

7th November, 1940.

Mr. Frank Shennen,  
Managing Editor,  
"Transportation Newsmagazine,"  
11c Castlereagh Street,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

The reports of the old Melbourne Tramways Trust, together with the history of Northcote, reached me safely, and I am obliged to you for returning them so promptly.

It is going to be very difficult to get hold of all the details you desire. The old cable depots were at Richmond, Fitzroy, Victoria Street, Clifton Hill, Northcote, Nicholson Street, Carlton, Prahran, Toorak, North Carlton, Esplanade, St Kilda, North Melbourne, South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and Brunswick, and the engine houses were at Richmond, Brunswick Street (Fitzroy), Nicholson Street, Northcote, Carlton, North Carlton, Toorak, Windsor, St Kilda Road, North Melbourne, South Melbourne and Brunswick, while the building and repair shops were at Nicholson Street. If any further report by the Trust was issued, dealing particularly with rolling stock, no one here has ever heard of it much less seen it, nor are there, so far as we know, any records now in existence from the Nicholson Street shops. The oldest employees joined the service in the early years of the present century, and none

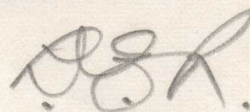


are of any use to us for the reason that they have occupied but minor positions. I have, however, succeeded in tracing a former foreman who retired 16 years ago or so. The name is J. A. Dahn, and his address is 38 Stanley Street, Black Rock, Melbourne, S 9. If his memory is good he might be able to help you.

The only official data we acquired consisted of the inventory compiled by the old Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company and handed over by it to the Temporary Tramways Board in 1916. This shows that the cars were acquired at prices ranging from £118/4/5 to £418/7/10, while the cost of the dummies began at £118 and went up to as high as £351/18/5. Our records show that the greatest number of cars in stock was 612 in 1926.

I hope that these additional details will be of service to you.

Yours faithfully,



Publicity Officer.

LER.



TRUCK and BUS

# Transportation



EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES: SUITE 806 CATHCART HOUSE,  
11c Castlereagh St., Sydney. Telephone BW 4396; Managing Editor: F. Shennen.  
Melbourne Representative, E. Oaten, A.P.A. Building, 379 Collins St.

5th Year of Publication

4th November, 1940.

Mr. L.E. Russell,  
Melbourne & Met. Tramways Board,  
616 Little Collins Street,  
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

I wish to advise posting today the three reports and copy of the history of Northcote which you so kindly loaned me. Would you kindly thank the gentlemen who made these publications available?

The information was exceedingly helpful but, unfortunately, no mention appears in any of the reports concerning the construction of the actual cars or the car sheds or anything connecting with the costs of rolling stock etc. No doubt, in a later report, the aspect of rolling stock must have been dealt with at length, in view of the fact that the first twenty tram cars were specially imported from America, and its that aspect of the history that I am exceedingly anxious to learn something about.

As I suggested in my previous request, I feel sure that somewhere in the surviving Nicholson Street workshops there would be records dealing with that aspect of the car numbers, in view of the fact that a large number of cars are being kept in reserve in case the two Bourke Street routes are required to be restored. Therefore, I would now appreciate your



*Latest Truck and Bus News, Pictures, Features, etc. Exclusive Articles on Fleet Management, Diesel and petrol Truck and Bus Maintenance, Trailers, Modern Bodybuilding, Current Transport Laws, New Truck Models and Pictures, Articles on Railways, Tramways, Buses, Trolleybuses,*

THE TRANSPORT FLEET-OWNERS MAGAZINE



2.

further helpful co-operation, or any of the older officials at Nicholson Street who might be able to throw some light on the rolling stock portion of the information required.

Attached hereto I enclose stamps to the value of 1/9 covering your expense in sending to me the material which is now being returned. I am posting you a copy of the next issue of TRANSPORTATION carrying pictures of the new Bourke Street buses and covering article.

