



REGIONAL TRAMWAYS

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND



PETER WALLER



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ABBREVIATIONS

BEC:	British Electric Car Co Ltd
BET:	British Electric Traction
BTC:	British Transport Commission
EMB:	Electro-Magnetic Brake Co
ER&TCW:	Electric Railway & Tramway Carriage Works Co
GNP:	Glasgow Numerical Printing Co
LMS:	London, Midland & Scottish Railway
LNER:	London & North Eastern Railway
LPTB	London Passenger Transport Board
LT:	London Transport
LUT:	London United Tramways
M&G:	Mountain & Gibson Ltd
M&T:	Maley & Taunton Ltd
MET:	Metropolitan Electric Tramways
PCC:	Presidents' Conference Car
UDC:	Urban District Council
UEC:	United Electric Car Co Ltd
VAMBAC:	variable automatic multi-notch braking and control

KEY TO MAPS	
	Passenger lines
	Lines closed before 1 January 1945
	Non-passenger lines
	Lines of neighbouring operators – open at 1 January 1945
	Lines of neighbouring operators – closed at 1 January 1945
	Passenger lines built opened after 1 January 1945
	Lines under construction at 1 January 1945 – never completed

PREFACE

This is the second in a series that is intended, ultimately, to cover all the tramways of the British Isles. Its focus is on those tramway systems in Yorkshire and north-east England that operated after 1945. However, it also provides an overview of tramway development from the horse-tram era onwards in the region. Following the introduction, individual chapters deal with each of the first-generation tramways that survived into 1945, with a map that shows the system as it existed at 1 January 1945 and a fleet list of all the trams operated after that date. The Yorkshire and north-east region also includes two second-generation tramways – Sheffield Supertram and Tyne & Wear Metro – which are covered.

The majority of illustrations in the book are drawn from the collection of the Online Transport Archive; in particular, I am grateful to Barry Cross, Bob Jones, Hamish Stevenson and John Meredith, as well as to the late Drew Crighton, Marcus Eavis, Jim Joyce, Harry Luff, Phil Tatt and

Tony Wickens – all of whose negatives or collections are now in the care of OTA. Martin Jenkins has been a great help in tracking down certain images and providing information. I'd also like to thank Hugh McAulay, for providing information about the tramways of Newcastle and Gateshead, and Richard Wiseman for permission to reproduce his view of Rotherham. Every effort has been made to ensure complete accuracy. Unfortunately, the records available are not always consistent and, with the passage of time, the number of those with detailed knowledge is sadly declining. Likewise every effort has been made to ensure the correct attribution of photographs. It goes without saying that any errors of fact or attribution are the author's and any corrections should be forwarded to him care of the publishers.

*Peter Waller,
Shrewsbury,
March 2015*

INTRODUCTION

The tramway age in Yorkshire and north-east England predated the Tramways Act, as the first tramcars to operate in the region commenced in Darlington on 1 January 1862. This was one of the pioneering horse tramways opened in Britain by the American entrepreneur George Francis Train, following on from his first line that had opened in Birkenhead two years earlier. However, without a legal framework to operate the trams, Train was subject to various legal impediments, including being sued for the loss of a greyhound, and the line ceased operation on 1 January 1865 and was quickly dismantled. The operating company was

wound up in December the same year.

The legal framework that Train lacked in Darlington came with the passing of the Tramways Act in 1870. The Act authorised local authorities to grant the rights to operate tramways within the local area to companies for a period of twenty-one years; construction of the tramway could either be undertaken by the authority and leased to the operator or by the operator itself. The Act also imposed a duty upon the operator of maintaining the strip of road 18in either side of the outer running rails. This was the Achilles' heel of the Act because roads were generally badly maintained – if they were maintained at all – and the

The first horse trams built for Sheffield Tramways Co were twelve, such as No 9 seen here, built by Starbuck Car & Wagon Co of Birkenhead for the Attercliffe route – the first section of the horse tramway to open (on 6 October 1873) and extended to Tinsley on 7 May 1874. Barry Cross Collection/ Online Transport Archive





