

A Brief History of Adelaide Trams And Trolley Buses 1878 - 1963

by
C.A. Andrews
L.M. Fenner
J. W. Hoffmann
R. White



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1. ADELAIDE TRAMS AND TROLLEY-BUSES

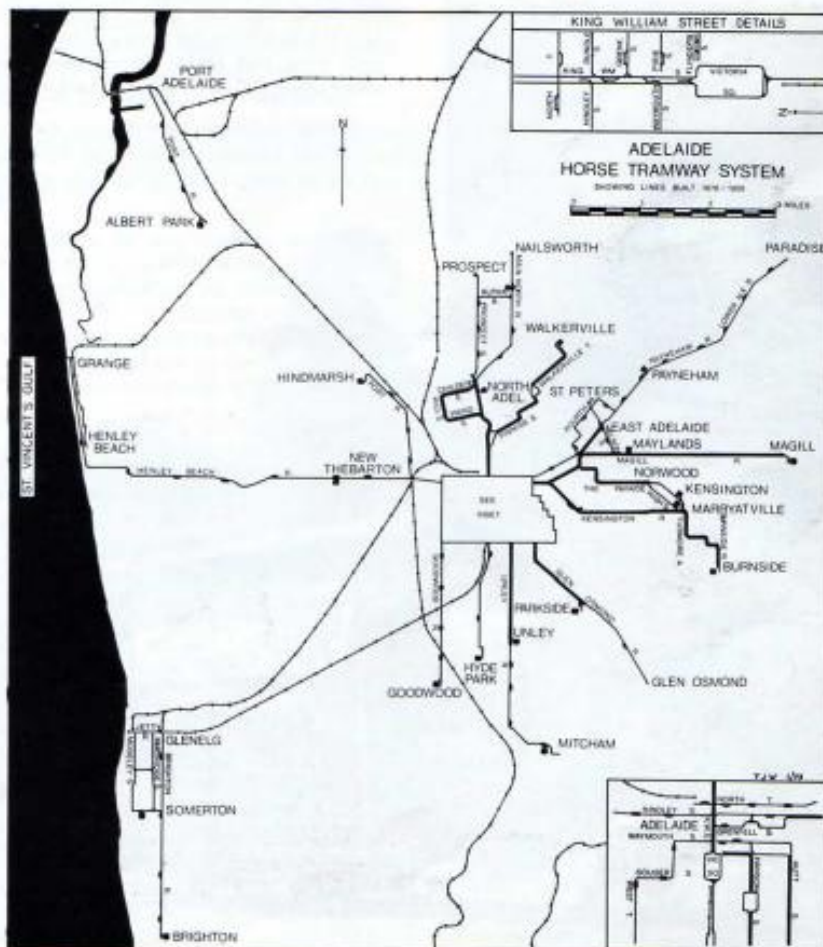
Tramcars have operated in Adelaide streets for over 100 years while trolley-buses ran for just over twenty-five years. These forms of transport have had an important role in the history of metropolitan Adelaide.

1878 HORSE TRAMS

During Adelaide's first forty years, transportation between the city and outlying villages consisted of local merchants' drays and spring carts. Soon regular services were organised, such as the one run by Thomas Haymes to Glenelg carrying five passengers a trip for one shilling and sixpence each.

Steam trains began running on the Port line in 1856, and to Glenelg in 1873. By this time, horse-drawn omnibuses had also been introduced. Roads in those days were often appalling, and riding in the horse-buses could be a trial of endurance. During the 1870s, two leading citizens of Adelaide, Sir Edwin Smith and Mr W.C. Buik, promoted horse tramways after seeing successful systems overseas.

The Adelaide and Suburban Tramway Company was formed and began a service to Kensington on 10 June 1878. Other lines were opened to North Adelaide, Walkerville, Magill and Burnside by the same company which, by the end of the century, was operating 90 cars profitably, using nearly 650 horses.



A Map showing Adelaide's horse tramway system. Double track and loops are shown by heavy lines, single track by light lines, and depots by squares.
T.J. Wilson

This success led seven other companies to open lines to Henley Beach, Hindmarsh, Mitcham, Parkside, Glen Osmond, Hyde Park, Clarence Park, Paradise, Prospect and Nailsworth. There were also two isolated lines from Brighton to Glenelg, and Port Adelaide to Albert Park.

1889 THE ILL FATED JULIEN CAR – ADELAIDE'S VERY FIRST ELECTRIC TRAM

During the horse-car era, experiments were made with two other methods of traction – steam and battery. Steam was tried on the Mitcham line and used at Port Adelaide for some three years.

A modified Duncan & Fraser horse-car fitted with "Julien's Patent Electric Traction" ran trials on the Henley Beach and Hindmarsh lines in January 1889. The heavy batteries placed under the saloon seats probably contributed to the difficulties met by the car in negotiating sharp curves. However, the car showed some promise in covering the trip to Henley Beach in 35 minutes, only ten minutes longer than today's buses. The same car appears to have been demonstrated in Melbourne and Ballarat. A tragic ending to this episode was the deaths of the promoters, Messrs James Cowan and Mark Bullimore, in a level crossing accident at Dry Creek in 1890.

