

Other Tramway Society Meetings

Two other tramway societies to which we have ties hold meetings over the winter period and you will be made welcome if you attend.

Scottish Tramway and Transport Society

Meets every 2nd Friday of the month in the Kirk Lounge of St. Stephen's Church Centre 260 Bath St Glasgow. Meetings start at 7-30.

13th October--Tramway Exotica

10th November -- British Trams in colour

8th December -- Public transport in Belgium

12th January-- Members slide night

9th February-- Paris Metro & R.E.R

9th March-- The Auchenshuggle Highlander on the Home Front

13th April-- European Trams in the 1970's

L.R.T.A (Edinburgh Area)

Meets on the Last Friday of the month at Quaker Meeting House 7 Victoria Terr. Edinburgh. Meetings start at 7-30

27th October-- Light Rail and Rapid Transit in N. America

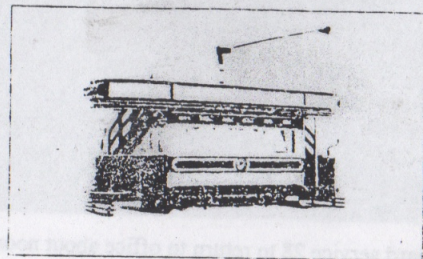
24th November-- Edinburgh Trams --Looking back to 1956 and forward to the future.

26th January-- Tramways of Portugal--Over the Last 20 Years .

23rd February--Members' Slides

30th March-- Vienna, Then and Now.

Many STG members are involved in these societies so you will find a friendly face. Brian Longworth is this years Chairman of the STTS and George Murray is Area Officer of the LRTA.



ST.G

TROLLEY

October 2006

The Magazine of Summerlee Transport Group



The Chairman at Work

THE SCRIBE

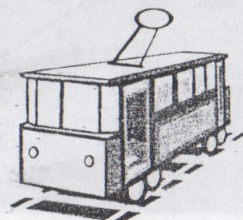
Summerlee Heritage Park will close to the public from the 23rd of October 2006 --so its last day of opening will be on Sunday the 22nd and this will also be the last day of a Public Tram service. At present the main hall is being emptied prior to the builders coming in to start the £9.8 million upgrade. There is still a shortfall of between £340k and £1million in the funding to match the lottery grant of £4.78 million but there is every confidence that this gap will be filled. Real building work is expected to start after new year. The park office and manual staff will remain on site during the closure period and other members of staff will be temp. redeployed in other areas of the council dept.

Two carriages of the blue train have been moved to a new siding at the Sunnyside end of the track whilst the other carriage was taken by VSOE. The workshop will move to a temp position in the sawmill

STG will still have access to the tram depot each Thursday evening during the closure to enable restoration and other work to continue. It is hoped that power to the tram overhead will be kept on for as long as possible to keep the trams running for training and their motors in good order, but there will be periods of no power --as yet unspecified. It is also the intention during the closure period to replace some of the overhead poles and we already have these at the side of the depot awaiting installation. Some of the cobble sets and track work will also receive attention.

The park management are considering some way to mark the park closure but this as yet has not been decided.

WE all look forward to a New Look Summerlee in April 2008 when the gates are re-opened to the public again and Scotland's as yet only Working Tramway comes back better than ever.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

THE SUMMER MONTHS ARE NOW A FADING MEMORY, HOWEVER WE CAN LOOK BACK ON THE WONDERFUL WEATHER WE HAD ALLOWING EXTENSIVE USE OF 53.

WE HAVE RECRUITED ADDITIONAL CREW OVER THE YEAR AND WITH JOHN TRAYNOR AND CHARLIE MORRISON UNDERTAKING THE CONVERSION COURSE THIS ALLOWED THEM TO OPERATE 53.

THE GREATER USE OF 53 ALWAYS DELIGHTS THE PARK VISITORS, HOPEFULLY REFLECTING IN INCREASED TICKET SALES, ALSO IN SOME WAY COMPENSATING FOR VISITORS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT OTHER ATTRACTIONS ON SITE ARE CLOSED.

