

Blackpool and Fleetwood Tramroad Company



1898 - 1919

Contents

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919

- Fleet History 1898-1919 Page 3
- Tram Fleet List 1898-1919 Page 6

Cover Illustration: Car No. 2 was one of the original toastracks built in 1898 by Milnes and now preserved at the National Tramway Museum at Crich. (LTHL collection).

© The Local Transport History Library 2026. (www.lthlibrary.org.uk)
For personal use only. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or distributed in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise without the express written permission of the publisher. In all cases this notice must remain intact. All rights reserved.

PDF-308-1

Promoted by the Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Syndicate and authorised by the Blackpool & Fleetwood Act of 1896 this 8¼ mile double-track tramway ran for the most part on reserved sleepereed track and was built to the standard 4ft 8½ins gauge. The portion of the tramway within Blackpool (from Gynn Square to Talbot Road, by the LNWR Railway Station) was constructed by Blackpool Corporation and leased to the Company for 21 years.

Services from Fleetwood to the Gynn commenced on 14 July 1898, the portion of track into Blackpool could not be used until Blackpool Corporation had widened part of the roadway along which the tracks ran.

The initial fleet consisted of ten (Nos. 1-10) crossbench cars, built by George Milnes & Co of Birkenhead, sporting an ivory, white and teak livery, along with three trailer cars (Nos. 11-13). Depots were established at Copse Road, Fleetwood and Bispham, with a smaller depot to house the first and last trams of the day at Bold Street, Fleetwood.

The tramroad was an immediate success, the cars carrying an average of 200,000 passengers a month and the company was forced to increase the fleet to cope. In 1898 six (Nos. 14-19) enclosed saloon cars arrived, followed by even more cars later in the year. Nos. 20-22 were bogie toastracks and 23-27 were more enclosed saloons from George Milnes & Co.

The new tramroad was not welcomed by all, especially the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway whose takings had been severely affected by the tramroad's success. As a consequence they built a connecting line (known as the Poulton Curve) which allowed a direct connection between Fleetwood and Blackpool. On 1 July 1899 they introduced a new service with 19 trains a day in each direction. The journey took 15 minutes and the fare charged was 6d, the same as the Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company.

On 1 August 1899 the Company retaliated by introducing an express service from the Gynn to Fleetwood with a special return fare of 10d. The competition delayed the Company's plans for expansion, but it still made a large enough profit to pay a good dividend to shareholders that year.

Seven more (Nos. 27-34) toastracks were purchased in 1900 bringing the total fleet up to 34 cars.

Postal cars were introduced in 1903 at the request of residents along the tramroad. An ornate letterbox was hung on the back of a tramcar leaving Fleetwood around once an hour and letters could be posted from any of the tramroad stations it passed through. Although popular with the residents it was not so with the company who found their cars delayed as people posted letters. The service ceased in 1907 when the Post Office fitted letter boxes at the stations.

In 1906 the Company registered The Fylde Motor Service Company Limited, with an authorised share capital of £20,000 in £1 shares, to acquire the undertaking of the Fleetwood Motor Passenger Carrying Company Limited, who were operating two Arrol-Johnston charabancs on a service between Knott End and Pilling. Expansion of this side of the business was obviously planned since orders were quickly placed for additional Arrol-Johnson vehicles. By 1907 they had five vehicles in service on routes to Lancaster and Morecambe. However, services ceased in 1908 when the railway was extended from Knott End to Pilling, bringing their brief sortie into motorbus operation to an end.

During the years preceding World War I, the tramroad consistently produced the best results of any British tramway, even during the conflict passenger levels continued to be satisfactory due in part to the large number of servicemen under training in the area.

On 1 April 1918 Bispham-with-Norbreck UDC was absorbed into Blackpool and the Corporation made plans to extend its promenade tramway into Bispham. Discussions were entered into between Blackpool Corporation and the Blackpool & Fleetwood Company about a possible purchase and concluded in December when a price was agreed. The final purchase was completed on 31 December 1919 and Blackpool Corporation took possession of the company and its assets the following day.

