

(5) Lydiard Street North.

The electric trams thus served the northern, eastern and western sections of Ballarat, while services to the south — Sebastopol, from the Town Hall, and Drummond Street South shuttle — were still operated by horse trams. The latter service was converted to electric trams in 1907, and was operated from the city terminus. The horse trams were withdrawn from Skipton Street and Armstrong Street during 1909, and, while Skipton Street, between Darling and Rubicon Streets, was being converted to electric trams, passengers were conveyed between the Drummond Street South electric trams and the Sebastopol horse-drawn trams by horse-drawn drags and wagonettes. This section was operated by electric trams from 1911. Lengthy negotiations were necessary between the Company and the Borough of Sebastopol before agreement was reached to replace the remaining horse trams with electric trams. This event took place on 14th April, 1913, and thus ended over 25 years of horse traction on the tramways of Ballarat.

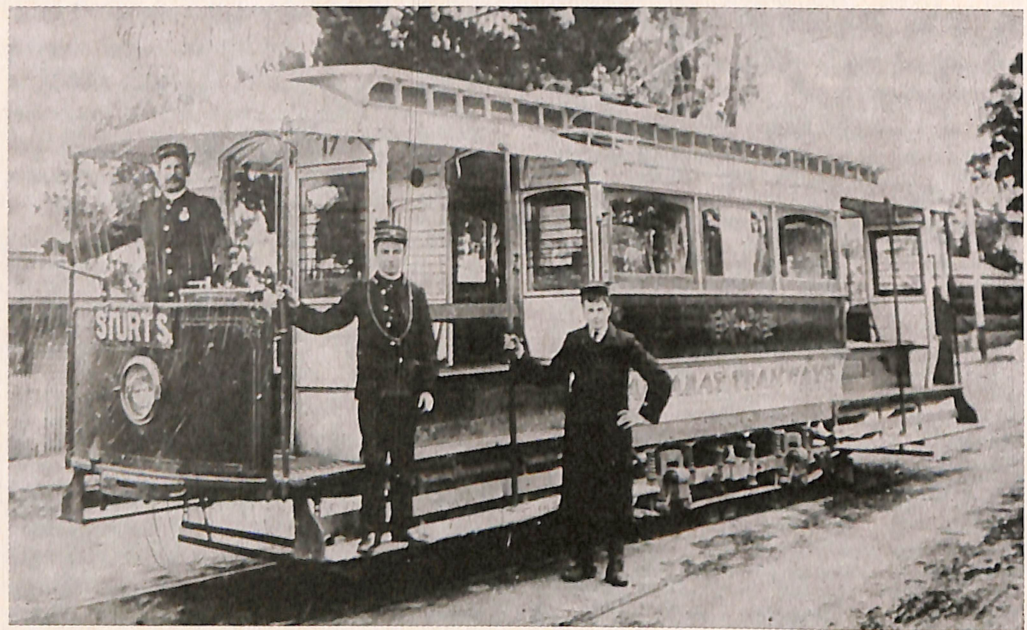
Day by Day

The city terminus of the electric trams remained at Grenville Street, at the eastern end of Sturt Street. A large waiting room was constructed there for passengers, and indicator clocks advised the departure times of trams on the various routes. The waiting room, which was constructed on the roadway beyond the end of the central plantation, was removed in 1923 to ease the movement of traffic. A points-boy was employed to assist the reversing of trams shunting here, and to ride Lydiard Street North

trams up the hill to change the points for them "on the run" (and then re-set the switch for the straight track).

The original destination signs were iron plates hung over the aprons. In 1911, four-sided revolving boxes were fitted to the canopies, with coloured glass bulls-eyes for night use. Coloured enamel route plates, carried on the front upper end of the cars as well as on the sides above the centre windows, were used from 1913 to 1934. Revolving linen signs were introduced in 1921, being accommodated in rectangular upright boxes fitted on top of the end roof canopies. The safe-working on single track sections was governed by hand staffs, without tickets.

The general operation of the trams appears to have been regular and uneventful over the years, but some points are worthy of note. Shortly after the electric trams opened, a phenomenal snowstorm, in August, 1906, made it impossible to commence running until noon. On the Tuesday after Easter, 1917, when the Eureka Pageant was being staged at the Eureka Stockade, on the occasion of the "Back to Ballarat" celebrations, all 23 trams were in use. At one stage, 22 trams were sent into the eastern section of Ballarat, and only one remained to serve the rest of the routes. During the 1920's, the tramways suffered from unrestricted competition from privately operated motor buses. About 1924, the Company actually bought a small bus from a man who was running it in competition to the Mount Pleasant trams, and it was subsequently used on this route and the Victoria Street line in an effort to counter the competition. State Parliament eventually legis-



One of the ex-Sydney cable trailers rebuilt as electric car No. 17 of the Electric Supply Company.



Town Hall and Sturt Street, Ballarat

The usefulness of trailers and the popularity of their open-top decks is clearly shown in this early photograph.

