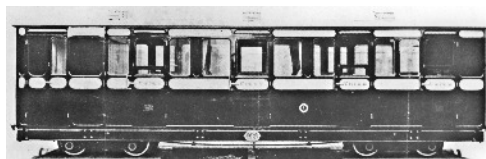


NWNGR Carriage Summary



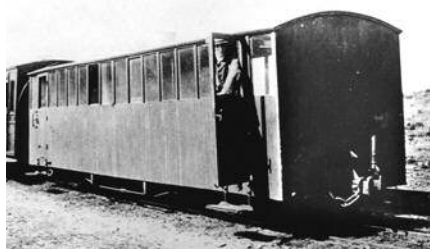
Ashbury Brake/1st/3rd Composite No. 1 - the number is visible on the carriage side and there is glass in one of the pair of guard's entry doors. On No. 2 this panel was opaque - Detail from Arch 4224/2



The three NWNGR Ashbury 4-wheel carriages. Detail from WHR 98 (Arch 0098)



One of the two Gloucester Brake/2nd/3rd Composites based on Cleminson's principle - WHR 186 (Arch 0186)



Metropolitan *Workmans* Carriage, No. 7 (of 1891)
Detail from Arch 3501



Metropolitan *Tourist Car* First Class, No. 8 (of 1891)
WHR 2a (Arch 0227)



The single Gloucester All-3rd *Cleminson* - WHR 187 (Arch 0187)



Both Ashbury *Corridor* carriages shortly after delivery - No. 9 to the left and No. 10 to the right - Detail from WHHR 4a (Arch



Ashbury un-glazed *Summer*, No. 13 - WHR 1a (Arch 0226/2)



Pickering Brake/1st/3rd Composite No. 4 - one of the pair acquired in 1907 Arch 3555

General

All of the carriages owned by the Welsh Highland Railway from its inception in 1922 originated on the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways, (NWNGR).

When these carriages passed to the WHR they were renumbered in a common series with the Festiniog Railway. WHR carriage numbers started at '23', following on from the second of the two F.R. Ashbury bogie carriages, number '22'.

The NWNGR had acquired carriages as follows: for the opening in August 1877 - two Brake 1st/3rd composites from Ashbury and three four-wheel carriages also from Ashbury; December 1877 - three six-wheel carriages to Cleminson's Patent design from the Gloucester Carriage and Wagon Co.; 1891 - the "*Workmans*" and the "*Tourist*" (later known as the "*Gladstone*") bogie carriages from Metropolitan; 1893 - two "*Corridor*" bogie carriages from Ashbury; 1894 - four "*Summer*" bogie carriages (two semi-glazed and two un-glazed) from Ashbury; 1897 - a possible bogie carriage to replace the three 4-wheelers (from Ashbury ? - see Note 9); 1907 - two Brake 1st/3rd composites from R.Y. Pickering to replace the two Gloucester Passenger Brakes (Cleminsons); a maximum sixteen at any one time. The Directors reported in 1879 that the whole of the rolling stock was hired - the NWNGR had apparently acquired it on hire purchase, but rentals had fallen behind, and some of it, including the three six-wheelers, were taken over by James C. Russell and sold to the Moel Tryfan Rolling Stock Co. Ltd. which he had set up with fellow Directors to protect his investment in the Railway, until 1880, when it was sold to the Railway in exchange for Debentures.

The numbering of carriages in NWNGR ownership is not completely clear and it has been postulated that there were two re-numbering exercises in the early 1890s. It would appear that interim numbers were applied to some vehicles as the system was changed over from the original sequence to that which was used through to the formation of the WHR, when surviving carriages were renumbered in a common FR Co./WHR number sequence.

A good deal of the evidence comes from photographs, the surviving 6-monthly accounts presented to shareholders 1881-1918, Board of Trade correspondence and Court Documents. But the latter sources are sometimes confusing at best, and suspect at worst. For example, the Carriage statistics in the accounts and Board of Trade returns appear to ignore the withdrawal of the 4-wheelers in 1897, not corrected until 1909. And on 13 June 1892 Russell wrote to the Board of Trade saying that "four (altered from five) 8 wheeled Bogie Carriages have been fitted, and a fifth will be, with Westinghouse Brake". The other evidence suggests that there were only four bogie carriages at this time, the 2 new *Corridor* coaches not being approved by the Court until the following March.

