

Ballarat's system of horse trams which preceded electric trams was formally inaugurated on 21st Dec, 1887. The actual running of the tram began four days later, 26th Dec (Boxing Day).

The official opening of the electric tram service took place on 18th August, 1905, and the opening of the Sebastopol Line on 14th ^{APRIL} ~~Aug.~~ 1913 completely eliminated of the horse system.

Genesis of System.

In 1885 the City Council asked leave to construct a tramway but the Government was slow in granting the concession. Messrs Thompson and Moore, Adelaide, made the most favorable offer. The Council desired a cable tramway system, but it was found on inquiry to be expensive. Then a cable system from the city to the Gardens was proposed, with a horse service to Soldier's Hill and Ballarat South but the suggestions were not carried into effect. In September 1886, Edward Thompson obtained the concession and delegated the power to a company. On 3rd October, 1887, the deed was signed by Messrs. Collard Smith (Mayor) and Cr. E.C. Shoppe on behalf of the Council, Messrs W. Smith, Henry Gore, W. Brown (secretary) for the company, which contained 32,000 shares at £2 each. Directors elected were Messrs H. Cuthbert, H. Gore (St Kilda) and W. Smith (Melbourne). Early in 1887, the contract was let to Edward Thompson, of Adelaide, for a horse drawn service, and "it is passing strange" that whilst the chapter of Wither's History dealing was going into the Press dealing with the buildings of Wendouree. Five acres of land were purchased and twenty cottages of four rooms each for drivers and stablemen were.

erected, also a stable 230' x 58' for accommodation for 100 horses. The shed for the trams still does duty for the electric trams, but has had much reconditioning. Harry Rawlings, who died a few years ago, and who lived all his life next door at Wendouree, and from early youth worked with the Tramway Co. said that ship carpenters helped to build the depot, and he could well recall them crying "Heave O! Ahoy!" as they hauled the heavy beams aloft.

FIRST RAIL LAID

1000 tons of rails at
£7-10-0 per ton.

The first rail was laid on the 18th October, 1887, and six miles of track was put down in 6 weeks. Fifteen tramcars were commissioned. The first section of the track was round the Lake from Grenville St., via Stuart St West and Ripon St.

Other lines contracted for and put down were, Ballarat South to Rubicon Street via Skipton St., to Soldiers' Hill via Lydiard St Nth, and then by way of Macarthur Street to the Lake; and Drummond Street South to Skipton St.

It is interesting to note that horse trams never ran east of Grenville St, which was the Eastern boundary of the City Council. East of this street was the property of the old Town Council of Ballarat East, which became part of the City Council in the very early 1920^(May 1921).

The Town Council wanted their own tram system and on 25th June, 1888, conferred with Mr Ellison of the firm of Booth, Ellison and Co., electrical engineers, who had the contract for the battery electric tramways in Bendigo.

With the Mayor and councillors he inspected the various routes and gradients, and was very favorably impressed with the prospect. He considered there was a grand opening for

electric tramways in Ballarat East, and said he could see no difficulties in the gradients, much steeper hills than that in Victoria Street having been surmounted in other places.

The Town Council were highly elated with the interview, and are sanguine as to the outcome when tenders are called for. Alas! The elation was not justified by events, even if it may actually have been by the position at the time, and Ballarat East had to wait for its electric trams.

CARS

The cars were the Stevenson, American pattern, built by Duncan & Fraser of Adelaide, but put together at the ~~the~~ Wendouree Depot. They were built principally of ash, elm, tern hickory and ~~Kauri~~ pine, with spiral stairs back and front. They were not altogether handsome, but they were comfortable. Each car seated 44 passengers. The first horses were driven overland from Adelaide, and the men with their families who came to operate the system here were Mr R.T. Moore, manager; Mr Peter Giles (foreman) and later manager. Mr Charles Ruffle (secretary); Matthew Buckley (ganger); Ned Robertson; Jack Nichols, Geo Barnett (later foreman); H. Parker, Ned Lane (drivers); - Apps (painter) Matthew Abbot, shoeing smith, D Cameron (assistant); J Rawlings; E Beaston, - Sylvester (grooms). Other men who were formed up here were Charlie Plunkett, - Kent, - Lawford, Harry Smith, Cutts, Perrett and Scully.