Hull Street

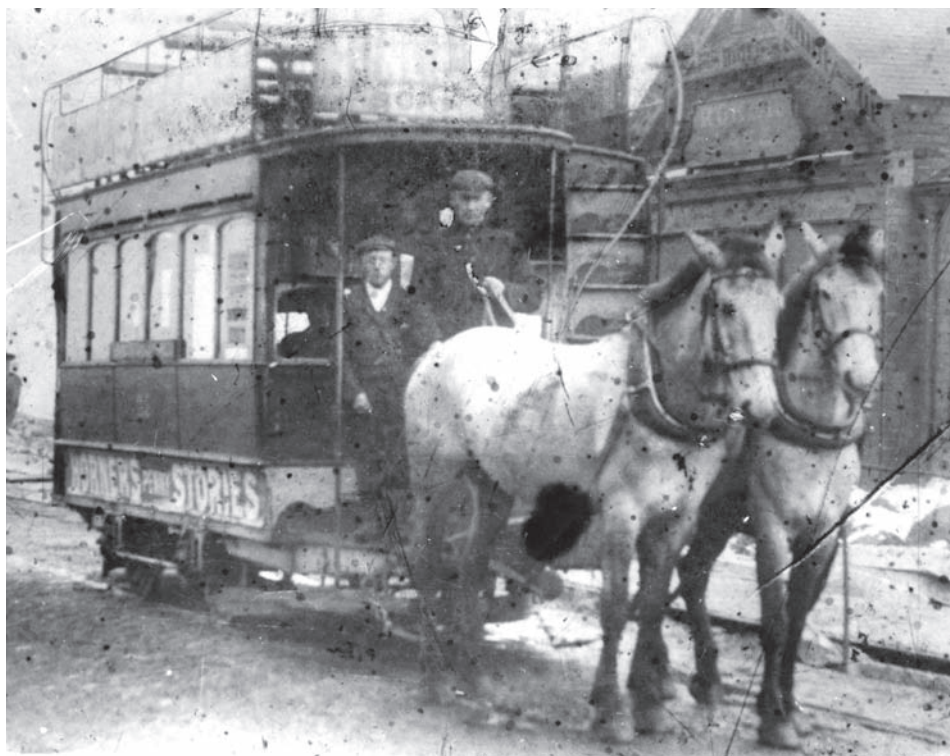
Tramways Co No 15 is pictured on the Beverley Road to Pier Head route in the mid-1890s, shortly before the company sold out to Hull Corporation. Barry Cross Collection/ Online Transport Archive

creation of this well-managed strip in the middle meant that it was available to all road users and the tram became perceived as causing delays to other road users. At the end of the twenty-one-year lease, or periodically thereafter, the local authority was entitled to purchase the assets of the company at a written-

down value. This further weakness in the Act dissuaded the leaseholders from investing further in the business as the potential selling price would not reflect

No fewer than five horse trams are visible in this view of Newcastle & Gosforth Tramways & Carriage Co's terminus at Gosforth High Street. In 1893 the company had a fleet of 44 cars and 272 horses operating over a network of 17 route miles. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive





A double-deck horse tram of Sunderland Tramways Co; the company introduced its first service in April 1879 with the operation passing to the corporation twenty years later. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive

the investment undertaken. The 1870 Act was subsequently amended, most notably with the Light Railways Act of 1896, but represented the basis upon which most tramways were built.

There were, following the experiment in Darlington, a number of horse tram operators in the area covered by the volume. The earliest was in Leeds, where Leeds Tramways Co introduced a standard gauge service on 16 September 1871; following acquisition by Leeds Corporation on 2 February 1894, the last horse trams operated in the city on 13 October 1901. Horse trams, again standard gauge, ran in Sheffield under the aegis of Sheffield Tramways Co on 6 October 1873. The system eventually extended to five routes; company operation ceased on 11 July 1896 when Sheffield Corporation took over. The



One of Stockton & Darlington Steam Tramway Co's 3ft 0in gauge horse trams stands in front of the Freemasons' Arms on Bondgate in Darlington. It is suggested that the elderly gentleman standing on the platform at the front dressed in white is from the company's then owners – Imperial Tramways. If that is the case, the image must date to between 1898, when Stockton & Darlington Steam Tramway Co was acquired by Imperial Tramways, and August 1903, when horse tram services ceased. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive

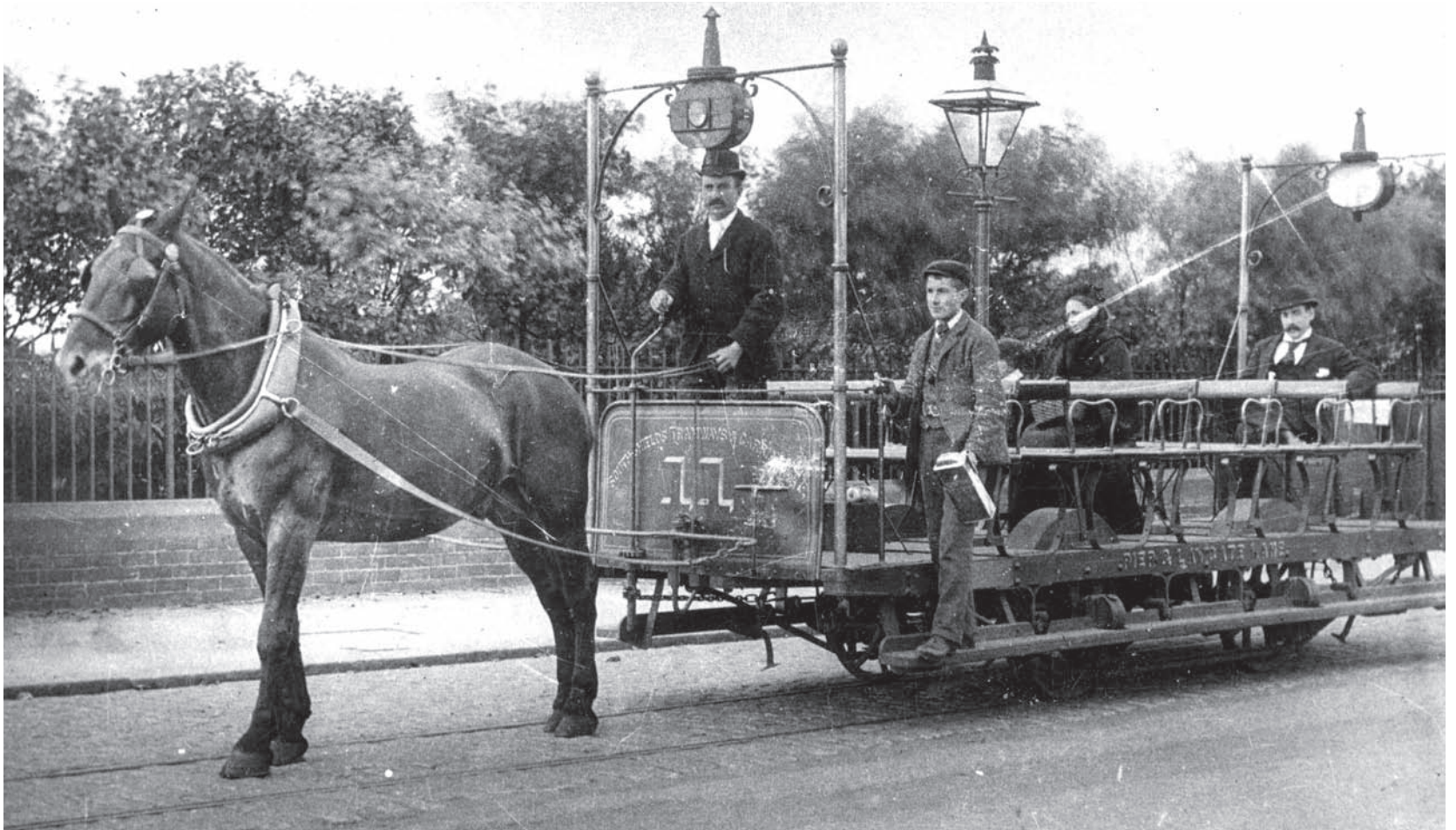


final horse cars operated on 30 May 1903. Sheffield was followed by Dewsbury, Batley & Birstal (sic) Tramways Co, again of standard gauge, on 25 July 1874; these lasted until replaced by steam trams six years later. Horse trams first operated in Hull on 9 January 1875. Originally operated by Continental & General Tramways Co, ownership passed to Hull Street Tramways Co in 1876. In total, some nine route miles of standard gauge track were operated; however, financial problems resulted in the company going into liquidation in 1889 and the Holderness Road route being sold to Drypool & Marfleet Steam Tramways Co. Ownership of the remaining part of the horse network passed to Hull Corporation in late 1896 for £12,500. The last horse trams operated on 30 September 1899. Under the auspices

of Newcastle & Gosforth Tramways & Carriage Co, horse trams were introduced to Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 5 December 1878. With the corporation desirous of taking over to electrify the system, company-operated standard gauge horse trams ceased operation on 13 April 1901 without replacement. The corporation then exercised powers of compulsory purchase and electrified the system. In Sunderland, the Sunderland Tramways Co introduced horse trams on 28 April 1879; following the takeover by the corporation on 31 December 1899 and the decision to electrify the network, the final standard gauge horse trams operated on 19 February 1901. Horse trams were reintroduced to the streets of Darlington on 10 October 1880 by Stockton & Darlington Steam Tramway Co; the company adopted the 3ft 0in