Trusting that the foregoing requests will not inconvenience you and thanking you for past co-operation.

Yours sincerely  
TRANSPORTATION

*Frank Sherman*  
Managing Editor.



*Mr Bussell  
Recd.  
Office*  
DRAFT.

MELBOURNE and METROPOLITAN TRAMWAYS BOARD.

18th October, 1940.

Mr. F. Shennen,  
Suite 806, Cathcart House,  
11c Castlereagh Street,  
SYDNEY. N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letter of the  
16th October in connection with the history of the cable  
tramway system in Melbourne.

In reply, I have to inform you that we *have*  
*been* unable to trace any copy of Mr. Greig's cable tram  
history; but I am sending you by registered post three copies  
of the "Chairman's Report of the Operations of The  
Melbourne Tramways Trust" dating, respectively, from  
the formation of the Trust to ~~xxx~~ 26th October, 1888,  
from 26th October, 1888, to 19th August, 1892, and from  
20th August, 1892, to ~~xxx~~ 20th January, 1905. *also the "History  
of Valtale" I have marked the chapter referring to  
Chairman's reports in the index.*  
As these are the only copies known to be in  
existence, I ~~should be glad to~~ shall esteem it a favour if  
you will see that they are returned safely to me.

Yours faithfully,

PUBLICITY OFFICER.



19th October, 1940.

Mr. Frank Shennen,  
Suite 806, Cathcart House,  
11c Castlereagh Street,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 16th inst. in connection with the history of the cable tramway system in Melbourne.

I regret that our Manager (Mr. S. M. Richardson) has been unable to trace any copy of Mr. Greig's history ; but I am sending you by registered post three copies of the "Chairman's Report of the Operations of The Melbourne Tramways Trust" dating, respectively, from the formation of the Trust to 26th October, 1888, from 26th October, 1888, to 19th August, 1892, and from 20th August, 1892, to 20th January, 1905 ; also "The History of Northcote." On the index of the latter I have marked the chapters which contain details of Northcote's tramway history.

As the Chairman's reports are the only copies known to be in existence, I shall esteem it a favour if you will see that they are returned safely to me. So far as Mr. Greig's History is concerned, I repeat my suggestion that you should communicate with him direct.

Yours faithfully,

Publicity Officer.



*Mr. Frank Shannan*

~~TRUCK and BUS~~

# Transportation



EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES: SUITE 806 CATHCART HOUSE,  
11c Castlereagh St., Sydney, Telephone BW 4396; Managing Editor: F. Shannan.  
Melbourne Representative: E. Oaten, A.P.A. Building, 379 Collins St.

*M.S.W.*  
5th Year of Publication

16th October, 1940.

Mr. L.E. Russell,  
Melb. & Met. Tramways Board,  
616 Little Collins Street,  
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

I wish to acknowledge your letter of the 12th instant and to thank you for your expression of co-operation. I note, with regret, that you believe most of the data required has been destroyed. I will appreciate receiving Mr. Richardson's copy of Mr. Greig's cable tram history on loan, and will take every care of it, also the copies of Mr. Hine's report. Northcote tramway history will also be of great value.

I understand that my representative in Melbourne is at present in camp, and wondered if you would be so good as to post, by registered mail, the material mentioned above, costs of which will be defrayed by me when returning material.

There was other information requested in my letter which officers of your department may be able to provide, and I trust to hear from you in connection with the foregoing at your convenience.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,  
TRANSPORTATION

*Frank Shannan*



Latest Truck and Bus News, Pictures, Features, etc. Exclusive Articles on Fleet Management, Diesel and petrol ~~Truck~~ and Bus Maintenance, Trailers, Modern Bodybuilding, Current Transport Laws, New Truck Models and Pictures, Articles on Railways, Tramways, Buses, Trolleybuses,

*Mr. Hine  
Can you send them  
Greig's history  
AM*



H. Matthews  
27 Riverside  
Parramatta, N.S.W.

12th October, 1940.