THE GROUP'S CORE RESPONSIBILITY IS CREWING THE TRAMS; THE GROUP IS COMMITTED TO COVERING 5 DAYS IN THE WEEK, WHICH WE ARE MOSTLY ACHIEVING. WE NOW HAVE FOUR MEMBERS WHO REGULARLY MAN THE CARS 1 DAY EACH WEEK, BOB SUTHERLAND, BOB CONNOR, JOHN TRAYNOR AND CHARLIE MORRISON. THE ADDITIONAL DAY/CONDUCTOR DUTY COVERED BY THE REST OF THE TEAM WHO CREW THE CARS MOST OF THEM TRAVELING QUITE A DISTANCE TO COVER A DUTY. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE CREW MEMBERS NOT ONLY FOR THEIR COMMITMENT BUT ALSO THEIR PROFESSIONALISM WHEN DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC.

GOOD WEATHER AND ADDITIONAL CREW WERE NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE AND GRAZ 225 HAS TAKEN ITS FAIR SHARE OF THE WORKLOAD.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OFF YOU WHO MANAGED TO ATTEND OUR OPEN NIGHT IN THE EARLY SUMMER. AS ALWAYS IT WAS A VERY ENJOYABLE EVENING WHERE EVERYONE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO OPERATE ONE OF OUR CARS AND INSPECT PROGRESS IN THE WORKSHOPS. DAVID SLOAN KINDLY ALLOWED THE EVENING TO RUN LATE INTO THE NIGHT ALLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS TO CATCH UP OVER SOFT DRINKS AND SNACKS.

OPERATING THIS SUMMER HAS BEEN A BONUS TO THE GROUP AS THE PARK REFUBISHMENT WAS MEANT TO COMMENCE DURING THIS PERIOD.

WORK IN EARNEST REMOVING LARGE EXHIBITS HAS NOW COMMENCED THE GIBB & HOGG STEAM LOCOMOTIVE HAS BEEN SANDBLASTED AND GIVEN A COAT OF RED LEAD PAINT. IT HAS NOW BEEN MOVED INTO THE MAIN EXHIBITION AREA WHERE IT WILL RECEIVE A COSMETIC RESTORATION.

ONE END OF THE BLUE TRAIN HAS BEEN REMOVED BY THE RAILWAY COMPANY VSOE WHO INTEND TO MAKE USE OF ITS BOGIES AND THE TWO REMAINING SECTIONS TRANSFERRED TO NEW TRACK LAYED ADJACENT TO THE AIRDRIE-HELENSBURGH RAILWAY LINE AT SUNNYSIDE.

ALL THIS WORK HAS, BY NECESSITY, CAUSED DISRUPTION TO THE TRAMWAY SERVICE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO AS ITEMS ARE SHIFTED UNTIL FINAL CLOSURE ON SUNDAY 22ND OCTOBER.

THURSDAY WORKNIGHTS HAVE BEEN REGULARLY ATTENDED DURING THIS

PERIOD WITH ONLY A FEW BEING CANCELLED DUE TO DAVID SLOAN TAKING SOME WELL EARNED HOLIDAY LEAVE.

HARVEY MILLIGAN, GEORGE MURRAY AND I HAVE NOW STARTED ON THE REPAIR OF DUSSELDORF 392 BODY WORK. WE STARTED ABOVE THE ROOF LINE WHERE OUR SKILLS AT BODY REPAIR COULD BE DEVELOPED BEFORE STARTING ON THE MORE VISABLE BODY SECTIONS.

WE WERE, DISAPPOINTED TO FIND THE ROOF PLASTIC COVERING ABOVE THE TWO DRIVING CABS HAS COMPLETELY DISINTEGRATED. THE ROOF PANEL IS MADE OF SHEET STEEL 'BASHED' (I CAN THINK OF NO BETTER ADJECTIVE) INTO THE ROUGH DESIRED PROFILE. IT IS THEN COVERED WITH PLASTIC PADDING OF VARIOUS DEPTHS THEN SMOOTHED TO GIVE THE FINISHED EFFECT. MOISTURE HAS PENETRATED BETWEEN THE PLASTIC AND THE STEEL SHEET CAUSING CORROSION WHICH HAS LIFTED THE PLASTIC.