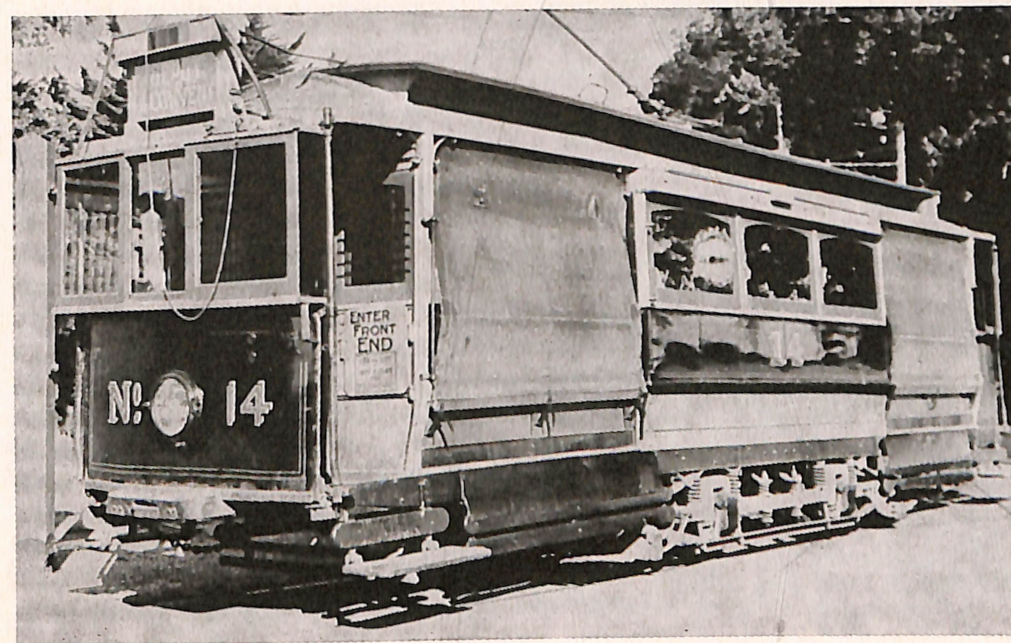
lated to give power to local Councils to license privately operated motor buses on specified routes under certain conditions, and this greatly eased the problem.

A number of experiments were tried over the years at through-routing, but Grenville Street remained the city terminus for all lines most of the time. With the introduction of the electric trams, west-bound trams travelled along the southern edge of the central plantation on the southern carriage-way, while east-bound trams ran along the northern edge of the central plantation on the northern carriage-way, of Sturt Street. Cars from the north, west and south terminated just off the end of the double track, at Grenville Street, while Victoria Street and Mount Pleasant cars waited in Bridge Street about the eastern building line of Grenville Street. A new time-table was introduced in 1924, and remained in force for many years. Briefly, these services were: Gardens, via Ripon Street, and Gardens, via Convent (Sturt Street West), alternate cars, each 30 minutes during the morning, 20 minutes during the afternoon and 30 minutes at night. Sebastopol: 20, 24, 20, with an additional service to Rubicon Street in the afternoon to give a 12 minute headway to that point. Lydiard Street North: 20, 12, 20. Drummond Street North: 30 minutes throughout. Victoria Street and Mount Pleasant: each 20 minutes throughout. On Sundays, trams ran during the afternoon and evening only. Sebastopol, Victoria Street, Mount Pleasant and Lydiard Street North received 20 minute services, and Drummond Street North a tram every 30 minutes. Both the Gardens routes are shown as at "regular

intervals", apparently to allow for the variations to the lake-side headway due to differing weather conditions and sporting functions, picnics, etc.

Rolling Stock

The Adelaide firm of Duncan & Fraser, which had built the horse trams, received the contract for the electric tramcars. None of the original 18 cars ordered were new vehicles; they were second-hand bodies heavily rebuilt. It was believed for many years that twelve of these trams had been converted from former Ballarat horse cars, but it now appears that they originated from Sydney cable trams, twelve of which were sold "to Victoria" in 1905. The bodies were placed on long, steel underframes, and open end platforms constructed under a lengthened roof. The end seats were originally of the longitudinal tip-over type. They received road numbers 1, 4, 6, 10 to 18. Nos. 2, 7 and 9 originated from Sydney's original electric trams Nos. 1 to 3, being rebuilt likewise. All these cars featured three equal length saloon windows per side. Nos. 3, 5 and 8 were rebuilt from Sydney "C" class electric trams Nos. 14 to 16, in similar fashion. The main distinguishing feature was a wider middle window in each side of the saloon, because the cars had seven windows per side in their saloons in Sydney. They were painted Columbia Red with white lining, and white with blue lining (later cream with brown lining). Numerals were in gold leaf with black shading, and lettering in blue with brown shading. Roofs were white and interiors were in grained woodwork with pale green lining. "Ballarat Tramways" was painted on the rocker panels of each



Original electric tram No. 14 in its later days, converted for one-man operation and fitted with roller-blind destination boxes.



A "Sebastopol" type bench car with the bulls-eye type destination indicator.

saloon side.

Messrs. Duncan & Fraser also built two open cross-bench cars late in 1905, and they immediately proved popular on the Gardens runs. They were numbered 19 and 20. Three new electric trams, called "Sebastopol" cars, were constructed by Duncan & Fraser in 1913, at the time the extension to Sebastopol was opened. They were semi-enclosed cross-seat cars, Nos. 21-23, with a centre aisle. In summer, seats were inserted across the aisle and the conductor had to use the footboard to collect the fares. After some time this practice ceased and the cars ran as centre aisle units. Thirteen of the double deck horse trams were retained in Ballarat as horse trams on the Sebastopol line or as trailers to the electric cars. Their number was reduced to eight when five were destroyed in the fire at Sebastopol Depot in 1909. Twelve of the cars were six-window saloons and the other had seven windows. Trailer operation proved advantageous in heavy traffic for many years, but finally ceased in 1927. The ex-horse cars were sold, except for one, which continued in an unusual role until about 1935. It was used as a bicycle trailer. The early morning crews naturally signed on at the Depot, but their afternoon relief men took over from the city office. Many of the former men cycled to the Depot and their machines were loaded into the trailer which was towed into the city behind a passenger tram

near the end of their shifts. The trailer later returned to the Depot behind another passenger tram loaded with the bicycles of the afternoon shift men, ready for when they finished work near mid-night. This service was taken over by a motor truck. A water sprinkler tram, built by the Brush Company, was purchased in 1907. It was stored, out of use, at the back of the Depot, about 1918, and was scrapped in 1925. The two open cross-bench cars, Nos. 19 and 20, had their Peckham trucks replaced by Brill 21E trucks in 1929, but this action was not successful, and the cars were withdrawn about February, 1930, and scrapped.

