Livery clippings from
The Railway Magazine for the period 1898-1924
(emphasis on GWR)

Text marked in yellow indicates particularly noteworthy bits. Most is already known, but some details are new to me at least. But note: There seems to be a good deal of hearsay, guesswork and inconsistencies involved!

Feb. 1898

Headcodes

The Great Western have but. one disc, viz.,a, round white one, which is only used on that company's trains working over the Metropolitan Railway at Aldgate, and to the Great Western City goods station at Smithfield.

Most of the traffic on the Great Western being long-distance, and therefore more easily distinguishable, an ingenious plan is adopted. This is to paint the sides of the head lamps themselves as if they were discs, and to turn the sides of the lamps to the front when running during daytime. The sides show either a white diamond on a black ground, or the letter S painted upon them.

July 1900

The Barry Railway is an interesting line in many respects. Being built at so recent a date, it has had at its disposal all the experience which other companies have had to purchase—often at great cost. Thus we find a very pleasing “freshness” in all things apertaining to the Barry Railway. Its engines are very handsome, being painted red. A polished brass cap on the top of the funnel gives these locomotives a nicely-finished appearance. The stations, too, are handsome to a degree, and have been built in a distinctly artistic style.

July 1903

Q.—Several times recently I have noticed, passing through the Great Western Railway Station at Reading, a number of new passenger carriages painted all chocolate, not the usual chocolate and cream. Can you tell me whether the Company intend to adopt this as a permanent colour for all its carriages. or not ?

A.—It has not been definitely decided to adopt an all chocolate colour for the rolling stock on the Great Western Railway. The all chocolate colour is, however, being tried experimentally.

August 1903

The Great Western Railway is painting a large number of passenger coaches a rich shade of chocolate, with ivory upper panels. Whilst, freshly painted, these tints are excellent, being well set

off by the varnish, it must, however, be left to time to prove whether they can stand the effect of wear and tear and our delightful English climate. Should these new colours successfully emerge from the contest, we consider they are an improvement on the celebrated tones adopted by Brunel for the Great Western Railway. The new tints have certainly a warmer and richer appearance than the original colours.

October 1904

Ed: This is the article referred to by John Lewis here: http://www.gwr.org.uk/liverieswagonred.html

The Colour Schemes of our Railways.
By J. B. Baron Collins, MA.

An article on the colours or uniforms adopted by the railway companies of the United Kingdom may be of some interest to all who are interested in railways, and as far as I know, no such article has appeared in any of the numbers of the RAILWAY MAGAZINE, of which I have the complete set in bound volumes up to December, 1903. The Editor very wisely refuses to answer questions in "The Why and the Wherefore" columns on the colour of a wheel or a tender, but perhaps an article on the whole subject more or less will not be refused.

In the early days of railways there were no distinguishing colours for the rolling-stock. One line would be in the county of Durham, another in Lancashire, these being the first and second respectively, and the third, a small affair in Cornwall, the Bodmin and Wadebridge Railway, opened in September, 1834. There were other lines opened earlier using steam locomotives or else carrying passengers, but these three railways were among the first to use engines and carry passengers. After this several more lines were opened. But it was not till the forties that two or more railway companies met in the same district, and it was some time before there was much interchange of traffic - much rolling- stock on "foreign " lines. But directly this began it was at once necessary to have a distinguishing mark for the rolling-stark of each company. Probably at first most engines were painted black, the trucks a dark grey, and the passenger carriages brown certainly outside, if not inside also. No attempt was made in early days to please the eye in railway things, except perhaps in the uniforms of the railway servants, who often wore top hats and tail coats, or even coloured livery, which would he laughed at nowadays. The favourite colours for rolling-stock would be what stood the trying English climate best, and what did not prove expensive, and also what would be considered suitable for the purpose. There were, of course, a few colours that were necessary, other colours being out of the question in some departments. Red being so little represented in nature, became the best colour for signals, and as signals were more required to be warnings than otherwise, red became the danger colour.

Though at first different companies had very different signals, after several years all lines have adopted the semaphore. The Eastern Counties railway had fan signals (see RAILWAY MAGAZINE, Vol. X., p. 437), letting out more or less parts or "panels " of a quarter circle to denote what speed might be allowed, there being two red panels and a green and a yellow. The Great Western Railway in early days used the disc and crossbar as the signal for entering a station, which was a combined distant and home signal. The latest uniformity in signals is the choice of green as the right colour for line clear, to avoid the mistaking of a white light in a street or platform lamp for the old "all-right" signal lamp. All changes since in signals have been in the signal box, not in the shape or colour of signals.

It is a pity that there is not a uniform sequence of colours in tickets as in signals, to mean the necessary differences. The postage stamps of the world are being brought into a colour scheme, green for halfpenny stamps, red for penny ones. Why not have red tickets for first-class, blue for second, and yellow or green for third? Some companies have more or less these colours, white being a favourite colour for first, green for third—though the London and South-Western Railway has pink and many companies have blue for second. At one time yellow was much used for third and green for Parliamentary fares. White is the favourite colour for labels, but the Midland Railway has a hideous magenta.

The rolling-stock colours are the most important uniforms, of course, and in early days a railway might experiment on and change the colours frequently, without great expense. But now most railways have hundreds of engines and carriages, and it would cost an enormous sum to change the colours unless it was done very gradually, as each required re-painting. On the other hand, the stations may be very diverse, being fixtures, and not in any way likely to be confused, even by the most ignorant, each railway having any colour or colours for its stations, without perplexing its patrons, but this would be intolerable if all coaches were coloured alike in some of our busy "cosmopolitan" stations. The Great Western Railway is very fond of light blue for the interior walls of stations, though lately it has improved on this by light green. The London and South-Western Railway has shown a partiality for pink. The Great Western Railway in its old days went in for wooden sheds, rather gloomy, but dry in wet weather, Brunel preferring to build cheap stations at first, to be re-placed afterwards by stone structures if the traffic developed much. It was not known at first which would be the more important stations. Bath did not come up to Great Western Railway expectations, but the Thames riverside and London suburbs, especially Ealing, exceeded the brightest hopes of the early days of the railway. This policy had, therefore, much that was wise in it. Some railways, on the other hand, went in for elegant Elizabethan buildings, as at Coventry, on the London and Birmingham Railway, which had awkward flights of steps leading down to the line as if to some large garden.