1890s HORSE-CAR DAYS

In the days of horse trams, the tram crews were well known to the passengers and other people along the line. This is shown in the following reminiscences of Mr Tom Quinlan about the Henley Beach service.

"Newspapers were individually delivered along the tram line, the conductor slinging them across the front fence or passing them to the family dog trained to take delivery. Meat from a Hindley Street butcher was delivered to the back doors of homes along the tramline.

Business men often gave conductors their takings to bank in the city during the twenty minute layover. The linen bags, often containing seventy or eighty pounds were thrown under the driver's stairs. Big cheques were also taken to the city, cashed at the bank, and the change taken down on the next run.

The twenty minute layover was often hectic for the conductor, taking mails to the G.P.O., and collecting mails for delivery down the line, calling for prescriptions phoned in by doctors, and collecting cakes for delivery. The conductor made quite a bit on these deliveries. He would hop off the car before it stopped, dash up to the back door, pick up his waiting coin – 3d, 6d, or 1/- – plunk down the parcel and run back to his car."



Horse Car 47 climbs the hill up King William Road past the City Baths.

J.C. Radcliffe Collection

1896 SANDWICHED ON THE MARRYATVILLE DINNER-HOUR EXPRESS

Mr H. Franklin had these memories of his time as a conductor on the horse cars when lunch-time expresses were run.

"By the Southern Cross Hotel in King William Street, the 48-seat double-deck horse car was crowded with clerks and shop men all "raring" to go. The City-Marryatville dinner-hour express was ready to rock off on its daily run. I squeezed my way through the jam-packed passengers tinkling their threepences into my "Evans Pot".

The clock chimed. On the first stroke, the driver slackened the reins and the brake. Late arrivals sprinted for the step. The wheels squealed around the corner of Rundle Street where Terragan settled into a gallop, and Grove trotted her best to keep up with him. A cloud of dust followed the rocking tram.

A latecomer sprinted alongside, holding on to his straw hat, and leapt for the swaying step, risking his limbs for his lunch.

Watching intersections for emerging traffic, the driver blew his whistle shrilly above the clattering hooves to get lumbering waggons and slow carriages off the line ahead. Clutching his case, a clerk leapt aboard, lost his boater, and jumped off after it, followed by derisive shouts.

At Pulteney Street, a heavy dray began lumbering across the line ahead. The driver's eyes narrowed, but he kept the horses pulling. Our car missed the back of the dray by a full yard.

Those who lived along the line began to drop off the non-stop car. The first one planted a firm right foot on the swaying platform, clutching his straw hat and the hand-rail. Leaning back, he dropped into the dust, sprinted, slowed down, and walked triumphantly to his gate. Some tangled their feet and bit the dust, farewelled by chaff as they rose and dusted their clothes.

As we pulled up hard in a cloud of dust at the Marryatville terminus, three miles out, the driver pulled out his huge watch. "Twelve minutes," he grunted satisfied. He watched while two stablemen hosed down his sweating horses, scraping off the surplus water with hoop iron before they rubbed them down with a cloth. Then Terragan and Grove were stabled until needed for the homeward express at night."

1907 FORMATION OF THE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS TRUST

By the turn of the century there was a general desire for a more modern mode of traction, and several schemes were promoted for the electrification of the Adelaide tramways. Finally, three days before Christmas in 1906, Parliament passed an Act authorising the formation of the Municipal Tramways Trust to provide electric tramway service within ten miles (16 km) of the G.P.O. The Trust's first meetings were held on 4 and 5 February 1907, when the various horse tram systems were bought for £280,372/9/3 (\$560,744.92). The MTT was in business, operating 163 horse-cars over 51 miles of route radiating from the city.

Fifteen months later, on 21 May 1908, construction of the electric tramway system began at the Hackney Depot site. After a further six months, on 30 November 1908, tramcar No. 1 ventured along Hackney Road and North Terrace to make the first trial run on the new tramway system.

1907-1950 SIR WILLIAM GOODMAN

In May 1907, Mr W.G.T. Goodman was appointed as Electrical Engineer after serving in Dunedin, N.Z. where he had set up the city tramways.

In September 1908, he was made Chief Engineer and General Manager of the MTT, and remained in that position until he retired in November 1950, at the age of 78.

He was created a Knight in 1932. He was a man of vision and energy, a strict disciplinarian and an outstanding transport engineer and administrator as well as being a leader in many other aspects of public life.

However it is the fine tramway system for which he is chiefly remembered.



Sir William Goodman

AETM Collection

1908 COMING OF THE ELECTRIC TRAMS

In preparation for the new trams, tracks were reconstructed at the rate of six miles a month. Old horse tram rails were levered out with long poles and heavier rail laid and bonded for electrical earth return. In the city area the tracks were surfaced with hardwood blocks which in some places remained for the entire fifty-year life of the tramways.

