**THE RISE AND FALL OF AN INDEPENDENT SERVICE PROVIDER ON BRITAIN’S RAILWAYS.**

**A TRANSPORT BUSINESS HISTORY, 1910-1964**

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**Abstract**

The thesis contributes to the debate about entrepreneurship, business performance and the growth of the Pullman Car Company, a specialist service provider working on Britain’s railways. It draws extensively on national and provincial newspaper reports, as previous histories have mostly followed descriptive narrative forms and no comparable detailed, analytical study of the company exists. It also contradicts the Harvard School of business historians that Britain delayed implementing ‘managerial capitalism’ arguing that two major contributory factors were the success of ‘partnership capitalism’ and entrepreneurship during the inter-war period. By examining the relationship between marketing and branding, and analysing Pullman Company progress in the context of increasing travel comfort, this study explores what was special, or particularly unique, about the Pullman product on British railways ca. 1910-1939 and 1946-1964. These years reflect almost the entire period of the British undertaking, from growth and prosperity, to post-World War 2 short-term revival and subsequent decline. They also cover times when the railway industry struggled with both continual falls in passenger numbers, and a market which fluctuated widely through economic and political circumstance, acting upon new railway schemes, and the introduction of new cars, while on rival railway lines attracting then quickly withdrawing short-lived services. It focuses on Pullman Company management, on the making and implementing policy, investigating depression, nationalisation and decision-making to evaluate whether it was rational in its business dealings throughout a period of profound institutional change, characterised by labour unrest.

Transport, business and economic historians have long investigated entrepreneurship, business performance and the growth of the firm from its original ‘family’ origins to latter-day ‘managerial’ enterprises. A great deal of deliberation has been given to the quality of management in an attempt to provide a better understanding of the origins, growth and, sometimes demise of the ‘specialist’ firm. The thesis seeks to add to this debate through examination of the decision-making capabilities of the independent Pullman Car Company and its role as a service provider on Britain’s railways.

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**Preface**

The luxury railway sector provides a case study of the relationship between entrepreneurial and behavioural characteristics in policy and decision-making. With our lack of understanding of how, historically, decisions were made, the conventional contention that the sole motivation was profit maximisation will, for the railway industry, need to take account of the varied cultural as well as professional backgrounds of the proprietors. In the industry’s early years, it was the American, George Mortimer Pullman, among others elsewhere including Continental Europe, who were anxious to improve upon the situation, offering the acumen to create wealth and provide employment.

The absence of a detailed analytical study of the business history of the British Pullman Company is therefore long overdue. This thesis fulfils the need to assess the luxury sector’s managerial capabilities through the complex inter-relationship with the host railway companies. The Pullman Company’s decision-making capabilities determined the effectiveness of their developing policies and their tactics in carrying them out.

Since the late 1970s, the author has undertaken research into the history of independent railway service providers in the luxury sector, which were independent of the British railway companies. He is pleased to have had this opportunity to consolidate his research into a thesis which seeks to contribute towards a better understanding of transport business history. It is hoped that the thesis will provide adequate acknowledgement of the contribution made by the British Pullman Car Company who were engaged in the industry during the 20th century.

Antony M. Ford September 2019

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Last, and by no means least, the author’s greatest debt is to his wife, Joanna and his children, for all their forbearance and understanding during the period in which this thesis was being prepared.

Antony M. Ford September 2019

**Author’s Declaration**

“I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not been previously presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as references."

Antony M. Ford September 2019

**List of Abbreviations**

A.E.U. Amalgamated Engineering Union

A.S.R.S. Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants

B.B.C. British Broadcasting Corporation

B.R. British Rail/ Railways

B.R.B. British Railways Board

B.T.C. British Transport Commission

B.T.H.C.S. British Transport Hotels & Catering Services

B.T.J.C.C. British Transport Joint Consultative Council

D.I.A. Design and Industries Association

D.M.U. Diesel Multiple-Unit

E.R. Eastern Region (B.R.)

G.E.R. Great Eastern Railway

G.N.R. Great Northern Railway

G.W.R. Great Western Railway

L.M.R. London Midland Region (B.R.)

L.M.S. London Midland & Scottish (Railway)

L.N.E.R. London North Eastern Railway

L.T. London Transport

MOT Ministry of Transport

N.U.R. National Union of Railwaymen

P.C.C. Pullman Car Company

R.E. Railway Executive

S.R. Southern Railway/ Region

W.R. Western Region (B.R.)

**1.0 Introduction**

This thesis seeks to determine how the Pullman Car Company’s contribution to luxury travel and how its marketing policies affected its relationships with the railway companies. It is a significant work of synthesis which makes a great deal of recent research on Britain’s transport history accessible. It advances our knowledge drawing extensively on national and provincial newspaper reports, as previous histories of the company have mostly followed descriptive narrative forms and no comparable detailed, analytical study of the Pullman Car Company exists. It also counters the criticisms of the Harvard School of business historians that Britain delayed implementing ‘managerial capitalism’ arguing that two major contributory factors were the success of ‘partnership capitalism’ and entrepreneurship during the inter-war period. By examining the relationship between marketing and branding, and analysing Pullman car progress in the context of increasing travel comfort, this study explores what was special, or particularly unique, about the Pullman product on British railways ca. 1910-1939 and 1946-1964. These years reflect almost the entire period of the British undertaking, from growth and prosperity under the initial control of Davison Dalziel, to post-World War 2 short-term revival and subsequent decline. They also cover times when the railway industry struggled with both continual falls in passenger numbers, and a market which fluctuated widely through economic and political circumstance, acting upon new railway schemes, and the introduction of new cars, while on rival railway lines attracting then quickly withdrawing short-lived services. It focuses on Pullman Company management, on the making and implementing policy and investigates depression, nationalisation and decision-making to evaluate whether it was rational in its business dealings throughout a period of profound institutional change, characterised by labour unrest.

Transport, business and economic historians have long investigated entrepreneurship, business performance and the growth of the firm from its original ‘family’ origins to latter-day ‘managerial’ enterprises.[[1]](#footnote-1)1 A great deal of deliberation has been given to the quality of management in an attempt to provide a better understanding of the origins, growth and, sometimes demise of the ‘specialist’ firm.[[2]](#footnote-2)2 This thesis seeks to add to this debate through examination of the decision-making capabilities of the independent Pullman Car Company and its role as a service provider on Britain’s railways.

The ‘Harvard’ school of authors have understandably taken the evolvement of progressive American business as their bench-mark.[[3]](#footnote-3)3 Drucker, for example, has contributed towards a better understanding of modern management theory and organisational development, while British authors, have recognised the importance of a specific context, to the ‘culture’ of business behaviour.[[4]](#footnote-4)4 While drawing on the intrinsic assessments of Drucker in particular into the development of business from ‘personal’ to ‘managerial’ capitalism, this study seeks in part to demonstrate the characteristics of the British case.

A key idea here is the separation of ownership from controls and the recruitment of a specialist management cadre, with the ‘m’ form. Pullman is a poor fit – it exhibits characteristics of a form of ‘personal’ capitalism, a family firm, with limited separation and few scale economies, and vertical integration: it was a specialist firm, and thus relied on network linkages and contracts with other firms (not on internalising functions). This structure was logical as demand was segment, luxury, niche; and because the industry was already dominated by large-scale firms when it entered the market.

‘Personal’ or ‘family’ capitalism, is sometimes ascribed particularly to British business formation and development in the twentieth century, was the form of enterprise similarly adopted by Dalziel, the British Pullman Company’s first chairman who innovated and exploited new technologies.[[5]](#footnote-5)5 The definition of ‘small firms’, as subsequently used in other papers, such as Church’s essay on industrial capitalism, and the papers edited by Jones and Rose, for instance, refer to those in which the founders or their heirs have progressed to engage managers, but have continued themselves to hold executive positions and who exercised a decisive influence on policy matters.[[6]](#footnote-6)6

The Pullman Company (and by association its American family origins and ownership) was not unique. Small firms provided networks and personal connections which offered mutual trust, and helped to offset the uncertainties and risks of their developing markets. Such firms were appropriate in both scale and structure.[[7]](#footnote-7)7 The rapid expansion of other family-owned firms, including the Wagons Lits Company, founded by Georges Nagelmackers and Mann Boudoir Sleeping Car Company, founded by William Alton Mann on Continental Europe had by the twentieth century contributed to the luxury service sectors.[[8]](#footnote-8)8 Jones and Rose argue that family firms maintained longer-term objectivity on their business than did managerial enterprises, and that they developed strong corporate cultures which yielded powerful ambitious advantages. The family-owned business remains the predominant form of business organisation up to the present.[[9]](#footnote-9)9

The decisive determinant in their on-going prosperity, however, was the generational shift from the entrepreneurial originators, like George Mortimer Pullman to his off-spring, close friends and associates. There was a perceived ascendancy in young members of the family developing ‘an extensive tacit knowledge of their firm as they grew up, providing them with valuable expertise’ when they themselves came to take decisions.[[10]](#footnote-10)10 However, Lazonick argues that succeeding generations or managements could not respond adequately to the challenges of technical change and that, regardless of relevant career credentials, they ‘stifled the growth of the enterprise and the development of organisational capability’.[[11]](#footnote-11)11 Payne goes further in arguing that their individualistic culture in the previous century, led owner-managers to take conscious decisions to ‘restrain the growth of the firm within the limits of existing managerial resources’, thus restricting the growth of the firm reliant on internal managerial and financial resources.[[12]](#footnote-12)12 A flourishing business often resulted from these determined personalities, for whom, Church believes, retirement represented a personal defeat.[[13]](#footnote-13)13

These arguments relevant to specialist family-run firms have, however, inadequately drawn a distinction between the single-family firm and partnerships. Following the purchase of the British Pullman Company by Dalziel in 1907, he took the decision to emulate the skilled partnerships which were a feature of larger enterprises in Britain during the early twentieth century, working closely with the industrialist Dudley Docker. Such partnerships were the organisational building-block of British business.[[14]](#footnote-14)14 By their nature, partnerships shared the responsibility for the growth and health of their firms between their partners. They maintained and supported greater capital-raising potential to meet higher levels of investment, and were invariably flexible enough to provide for the withdrawal and recruitment of partners as age, experience and financial circumstance determined. The effectiveness of this ‘partnership capitalism’ may have contributed to the slow introduction of ‘managerial capitalism’ in Britain, i.e. full separation of ownership from control, an argument which has been insufficiently considered by previous authors.

With its call for high levels of investment, Britain’s railway enterprises providing luxury services in the first quarter of the twentieth century were primarily formed of partnerships with operating railway companies. The industry produced small batches of rolling stock, which were in effect an assortment of diversely designed ordinary carriages, according to customer specification, and was composed of firms with a vertically-integrated workshop structure, quite unlike the small, repetitive production activities of the light manufacturing sector. Railway-related partners had technical, production and commercial responsibilities, as well as the role, shared with their non-executive colleagues, of strategic planning. Reporting to them were senior managers, who were themselves potential partners. This business structure generated novel problems of management. The effectiveness of ‘partnership capitalism’ can therefore be tested in part by considering the development of decision-making capabilities of the service industry and the role played by the Pullman management in their expectations.

The Harvard school has also been inclined to introduce a form of management requiring a wholesale restructuring of firms, often more generally focusing on the development of ‘managerial capitalism’, for example, in which a three-tiered management structure required specialist managers with pre-determined responsibilities.[[15]](#footnote-15)15 Such managerial rankings arose in large numbers at the turn of the twentieth century with the growth of ‘co-operative managerial’ capitalism particularly seen in the United States, and the growth of ‘co-operative managerial’ capitalism in other countries, including Germany, for example. They did not become a major force in Britain until the 1920s. Yet it does not follow that the British Pullman Car Company was necessarily poorly managed, as other business structures may have been just as effective.

Payne distinguishes the development of ‘private limited companies’ as ‘a typical British compromise’, which in continuing their ownership, actually discouraged wider investment.[[16]](#footnote-16)16 Cottrell also argues that transformation to public companies was very slow, and principally remained the preserve of the large banking and utility organisations.[[17]](#footnote-17)17 The Pullman Company was a small specialist company which took advantage of public status, with a proprietor seeking to maintain his involvement with his company, either through existing partnerships or through a new private company.

As noted above, one explanation for Britain’s corresponding decline at this time is that entrepreneurs kept their family firms and passed them on to their heirs. In the matter of Davison Dalziel this was not the case necessarily, as he decided that effectively his secretary, Stanley Adams, rather than any member of his family, took up the responsibility of running the company following his death, initially as adviser to the Board and later, Chairman. Lazonick has developed this argument by claiming that Britain’s ‘proprietary capitalism’ worked well until faced with the technological complexities and high fixed costs that later developed. It then lacked the managerial expertise to make decisions, which Lazonick blames on a reluctance of partners to become ‘reliant on, and potentially subservient to, a bureaucracy of technical specialists and middle managers’.[[18]](#footnote-18)18

An examination into the advancement of proprietorial and management responsibilities in the (luxury) transport sector with the Pullman Company leading the way, should therefore be a suitable test bed of Lazonick and Drucker’s views. It will also test the views of those historians who claim that the restraints of British industrial development were due to the wider concern of ‘business culture’, which Elbaum and Lazonick have both suggested was one of the principal ‘institutional rigidities’ which hampered Britain’s competitiveness.[[19]](#footnote-19)19 Other historians have argued that there was a ‘gentrification’ of industrialists in the early part of the twentieth century.[[20]](#footnote-20)20 Such industrialists are said to have invested their wealth in landed estates rather than expanding and modernising their capital equipment, but this is seen by others as doubtful.[[21]](#footnote-21)21

In seeking a better historical understanding of the Pullman Company and concern with its luxury long-distance passenger business, which had few close substitutes in the period of study, the research has considered the decision-making process and provision of management information.[[22]](#footnote-22)22 This study has moved away from the simple notion of profit maximisation, and towards an assessment of entrepreneurial and behavioural rationality, both individually determined, and reflecting far-reaching forces. Some theoretical conclusions have been drawn on the mixed motivations of Dalziel, the effects of business performance through changing economic climates, tastes and the development of Pullman Company managerial functions, agencies, and responsibilities. However, much remains ambiguous, and transport historians’ knowledge of how businessmen undertook decisions, and the structure within which they were made, whether motivated by economic, cultural or social considerations, is restricted.[[23]](#footnote-23)23 Noting that, contrariwise to all the evidence, modern economic text books maintain the notion that profit maximisation is central to the ‘theory of the firm’, Boyns and Edwards have highlighted the difference between the concepts of profit maximisation and long-term survival. They argue that, whilst some long-term profits may be a necessity for survival, it is not clear that profit maximisation and survival are synonymous.[[24]](#footnote-24)24

Identifying that decision-makers operate in a complex behavioural fashion, Simon and other behavioural theorists have pursued the concept of bounded rationality, in which participants’ behaviour is understood as being constrained by incomplete information.[[25]](#footnote-25)25 They have sought to determine ‘what the central frame of the decision is, how that frame arises from the decision situation, and how, within that frame, reason operates’, and proceed to call for micro-empirical studies to determine how the decision-making process was conducted in practice, and what the economic consequences of that method were.[[26]](#footnote-26)26

A greater appreciation of ‘business culture’ and its correlation to profit motivation will, therefore, contribute to this debate, and lead to an enhanced understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of partnership capitalism. As an underdeveloped historiography, at one level the Pullman Company can also be taken as a study in how change and continuity characterised the British railway industry during the inter-war period and beyond. This thesis seeks to determine the relationship through a detailed study of the decision-making capabilities of the Pullman Company management at different times and questions whether the company’s services were either time-limited expensive gains governed by short-term operating agreements, well deserved, or due only to sophisticated marketing. It seeks in particular to analyse the relationship between profit maximisation and this type of business configuration. To appreciate the evolution of proprietorial responsibilities, the thesis considers decision-making relating to the development of marketing, technology, design, manufacturing, management and the tactical issues governing their implementation. It also considers the benefits and drawbacks of incorporation as private and public companies, and the objectives and motivations of their management pre- and post-World War 2. It comprises an appraisal of management systems, including the Pullman Company relations to the trade unions particularly post-World War 2, which contributed to the process by which decisions were made, together with the economic conclusions.