The conditions required were: Trams to run from 8 am until 11 pm, services to be of 15 minutes to 30 minutes maximum: fares 3^d for 3 miles and on a basis not to exceed a 1^d per mile.

FORMAL OPENING.

On 21st Dec. 1887, the formal opening took place. Three hundred ladies and gentlemen, by the

invitation of Mr & Mrs R.T. Moore (six cars were provided) were invited to make the first trip. The start was witnessed by several thousands of spectators. Cabmen organised a counter demonstration and drove along in procession in front of the trams with various placards on their cabs. Some delay occurred by trams getting off the lines, the reasons given being inexperienced drivers, horses (unaccustomed to route) and new rails, but the Gardens were reached in excellent humor. The military band played some airs and the banquet at the Gardens was catered for by C. McIntyre. The Chairman, Mr Collard Smith (M.L.C.) Mayor, members of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, the Mayor & councillors of Ballarat, Ballarat East and Sebastopol were present, and the toasts honored were: the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the Royal Family. The Governor and Lady Lock were at Mount Macedon. Cr Claxton proposed "Success to the Ballarat Tramway Company" and said it was a red letter day. Mr Henry Cutthbert speaking in reference to the cable system of Melbourne, said it was the most perfect in the world. On the return, a few more stoppages, through trams going off the line occurred.

SERVICE BEGINS.

The actual start was made on Monday, 26th Dec, 1887 but only three trams ran. These were well patronised. One got off the line opposite the City Hall. The cabmen began to "chevy" the drivers and they were ordered back to their ranks by the police. On the 28th, the four trams in service were packed and the system worked more smoothly. The gorgeous yellow trams were drawn by 3 horses apiece and carried about 80 passengers each.

actual ~~outside~~ saloon measurement

The cars were 12 feet in length (2 had ~~14 ft body frames~~ ^{14 ft body}) and weighed $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons. Seating capacity was 44 passengers. The doors opening into the saloon were manufactured by J. M. JONES SONS of Westthoy N. Y. U.S.A. A copper builder's plate was fitted to each door.

The public were requested to ~~to~~ load up at the Post Office as in them days the outer bound trams used the north side track while the south side track was used by the in bound trams. A general service gradually became established and it settled down into an uninterrupted daily routine.

On the Gardens route ^{looks} were at Lake View, ~~Darwin~~ Dowling St., Gardens, and Alfred Street. The trams and the steamers on the Lake contributed to many lively scenes, and in the nineties at least, the steamer proprietors co-operated with the tram service (Adelaide share holders predominated in both concerns). The tram services supplied in the main were a $\frac{1}{4}$ hour Grenville St. to Ripon St.; half hourly either way to the Gardens. The hour and a half services via the Convent, and 15 & 45 minutes past the hour via the boatsheds. The Gardens, via Sturt St West ran east of the convent into Wendouree Parade via Morrison St. At that period the land through which Hamilton Ave. now runs was private ground owned by Lady Hamilton. A half hour service was provided in Macarthur & Lydiard Sts, with one tram. A branch stable for the exchange of horses ~~roundly~~ ^{roundly} a dozen, was located first at the then more spacious yard of the Princess Royal Hotel in Macarthur Street, and later at the Vine Hotel (now Canberra) at the corner of Brunswick.

Road. The Ballarat South services were 20 minutes, via Skipton St, and half-hour Skipton St and Skipton Darling Street, via Drummond St South. (This was a shuttle line and operated by a single deck car)

The Rubicon St service, and later Sebastopol commenced at the Town Hall. The route was extended from Rubicon Street to Queen St. Sebastopol, in April 1893.