Bridge works were also needed for the heavier cars. The City Bridge needed two new girders. The Hindmarsh and Henley Beach lines required a series of bridges, the best remembered being the viaduct at Henley South which carried the trams over the reedbeds of the River Torrens. It was a very wet year in 1909, and the strong flow down the Torrens created problems in building the viaduct. Mr Goodman, while inspecting work there by boat, almost fell into the racing floodwaters. HMAS Australia Road now occupies the site of the former viaduct.

Along with the 55 miles of overhead wires, a telephone system was installed. To begin the tram services, power was supplied by the Adelaide Electric Supply Company to the battery house and converter station at the Pirie Street-East Terrace corner. Two years later the MTT power station at Port Adelaide was working.

At Hackney, the MTT headquarters were being built. The three storey office building, a 24 track running shed and workshops were erected on the nine acre site.

1908-1909 THE NEW TRAMCARS

Duncan and Fraser were chosen to build the first one hundred car bodies which were fitted to Brill running gear. Two styles of body were built. Seventy cars (Type A) had "California" combination bodies – an enclosed saloon in the centre over the wheels and open cross benches at both ends. These cars are best remembered as "Bib and Bubs" when they ran coupled in pairs during and after the Second World War.

The other thirty cars (Type B) were "Toastracks", consisting of ten cross benches entirely open along the sides, except for canvas blinds pulled down in inclement weather.

All these cars were four-wheelers and provided the service for the first phase of electrification when the "inner circle" lines were converted from horse to electric traction. Construction of the cars was undertaken in the sheds in the Jubilee Exhibition Grounds where Adelaide University is now, and also in the part of Hackney Depot that had been built. By December 1908, tramcars were being completed and tested for service, and drivers were being trained.

This is how Motorman Chris Hollamby remembered training for electric tram driving.

"Motormen joining the service in 1909 took evening instruction classes. We used to go out driving after the horse cars were off the road for the night. Sometimes I got home at 4.30 a.m., and started work on my regular job at 7.30 a.m. When I went on the M.T.T. payroll, my first fortnight's pay was £5/3/- (\$10.30) for 103 hours. I find it hard to understand why passengers, seeing tramcars standing in a single line, would ask which car left first. But they did."

1909 OPENING DAY – TUESDAY MARCH 9th

At 2.45 p.m., a procession of tramcars, led by No. 1, left Hackney Depot and proceeded via North Terrace, Pulteney Street and Grenfell Street to Kensington. Hackney Road was decorated with bunting and 5000 people jostled for the first glimpse of the gleaming cars.

Mrs Tom Price, wife of the Premier, drove car No. 1 under the guidance of Mr Goodman, and over 600 guests rode in the fourteen tram cars in the procession which returned to the Grenfell Street terminus and then back to Hackney depot for afternoon tea in the marquee set up for the event.

That evening, Norwood Corporation commemorated the occasion with a banquet. Because some diners were late in leaving, one of the special electric cars was despatched to take them to the Glenelg train. The tram did the journey in seven minutes!

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The following morning, regular service began on the Kensington line. There was a scramble for the first tickets as described by Motorman George Redman.

"When the first electric tram left the depot at 5.47 a.m. on March 10th, 1909, on a regular passenger run, a crowd of people waited to try and get the first tickets issued. Seppelts Limited had offered prizes for No. 1a tickets of the 1d, 2d, and 3d values – the only tickets then issued. None of the would-be passengers got the coveted tickets however, because a certain inspector bought them from the conductor as he passed the Marshal's office. The crew of this first service tram, No. 37, to Gurrs Road, Kensington were Conductor W. Melville and myself as Motorman. A three minute afternoon service had to be run for several days.