Tram Fleet List 1898-1920

This listing is in the format - Year into service; Type; Trucks; Body; Seating.

1898-99

1-10	Single-deck bogie toastrack	Milnes plate frame	Milnes	48
14-19	Single-deck bogie saloon	Milnes plate frame	Milnes	48
20-22	Single-deck bogie toastrack	Milnes plate frame	Milnes	48
23-27	Single-deck bogie saloon	Milnes plate frame	Milnes	48

Nos. 1-10, 20-22 were open-sided roofed bogie cars with 12 wooden crossbenches each seating 4 passengers; they were known as 'old open crossbench racks'; seating was increased later by fitting a bench on the driver's platform to increase seating to 56. They were all built on trunnions not trucks.

Nos. 14-19, 23-27 were fully-enclosed saloon cars known as 'Fleetwood box cars'; Nos. 14-19 had six side windows; Nos. 23-27 had eight side windows; in 1901 they were divided by a partition into smoking and non-smoking sections.

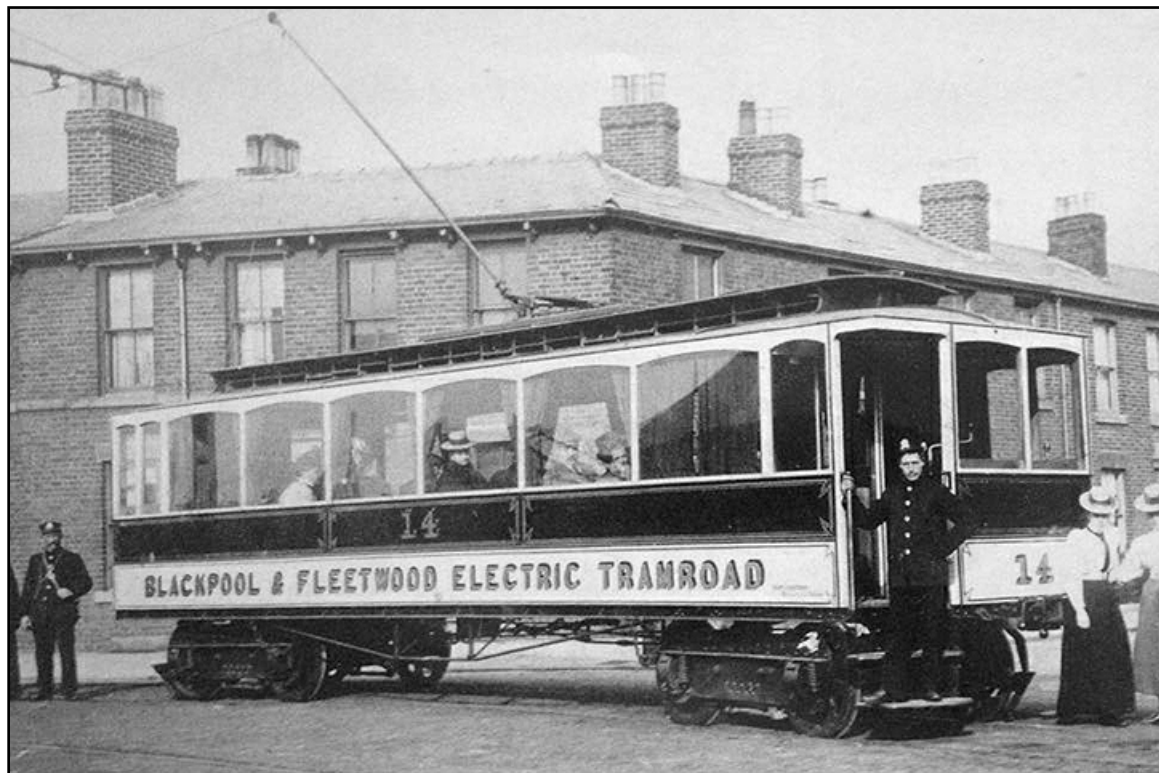
Nos. 1-10, 14-19, 20-22, 23-27 to Blackpool Corporation Tramways 1/20 (re-numbered 126-135, 106-111, 139-141, 101-105 respectively).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



No. 10 was one of the original single-deck covered bogie toastracks purchased by the Company, built by George Milnes & Co it originally seated 48, but were later fitted with crossbench seats on the drivers platform increasing the seating to 56 as seen here. (LTHL collection).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



Car No. 14 was built in 1898 and was the first of the Fleetwood 'Box Cars'. It was built by Milnes with corner entrance as seen here and seated 48. (LTHL collection).