The Company introduced one-man operation of its trams in 1913, except on Nos. 19 and 20. The backs of the end platform longitudinal seats were fixed so that passengers faced inwards, and all passengers entered and alighted from the car via the off-side of the front motorman's cabin and the doorway in the motorman's bulkhead, on cars Nos. 1 to 18. Notices reading "Enter Front End" were painted on small doors which were swung across the unwanted rear cabin entrances. About this time, No. 10 was fitted with a windshield at one end, and it was subsequently decided that it was successful. Consequently, windshields were fitted at both ends to all cars except Nos. 19 and 20, and provided much better conditions for the motormen in Ballarat's inclement weather.



No. 21 near the railway station with a back-drop of period buildings.

CHAPTER 3

THE S.E.C. ERA

Acquisition

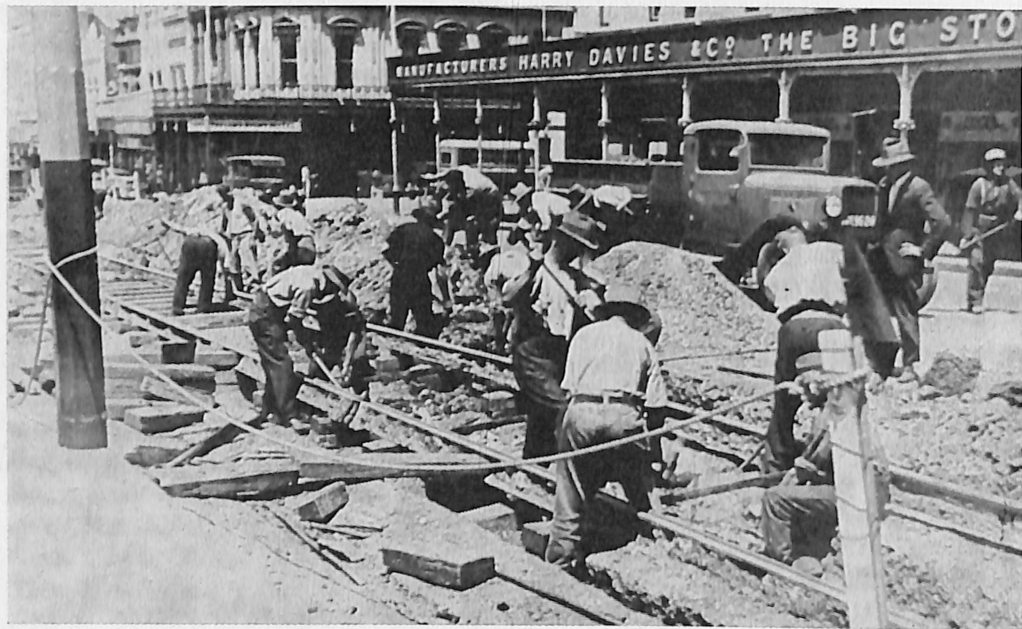
In 1918, State Parliament constituted a body to develop electricity production in Victoria, using the huge deposits of brown coal in the eastern part of the State. The State Electricity Commission of Victoria, as the body became known, also had the task of unifying existing sources of electricity and its distribution. This, of course, involved the plant and equipment of the Electric Supply Company of Victoria Limited, who, as previously mentioned, operated the Wendouree powerhouse and supplied Ballarat with its electricity.

Initial negotiations between the Commission and the Company took place in 1923, but as the Company's franchise did not expire until 1931, the rate of progress was limited. Although the Commission was an electricity manufacturing and supply body, it intimated that, if necessary, it would include the tramways in its purchase of the Company, even though it did not consider itself a tramway operator and, at the time, was not vested with power to operate tramways. Further negotiations took place,

including a conference with the Ballarat City Council on 25th October, 1928, and the terms for the purchase of the Company (including the tramways) by the Commission were eventually agreed upon, on 24th June, 1929, and duly ratified by Parliament in December, 1929. The purchase date was set at 1st July, 1931, but the date of expiry of the franchise was altered to 30th June, 1934. During this period, the Commission was to supervise the operations of the Company, who were to continue their normal functions. The Commission was also required to provide funds for any necessary capital works, which were to be approved by Parliament. Also in December, 1929, Parliament passed an Act giving the S.E.C. power to operate tramways, and further detailing their protection from competitive bus operators. In due course, these aforementioned items progressively came into being.

Rehabilitation

During 1932 and 1933, the S.E.C. conducted a detailed investigation into the condition of the tramways (and also those at Bendigo and Geelong, which



Track reconstruction in Sturt Street during the 1934-35 rehabilitation.



were included in the foregoing arrangements). Ballarat's electric tramway system was nearly 30 years old, and required quite a deal of attention to track, overhead and rolling stock. The costs and advantages of rehabilitating the system, compared with alternative methods of transport, were probed, and it was decided that the best solution would be to reconstruct the system to a reasonable standard, which would assure adequate street transport for the next 15 years. At this time, the route mileage was 13.1, there being 1.3 miles of double track and 15.25 miles of single track (which latter figure included passing loops). The rolling stock comprised the 1905 to 1913 built cars Nos. 1 to 18 and 21 to 23, with the amendments listed later.