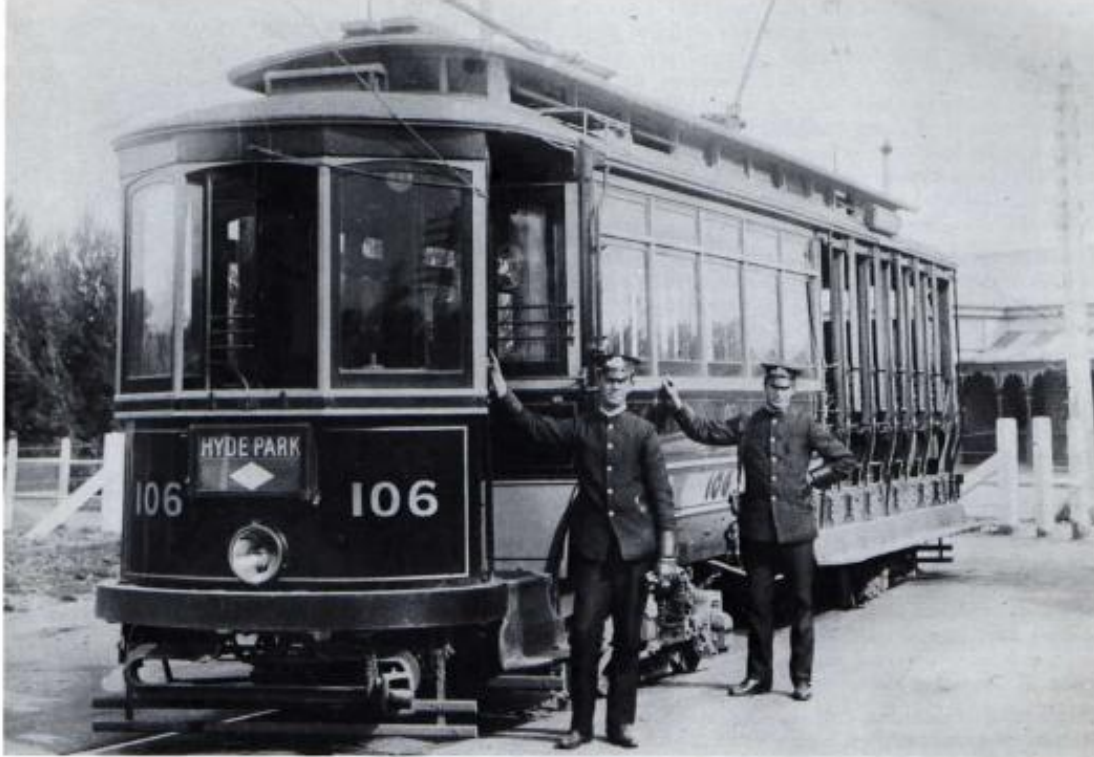
Although this was the first traffic run, it was not the first run offering rides to the public. On about March 6th special novelty runs were made in connection with the Royal Show then situated at the Exhibition Building on North Terrace. Passengers paid one shilling a head, and the proceeds were donated to charity."

Other lines were opened in quick succession so that by the end of 1909 electric trams were working the inner circle lines to North Adelaide, Walkerville, Payneham, Maylands, Marrayatville, Parkside, Unley and Hyde Park. Passengers travelling further out transferred to horse-cars. One exception was that four electric cars, stabled at Thebarton Depot, ran between Thebarton and Henley Beach with horse-cars working the City to Thebarton section. From 9 March 1910, electric cars ran over the whole line and the first stage of the electrification project was complete.



Type A Car 86 circa 1911

STA Collection



Walkerville terminus at the top of Smith Street, with crew proudly posing alongside their car. C. Air Collection

1911 THE OUTER CIRCLE LINES

Over the next few years the rest of the horse-car system was quickly converted and two horse-bus lines replaced by trams. By 1914, electric trams were running to Bowden, Prospect (Farrant St.), Enfield, Walkerville, St Peters, Paradise, Magill, Kensington Gardens, Burnside, Dulwich, Glen Osmond, Fullarton, Mitcham, Hyde Park, Goodwood, West Terrace, Henley Beach and Hindmarsh.

By 1918 further extensions had been made to Goodwood (Cross Road), Morialta, Hilton, Kingswood and Keswick.

1911 THE BOGIE CARS

To work the extending system, a further seventy cars were added to the fleet. These were bogie cars, again showing American influence in their body design.

Twenty of them (Type E) were called Open Combination Metropolitan Bogie Cars because the passenger accommodation was a combination of closed saloon longitudinal seating and open cross-bench seating. They were mounted on two maximum traction trucks having large driving wheels and small "pony" wheels, with one motor fitted to each truck (bogie).

The other fifty cars (Type D) were called Closed Combination Metropolitan Bogie Cars. Their bodies consisted of a saloon with longitudinal seating with the smoking section having cross seats enclosed by sliding doors along the sides. Conductors had to collect fares on the footboards of the open or smoking sections of these seventy trams, which were built by A. Pengelley & Co. at Edwardstown.

1917 TRAMS IN PORT ADELAIDE

The first tram in Port Adelaide was steam-hauled. A Merryweather steam-motor hauled the tram that began running from Port Adelaide to Albert Park on 22 May 1879. However, horses took over in 1882 and worked the five feet three inch gauge line. The depot was at the Glyde Street corner of the Port Road at Albert Park. One incident was remembered by Operator Collins.

"'Gee up, Horsie!' was the way to start the vehicle in the early times of the Port transport system. One night the driver's 'Gee up, Horsie!' brought no response. The driver got down to investigate. Ah, yes. He'd forgotten. There was an excavation, and instead of the horse walking around it, he'd fallen in."

In 1913, the MTT bought the Albert Park line and in 1914,

work began on the new Port Adelaide electric system. Being wartime, construction was slow and it was 1917 before the new tram service began, operating out of Port Depot at the Grand Junction Road-Port Road corner. Trams ran to Semaphore, Largs, Albert Park and Rosewater. At first, A type California cars were used, but during 1917, some of the unpopular B type cars (toastracks) were converted to California cars and sent to Port Adelaide. One toastrack car, No. 40, was kept at the Port for use by the Tramways Symphonic Band. In later years, a number of C type trams – Desert Golds – were stationed there.