**1.1 Luxury rolling stock**

From its American origins, the Pullman Company in Britain grew to over 70 vehicles by the end of the nineteenth century operating on the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway; London & South Western Railway, the Midland Railway, the Highland Railway as well as connections overseas, with the Italian Mediolanum Railway. Its fleet might possibly have been considerably larger had the British main-line railway companies not undertaken their own luxury carriage manufacture from the 1890s. The growth in output was interrupted in each decade, as economic cycles influenced growth in rail transport, resulting in considerable fluctuations in traffic and, in some cases, future uncertainty.[[27]](#footnote-27)27

Aldcroft argues that the British market showed no appreciable growth trend initially, but moved through the first decade in a series of cyclical peaks and dips.[[28]](#footnote-28)28 At this time, first-class main-line carriages were principally fitted out luxuriantly of numerous designs and types, as well as imported pre-fabricated Pullman cars from the United States of America, to which was added a significant number of restaurant and dining cars, private carriages and royal saloons.[[29]](#footnote-29)29 With its origins to the early nineteenth century, the main-line market met the needs of the early railways in Britain and progressively elsewhere, by expanding considerably as railways were developed in the United States and Latin America, for example.[[30]](#footnote-30)30

For the first-time, railway companies were themselves offering well-appointed special or club saloons, in addition to the ordinary first-, second- and third-class carriages. The effects of the business cycle showed itself as companies started-up, competed, diversified into, or withdrew from the luxury sector.[[31]](#footnote-31)31

Rolling stock production was largely undertaken by firms in the heavy manufacturing sector, which pursued several markets with varying levels of specialisation. It began through the diversification of early manufacturing firms, which already had vertical integration of manufacturing processes and the administrative experience to take on this new market opportunity. By 1910, many railway carriages were usually constructed in small or batch quantities, the many component variations for particular applications limiting production opportunities. The builders’ in-house development of machine tools, handling equipment and the use of new materials extended their capabilities, both in terms of new product development and organisational efficiency. By its very nature, each item of equipment was designed, manufactured and erected by carriage builders, particularly with carpentry skills, whose one-time independence and discretion over the labour process was included in the collective activities and hierarchical subservience of manufacturing firms. Parallel situations had occurred in the United States, where Scranton has drawn the distinction between the manufacturing characteristics of four levels of assemblage size, namely custom, batch, bulk and mass production.[[32]](#footnote-32)32 Although he does not attempt to establish the boundaries between them, he does give prominence to the growing economies of scale that is inherent as one progresses from custom to mass production. Railway rolling stock production had been born into a custom industry and developed, with varying degrees of success, into a batch industry.

The luxury railway sector provides a case study of the relationship between entrepreneurial and behavioural characteristics in policy and decision-making. With our lack of understanding of how, historically, decisions were made, the conventional contention that the sole motivation was profit maximisation will, for the railway industry, need to take account of the varied cultural as well as professional backgrounds of the proprietors. In the industry’s early years, it was the American, George Mortimer Pullman, among others elsewhere including Europe, who were anxious to improve upon the situation, offering the acumen to create wealth and provide employment. It was rare to find these attributes in one person, and partnerships were inevitably the way to combine entrepreneurship and innovation.[[33]](#footnote-33)33

The Company Acts not only allowed proprietors to attract further capital, but also provided the opportunity to attract new entrepreneurial talent. Understanding the changes in proprietorial culture and decision-making capabilities, will help to explain the evolution of the luxury rolling stock sector during the first quarter of the twentieth century. One line of enquiry, in particular, explores the extent to which Dalziel sought to maintain control, either through continuing partnership or through private limited company status. In addition to their entrepreneurial and business attributes, Dalziel and his Board needed to draw on another quality, namely strength of character allied with sensitivity, with which to earn and maintain the respect of the labour force. This was a particular requirement during increasing union intervention in later years. Too harsh an approach would lead to industrial strife, too soft an approach could engender such loyalty to the workforce that the motivation for maintaining employment levels, and even remaining in business, became stronger than profit incentive alone.

From the beginning of the luxury railway sector, the rolling stock manufacturers’ were almost all partnerships, thus providing a case study of the benefits of managing partners, which Wilson argues as one of the more enduring solutions in the compromise between individualism and economic reality.[[34]](#footnote-34)34 In the case of the Pullman Company, as it grew and delegated decision-making responsibilities became quite varied, this case study will examine the introduction of general managers who took over the responsibilities for strategic and administrative changes of the vertically-integrated operations. The principal decision faced by Dalziel particularly, as the scale and scope of Pullman’s operations expanded, was how to develop the administration through introduction of a management hierarchy, which included the separation of ownership from controls and the recruitment of a specialist management cadre, with the ‘m form’.

The managerial responsibilities included interpretation of, and response to, cyclical market changes, raw material price shifts, and the corresponding effects on employment policies and industrial relations. The luxury railway sector had little opportunity to achieve the full benefits of administrative co-ordination, and in the case of Pullman, the managerial responsibilities had to become increasingly technical and specialised in order to deal with demanding decisions, particularly on investment and the use of assets, that were quite unlike those of its competitors.

**1.2 Previous Literature**

Previous assessments of luxury transport on British railways, is limited to a small number of papers and books, and each only goes a short way towards exploring these issues. No comparable detailed, analytical study of the British Pullman Car Company exists, although there are reliable narrative transport studies of individual batches of vehicles and other features found in contemporary railway journals, newspapers and magazines, including *The Railway Gazette, Railway Engineer* and *Modern Transport.* As Jenkinson rightly asserts, that a ‘wealth of material’ was published and little escaped the notice of *The Railway Gazette* particularly during the 1920s and 1930s.[[35]](#footnote-35)35 While the Pullman Society Journal, *The Golden Way* (formerly known as *Contact*), is principally a publication for the enthusiast, and invariably features personal recollections of Pullman travel, historic and modern photographic images, modelling notes and details of the preservation movement today. Wherever possible, it is dedicated to the study of all aspects of Pullman operations. The magazine of the one-time Wagons-Lits Society, *Repas Bleu,* also provides similar features to its British counterpart.

Over twenty Pullman-related histories have been written since the 1940s, but on the whole, these have been descriptive rather than analytical.[[36]](#footnote-36)36 The company histories, including the recently-published *Pullman Profile* series provide a descriptive or technical narrative of the vehicle aesthetics, but are essentially pictorial. Because the bulk of the British Pullman Car Company’s own records were destroyed during air raids in World War 2, chroniclers of the early years of Pullman operations in Britain have sometimes had to draw on second- and third-hand evidence, some of which has subsequently proved to be of questionable value. In recent years, however, a number of complementary primary and secondary sources of information have become more accessible. These have allowed a more coherent and reliable picture of the company (often in connection with the Wagons-Lits Company) to emerge, including for example transport articles in the *Journal du* *Chemin de Fer*, a Belgian railway magazine – although, inconveniently for the researcher, they are divided between Britain, France, Belgium, Spain and the United States. Until 1906, it should be remembered, the British company was a subsidiary of the American Pullman organisation and that during the 1920s, Pullman’s Chairman, Davison Dalziel, also held the position of President of the Board of Directors and the Managing Committee of the Wagons-Lits Company based in Paris, France.

Pullman’s own partnerships with the Wagons Lits Company and carriage manufacturers have similarly received insufficient enquiry, although a number of descriptive books and magazines have been published which extend the Pullman relationship that was formed. *La Compagnie* *des Wagons-Lits* is one of the few detailed analysis of the Pullman history in Continental Europe, and more cursory studies of the progression of services, have enquired into such issues as managerial strategies, railway company policy and union relationships.[[37]](#footnote-37)37 Direct comparison between railway-owned and independent company ‘extra fare’ services is not always relevant or even possible at the turn of the twentieth century, as the former were usually fully integrated into the railways’ corporate structure. There are, however, a number of records and published accounts of American Pullman history which overlap with the British operations whose conclusions are directly relevant to entrepreneurship and management decision-making. These provide evidence to explain some of the issues affecting operations, including the related matters of labour recruitment, company organisation, training and supervision of staff, all of which were linked with the development of capital equipment and service processes.

Research undertaken at the National Railway Museum, York; the Newberry Library, Chicago, and elsewhere has served only to support proven doubts of early histories, as well as a confirmed reliance on many of the post-World War 2 privately-held records of primary source documents (including Pullman Company reports and brochures, as well as personal papers and recollections) of Charles S. E. Long, former traffic clerk in the headquarters offices of the Pullman Car Co from 1958-1963. (Much of the collection of ephemera, also includes inter-war railway and Pullman Company correspondence, photographs, brochures, and other publicity material, dating from almost the beginning of the British Pullman concern and some is now in the possession of the author. Where these have been used, full references are cited). In addition, several pre-World War 1 testimonies of the ‘Southern Belle’ from the railway company view point, as well as many national and regional newspapers provide much detail of the vehicle interiors and other features which help to explain the attraction of travelling ‘Pullman’, while also constructing notions of English and British representation of past artistic designs.

Although a strong business link was formed in the 1920s between Pullman and Wagons-Lits, a recent work of the latter company’s Pullman services (*Au Bon Temps des Wagons-Restaurants*, La Vie du Rail, 2012) though smaller in output, serves to show a similar British pattern of working emerging. This French publication details a summary of the luxury market and explains why there were similar demand fluctuations as those experienced in Britain, as seen to good effect with the international service, the ‘Golden Arrow’ and French counterpart, ‘La Flèche d’Or’ per chapter 6.

The absence of a detailed analytical study of the business history of the British Pullman Company is therefore long overdue. This thesis fulfils the need to assess the luxury sector’s managerial capabilities through the complex inter-relationship with the host railway companies. The Pullman Company’s decision-making capabilities determined the effectiveness of their developing policies and their tactics in carrying them out.

In this thesis, all sources of ‘new’ material have been identified, and where there remains uncertainty, it has been noted. The bombing which destroyed the Pullman Company’s own archives at Victoria station has for too long been used as an alibi: there are many other contemporary sources of useful information which have scarcely been consulted before, from magazine and numerous newspaper reports (both national and regional), as stated, to railway management minutes and vehicle builders’ records – variously held at the National Archives at Kew, the National Railway Museum at York, and provincial museums. Surviving contemporary transport records in the USA, Spain and France also offer increasing evidence.

For transport historians who therefore wish to seek a full, complete and integrated account of his or her chosen subject, and to undertake such research as is necessary to do, transport history as part of a vast body of subjects has been found to cover, in the Pullman case, not merely one nation, the United Kingdom, and one language, as stated, but many others including France, Spain and the United States.

This thesis has generated an interdisciplinary investigation, for railways generally have made a significant contribution to the development of world-wide civil and mechanical engineering, for example, as well as to the evolution of accountancy and management skills. Although steam locomotives might have dominated many earlier studies, many other railway subjects have been largely ignored until now, which as Divall has argued, ‘the cultural turn has propelled issues of travel and physical mobility to the centre of lively debates in a number of key areas of social and historical inquiry’.[[38]](#footnote-38)38 The task of this thesis has been rewarding because the historical development of transportation has brought about a new sense of identity and, by inference luxury mobilities, which were produced and consumed in the past – including organization, modes of governance, vehicles and artefacts, among others.

Up until recently, researchers may not have appreciated the importance of what came before success which, as Andrew Dow argues, established facts are simply set down without due explanation or context, while reinforcing Michael Robbins words ‘it’s a startling thing about the written history of English railways that so much of it is not quite right’.[[39]](#footnote-39)39

For the researcher wishing to explore theoretical perspectives, as has been explored in this thesis, collaboration with railway institutes overseas offers endless possibilities. Madrid’s Museo de Delicias, for example, one of Spain’s fastest growing railway museums, founded in 1967 and now housed in a disused station, has a rich and diverse collection of railwayana, and an extensive archive. Likewise, in France, the Patrimoine des Wagons-Lits, one of the world’s leading railway and transport depository of art and design, offers a rigorous and sophisticated account which enables the researcher to capitalise on the strengths of both institutions. Such an enquiry will allow access to richer collections, ideas and perspectives world-wide than each institution could provide alone. Volumes of scholarly debates in transport and other fields of social inquiry exist from the 1840s, but the majority of records held in Madrid are written either in Spanish or Portuguese, and occasionally in French, as noted in documentation of the 1920s, for instance, outlining the French-based Pullman services with Continental connections. Demarcation of specific geographical railway operating areas, photographs, timetables and engineering drawings are useful markers for the researcher, and all are available and accessed through a growing database system, conveniently suited to the British and American researcher, who are familiar with the Dewey Decimal Classification (colloquially the Dewey Decimal library classification system). By accessing the records, the researcher can draw upon railway management decision-making, rules and regulations, technologies, as well as vehicle and network design, within the Iberian Peninsula but also further afield, including considerable links with France and the United Kingdom.