NWNGR/WHR - Passenger Carriage Summary ^{[1][2]}

Number 1876 - 1890	Number 1891 - 1892	Number 1893 - 1897	Number 1897 - 1907	Number 1907 - 1922	Details	Date	WHR Number	Notes
1	1	1	1	1	Ashbury Brake 1st/3rd Composite	1876		1
2	2	2	2	2	Ashbury Brake 1st/3rd Composite	1876		1
3	3	3			Ashbury 4-wheel carriage	1876		2 10
4	4	3			Ashbury 4-wheel carriage	1876		2 10
5	5	3			Ashbury 4-wheel carriage	1876		2 10
6	9	4	4		Gloucester 6-wheel Cleminson Brake 2nd/3rd Composite	1877		3 8
7	10	5	5		Gloucester 6-wheel Cleminson Brake 2nd/3rd Composite	1877		3 8
8	11	6	6	6	Gloucester 6-wheel Cleminson all 3rd Saloon	1877		3
	7	7	7	7	Metropolitan 3rd saloon (Closed Coach)	1891		4 9 12
	8	8	8	8	Metropolitan 3rd observation (Tourist Coach - the Gladstone Car)	1891	29	5 9
		9	9		Ashbury 3rd saloon (Corridor Coach)	1893	25	6
		10	10	10	Ashbury composite saloon (Corridor Coach) - Buffet Car	1893	23 (later 24)	6
		11	11	11	Ashbury 3rd 7-compartment open (Summer Coach)	1894	26	7
		12	12	12	Ashbury 3rd 7-compartment open (Summer Coach)	1894	24 (FR No 23)	7
		13	13	13	Ashbury 3rd 7-compartment open (Summer Coach)	1894	28	7
		14	14	14	Ashbury 3rd 7-compartment open (Summer Coach)	1894	27	7
			3	3	Ashbury (?) Bogie carriage to replace 4-wheelers	1897		10 12
				4	Pickering Brake 1st/3rd Composite	1907	8	2 11
				5	Pickering Brake 1st/3rd Composite	1907	9	2 11

Notes

1) The numbers 1 and 2 are confirmed by the 1 seen inside the crest on the maker's photograph. It has been suggested ^[3] that these two coaches were built in 1874, consistent with the originally planned opening in November 1874, but were delayed by the late completion of the railway. Whatever date they were built the numbering suggests they were built at the same time as, or before, the three 4-wheelers (Note 2). Hence the (latest) date listed here of 1876. It has been suggested that these Brake Compos were replaced by the Pickerings in 1907, but it is more likely that the Pickerings replaced the Cleminson Brakes (see Note 10) and the Ashburys probably remained in service for some considerable time after this - the under-frame of one of them remained in service as a bogie timber wagon and can be seen in the J.F. Bolton photographs of the 1941/42 demolition trains. Additional confirmation of this fact was the listing for the 1934 lease of the WHR by the FR which included "Timber Wagon 25 ft long - old carriage converted into timber wagon to carry say 2-3 tons" ^[4]

2) Correspondence with B.o.T records three 4-wheelers. One of them was exhibited in Manchester on 1 May 1876 by Ashbury, the makers.^[5] The B.o.T report (31 March 1883) following an accident at Snowdon Ranger in February 1883 records 4-wheelers Nos 3 and 5 being involved. There are photographs that show all three 4-wheelers - the third, logically, would have been No 4.

3) *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (weekly, published on Saturdays) of 22 December 1877, reporting on the 10th half-yearly meeting of NWNGR shareholders, noted: "Two composite carriages, 2nd and 3rd class with break compartment, and one third class carriage, each 30 feet long, were added this week, to supply a great want." These were the 6-wheeler carriages to Cleminson's patent. ^[6] (they were added to the stock totals in 1878) Cleminson's system was described in Edouard Vignes' 1878 publication "*A Technical Study of The Festiniog and Other Narrow-Gauge Railways*".

A letter from J.C. Russell to the B.o.T of June 1892 confirmed that "there are three 6-wheel carriages . . . two of these have brakes and brake compartment, one has not". Several photographs show all three in the same train. The report into the 1883 accident at Snowdon Ranger (see note 2) records that Carriage No 6, "six-wheel composite carriage with break compartment", was in the train.