EXTENSION OPPOSED

Quite a lot of opposition to this extension was offered at first by councillors of the Borough of Sebastopol, who were conscious of the fact that many cabmen were ratepayers, and their livelihood was endangered. The point that cabs could serve all portions of the district was stressed. However, the trams went through and an all-time service of every 20 minutes from 7.30 AM until 10 PM.

The depot lay near the Royal Mail Hotel, in South Sebastopol. On the ~~7th~~^{10th} October 1909, a fire destroyed the depot and many good horses ^(13 horses) + ^{5 cars}. This event and others, less sensational, associated with the horse trams, advanced into the electric era. The official opening of the Ballarat electric tram service took place on 18th August 1905 and that of Sebastopol completely eliminating the horse, was celebrated on 14th April 1913.

— MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES —

The managers during the horse regime were Messrs. Moore, Giles, Fay, Milner, Hodgkiss, and Gummow. The secretaries - as far as is known, Messrs Ruffle and Eakins; Mr Walter J. Dunstan, as accountant, handled the last business for the horse tram Company, and as chief accountant, carried out similar duties for the Electric Supply Co. of Victoria.

The maintenance of the horse tramways was a considerable job. There were always upward of 50 horses to service at Wendouree and they were well cared for. An 8 m.p.h. schedule was fixed. In actual practice this never exceeded 6 m.p.h. A groom had personal supervision of 12 horses. Four grooms did service at Wendouree, and each brought his own pairs to and from the trams. Each team had not more than 2 runs per day, excepting on extra busy days, such as railway fairs, Easter, Christmas, etc., when all reserves were utilised, but then a third and often a 4th horse would assist with the hill work. All were spelled in turn and at the least sign of distress taken out of the traces. They were rubbed down constantly and open boxes for sick horses were provided. Reserves were ever at hand. The horses were worked in teams. The length of service averaged seven years; a notable exception being "Queen", a mare of quality. She worked for 13 years. The stock were a fine lot indeed, and well selected. The late Mr Peter Hodgetts came to the Tramway Co. as manager from Cobb & Co. in 1894, and retained control of the horse section until 1907. He was rightly considered an outstanding judge, his son, a fine boy, and Peter, too, also Mr Will Kennedy, fell serving King & Country. At Wendouree the many activities associated with ostling, the ~~farming~~ ^{farmer}, coachwork, etc. made up a busy scene, and this industry, quite apart from administration at the office of the company, first at Camp St, later in Armstrong St, where the electrical

and receiving department were housed, and the traffic itself was very important.

The horses, as custom has always decreed, were named, each having the name above the entrance. Mr McCarthy and Geo Barrett did the "breaking in". A brake was kept for that, and other purposes, a two seated vehicle; but often times a colt would be hitched to a log and taught to see the light. One so harnessed broke away from the tramway paddock, and was finally run to earth tangled up with a tree at the Gardens. Again a colt would be run between two regulars in service. To each tram would be allotted six pairs for the day's work. Four trams ran daily on the Gardens, one hour per trip. The time table was amended to 8.30 am. first; and 10 pm last car, in later years. The lighting system consisted of two kerosene lamps fixed into a glass case in opposite corners of the saloon, and a large headlight which was strapped to the forward upstairs rail and carried round by the driver at each terminal change. These lamps were serviced by Hugh Cameron for some years, and he acted as night caretaker; two of his sons, Charlie & Hugh, worked as conductors.

— DRIVERS and UNIFORMS. —

The drivers did not adhere rigidly to uniform. During the long winter months they had need of much warm and water-proof covering. Large trimmed slouch felt hats, oilers overcoats, leggings, all fortified with oils and preparations to resist water penetration and stout boots completed the

outfit. Drivers were issued a whistle with which they warned other road users. Thirty six shillings per week with a cottage for the married men was the wage, and conductors received 14/- per week. The hours were long. It was the practice for men to work throughout with an $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours for dinner and an hour off again for tea, a day off once a month. Fifty would be about the total number of tramway employees on the job, but the number varied over periods. The conductors wore uniform, the cap was the old pill box style, but in summer hard straw hats were provided, a number of tramway men wore the honeycomb puggarees, laced tape. These were very familiar sun protectors long ago.