In recent years, Delicias archive staff have been adding papers to their on-line service, but these are currently case files only of the many individual railway company formations that were created in the mid-nineteenth century with backing from London-based investors, but one of their mission statements include future plans to integrate the whole collection. The majority of the records are on-site and easily accessible at a centrally-located library and archives centre located at the old station. Also housed under cover within the museum complex, are numerous preserved examples of static 1920s Pullman cars which can be accessed by prior appointment. In the wake of the collaborative approach promoted by the National Railway Museum in York, a similar pattern is emerging in Spain in which the management is working with outside organisations, transport historians and volunteers. Intriguingly, on-line announcements confirm the reappraisal and updating of many records, as well as neglected areas. Internal policies and practices of collecting, curating and exhibiting have also been critically analysed. Analysing how railway company relationships are formed through the exercise of construction, design, and operation of transport technologies and mutual practices have become major undertakings.

A particularly appealing side to the interpretation of documents and objects held at Delicias, is also the staff appreciation of and insistence on the multitude of types of meanings that objects and documentation may possess or convey. Both the historical, emotional, symbolic and political aspects of objects’ and ephemeral meanings are considered legitimate approaches to the study of transport history and material culture. Furthermore, the various meanings of things are seen as an interactive process between object and subject. The policy and practice of the museum is proactively with a hands-on approach to objects and documentation, but perhaps its greatest potential contribution to transport history, might lie in micro-level analysis with associated links to other collections, providing an alternative to traditional historical methods and semiotics. The Spanish take on material culture might potentially offer the researcher greater scope, for the aims of the museum not only unify artefacts and documents as sources, but also aim at a wider coalition of subjects and approaches useful to researchers that can bring together aesthetics and company performance in a way that enlightens a wide, multidisciplinary audience.

Addressing the various changes which have occurred in the writing of luxury transport and the wider involvement of Pullman services in Spain, the museum collection is not only easily accessible, but the material will potentially offer a nuanced survey of ongoing debates in transport circles in the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal and France, and will be of even more value for its connections with other institutes.

Conversely, for those researchers who want to embark on fully researched writing of transport history, the records held at the Patrimoine de Wagons-Lits also offer a potentially fascinating mixture of nostalgia, human interest, European connections and contemporary design for the transport historian. This archive has been closely consulted during the preparation of this thesis. With an exuberant collection of imagery, graphics and corporate identity devoted solely to the operating history of one railway service provider, the records tell of strategy and European operations as a whole, and demonstrate how the two aspects influenced each other. Although there is currently restricted access and a policy of minimum disturbance to the records due to ongoing conservation, much of the Paris-based collection of ephemera and documentation has during the course of this thesis moved to a secure location in Central France, while a matter of raising funds for an ambitious purpose-built archive, surplus material of historic posters and luxury items, including Lalique panels, silverware and furniture have previously been sold at various auctions.[[40]](#footnote-40)40 Analyses of the luxury train era is nevertheless manifest in the recently catalogued collections of former travellers, transport history devotees and aficionados of twentieth-century decorative and graphic arts following an exhibition held at the Arab Institute, Paris.[[41]](#footnote-41)41 Supported by the Patrimoine who brought together numerous co-ordinators and curators from European universities, each playing an important role with regard to conservation requirements and expertise. As a result of earlier railway-related conferences across Europe, the exhibition was recognised for its interdisciplinary take on material culture. Despite their very divergent focuses and approaches, accounts of Pullman and luxury train history by the Patrimoine and the Arab Institute will be of considerable value to anyone interested in artefacts and company records as sources of knowledge and material culture in general – transport historians included.

In association with more recently published works in association with the French publication, *La Vie du Rail,* the significance of record keeping has been highlighted. Probably invaluable to the researcher, the contributors have quite diverging views on how the Pullman and Wagons-Lits Companies are to be understood. At the one end of the spectrum, the writings of the Wagons-Lits historian Roger Commault acknowledge that objects are ‘effective generators of discourse’, while others have invariably suggested that the surviving records are both inarticulate and loquacious, compliant and defiant.[[42]](#footnote-42)42 With the vast array of material on offer and increasing accessibility, it becomes a matter of translation, negotiation and networking.

While British transport and social historians have generally relied on the records held at the National Archives at Kew and the National Railway Museum at York, the Spanish and French institutions have the potential of offering other possibilities in new research on a variety of transport topics which make for better historical explanation. Although these various collections foster reflection upon the past, their significance lies not in nostalgia, but in documenting the experience of modern life which, as Divall has shown, ‘the study of the history of transport’s consumption, contemporary mobility studies, and the small but important historiography on transport as material culture, and by adding technology into the equation brings considerable benefits’.[[43]](#footnote-43)43

More generally, there is also an expanding railway transport history that, quite apart from having too readily accepted company propaganda at face value, some writers have generally either misread the evidence before them or simply presented speculation as fact.

The experience did, however, re-awoke a rather somnolent interest in the Pullman Company and railway luxury services, and the evidence for a number of assertions made over the years about the provenance and subsequent history of British Pullman cars have been re-examined.

This research into Pullman business history modifies and clarifies many aspects of previously published accounts. However, some contemporary records were probably not so accessible when Behrend’s *Pullman in Europe* (Ian Allan, 1962), for example, was being written. Haresnape’s work *Pullman, Travelling in Style* (Malaga Books, 1987) gives the best general account of the development of British Pullman car construction styles as well as a broad history of the company, but it does contain misinformation. While working on the thesis, access to Behrend’s background papers were latterly made available. These identified that what had been written about the early years of Pullman operation in Britain (and repeated from one book to another) appeared to be based largely on hearsay and speculation, rather than on any solid research. However, the evidence provided after World War 2 to the introduction of the ‘Blue Pullmans’ does generally concur with contemporary primary sources.

Although the central thesis is essentially based directly on research, some supporting evidence and incidental information has been drawn from three publications which are themselves derived from inadequately documented primary source material, together with numerous transport-related, management and business history journals. One is *Palace Car Prince*, by Liston E. Leyendecker (University Press of Colorado, 1992). This is the first-ever full-length biography of George Mortimer Pullman, founder-President of the organisation that was to bring the Pullman name recognition throughout the western world, and it draws extensively on the diaries of his wife, and other private family papers to which Professor Leyendecker was given privileged access. This in-depth work also considers many of the management and technical issues of American Pullman car manufacture and the strategic decisions taken by its management, which provides useful comparisons with those of their British counterparts. Of particular significance is the approach to the problem of design proliferation which, as in Britain, created unnecessary standardisation difficulties and restrictions in some vehicle movement. The strong line taken in dealing with the design aspirations, whilst promoting component standardisation, makes an interesting comparison with the British Pullman Company who only considered all-steel construction in 1928.

The second is a comprehensive review of one of the most diverse periods of railway carriage development in Great Britain from 1923 to 1953, including design, technology and social response, drawing on previously unpublished material from the National Railway Museum’s extensive collection, by David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century, Vol. 2* (Patrick Stephens Limited, 1990). The third is a business history of the first twenty-five years of British Railways by Terence R. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73, A Business History* (Cambridge University Press, 1986). Originally commissioned by the British Railways Board, it is wholly based on the Board's extensive archives. Gourvish has methodically analysed the dynamics of nationalised industry management and the complexities of the vital relationship with government. After exploring the origins of nationalisation, the book also deals with the organisation, financial performance, investment and commercial policies of the British Transport Commission (1948–2), Railway Executive (1948–53) and British Railways Board (1963–73). Calculations of profit and loss, investment, and productivity are also provided on a consistent basis for 1948–73. This business history represents a major contribution not only to the debate about the role of the railways in a modern economy, but also to that concerning the nationalised industries, which have proved to be one of the most enduring problems of the British economy since World War 2. Representing special features for Pullman at the time, one of the major strands of this book is that it surveys the government-influenced business of the nationalised railways, whose actions greatly complicated the task of evaluating managerial performance and decision-making in conventional terms. It culminated in the introduction of American-based corporate planning techniques following difficulties faced by the railways with origins from the inter-war years. That the political and economic environment in which the railways, and the Pullman Company were required to operate pre- and post-World War 2 was complex and frustrating is not in doubt. Gourvish carefully explains the railways’ record in relation to investment and labour relations, where managers were faced with the real difficulty that railwaymen were falling behind other occupations in terms of both pay and conditions, a situation underlined by the findings of subsequent inquiries. This has proved to be an invaluable source of information to determine the relations with government, changes in organisation, investment shortages and industrial relations difficulties that remain live issues today.[[44]](#footnote-44)44

Supporting these publications are four leading peer-reviewed journals, among others, which have been closely consulted throughout this thesis. For the researcher, each of these publications detail the study of management organisations and organising, seeking to advance to wide audience groups innovative historical methods to business and labour history regarding transport, mobility and travel. These include *Management and Organizational History* who have produced, since their first publication in 2006, an accessible and more usable past in the field of management studies. Numerous articles explore, for example, the implications of the epistemological position taken by business history writers, and others the fundamental relationship between ethics and business.[[45]](#footnote-45)45 Technically and conceptually sophisticated, and suitably orientated towards end-users and wider transformative impact, especially in the context of archives and museums, *Accounting, Business and Financial History* provide numerous articles relating to the problems of the capitalization and financial performance of the railway companies in the inter-war period. ‘An awkward fence to cross: railway capitalization in Britain in the inter-war years’ by Gerald Crompton and Robert Jupe, for instance, argue that the railways were both financially over-capitalized and physically under-capitalized, facing serious financial problems that were inescapable of resolution within the existing ownership structure, which providentially allowed the Pullman Company to take a lead for a limited period of time,[[46]](#footnote-46)46 while crucially R. A. Edwards explores how railway companies performed the management accounting function.[[47]](#footnote-47)47

The international journals of business history, *Enterprise & Society* and *The Journal of Transport History* also bring together original work, as well as book, exhibition and museum reviews, from researchers, curators and transport historians and those in allied fields. The former is closely representative of labour, accounting and government; while the latter promotes wide-ranging articles on new histories of transport, mobility and travel, together with connected relationships involving planning and policy as a means of understanding their subjects. Those that have been consulted for this thesis, comprise for example, articles from the early 1960s: ‘Transport Treasures’[[48]](#footnote-48)48 and ‘British Transport Commission Archives: Work since 1953’,[[49]](#footnote-49)49 as well as more recently published work, including, ‘Engineers v. Industrial designers: The struggle for professional control over the British Railways Mark 2 coach, c.1955-66’.[[50]](#footnote-50)50 Although the author of this thesis is primarily concerned with luxury passenger business, the researcher will find not only many diverse transport-related subjects in each of these publications, but also an invaluable source of cross-referencing made throughout. With rigorous historiographical concerns, these effectively combine technical innovation, intellectual ambition and significant public impact.

**1.3 Market Development**

The extraordinary fluctuations of the market during the early twentieth century hampered Pullman development. This was to have a significant influence on the company’s strategic decision-making and was a strong factor in the market development and the ‘extra fare’ market’s growing diversity. Demand, which varied for each geographic and economic region, was the result of economic and political events quite outside the influence of Pullman or railway companies. Short-term market variations offered limited opportunities for scale economies through batch production and interpretation of market growth made investment decisions precarious. With these fluctuations having such an important influence on the affairs of the Pullman Company, their management’s interpretation of the market, and their strategic and tactical response to the changes, became important elements in their policy making.

Pullman’s initial measured growth was to meet the demand of just a few railway companies prior to World War 1, at a time when any challenges from its competitors were slowly diminishing. By 1915, third-class Pullman cars were introduced on the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway coinciding with market fluctuation and demand. (See Pullman Company annual revenues, 1907-1920, appendix 2, 299-301). A measure of its success may be explained by a relationship between railway company co-operation to extend Pullman services and demand for its accommodation pitched at affordable prices.

Although early British Pullman car demand patterns were difficult to determine, the long-term characteristics of the luxury or ‘extra fare’ market were more readily perceived. The start-up and growth of the new Pullman Company by Dalziel and the imperative to market new – as well as established and profitable – services were fundamental commercial practices developed by the host railway companies. It was almost mandatory for Dalziel and his management to adapt its marketing and selling strategies accordingly. The railway companies had practised marketing by promoting extensively, for example, excursion traffic to coastal resorts. The practices were thus transformed from those it had used in the previous century which were repeatedly local rather than of a national nature. Other than a one-time small Italian Pullman enterprise set-up by the American parent, the overseas market, on the other hand, was developed from 1910 by Davison Dalziel when Pullman car services were introduced to the South Coast ports of Dover and Folkestone for connecting European services to Paris and beyond. It was initially the preserve of Pullman conductors to tout for business onboard incoming Channel vessels, prior to the introduction of commission agents established in Britain and overseas, culminating with the intervention of the Wagons-Lits organisation and the travel agency, Thomas Cook in the late 1920s. Payne has argued that the employment of agents brought about a reliance on intermediaries which prevented, rather than assisted, the travel industry from developing a close relationship with its customers.[[51]](#footnote-51)51 Additionally, the dominance of London in the affairs of many overseas railways, led to the growth of a luxury market for the Pullman Company with the opportunity for direct marketing of its products with other railway companies, not only in Britain, but Continental Europe. The ways in which Pullman management responded to these changing requirements, establishing new market practices, agency networks (and partnerships with Wagons-Lits agencies) and selling techniques, are important indicators of their responsiveness to the new order and their capacity to take decisions necessary to maintain and improve upon market share.

**1.4 Technology, Design, Manufacturing and Industrial Relations**

It was a necessary pursuit of the Pullman Company to strive towards long-term aspirations through the development of Pullman car technology and design. Previous studies of technology and design in the railway carriage industry have been helpful, but specifically regarding Pullman it has not been conclusive. In discussing technological innovation, or the lack of it, Jenkinson argues that ‘there were perhaps two principal areas during the company period where things never seemed to change in any sort of meaningful way from their established pre-1923 patterns’.[[52]](#footnote-52)52 This analysis needs more rigorous assessment, however, in order to understand whether there was any motivation for, and a means of achieving, technological progress within the Pullman fleet.