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, WE HAVE BEEN REMOVING SECTIONS OF PLASTIC, WIRE BRUSHING THE STEEL ROOF TO REMOVE ALL TRACES OF RUST THEN REAPPLYING PLASTIC PADDING. THIS REGRETFULLY IS A SLOW PROCESS AS PLASTIC PADDING TAKES TIME TO CURE BEFORE WE CAN SAND IT DOWN TO THE CORRECT PROFILE. GROUP FUNDS ARE BEING USED TO PURCHASE ALL MATERIALS AND ASSOCIATED TOOLS. WE ARE NOW ON OUR SECOND SANDER.

CHARLIE MORRISON AND HIS TEAM HAVE HAD TO ABANDON WORK ON THE SANDER PIPEWORK ON 1017 AS A SATISFACTORY ANGLE TO ALLOW A STEADY FLOW OF SAND COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED, DUE TO THE GEOMETRY OF THE WORKSPACE UNDER THE CAR. THE SANDER MECHANISM IS LOCATED BELOW THE CENTRE ISLE OF THE CAR AND HAS BEEN A CONCERN AS SAND HAS ESCAPED ON OCCASION AND LANDED OVER THE MOTORS.

CHARLIE SPENT SOME TIME UNDER THE CAR TAKING MEASUREMENTS AND HAS FOUND A LOCATION NEARER THE SIDES WHERE THE SANDING MECHANISM WOULD BE BETTER POSITIONED. THIS LOCATION WILL ALSO ALLOW FOR SAND STORAGE HOPPERS TO BE FITTED, CHARLIE HAS ASSEMBLED THE HOPPERS WHICH WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE THE SAND CAPACITY. THIS HAS NOT BEEN AN EASY SOLUTION AS THE OPERATING LINKAGES FROM THE SAND PEDALS WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE REROUTED INVOLVING THE USE OF BELL CRANK LEAVERS. HOWEVER, IF IT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THIS WILL GREATLY INCREASE THE RELIABILITY OF THE SANDING MECHANISM.

CHARLIE, JOHN TRAYNOR AND DAVID SLOAN HAVE ALSO SPENT TIME TRACING AIR LEAKS ON THE CAR'S BRAKING SYSTEM. THIS IS NOW GREATLY IMPROVED AFTER A NUMBER OF LEAKING JOINTS WERE REMADE, NEW LEATHER WASHERS HAVE BEEN FITTED TO THE VALVES. THE BRAKE CYLINDER NOW HAS MORE THAN ENOUGH PRESSURE, WHICH IS BEING MAINTAINED SATISFACTORILY.

JOHN TRAYNOR AND BOB SUTHERLAND HAVE BEEN ASSISTING DAVID WITH SOME BASIC MAINTENANCE ON 53. PARTICULAR ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE BRAKING SYSTEM WHICH HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY LUBRICATED. JOHN IS INVESTIGATING REPLACING THE BRAKE PULL OFF SPRING ASSEMBLY THAT

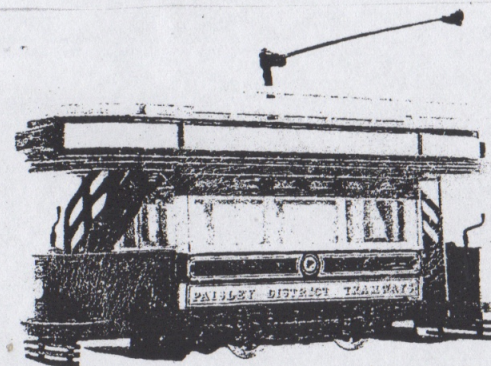
HAS BEEN CAUSING PROBLEMS.

A COMPREHENSIVE WORK LIST FOR THE TRAMWAY HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED WHICH SHOULD BE DONE DURING THE PARK'S CLOSURE. A NUMBER OF TRACTION POLES REQUIRE REPLACEMENT, TRACKWORK REQUIRES ATTENTION. THE OPERATING TRAMS REQUIRE A GENERAL SPRUCE UP PARTICULARLY 53, WHICH MUST HAVE ATTENTION TO ITS EXTERNAL CREAM PAINTWORK BEFORE ROT SETS IN. ALL THIS WORK AND MORE IS VERY LABOUR INTENSIVE.