The City of York possessed a 4ft 0in gauge horse tramway that extended just over 3 route miles. Operated by York Tramways Co between 1880 and 1886, and by City of York Tramways Co Ltd between then and the corporation takeover, a total of nine double-deck and one single-deck trams were used; one of the former is illustrated here.

Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive



Among the horse trams operated by South Shields Tramways & Carriage Co were six, Nos 11-16, that were supplied by Ashbury Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. Nicknamed 'Bedsteads', the open single-deck cars could accommodate eighteen seated passengers. Popular in fine weather (for obvious reasons) the sextet was limited to operating between Laygate Lane and the Pier Head. In later years the cars were fitted with a rudimentary top cover. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive

One of Keighley
Tramway Co's horse
trams is pictured at
the Ingrow Bridge
terminus of the first
tram route to serve
the town.
Barry Cross Collection/
Online Transport Archive





Steam trams were introduced by Dewsbury, Batley & Birstal Tramways Co on 10 April 1880. In all, eleven steam locomotives, all built by Merryweather, were operated over the 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ route miles that the company leased. In 1880 one of the locomotives is pictured attached to ex-horse trailer No 9, one of five (Nos 6-10) built by Starbuck Car & Wagon Co between 1876 and 1880. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive

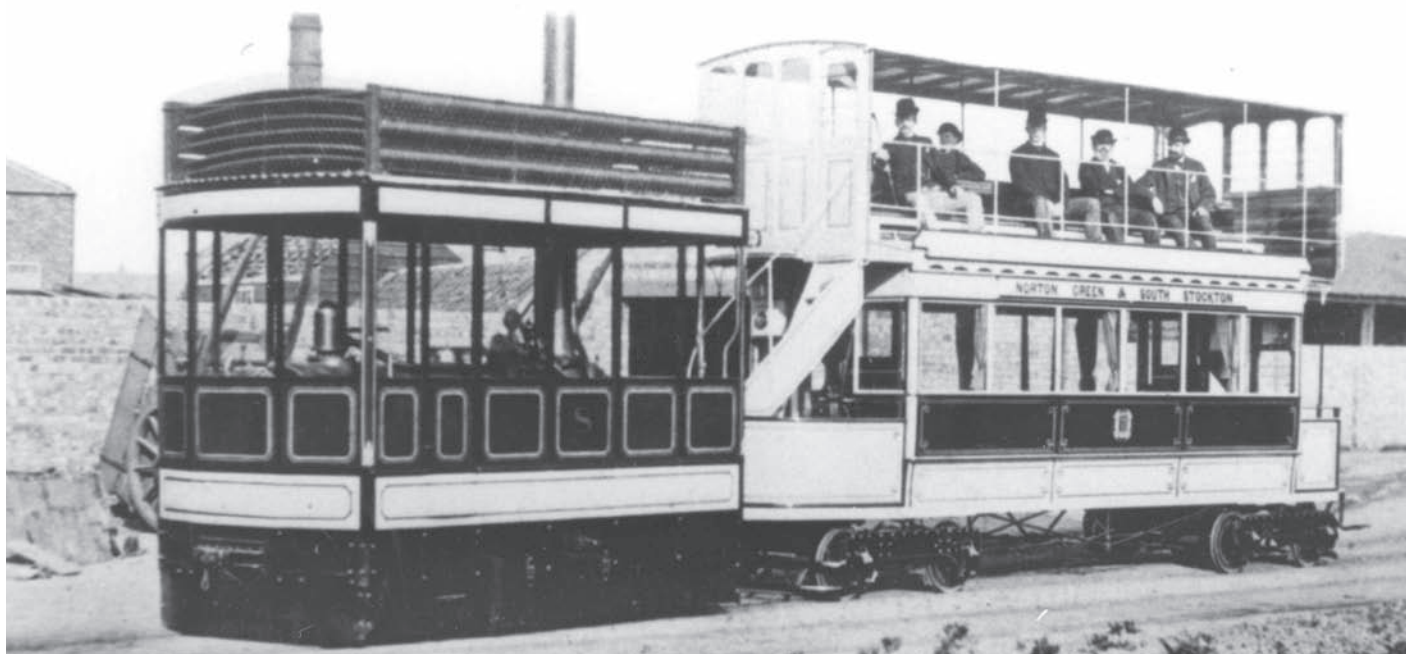
gauge and the horse trams ran until 18 August 1903 when they were withdrawn to permit the track to be regauged to 3ft 6in and electrified. Horse trams of 4ft 0in gauge were introduced to the streets of York by York Tramways Co Ltd on 26 October 1880; operation was taken over by York Tramways Co Ltd on 1 January 1886, a subsidiary of Imperial Tramways, and the operation passed to corporation