An examination of the history of technological innovation has broken new ground in some theoretical studies. Several consider the social construction of technology and technological thought, as well as the evolution of technological change. Mokyr argues, for instance, that the evolutionary process of technological change consists of ‘mutations, re-combinations or hybrids, followed by selection’, an appropriate description in the context of Pullman car remodelling, or rebuilding, and the use of new materials to suit changing demands.[[53]](#footnote-53)53 O’Brien’s, Griffiths’ and Hunt’s analysis goes further in suggesting that the proper historical context for the consideration of technical change is both local and specific and although this relates to the progressive case of textiles, the analysis works well with Pullman; innovations are either new products (or variations on old ones), or artefacts or processes designed to raise the quality of commodities, or techniques that lower production costs.[[54]](#footnote-54)54

As with the building and manufacturing industries, the long-term development of the Pullman Company depended on continued exploitation of new technologies and materials, as well as design progression to stimulate market requirements. At the turn of the century, still under the direct influence of the American parent, Pullman licensed their inventions. The British management were later faced with decisions regarding the balance between design-led business strategies, i.e. the continuing use of their in-house design resources, and contract-led business strategies or out-source the designs from manufacturers. Yet design proliferation was not unique to Britain, there being a similar problem, but in greater volume with the American Pullman Company. None of these topics has been explored in any real depth. Even those aspects of carriage-building technology that have attracted scrutiny of historians, merit further examination.

The first Pullman cars wholly designed and constructed in Britain were destined for the ‘Southern Belle’ in 1908. The development of manufacturing during the turn of the century required major strategic decisions by the rolling stock builders, both in terms of accommodating the proliferating designs determined by its domestic markets generally and with batch orders, the increasing use of self-acting machine tools. As the first order of Pullman cars incorporated new technologies for the first time, the builders understanding the scale benefits of specialisation, required both investment in equipment and the introduction of a new production culture.

By 1928, the all-steel car introduced improved production control procedures, reduced component processing time, and stabilised production costs. Almost thirty years later, the situation had changed again with the building programme of the ‘Blue Pullman’ using new high-technology, materials and for the first-time the utilisation of outside industrial design teams.

Labour relations were a severe test of managerial expertise. Although dwarfed in size by the many railway companies, the growth of the British Pullman Company by the 1920s required new labour policies which both developed managerial skills and responsibilities. These were introduced against a background of improving terms of employment nationally, often arising from considerable industrial relations strife.[[55]](#footnote-55)55 Whilst Dalziel delegated some responsibilities to his Board, the evolution of employment policies most distinguished the growing diversity between the railway companies and progressive transport enterprises such as the Pullman Company.

There have been several academic enquiries into the nature of skill and its application to industry since Braverman first considered the matter in detail.[[56]](#footnote-56)56 As they all considered skill requirements in heavy industries, not all are relevant to the service sector, which had to accommodate multifarious on-going requirements, including maintenance of rolling stock, victualling the vehicles administration and training on-board staff. A further important issue was the retention of staff. The requirement for employment incentives, including the provision of housing and community benefits, as well as a sick fund. The Pullman workshop locations of Battersea and later Preston Park, Brighton, for instance, although in close proximity to rail company workshops, benefited from the community provision of welfare, recreational and learning opportunities during the inter-war period. For the most part, these matters were not, of course, wholly within Pullmans’ control. During the first quarter of the twentieth century industrial relations saw significant organisational growth, by both trade unions and employer’s federations, as pressures grew to introduce a shorter basic week and higher wage rates.

In seeking a better understanding of the contribution of partnerships to the development of the ‘extra fare’ luxury market, therefore, consideration is to be given to the entrepreneurial and administration attributes of the Pullman management and the developing expertise of their general managers. This enquiry into the history of the Pullman Company will investigate their decision-making capabilities in developing strategic policies and in addressing the tactical issues they confronted in carrying them out. Distinctly, it will focus on the way the ‘extra fare’ market reached its decisions against the different interpretations of luxury travel by competitors, including railway companies, with its unpredictable demand fluctuations, resulted in a spectrum of policies on marketing and sales, technology and design, production and employment. This enquiry considers the issues determining Pullman’s divergence with each of these policies, and how they adapted and reached their decisions by specifically reviewing components of early Pullman Company operations, business performance (see appendices 2 and 3 regarding annual revenues 1907-39), and design as well as the development of the luxury railway sector and industrial relations.

**2.0 Early Pullman operations in Great Britain**

**2.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide background detail for subsequent chapters, which show the weak effects of the American legacy and draws out the differences in the early British service. This chapter will also explore Davison Dalziel’s early business development following the widely reported introduction of British-built vehicles to services in 1908 and 1910 respectively, and the unexpected demand and increase sale of tickets in the post-World War 1 period. It also sets out the argument that Dalziel was a successful entrepreneur and although aided by an expanding administration, the performance of his company was due to many factors outside his control. His business strategy had an impact on the wider business environment and, as argued, with structured ticket pricing and a quest to introduce many new and much improved Pullman cars, this chapter explores how and why the early British Pullman operations were a success.

The Pullman Company was American and it took its name from its founder, George Mortimer Pullman, who was born in up-state New York in 1831. Travelling back and forth by train between his family home and Chicago to help with his father’s building-moving enterprise, Pullman felt that the overnight accommodation he encountered left a lot to be desired.[[57]](#footnote-57) Many American railroads had provided sleeping cars of a sort – since the early 1840s. While there had been improvements over the years, these commonly provided three tiers of bunks down each side of an open saloon, with some privacy being afforded by heavy curtains screening them from the central aisle. The cars were ‘cramped and claustrophobic’ and the only bedding provided was likely to be a rough blanket.[[58]](#footnote-58) In 1859, George Pullman persuaded the management of the Chicago & Alton Railroad (which actually continued to St Louis, Missouri) to allow him – and his current partner, Benjamin Field – to convert two existing day cars into sleepers, incorporating their own ideas. These conversions retained day seats, although – for night travel – the cushions pulled out to form low-level berths, while a single upper tier of berths dropped down from the ceiling.[[59]](#footnote-59) Later cars had considerably more headroom, and most of them were to incorporate a number of private compartments for families or other small groups travelling together. Nevertheless, right up to the late 1920s, this semi-communal style of overnight accommodation (as seen to good effect in the United Artists 1959 film *Some Like It Hot*) was to form the standard pattern of American sleeping car.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Between 1860-1864, during the period of the American Civil War, George Pullman acquired further cars from independent builders for service on the St Louis line, and these incorporated developments similar to those embodied in cars being constructed for sleeping car contractors operating on other lines.[[61]](#footnote-61)

George Pullman himself suggested that the greatest hurdle he had had to surmount was to persuade the railroad company that it was *not* an unreasonable extravagance to carpet the floor and provide overnight passengers with clean sheets and pillowcases.[[62]](#footnote-62) In American railroad industry, Pullman was by no means the only, nor yet a particularly powerful, provider of sleeping car services. Nor over the coming years – except in the development of the enclosed vestibule and inter-car gangway (features that were promptly copied elsewhere) – did Pullman sleepers show any marked advance on contemporary vehicles supplied by other builders and operators – particularly those supplied to the Wagner Palace Car Company which operated over the lines of what was to become the New York Central System in the Eastern States. However, by 1899, largely through the business acumen of its founder and first president, the Pullman Company had either bought out all its principal rivals (Wagner being the last), or had run them into the ground – and later company propagandists saw to it that those organisations’ contribution to the development of long-distance first-class rail travel in the USA was played down to the greater glory of Pullman.[[63]](#footnote-63)

By the turn of the nineteenth century the Pullman Company had established a virtual monopoly of sleeping car railroads with superior day cars (or ‘parlor’ cars), and diners, in an American context, ‘Pullman’ and ‘sleeping car’ became virtually interchangeable terms. It has been claimed that, in the mid-1920s, when long-haul rail travel was at its peak, the US Pullman Company provided overnight accommodation for roundly 50,000 travellers every night a number that would have filled the Chicago Hilton & Towers, then the world’s largest hotel, 20 times over.[[64]](#footnote-64)

The British company developed along very different lines to the American operation, although it was following a fact-finding visit to the USA in 1872 by James Allport, general manager of the Midland Railway, that American-style sleeping cars and open-plan ‘parlor’ cars were initially introduced to the Midland in 1874. These vehicles were constructed at Pullman’s main works then located in Detroit: they were then knocked-down into their component parts which were shipped across the Atlantic for re-assembly in a shed leased from the Midland Railway at Derby.[[65]](#footnote-65)

Although the title ‘Pullman Car Company’ was not to be formally endorsed until 1915, when the undertaking was floated on the London stock market, this term had been commonly employed to brand British Pullman operations ever since the 1870s. The complex structure of George Mortimer Pullman’s business activities on this side of the Atlantic prior to 1882 was not widely understood – either at the time, or later. That it is at last possible to appreciate the true situation is due in no small part to the opening of company records in Chicago’s Newberry Library. This chapter shows that relations between George Pullman and his London partners deteriorated following the deaths of two of the original English subscribers and, by the late summer of 1881, he had resolved to buy them out.[[66]](#footnote-66) This was the background to the establishment of the Pullman Company Limited. Registered in London on 2 June 1882, this was, nevertheless, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the American “Pullman’s Palace Car Company” whose intention was to introduce Pullman cars to mainland Europe.[[67]](#footnote-67)

To say that the new vehicles caused a sensation when they were unveiled to the British press and public in 1874 is an understatement. It is very much doubted whether the introduction of any new passenger rolling stock in the country has ever generated so much press attention, in papers ranging from *The* *Times* and *The Pictorial World* on the one hand, to such miscellaneous publications as *The Lancet,* *The Watchman* and *Surrey Gazette* on the other.[[68]](#footnote-68) They were, after all, the first bogie coaches in British main-line service, offering a much improved quality of ride – particularly at speed – by comparison with the six – (and even four) wheel coaches that were then still the norm; with circulating hot water continuously heated by a coke-fired boiler, they were the first to offer some form of heating beyond primitive tin foot warmers; they were the first to offer generally accessible lavatory facilities as a matter of course; and, although the East Coast companies were already running some six-wheel saloon carriages with pull-down couches on overnight trains, the Pullman sleepers were the first that provided full bedding and which were under the supervision of a travelling attendant. The day cars offered individual revolving and reclining armchairs. While on-board food preparation and cooking were still five years away, a pre-prepared meal, with wine, was served to invitees on the press and VIP promotional trips.[[69]](#footnote-69) The American publication devoted to the interests of railway rolling stock, *The National Car Builder,* reported shortly afterwards that the Pullman Company ‘enterprise was built up and perfected, led to the arrangements now provided … for the convenience, safety and comfort of the traveller.’[[70]](#footnote-70) On the other hand, a correspondent writing in *The Engineer* commented:

It is to be regretted that the decorator of these cars was not aware that the word ‘gent’ is considered in England to be about as offensive an appellation as could well be addressed to a gentleman. Should a fortunate accident cause the glasses in the upper portions of the doors of the saloons to be broken, we would suggest that when they are replaced the words ‘gentleman’s saloon’ should replace the present obnoxious inscription of ‘gent’s saloon’.[[71]](#footnote-71)

The first British Pullman service was inaugurated on 1 July 1874 between Bradford (then at the heart of Britain’s textile industry) and London St Pancras, travelling south by day (with sleepers in the ‘day position’), and returning north overnight.[[72]](#footnote-72) Over the next 12 years another 17 Pullman sleepers were to enter service on the Midland and 17 ‘parlor’ cars. In 1875, the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway started running a single Pullman parlor car in its principal mid-morning service from London Victoria to Brighton, returning the same evening. Pullman sleepers were also taken up by the East Coast companies after the opening of the Settle & Carlisle line, in 1876, and through running on the Waverley route brought Midland Pullman sleepers into Edinburgh. Three years later, in 1879, the Pullman Company introduced the first kitchen dining car to British service: named *Prince of Wales*, it ran between Leeds and London on the Great Northern Railway.[[73]](#footnote-73)

Prior to 1882, George Pullman was tied into complex interlocking agreements with certain London financial interests with whom he did not wholly agree and which severely limited his freedom of action. In that year he bought out his English partners and registered a separate Pullman Company Limited in London.[[74]](#footnote-74) However, far from providing for greater local autonomy, the new body was totally subservient to the American Pullman’s Palace Car Company. While there was a nominal London-based ‘Committee’, originally consisting of two Directors – and latterly only one – all the remaining Directors were seconded from the American Board. Although the inaugural Board meeting was held in London, all subsequent meetings seem to have been held in Chicago or New York – *excepting* the London members.[[75]](#footnote-75) Deteriorating personal relations between Pullman and the General Managers and Board members of both the Midland and Great Northern Railways played at least some part in the desire by both companies finally to buy out of their Pullman commitments, in 1888 and 1894 respectively. That left the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway (L.B.S.C.R.) as Pullman’s most important British customer. Indeed, had it not been for the Brighton company, the Pullman presence in Britain could not possibly have survived. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Pullman-owned and operated fleet in Britain consisted of 21 ‘parlor’ cars on the Brighton line and four on the London & South Western (used singly on Waterloo-Bournemouth services) and two elderly sleepers leased to, and staffed by, the Highland Railway in Scotland.[[76]](#footnote-76)

The Brighton Railway had first experimentally introduced one Pullman ‘parlor’ in 1875 at a time when the management approached the Wagons-Lits company to see if it could offer a better deal on the operation of saloon (or ‘parlor’) cars.[[77]](#footnote-77) Six years later, in 1881, the all-Pullman ‘Limited Express’ (the first main-line train to have electric lighting) was introduced. However, vociferous objections to the principle of running a train on which passengers had no choice but to pay a Pullman supplementary charge were made, and for many years the L.B.S.C.R. attached some of its own (unplumbed and non-corridor) coaches to the formation. Nevertheless, the ‘Limited’ was sufficiently successful for new purpose-built Pullman sets to be introduced in 1888 (Britain’s first train with gangways), and again in 1895. After the termination of the Midland contracts, the Pullman erecting shops at Derby were closed, and all the later ‘American’ cars were assembled by the L.B.S.C.R. at its Brighton carriage shops.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Following the death of George Pullman in 1897, the desultory occasional entries in the ‘British’ company’s minute books held at the Newberry Library, Chicago, suggest that its American directors had lost all interest in what, to them, must have been very much an insignificant side-show.[[79]](#footnote-79) British financier, Davison Dalziel (who also happened to be on the Board of the Wagons-Lits Company), made an offer to purchase the operation outright in late 1906, to which the American directors accepted.

