

A Club Carriage in 7mm scale

PETER FITTON was inspired by the restoration of the prototype to build a model of this remarkable vehicle...



Having followed the recovery and restoration of this marvellous and unique Lancashire & Yorkshire carriage and being brought up in St. Annes adjacent to the busy Fylde Coast line along which this vehicle ran from 1912 until about 1934 (and now living even closer to the remaining single track branch), I decided that a 7mm scale model of it was essential for my growing collection of L&YR items.

After several trips in No.47 on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, with much kind help from Robin Higgins of the L&YR Trust, plus Barry Lane as usual providing me with the necessary drawings and pictures, John Firminger set about computer-designing the carriage to enable an etch to be done. Once the correct 8 foot 10 inch width had been confirmed, that part of the job proceeded rapidly. We decided to use 0.55mm nickel silver sheet so that the thinnest areas were still strong after half-etching. A beautiful set of etches soon arrived to enable the construction to start.

This carriage was built at Newton Heath in 1912 to Diagram 126 and was the sole 58ft one on the L&Y, meaning that I needed a longer roof than on Chowbent carriages I had previously built; most amazingly there was one in the stores! (I have no idea where it came from!) It also required 10 foot wheelbase wide bearing bogies and as I had the white metal side-castings available, these were modified to fit on Wayoh (don't say it) GWR frames, which are supplied by Chris of Invertrain Models. Another useful discovery was that Peter Cowling makes resin corridor connectors which look much nicer than the black card concertina

ones. I have actually also retro-fitted these to all my elliptical roofed corridor coaches.

Some redesigning was needed as building proceeded, namely on the underframe and steps, I also fitted 1mm Z section brass (available from Eileen's, but tricky to do) under the windows to make a ledge to hold the perspex strip in place and help maintain the sides straight. My final method of securing the window strip tops was by gluing some 6mm x 6mm plastic lengths under the upper flanges. You can use PVA when fixing windows, but superglue is possibly better. However, the 'fumes' that you can smell (and should certainly not breathe!) do attack the material and make it opaque, so much care is needed, and it is very likely that you will need to replace the window you have just fitted!

I soldered on the roof formers plus 6mm x 2mm brass angle lengthways to keep it in shape; there is absolutely no twist, which must be a first. Much fiddling was called for, however, in making everything fit perfectly. Gas lamp tops were easy to fix, but those ventilators (small LNWR type from Malcolm at Sidelines) had to be reduced in height by filing. In fact, later, I decided to have LED lighting, so now there are white Plastikard inserts clipped in under the roof to hide the wiring.

Helmsman Model Rail, conveniently of Blackpool, supplied the realistic gaslights, with a battery in the attendant's area at the coach end. It seems that when No.47 was altered in 1917, electric lighting was fitted, but the gas lamp tops remained in place on the roof! Perhaps gas was left for emergencies? The carriage ends were

The completed club carriage.

detailed as per all gas-lit L&YR ones, not at all like the preserved vehicle, which of course has no gas. (Health & Safety surely would not allow it!)

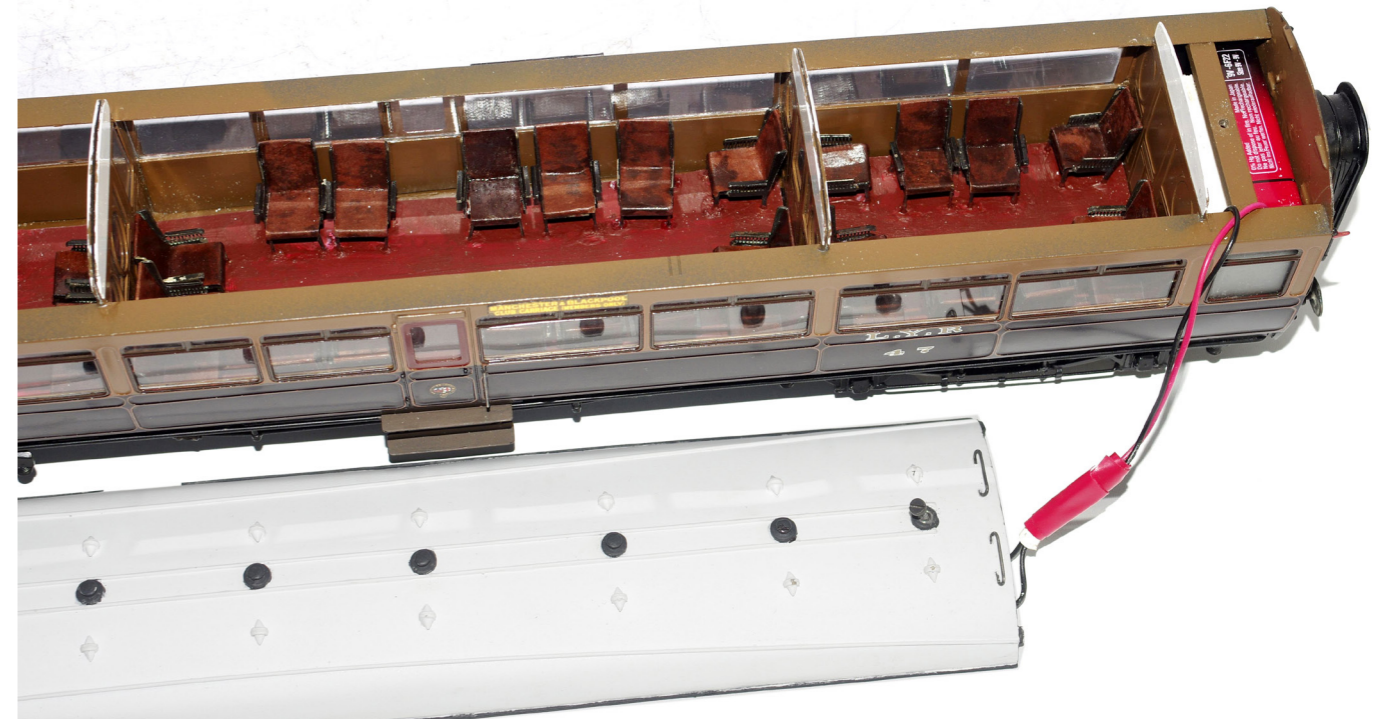
After some thought, John Firminger came up with a simple fold-up design for those 40 armchairs, which was very ingenious and saved much work. I stained them after bending them to shape and glued leatherette paper on to give realism. They fit into holes bored in the 1mm plastic sheet floor which is screwed down. Unfortunately they are brown rather than the probably red leather actual chairs.

As I required quite a few lightweight seated Edwardian male passengers, I searched out a suitable supply at Telford. Nigel Smith of Omen Miniatures agreed to make some of his beautiful figures in resin (you must all buy some). OK, they took some painting, but certainly look the part! How can this carriage possibly run without passengers?

Conrad Cooper has done a magnificent job of painting the sides in lined out L&YR livery plus dark chocolate ends – I painted the roof and frames/bogies.

I am very pleased with No.47, which looks rather good as part of my Club Train running on our Preston Group layout hauled by original Dreadnought No.1525 (or even possibly by double headed Flyers!). A Diagram 95 may be one for future consideration.

PS: As a result of my showing pictures of this model in *Magazine 257*, there have been several requests for sets of etches. This will take some time as roof and bogies are needed. The latter is possible, but can anyone roll an elliptical roof?



Top: The carriage interior viewed from above showing the batteries and leads for the interior lighting.
Middle: The painted passengers wait to be fitted in the carriage.
Bottom: The passengers are now sitting comfortably in their club carriage.