The Commission estimated that approximately £100,000 would need to be spent on track and overhead reconstruction, and that by effecting some re-routing of services and elimination of routes some three miles of track would be deleted. Protracted negotiations ensued with the Ballarat City Council on the latter point, and history has already recorded that the Commission was unable to gain their requested alterations. The required funds were made available to the S.E.C. — mainly by a loan from the National Recovery Fund and a Government Grant — and work commenced on the rehabilitation of the tramway system in October, 1934.

The first section to be done was the southern track in Sturt Street, from Lydiard Street to Pleasant Street. While Bridge Street was being relaid, men and equipment were brought from Bendigo to speed completion of the job in this narrow thoroughfare,

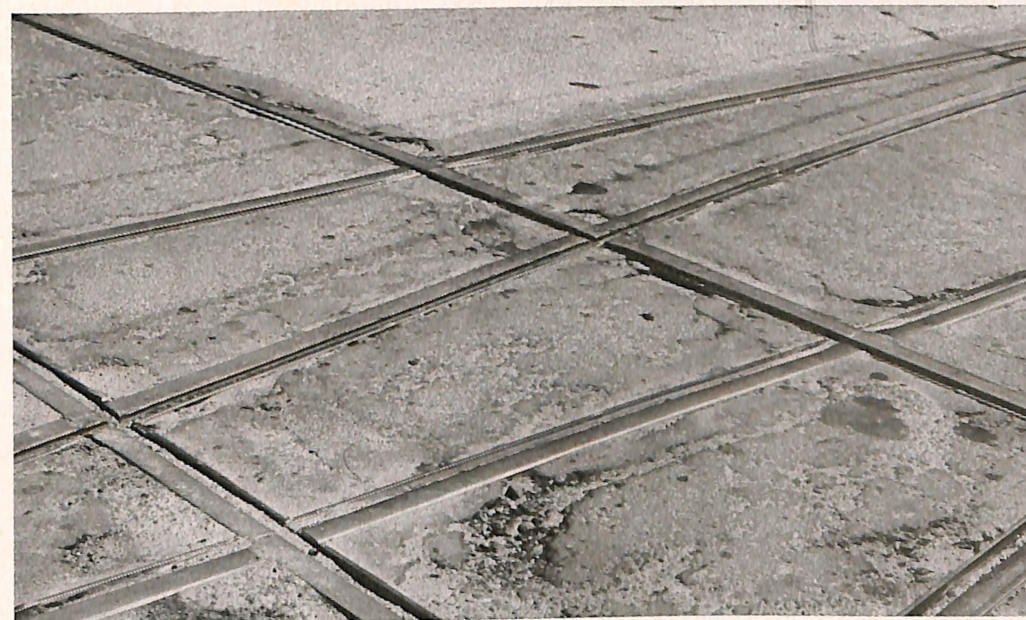


An elderly citizen walks slowly towards the Cemetery gates as No. 41 waits to roll down the Lydiard Street North hill.

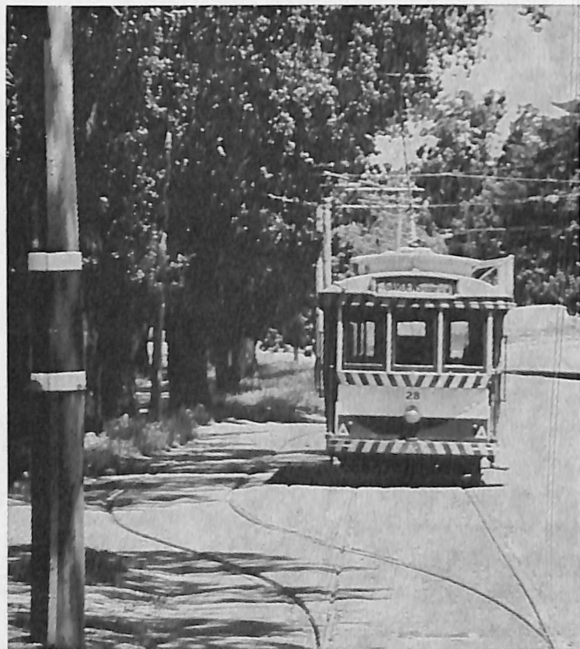
| OUT TO RUBICON STREET and SEBASTOPOI. | | OIT TO RUBICON ST. ONLY | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Leave TRAMWAY CENTRE at 15 minutes past the Hour 25 minutes to the Hour 5 minutes to the Hour | | Trams at 10 minute intervals during periods as shown (Holidays excepted) | |
| Weekdays | Sundays | Monday to Thursday | |
| 6.55 a.m. —First Tram— | 1.35 p.m. | from 11.55 a.m. to 7.35 p.m. | |
| 11.15 p.m. —Last Tram— | 10.15 p.m. | Friday from 11.55 a.m. to 9.35 p.m. | |
| At Drummond/Start Streets (From Depot) | | Saturday from 10.35 a.m. to 2.15 p.m. | |
| 6.19 a.m. —First Tram— | 1.19 p.m. | from 4.55 p.m. to 7.35 p.m. | |
| 6.39 a.m. | 1.39 p.m. | | |
|  |  | | |
| Trams Pass Hospital Corner 4 minutes later Rubicon Street 14 minutes later | Trams Pass Hospital Corner 4 minutes later | | |

