

GLASGOW: The LAST TRAM on ANY Route!

Memories of a 15-year-old ‘new’ tram enthusiast in 1962

Dr Bob Tebb

*“There is no restriction to
the number of standing passengers
on the LAST TRAM on any route”*

[Glasgow tram staircase notice for many years]

*** Because I have not properly recorded elsewhere my own experiences of Glasgow in 1960 and 1962 (aged 13 and 15), I have penned this, somewhat lengthy(!), account here. Those memories and lessons had such an effect on my future interests and career in mass transit that they deserved recording. My youthful volunteer Crich involvement from 1960 had shown me some of the technicalities and mechanisms of tramways, but had not then shown me the life (and death) of any city tram or public transit system (or even just trams moving, except by hand-pushing!). Glasgow did that all too well!*

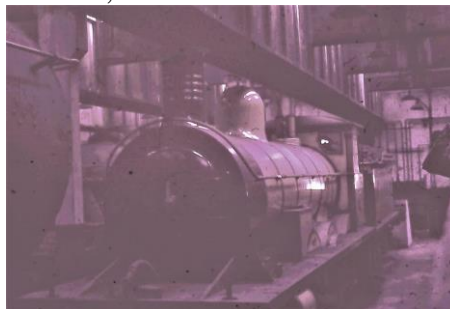
For many years Glasgow as a city has fascinated me; our summer family holiday in late Summer 1960 (when I was just 13) was to Scotland, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, and the Highlands. Not then a tram fan (about to change, thanks to Crich!), my interests were in trains, including ‘Duchesses’ storming over Beattock summit, pre-LMS 0-4-4Ts and even BR 2-6-4Ts with but one-coach on remote Highlands branches, and visiting a fair number of loco sheds.

A visit to *loco* sheds in the Glasgow area on our one-day-only visit (Sunday 4 September 1960) became itself truly *tram*-memorable, as we discovered also a city of deserted, setted, silent, streets – totally empty (that was then Scotland on the Sabbath!) except that seemingly *everywhere* in the city were trams rushing around in profusion (some 11 high-frequency routes from 4 depots of that city’s vast network were then still operating), in their startlingly-vibrant orange, green, and cream livery, their earnest howls echoing back from the surrounding tall, endless, tenement blocks. I have since *so* much regretted *not* seizing the opportunity there and then properly to experience a ‘real’ still-extensive city tram network operating – but at least I *witnessed* it. Though, curiously, I took barely any photos during that whole holiday!

An attempt to locate Dawsholm loco-shed, by asking a signalman at Maryhill, introduced me to the full, ever helpful, but then incomprehensible to me, Glasgow brogue – the only bit I could almost understand was to “*ask the car-lady [tram conductress] to put you off at*”. Oh! that I had then accepted his advice! (We did later find it, with the four restored Scottish locos.)



Picture 1. In 1960 this Ferry was the only ‘road’ crossing the Firth of Forth! Photo: author [rgpt slide]



Picture 2. 1960-happenstance for exactly 2 years ahead! My only day, and only photo taken that day, in Glasgow in 1960; working preserved H.R. 103 slumbers in Dawsholm shed. 4 September 1960 – whilst 4 September 1962 was to prove quite a contrast in the city! Photo: author [rgpt slide]

At this time, Glasgow, once the largest integrated bus and tram system in Britain by far, was certainly *the* city for public transport enthusiasts of *all* interests, the city Corporation itself directly operating trams, trolleybuses, buses, and its own ‘Subway’, quite apart from the brand-new electric ‘Blue Trains’, and other services on the BR steam and diesel network.

The trams last ‘Wake’ in Glasgow!

Just two years on (age just 15), now a confirmed weekly ‘yearling’ volunteer at still ‘building site’ Crich, a short ‘family-break’ to Glasgow was arranged, courtesy of my parents, this time centred around the end of their trams (curiously also to be on 4 September); I knew I really *had* to experience the *last* real UK city system (and, *sadly*, its end!). Somehow, family tourist attractions were also achieved! By now, the city was down to just one 12-mile service (9 Auchenshuggle – Dalmuir West), one depot (Dalmarnock), and the Workshops (Coplawhill). Their trams were 4ft 7¾in gauge, which strangely allowed standard gauge railway wagons to be run on sections of the tramway, whilst the Victorian-aura 4ft gauge ‘Subway’ was the same as Bradford trams (such as the preserved one I had experienced there, age 14, that July).

