nos. 44-46 were trailer cars built by Brush.

Nos. 47-48 on loan from Rothesay Tramways Company (Nos. 11-12); returned 1918.

Withdrawn **by 1929** (44-46).



No. 40 was a 1908 United Electric Car Company single-deck demi-car seating 20. It passed to Rothesay Tramways Company in 1918. (LTHL collection).

Bus Fleet List 1911-1914

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

1911

VS201	Leyland 30hp	??	Mitchell	B30F
VS202	Leyland 30hp	??	Mitchell	B30F
VS203	Leyland 30hp	??	Mitchell	Ch??

VS201-203 on loan to Airdrie & Coatbridge Tramways Company from 12 October 1911; it is uncertain which vehicle carried the charabanc body; to Scottish General Transport Company 1/14.

1912

VS213-15	Tilling-Stevens TTA1	??-??	Fleming & Taylor	Ch30
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VS213-215 on loan to Airdrie & Coatbridge Tramways Company from 1912; to Scottish General Transport 1/14.



VS213 was a 1912 Tilling-Stevens TTA1 with 30-seat charabanc body by Fleming & Mitchell of Airdrie. It spent most of its life on loan to the Airdrie & Coatbridge Tramways Company. (LTHL collection).

1913

G3490	Lacre 30hp	1333	??	Ch23
SD394	Albion 16hp	??	??	Ch14
SD421	Albion 16hp	??	Charles Glasgow	Ch14
SD813	Albion 32hp	251L	??	Ch29
SD908	Albion 32hp	??	??	B25F
V2216	Tilling-Stevens TTA2	38	??	??
VS219-20	Daimler CC	??-??	??	??
VS221	Daimler CC	539	Fleming & Taylor	Ch??
VS222	Daimler CC	364	??	??
VS223-24	Daimler CC	394/543	Fleming & Taylor	Ch??
VS225-26	Tilling-Stevens TTA2	31/47	??	??

G3490, SD394, SD421, SD813, SD908 ex-West Coast Motor Services, Largs (new ?, ?, 1909, 1911, 1912 respectively); G3490 kept for summer only service between West Kilbride and Portencross; SD421 carried fleetname 'Scotia' whilst with West Coast; SD908 convertible to Ch30 for summer use; to Scottish General Transport Company 1/14.

V2216, SD219-VS216 to Scottish General Transport Company 1/14.

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