F. Shennen, Esq.,  
Managing Editor,  
"Transportation Newsmagazine,"  
11c Castlereagh Street,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge your letter of the 8th inst.

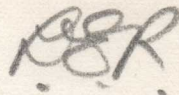
While I am willing to give you, on the direction of my Chairman, Mr. H. H. Bell, all the assistance in my power, I am afraid that the greater part of the data you desire went up in flames long ago when the records of the old Melbourne Tramways Trust and the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company were destroyed. Much of it, indeed, never came into the possession of the Board, while more was sent to the incinerator when we left the old head office in 1937. So far as I know, no complete set of photographs is in existence.

I am informed that something like 20 years ago Mr. A. W. Greig, of the Historical Society of Victoria, 234 Swanston Street, C 1, compiled a cable tram history. Our Manager (Mr. Richardson) is trying to trace his copy, and if he succeeds in doing so he will be glad to loan it to you. Our Industrial Officer (Mr. H. R. Hine) has copies of the three reports issued by the Chairman of the Melbourne Tramways Trust, covering the history of the operations of the Trust between 1882 and 1905. These



contain full details of the negotiations, the methods of construction employed, the financial details, the opening of the various lines, etc. I have also in a Northcote publication the history of the Northcote tramway. These will readily be made available to your representative any time he cares to call here.

Yours faithfully,



Publicity Officer.

LER.



# TRANSPORTATION *Newsmagazine*



THE AUSTRALIAN COMMERCIAL MOTOR, ROAD HAULAGE AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Sixth Floor, Cathcart House, 11c Castlereagh St., Sydney, Australia

Telephone B 2589

Fourth Year of Publication.

Publicity Manager,  
Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board,  
Little Collins Street,  
MELBOURNE

Oct. 8.40

Dear Sir,

I propose to prepare a record of Melbourne tramway operation up to the acquisition of the various concerns by the Board.

At first I am dealing with the cable tramways based largely on my personal experience and observations up to 1920. This record will be reproduced in the Railway Historical Society's Bulletin and I will run a condensed version through several issues of this magazine.

Your assistance in securing the co-operation of the cable tramway workshops at Nicholson Street will be greatly appreciated. I specially desire to receive the information as listed hereunder and, in order to avoid wasting the time of your employees, if the workshops concerned would loan the various records entailed I would set my staff to culling the data required and would return the records within a few days.

You may recollect the personal interview you gave the writer last January who, you might remember, identified himself also as an ex-Argus man.

I have had some of my staff searching the available records at the Mitchell Library here but as I obtained most of the information sought in 1920 from



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**THE TRANSPORT FLEET-OWNERS MAGAZINE**



the Nicholson St. shops ( since lost in removing from place to place ) it is almost certain that the data is still on record. Perhaps some of the early reports (annual) will show all by the road numbers and photos requested.

In view of the forthcoming change-over to buses ( running an illustrated story in the November issue showing buses coming from Adelaide etc.) and the changing times due to the war I feel that I should put these observations on record whilst conditions permit and I sincerely trust you will extend the co-operation requested.

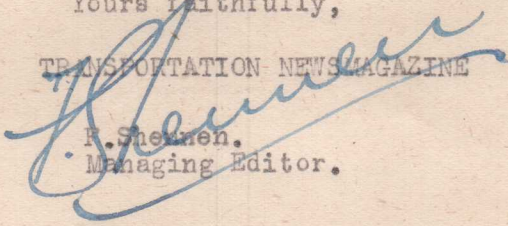
Copies of this journal and the Society's own Bulletin containing the records will be forwarded to you in due course.