Thanks to my father’s hosiery business contacts, a private visit to the main tramcar works had somehow been arranged for me, with a similarly-tram-minded school/Crich friend, on Friday 31 August 1962. A thorough conducted tour of the immense still-active Coplawhill Works (once employing 740 staff) found some 36 trams therein; the place looked busy still with 22 of these repainted or fettled for the closing Procession, including the 6 (later 7) cars destined for the city’s own museum. These had been thoroughly rebuilt and restored there, and went out on final proving runs that day; thus Albert Drive outside became, albeit briefly, an *authentic* ‘live operating museum’ – and barely another enthusiast present! (We did help in hand-pushing horse car 543 into the works!) Unlike many other places, sadly *no* Glasgow tram was ‘decorated’ as a civic last tram – maybe there were too many of those – as we shall see!

Showing the sheer scale of the place, in its heyday the Works had built well over 100 new trams a year (even post-war, in 1950 alone, they built over 50 new double-deck bogie trams to the latest design, as ever, for use in Glasgow). The Works shunter, ‘Standard’ car 76, though with a few ‘bits’ taken for other restorations, was in active use (it nearly ran me over as it exited a Works doorway - I was not yet used to trams *moving*). However, as a stark reminder that this weekend was about a tramway *closure*, rather than any celebration, we witnessed the bottom deck of ‘Coronation’ 1170 being lifted by the Works crane onto a lorry for the scrapyard!



Picture 3. Coplawhill Works was vast and awesome. In the cavernous Erecting Shop, ‘Standard’ cars 22 and 585 were under restoration for other museums. 31 August 1962. Photo: author [XA14]

Picture 4. Hiding in its depths was car 1005, built in 1947 as the experimental ‘One-Way’ VAMBAC-control car ‘Blue Devil’, but rebuilt by 1956 to resemble other fleet trams. Except for a last-minute preservation failure, 1005 was, oddly, the last tram to go for scrap. Photo: author [XA13]

Picture 5. The lower deck of tram 1170 leaves Coplawhill Works, seen in the background, along Albert Drive en route to a Partick scrapyard, a forceful reminder that this was a tramway *closure* that was being attended, *not* a celebration! 31 August 1962. Photo: author [XA28]



Pictures 6, 7, & 8. Cars 672 & 1089, 779, 1088, all restored for the forthcoming last procession and city museum, get their final engineering proving street runs on Albert Drive, driven by cloth-capped, overalled, workmen, overseen by Trilby-hatted, suited, Supervisors. Is this 1898, 1914, 1926, 1928, or 1962? No traffic or other enthusiasts in view! 31 August 1962. Photos: author [XA11, XA22, XA16]

That afternoon, we first caught pre-war ‘Coronation’ tram 1150 on the remaining service 9; here was another future-career ‘memorable’ life-event as, whilst waiting excitedly at the tram stop under Central Station (the ‘Heilanman’s Umbrella’) – to have my very first proper, as it happened truly exhilarating, ride at speed as a tram fan – a waiting blind gentleman suddenly gathered himself up and made out into the roadway. I was mystified, having seen or heard no sign of a tram coming. He was of course right – he had heard or felt the ‘singing’ in the wires!

Despite dialect issues, in due course the crew (driver and conductress) of ‘Coronation’ tram 1213 later ‘took us under their wings’ and looked after us as we travelled up and down on their car for some 2½ hours (the proffered plums by the conductress were equally memorable). With no crew-relief at their change-over time, we were taken back to Dalmarnock Depot with them (off-route, and with the tram of course, needing a double reversal!) – more interest – and lessons learned for my future career. (Do *not* mess with crew change-over times; we ‘experienced’ just how fast a double-deck tram could take 4 tight right-angled corners with *no* relief available!)



Picture 9. Happenstance! Our first and last Glasgow trams in one picture, having just alighted from 1150 (on its own last day in service) at Auchenshuggle terminus, after our first tram ride on 31 August 1962. Beyond 1150, 1174 has arrived, ready to reverse, quite unaware of the history due to end its own life on 4 September 1962 as the city’s last service tram, from here with us aboard! Photo: author [XA32]

Picture 10. With no ‘crew-relief’ available, our later ‘taxi’ 1213 delivers us in haste ‘off-service’ to the doorway of Dalmarnock Depot (you can’t get much closer)! 31 August 1962. Photo: author [XB3]

Picture 11. Lurking (at left) in its depths, amongst the ‘Coronations’ & ‘Cunarders’, during our wholly unexpected visit to Dalmarnock Depot on 31 August 1962, was ‘oddball’ maximum-traction car 1100, quietly waiting for the city’s ‘Final Tram Tour’ the following Sunday. Photo: author [XB6]

Picture 12. My 10d (5d+5d) ticket for Dalmuir West – Auchenshuggle on Friday 31 August, and also the 4d+7d tickets for the same journey (with a new Saturday 1d. premium) on 1 September, together with my ticket for the ‘Final Glasgow Tram Tour’ on Sunday 2 September. Photo: author’s collection.