DURING THE PARK CLOSURE THE GROUP WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE PARK. TRACTION POWER WILL BE MAINTAINED FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, IT WILL HOWEVER BE SWITCHED OFF BRIEFLY WHEN HEAVY MACHINERY IS MOVING AROUND THE PARK AND WILL BE UNAVAILABLE FOR A LONGER PERIOD WHEN MAINS CABLES WITHIN THE EXHIBITION HALL ARE BEING ATTENDED TO. THE GROUP INTEND TO HAVE WORK DAYS DURING THIS PERIOD WHICH WILL ALLOW GREATER PROGRESS.

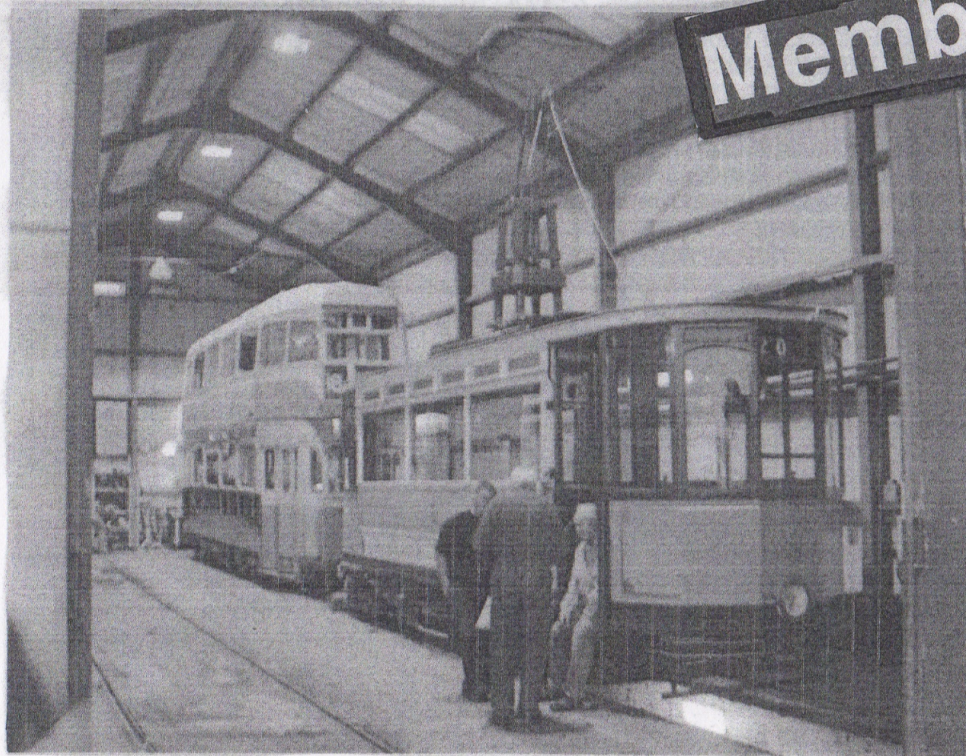
THE GROUP HAS ALSO BEEN IN DISCUSSION WITH THE PARK MANAGERS TO INVESTIGATE WAYS OF ATTRACTING NEW VOLUNTEERS TO THE PARK WHO MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST WITH THIS WORK. WE PROPOSE TO HAVE AN OPEN WEEKEND BEFORE THE CLOSURE WHERE VISITORS WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK ROUND THE CAR SHED AND MEET OUR WORKFORCE.

THE TRAMWAY'S TEMPORARY CLOSURE WILL BE MARKED WITH SOME CEREMONY, IT WILL NOT BE AS GRAND AS THE GLASGOW CLOSURE BUT WILL CERTAINLY BE WORTH ATTENDING. KEEP SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER FREE AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.





Members' Night



50 Years Ago – Edinburgh Reminiscences by George Murray

These are some of my personal memories of the Edinburgh tram system which operated for the last time on Friday night the 16 November 1956. Incidentally 1956 was the year in which I left school to start a five year apprenticeship as a surveyor.

The last tram procession has been well documented in photos and film and comprised 10 special trams leaving Braids terminus for Shrubhill Depot around 7.15 pm for those with pre-booked tickets and naturally I was there.