**2.2 Business developments and entrepreneurship**

The extraordinary scope in which luxury travel had progressed following the acquisition of the English Pullman Company in 1907 by Mr Davison Dalziel, ‘entrepreneur in finance and service industries’, Chairman of the Pullman Company, President du Conseil of the Wagons-Lits Company, and owner of the Standard Newspapers Ltd, among other businesses was unexpected.[[80]](#footnote-80) Having secured the rights to use ‘Pullman’ from the American parent,[[81]](#footnote-81)25 Dalziel began to raise passenger standards, and ‘set himself out to develop comfort and even a measure of luxury’. He had faith ‘that the public would pay for this’.[[82]](#footnote-82)26 New British-built Pullman cars were introduced to the ‘Southern Belle’ a year later in 1908 - a service labelled as the ‘most luxurious train in the world’ - followed by approximately twenty vehicles for the ‘popular’ Continental boat trains (from 1910), in addition to securing a new ‘long-term’ contract with the Metropolitan Railway, later better known as the London Underground.[[83]](#footnote-83)27 To generate business at every opportunity, Dalziel also attempted to provide services for one of the newest mainlines to reach London, the Great Central Railway (G.C.R.). Behrend argues that ‘anxious to please its clients in every way possible’, the G.C.R. seriously considered providing Pullman with a contract.[[84]](#footnote-84)28 Although the G.C.R. Board agreed to accept an offer made by Dalziel during October 1909 to provide their line with his Pullman service for a period of 15 years, no contract materialised. Even though railway companies were briefly reporting ‘remarkable increases [of passenger receipts]’ at this time, including one of Pullman’s closest allies, the South Eastern & Chatham Railway who declared a half-yearly increase[[85]](#footnote-85)29, the G.C.R. Board soon had a change of plan and decided themselves to provide, and own, any luxury train that ran on their lines. *The Railway Gazette* noted in 1910:

revival in Pullman travel was due to the luxurious vehicles themselves, than what the travelling public have hitherto known as Pullman cars [and] whilst people may hesitate before paying an extra fee to travel in a vehicle really better than an ordinary first-class compartment, they will gladly pay the small super-fare demanded to ride in a really luxurious saloon.[[86]](#footnote-86)30

By January 1913, *The Railway Gazette* was also claiming that the ‘ever increasing popularity of the existing Pullman Car services … necessitated a still further addition to the number of the cars already running.’[[87]](#footnote-87)31 Pullman services had expanded quickly, but had not been taken up by the network as a whole.

On its formation in September 1915 as a listed public company, the Pullman Company was capitalised at £ 250,000 and at this point owned 74 vehicles which, in financial terms, made it the second largest railway service provider in Britain at the time, only eclipsed by the much larger Wagons-Lits Company, a private organisation established in 1876 on mainland Europe.[[88]](#footnote-88)32 In common with the multitude of railway companies existing before the ‘Big Four’ were created in 1923, the new Pullman Company was owned by what were termed London-based ‘subscribers’ or investors. In this case, shareholders wanted a quick return of their investment, but also hoped that Pullmans’ service would improve. *The Railway* *Gazette* comments that:

in these days, when most British railways have such difficulty in raising new capital at a reasonable rate, it is no small consideration for [Pullman] to be able to provide their customers with costly vehicles without any capital outlay or risk to themselves.[[89]](#footnote-89)33

The railway companies which ran Pullman services manipulated the press to generate publicity, and to sell at that time the limited catering service on behalf of the Pullman Company. To achieve this, it invited journalists to join special press launches which prompted a great deal of positive comment. A case in point regarding the ‘Southern Belle’ succinctly glorified its new vehicles as being, ‘nothing more elegant, more luxuriously comfortable, has ever been devised by railway experts,’ wrote one journalist. The 12 shillings for a day return fare was, on the face of it, ‘not unreasonable’ for over 100 miles of Pullman travel. This service was however luxury beyond ordinary travellers and that the travel ticket and supplement combined ‘has been estimated at 60 per cent. of an agricultural worker’s weekly wage.’[[90]](#footnote-90)34

As Pullman services were only firmly established on three British lines, two of which were South of the Thames, Dalziel remained determined to expand. By a special resolution which changed the name of the company to ‘The Drawing Room Cars Company Limited’ on 15 September 1915, for legal reasons (and which provided the financial medium for his purchases of equipment), allowed the company to be called ‘The Pullman Car Company Limited’. A fortnight later, a public company was formed to take over all ‘the cars, stock, work-in-hand and goodwill’ with Dalziel holding a majority share in this new company, and taking up the position as Chairman. Concurrently, the first meeting of 29 September 1915 sought to agree the basis on which the new company was to be capitalised. Pullmans’ annual gross profits were at the time reported at £ 30,000, which represented a return of just over 15 per cent. on the existing capital employed in the business.[[91]](#footnote-91)35 (See appendix 2, annual revenues, 1907-20).

Throughout the early years of the company, almost every batch of new vehicles had been the subject of detailed magazine features based on press releases provided by the Pullman Board. In an article ‘Progress of Luxury Travel’, *The Locomotive*, dedicated six full pages to the Pullman Company, for instance, and reflected upon their pioneering achievements. These included the introduction of the first bogie car in England in 1873, which soon stimulated the building of bogie coaches by Britain’s railway companies (all of whom previously ran with four- or six-wheel variants), and the first electrically lit train in England. ‘Pullmans’, it was claimed, ‘are regarded as necessary standard equipment for all fast train services throughout the world’.[[92]](#footnote-92)36

In short, aided by an expanding administration, the spirit of capitalism and the inducement of profit, these probably all became the overriding criterion for what was deemed a promising venture, where Dalziel could develop a business model which drove his activity.

**2.3 Post-World War 1 developments**

Up to 1910 the luxury ‘extra fare’ service sector developed on the railways ad hoc. Vehicles allocated to these services were built specifically, with tare weight, height and length restrictions and considerations governed by the respective railway managements, including livery. Later, when the need arose to temporarily ‘loan’ vehicles to other railways, such transfer or working of cars on other operating lines increasingly became prohibitive.[[93]](#footnote-93)37 (See figures 1 and 2 of two differing types of vehicle, constructed only four years apart).

Pullman accommodation was only sold through station booking offices served by the trains themselves (or onboard by the Conductor if spare seats were available). Although the American parent had found the logistics of running the original British company increasingly difficult from its Chicago base, any desire to secure new contracts and networks on anything approaching nationwide required investment in marketing, as outlined in chapters 3 and 4. At this time, Dalziel played a pivotal role in promoting Pullman services, but acknowledging the company’s reliance on railway booking offices, who in effect, sold the Pullmans to customers and marketed its services.

In an effort to achieve greater control, the Pullman management considered the idea of giving some of their services special names to listed timetabled trains. Railway services had always been promoted using public timetables which invariably described the amenities on board, including restaurant, dining or other special facilities. Pullman’s branding strategy – which was introduced just prior to the inauguration of the ‘Southern Belle’ – contrived to emphasise the uniqueness of Pullman’s product. Moreover, marketing highlighted the uniform cleanliness of the rolling stock, and gave the vehicles a unique identity - ‘The cars were cleaned internally and externally before every journey, and swept and dusted at the termination of each run’, argues Williams.[[94]](#footnote-94)38 For all its longer-term importance, branding before World War 1 was not so much innovating or transformative, in immediately changing the whole nature of the market. Pullman’s service names were reserved principally for ‘limited trains’, rather than for the many individual vehicle workings - that is, a train formed wholly or consisting of Pullman cars offering a maximum or ‘limited’ number of seats which were designed for specific short-distance journeys: the ‘Southern Belle’ from London to Brighton, and the ‘Eastbourne Pullman Limited’, for instance. Directors’ Report and Statement of Accounts (see appendix), record annual increases of ‘supplementary-fare’ receipts. Another indirect indication of rising demand for Pullman accommodation is given by the ordering of 21 vehicles during 1910 to service emerging traffic to the South Coast ports, connecting with Channel steamers to the Continent. These services garnered favourable reports, with *The Graphic* observing how they decreased ‘the disagreeable side of railway travelling … [while the interiors] are most luxurious and yet always tasteful’.[[95]](#footnote-95)39 By the outbreak of World War 1, practically all boat trains linking London stations with the South-East Coast ports included two or more Pullman cars ‘at a cost of more than £ 5,000 per vehicle’.[[96]](#footnote-96)40 Pullmans’ popularity appeared to be increasing, but the promotion of luxurious or ‘extra fare’ facilities was not enthusiastically received by all travellers, a matter which was repeated in years to come*. The Railway* *Gazette* commented on the ‘absurdity of the advice given to passengers by a correspondent of *The Railway Times* who objected to the supplement of 2 shillings and 6 pence for Pullman cars on the Dover boat trains’.[[97]](#footnote-97)41 An additional article titled ‘Railway Companies as Public Caterers’, outlined what were then considered by a correspondent, ‘short-sighted reflections on Pullman car policy on the S.E.C.R.’ where an essential difference was found between the character of the Continental boat-train traffic and that of the ordinary long-distance express in England.[[98]](#footnote-98)42 The timetabled services were improved and accelerated concurrently when more powerful locomotives were introduced by both the L.B.S.C.R and S.E.C.R. respectively.[[99]](#footnote-99)43 Where it was possible, the railway company’s worked to improve Pullman train departure times throughout the day; it appears the majority of day trips seem often to have started and finished in urban centres, and was a pattern that was reinforced … by [general] transport improvements’ at the time, argues Benson.[[100]](#footnote-100)44 One of the clearest indications of this drive by railway companies was the increasing provision of advertising materials which showcased Pullmans, which Klein explains ‘produced superb posters by famous artists’.[[101]](#footnote-101)45 This was backed up by regular press advertising and a variety of more permanent forms of display and facilities at main railway stations, while the vehicles themselves were described as rolling showcases ‘extravagant and exotic and reflecting the moneyed class taste for luxury and conspicuous consumption that prevailed before and immediately after World War 1.’[[102]](#footnote-102)46

On the other hand, the application of branding and advertising depended fundamentally on a company’s selling organisation. A good example of this was one of the earliest agreements reached with the Caledonian Railway, in November 1913 (with contractual extensions to the early 1930s), for the Pullman Company to provide seventeen buffet and dining cars. The prime reasons which influenced the railway company in agreeing to accept Pullmans meant that heavy expenditure, as well as costs of maintenance would be avoided. As a secondary consideration it was also felt that the ‘facilities would attract passengers to travel on their lines, with consequent benefit to be derived from this’.[[103]](#footnote-103)47

Operating matters changed with the breakout of World War 1. The Army Council had made a request that the railway companies should come to the assistance of the British armies in France in the matter of providing transport for men, supplies and materials. Almost at once, most Pullman cars were withdrawn from the Caledonian, for example, for the duration of the war, and although there was a curtailment of services for two years, the Pullman Company had entered into a contract with the railway company which required that the railway haul its cars, and no consultation had taken place with either the Pullman Company or the Railway Executive Committee before services were withdrawn.[[104]](#footnote-104)48 Following cessation of hostilities, the Pullman Company attempted to sue the railway company for the revenue which it lost as a result of the withdrawal of its cars. As the 1871 Regulation of Forces Act stated that any contract broken as a result of implementation of the Act became enforceable against the government, the railway company immediately passed the action on. Despite the fact that no direct order had been given to the railway company to withdraw the Pullman cars, the company’s claim of £ 5,248 per annum should be met in full by the government, although in an attempt to stave off legal action there was no admission of liability. The Pullman Company therefore received from the government, via the railway company, the sum of £ 8,500 as compensation for loss of income during the war. By March 1919, the services on the Caledonian were reintroduced running almost to the same circuits as before.[[105]](#footnote-105)49 During the same year, Pullman management studied new business openings, building up a fact-finding network of contacts in Britain and overseas. Reporting on trends as well as pushing towards new brands or services, Dalziel received a flow of market intelligence which were hoped might help the company to tailor its trade and selling methods to match anticipated and actual demands.[[106]](#footnote-106)50 This was particularly important when overseas Pullman services were being established on the Continent from 1925, as well as in Egypt and the Palestine from 1926, intimated as a ‘far-reaching an institution … as the International Sleeping Car Company … of Continental Europe’.[[107]](#footnote-107)51 While Dalziel continued pressing for an extension of services on other main lines administered by railway companies, he also forged concurrently physical links between his activities in both Britain, France and beyond. As services were being secured, many new or reconditioned vehicles of varying types (and with operating restrictions) were working in revenue-earning service, but these were not necessarily of a ‘standard-type’. By 1923, *The Locomotive* recorded a total of 103 Pullman cars on Southern and 49 on Northern services (see appendix 7), but failed to determine whether these were compatible types that could run together, an important point as not all the rolling stock in service at that time shared the same coupling or buffer arrangements or weight tolerations.[[108]](#footnote-108)52

In their ‘Notes of the Week’, *Modern Transport* remarked on the rising popularity of third-class Pullman accommodation and the apparent problems of satisfying post-war requirements, whereas *The Railway Gazette* offered a detailed account of new all-Pullman express trains stating that ‘considerable space is devoted [to the subject]’ because the railway management ‘has shown that it is receptive to new ideas’.[[109]](#footnote-109)53



**FIG.1 EXTERIOR VIEW OF ALL-TIMBER 12-WHEEL THIRD-CLASS**

**‘H-TYPE’ PULLMAN WITH KITCHEN ‘CAR No.45’**

(Clayton Wagons of Lincoln, 1920 for the Great Eastern Railway)

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)



**FIG.2. EXTERIOR VIEW OF TIMBER BODY AND STEEL UNDERFRAME 8-WHEEL FIRST-CLASS ‘K-TYPE’ PULLMAN CAR WITH KITCHEN ‘RAINBOW’**

(Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd, 1924)

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)

