

WT 7101

Keighley no; 5

1924 Straker—Clough

Brush H26/24RO



Although trolleybuses ran in Keighley for a relatively short period from 1913 to 1932, during that time there were two separate and quite different systems. The original 1913 installation comprised three separate routes acting as extensions to the tramway system - Ingrow to Oxenhope, Keighley to Oakworth, Utlely to Sutton. These routes used the unsuccessful Cedes-Stoll system, whereby 4-wheeled trolleys ran on top of a pair of overhead wires and were towed by a cable connected to the trolleybus itself. On single track installations such as Keighley, this meant that trolleybuses had to stop and exchange trolleys when they met. For various reasons - the pioneering nature of the system and the difficulty of obtaining spares after the outbreak of the Great War (Cedes had Austrian origins) - the system operated intermittently and finally expired in 1921.

In 1924 trolleybuses returned to Keighley whereby Straker –Clough and in some cases second hand Dodson bodied vehicles were used to replace trams primarily on the Utlely, Stockbridge and Ingrow routes. However due to strong competition from inter-urban bus operators, the re-emergence was short lived, and just eight years later in August 1932, the Keighley trolleybus system was abandoned. Within a month from that date the Keighley Corporation services (who also ran motor buses) was absorbed into the Keighley-West Yorkshire company.

Due to the relatively short careers of some of these vehicles, certain examples could later be found in the Keighley and Yorkshire Dales areas as sheds, stores or in some cases caravans, as was to be with no; 5, which was used as a caravan in the Grassington area. Local transport historian J S King obtained the vehicle and it was subsequently presented to the Keighley Corporation. It was conserved as a static exhibition, displayed at the Victoria Hall, and later in the Peter Black collection. After government re-organisation absorbed Keighley into the Bradford District in 1974, it was in store at the Bradford Industrial Museum from 1994 under the ownership of Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council.

In early 2000 it was placed in the custodianship of Keighley Bus Museum Trust bringing it full circle back to its home town for display. WT 7101 is thought to be the world's oldest surviving double-deck trolleybus.