The North Staffordshire Railway went in for some exceedingly handsome red brick stations, not so inconvenient for modern requirements. Lately the Great Western Railway has been doing away with all-over roof stations, and has built the pillar bracket two-slope roof over most of its long platforms at important stations, as at Acton, Ealing, Reading, 'Taunton, Mill Bay (Plymouth), and Truro. These are nearly all coloured drab, a pleasing colour.

Turning to the rolling-stock, the Great Western Railway has been modifying its engine and carriage colours. In 1892, at the time of the abolition of the broad gauge, the new express engines had a lighter shade of green for boilers and tenders. In 1903 the handsome brown and cream of the coaches was threatened by a change to brown all over, a retrograde step. It is not to be, fortunately; a slight modification of the old Brunel colours being tried as an experiment, which will probably be the permanent colours of the coaches. If some persons object to light colours for parts of the carriages as are to be seen on the Great Western Railway, Great Central Railway, London and North-Western Railway, and Caledonian Railway, because they look dirty so quickly if not well washed, on the other hand, it is well to know where the dirt is and when the carriage is clean. Dark coloured carriages may look clean when they are very dirty outside. At one time the Midland Railway had green for the chief colour of its engines, green being the favourite colour, for some reason or other, all over England, but by changing to what is officially called Victoria brown, really a red, money was saved. Certainly, the predominance of red in a Midland Railway passenger train looks bright and is an excellent advertisement for the railway itself. The London and North-Western Railway engines were at one time also coloured green, but their present (black) sombre appearance

is counteracted by the spick and span exterior of the passenger carriages with their dark purple brown lower panels and spilt milk upper panels.

In contrast to the cheerful colouring of some lines, mostly west rather than east, as far as Great Britain is concerned, we have the gloomy Great Eastern Railway carriages, brown all over, most comfortable inside, but uninviting outside. Now a band of scarlet below the windows, where the class of carriage is indicated, would do much to improve the appearance of these carriages, and the upper panels might be further improved by being painted the shade of a primrose leaf, a good green.

Then again, the Great Eastern Railway engines are coloured with such crude shades, a hard blue, and an untoned red and yellow. Some of the machinery is painted a greyish White. A Great Eastern Railway engine is enough to make an artist weep, but a Caledonian Railway engine, or even a Somerset and Dorset Railway engine, both with blue predominating as on the Great Eastern Railway, have a wiser choice of shades tor the prominent and accompanying colours. Compare the coloured pictures of engines in the RAILWAY MAGAZINE, January, 1901 (Great Eastern Railway), and August, 1903 (Caledonian Railway), and you will notice this.

One improvement in Great Eastern Railway engines is probably owing to a Great Western Railway engineer who has joined the Great Eastern Railway—the copper chimney heads—which the Great Western Railway is abandoning *(Ed: Or not? See October 1909 below).* It takes a man two days to hammer the copper head into position, so probably the change is to save time and money. The London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway is fond of these very finished chimneys, and though it is but a small matter, yet a stylish, well-kept appearance wins its way with the travelling public. The London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway gives a name to each engine, which makes its engines more interesting to the passengers, and is a way of advertising its district, as well as paying a compliment to most of its towns
and villages by using their names.

The Waterford, Limerick and Western Railway had copper chimney heads, but when the line was taken over by the Great Southern and Western Railway, off came the copper heads to be replaced by chimneys very interior in appearance.

The London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway has been experimenting with new colours for its coaches. The original red of its carriages is not so handsome as the colour arrangement of the Midland Railway, North-Eastern Railway, or North Staffordshire Railway; in fact, the Brighton vehicles do not liven up the view, but look rather dowdy. A modification of the Great Western Railway colours has been tried—a great improvement on the dull red. The Great Central Railway has also adopted colours somewhat like the Great Western Railway - French grey for upper and a bright brown for lower panels. Perhaps these changes made the Great Western Railway think of changing, not to be common, though it is undoubtedly the best locking of all coaching stock, in its brown and cream.

The Furness Railway goes in for cream upper and dark crimson lower panels, very pleasing to the eye, and lately the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland has decided to change a gloomy brown all over for cream upper and dark blue lower panels.

Shape has been considered more than colour in carriages. Rounded off corners to the carriage and handsome moulding round the windows, instead of straight and square building, have long been in vogue.