Later that Friday, and also on the Saturday (which was the last day of full end-to-end service on the 9 Dalmuir West to Auchenshuggle route), we rode also on a number of post-war ‘Cunarder’ trams which, though more modern looking, were less comfortable, *far* more difficult to board, and poorer riding (a truly frightening pitching and tossing, akin to a liner in

a heavy sea – is that where the name came from?). Perhaps not surprisingly, the pre-war ‘Coronations’ were favoured by the operator and the users (including *now* me!) until the very end! Indeed, had it not been for a disastrous 1961 Dalmarnock Depot fire, where 50 trams were lost, all the ‘Cunarders’ would probably have gone before 1962, the last being built in 1952.

On the Saturday we rode by chance on *post-war* ‘Coronation’ tram 1394, one of a depot-fire-insurance-claim-funded batch of six built as late as 1954 to the preferred pre-war design *after* the post-war ‘Cunarders’; ironically, four of these *then* perished in the 1961 Dalmarnock fire! End-to-end tram fares now rose from 10d. on the Friday to 11d. on the Saturday for 12 miles – my first encounter (but by no means the last during my career!) with ‘differential fares’ by day or time (here, a new 1d. Saturday premium, *just* in time for the trams to finish!).



Picture 13. At Dalmuir West on its last day, *post-war* ‘Cunarder’ tram 1351 has reversed, ready to depart on the 12-mile run to Auchenshuggle. 1 September 1962. Photo: author [XB8]

Picture 14. A mere 8 years old, *post-war* tram 1394 arrives at Dalmuir West, also on the last day; built in 1954 to the pre-war ‘Coronation’ design, but with more modern flush-mounted windows, no cab doors, and a simplified interior. 1 September 1962. Photos: author [XB10]

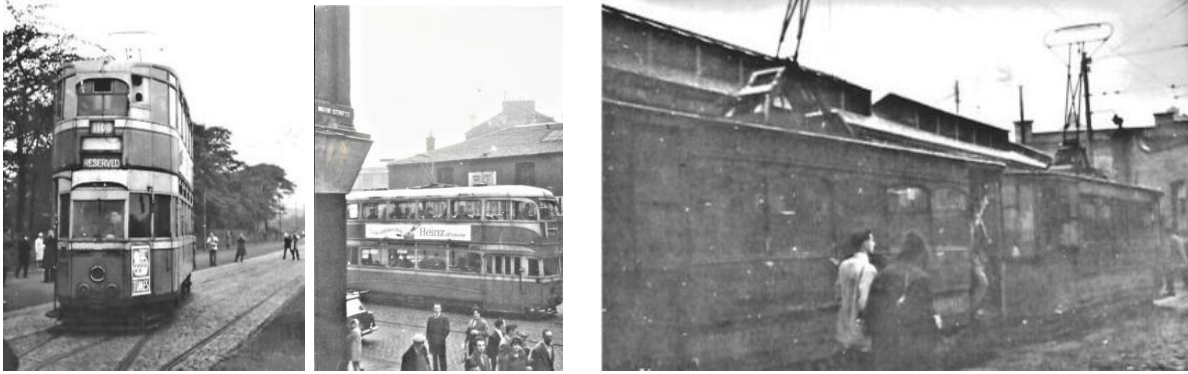
Picture 15. This last full-service day required some 43 trams. Here, a right-turning scooter+sidecar provides but a gentle taste of past high-frequency glories through the city’s archetypal tenements at Partick Cross by creating a ‘bunching’ of 3 pre-war ‘Coronation’ cars, whilst it waits for 1394 (and us!) to pass before turning. 1 September 1962. Photo: author [XB12]

In the ‘wee hours’ of Saturday/Sunday night, the last ‘full normal service’ trams returned to the Depot; we did not attend these (which were, shall we say, ‘busy’!). But, as intended, on Sunday, and yet again on Monday and Tuesday, trams were *still* running, on public service, over the city-centre section of Service 9 from Anderston Cross and out to Auchenshuggle!