The last journey seemed to be over far too soon with police present in numbers making sure everyone disembarked before the cars entered the depot and also preventing too much souvenir collecting by enthusiasts. The conductor on my car was noticeably upset and emotional when we reached Shrubhill being convinced that this was not the end and that trams would ultimately return to the Capital. I was too cynical at that time to think that would ever happen but with the two proposed lines recently gaining Parliamentary approval I sincerely hope that his prediction shall be proved true during my lifetime.

By the end of operations the only type of passenger cars in service were the domed roof Shrubhill Standard cars although the one remaining works car No 3 made runs during the last few days and hours (it was the only remaining ex cable car in stock). The other car types had by that time gone to Connells of Coatbridge, wooden standards mostly by 1955 and the streamliners and other steel bodied cars by March 1956. One story about the all steel cars, which I have not been able to verify, is that car 244 whilst travelling along Princes Street had a minor collision with the tailgate of a horse drawn lorry which caused the whole side of the car to fall into the street as a pile of rust and broken glass. Certainly this car built by Metro-Cammel in 1934 was the first of the modern cars to be withdrawn possibly in late 1951 and certainly scrapped during 1952. The resultant inspections carried out on the 30 odd other all steel cars supplied by various outside builders revealed a similar body rot problem in many of them (a problem which did not affect the composite construction of the Shrubhill products).

The only non-standard car which survived to within a week of the end was No180 of 1932 (the £4000 car!) which was one of the experimental cars leading to the construction of the 84 domed roof cars built between 1934 and 1950 at Shrubhill. 180 pioneered many of their unique features such as the sliding door at the foot of the stairs to shut off the draught to the upper deck at the front end and the hinged glazed door hiding the compressor or resistance box which swung through 90 degrees to the centre platform grab rail to prevent draughts for the motorman. (180 had the nickname "Red Biddy" due to being painted in pillar box red when first built.) This car was my favourite as she had a very distinctive and elegant white roof band rather than the domed design favoured for the production batch of cars. Sadly she suffered a burned out motor about one week before the end and was not repaired otherwise she would surely have been at the last tram event. I am convinced I was party to the run which led to this sad situation - 180 was rarely if ever rostered on route 23 (the last full day service) but was a regular performer on the part-day service 28 (the other final route). I tried to get as many tram journeys fitted in as possible during the last weeks and had managed to be on the last 28 of the evening from Stanley Road to Braids on the Wednesday of the second last week. 180 was the allocated car which pleased me no end and the crew were relatively young being in their 30's (male driver and clippie). As the last car of their shift 180 was driven in full parallel on all possible occasions and as there were very few passengers around,

an exhilarating run ensued with buses being overtaken several times. This run however probably did it for that motor!

I was unfortunately in hospital for two weeks in September 1956 and thus missed the last of services 11 and 16 which used almost the whole length of Princes Street from St Andrew's Street to the West End. The 11 had always used Leith Street but was diverted by York Place and St Andrew's Square after the last of the Bridges routes were withdrawn as this allowed track lifting in Leith Street to commence. For a couple of months prior to that abandonment, as a very rookie apprentice surveyor I was assisting with a small pub renovation project off Iona Street near the former Leith – Edinburgh boundary. Naturally when required to visit the site I made sure that I travelled by tram (from the West End to Shrubhill or Pilrig). Service 28 which was in reality an 11A was retained for the final two months but was diverted by the Mound and past the Royal Infirmary to get to Tollcross which allowed track lifting on the western section of Princes Street and Lothian Road. This was the first time since 1871 that trams had not travelled the full length of the most famous one sided street in the world! When I returned to work I still went to that site by tram but had to walk from the West End to the Mound and as luck would have it, unknown to me then, Stuart Sellar of SRPS fame took my photo boarding a 28 at Shrubhill on the very last morning of the trams. I was returning dutifully to the office complete with surveyors folding six foot rod tucked under my arm. Stuart kindly gave me a print of this historic event some years later.