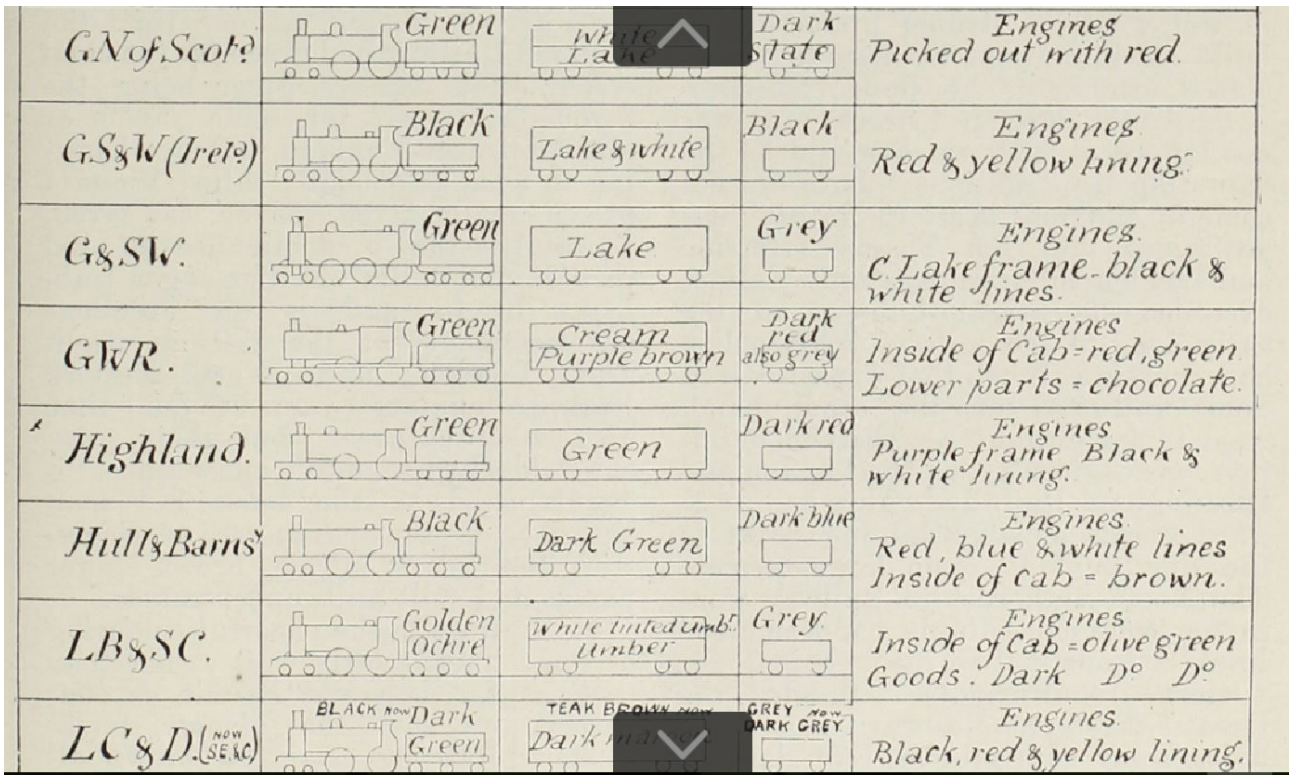
The upholstering of the carriages is a matter of consideration nowadays, and in the saloon and dining cars the internal decorations in woods, lincrusta, and upholstery make the cars travelling palaces indeed. It might be better if less money were spent on the upholstering of the carriages and a little more spent in developing the districts at present badly off for railway accommodation. Many English carriages, third-class ones even, are far more comfortable than many of the homes of those who use these carriages, some persons probably wishing to stay in these carriages a little longer before having to get out.

Shape and beauty of form cannot be considered much in engines, utility must come first by a long way, but what appeared hideous at first often gets so customary to the eye, that we soon admire the new types of engines turned out from Swindon and elsewhere. French and American engines are not so handsome as those built in Great Britain and Ireland. Belgian engines, some of them, are particularly ugly. (See article, RAILWAY MAGAZINE, Vol. V, p. 235) One Belgian type of engine has, among other monstrosities, a square smoke-stack. There is a photo of it in an old RAILWAY MAGAZINE. Of course, the early types of engines were, all of them, very ungainly in appearance, with their dome-like fire-boxes, especially the old Bury type. The London and South-western Railway at one time had very different colours for its livery, chocolate for engines and carriages, and a wonderful costume for the guard—scarlet and blue, with a lot of lace. The present tints are very well chosen, the bright green of the engines with a little purplish brown on the tenders, and the bright red of the buffer beam (though, for the matter of that, almost every railway has red for the buffer beam), and the orangish salmon on upper panels and Worcester sauce lower panels of the carriages and red lines making a good assortment of colours. The vans once had scarlet ends. The South-Eastern Railway adopted Wellington brown for its carriages, a sort of purple, a compliment to the Iron Duke, who was Warden of the Cinque Ports at one time. This looks better than the mixture of its own colours with the old Chatham company's brown, a combination that is not at all pretty, and is like the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railways. The South-Eastern Railway engines look well with their Brunswick green, and neat smokestacks. The old Chatham and Dover Railway was never noted for the appearance of its rolling-stock (black engines and dingy brown carriages), but it has been absorbed in what was its larger neighbour, an amalgamation not likely to benefit Kent and East Sussex. And now to conclude. Of all the turnouts, surely the Great Western Railways is the best looking, provided it keeps its cream upper panels. Its carriages are much richer in shape and finish, and even its trucks are cheerfully coloured a warm red, probably the only decided red trucks going. *[Ed: But note the colours given in the diagram below from the same article, which refers to red wagons on other railways too]*.

The most hideous colour for a carriage is that used by the District Railway electric cars on the Harrow line, a yellowy green tor third class, a class distinction like what obtains in France, where red is first class on the Paris - Lyon - Méditerranée Railway, yellow second, green third; and blue first on the Nord Railway, green second, and red third, with black upper panels for all.

Ed: Article includes the following diagrams of liveries:

Railway.	Engines & Tender.	Pass^r Coaches	Trucks	Remarks.
Belfast & NC	Invisible Green	Lake.		Engines Picked out with yellow blue & vermill^n
Cambrian	Black.	White Bronzegreen	Dark grey	Coaches Black & gold lined, also red Engines = Yellow & red d^o
Caledonian	Blue.	White Chocolate	Brick red	Engines Rich dark blue & Chocolate Goods d^o = black. Branch Carr^s = Lake.
Cheshire lines	Owning Co^s Colours	Oak brown	Grey.	Owning Co^s Engines.
Furness.	Indian Red.	White Blue	Grey (light)	Engines Red & black lining.
GCR.	Green	(New stock Cream) French grey purp brown	Grey	Engines Black & yellow lining. Goods d^o black, red lining
GER.	Ultramarine Blue	teak panell^d Varnished	Grey	Engines Red & yellow lining. Gold lettering. Goods-black
GNR.	(Light) Green	teak varnish^d	Dull red	Coaches. Curved long^l sides of the roofs a^o feature.
GN (Ireland)	Green	teak varnish^d		Engines Crimson frame, black & white lining.
GN of Scot^d	Green	White Lake	Dark slate	Engines Picked out with red.
G S & W (Ire^d)	Black	Lake & white	Black	Engines Red & yellow lining.