For the Sunday morning, we first called in at Dawsholm loco shed and now found the tragic remains of Highland Railway ‘Small Ben’ 54398 BEN ALDER rotting away outside in the torrential rain (‘preserved’ 1953 to scrap in 1967!), with the four working preserved locos indoors, as I found in 1960. For the afternoon, we had booked for the ‘Final Glasgow Tram Tour’ for enthusiasts on much-rebuilt ‘oddball’ maximum-traction car 1100; enjoyably there were now-familiar Crich faces aboard. This covered most of the surviving tracks east of Anderston Cross, including *miles* of by-then non-passenger trackage, such as crossovers and reversing ‘spurs’ (Glasgow had *lots* of these!), round the 4 sides of Central Station, and down the long link to Coplawhill Works and Barrland Street permanent way yard, south of the Clyde.

Having already had a private conducted visit to Coplawhill Works, seen on-street and in action all the Museum trams, and now ridden on 1100, in heavy rain, over the lengthy off-service tracks thereto, strangely the highlight here for me was an, albeit short, ride in Barrland Street p.w. yard on Works Car No.40 (originally 722, dating from 1899, one of the *very* earliest of the city’s 1000+ ‘Standard’ cars); I thus ‘experienced’ a pioneering member of those veteran Glasgow ‘Standard’ cars. (It was later to be the last-ever tram to visit, with permanent-way equipment, Dalmuir West and Auchenshuggle, some days *after* the last passenger trams.)

So, my Glasgow tram travel ‘experiences’ that hectic weekend ranged from 1899 (ex-‘Standard’ 722 – age 63), 1928 (‘Kilmarnock bogie’ 1100), 1938 (‘Coronations’ 1150, 1174, 1213, etc), 1950 (‘Cunarders’ 1339, 1351, etc) to 1954 (Postwar ‘Coronation’ 1394 - age 8).



Pictures 16, & 17. *The Final Glasgow Tram Tour. Maximum-traction ‘oddball’ car 1100 (the sole rebuilt ‘Kilmarnock Bogie’ of 1928) reverses at Auchenshuggle, and a ‘top-deck’ view from 1100, safe in the Moir Street ‘side-spur’, with passers-by puzzled at our strange tram therein, as a now-unhindered Service 9 car passes on London Road! 2 September 1962. Photos: author [XC8 & XC7]*

Picture 18. *Later, in heavy rain, the tour having crossed the Clyde, Works Cars No.23 and No.40 ‘paddle’ around Barrland St P.W. yard to clear tracks for 1100 to make a circuit; I was so pleased to have a short ride on No.40 (once 1899 Standard car 722). 2 September 1962. Photo: author [XC18].*



Picture 19. *Saturday shoppers throng Argyle Street on 1 September; for some, their last trip by tram.*
Pictures 20, & 21. *The same location, but on the last day of all! Argyle Street’s atmosphere, on this eerie rain-soaked Tuesday afternoon, during the last few hours of service trams in the city; I took some brief 8mm cine colour film, out of the rear window of Cunarder 1339, by chance showing later-to-be-last-tram Coronation 1174. With its ‘Goodbye Trams’ banner, 1174 is here heading to Auchenshuggle. Some very-few hours later we were, fortuitously, able to ride it on the city’s last public service traditional-tram journeys! 4 September 1962. Photos: author [XB13, DSCN0712/13]*

In that final afternoon, Tuesday 4 September 1962, we were at the outer tram terminus at Auchenshuggle, when I overheard a casual comment along the lines of ‘this may be the last tram to city coming’. I had by now realised we needed anyway to be getting back to Central to meet my dad as arranged, so, if that comment were true, we should try to join folk boarding tram 1174 (or a new 64 bus!), although I had *never* envisaged being on a last Glasgow tram!

With a few others, we found somewhere to stand on the top deck, but the two Inspectors aboard very politely decreed that there could be NO standing upstairs. From my youthful Crich experience, I knew there was a long-established Glasgow tram notice that had once said –

“10 standing passengers are permitted in the lower saloon when all seats are occupied on the vehicle. There is no restriction to the number of standing passengers on the LAST TRAM on any route”

– and our, still largely uninformed, suspicions were now growing that this maybe (just *maybe*, we thought), indeed turn out to be the **LAST TRAM** on **ANY** route in Glasgow!