| SPECIAL NOTE | Schedule of Fares and Charges |
|---|--|
| PASSENGERS WOULD FACILITATE TRAFFIC BY Noting that Check is nipped in correct destination space. Always keeping Check ready for inspection throughout the journey. Destroying the Check after leaving Train. Distinctly halting Tram at stopping place. Waiting for Passengers to alight before boarding Train. Not standing at entrance to Train. Having the Correct Fare ready for Conductor. Promptly and clearly notifying Conductor of desired destination. Assisting the Motorman and Conductors in the observance of By-Laws and Regulations. Immediately reporting to the Office any complaints against Commission's servants. The Commission accepts no responsibility for any delay or irregularity which may occur from any cause whatsoever, and reserves to itself the right to alter this timetable without notice. | Minimum Cash Fare (Adults) 2d. Between City Zone & Sebastopol Destination No. 3 3d. Between City & Sebastopol Destination No. 3 4d. Between City Zone & Sebastopol Destination No. 2 5d. Or between Sebastopol Destinations Nos. 2 & 3 and 3 & 4 2d. (by ticket only) Between Boundaries of the City Zone 1d. Or in the Borough of Sebastopol between 1a & 3 or 4 1d. (by ticket only) Children under 12 years of Age 1/2d. Cash Children under 3 years of Age held in arms Free TRANSFER—Between Railway Sisset & the Gardens (Adult) 3d. Ditto (Child) 1/2d. Cash Scholarship, Tourists, and Weekly Tickets are available at Concession Rates. For information, apply to Conductors or At the Commission's Office. (For Luggage or Parcels and Newspaper Packages, see overleaf.) |

Pages from the January, 1939 public time table.



Unbroken main line crossing frogs in the Drummond Street track as it crosses Sturt Street.



Single truck car No. 28 waits on the Carlton Street loop adjacent to Lake Wendouree.

and the trams serving the Victoria Street and Mount Pleasant routes were isolated for several days. Much of the old and worn grooved rail was replaced with 80 lb. "T" rail with a groove strip bolted on, but the remainder was reconditioned and remained in use. The special work was repaired by welding where possible, and only replaced by new units where absolutely necessary. Considerable attention was also bestowed upon the overhead, and much new trolley wire was strung.

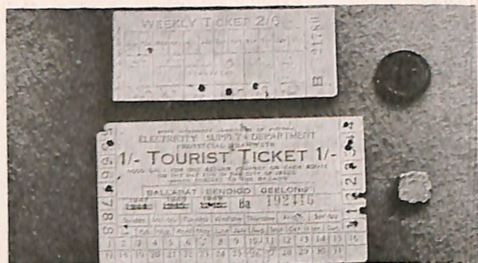
On 28th August, 1937, an extension of 45.5 chains was opened to the Cemetery gates on the Lydiard Street North route, following local pressure. This was the only major change made in the system after the Sebastopol electrification of 1913, and was officially opened by tramcar No. 32 (see later).

Rolling Stock

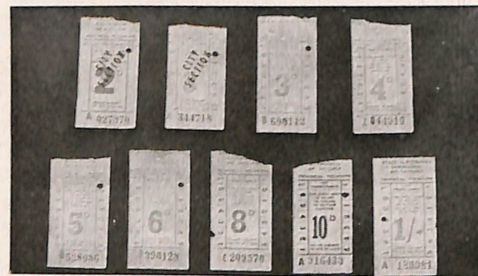
It would appear that the Company realized that its elderly rebuilt tramcars were showing the strain of operating beyond their originally designed limits, as five replacement single truck vehicles were acquired from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board shortly before the S.E.C. officially purchased the Company on 1st July, 1931. The first one, number 24, ex Melbourne No. 108, arrived in February, 1930, and the other four (Nos. 25 to 28) in May and June. No. 24 ran for a short while in unaltered condition, that is, centre saloon with one tip-over seat and one fixed seat on each end platform. These five cars were converted for one-man operation within a few months by removing the off-side glass from the motorman's bulkheads and cutting a narrow aisle through the tip-over seats.



Ex-Melbourne car, No. 27 rolls along Lydiard Street North towards its 1,000,000 Ballarat miles.



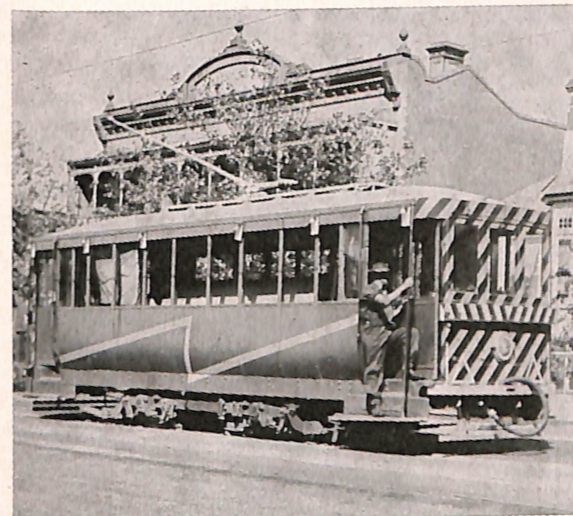
Weekly and tourist tickets in use about 1950. The disc is a 2d. fare token from 1913, while the metal seal was used by the Company to "lock" the power consumption meters on the trams.



Tickets in use prior to conversion to decimal currency in February, 1964.