The most significant rolling stock at Port Adelaide arrived in 1925 in the form of four Birney trams (Type G). These American cars were designed for one-man operation and were used mainly on the Rosewater service running through to Semaphore or Largs.

The Port system had a few unusual incidents. The Largs line opening was delayed when the South Australian Railways refused permission for trams to cross the Semaphore railway. One tramcar was allowed across to run a shuttle service between Exeter and Largs Bay. When other trams began crossing the line without authority, fettlers threatened to dump a load of sleepers across the tramline. The following day agreement was reached on safeworking procedures, and normal service began.

The Jervois Bridge caused holdups to the service when it did not swing back properly into place. When the rails did not match up, trams were stranded on either side of the bridge and passengers had to walk across.

The Port Adelaide tramway system was destined to operate for about eighteen years.

1918 MORE SINGLE TRUCK TRAMS

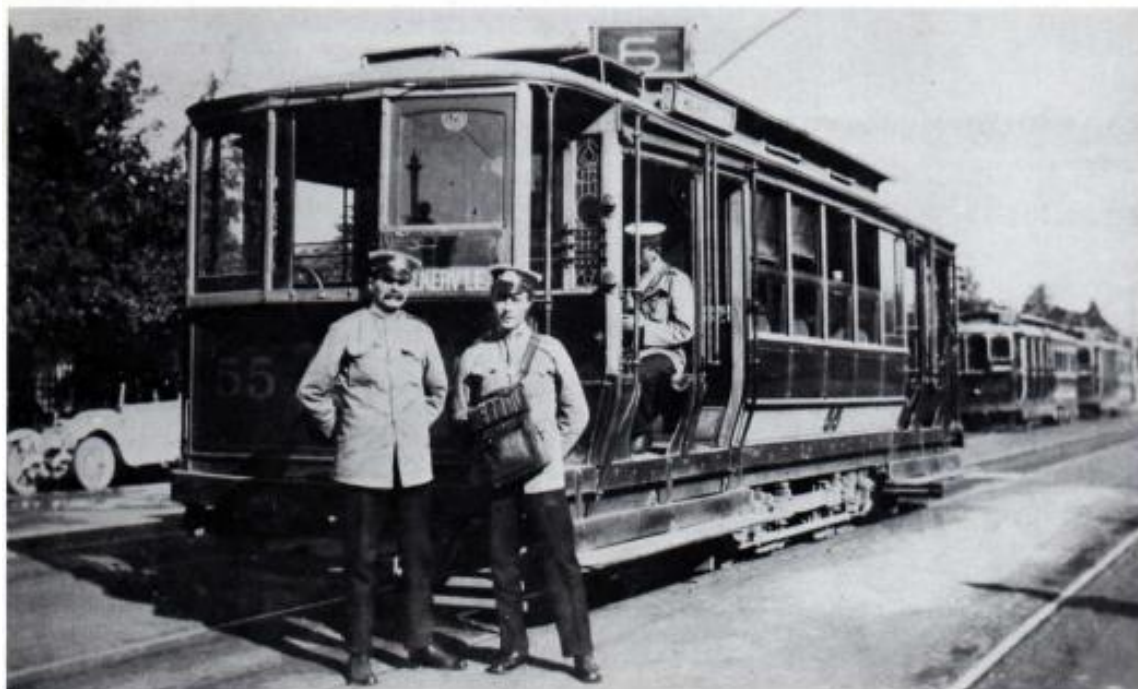
Towards the end of the Great War, the expansion of the system as well as increased population brought about an urgent need for more rolling stock. Wartime problems caused delays, but eventually, twenty more California cars (Type C) were delivered, being very similar to the original trams except for having arched roofs instead of the older style clerestory roofs. Thus by the end of the first ten years of electric tramways, 190 tramcars were in service.

1922 THE DROPCENTRE TRAMS

The "dropcentre" became an almost universal Australian design, but in New Zealand, dropcentre cars were being built in Christchurch in the early years of the century. Duncan and Fraser built dropcentre tramcars for use by Melbourne suburban tramways as early as 1913. Eventually most capital cities in Australia had dropcentre cars of one description or another, and Melbourne and Adelaide had very similar looking cars.

Plans were drawn up in 1918 for a dropcentre tram 51 feet long to seat 74 passengers. However, the shortage of materials after the war delayed their construction, and it was 1922 before the first dropcentre entered service. The design had been modified, and the end result proved to be a very successful and popular vehicle. Eighty-four of these cars were built during the years 1921-29 by Pengelleys and the MTT.

The first of these cars was a great advance over the then ten-year-old bogie cars, as it had four motors, lower steps, smoother riding and more passenger space. The control gear was suitable for the cars to be run in coupled sets as



Type A-1 Car 55 was converted to this design in 1917 from an open toastrack form. J.C. Radcliffe Collection



King William Street during the roaring Twenties.

C.A. Andrews Collection

the Glenelg cars are, but the necessary couplers were never fitted and the dropcentres ran as single units all their working lives.