Carriages 6, 7 and 8, (without a description) were listed amongst rolling stock hired to the railway in an agreement with the Moel Tryfan Rolling Stock Co. Ltd of December 1878 until 1880 when Debentures were issued by the railway to pay for them and outstanding hire fees. J.I.C. Boyd stated that Nos 6 and 7 were the composites and No 8 the third, ^[7] but his source for Nos 7 and 8 is not known. The attribution in the table follows Boyd, but is therefore, in this respect at least, speculative.

When the two carriages from Metropolitan were acquired in 1891 and were allocated the numbers 7 and 8, the number conflict was temporarily resolved by re-numbering the Cleminsons as 9, 10 and 11 ^[8]. In these referenced notes, Michael Bishop observed that upon the acquisition of the *Corridor* and *Summer* carriages, further renumbering would have been necessary.

There is photographic evidence from 1896 showing a Cleminson Brake carrying the number 5, indicating that a second renumbering did take place ^[9]. Analysis suggests that this second renumbering allocated the numbers 4, 5 and 6 to the Brakes and the All-3rd respectively.

4) The 26ft *Closed Coach* was described by its manufacturer as a *Workmans Carriage*. All windows were glazed and there was no internal connection between the two halves of the car. The seating was arranged peripherally around each of the two compartments. The carriage appears in a photograph taken at Dinas published in the WHR section of Boyd's book ^[10] suggesting it was taken in 1922 or later, credited to G.M. Perkins, but it had been published in an earlier edition ^[11] in the NWNGR section captioned "c 1909", along with a photograph of *Gowrie* by Perkins in 1909. ^[12] It was not retained for use on the WHR. It is possible that some of its timber was used in the 1927 *Buffet Car* conversion.

5) The 26ft *Tourist Coach* had a glazed central section and commodious open end sections (referred to sometimes as *balconies*). The original Metropolitan plans and the half-yearly accounts at the end of 1891 suggest that initially it was considered a Composite (2nd inside and 3rd outside ?). But the accounts 6 months later create a *Tourist Car First Class* vehicle at the expense of a Composite. This suggests a conversion, maybe to cater for an increasing tourist trade, but it is also possible that this was in anticipation of Prime Minister Gladstone travelling in it during a visit to Edward Watkins' chalet in September 1892. The well-known photograph in this guise as No 8 comes from Mackay's *Light Railways* of 1896.^[13] In WHR days it was the only carriage whose roof was not lowered and it seems to have been known as the *Observation Coach* rather than carrying any number. It was dual-braked between May 1923 and Spring 1924.

6) The 30ft *Corridor* coaches were so known because there was internal communication throughout; they did not have external corridor connections. All windows were glazed. They were perhaps the first British ordinary carriages for any gauge to incorporate this now general "modern" layout. No. 10 was altered in the late 1890s to incorporate a central partition, with door, and a 1st-class saloon in one half. It, as WHR no. 24, was further altered in 1927 to incorporate a buffet in the erstwhile 3rd class section, and, at some time before 1934, the 'buffet-end' was altered again, the carriage being restored as a simple 3rd-class saloon.

7) The *Summer* coaches" were more spartan compartment vehicles, 29ft 11 ins in length. 13 and 14 had no glazing and half-height doors while 11 and 12 had similar half-height doors with the upper section between each door glazed. No. 12, which had become WHR 24, was passed to the FR, in exchange for 3 bogie coal, wagons at the end of 1926, becoming their no. '23'. *Corridor* no 23 was renumbered as '24' at the same time.

8) Second Class was abandoned at the end of 1893 ^[14] and these carriages ceased to be Composites, becoming Brake All 3rd.

9) The numbers allocated to the *Workmans* (7) and the *Tourist* (8) had previously been allocated to two of the Cleminson 6-wheelers. Photographic evidence ^[15] shows these vehicles operating together and as it seems unlikely that the Company would deliberately have allowed a numbering ambiguity, it seems probable that some carriage renumbering must have taken place. Further photographic evidence ^{[16][17]} appears to confirm that circa 1892 one of the Cleminson Brake Composites carried the number '10' apparently confirming that such a renumbering did indeed take place. However, as the number '10' was subsequently allocated to one of the

Ashbury *Corridor* vehicles (1893) it seems probable that this first renumbering was a temporary measure leading to the eventual establishment of a more logical number structure for the NWNCR carriage fleet.