1899

11-13 Single-deck bogie trailer Milnes plate frame Milnes 48

Nos. 11-13 were originally trailer cars and were motorised in 1905 and had the body extended to form a platform for the driver and controls. They were fitted with Mountain & Gibson bogies.

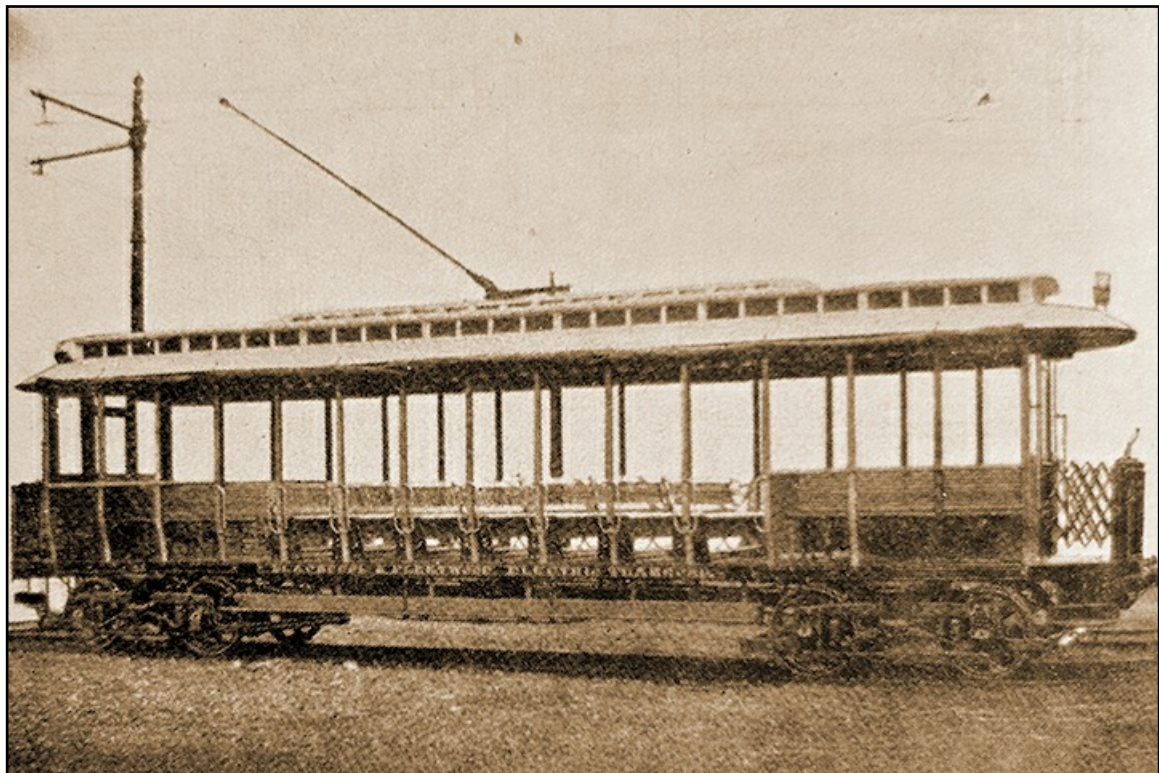
Nos. 11-13 to Blackpool Corporation Tramways 1/20 (re-numbered 136-138 respectively).