—COLLECTION of FARES—

Fares were collected by hand and tickets issued, then came "receivers", bell registering, carried by the conductors, with a chute to receive the coin inserted by the passenger. Later again tickets, arranged in wallets, were re-introduced; fares as stated did not exceed 3^d, but sectional tickets (8a 1/-) were greatly used. A replica of a tram was the design they bore. Fresh straw spread on the floors made for cosy travel.

The trams totalled 26 including those out of use, were patronised by all classes of people.

Many prominent citizens used them regularly as did the majority of the public. Bicycles were still priced beyond the ordinary person's means, and private conveyances were not so convenient, harnessing up, etc., took time.

All the same stabling was available everywhere as nearly all the hotels had

livery service. During the winter or when the weather was rough the small interiors of the trams were crowded and the always exposed upstairs seats, cold and deserted, naturally. It was different in the summer and the writer remembers riding "up above", when years later, these cars were used as trailers behind the electric trams. Whether numbers were great or few many chose to ride above and Sundays & holidays every available inch of room was taken. Extra horses by means of a chain assisted the trams and from the Post Office (grade being north track 100 ft of 1 in 15.5 + 38 ft 1 in 14, 100' of 1 in 17 south track: 137' of 1 in 20.5 + 195' of 1 in 15) the hill driver returned with his charge again to repeat the work. There were no center poles, the horses were controlled by hand; a strap fixed to the breechings was a restraint against fractiousness, and the hand brake was very effective, but the driver's skill was rarely fully realised.

TRAMWAYMEN'S COLONY.

Quite a small colony was housed at Tramway Row in Gregory St. west, and these homes became very favorably known both for neatness and for their gardens. Mr. Smith, the nurseryman and florist of Wendouree, and Sturt St., took a special interest in them and made a practice of denoting a prize for the best kept garden plots.

SUPPLIES of CHAFF.

At Sebastopol an important arm of the tramway operation functioned almost independently of the main depot, but before electrification of the Lake section all requirements came from Wendouree.

stores. There during that period the old portable chaffcutter engine was kept very active. Mr Boyce had charge and Hugh Trainer acted as feeder. He also transported the orders to the other stables, visiting Sebastopol twice a week with as many as 50 bags of chaff on his lorry. About 1000 bags were cut prior to the Christmas and New Year holidays to carry over that busy traffic season.

Peter Hodgetts himself made visits to the south, but he rarely had reason to fault anything, for matters there was in the capable hands of Owen Farmer and later Geo Barnett, followed by Ted Sheldon.

HEAVY LOADING.

The loading, particularly on Saturday night (shopping night), was solid on this run from the City Hall to Sebastopol. A top-loading conductor was required. He collected the fares on the upper deck and front stairs and platform, then joined the passing tram on Hillman's loop to go out with the next load. An extra car was added to the service for this heavy night's traffic. The passing points, all told, were the loops at Hillman's (near South St) Eudeys (Lathrobe St) Rubicon Street and South Star (Blair & Vickers Sts Sebastopol). ~~Mention of South Star this recalls the gold mines and the pay days~~

The blades were kept in position with blocks of carriage spring rubber - simple and effective, then.

Mention of "South Star" recalls the gold mines and the pay days. When those days arrived sovereigns became abundant, and the miners, particularly the younger men, appeared to gain much pleasure in offering sovereigns for their fares. Of course a conductor's cash became

exhausted, and names had to be obtained.

