

Rossendale Valley Tramways Co. Ltd.



1889 - 1908

CONTENTS

Rossendale Valley Tramways Co. Ltd. - Fleet History 1889-1908	Page 3
Rossendale Valley Tramways Co. Ltd. - Tram Fleet Summary 1889-1908	Page 5

Cover Illustration: This 1906 tinted postcard shows a loco and trailer of the Rossendale Valley Tramways Company at Crawshawbooth. (LTHS collection).

First Published 2016 by The Local Transport History Society. First Edition 2016.

© The Local Transport History Society 2016. (<http://lths.lutsociety.org.uk>)

For personal use only. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or distributed in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise for commercial gain without the express written permission of the publisher. In all cases this notice must remain intact. All rights reserved.

PDF Booklet: 046-1

Authorised by the Rossendale Tramways Act of 1888 and owned and operated by the Rossendale Valley Tramways Company, this steam tramway consisted of a single line track built to 4ft gauge and ran south from Crawshawbooth along Burnley Road to Queens Square in Rawtenstall (where it was joined by an extension of the Accrington Steam Tramways line from the boundary at Lockgate), then turned east, following the line of the River Irwell, the road and the railway for 4½ miles to the neighbouring town of Bacup. The section between Rawtenstall and Bacup opened on the 31st January 1889, followed in 1891 by the line to Crawshawbooth, a total of just over 6½ miles.

The initial service was operated using 9 (Nos. 1-9), Thomas Green locomotives hauling Milnes double-deck bogie trailer cars (Nos. 1-10).

Additions to the rolling stock were made in 1893 and 1894, when two more (Nos. 10-11) Green locos arrived, followed in 1901 by a similar engine (No. 12) purchased from Blackburn Corporation, along with additional Ashbury trailer cars (Nos. 11-12), also ex-Blackburn, in 1899.

Although no official records tell us of the tramway livery, there is in existence at least one tinted postcard (front cover illustration) dating from 1906, showing a trailer car wearing a chocolate and primrose livery hauled by a rather rusty (brown) steam loco (known locally as 'armoured trams' because of the metal cladding on the steam engine), which may possibly be an approximation of the actual livery.

The Company was purchased by the BET in 1900 and plans were made to electrify the system, but wrangling between Rawtenstall and Bacup councils delayed permission

until the 21-year lease on the tramway had almost expired and the system was eventually purchased, jointly by both councils, on 1st October 1908, with Rawtenstall Corporation operating the system on behalf of both parties.

The steam trams continued to be operated by the new owners until 22nd July 1909, the last regular use of steam traction on a street tramway in Britain.

TRAM FLEET SUMMARY 1889-1908

Locos

This listing is in the format - Year into Stock; Fleet No; Manufacturer.

1889; 1-9; Thomas Green

1893; 10; Thomas Green

1894; 11; Thomas Green

1901; 12; Thomas Green

No. 12 ex-Blackburn Corporation (fleet number unknown but Blackburn had 14 (Nos. 1-14), all were new in 1887).



Thomas Green loco No. 6 towing an unidentified Milnes trailer outside the Queens Arms, Rawtenstall c.1890. (LTHS collection).



An unidentified loco and Milnes trailer passing the Swan Hotel in Stacksteads c.1900. (LTHS collection).

Trailer Cars

This listing is in the format - Year into Stock; Fleet No; Type; Manufacturer; Seating.

1889; 1-10; Double-deck enclosed bogie; Milnes; 30/30?

1899; 11-12; Double-deck enclosed bogie; Ashbury; 30/30

Nos. 11-12 ex-Blackburn Corporation (fleet numbers unknown but Blackburn had 12 (Nos. 1-12), new 1887 or 1888)

© Local Transport History Society 2016