Passengers thus entered the car from the "wrong" side, as the near-side barrier rails were fixed in the lowered position. Five more cars (Nos. 29, renumbered 17 in 1935, 16, 18 to 20) were received from Melbourne in 1931, and all ten were converted to an improved design. This involved the removal of the off-side third of the motorman's bulkhead, its passenger seat and the rest of the tip-over seats, fitting panels to the sides of the end platforms and installation of longitudinal seats against these panels. Four more similar cars (Nos. 30 to 33) were received from Melbourne in 1935 and four more (originally ex Melbourne) from Geelong in 1935-36. They became Nos. 11-14. These 18 trams, plus one (No. 21) of the three (Nos. 21 to 23) purchased from Adelaide in 1937, were modified to the final style of one-man conversion between 1935 and 1938. This work involved moving the four motorman's bulkhead pillars back to make a wider doorway, removal of the near-side third of the motorman's bulkhead, removal of the rest of the seat which was fixed against the motorman's bulkhead, and adjusting the end platform longitudinal seats. Thus the cars were suitable for near-side loading when running in normal streets (removing the danger from on-coming motor traffic at the front off-side corner) and off-side loading from the central plantation in Sturt Street and some sections of the Lake routes.

Originally, the S.E.C. had hoped to operate the system with only ten "new" trams, but it was soon seen that even the best of the older cars could not be expected to give part-time support for much longer. Hence the extra cars were acquired from



The track cleaner car as it appeared in the late 1960's.



Near the Sebastopol terminus the single track swings from the east to the west side of the highway.



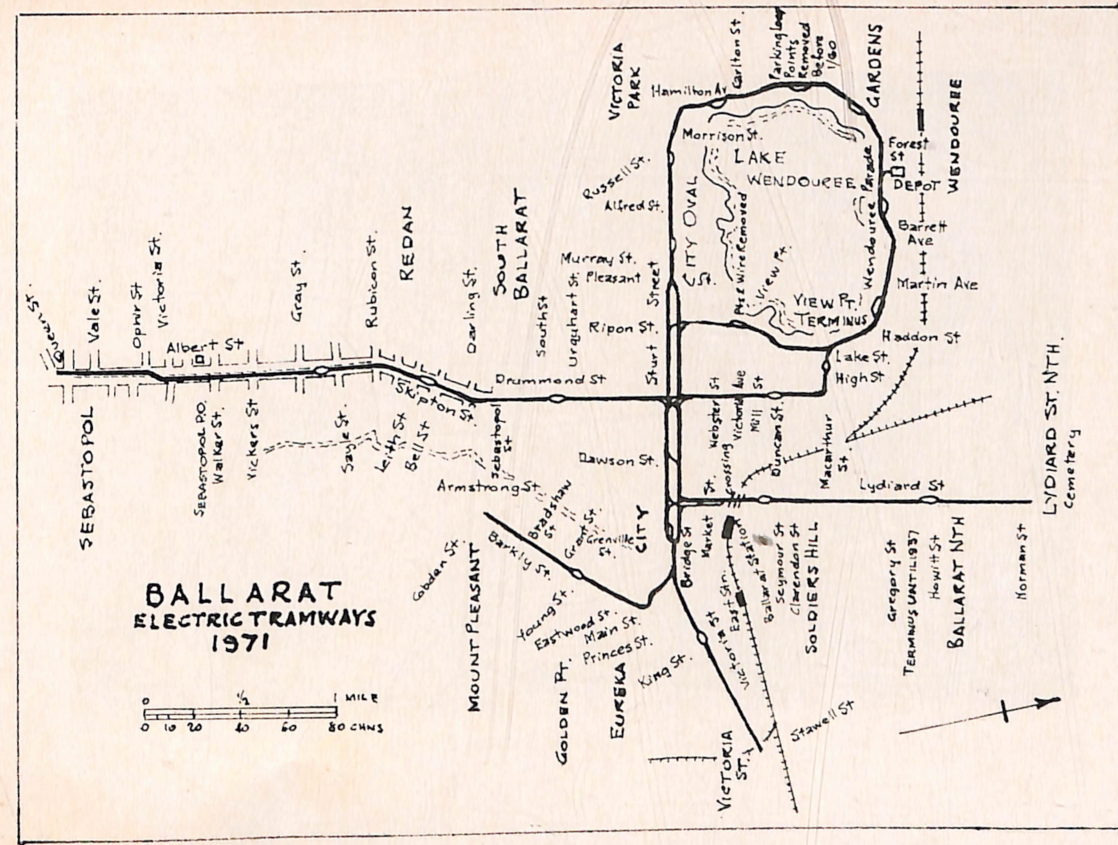
The side-of-road rural atmosphere of the Sebastopol route is shown as two cars pass on the crossing loop.