In a sensible ‘crowd control’ measure, the Inspectors insisted, annoyingly but strictly correctly, on no standing upstairs (I had forgotten the ‘NO STANDING UPSTAIRS’ notice!), but

they then did not count the lower deck! We thus joined the many standees ‘down below’ (and, amazingly, I later got a seat – as some people left!) and away we went back towards the city. After a few minutes there was consternation as *another* tram passed, heading for the *outer* terminus – so we couldn’t be on the *last*, could we? Eventually order was restored as we learned that we *were* indeed on the *intended* last tram – but not *yet* on its final journey! (My dad would have to wait for us a fair bit longer!) How *little* I then knew! Had we not caught *this* journey, we could *not* anyway have got back to Central by tram ever again, as this was the *final* public service tram journey to cross the city centre, past Central Station, reversing at Anderston Cross, before setting off, for the last time ever, *back* through the centre again and out to Auchenshuggle (*all* the trams we had passed since last there were headed for the Depot).

But now I had only to ‘stand (and blend in)’, and later ‘sit tight’, pay my sixpenny fares on demand, and I *should* be on *Britain’s* last-ever city public-service tram! There was a young ‘polis’ on traffic point duty at the Anderston Cross terminus road junction. How much he had been forewarned I know not, but as we started to leave there for this *last-ever* cross-city public service journey, he gestured in the appropriate ‘point duty’ manner to stop all other traffic, and waved us out onto Argyle Street; as we approached, he ‘snapped to attention’, removed his cap, and held it across his chest in a *most* appropriate mourning stance! I thus eye-witnessed, at first hand, a truly wonderful, nay marvellous, salute! If a photo exists, I would *so love* to see it.



Picture 22. *The last afternoon, with rails sunk in the puddles at Anderston Cross; shabby 1188 with its steamed-up windows oozes last-day decrepitude. 4 September 1962. Photo: author [XC33].*

Picture 23. *Later, in contrast, now with brief sunshine amidst the rains, car 1174 travels east on Argyle Street, its significance almost totally ignored by the Glasgow public, on this, genuinely the last-ever city-centre traditional service tram journey in Britain! The ‘Goodbye Trams’ banner is evident. The author is aboard! 4 September 1962. Photo (and tram banner!) courtesy: Geoff Price*

Sadly, virtually nobody else in the city seemed to take any notice of these last-ever cross-city service tram journeys, and finally, now back at Auchenshuggle, we reversed for what was indeed to be the *very-last* public service tram journey *of all*, but now only to Dalmarnock Depot ourselves. We passengers still needed to *buy* our 6d tickets – mine was C3499 – so, depot journey or not, it was *still* in public service! It is notable that, on these last 3 journeys, 77 and then 80 other tickets separated my 3 respective tickets – for a tram with 64 seats! So those Inspectors earlier had ‘*played fair*’, honourably applying the traditional standing permission rules for what was now very definitely the city’s *last* ‘public service’ tram on *any* route!

Seated by now, midway in the packed lower deck as 1174 arrived at Auchenshuggle for that last time, I was unaware (until seeing a photo years later!), that another tram was *still* there; fortunately for us, it did leave *before* us, but there were other sights to come! These last-two should have been running some ten minutes apart, so at least one of us should not have been there! Our last-tram now passed 1285 (as I found this next-to-last-tram to be) *en-route*, on the

double-track Abercrombie Street reversing ‘spur’, going in the opposite direction, yet both of us still in service and both heading for the Depot. Never again would two ‘traditional’ trams pass each other on a UK city street. It would seem that the Inspector at Anderston Cross had dispatched 1174 early, presumably to get rid of these now-embarrassing(?) final, and sadly ‘tatty’, service trams to the Depot in good time for the Last Procession’s departure at 6.30pm.

By this time, 1174’s bow-collector was somehow missing some of its strategic structural framing which was certainly there on the Friday – still it hadn’t got much further to run now anyway, had it? Although 1174 was actually tidier than some other trams in service that last day, it was a shame for the crews that those in public service were all in such generally shabby condition, in contrast to the efforts made at Coplawhill to repaint at least partly the ‘Procession’ trams for their crowd-pulling all-too-brief one-run experience that same evening.