Because they were quick to load and unload, the dropcentres were popular with the men who worked them. The saloons at either end seemed to be the preserve of women and children while men monopolised the gangways and the dropcentre smoking section. More than one newcomer to Adelaide was known to offer a first class fare to ride in the warm saloon section. The first man to drive dropcentre 201 in traffic was Motorman Harry Pearce on 22 May 1922. The second man was Motorman Jim Critchley, and they took 201 shift-and-shift-about until other motormen were trained.

These tramcars operated until the end of the street tramway system and are undoubtedly the best remembered of Adelaide's trams. This is probably because there were more dropcentres than any other type of tram, and they were an excellent vehicle for their time.

1923-27 EXTENSION TO THE TRAMWAY SYSTEM

As the dropcentre trams became available, extensions were made to Adelaide's city-based tramway system. The fast transport that trams provided encouraged the development of suburbs further out during the Twenties, and this required extensions to Kilkenny, Prospect (Irish Harp Road), Walkerville North, St Peters via Sixth Avenue, Linden Park, Hyde Park (Cross Road), Colonel Light Gardens, Henley North and Findon.

Other associated changes were the re-routing of the Findon service in the Hindmarsh area, and the St Peters service out of Fourth Avenue, the opening of the loop-line at the new Wayville Showgrounds, and the new Bakewell Bridge bringing Henley Beach trams into Currie Street.

1925 MOTOR BUSES ARRIVE

Motor buses had been operating intermittently in Adelaide since about 1905 when a double-decker began working between Adelaide and Glenelg. By the time of the Great War the MTT was preparing to operate a fleet of buses. The bodies were built and stored at Port Adelaide to await the chassis from England, but they never arrived because of being commandeered for the war in Europe. Private operators expanded their influence over the next ten years and in 1925, to counter this, the MTT entered the field of fuel bus operation with a fleet of forty single deck Mack buses.

The prototype, No. 51, was imported complete and the other 39 buses had their bodies built by Holdens at Woodville.

At the same time, the SAR built 28 Garford double-deck open-top buses at Islington to cope with the competition suffered by the Glenelg trains.

For a couple of years there was fierce uncontrolled competition for suburban passengers. Some of the hectic doings were remembered by Mr H.J. McAuley.

"I was driving a Mack bus, nearly full, up the Port Road, and was approaching a crowd of city-bound passengers at the next stop.

In my driving mirror, I could see a private bus overtaking me to collect the waiting fares. Remembering Lord Nelson, I turned my blind eye on my driving mirror and became suddenly deaf to the frantic hoots for right of way from the opposition bus. Swerve as he might, the other driver could not pass my Mack.

Then the frustrated opposition driver threw caution to the winds. He drove his bus over the kerb, along the footpath and bumped onto the road again to win by a bonnet and get the passengers."



Garford buses in the 1920s.

STA Collection

Eventually, the MTT was given licensing control over all suburban bus operations and also took over the Railways' Garford buses.

Operator Collins related this information about early MTT bus operation especially in regard to Port Adelaide.

"After the Garfords were taken over from the South Australian Railways the M.T.T. operated them between the City and Albert Park, and a fast tram service of "Desert Golds" (type C) connected at Albert Park for Largs and Semaphore.

Then came the day when the Port tram depot closed in 1935, and most of the traffic staff had to ride push bikes to Hackney Depot for their work. Garford buses maintained the Port Road service.

Working on Garfords was no picnic. A conductor's uniform was caked with dust by the end of a shift. It was frustrating punching tickets upstairs in a high wind, and at night-time, punching tickets in the dark. Ticket examiners used torches when checking them! Standing on the back platform, the vibration was bad and the fumes would keep your eyes watering the whole shift."

Buses were here to stay.

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1929 THE GLENELG TRAMWAY

From 1873, rail-borne transport has served Glenelg from Victoria Square and South Terrace. Steam trains ran along King William Street as far as Angas Street until 1914 when the railway terminus was moved to South Terrace.

In 1929, the steam train service was closed down and the line regauged and electrified in some eight months. At the same time the flyover at Goodwood was built across the Main South Railway. Thirty large multiple-unit cars (Type H) were built by Pengelleys and are still in use over fifty years later. This tramway and its cars are probably the most enduring testimony to the foresight and excellent standards of Sir William Goodman.

Some tremendous loadings have been carried on the Bay line, which sometimes required dropcentres and even bogie cars to operate out of their normal territory. Trams in their heyday would carry up to 14,000 football followers to an oval, 17,000 punters to the races, and 30,000 to the Bay for Commemoration Day. In Centenary Year, 1936, eighty-two trams, running less than a minute apart at times, carried 45,000 down the line and back again on December 28th. On any good summer Sunday afternoon, the trams would carry 10,000 to the beach at Glenelg, similar loadings being carried to Henley Beach.

Other unusual passengers carried on the Bay line were race-horses which were conveyed in two grey horse-box cars hauled by dropcentre cars 274 and 275 to Morphettville Racecourse. Horses were also carried from the Morphettville stables to Victoria Park meetings.