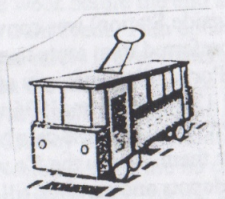
During my last two years at school when it became obvious that the tram services were going to be withdrawn as rapidly as the Corporation could obtain buses and train the crews, I made sure that I always travelled to and from school by tram. As routes were abandoned I had to adopt sometimes circuitous routes to achieve this result. However the scholar's transfer ticket came to the rescue as it permitted a change of vehicle to complete your journey all for the princely sum of one old penny! Thus when service 5 became buses I could get a lift with my father on his way to the city as far as Newington where I could take a 19 to Tollcross there I could change to services 11,16,23 or 28 to Churchhill. Less adventurous was to take the Granton circle service 14 direct to Churchhill with service 13 on the return from school. I made a sewing table for my mother at woodwork and was able to take it home on the front platform of a 13 tram. At that time large parcels or luggage were charged a fare but the conductor enquired if I had made the table myself. I confirmed that was the case so he said there was no way he would charge me under these circumstances. The driver duly handed it off from the front platform at Salisbury Place and I now realise with present traffic conditions that trying such a manoeuvre nowadays would probably result in fatal injury. The trams at that time were being blamed for causing traffic congestion but as we all know now traffic congestion did not really exist in these far off days and it is present day bus services which really suffer from its effects.

Service 5 (Piershill to Morningside Station) was converted to buses at the end of October 1954 which was till then my preferred tram route to school from Salisbury to Churchhill. This service was provided by Portobello depot cars and the regular performers were domed roofed standards 111, 112 and 120 of 1935 and 1936 vintage. 111 was nicknamed "Nelson" (one eye, one arm and one *****!!). These cars became almost like old friends as one had travelled so many times on them. When the 5's went off and Portobello depot closed they were transferred to other depots and survived till 1956.

The other service which I used frequently was the 7 (Liberton to Stanley Road) to visit my paternal grandmother at Craighall, catching the tram in Minto Street, Newington. This service showed double red coloured light code at night and this could be identified from the Minto Street stop when the car rounded the bend at Lady Road fully half a mile away. The 7 was rostered from Leith depot which often provided streamliners or other non standard all steel cars for this route. Once on my way home from granny's on a 7 in central Leith a dog boarded along with about half a dozen passengers. The conductress collected the fares but no one paid for the dog – "Wha belongs the dug?" was the immediate response. Nobody belanged the dug and it was unceremoniously booted off at the next stop! With this in mind some of the traditional fishing families from Newhaven aspired to move to the then new bungalows at Fairmilehead in the 1930's. Service 11 was extended to Fairmilehead from Braids in April 1936 and thus provided a direct service between the two points. My late father assured me that one family dog would visit from home in Newhaven to the newly weds at Fairmilehead on a regular basis by tram all on it's own without paying and seemed to know which tram to take and if ejected from one tram would simply wait and try it's luck on the next.

My earliest memories of the trams was travelling to visit my maternal grandmother who lived at Liberton Dams during the dark days of WW2. At that time we were living in Marchmont and the direct tram service was the 18 which was part-day only and not all that frequent. The 18 was a Tollcross depot service and was the first tram route to be converted to buses in March 1950 but this did not lead to any track abandonment as other services used all of its route except the southern curve of the triangular junction from Hope Park Terrace into Clerk Street. Incidentally this triangular pointwork was completely renewed after the 18 had gone but it was heavily used by the Bridges routes and the north curve by service 19 which lasted till summer 1956. The 18 by its nature was usually serviced by older wooden cars and (though I did not know of these things then) almost certainly on occasion by one of the few remaining converted cable cars, a few of which lasted till 1947. I have vague memories when I would be 2 or 3 years old, of returning home by 18 after dark with my mother as the air-raid sirens sounded when we were in the Melville Drive. The tram stopped, the conductor tied down the pole and ushered us to one of the many air raid shelters in the adjacent Meadows public park. This must have been a false alarm as I definitely do not recall any explosions!

I hope you have enjoyed my random reminiscences and that I have caught something of the atmosphere of the tramway years in Edinburgh when all too soon the everyday presence of these fine vehicles was removed from the city streets and things for me were never quite the same ever again.



2 27 Streamliner (Metro-Cammel 1935) on Granton Circle service 14 near top of Leith Walk.



4 169 Author about to board service 28 to return to office about noon on last day of trams – 16 November 1956. Car 169 built Shrubhill in 1950 – only 6 years old!