—RESOURCEFUL CONDUCTOR—

In one instance the conductor made a last desperate round up of money, and, getting possession of another gold piece, took the remaining fares from one tenderer. Some excitement and amusement followed. The conductor was threatened with all sorts of reprisals. There was not much of the gold thereafter. Some of those men were swell dressers, most had good taste, a few showy, right over the heights of fashion. Huck a buck vests and buttoned boots, with long pointed toe pieces. One gallant sported a nugget as big as a thumb for a tie pin. Every Sunday morning church trams ran.

The Sebastopol church special left the Borough at 7.30AM, and came through Drummond St. South into Sturt St as far as the Cathedral (Dawson St) and later via Skipton St to Snows ^{(now} ~~MINERS~~ ^{MINERS})

This special provision was provided on the Lake run also; the hour, however, was later.

On the Drummond Street South line a single deck, small tram ran daily from 9am until 6pm. Tom Bambrick was the regular driver. He had a fare receiver (a conductor was not required) so Tom managed, by means of a lever, to operate the doors of his tram. Boys of the district often essayed to whip behind (no route was free from this attention). Bambrick had his own way of meeting the situation. He would apply the brake lightly, tie the reins to the rail, and attend to the lads with the whip. ("Whip behind" was right)

The early depot for Ballarat South was in Darling St. on the south east location, and later moved to Sebastopol, but the Drummond Street South tram was quartered there some little

12 10 8 was about mark east
map has not been checked

longer, and horses were stalled at the Redan Club Hotel premises. Charlie Oakley was a noted and well liked official at Ballarat South.

The Sebastopol depot became the headquarters later and fresh horses supplied to Drummond St south tram by various procedures. A lad would mount one and lead another, returning from Darling Street with horses to be spelled. At other times the Sebastopol tram driver would bring a third horse. The number of horses on the Drummond St south tram varied from one to three.

— RAIL and TRACK CLEANING. —

Rail and general track cleaning was part of the daily round. The roads for ordinary traffic were nothing like those today, and the tram track suffered in consequence. John Galvin was to be seen patrolling the Wendouree area with a spiked shovel. His "follow through" left nothing to be desired. A water pipe was run to the rails at the corner of Sturt & Drummond Sts on the north side and washed the rails cityward, considerably aiding the progress of the horses up hill. At Sebastopol a spare conductor had this job of track attention. It was easy if one was "game" to risk detection to hook a leg over the handle of the cleaner on the back of a service tram. Storms made a lot of trouble for the trams, large sections of the track being covered with gravel and silt. Clarendon hill (Lydiard St North) was a noted bad place, even three horses having a struggle to make headway there. The horses as has been said were given every care and if one or another became distressed

Horse trams totals were 30 or 31
which included ones out of use.

Mr Harrison, the veterinary, would be called in to attend the "hospital"

SERVED THEIR DAY.

The horse trams served their day and generation. The clink of the trace chains play no longer against the swingle tree; the music of the road has ceased, and with the coming of the electric tram the old cigar boxes gradually vanished.

BATTERY CAR.

In ~~Oct~~ 1888, the single deck horse tram was converted to a Julien's system of storage batteries. There were 96 cells storage batteries, each measured ~~6ft x 6ft x 10ft(?)~~ ^{6" x 6" x 10"} arranged in boxes & placed on trays, 12 to each tray. Sufficient energy for 50 to 80 miles.

In its first trials which was along Drummond Street, a speed of 12 m.p.h. was obtained. The date being 12th October 1888. The 2nd trial was on 15th Oct. 1888, when a run to the city via Sturt St. was held. These trials were successful, but nothing further became of it.

This car was stored at the Darling St. depot.

Destination signs — Iron hanging signs on stair rails showing destination, and long painted boards on sides of car. Large white letters on a black background. and at night, only one route had a colored light — Gardens via Convent — a green light.

MOST OF THE ABOVE HISTORY WAS SUPPLIED
BY THE LATE INSPECTOR H.P. (FREDIE) JAMES 19-6-1937.

WITH CORRECTIONS. JUNE 52

JAN. 62.