10) The Board of Trade Order of 30 December 1890 under the Regulation of Railways Act had allowed three years for the NWNCR to install Continuous Brakes on vehicles carrying passengers but the Company had managed to prevaricate, firstly over the 6-wheelers, until they were fitted, and then the 4-wheelers. Finally on 2 September 1896 J.C. Russell had to agree “to replace the three small coaches referred to as early a date as the finances of the Company will permit, and to discontinue running the small coaches in any event by the 31st March next year.” On 20th September 1897, Samuel Tanner, referring to a previous letter to Russell on the subject, wrote; “I beg to say that these were taken out of traffic some time ago and a new large Coach fitted with the Westinghouse Brake had been put into use in place thereof.” This suggests the new Coach referred to is unlikely to have been any of the 8 coaches delivered 1891-94, but could have been the result of the £162 charged as Capital Expenditure under the “On Rolling Stock and Continuous Brakes” head in the second half of 1897 (expenditure on continuous brakes having been completed in 1894). This was what the previous 4 bought in 1894 had cost (a total of £649). With the withdrawal of the 4-wheelers Nos ‘3’, ‘4’ and ‘5’ it is logical that the 1897 coach referred to by Tanner was given No ‘3’. This also fits with the 2 new Pickering coaches delivered in 1907 being given numbers ‘4’ and ‘5’ (as confirmed by the Pickering Order Book). Although no contemporary photographs of such a vehicle have ever materialised in service, it has been suggested that this might explain the “Mystery Carriage” photographed at Boston Lodge in the 1920s and 1930s. This carriage was clearly only suitable for quarrymen's trains (to Glanrafon Siding), quite logical if it was replacing the 4-wheelers. There was no adjustment of rolling stock totals between 1897 and 1909, although the withdrawal of the 4 wheelers was confirmed by the Continuous Brake returns.

An alternative scenario is suggested by an affidavit by Russell to the Chancery Court in his role as Receiver and Manager in February 1893. He wanted to spend capital funded by an issue ‘A’ Debenture Stock, including “£550 in the purchase of two large carriages capable of carrying from 30 to 34 passengers each and to order one long frame on which to place 3 small carriages which are at present very ill-suited for the line and not very safe”. The purchase of the two large carriages clearly went ahead in 1893 (becoming Nos 9 and 10), but did the conversion of the 4-wheelers still running as ‘piped’ vehicles three years later, which if 10 ft long would have produced a 30 ft bogie carriage, ever take place? The £162 spent in 1897 could have been spent on this conversion. [18] Possibly Tanner’s letter was in coded language to prevent the B.o.T. asking further questions. One of these two scenarios was probably the source of the dilapidated coach No 3 noted by Williams in 1923. Unfortunately the trail goes cold beyond this evidence.

It has been suggested that the Pickering Brake Composites were acquired to replace the Ashbury Brakes Nos 1 and 2. The Directors in their report of September 1907 on the delivery of the Pickering Composites said these two new “Composite and Brake Van Carriages were obtained to replace two of similar construction which had been running since the opening of the line in 1877.” G. C. Aitchison had reported that “it was impossible to repair the old carriages any more as they were completely worn out”. It had been found that “a carriage combining passenger compartments with a guards van and space for luggage most economical and convenient as when traffic was slack it enabled the one vehicle to be run in a train”. For this reason the replacements were planned as “two similar vehicles”. [19]

The entry in the Pickering Order Book confirms that these two carriages were given numbers ‘4’ and ‘5’ - why, if they were replacing nos ‘1’ and ‘2’?

11) As it is now known that one of the two Cleminson Brakes definitely carried the number ‘5’ and as photographic analysis indicates that the All-3rd probably carried the number ‘6’ ahead of the acquisition of the Pickering Composites [20] it seems almost certain that the other Cleminson Brake was number ‘4’ and therefore it was these vehicles that were replaced by the Pickering Composites. The Cleminsons were operating on the Railway in the year it opened and the Director’s statement in 1907 was thirty years after the event. The chassis from at least one of the Ashbury Brakes was still operable on the WHR into the 1940’s demolition activities (see Note 1) and, referring to Aitchison’s comment, his sentiment seems far more accurately to describe the Cleminsons than the technically superior Ashburys.

12) Closed coaches 3 & 7 were described as “dilapidated” in 1923. It is claimed by Boyd that they were allocated numbers 32 & 34, but it seems more probable that these carriages never received WHR numbers.

References

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