G.N. of Scot.d	Green	White Lake	Dark slate	Engines Picked out with red.
G.S.&W. (Irel.d)	Black	Lake & white	Black	Engines Red & yellow lining.
G.&S.W.	Green	Lake	Grey	Engines. C. Lake frame. black & white lines.
G.W.R.	Green	Cream Purple brown	Dark red also grey	Engines Inside of Cab = red, green Lower parts = chocolate.
Highland.	Green	Green	Dark red	Engines Purple frame Black & white lining.
Hull & Barns.y	Black	Dark Green	Dark blue	Engines. Red, blue & white lines Inside of cab = brown.
L.B.&S.C.	Golden Ochre	White tinted umb.r Umber	Grey.	Engines Inside of Cab = olive green Goods. Dark D.o D.o
L.C.&D. (now S.E.&C.)	BLACK now Dark Green	TEAK BROWN now Dark maroon	GREY now DARK GREY	Engines. Black, red & yellow lining.

Ed: LCDR coach colour reads "Teak brown now" above and "Dark maroon" below.

Railway.	Engines & Tender.	Passen's Coaches	Trucks	Remarks.
L & N W.	Black	Spirit milk / purp: brown	Invisible Grey	Engines Red & yellow lining. Number in red panel.
L & S W.	Green	Salmon / brown	Dark Brown	Do Inside of Cab = yellow
L T & Southend.	Green	Varn^d teak	Grey	Do Chocolate, red, black, yellow & white. All tank engines with two exceptions.
L & Yorks.	Black	Purple / brown	Dark Grey	Do Red & white lining & some yellow
Liskeard & Looe (Cornwall		Brown		Coaches Black & red lining.
Maryport & Carlisle.	Green	Var^d teak	Lead colour	
M R.	Lake	Lake	Grey	Engines & Coaches = one colour
Midland GW	Royal Blue	White / Royal blue		Coaches - Blue & gold lined Former colour = Brown
Metropol^n	Chocolate	Var^d teak	Pale slate.	1st class Do white upper panels. (old stock) Older engines outside cylinder
Met. Dist.	Dark Green	Red brown		New electric cars = red
N British.	Dark Gamboge	Red brown	Grey.	Engines Red & yellow lining
	Green		Grey	Do

N.E.R.	Green	Lake	Grey	Do. Black & white lining, red in underpart Copper top Chy
N.London.	Black	Brown		Do. Inside of Cab = brown Yellow & grey lining
N.Staffs.	Lake	Lake	Dark red brown.	Do. Yellow, red & black lining
SER (now S.E.&C.)	Dark Green	Dark maroon	Brick red (S.E.&C.R. DARK GREY)	Do. Black, red & yellow lining Copper top
Som & Dorset	Blue.	Blue	Lead col.	
Taff Vale.	Black.	White / Chocolate	Dark red	Do. Red & yellow lining
Taff Vale.	Black.	White / Chocolate	Dark red	Do. Red & yellow lining
Waterford Limerick & Western (now of G.S.&W.)	Lake	Lake	Black	Do. Gold lining. Goods. black with red panels & lining

CONTINUATION OF DIAGRAM SHOWING THE VARIOUS COLOURS OF LOCOMOTIVES, ETC. C

June 1905

The Colour of Great Western Coaches.

In the RAILWAY MAGAZINE for August, 1903, page 168, we called attention to the fact that the Great Western Railway was experimenting with deeper shades of the standard colours chosen nearly seventy years ago by Brunel, whose own artistic taste was never questioned by his most determined enemies.

The experiment has developed in a much more pronounced form, and passenger rolling stock is now running, wholly painted brown and only relieved by gold lining. Doubtless this new development is but a tentative measure called forth by economic considerations, and we therefore refrain from expressing an opinion on the glaring ugliness of the vehicles that are running in the new livery, because we feel sure that the directors of the Great Western Railway will recognise that economy can be purchased too dearly, and that the saving of a few thousands a year in paint can be lost a hundred times over in directions directly traceable to the colour of the rolling stock.

Apart from mere opinion, however, the following facts must carry weight. The Great Central, Furness and Caledonian are railways which have, during recent years, abandoned sombre shades of paint, and adopted pleasing colour schemes for the exteriors of their passenger coaches. A portion of the large increase in passenger traffic on these progressive lines can fairly be traced to the improved appearance of the exteriors of the coaches. Why, even the Metropolitan, in making a bid for increased traffic, is abandoning its teak colour for white! The value of an inviting exterior is recognised by every trader, or why are shop fronts to-day so much more imposing than was the practice even ten years ago? The answer is: to attract the attention (and custom) of the ‘man in the street.’ It is the custom of the ‘man in the street’ that railways desire, and “to win the eye is to win all !”

Westward, the London and South-Western Railway is the Great Western Railway’s chief competitor, and the colour adopted by the former line is far preferable to the all brown shades now under trial on the Great Western Railway. Northward, the Great Western Railway meets the London and North-Western Railway, but how will the new colours compare with the pleasing shades that have helped to make the London and North-Western Railway famous ?

Apart from the monetary question, the directors of the Great Western Railway cannot afford to neglect public sentiment, which has always associated good taste and artistic fitness with the progress of our longest railway, we therefore have little doubt that the experiment will not be persisted in.

Perhaps readers of the RAILWAY MAGAZINE will favour us with their views on the subject.

July 1905

The Colour of Great Western Coaches.

THE “‘Pert Par” in the June issue of the RAILWAY MAGAZINE, relative to the colour of the Great Western Railway coaches has attracted considerable attention in the press, and among our readers, a large number of whom have written us on the subject, all of the communications have strongly deprecated any further changes in the colours of the Great Western Railway carriages.