In the opinion of the latter correspondent, the first-class cars were available to the public who were willing to pay for the best accommodation obtainable while ‘the third-class Pullmans may be said to correspond to those popular hotels and restaurants of Messrs. Lyons, the Regent Palace or the Corner Houses’.[[110]](#footnote-110)54Simultaneously, the catalyst of notable change took place by an almost immediate public desire to travel in luxury and style prior to the end of World War 1 which, as Jenkinson has argued, was a ‘fact accurately foreseen by Dalziel, but which appears to have taken many railways by surprise’.[[111]](#footnote-111)55 The railway manufacturing industry had in fact been deeply involved in the war effort, and such items as new luxury vehicles had not been built. Material to build new carriages, as previously noted, was scarce.[[112]](#footnote-112)56 Dalziel showed initiative and foresight by purchasing immediately after the cessation of war twelve former ambulance coaches, built for the War Department for reconstructing into first- and third-class Pullman cars at minimal cost.[[113]](#footnote-113)57 However, Jenkinson argues that upgrading of some services were in any event necessary as the vehicles (first- or third-class) used were no longer suitable for use on the railways having reached the end of their useful life.[[114]](#footnote-114)58

Notwithstanding a high degree of competition between railway company products and railway owned ‘special saloons’ since before World War 1, it was not until around 1926 when reduced costs of production and a careful reorganisation of manual processes with-in purpose-built factories, that further savings could be made with orders of future Pullmans introduced in tranches, many of which to standard designs. Nonetheless, the most efficient application did not wholly come in the form of the vehicles themselves, but from the techniques yielding a sustainable cost/profit advantage rather than a competitive selling advantage by the cost/price structure of the railways. On all continental boat trains, for instance, running on both the Southern Railway and L.N.E.R. ticket mark-ups were added on the principle of what the travelling market could bear within the constraint of having to charge even-money prices. Thus, the pricing of these services amounted to monopolistic pricing. Correspondingly, as sales increased in proportion to total sales of Pullman seats, the services set up under the Dalziel regime became more monopolistic in organisation. One of the clearest signs of changes in the structure of the service industry was the growing collusion between almost all railway companies and Pullman during this period.[[115]](#footnote-115)59 A friend of Dalziel was Sir Henry Cosmo Bonsor, who held the position of Chairman of the Managing Committee of the South Eastern & Chatham Railway and was a great advocator of Pullman travel. (A Pullman car was named in his honour in 1912.)[[116]](#footnote-116)60

Throughout his term in office, Dalziel attempted to meet with senior railway company representatives of almost all main-line railway companies to discuss issues of pricing and terms of trading; and before long these meetings began to produce policy agreements, if not occasional rejections, including for example, one relating to a sizeable experimental venture of running Pullmans on London & North Western Railway metals from London Euston.[[117]](#footnote-117)61 The meetings proved variably successful, to the extent that on attempting to secure an agreement even on a short-term basis, some unusual practices emerged. For example, with regard to the supplementary fares agreed in advance for the ‘Torquay Pullman’ on the Great Western Railway (G.W.R.), unusually one shilling per head went to the railway. The Pullman agreement with the G.W.R. was probably unique, in that it provided for the railway to take a slice of the Pullman extra-fare charged. (As a matter of historical record, the American George Mortimer Pullman, the founder of the Pullman Company, had always firmly rejected demands of this kind by the railway companies, unlike his Belgian rival at the time Georges Nagelmackers of the Wagons-Lits Company).[[118]](#footnote-118)62 Although enjoying contractual agreements with the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (L.M.S.), G.W.R., Great Southern Railway of Ireland, among others during and shortly after the Dalziel period in office, many of these agreements were later modified, and in some cases concentrated to one operating area only, i.e. the L.M.S. (Northern Division) Scottish services.[[119]](#footnote-119)63

Following the death of Dalziel in 1928, Pullman expansion continued where possible, allied to marketing and some considerable changes in carriage building technique during that same year, at which point the company exercised a high degree of control, albeit briefly, over the ‘extra fare’ market. Its influence culminated in laying claim to comprehensive services extending throughout the British Isles, which by the end of the decade now accounted for over 200 Pullman cars of increasingly standard and versatile types replacing many older ‘non-standard’ variants, as well as significant interest in a British holding company known as the International Sleeping Car Share Trust Limited. With an aim to secure a controlling interest in the Wagons Lits Company, this trust had a recorded capital of £ 5,250,000, in addition to the high appointments which at one time Dalziel held in it.[[120]](#footnote-120)64

**2.4 Business planning and growth**

Could it be true that by 1923 the Pullman Company was considered to be *primus inter pares* among the railway service providers, appearing set to consolidate and retain this position with the added incentive of ‘important innovations in British Rail Travel’ as suggested by *Modern Transport*?[[121]](#footnote-121)65

Within a decade the company came to lead the industry of ‘extra-fare’ travel with the distinction that every operational vehicle in the fleet was almost always decorated in supposedly recognisable historical styles.[[122]](#footnote-122)66 In order to understand this development, it is necessary to examine the company’s plans under Dalziel.

Immediately following the formation of the British company, the main operational objective had been to maximise the utilisation of all available cars, secure additional routes and increase the services offered, on the assumption that this would produce profits. Staff working on the cars were all carefully selected and trained at the Battersea depot (and from 1928 at Preston Park Works, Brighton) in a redundant Pullman car. This was in stark contrast to the purpose-built schools with residential accommodation offered by the ‘Big Four’ Railway Companies including, for instance, the L.M.S. School of Transport at Derby.[[123]](#footnote-123)67 Furthermore, the accounting procedures employed by the Pullman Company defined profits initially at least as residual rewards to management, and not as returns on capital employed. This naturally tended to direct attention to searching for, and then exploiting, new sources of revenue, including the sale of meals and light refreshments on board and a concerted drive to secure advertising fees, through in-house magazines, brochures and other publicity.[[124]](#footnote-124)68 This immediate objective was interrelated with the more fundamental one of securing the long-term prosperity of the company and to serve the financial and social needs of a large and strongly committed nonconformist workforce. Often remarked upon at general meetings and through press releases, Dalziel reminded shareholders of the special unified relationship between the Pullman Board and all its employees. This was reinforced in much company literature, including the following historical quotation by Sir Francis Drake used repeatedly in Christmas cards:

I must have the Gentleman to haul and draw with the Mariners and the Mariners with the Gentleman – let us show ourselves to be *all* of one Company.[[125]](#footnote-125)69

Eventually, when the aims of expansion and prosperity were secure, the Board became intent on building up a national and international reputation for their business. During October 1925, a letter from Dalziel appeared in *The Times* indicating the imminent introduction of numerous new all-Pullman car services throughout Europe. This was probably the high pinnacle and culmination of his visionary aspirations and investment at the time: the creation of the first-class only ‘Golden Arrow’ to Paris.[[126]](#footnote-126)70 In an attempt to bring visual coherence and unity to its expanding fleet, the company appeared to be careful about nurturing a corporate identity reflected in their latest vehicles for the ‘Golden Arrow’, and for the first time, taking on wider, recognisable ‘international’ interior styles to give a sense of modernity.[[127]](#footnote-127)71 Such business objectives as expansion, profit, style and decoration and good employer-employee relations, gave a powerful and continual thrust to the search for new markets. This also included, as outlined earlier, the introduction of third-class ‘Pullmans’ on various routes i.e. from 1915 London to Brighton, and from 1923, London to Newcastle (second-class on selected Continent routes) which, at least, contributed to further brand differentiation of existing ones on account of ‘extra fare’ pricing and on-board limitations. However, the apparent furore shown by the new continental Pullman services had been wholly overshadowed by the earlier General Strike that swept through Britain during May 1926. Reflecting on the impact this had made to business generally, Dalziel advised at a subsequent ordinary general meeting of the Company:

First the railway strike, and subsequently the coal strike, brought the great bulk of our services to a standstill, while the working charges in all departments, with exception of the commissary supply, remained the same.[[128]](#footnote-128)72

After all, in all this, there is no evidence to suggest that the Board were at any time looking beyond their own industry, even if only as far as related ones in the provision of catering, which adheres to the analysis of expanding firms, as argued by Penrose. Almost parallel to the way in which firms grew and the welfare implications involved, it followed that the Pullman Company had increasingly spare resources by the mid-1920s. Although brief, it possessed ample financial reserves that it began to experience a measure of overcapitalisation.[[129]](#footnote-129)73 More significantly, it had potentially spare management resources, since Board members could well have reduced their involvement in the business by limiting their activities to major management functions. Mr Stanley Adams, a protégée of Dalziel, was one such director who took up appointments with other companies, including Bakelite Ltd and Thomas Cook, the travel agent.[[130]](#footnote-130)74

In one sense, of course, this could be regarded as a measure of efficiency, but to do so would be to ignore Pullman’s positive opposition to developing business activities beyond catering or luxury travel. In part this was simply a matter of choice but also, it was founded on a shared belief that extension of the company into new areas would lead to divided, and therefore destructive, loyalties in what was essentially, and necessarily for them, a service company formed of long-standing, loyal employees.[[131]](#footnote-131)75

The task of finding new markets in the luxury travel sector was a difficult one because of the basic nature of the product. Some railway companies including the L.N.E.R. embraced the Pullman car in order to complement their existing passenger services, while others as noted above were only briefly involved with short-term contracts, ultimately preferring to introduce their own versions of luxury accommodation, often with Pullman-style trappings as a direct alternative (sometimes with, but often without any supplementary charge).[[132]](#footnote-132)76 Within the broader context of retailing the Pullman product by the end of the 1920s, it was difficult to imagine how, short of quite revolutionary changes in travelling patterns, the company could expect to achieve a significantly larger share of the market than it had held through existing selling techniques.[[133]](#footnote-133)77

Pullman travel connecting with Continental services offered the most obvious opportunities for new sources of profit, particularly as regard the expansion of a lucrative market with catering on all services, which in turn also presented formidable technical challenges for the railways. Dalziel continued to enjoy a close working relationship with the chairmen of numerous railway (as well as non-railway related) companies, who all exercised a genial, astute, and strong influence over policy-making. Thus, the relationship with Cosmo Bonsor and others probably helped secure contracts, additional extensions of services and introducing up-to-date vehicles to their lines from time to time.

At an ordinary general meeting of members of the Pullman Company held in December 1926, Dalziel outlined the management’s ongoing interest in foreign or overseas developments:

We are joint partners with the Compagnie des Wagons-Lits in all our Pullman services on the continent, and it is not unreasonable to think that we may eventually benefit by them … your enterprise is popular with the public and is well patronised, and I am still more glad to be able to say that it holds the goodwill of the railway companies with which it is in direct contact.[[134]](#footnote-134)78

Other than providing additional vehicles, the crucial move by Dalziel was in direct accordance with the company’s general policy of expansion and finding economies of scale, by persuading the Docker Brothers to work on Pullman’s behalf.[[135]](#footnote-135)79 The Board estimated significant saving in costs made possible by Docker’s assembly line production, and although this had been done on a conservative basis before with seven British-built cars for the ‘Southern Belle’ during 1908, as previously outlined, it was shown that by using new materials, including the greater usage of steel making vehicles lighter and easier to haul, amounted to a reduction of 30 per cent. (from a cost of almost £ 7,000 per vehicle to around £ 4,900 dependent on type i.e. with or without kitchen plant).[[136]](#footnote-136)80 But the really striking thing was that Dalziel did not confine himself to purely technical matters: he offered clear advice on the potential market to the railway company boards themselves.[[137]](#footnote-137)81 In his theory of entrepreneurship*,* McClellandargues that entrepreneurs possess a need for achievement at any cost that drives their activity, and this is particularly noted of Dalziel who continued to play a pivotal role in the process of the promotion and execution of the business on broader terms, as well as striving to develop his own interests.[[138]](#footnote-138)82 Drucker, on the other hand, claims that while profit is the criterion, innovative entrepreneurs always search for change and exploits it as an opportunity. To them there is only success or failure.[[139]](#footnote-139)83

**2.5 Ticketing and pricing schedules**

Besides the distinction of travelling ‘de-luxe’ by fare-paying passengers willing to purchase an ‘extra fare’ ticket, it had meant that from their introduction (initially as sleeping cars) in the 1870s by the American parent, Pullman’s pricing schedule had been a haphazard secondary factor. Within the requirements of making services pay, supplementary fares were often adjusted to attract demand, and it appears it was only with Dalziel’s instigation that a fixed price tariff – regardless of the railway company but dependant on the distance and class of travel taken - was firmly introduced within official guides and notice of fees payable in newspaper advertisements.[[140]](#footnote-140)84

Pullman management therefore priced their seat tickets on the principle of adding a high mark-up compared to conventional railway company saloon seats prior to World War 1; and the relatively high price for stand-alone reservations, rather than an all-inclusive ticket, became a feature of product differentiation especially on the Southern-based services, where excursion rates only later became available at week-ends and certain off-peak services.[[141]](#footnote-141)85

There was always a quest for additional revenue, and one regular source was from advertising. Between the wars Pullman’s various publications invited suppliers to advertise at a fee. Promotional material of all kinds, including book matches and drip mats were put out on the Pullmans, while some of the bar cars display cabinets were also available for letting. More often than not, products were also discreetly advertised on tariffs and wine lists, for which fees were also charged, while on board, cigars, cigarettes, all specially commissioned for the Pullman Company produced a profit on trade prices, including brands such as Abdulla and Wrigley’s ‘chewing sweet’, for instance.[[142]](#footnote-142)86 Yet Pullman management continued to remain cautious and refrained from offering and stocking anything which might not be deemed suitable; especially as they were concerned to uphold the company’s reputation as the leading service provider with attentive on-board staff – this, after all, had been an important and long-lasting element in Pullman’s success on South Coast services generally.[[143]](#footnote-143)87 In light of the existing range of services, the specification of a train appealing to the third-class ticket holder was particularly predetermined, but this still left room for choice, and the so-called ‘limited trains’ continued to rely upon very old American-built vehicles remodelled for the purpose.[[144]](#footnote-144)88 The critical factor was price as it defined and differentiated the third-class ‘Pullman limited train’ service on the Brighton line pitched at an affordable nine pence per passenger per journey.[[145]](#footnote-145)89

According to the *Modern* *Transport* correspondent, conventional pricing and costing methods automatically endowed these services with healthy profit margins.[[146]](#footnote-146)90 While they promoted so-called ‘de-luxe travel’ to a wider audience, no evidence suggests they rivalled, or supplanted the first-class only Pullman trains (on the same lines). The scale and speed of Dalziel’s success anticipated some good results. For example, fractional profit margins on Pullman dining cars in Scotland, took a completely new order of significance when multiplied by the turnover of meals and refreshments. From the commencement of post-war services on the Caledonian Railway in 1919 to 1921 ‘profits rose’ on these specific services alone. While no detailed values are known, profits were due entirely to the sale of meals and refreshments on ‘non-supplement’ buffet and dining cars working to intense and complex rotas.[[147]](#footnote-147)91