ownership on 27 February 1909. Horse trams first operated in Bradford on 1 February 1882 when they were introduced by Bradford Tramways Co; following acquisition by Bradford Corporation, the last horse trams were withdrawn by early 1903. The first horse trams served South Shields under the ownership of South Shields Tramways Co on 1 August 1883. Financial problems, however, led to the

One of Sunderland Tramway Co's experimental steam trams – one of the three locomotives that the company owned – is pictured at Roker.

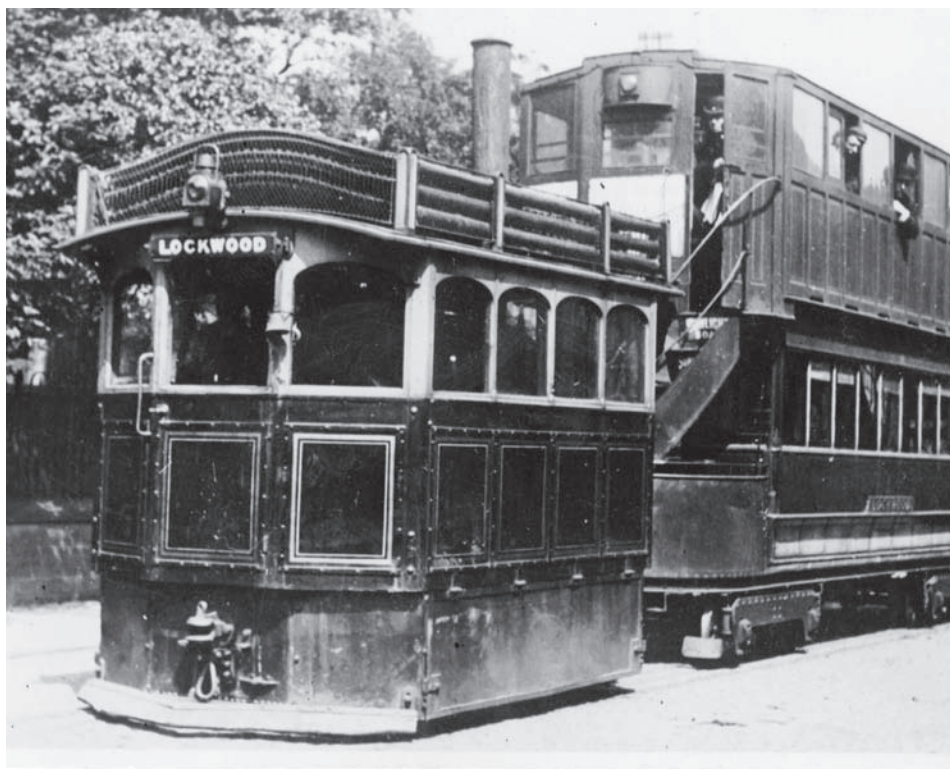
Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive





A Merryweather steam tram locomotive, believed to be No 8, of Stockton & Darlington Steam Tramways Co Ltd, at Stockton Depot. This was built in 1881 for North Staffordshire Tramways and acquired by Stockton & Darlington by 1884. The trailer is No 15, which was built in 1897, and was the only covered-top bogie trailer owned; the remainder were all open-top four-wheel cars. No 15 was built for the Norton Green to South Stockton (Thornaby) service in c1885. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive

Huddersfield Corporation became the first municipal operator of trams in Britain when, on 11 January 1883, it inaugurated its first service. One of the corporation's Kitson locomotives with double-deck trailer is seen at Lockwood in c1896. Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive



cessation of services on 30 April 1886. However, a new company, South Shields Tramways & Carriage Co, was set up to restart operation, commencing services on 28 March 1887. Horse trams survived in South Shields until 31 January 1906 when they were withdrawn to permit the electrification of the system under the auspices of the corporation. The last horse tramway to open in the region covered in this book was that which served Keighley. The first section was opened by Keighley Tramways Co Ltd on 8 May 1889. The route, built to the 4ft 0in gauge, ultimately ran for about 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ route miles linking Utley to Ingrow via the town centre. The operation, which was never financially successful, passed to Keighley Corporation on 21 September 1901, and the last horse trams operated on 21 September 1904.

Following experiments in 1876 and 1878, the first steam trams in the region were operated by Dewsbury, Batley & Birstal Tramways Co from 10 April 1880; these were, in fact, the first steam trams to operate on the public highway in England. The company was taken over by BET in 1902 and the local authorities



exercised their powers to also acquire the track. The lines were then reconstructed for use by electric trams. Leeds Tramway Co introduced steam trams on 17 June 1880; these were also taken over by the corporation on 2 February 1894 and last operated on 1 April 1902. In Sunderland

Huddersfield was unusual in that horse traction was adopted after the operator had already introduced steam trams. A total of four horse trams, Nos 7/8 and 12/13, were built for the corporation by Ashbury Railway Carriage & Iron Co Ltd of Manchester in 1885. Destined for a short life in Yorkshire, all four, including No 7 seen here, were sold to the Stockport & Hazel Grove Tramway Co Ltd in 1890/91 following the cessation of Huddersfield's horse tram operation on 1 April 1888.

Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive



Bradford

Tramways &

Omnibus Carriage Co Ltd locomotive No 31 was one of twenty-four, Nos 12-35, supplied by Thomas Green & Sons Ltd of Leeds between 1888 and 1894. It is seen here attached to double-deck trailer No 23, which was delivered in 1885, although the manufacturer is unknown.

Barry Cross Collection/

Numerically, the highest locomotive in Bradford & Shelf Tramways Co Ltd, No 14 was one of seven acquired from Thomas Green & Sons Ltd between 1887 and 1893, five of which were replacements for earlier locomotives in the fleet.

Barry Cross Collection/
Online Transport Archive



the Tramways Co experimented with steam tram operation between 15 October 1880 and the middle of the following year, but disruption to other traffic and

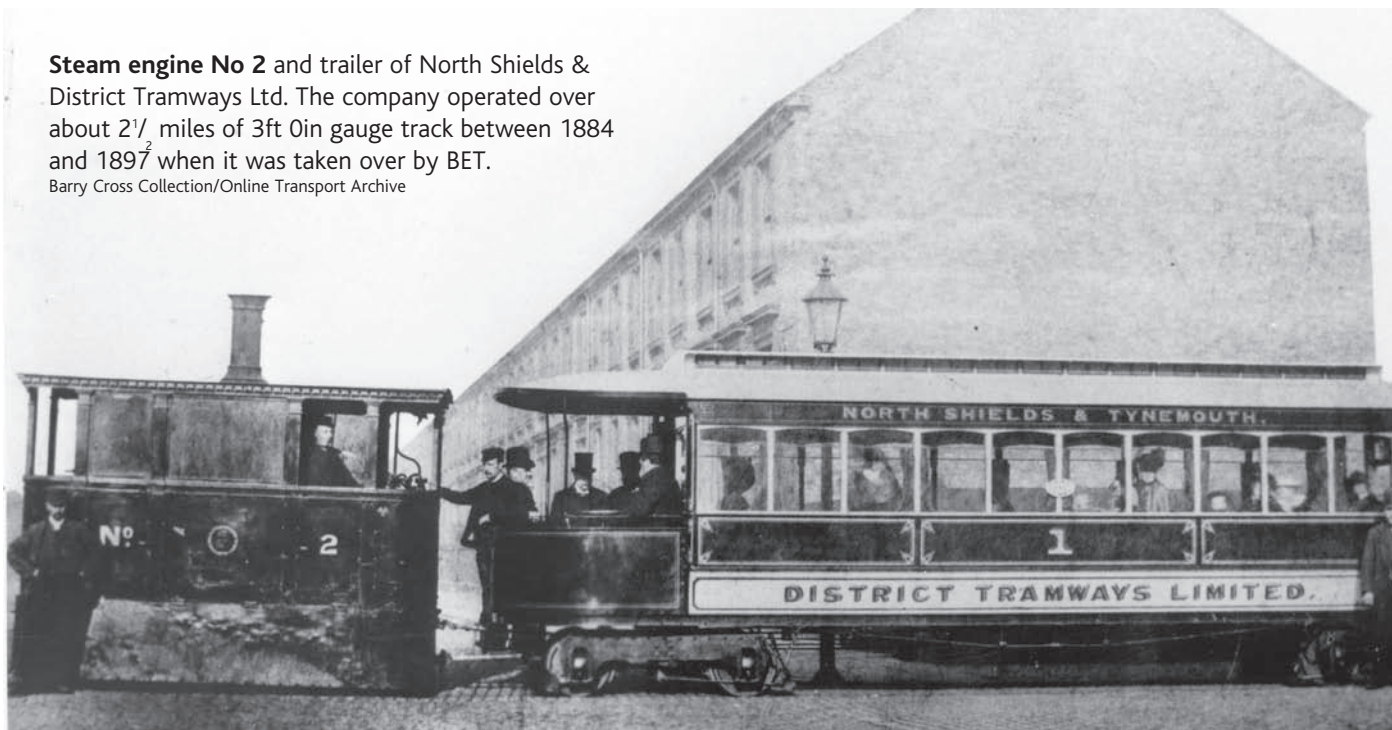
frequent breakdowns meant that they only survived seven months. Steam trams operated also experimentally in York in 1881, but horse traction was retained.