The West Cumberland Times, after quoting what we said on the subject, continues:— “ The confectioners, for instance, know that a cake must not only taste well but look well in order to sell well. The proof of the pudding may he in the eating of it, but a good appearance goes a long way in recommending it. But it is something new to find that people not only eat more cakes, but make more railway journeys if they are tempted by a pleasing exterior. Let us hope the Maryport and Carlisle may; in common with the larger systems mentioned find that their artistically coloured coaches may attract an increased amount of passenger traffic.”

The Maryport and Carlisle Railway has (like other progressive railways) recently changed the sombre teak colour of its coaches to a pleasing shade of green for the bodies, with cream colour for the upper panels.

November 1905

With this issue is presented an accurately drawn and correctly coloured plate of Great 'Western Railway locomotive N0. 103, one of the new de Glehn compound (French) express engines. No. 103 is painted the standard, Great Western Railway colours *(Ed: Ahem!).*

December 1905

ANOTHER Great Western Railway 7 feet 8 inches ‘single’ has now the driving splasher painted green, instead of the same colour as the frames, as hitherto.

N0. 3310, Waterford, the pioneer of the domeless régime, has been rebuilt so as to be externally identical with the “ City ” class.

Jan 1906

Monograms and Initials.

In continuation of the Pertinent Paragraph in our October issue, it is interesting to note that there are at present engines running on the Great Western Railway with tenders painted in six different styles.

l.—-No lettering, crest or monogram (on the old (6-wheel passenger and goods engines).

2.—-The monogram in centre panel (the standard till recently).

3.-——Large block letters, “ G.W.R.,” on centre panel.

4.——Large block letters, “ G.W.R.,” spaced out, one on each panel of tender.

5.—-The Company’s arms only on centre panel of tender.

6.—-The name, “Great Western,” painted in full in block letters, with a red shading, the Company’s arms appearing between the two words. '

August 1906

A New Livery for Small Great Western Engines.

The Great Western Railway is following the practice of many other British railways by setting apart a number of the small side-tank engines of the 0-4-2 type for the duty of working railway motor services. These engines have been painted a reddish-brown, similar to the colours employed by the Isle of Wight Central Railway. They push or pull the coach attached indifferently, and, if another vehicle is required, are not infrequently to be seen sandwiched between the carriages forming their train. As the engine is carried on a separate frame to that of the passenger coach, a ride in one of these rail-motors is more pleasant than a journey in one of the “ self-contained ” type, the vibration in the former case being notably less.

October 1906

The practice recently adopted on the Great Western Railway of painting over the brass domes on several of the engines, both passenger and goods, which still retain them, was dictated by economical motives, from a desire to save labour in cleaning. The same consideration has new led to some new locomotives, of the 4-6-0 and 4-4-0 types, having the wheels and frames painted black, in place of the dark red formerly adopted. Some four years ago the springs were first painted black, instead of red.

December 1906

The Evolution of the Great Western's Locomotives.

The following particulars concerning Great Western Railway locomotives are of interest. The 4-4-2 locomotives Nos. 183 and 189 have recently been named " Red Gauntlet " and "Talisman" respectively. The former name was, till recently, borne by the single- wheel locomotive No. 3072. The old 7ft. single. No. 165, has been refitted with domeless boiler and "Belpaire" firebox.

A further batch of side tank engines of the 4-4-2 type, with driving wheels 6 ft. 8 in. in diameter, are new being turned out from Swindon works. These engines bear the words "GREAT WESTERN" painted on the tank sides, the number-plate being removed to the bunker. Those running are numbered 2221 to 2229. The construction of 30 additional locomotives of this class is contemplated.

May 1907 p.88

All the modern goods rolling stock of the Great Western Railway is now marked with the letters "G.W." *(Ed: Introduced 1905, so it took them 2 years to notice, or do they mean all as opposed to some?).* This style of lettering is also employed on carriage trucks, fruit vans, horse- boxes, and milk vans, which are frequently attached to passenger trains. The monogram "G. W.", in legible and severely plain style, also replaces the elaborately entwined monogram "G. W. R", which had somewhat the appearance of a crown, and the was to be seen on panels of the passenger coaching stock. In adopting this practice the Great Western Railway has followed the example of the three other "great" English lines, which all employ the same style of lettering, the Great Eastern Railway making the innovation at about the same time as the Great Western Railway.

July 1907 – *Ed: a bit silly, but just for completeness:*

Coaches of Three Colours on the Great Western.

In the days of happy childhood how many of us found pleasure in playing with the boxes of wooden toy trains, each carriage painted a different colour, and the tout ensemble made up with trees a la Noah's Ark !

Even in those sunny days many of us wondered why the various carriages were of different colours, and as embryo railwaymen or railwayacs felt hurt that the toy makers did not keep to one colour for each box of carriages. We knew the South-Eastern, the London, Chatham and Dover, the London, Brighton and South Coast, and the London and South-Western Railways (and save for some thirds on the former, which, having so little woodwork above the body panels, did not present an opportunity of showing two colours, whilst the body could conceivably be the dark red brown shade then standard, uncleaned) each railway had a distinctive livery, which was used for all classes of carriages.

Yet a wider acquaintance with railways taught us that the toy makers. after all, had foundation for their idea, for, as recently as 1856, the Great Western Railway had its three classes of passenger coaches painted in distinctive colours, the first class being yellow, the second brown, and the third green.

August 1908

New Colour for Great Western Railway Coaches.

The forward policy of the Great Western Railway during recent years has provided a large proportion of the surprises that come over the railway world. Ever since the abolition of the broad gauge in May, 1892, various cherished features regarded as 'part and parcel' of the Great Western Railway, 'have gone by the board.' So drastic have been some of the alterations, that whilst a Rip Van Winkle, or anyone who had been out of England for the past 20 years, and had no knowledge of changes that have taken place on our railway systems, would have no difficulty in recognising his old friends at Euston, Waterloo, King's Cross, etc., the locomotives and types of rolling stock at Paddington would in no way bring to his mind the Great Western Railway of even 17 years ago.