1900

28-34 Single-deck bogie toastrack Brill 27D ERTCW 55

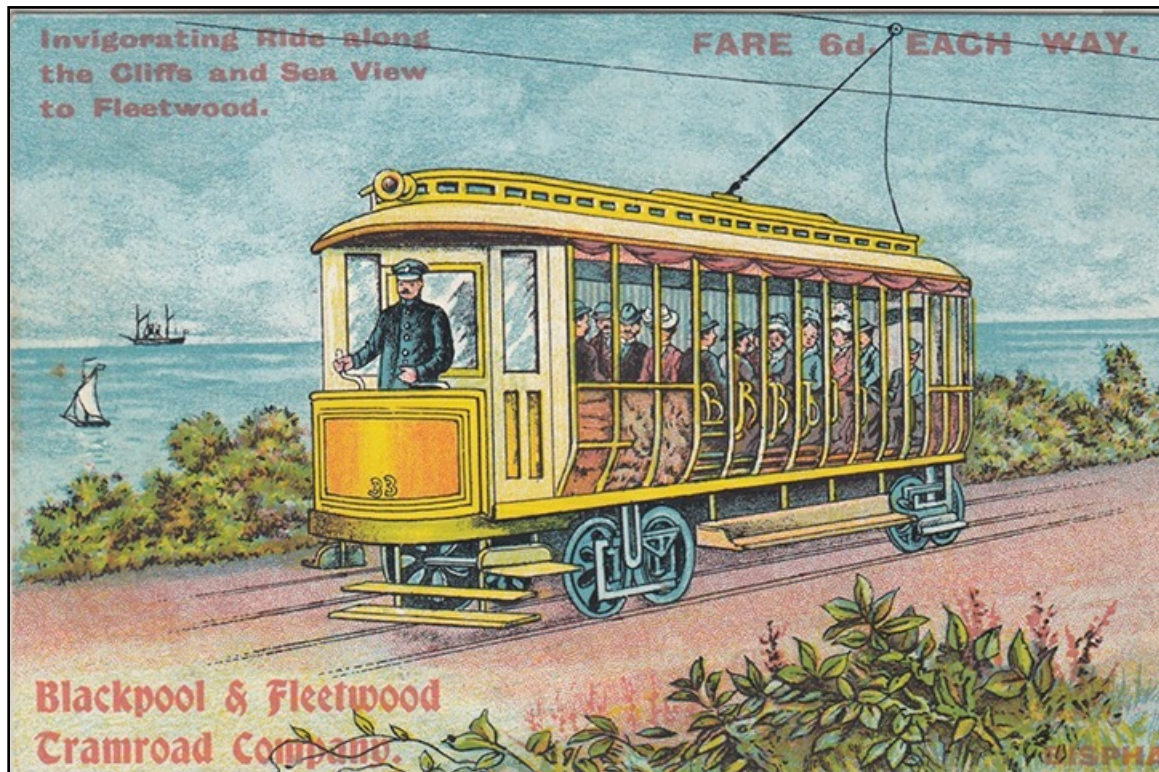
Nos. 28-34 were roofed open-sided cars with wooden bench seating in the central section and knifeboard seating in two end sections which had enclosed sides. They were known as 'Yankees'; to Blackpool Corporation Tramways 1/20 (re-numbered 116-122 respectively).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



Although not very clear this old photo shows one of Nos. 28-34 'Yankee' open-sided single-deck trams with part crossbench seating and knifeboard seating at either end, which was later part enclosed. (LTHL collection).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



This advertising postcard issued by the Company dates from around 1905 and shows an artist's impression of one of the 'Yankee' trams (No. 33) in service. (LTHL collection).