Picture 24. A historic split-second snapshot, taken through ‘my’ side-window in 1174, on the final public service tram journey of all, with us powering half-way down the sharp right-angled junction turn-off curve from London Road into Abercrombie Street, of next-to-last tram 1285 approaching us. It had just reversed there, en-route to Dalmarnock Depot, as our 1174 would itself also do shortly. Never again on any UK city street would two traditional service trams ever pass each other anywhere! 4 September 1962. Photo: author [X1A2]

Picture 25. How a street scene can change totally in a few seconds. ‘Our’ last tram 1174 is now reversing as described above in Abercrombie Street (glimpse of my shoulder downstairs!), but now surrounded by a horde of service 106 trolleybuses! 4 September 1962. Photo courtesy: Keith Terry



Picture 26. Next-to-last-tram 1285 is about to decant its passengers in Ruby Street before entering Dalmarnock depot, again a split-second fleeting snapshot by the author through ‘his’ side-window from very-last service car 1174 as we pass along Dalmarnock Road, prior to our own reverse into Ruby Street for our final unloading. 4 September 1962. Photo: author [X1A4]

Picture 27. The End is Nigh! Last tram in public service, 1174, centre, still with its last passengers aboard (including me!), rounds the curve from Dalmarnock Road into Ruby Street, just yards away from our own unloading. At extreme left, next-to-last car 1285, now clear of passengers, is about to run empty into the Depot, whilst, in true Glasgow style, Ruby Street’s tenement residents lean out of their windows to watch the activities below. 4 September 1962. Photo courtesy: Geoff Price



Picture 28. My three 'last' tickets issued on tram 1174 on 4 September 1962. C3342 on last Auchenshuggle–Anderston X, C3419 on last Anderston X–Auchenshuggle, and C3499 on the very-last Auchenshuggle–Dalmarnock Depot (the last public-service journey of all). Photo: author's collection

Pictures 29, & 30. Public Service has ended! On Ruby Street, 1174 has just unloaded its last passengers (including me) from its last journey; the crew confer on their empty tram, job completed. The author then records 1174's last few non-public yards to enter fire-ravaged Dalmarnock Depot; an enthusiast in the period belted-gabardine mac, canvas 'snap' bag, and 'short back and sides' gives his own farewell salute (with 'fag'!) 4 September 1962. Photos: author [X1A5 & X1A6]

With 1174 running off service from Ruby Street on Duty 2 into the depot by around 6 pm, as the last (and the oldest) of this day's 8 cars out in public service, and thus all public tram service now ended in the city, there were some 83 trams in Dalmarnock Depot! Barely half an hour later, the 20 trams (plus bus LA20) forming the 'Last Tram Procession' set off from there, through the city centre, past thousands (estimated 230,000), and on to Coplawhill. But *before* that, we had to escape (by bus of course – because, surprise, surprise, we couldn't catch a service tram anymore!) to Central, where we were to meet my dad to watch the Procession.

Tickets for the Last Procession had not been sought, and I was actually rather pleased about that, as it meant we were now able to 'experience' its full length, rather than being wedged into a slowly-moving tram along tram-tracks we had ridden earlier. We had chosen nearby Union Street for viewing, for convenience and for the electric 'Blue Train' back to our hotel afterwards, to rejoin mum dog-sitting; we saw the procession *twice*, once as it travelled along Argyle Street passing Union Street, and then as it came down the latter (having made the 4-leg 'circuit' of Central Station). The procession front was halted in Union Street until its tail had cleared the junction before continuing (so we 'had it to ourselves' for longer than anyone!).

In truth, I found much of the Last Procession a sad anticlimax! (For me, it had really been *far* more exciting and *humbling* to have just ridden, by chance, the very last traditional service tram of all in any British city!) After the superb 'museum' cars, already seen running in-street, it was really just a jumble mainly of nose-to-tail 'Cunarders' and a few pre-war 'Coronations'; perhaps a typical sight in the last year or so of tram services – but where were all the 'missing links? No 'Kilmarnock Bogies', or 1005, or other trams seen that weekend! No 'decorated' last tram! No sign of the humble but so-essential works cars! Not even true 'last tram' 1174 off-public-service in running order bare minutes before! Wouldn't that last have been a *finer* way to 'tail' the procession (it had quietly to run that same journey later to Coplawhill anyway)?

Years later, I realised that, yet again by happenstance, we had chanced on this section of the route of this last tram procession, since the *first* tram procession in the city, on the horse tramways opening day on 19 August 1872, had also come along here. (A 1922 Jubilee procession itself led by horse car 543, ran this *exact* 1872 route, with the trams then in use.)