The Glenelg trams enjoyed the reputation of being the fastest and finest tramcars in Australia. They still attract attention from visitors to Adelaide.

1932 TROLLEY-BUS BEGINNINGS

In other parts of the world, pioneer trolley-bus systems had operated from about 1911. Adelaide was the first city in Australia to try the hybrid "trackless tram" when the MTT converted one of the Garford fuel buses to a trolley-bus by installing electrical equipment in place of the petrol engine and transmission. Painted green and cream, this bus soon became known as the "Green Goddess" as it ran from Payneham to Paradise on weekdays between peak hours.

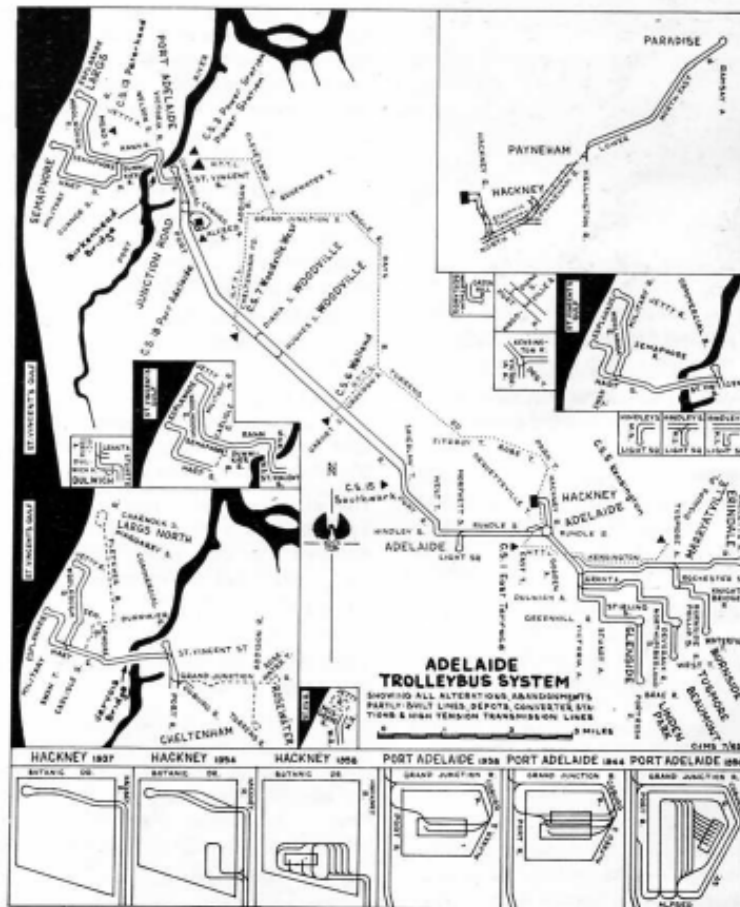
For some two years (2-5-32 to 11-8-34) this experiment went on, resulting in a full route installation in 1937 from the City to Tusmore.

The Green Goddess later became a servicing vehicle for lubricating the trolley-bus overhead system.

1937-8 THE TROLLEY-BUS SYSTEM

The first full trolley-bus service was installed in 1937 to replace the Toorak/Tusmore Mack bus service. Twenty modern enclosed double deck trolley-buses were built by J.A. Lawton, and ten more soon afterwards.

Two dear old ladies, we are told, were curious to know what the trolley poles were for. One of the crew explained that the poles were attached to the wires to prevent the bus tipping over. "Well, I never!" exclaimed one of the old souls.



Map showing Adelaide's trolley-bus routes. Proposed lines not completed shown as broken lines on inset. Depots are shown by squares, converter stations by triangles and transmission lines by dotted lines. C.J.M. Steele

The City-Tusmore trolley-bus service started on 5 September 1937 and was extended to Semaphore and Largs on 3 April 1938.

The Port tramway system had suffered as a result of its isolation, and it closed in 1935. Garfords provided for the demand for through service from the City to Port Adelaide, and the trolley-bus service was installed to take over the Port Road bus service and integrate it with the former Albert Park, Semaphore and Largs tram services. This proved to be a very strong service during the time of trolley-buses, demanding a day-time frequency of three minutes.



AEC Trolley-bus No. 421 in its early years. J.C. Radcliffe Collection

1938-44 MORE TRAMWAY EXTENSIONS

The Glenelg tramway project was completed as the Great Depression began to have its effects. After that time no new tramcars were built, but less expensive fuel and trolley-buses were put into service.

After the closure of the Port tramway system in 1935, some rail became available for use elsewhere, and in 1938-39 tramway extensions were opened to Springfield and Richmond. However, the Keswick service was cut back to Wayville West.

During the war, the Kilkenny line was extended to the munition works at Cheltenham, and a brand new line opened from Marryatville to Erindale. This was the last route extension to the Adelaide tramway system, the only other changes being the Franklin Street loop for Showgrounds trams in 1950 and the double track connecting Grenfell and Currie Streets across King William Street in 1952.