The latest innovation is the discarding of the cream colour for the upper panels of Great Western Railway passenger rolling stock. It has been decided that in future the Great Western Railway. coaches shall be of a uniform chocolate-brown colour all over. This tint of brown was adopted by the Great Western Railway some five years ago (see *RAILWAY MAGAZINE August, 1903, and June 1905)* for the bodies of the coaches below the waist, and as the sides of modern Great Western Railway passenger vehicles consist largely of plate glass above the waist line, it must he confessed that not very much cream paint work will give place to the "Swindon chocolate "—as we venture to christen the standard colour. Since in these days no alteration is made unless it can claim to effect an economy; we can be sure that the 'blessed word Mesopotamia' [which in this case is synonymous with economy] has convinced the directors that the change means that money will be saved, otherwise so valuable an asset as the distinctive colours of the Great Western Railway coaches would not be discarded.

'Coming events cast their shadows before.' and in the March issue of the RAILWAY MAGAZINE (page 254), we showed that for real economy, i.e., the preservation of the wood—light pigments were superior to dark ones. That the superiority of light colours is generally admitted, can be gathered from the fact that progressive railways like the Caledonian, Furness, Great Central, London, Brighton and South Coast, Metropolitan, Maryport and Carlisle and others have substituted light shades for dark ones on their passenger vehicles, whilst we know of no railway (previous to the Great Western Railway's decision) during the same period that has substituted a white, cream, or grey tint for a darker one. Mr. J. F. McIntosh, the Locomotive and Carriage Superintendent of the Caledonian Railway (which. as stated above, a few years ago adopted a light tint in place of a dark one) states :—

"I, do not think the cost of painting per vehicle has increased since we adopted white top and lake bottom painting. The lake is a very expensive colour, and we save something in doing the tops of our carriages with white lead.

"' If the white top carriages are carefully and regularly cleaned, they do not show a dirty appearance, and do not require re-painting any sooner than those with lake or dark colour."

Ed: To make the point completely (!) clear, there follows more comments in same issue on related issues, as seen on the following pages, including:

Liverpool Street and Paddington meet
Varnished teak is the standard livery of Great Eastern Railway coaching stock, and pleasing enough the vehicles look ere the freshness of youth wears off; but as the coaches age, it becomes necessary to paint them, and the shade adopted is somewhat akin to ‘Swindon chocolate.’ Tastes differ, and some people imagine that to appear ‘cultured’ it is necessary to express appreciation of bizarre colour schemes, so that it may be possible to hear enthusiastic expressions regarding the external appearance of the Great Eastern Railway‘s painted coaches. The poet sings: ‘ East is east and west is west,’ and that never the twain shall meet, but ‘Swindon chocolate ’ appears likely to falsify the poet's assertion.

Some Advantages of Light Tints
Readers of the RAILWAY MAGAZINE will naturally be interested to learn why cream and similar light tints are really more economical than dark shades of paint. The explanation is that such colours are (or should be) composed largely of lead, which is to painting what a rock bottom is to a house—it forms a lasting basis for the decoration and lettering of the coaches, as well as for the finishing coats of varnish, which though the carriage is run beyond the endurance of the varnish, yet when cleaned enables it to stand the operation to such an extent that though one rubs through the varnish and touches the colour, it is not ruined, for the succeeding coats of varnish restore light tints to their former condition. Such is not the case with the dark body colours which contain no lead, but are simply a. thin stain over the surfacing coats. If a painter runs through perished varnish and touches a dark colour, it is gone, and will have to he retouched, and, in nine cases out of ten, painted all over, because with a dark colour the temptation is increased among railway officers to run the vehicles longer, as the dirt does not so easily show on them. Light coloured coaches have to go to the cleaning depot sooner than the dark ones because the dirt shows so much on them that they become an eyesore, although so far as actual preservation is concerned, they will in reality run longer than the dark ones without damage to the paint.

Disadvantages of Dark Shades
Our readers will he interested in what happens when dark tints are used for railway carriages. In the first place, dark colours have the greatest attraction for the sun, which is the great destroyer of the life of varnish, and therefore the hastener of the end when the best days of a good painting and varnishing job are past. It must not be forgotten that the increased heat to passengers in the hot months of the year who travel in coaches painted a dark colour, has to be reckoned with; during the summer passengers can travel in greater comfort in a vehicle that does not attract the sun, and the “summer traveller” is the one the railways have to attract and to cater for. They will have the “all the year round " anyway, except where competition exists, and then the light coloured coaches will have the advantage. It will be found also that a varnish dries much slower on a dark colour than on a light one. Light is an essential quality in the drying of varnish, and the luminous ground of a light colour exerts a powerful effect in the drying of the varnish, and. the darkness of a dark colour affects it in the opposite way; and in these days of hustle carriage superintendents may be tempted to use a quicker drying, and hence less durable varnish, for dark coloured coaches.

June 1909

The method now employed by the Great Western Railway of placing the words GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY on a bright red fascia on the road vans, instead of on a panel painted the same brown colour as the rest of the van, is a good innovation, as the ownership of the vans is at once obvious.

September 1909

Great Western Locomotive Painted Lake

When a conservative railway introduces an innovation, others usually follow in a short time, and then alterations succeed one another so rapidly that points considered to be distinguishing features of a railway disappear and it becomes difficult to refer to any one feature as a characteristic of a particular railway.

For some few years the Great Western Railway has been recognised as an extremely progressive line and month by month we have chronicled alterations in its methods, etc.

But a few months ago we dealt with the disappearance of the cream panels from the coach livery of the Great Western Railway and now rumour has it that green is no longer the colour of the locomotives.

Towards the end of July. No. 2225, a. tank engine of the 4-4-2 type was put to work on local services in the Bristol and Swindon district painted in a new shade of crimson lake somewhat similar to the colour adopted for the Midland Railway's locomotives, but lighter. The wheels and framing are still painted black. The new shade is stated to be cheaper than the present standard colour of light green adopted in place of the dark green about 16 years ago. In 1906 the custom of painting the frames and wheels a reddish brown was abandoned.