Picture 31. On Union Street, 1894 horse tram 543, with 1898 electric car 672 following, leads Glasgow's 20-strong Last Tram Procession. Glasgow's (ceremonial and actual) last horse tram journey, is here running exactly along the course of the first horse tram procession journey on 19 August 1872 (and as 543 had itself done in 1922). 4 September 1962. Photo: S B Tebb/author [X1A7].

Picture 32. The sixth tram in the procession was the restored (at Coplawhill for the city museum) pre-war 'Coronation' car 1173, looking far more in-period stylish and sparkling 'Art Deco' than had next-built 1174, by coincidence (or not? – yet another amazing happenstance) the last work-wear service tram of all closing the city's public service down (with me aboard!) barely an hour earlier! (Determined to the last, a Glasgow urchin's hand and arm may just be spotted clinging onto 1173's outside cab mirror handrail!) Union Street. 4 September 1962. Photo: S B Tebb/author [X1A13]



Picture 33. A sorry sight in too many ways! The last seven trams (and bus LA20) in the Last Tram Procession (right-to-left 1352, 1363, 1382 [all of which have just crossed Argyle Street], 1385, 1147, 1367, and last of all 1379), head down Union Street and Jamaica Street. Why on earth all those 'Cunarders' (and why that mundane one to be last of all)? 4 September 1962. Photo: author [X1A16]

Picture 34. 44 years later, I spent much professional time here on Union Street, monitoring the effects of traffic road space on bus reliability – challenging, and proving, Glasgow's by-then bus-capacity-wasteful use of one-way streets! No-one listened then – but my findings remain just as true today! (The FirstGlasgow buses were direct Glasgow tram successors.) Photo: author [rgpt print: October 2006]

Quite literally, in its system's last few days, Glasgow had not simply *introduced* this 15-year-old to, but *totally immersed* me in, the minutiae of traditional city electric tram operations in Britain over the previous 60 years or so. A 'close call' indeed to focus and sustain me in my future career and enthusiast activities in urban public transport for the *next* 60 years! With little prior knowledge of trams, the city, or of the weekend's events, I experienced wonderful 'happenstances', being in the right places at the right times!

How even more wonderful too (particularly for me!) that the 'immortal' old Glasgow tram notice that "*There is no restriction to the number of standing passengers on the LAST TRAM on any route*" was indeed honoured on what was genuinely '*the LAST TRAM on ANY route*'! Otherwise, simply, I would *not* have been on it!

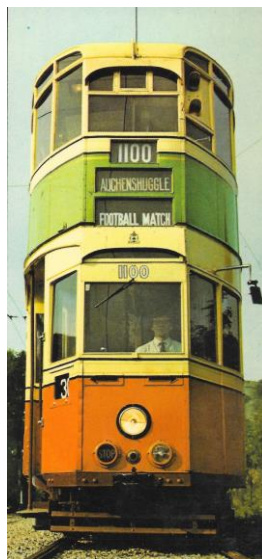
Thank you, Glasgow trams!

P.S. Quietly, there were yet more 'last trams'; for example, 'Coronation' 1282 (having left there as part of the last procession) 'sneaked' the c.3 miles back to Dalmarnock Depot in the early hours of the following night for yet another farewell 'political' last tram special on 6 September, this time for the 'independent' Burgh of Clydebank (who weren't on the city's last procession route!).

***and** – the very-nearly-first shall be last! Sixty-three years old but still valiantly 'earning its keep', former 'Standard' 722 of 1899, by then Works car No.40, was the last tram of all to visit, on 8 September, with permanent way materials, the last route, Dalmuir West, Auchenshuggle, and other last parts of the closing system (so glad I had a brief Sunday ride on it). Well done the workers!*

***and** – there were now still some 64 trams (including 1282 for the second time!) in Dalmarnock Depot, which needed to be worked back through the city centre to Coplawhill Works – Glasgow did things in bulk, the last such convoy being trailed by 1165 in the early hours of 15 September (most such convoys moved at night, maybe to hide the actual number of last 'last trams').*

Tail-Piece



Picture 35. A 60-year electric traction contrast! Glasgow 'Standard' tram 779 of 1900, restored to 1914 Museum condition, leaves Coplawhill Works on a proving run for the last procession, whilst in the background is, by way of fortuitous comparison, the 'double-arrowhead' logo for the recent 1960s BR 'Blue Train' Glasgow suburban electric trains. 31 August 1962. Photo: author [XA18]

Picture 36. The author driving Glasgow tram 1100 at the Crich Tramway Museum; there I frequently drove all their preserved types I had witnessed in Glasgow, but 1100 was the only tram I rode on in Glasgow during that historic weekend that survived into preservation, and was later such a true delight to drive! Photo: 'The Tramway Museum Guide 1970'

NB. All photos remain the copyright of the individual photographers identified.