The request for the actual car numbers and the depots to which they were attached may seem unusual but when you know that, in 1920, I knew the number of every car, its type, depot, etc. both cable and electric, you will understand that the availability of that section of the data required will open up a vast fund of information of operation practice which at present eludes my memory. The list is attached.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

TRANSPORTATION NEWS MAGAZINE

  
F. Sheehan.  
Managing Editor.



MELBOURNE CABLE TRAMWAYS - DATA REQUIRED.

- 1. POWERHOUSES (a) Location of each house.  
 (b) Date put into operation  
 (c) What ropes it powered at opening date  
 (d) Subsequent sections of routes opened served by the respective power houses.
- 2. ROUTES (a) Date each route ( indicate termini) opened  
 (b) Date subsequent sections opened (name termini)  
 (c) Mileages of those routes  
 (d) Date routes closed.
- 3. ROUTE SIGNS (a) Please check. Prior to 1921 the visual route destination indications for each line were.-

<u>ROUTE</u>	<u>CARS PAINTED ROUTE BACKGROUND COLOR</u>	<u>CARS AT NIGHT SHOWN ROUTE COLOR.</u>
Richmond	Blue	Blue
Victoria Edge	Red	Red
N.Fitzroy	Orange	Yellow
S.Melbne.	Green	Green
Port Melb.	White	Amber
Clifton Hill	Red	Red
C.H-Preston	Red	Red
Nicholson St	Blue	Blue
Stkilda -NC	Green	Green
Prahran -C	Red	Red
Stkilda - Windsor	Orange	Red
( Stkilda - Q'berry St	Green/white (Holiday relief)	Green going Stk. Amber going Q.St.
Toorak	Orange	Yellow
Brighton Road	White	Amber
Brunswick	Red	Red
N.Melbourne	Green	Green
W.Melbourne	Chocolate	White

- (b) After taken over by M&MTB all cars on all routes we painted a uniform chocolate. The Brighton Rd trams were later (date?) routed through to N. Melbourne and the color route light changed to..... and the West Melbourne from white to..... Was S.Melb-N.Fitz likewise
- (c) Would it be possible to have on loan a photo of each of the series showing a cable tram, with route names thereon ( pre M&MTB ) for each route. I believe the shops kept these on record for repainting guides etc. Full care and immediate return is assured you.

4. CAR NUMBERS  
 (trailers only wanted)

**This information is the most urgently needed.** A certain batch of cars (dummies and trailers) were permanently attached to their respective depots in view of the fact that they carried the names of streets and suburbs on the sides and rear. I particularly require a list of the cars numbers (trailers only) attached to each depot prior to M&MTB acquisition. These I imagine will be on record among the construction records and if so



the construction dates of each trailer would also be appreciated.

- (d) Up to 1920 the car numbers (trailers) were not in complete rotation. To the best of my recollection the South Melbourne, North Melbourne, Richmond, Prahran, and the Clifton Hill - Northcote depots all housed cars whose series numbers commenced at No 1. Consequently numerous numbers in the 300 and 400 were entirely missing when new construction took the correct rotation forward. As soon as the M&MTB took over and commenced the uniform chocolate, changeable route signs, the shops also commenced to renumber the duplicates with the missing numbers and finally obtained the full rotation from 1 to 601 leaving the original Richmond American-built Nos. 1-20 with their original numbers. Would it be possible to borrow the renumbering schedule used by the shops during 1921-1925. **This is also very specially required** in order to trace the history of operation practice to the logical conclusion.
- (e) Would it be possible to obtain a list of dates that trailers were sold, listing the numbers of those cars (road numbers).

Any records, reports, photos and any other copies of printed matter and data which you can loan will be handed with utmost care and returned as quickly as copies can be made.

It is felt that there are a great number of Melbourneites with a genuine affection and appreciation of the work performed by the cable cars and it is hoped that this record will fill gaps not hitherto placed on public record. The earlier era between 1885- and 1910 will be uncovered by the local library search coupled with the car numbers which I hope you can make available.

*J. J. J. J.*  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
 Centcart House, 11c Castlereagh St. Sydney