Green is the colour most generally adopted for locomotive work, the idea being that this is the most restful colour for the eyes of the engine-men, who must spend a good deal of time gazing at a portion of the boiler of their engine. So far, No. 2225 is the only engine painted crimson. When " La France " the De Glehn compound was acquired by the Great Western Railway in 1903, she was painted black, but she was afterwards re-painted the standard shade of green. Should the new crimson tint be at any time definitely adopted, it will practically have the effect of making engine and coaches appear to be painted the same shade—as soon, of course, as a little " weathering " has been accomplished. When the colours are new, however, there will naturally be a great gulf fixed between crimson and chocolate brown.

It will take some little time for the experiment to he made, but since the distinctive tints of the coaches have disappeared. the colour of the locomotives is not of so general interest. It is interesting to remember that up to some 27 years ago the Midland Railway's locomotives were painted green.

October 1909

No. 2225 (the Great Western Railway's red painted tank) has now received a copper—capped chimney, as have Nos. 3439, " City of London," of the " City " 4-4-0 class, and No. 3614, of the 2-4-2T" type.

Later in the same issue:

What Swindon is Doing

A second locomotive, No. 14, a small six-wheel side-tank, has now been painted in the experimental lake colour. A number of the comparatively old but strikingly handsome 7 ft. 8 in. singles, built in the " nineties " by the late Mr. William Dean are being given 20 lbs. more steam

pressure by his successor, Mr. G. J. Churchward. Their working pressure is now 180 lbs. per sq. in.. and with the somewhat lighter trains which may be expected when second-class accommodation has been finally withdrawn from the Great Wcstcrn Railway, they should be able to accomplish much more useful work.

Locomotives recently supplied with copper- capped chimneys include No. 3310 “ Waterford.” the pioneer of the domeless regime reintroduced in 1899 by the late Mr.William Dean. When she originally appeared. No. 3310 had a copper-capped chimney; but when she. was altered to the “ City” type. this was removed. No. 3312. “ Bulldog,” now identical with the " Cardiff” class, has also received a. copper-capped chimney. This engine had like-wise. a copper-capped chimney when first constructed. Other engines of the 4-4-0 type so treated are No. 3433, “ City of Bath," and Nos. 3445. “Ilfracombe,” and 3462, “ Winnipeg." both of the “ Cardiff” class. Tank engines thus treated are 3607 of the 2-4-2 type, and 3123, of the. 2-6-2 type.

Also October 1909, on the Cunard Special:

The following are the composition, length and weight of No. 1 special :—

Two 4–4–0 locomotives—Nos. 4108 (*Gardenia*) and 3402 (*Halifax*).

		Weight.			Length.	
		T.	C.		FT.	IN.
n.s.	*Ocean Mails van ..	27	3	..	73	6
o.c.	1st class bogie coach	26	4	..	61	3
n.c.	,, ,, ,,	27	3	..	61	2
n.c.	,, ,, ,,	25	18	..	61	3
o.s.	Restaurant car ..	35	14	..	73	6
o.s.	,, ,, ..	36	6	..	73	6
n.c.	1st class bogie coach	25	6	..	61	0
n.c.	,, ,, ,,	26	3	..	61	3
o.c.	,, ,, ,,	25	17	..	61	3
o.s.	Bogie break van..	18	4	..	43	6
	Total	273	18	..	631	2

*Used for passengers' luggage.

n New brown coloured coach.
o Old standard chocolate and cream coloured coach.
c Clerestory coach.
s Non-clerestory roof.

Elsewhere again in the October 1909 issue:

A Distinctive Livery for the ‘ Cunard Special.’

AMERICANS are keen observers especially of things that differ from those of the same character in the land of Stars and Stripes. Many of the passengers from off the *Mauretania* took stock of the Cunard Special at Fishguard Harbour station. ere they boarded the. train for their quick and comfortable journey to London.

The composition of this train is given on page 278. As no special stock was constructed for the train coupled with the fact that both the design and colour of Great Western Railway coaches are in a state of transition, it will be seen that 5 types of coaches are represented in the 10 vehicles forming the first Cunard Special, Viz. :

Coaches, painted brown and with new elliptical roofs.
Coaches, with new elliptical roofs painted chocolate and cream.
Coaches, with clerestory roofs painted brown.
Coaches, with clerestory roofs painted chocolate and cream.
And van, with old non-clerestory roof painted chocolate and cream.

The form of clerestory adopted by the Midland Railway is very general in the United States. And therefore the American travellers would note that 4 vehicles had no clerestory but that the roofs of all the 4 were not of the same pattern. The almost general colour for ordinary passenger coaches on American railroads is a red-brown tint, and the exteriors of one half of the Cunard Special were so tinted, whilst the remainder were still showing the well-known Great Western Railway distinguishing livery of chocolate and cream.

In the States the most important and Fastest trains are named, and some are painted a distinguishing colour: the latter practice at once showing that the train so ‘liveried ’ is a limited, or a, specially important train. The Great Western Railway has already named its Fishguard - London train for American passengers the “Cunard Special”. It therefore would he a compliment to its American patrons, a good advertisement for the Great Western Railway. and concession to the susceptibilities of the large number of travellers who associate this combination of tints with the Great Western Railway, as well as affording a means of perpetuating the former standard colours of Great Western Railway passenger rolling stock, if the Cunard Special be painted in a distinctive livery—the chocolate and cream shades, so long the standard colours of the Great Western Railway.

June 1916

A Cheshire reader mentions that recently he saw several of the large G.W.R. 2-8-0 goods engines painted in the new khaki livery. The numbers on the front buffer beam are painted an orange colour and show up particularly well. Some of the engines look rather well thus painted. For instance, 3137 a. 2-6-2 T, which works coal trains to and from Birkenhead, looks quite smart in her new livery. He also noted a 0-6-0, No. 937, the engine painted khaki and the tender green. Some of the 0-6-0 saddle tanks are also being painted khaki. He also noticed a 2-4-0 tender engine thus painted. At Chester our correspondent saw a small 0-4-0 saddle tank, No. 95. It looked extremely old and ramshackle, and had not the appearance of Swindon birth. He asks whether any of our readers know anything of this engine.