1939-45 THE WAR YEARS

In 1939 Australia was at war, and the demands on public transport increased considerably. As part of the circumstances of war, twenty-six Leyland single-deck trolley-bus chassis, originally intended for Canton, China, were diverted to Adelaide and the MTT built bodies on them during the war years. These small buses, known as Wombats

or Cantons were very useful in coping with the extra loading. Also built in the MTT workshops during the war were five large six-wheel double-deck Leyland trolley-buses which were the largest buses ever operated by the MTT, seating 66.

The war years brought difficulties in maintaining services to satisfy a higher demand. Sixty-two old California combination trams were taken out of storage and coupled in pairs to make the famous Bib and Bub tram-sets.

As well as completing outside jobs for the war effort, the Hackney workshops made spare parts that were otherwise unavailable and kept 97 per cent of rolling stock available for service.

1945 THE POST-WAR YEARS

With the coming of peace, plans were made for the restoration, to high standards, of the transport system. However, shortages of materials and man-power made progress very difficult.

Orders were placed in 1946 for double-deck and single-deck motor buses, single deck trolley-buses and forty new tramcars. The "Somerton" Daimler double-deckers were the first to arrive, in 1947, followed in 1949 by the AEC Regal diesel buses. In 1951, the Sunbeam trolley-buses began going into service, and in early 1953 the prototype of the new trams, No. 381, rolled out of Hackney Depot.

Extensions to the tramway system were planned for Kilburn (from Prospect), Kensington Gardens, Grange (from Henley North), and Firlie, but the only significant work completed after the war was the duplication from Croydon to Kilkenny on the Cheltenham line.

Trolley-bus services were projected for Cheltenham to Largs North, along South Road to Edwardstown, and Grange via Findon. However, they were not proceeded with.

Another factor causing these expensive projects to be dropped was the increase in private transport, causing a significant drop in patronage of public transport services from 95 million in 1945 to 78 million by 1951.

The silver and red colour scheme came with the Ford Transett buses in 1951, and was used on all new rolling stock delivered after that. From 1952 and 1953 all the Glenelg trams, about half the dropcentres, nearly all trolley-buses and some fuel buses were given the new colours.

1952-1958 CLOSING DOWN THE TRAMWAY SYSTEM

In May 1952, the Erindale, Burnside and Linden Park tram services ceased operation to be replaced at first by diesel bus and later by trolley-bus services. These connected with the Port Road services, giving through service more evenly balanced than before. At the same time Henley North trams began running through to Kensington Gardens.

By early 1953 it had been decided to replace all the tram services with buses, the trolley-buses continuing for the time being. Gradually, the tramlines were closed until the end came with a rush in 1958, when the final six services were "bustituted".



"Bib and Bub" set 84/86 at Hackney Depot, 10 January 1949.
N.F. Reed



E-1 Type Car 111 outside Angas Street Depot in mid-fifties.
H.D. Ellerton

The last significant "big lift" by trams was on 5 March 1958 for the children's welcome to the Queen Mother at Victoria Park. Forty Glenelg and dropcentre type trams were used between the Railway Station and George Street on the old Kingswood line. Twenty old Bogie cars were taken out of storage for peak hour service that day.

The end for street trams came on 22 November 1958. At 11.40 p.m. the inspector's whistle blew and tram 269, driven by Motorman Clarrie Hannam with Conductor E. Adams began the last run to Cheltenham. All the buses waited, giving the tram pride of place down King William Street. Carrying about 200 passengers and with streamers flying, car 269 was followed by about fifty motor cars. People along the way were unable to get on, and 269 arrived after several delays at Cheltenham at 12.28 a.m. to be greeted by about 2,000 people with streamers stretched across the track.

At 12.35, the tram began its journey back to the city with

Car 282 crossing No. 238 at Unley on 28 June 1958. D.A. Colquhoun

three police cars clearing a path for it. At Finsbury loop, two out of the four motors had to be cut out, and there were no lights working. Men, women, and children stood in pyjamas at their gates to watch the last tram go past. The tram struggled successfully over Bowden bridge, up Hill Street and finally the Government House hill. Car 269 arrived at Victoria Square at 1.35 a.m. where 300 people watched her trundle into the depot.

1963 THE END OF THE TROLLEY-BUS SYSTEM

The trolley-bus services carried on for another five years. Diesel buses gradually took over runs from the trolley-buses until the Sunbeams quietly retired in July 1963.

In less than ten years, the successful three-door bus had replaced Adelaide's electric transport vehicles, and today, only the Glenelg trams survive.

Double deck trolley-buses and diesel buses with Canton trolley-buses at Hackney Depot.
H.D. Ellerton





E-1 Car 111 at Springfield terminus.
Australian Electric Traction Association Collection, A.W. Perry



North Terrace at King William Street intersection with D Type cars turning right into King William Road. AETA Collection, A.W. Perry



Morialta Terminus. AETA Collection, A.W. Perry



F1 269 Angas Street on last run, 22 November 1958. H.D. Ellerton



F1 265 Fullarton Terminus, 1958 H.D. Ellerton