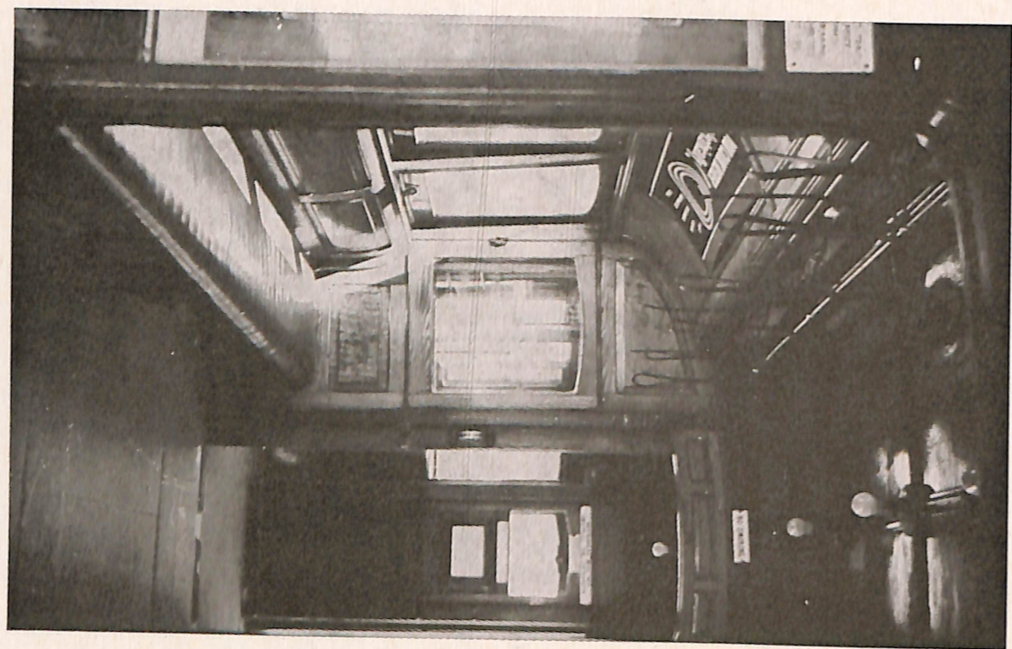
Melbourne and Adelaide, as mentioned, plus another one from Melbourne. The latter (No. 22, renumbered 29 in 1938) arrived in 1936, and was slightly different to the other cars. Its main frame was straight, whereas the other cars had dropped ends, and its end platforms were partly enclosed by side panels. Its straight frame gave higher steps and it was thus unpopular and saw limited use. Time was to prove the S.E.C. wise to purchase these cars before they were scrapped in Melbourne and Adelaide, as it gave Ballarat a fleet of trams which was in quite good condition, and capable of working for many years to come. All the older trams were withdrawn and scrapped between 1930 and about 1936, except No. 23, which was converted in 1934 to a track cleaner by removal of the seats, installation of a large water tank, and fitting of the necessary holders and levers to the truck frame.

The early ex-Melbourne trams were painted in the red and cream colours of the Company, but No. 27 first appeared in the new colours of green and cream, with cream rocker panels, in March, 1935. These colours were a "richer" tone than the later green and cream colours, which first appeared on No. 16 about April, 1946. The first tram to run with air brakes in Ballarat was No. 24, the first of the ex-Melbourne cars.

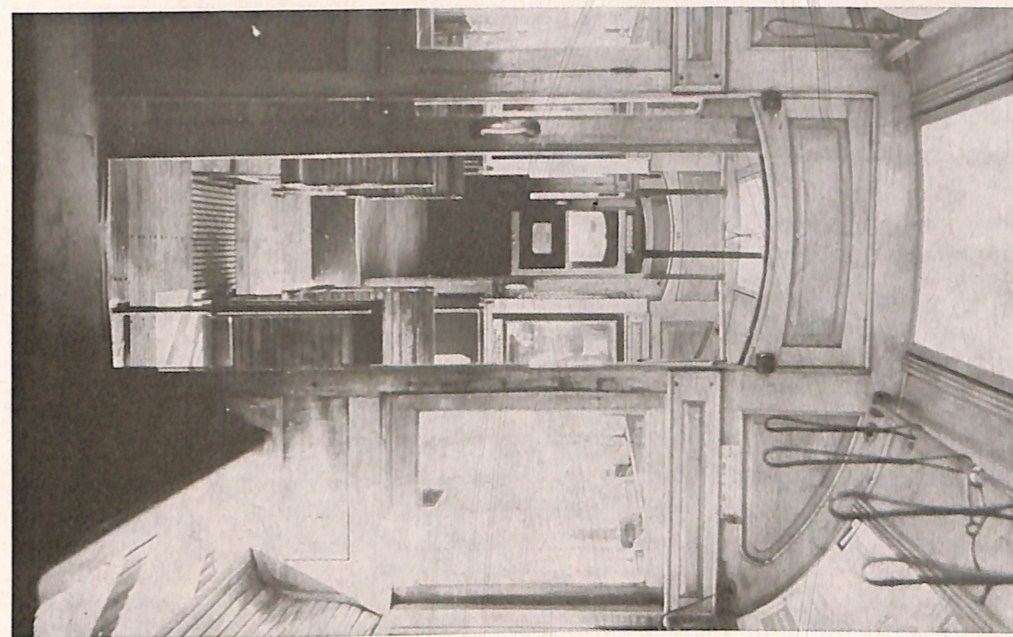
The Commission's Trams

The S.E.C. had hardly finished rehabilitating the Ballarat tramways when World War II was declared. The trams carried increased loadings for several years, and survived the shortages of materials and maintenance fairly well. The man-power shortage





Interior of single-truck tram No. 20.



Interior of bogie tram No. 35.