Although due care, rather than complacency remained the watchword of the management at this time, unusual and inexplicable situations occasionally arose and two examples are discussed. During May 1923, a fact-finding enquiry with the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company (B.R.C.W.) enquired into the costs involved in ordering 50 timber-framed Pullman cars. In their response to Dalziel, the Builders’ offered to construct ‘metallic’ cars at the same cost as timber cars without additional charge (with settlement by Pullman Company shares). Even though the first all-steel Pullman car for Britain service was not introduced until some five years later, in 1928, the benefits of steel construction were already by then widely known, but no explanation has come to light to explain why the Pullman Board declined the offer, and continued to accept timber-bodied vehicles by B.R.C.W., in the interim, that would be subject to heavy maintenance and deemed to have a shorter limited life, by comparison.[[148]](#footnote-148)92 By 1934, however, all-steel cars were well-established with over 60 vehicles of that type in service, at which time the Pullman Company came to represent the ‘de-luxe extra fare’ market on almost all main railway lines, even though some railway companies were diligently introducing their own special stock of well-appointed carriages in a bid to attract custom. The key to Pullman’s success was of course its head start with short-run services at prices beginning at nine pence, as quoted above, since this gave them the market opportunity to establish itself as *the* universal luxury travel brand. Pullman’s other brands, especially the developing ‘Belle’ and ‘Limited’ trains were then already well-established often running to daily schedules irrespective of season.[[149]](#footnote-149)93

The second example occurred at the same time during 1923 shortly after the Southern Railway had been formed. Despite the fact that the company had agreed to outsource much of its catering services to the Pullman Company and had honoured all the contracts in place from its predecessors, a question was raised with Dalziel during January and again in February 1924, which although premature at this time, eventually anticipated the 1960s Pullman policy under the auspices of the British Railways Board, i.e. one dedicated class of travel:

We must not overlook the fact that in the course of time it is quite likely that the Railways in this Country may adopt the same arrangement as is in force in America, that is that they will only put on one class, with supplementary payment or specially provided accommodation.[[150]](#footnote-150)94

This point was a clear indication of the railway’s desire to adopt a simple one-class ‘extra-fare’ system rather than continue, albeit briefly, with the eventual (short-lived) three classes of Pullman accommodation offered on their boat train services. Although a response from Pullman management has not been traced, the railway concluded ‘you realise the fairness of the proposal … put forward, and would be prepared to abide by it subject to the fares being agreed’.[[151]](#footnote-151)95

**2.6 Railway company collusion**

Before examining the more general nature and significance of Pullman’s development, it is necessary to consider the reaction of the company to two specific developments in the railway industry during the early 1920s, that is price-cutting of rail travel and the railway company’s oligopoly.

During the early post-World War 1 period, almost all railway companies were, by necessity, beginning to price-cut on main-line routes to attract custom, although many appeared to want some form of strong action to regulate prices and terms.[[152]](#footnote-152)96 Dalziel warned that he was ‘doubtful whether a schedule agreed by all companies working at that time under Government control could be made to work’, and although concerned about public reaction, he remained apprehensive of certain railway companies stealing the march on Pullman, to such an extent, that a wholesale replacement of more comfortable armchairs was agreed for the first-class cars with higher padded backs offering greater comfort, and a firm conviction to have each car differently decorated.[[153]](#footnote-153)97 In a comment voiced to shareholders in June 1923, he summed up his caution with what became the guiding principles of the company’s business approach, as it accustomed itself to its new-found prodigious prosperity, ‘…we are doing well now. Don’t let us take a leap in the dark. One false step now may ruin our business and turn its growth into decay.[[154]](#footnote-154)98

However, during the same year, the Pullman Board involved itself in discussions with the newly-formed railway operators about introducing long-haul trains to the North, with the plan of agreeing to, among other matters, cheaper all-inclusive tickets.[[155]](#footnote-155)99 But none of this amounted to much, for it was clear to Pullman that there were two fairly distinct markets for business and leisure rail travel: a demand for short-haul services, i.e. for a journey duration of about one hour, and another where journeys were considerably longer i.e. the lucrative London to Scotland route which were not only ‘intensely competitive, but where profit margins were continually being squeezed’.[[156]](#footnote-156)100 Nonetheless, Dalziel demonstrated that regular contact with the operating companies was a necessity in order to enable it to exercise a degree of control and market leadership – and, more fundamentally, Pullman wanted to maintain their dominant position in the luxury railway sector. This was again evident at an ordinary general meeting of the Pullman Company held earlier during April, when Dalziel referred to the development of the ‘Pullman Car system’ on British railways.[[157]](#footnote-157)101 He declared that he was ‘sanguine before long the Company could reasonably hope to become as active, as useful, and as far-reaching an institution in British railway affairs as the International Sleeping Car Company’.[[158]](#footnote-158)102 His aim was to maximise sales through marketing, including canvassers.[[159]](#footnote-159)103 At this general meeting, shareholders were also advised that regarding the cars and equipment account (per the assets section) were considerably augmented during the previous two years from £ 849,599 rising to £ 1,259,835 (and, by comparison, rising again four years later to £ 1,595,888 in February 1927).[[160]](#footnote-160)104 Dalziel explained there was a marked improvement in the volume of business, reflected in the substantial increase in passenger and commissary receipts while the number of services in operation was greater than in the preceding year. Net profits for 1922-1923 were reported as £ 80,609. (See appendix 3, 299-300, with comparative years).[[161]](#footnote-161)105

*The Railway Gazette* correspondent reinforced ‘the encouraging news’ by advising that:

the Pullman Car will eventually become the standard means of providing superior accommodation, though some of the cars are available for the use of passengers without payment of a supplement, where they replace ordinary restaurant cars. Whatever may be the outcome, there is no doubt the Pullman car has become an established feature of British railway practice.[[162]](#footnote-162)106

In short, although Dalziel appeared to have all the qualifications, his strategy did not necessarily conform to the precepts of what would now be defined as ‘stiffling competition’.[[163]](#footnote-163)107 For in terms of sales and profitability, it is doubtful whether this made much difference, although it might be said that the company’s broader business strategy, caution and lack of understanding of its true market position had important consequences in relation to the second phase or development during his leadership. Expanding upon the analysis of the Pullman Company’s market position in terms of sales value and niche market dominance, it is necessary to add an account of what this meant in terms of profits. It has been shown that almost at the beginning of the British company, Pullman accounted for around 10 per cent. of advanced railway seat reservations during 1910. At this time the railway company-owned saloons, or ‘extra fare’ accommodation also produced a similar percentage of total sales beyond the ordinary first-class accommodation (as well as second- and third-class offered on the ‘American Car Train’).[[164]](#footnote-164)108 Just over ten years later, in 1923, the evidence suggests that capitalisation of the Southern Railway Company was on the basis of the net profits of each former constituent company, and on these terms, it was necessary to allot Pullman almost 60 per cent. of the ordinary share capital, by which time the management had secured exclusive catering rights, and appeared to remain the first choice for royalty, heads of state and other special traffic.[[165]](#footnote-165)109 Although prepared and published during 1930 (and several years post Dalziel involvement), a review of the detailed table of ‘British Restaurant and Pullman car trains’, published by *The Railway* *Magazine*, confirms that the Southern Railway operated 116 Pullman cars and six ‘limited’ trains, in contrast to the L.N.E.R. who operated eight ‘limited’ trains. Ordinary stock was included in the review, but the Pullman services were also identified to make as many as four journeys a day, which explains the high figure achieved by the Southern of 68 workings, in proportion to the size of that system, and compared to its ordinary timetable services.[[166]](#footnote-166)110

Pullman’s profitability at this time arose directly from securing new operating rights, and maximising an expanding fleet of locomotive-hauled cars which were latterly standardised to four main types (excluding those tied to the South Coast electric services, including the ‘Brighton Belle’). It follows, therefore, that Pullman’s share of the industry’s profits might have been probably significantly above 15 per cent – an informed guess would possibly put it greater, had it not been for the impact of World Recession during the early 1930s.

Nevertheless, Dalziel and the Pullman Board were cautious in their policies at a time when railway-owned special rolling stock of the ‘Big Four’ was increasingly introduced from the mid-1920s (and later) in direct competition with Pullman services. In the event, the dominant characters of Dalziel and later his successor, Stanley Adams, endeavoured to make the company competitive, and their decision to pursue this course derived from their assessment that it would be extremely difficult to get any sort of satisfactory terms from the railway companies, if they were not to co-operate.

On this reasoning alone, the possibility of Pullman branching out was ruled out especially as almost all the contracts in place were in the event limited in scope and were time-sensitive. In short, there is no way of precisely determining which was the optimum course, given Dalziel’s objectives and the Pullman Board’s necessarily imperfect knowledge. In turn, this raises what is in many ways a more fundamental issue in this context: the manner in which the Pullman Company adopted its choice of policy. In effect, it is argued that the Pullman Board did not fully adopt a meaningful strategy to meet changes in market conditions, or direct competition from the railway companies themselves. They simply adopted short-term tactical policies which squared with their cautious, pragmatic approach. Jenkinson has argued that in any case, by 1937 both the L.N.E.R. and L.M.S. had introduced brand new, streamlined trains which were widely advertised, and ran to record fast schedules, and their appointments were contemporary in style. They also attracted a supplementary fare on a similar basis to Pullman, but pitched at lower amounts for both first- and third-class accommodation.[[167]](#footnote-167)111

In the immediate situation the Pullman strategy might appear reasonable enough, but when it is seen against its longer-term consequences, it reveals a great deal about the formulation of business strategy. The elements underlying Pullman’s emergence as the dominant supplier of luxury services stand out reasonably clearly from the foregoing analysis. To reiterate, Pullman adopted early branding and joint advertising with railway companies. In addition, the acquisition of exclusive rights to certain technical innovations enabled it to steal the march on competitors in a manner which gave it rapid and commanding market advantage before the outbreak of world war in 1914. Above all, at this time Pullman’s success depended on the relationships Dalziel made with the individual operating companies over which its cars ran. These factors focus attention on the role of entrepreneurship. One of the general problems in this regard lies in taking account of relationships between various levels of management within the company, in the process of decision-making. The Pullman Company was, of course, at an early stage of development in which the ownership and control of over-all strategy was left to Dalziel, who was also involved in the whole range of managerial functions.

In examining entrepreneurial performance, it is important to note that, in the case of the Pullman Company, while oligopoly theory is useful in helping to distinguish certain dominant features of the luxury service provider over a twenty year period to the point of Dalziel’s death in 1928, it does not provide anything like an adequate basis for explaining business behaviour. However, Dalziel’s immediate objective was to increase sales of seats as the means of increasing revenue. This involved some notion of a satisfactory level of profits, until the early 1920s at least, but this was pliable in accordance with contemporary accounting practices. This immediate objective was further conditioned by successive Board members’ concern to preserve the long-term existence of the business in order to meet the financial and social needs of an increasingly large workforce. By this fact alone entrepreneurship can be easily elevated in the analysis to the position of the central dynamic factor which responds to a range of other, given positions. This approach, argued by Davenport-Hines, is elaborated with a colourful driving account of Dalziel and underwritten by apparent evidence of deeper psychological motivations.[[168]](#footnote-168)112

On the other hand, could it be that the particular talents of the Pullman Board combined shrewdness in exploiting available markets and techniques? It could be argued that Pullman had business flair in taking some calculated risks with new ideas, but these were limited.[[169]](#footnote-169)113 Thus, in terms of profit or loss, the company probably benefited from the virtues of Board members’ without suffering unduly from its vices. The evidence suggests that by the 1930s particularly, three of the ‘Big Four’ railway companies at least were vigorous in their efforts to match, if not better, Pullman’s appeal and market performance. Notwithstanding, Pullman proved its ability in 1933 by taking up the challenge with these companies by introducing the modern electric, all-steel, all-Pullman ‘Southern Belle’, later better known as the ‘Brighton Belle’, as well as individual Pullman cars workings on all ‘Central Division’ services. These trains all featured new materials, including wide-spread use of plastics and stainless-steel fittings for the first time, and the ‘Belle’ inaugurated an intense all-year-round inter-city service.[[170]](#footnote-170)114

For all their brief success, however, the Pullman Board rarely adopted coherent strategies as conditions altered. Their response appeared to be one of short-term tactics, albeit in accordance with their basic objectives. The policy to introduce the ‘all-steel’ Pullman from 1928 for faster, safer and more comfortable running has been shown to be an example *par excellence* of this approach. As one of the leading examples of the luxury travel market, it is of more general significance: it stands as a warning against assuming that companies necessarily operate on the basis of a prepared strategy, however well or badly defined; in fact, what might appear as a strategy *ex post* might well have been the outcome of a series of short-term tactical manoeuvres.

**2.7 Conclusion**

This chapter at least bears out an analysis that Dalziel’s leadership was of importance in securing Pullman dominance over other railway luxury service providers. He was also a successful entrepreneur in various businesses, but the performance of his company was due to many factors outside of his control, including the acceptance of the railway companies with whom Pullman contracted. But at the same time this does not imply a correspondingly crucial role for entrepreneurship; yet it is in this latter respect that by far the most significant assessment of its economic role has to be made. In other words, Pullmans managements’ performance is probably unique. The nature of these external factors together with what is known of the Pullman Company and other railway luxury sectors during the first quarter of the twentieth century, provides support for the hypothesis that if Pullman had not come to dominate the industry some other company would have done. Entrepreneurship was obviously a necessary condition of the sector’s growth, but the level required was not such as to make it a factor in short supply. In other words, Dalziel was by far the main beneficiary of the Pullman Company’s special talents. However, in so far as the timing of innovation is an important factor in an industry’s development, then the unique combination of chance elements and the business abilities of the Pullman Board might well have been of significance too. A plausible hypothesis would be that if Pullman had been unwilling to expand its operations, retaining solely a ‘Southern’ presence, in the short run, minimal Pullman services would have made the luxury sector far easier game for its competitors, particularly on the lucrative long-distance business and excursion routes that later developed. While this would have resulted in different ownership of the industry it is difficult to see how it would have resulted in any change in structure: a foreign oligopolist would have simply supplanted a domestic one. Moreover, this hypothesis ignores Pullman’s delay of years before taking full advantage of its patent rights, so an alternative British company might simply have replaced Pullman and developed a similar position. Whichever way, various alternatives on this counterfactual theme are developed it seems to make little difference to the probable outcome.