When acquiring its steam locomotives, Gateshead & District Tramways shopped locally, buying all sixteen of its steam locomotives from Black Hawthorn & Co. Fifteen received fleet numbers; the sixteenth was deemed too heavy and returned to its manufacturer. Engine No 13 is seen with one of the two larger trailers, either Nos 15 or 16, that were supplied by Lancaster Carriage & Wagon Co in 1889.

Barry Cross Collection/
Online Transport Archive



Steam engine No 2 and trailer of North Shields & District Tramways Ltd. The company operated over about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of 3ft 0in gauge track between 1884 and 1897 when it was taken over by BET.
Barry Cross Collection/Online Transport Archive



Physically separate from Darlington horse trams, steam trams were introduced by Stockton & Darlington Steam Tramway Co on a 4ft 0in gauge route from Stockton to Norton – a distance of $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles – on 17 November 1883. The route was extended and services eventually operated over $6\frac{1}{4}$ route miles. The company was taken over by Stockton & District Tramways Co in 1893; this itself became a subsidiary of Imperial Tramways in 1896. Steam trams were withdrawn later the same year to permit the route's regauging (to 3ft 7in) and electrification. Steam trams first appeared on the streets of Huddersfield on 11 January 1883. The council had failed to find a company willing to take on the lease for operations, so the corporation itself took it on, thus becoming the first municipal operator of public transport in the British Isles. Huddersfield adopted the slightly unusual gauge of 4ft $7\frac{3}{4}$ in to enable conventional standard gauge railway wagons to operate over its metals. Huddersfield was also unusual in that horse trams were introduced to the town later than the steam trams;

horse trams operated from 9 May 1885 through to 1 April 1888, and the last steam trams operated on 21 June 1902. In neighbouring Bradford there were two operators of steam trams. The first to commence operation, on 3 August 1882, was Bradford Tramways & Omnibus Co, which already operated horse trams. In all, the company operated just over 17 route miles of 4ft 0in gauge track, and the last steam tram operated on 5 June 1902, shortly after Bradford Corporation took over the company's assets on 1 February 1902. The second operator was Bradford & Shelf Tramways Co, which operated over $7\frac{1}{2}$ route miles (again of 4ft 0in gauge) with steam from 8 September 1884. Bradford Corporation took over on 31 January 1902 with the last steam trams operating on 1 April 1903. On the Durham Coast, steam trams were introduced to Hartlepool by Hartlepool Steam Tramways Co Ltd on 2 August 1884. A total of six steam locomotives operated on the 3ft 6in gauge route that linked Hartlepool with West Hartlepool. The company failed financially and