1910

35-37 Single-deck bogie toastrack Preston M&G UEC 64

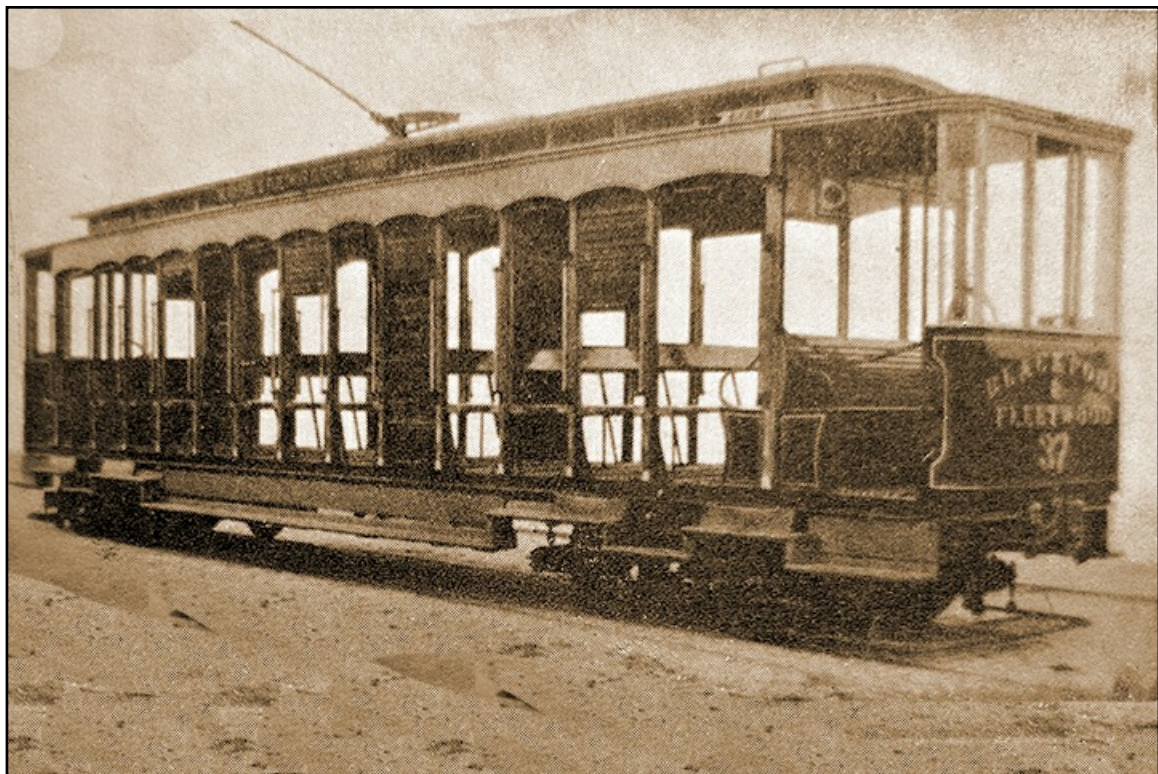
Nos. 35-37 were roofed open-sided toastracks with roller shutters that could be pulled down to enclose the sides. The drivers platform was fitted with bench seating and windscreen. They were known as 'Vanguards'; to Blackpool Corporation Tramways 1/20 (re-numbered 123-125 respectively).

1914

38-41 Single-deck bogie saloon Preston M&G UEC 48

Nos. 38-41 were fully enclosed saloon cars known as 'new Fleetwood box cars'; to Blackpool Corporation Tramways 1/20 (re-numbered 112-115 respectively).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



No. 37 was a 1910 single-deck covered toastrack seating 64 including four on the drivers platform. (LTHL collection).

Blackpool & Fleetwood Tramroad Company 1898-1919



The final delivery of trams in 1914 included No. 40, an enclosed box car with seating for 48 built by the United Electric Car Co of Preston which now survives in preservation. (LTH collection).



YOUR BEST ROUTE TO UNDERSTANDING
THE BRITISH BUS INDUSTRY

[CLICK HERE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

© Local Transport History Library 2026

Additional information, corrections and photographs are always welcome.
Our general email address is: lth.library@gmail.com

In producing this booklet reference has been made to the following publications: Blackpool to Fleetwood, Turner, LRTL, 1977; Commercial Motor Archive, 1906; PSV Circle Fleet History 2PC20, 2003.

Illustrations from the LTHL collection.

Series Editor: Peter Gould (secretary.lthl@gmail.com)