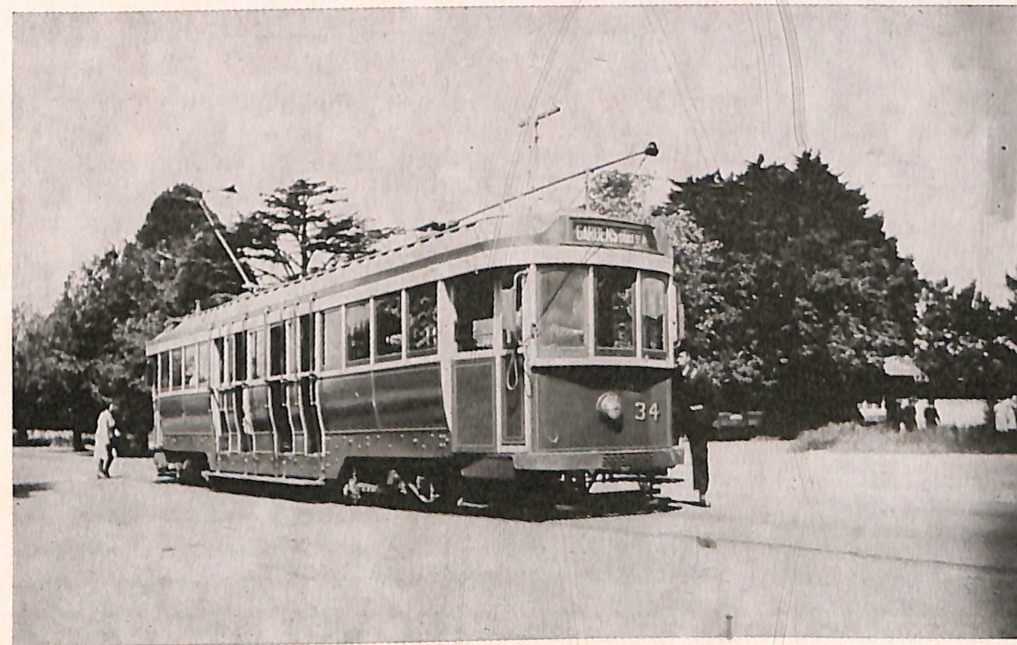


The small pole-mounted box allows the motorman to select the correct signal light setting for his passage into Bridge Street to the Victoria Street or Mount Pleasant routes, or to shunt and return along Sturt Street.

necessitated the employment of Conductresses between 13th September, 1942, and 9th July, 1946, a maximum of 23 being on the job at one time. After the S.E.C. took over, the almost total one-man operation of the trams had been eased, but, during the war, they ran as one-man cars before 11.00 a.m. and after 8.00 p.m. From 8th April, 1946, Conductors were provided at all times.

After the opening of the Lydiard Street North extension in 1937, a 20 minute time-table was introduced on all lines except that to View Point. A new system of through routing was also introduced, and, except for short-working cars, Grenville Street was largely deleted as a terminus. The new arrangement was: Victoria Street to Gardens via Sturt Street West; Mount Pleasant to Gardens via Drummond Street North; Lydiard Street North to Sebastopol; Lydiard Street North to Rubicon Street (later Grey Street); City to View Point; City (Main Street) to Sturt Street West. Trolleywheel operated colour light signals were introduced on the Bridge Street section in 1937, and then on the Victoria Street and Mount Pleasant routes. The Sebastopol, Lydiard Street North and both Gardens routes were equipped thus in 1938, leaving only the View Point route worked by hand staff.

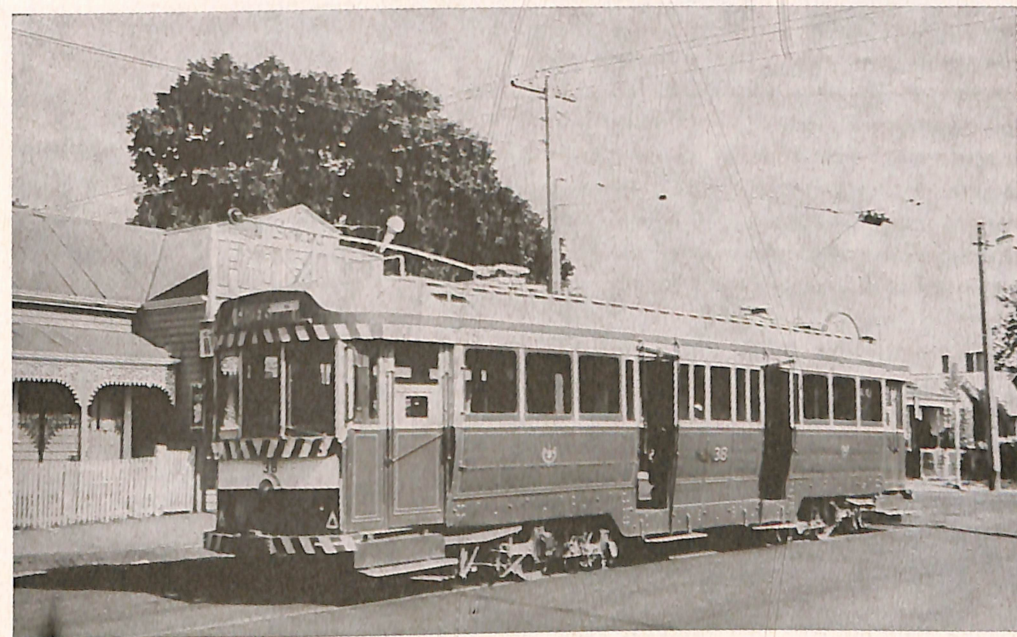
No. 22, one of the unconverted ex-Adelaide cars, collided with an Army truck in Drummond Street South on 28th July, 1944, and was badly damaged. Although preliminary work on repairs had been started, it was decided to scrap this car when the M. & M.T.B. offered some maximum traction bogie tramcars for sale. The first such car arrived on



Ex-Hawthorn Tramways Trust, No. 34 waits at the Victoria St. terminus in the late 1940's.



Ex-Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust, No. 40 in Sturt Street.



Bogie car No. 38, as converted for one-man operation, at Mount Pleasant terminus.