NB.** Geoff Price and Keith Terry copyright photos used are gratefully included, with their permission.

NB.** **Picture 6** [B&W neg XA11] was my first-ever 'published' photo – in the December 1962 issue of 'TwentyTwo Newsletter 6'! – whilst trams (672, 1089, etc), were still moving under power around Coplawhill & Albert Drive. I remain delighted with my personal 'live' published tram photo then to mark that weekend! Keith Terry even captioned this photo in his Newsletter as "Glasgow's Railcars"!

*** For further information, a useful Article giving the 'flavour' of the various activities over that last long weekend may be found in "Glasgow's Last Cars" in 'Modern Tramway' for November 1962 (Vol.25 No.299). Also, a detailed pamphlet of all then and later tram movements can be found in "1165 was the Last" produced by 'The Glasgow 22 Hex-Dash Tram Fund' (Duplicated + Addenda) as supplements to the TwentyTwo tram appeal.*

A before-and-after ‘Wrap-Round’ to that last weekend in Glasgow!’

By happy happenstances, the months of July and August 1962 had given inexperienced-me key ‘tasters’ about trams, invaluable leads before what I was about to experience in Glasgow over that ‘Last Tram’ weekend. Neither, strictly, had any connection with Glasgow, or that weekend, but as ‘scene setters’ they were rather unexpectedly invaluable! (Remember Crich was **not** then operational **at all!**)

The first was a ‘family’ day trip to Bradford on 7 July 1962 to experience the amazing operation of restored Bradford open-balcony tram 104, running since 1958 on a surviving genuine section of the city’s former 4ft gauge tram network, using the city-council-owned Thornbury Workshops access road. For very modest fees, I rode, and (age 14) drove, 104 up and down the full 169 yards of available track!

(Many years later I had professional responsibility for, inter alia, this access – by then sadly sans trams, trolleybuses, and wires [though still with tram track!], but I did manage thereon in 1986 the operation of Bradford trolleybuses, under a new 1982 Parliamentary Act [to which I had had input!])

The second was the *very-first* horse-drawn operation at Crich of horse tram Sheffield 15 on 25 August 1962; this was also its *one-and-only* trip with TMS-owned horse (FELIX) and, I think, mine the *only* photo of them *moving* – all later horses were hired-in! This was just one week before Glasgow closed; the ‘*just*’ is all-too-true – my next, *consecutive*, negative image taken a mere 6 days later, the following Friday, is of restored Glasgow 779 with (if in the gloom) the city’s last working Standard tram 76.



Picture 37. Bradford 104 approaches Leeds Road from Thornbury Works on 7 July 1962 with the author (age 14) driving a tram for the first time (supervised by Keith Terry!) Photo by my dad S B Tebb [rgpt neg IXB14]
Pictures 38, & 39. Sheffield 15 at Crich on first and *only-ever* trip there with a TMS-owned horse (FELIX). Saturday 25 August 1962. My *very-next* negative image was this *total* contrast; in Glasgow Coplawhill workshops, restored 779, with, more importantly (in the gloom!), the last surviving unrestored, but still very *operationally* active, Standard car 76 (as Works shunter)! Friday 31 August 1962. Photos: author [XA5 & XA6]

Following the Glasgow weekend, several trams arrived at Crich from there post-closure, including ‘1282’ (the somewhat-secret last tram to Clydebank carrying local politicians) – but *only* its body came, with bogies *maybe* off 1177 (not off 1282, but *perhaps* via the originally-planned 1269).



Picture 40. A task at Crich for this young volunteer found me (above) washing 1282’s domed roof (some 16 feet above rough ground level), long before “Health-&-Safety”; 13 April 1963. Photo **published** in ‘The Crich Tramway Museum Handbook’, 1964. Photo: J I Peck [rgpt neg XIC30]

A follow-up to this Tale! As noted above, Glasgow’s very last true public service tram was car 1174, with me aboard, on 4 September 1962. So what? Well, by pure happenstance, I married my precious wife Kath on New Year’s Day 1974 – ie 1.1.74. Thank goodness I did! ‘Happenstances’ were there even on that day! A wedding guest brought along the actual point-iron used on Glasgow 1174!