November 1916

THE coat of arms in colours, applied by transfer, which has appeared on the tenders of Great Western Railway locomotives for the past ten or eleven years between the words "Great Western" is being discarded as the engines pass through the shops. The khaki- painted locomotives were the first to be robbed of this adornment. Now the green-painted locomotives are sharing this fate. The coats of arms on the splashers of the London and South Western locomotives have also disappeared

THE Great Western Railway has painted some of its 4-6-0 two-cylinder passenger engines (2900 class), as well as some of the 4-4-0 passenger engines of various types, in the khaki livery which is now generally familiar.

December 1916

REFERRING to the painting of Great Western Railway locomotives during the war, Mr. A. Oram observes that the green now used for passenger engines is not the same colour as that previously employed. Also, the engines are painted in the same manner as those which are painted khaki; that is, without the yellow lining, though buffer beams are painted red. He has noted the following engines painted in the new green (which is not at all displeasing) — 4-6-0 four-cylinder class : Princess Eugene, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Queen Adelaide, and King James; 4-6-0 two-cylinder class : Stackpoole Court, Lady Disdain, Lady Godiva, and Lady of the Lake; 4-4-0 class : Earl of Cork, Pretoria, and Gibraltar; a "County" tank; and the latest 2-6-0 No. 4397.

February 1918

Great Western Railway Wagon Nomenclature.

As is well known, the Great Western Railway employs a system of class-names for special types of goods wagons. These are painted on each vehicle, and used for code purposes. The realm of natural history (including botany) supplies the source for the majority of these names, which have much picturesque suggestiveness. Of all these type-names, that of "Crocodile" applied to bogie well wagons, is probably the most familiar. Other examples from the recognised animal kingdom are "Macaw " and " Serpent". "Pollen" brings us into the realms of botany. Most interesting are the examples of mythological names. " Hydra " certainly denotes a species of water-snake, as well as the fabulous many-headed monster; but "Loriot" presents something of a puzzle. It suggests at first sight an association with the vehicle called a lorry. But research in an eighteenth century dictionary furnishes a surprising solution. A Loriot says this authority, is "a Bird, that, being look'd upon, by one that has the yellow jaundice, cures the Person, and dies itself." Unfortunately, the lexicographer omitted to state the habitat of this wonderful bird, or—which would make still more wonderful reading—the means adopted for its capture. "Mica" is applied to this Company's meat-vans, and the bogie parcel vans are known as " Monsters " quite appropriately. Other vehicles of similar type are called " Siphons."

August 1918

"The Great Bear," Great Western Railway.

It is impossible to say what train or trains are being worked by individual engines at any given moment. As we have replied on several occasions, the above engine, in normal circumstances, takes her turn on both express passenger and goods working between London and Bristol. A letter was

recently received from a reader stating that “The Great Bear” was in the paint shops, and being endowed with a new livery.
[Reply to G. W. M. R.]

June 1920

Colours of Great Western Railway Coaching stock (Ed: did they miss change from brown to lake?)

It was in 1908 that the change from the previous chocolate and cream livery to the present crimson lake was decided upon. The Great Eastern Railway last year decided upon a change from varnished teak to crimson lake, which is now in course of being carried into effect.
[Reply to J. A. O. FARNELL.

Same issue, ie June 1920:

Letters and Numerals on Coaching Sets.

Several railways new place large letters and numerals on set trains used for suburban services, the letters usually indicating their stabling centre and the numerals identifying the various sets of vehicles, both enabling the movements of vehicles to be organised and recorded.
[Reply to J. L PEARSE]

July 1922

MUCH interest is manifested in the new colours of Great Western Railway rolling- stock. The first trains to be so painted will be the “Cornish Riviera”, and Torquay ex-presses. The remainder of the eight-wheel stock will be dealt with in turn.

September 1922

Colours of Great Western Railway Rolling- Stock

We understand that until about 1855 passenger carriages on the Great Western Railway were painted in distinguishing colours for the respective classes, but we have not been able to ascertain exactly what these colours were or when the brown lower panels and white upper panels were first adopted. An old Great Western Railway man, Mr. J. B. N. Ashford. now of Plymouth. mentions that, according to his recollection. the South Devon and Cornwall Railway carriages about 1868 were painted light brown all over, though a few had black panels between the windows, and the first class carriages had the upper panels outlined with black and white lines. He also states that the Bristol and Exeter carriages were painted somewhat similarly to the present North Eastern Railway colours, and in the early 'seven- ties he remembers seeing the window panel portions of some of these coaches painted white. About 1873 the South Devon Railway had some carriages not painted but varnished only.
[Reply to A. J. MAXWELL]

October 1922

Colours of Great Western Railway Rolling-Stock

In further reference to the reply given in the September RAILWAY MAGAZINE, Mr. G; Moody mentions that, according to the Locomotive Magazine for January, 1908 (pages 18-19), “until the middle ‘fifties the Great Western Railway painted their coaches the following colours: first class, yellow ; second class, brown ,' third class, green.” The article adds that at that time there were no composites.
[Further reply to A. J. MAXWELL]

December 1923

Great Western Engines Painted Crimson. During the time that crimson lake was standard colour for Great Western coaches, a few 0-4-2 and 0-6-0 Great Western tank engines were painted lake for use in auto-train or “push-and-pull” train formations, in order that they might match the coaching stock, and these are doubtless the engines you have seen.
[Reply to “ READER.”]

January 1924

In the case of the Great Western Railway and with reference to illustration of No. 8 (2-6-2T) shown on page 402, there are two engines of this class, No. 7 completed about the middle of July and No. 8 early in August. Several of the older tank engines are now having the words “Great Western " painted on the side tanks and in many cases the number plates are removed to the cab or bunker sides. Several of the 4-6-0’ s have been repainted in the latest style, including Nos. 2901, 4034, 4040. but the brass beading has not been replaced yet.