It is, of course, impossible to generalise about the development of British business enterprise over the first quarter of the twentieth century on the basis of this one case. At least, the luxury railway sector is of some general significance as a major example of a consumer industry; in some ways it could be defined as a new industry of this period. Although hampered by an old industrial structure and the ramifications of World War 2, expansion of the luxury market was associated with buoyant demand and new products and by traditional patterns of labour and organisation. Later, as other chapters outline, successful performance was directly the result of an established market, as well as technological and institutional factors, rather than oligopoly and Dalziel’s relations with railway companies. In short, this analysis provides some grounds for suggesting that discussion of the performance of British business, over this period at least, should concentrate primarily on such factors, and only secondarily on the particular virtues or vices of individual business men.

**3.0 Development of the luxury railway sector 1910-1939**

**3.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines Pullman’s performance and its development of the luxury railway sector, exploring the values of marketing and the construction of specific passenger identities. More generally, this chapter also supports and extends trends in the wider historiography of gender and mobility. Sociology endeavours to establish the conditions in which the consumers of cultural goods, and their taste for them, are produced, and at the same time to describe the different ways of appropriating such of these objects as are regarded at a particular moment as works of art, and the social conditions of the constitution of the mode of appropriation that is considered legitimate.

The origins of Britain’s luxury railway market from the late 19th century grew slowly as railway networks expanded.[[171]](#footnote-171)1 The development of the Pullman company’s domestic and foreign markets was, however, determined largely by economic and political considerations, and by the structural changes within the British railway industry itself.[[172]](#footnote-172)2 How the Pullman management interpreted the market developments, and acted upon them - once it had become a wholly British-owned organisation, separate from its American parent in 1907 - was a major determinant in their success or failure, as too, were their relationships with the railway companies with whom they entered into short- or long-term contract.[[173]](#footnote-173)3 Pullman’s strategic decisions on investment, development of their product and employment of skilled craftsmen to maintain their growing fleet, were based on the interpretation, not only of long-term market trends, but also of the major fluctuations in demand that affected each geographic and economic region.[[174]](#footnote-174)4

The early provision of portfolio capital for Pullman car construction from the London market and from numerous private investment dealings with the industrialist Dudley Docker, was subsequently emulated by other European capital markets.[[175]](#footnote-175)5 The nationalism that followed, including the increasing effects of import tariffs influenced the potential for the British industry.[[176]](#footnote-176)6 The major difficulty for Pullman in understanding the rise of passenger receipts was in trying to predict the extraordinary fluctuations in demand with which the company was faced in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.[[177]](#footnote-177)7

The economic cycles greatly affected the market, which followed a largely unpredictable demand pattern. Investment decisions for the future anticipated the likely capacity requirements when demand was high, without over-providing when demand was low. The latter invariably led to cash-flow problems and manpower reductions.[[178]](#footnote-178)8 Pullman management from its initial set-up was thus required to monitor changing markets to predict potential demand, and the external influences that could divert that potential to the railway companies own restaurant carriages or special saloons which were seen generally on a par with Pullman cars.[[179]](#footnote-179)9 Their use of representational agents in Europe, Ireland and further afield, in Egypt to keep Davison Dalziel and his management in London informed of passenger potentials, followed the practices developed when Pullman sleeping cars were initially introduced in Italy during the 1880s. The pattern of British trade and overseas investment, argued by Cottrell, followed an 8-12 years’ boom/depression cycle, known as the ‘long swing’, which largely affected the Pullman Company.[[180]](#footnote-180)10 The health of British trade and overseas investment, in turn, accelerated or supressed the British domestic economy. As the provider of luxury vehicles and, later deemed a catering contractor, Pullman was wholly dependent on the railways, where the rise and fall of first-class traffic patterns at the time determined passenger requirement. It is therefore necessary to investigate both the growth of the luxury sector, the evolution through which the demands fluctuated, and how marketing assisted, in order to understand the context within which managements’ decisions were made.

To provide sufficient capacity of seats to meet peak demands, particularly on the boat trains to and from the South Coast ports, or the race and other special events, without surplus capacity when the receipts were low, required strategic decisions on investment and employment, and tactical decision-making about employment levels on the cars, and at the maintenance shops, to preserve scarce labour skills whilst maintaining profitability.

This investigation will also provide an understanding of the market influences that led the company towards structural and corporate changes, particularly from the mid-1920s. The changes ranged between progressive specialisation of the lucrative high-end tourist market and arrivals by ocean liner, for instance, to complete failure, withdrawal and liquidation in succession of certain services, notably in Scotland and Ireland. (See also appendix 3 regarding fluctuating annual revenues from 1921-1939).[[181]](#footnote-181)11

**3.2 Market growth**

From its American start-up in the 1860s, the Pullman Company grew to over 70 vehicles by the end of the nineteenth century operating on the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway; London & South Western Railway, the Midland Railway, the Highland Railway and in Italy, the Mediolanum Railway. Its fleet would possibly have been considerably larger had the British main-line railway companies not undertaken their own luxury carriage manufacture from the 1890s. The growth in output was interrupted in each decade, as national, regional and world economic cycles influenced growth in rail transport, resulting in considerable fluctuations in traffic and, in some cases, business uncertainty.[[182]](#footnote-182)12

The British market showed no appreciable growth trend in the early 1900s, but moved through the first decades in a series of cyclical fluctuating peaks representing the residual requirements of the main line railway companies in part only.[[183]](#footnote-183)13 The market at that time was principally composed of main-line luxury carriages of numerous designs and types, as well as Pullman cars (pre-fabricated and built to American designs), to which was added a significant number of restaurant and dining cars, private carriages and royal saloons.[[184]](#footnote-184)14 With origins to the 1870s, the main-line market met the needs of the early railways in Britain and elsewhere, by expanding considerably by the 1920s as railways were developed in the Empire (particularly India), Latin America, the Middle East and the Far East, in addition to Britain itself.[[185]](#footnote-185)15 The rapid growth in the market was well understood, as various companies were offering luxury vehicles for the first-time, in addition to the ordinary company-owned compartment first-, second- and third-class carriages. The effects of the growing and fluctuating market showed themselves as companies started-up, diversified into, or withdrew from the sector.[[186]](#footnote-186)16 In some cases, the vehicles were later sold to other railway companies, while many were also bought by the Pullman Company at discounted prices, including the ‘Folkestone vestibule train’ and later, redundant ambulance coaches from the Great War.[[187]](#footnote-187)17 These were all remodelled and furnished into ‘Pullmans’ filling gaps in the management’s less lucrative services for an anticipated short-lived period of some 10 years.

3.2.1 The Domestic Market

In order to meet the growth in their services, the larger railway companies embarked on their own carriage manufacture.[[188]](#footnote-188)18 Using their existing maintenance and building workshops, these companies invested in new facilities and skills, such as cabinet-making. This provided economies of scale through wider use of their workshop resources, but carried the risks of demand fluctuation without the opportunity to diversify into alternative markets when few new carriages were required.[[189]](#footnote-189)19 The Midland Railway, for instance, with its Derby workshops, constrained their new-build capacity to meet a relatively constant demand (while simultaneously introducing American-style Pullman cars to their lines), with peak requirements being met from the independent sector.[[190]](#footnote-190)20 The smaller (or lighter) railways, however, remained fully reliant on the independent carriage manufacturers for the provision of their rolling stock.

The culture that developed, with each railway company establishing an identity through rolling stock design and specific livery of its trains, was peculiar to Britain.[[191]](#footnote-191)21 Although a small number of railways in France and elsewhere constructed their own carriages, the large majority of the world’s railways preferred the negotiating strength of independent supply. There were merits and disadvantages in self-design and manufacture as the British-owned Pullman Car Company were later to experience, and a culture divide grew up between the two industries. Once a railway had invested in manufacturing facilities, it generally retained and enlarged them, in spite of fluctuating demand that could result in costs rising above prices from the independent sector.[[192]](#footnote-192)22

Almost immediately following its break-away from the American parent, the newly-formed Pullman management elected to order eight British-designed and British-built cars for the ‘Southern Belle’ from London to Brighton. Generally, thereafter, all other car batches were assigned to, and constructed by, numerous independent companies. The incentive for the Chairman in sanctioning the continued operation of outsourcing, is partly explained by accounting conventions and his personal net-work of relationships with entrepreneurs and industrialists. New cars, which were often authorised as direct replacement for old stock were chargeable against the revenue account, thus avoiding the need to increase the capital account, with its implications for shareholder approval and stock market evaluation.[[193]](#footnote-193)23 The same incentive also led to a strong ‘second-hand’ market, as referred, which offered a cheaper source of swift conversion potential, particularly during economic recession. With minimal expenditure to extend their working lives, many vintage American-built Pullmans (with high clerestory roofs and dated Victorian-style features) were also re-built and remodelled to third-class during the 1920s at the Longhedge workshops (or, later still, at Pullman’s dedicated premises at Preston Park, Brighton from 1928), and fitted out for the first time with kitchen facilities; almost all of which were ‘cascaded’ to less prestigious operations, such as race specials or hired excursions. Once life-expired, they could be sold privately for use as dwellings, devoid of wheels, bogies and underfloor apparatus. [[194]](#footnote-194)24

With the increasing loss of much of the main-line market at the turn of the twentieth century to the railway companies, the Pullman market might have reduced considerably but for the co-incident interest and growth in the demand for short-distance services by the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway who preferred to contract for their services.[[195]](#footnote-195)25 The growth of these services was largely dependent upon wealthy prospective passengers taking their holiday or short-break to Worthing, Eastbourne or Brighton. While the market was customer-led, Pullman at that time retained control of operations and publicity with the co-operation of the host railway.

Additionally, there were efforts made to offer standard designs: by way of dimension (thereby making them interchangeable from one railway company to another, if necessary) and a limited seating capacity, per car, despite the fact that uniformity of their fleet was sometimes seen to be precarious.[[196]](#footnote-196)26 Although all manufacturers were engaged elsewhere in this market to some extent, several including the Metropolitan Amalgamated Railway Carriage & Wagon Company of Lancaster, W.S. Laycock of Sheffield and Clayton Wagons Limited of Lincoln, took the strategic decision to specialise in luxury types of vehicle and later provided some of the ‘finest vehicles in the Pullman fleet’.[[197]](#footnote-197)27

3.2.2 Market improvement

As the market developed in the last decade of the century, the Pullman Company experienced an overall growth in the market for additional services which was interrupted by several periods of low demand that severely tested their ability to remain profitable.[[198]](#footnote-198)28 The period also saw increasing competition from European companies offering similar luxury services, including the Wagons Lits Company who entered into discussions with several British railway companies, to which the South Eastern Railway introduced one of their ‘Club Trains’.[[199]](#footnote-199)29

The growth in the size of railways and in the passenger traffic they handled in turn led to an increase in Pullman batch sizes of three or four vehicles to fifteen or more which favoured the progressive and larger manufacturers, whose continued investment in capital equipment allowed cost reductions to be made to the disadvantage of much smaller firms.[[200]](#footnote-200)30 Importantly at this time, too, there was a major expansion of London-based foreign direct investment in railways in both the Empire and elsewhere, particularly South America. Several railways in Europe, including those in Holland, were either British-owned, with their headquarters in London, or retained strong proprietorial contact with railway companies. The emerging luxury market gave every opportunity for manufacturers to monitor the progress of demand in each country, although the economic and political influences on railway development continued to create fluctuations in demand that were largely impossible to predict. British investment in the railways of the Argentine, for example, was extensive and, by the early post-World War 1 period, twenty-seven of the country’s thirty-four railway enterprises were British controlled.[[201]](#footnote-201)31 However, British carriage builders experienced concerted competition outside Europe from the American industry competing for export orders where modest inroads continued to be made in markets previously considered to be ‘British’, notably in Latin America where long-distance Pullman trains, operated by the American Pullman Company were then being introduced.[[202]](#footnote-202)32

Britain’s capital exports and trade recovered, and manufacturers again faced capacity limitations and quoted longer delivery times and higher prices.[[203]](#footnote-203)33 Although the market had remained buoyant throughout the Edwardian era, and the manufacturers continued to retain full order books for the Pullman Company by 1914, the progressive manufacturers were generally only successful in their pursuit of strategies because they were able to provide sufficient capacity to meet the growth in demand of luxury carriages. The extraordinary surge in production of new vehicles for Pullman during the inter-war period specifically for new routes and services, coincided with high demand from the continental markets. Pullman was able to accommodate the sharp fluctuations in demand by a policy of employing partially skilled labour -according to demand - to remodel, or convert at short notice.[[204]](#footnote-204)34

The strategic decisions taken by Pullman’s newly-formed British management, in collusion with the carriage building industry, were influenced directly by perceptions of the changing market in luxury travel. Whilst the manufacturers controlled the interests in its earliest years, their subsequent decisions on capital investment, technological and design development were all controlled by a market, which latterly it no longer controlled.[[205]](#footnote-205)35 The domestic market, in particular, for which the industry had previously provided most orders (and to its own designs), gradually became a residual market consisting of designs undertaken by the railway companies and the Pullman Company themselves who were forging their own identity through such things as branded silverware, uniforms and decorated literature.[[206]](#footnote-206)36

It was the inability to predict the extraordinary fluctuations in demand that made strategic decision-making so difficult for the manufacturers. The risk to firms through over-commitment of investment of hard timbers and luxury fabrics, producing funding problems when demand was low, underlay the builders’ caution. It led directly to the industry’s divergence between firms dependent upon craft skills, avoiding major capital expenditure, and the progressive firms which were stimulated to develop new capital equipment to reduce craft dependency. Employment policies for these companies were premised on the increasing use of semi-skilled labour, which could be laid off and recruited according to the strength of the market.[[207]](#footnote-207)37 These diverging policies, and the determination to survive the periods of low demand, led the British Pullman Company to base their corporate decisions, both of corporate structure and product diversification, on a combination of long-term growth in the luxury sector and a cautious interpretation of shorter-term demands. The raising of substantial capital, through an enduring partnership with Dudley Docker particularly and, by association, his railway carriage building empire, and other proprietorial businesses, was based on this cautious interpretation.[[208]](#footnote-208)38

Pullman relied on diversification to varying degrees, in their bid to survive through the periods of low demand. Several of their competitors diversified away from the industry permanently, whilst others went out of business altogether through failure to tap into broader markets, including the erstwhile ‘Club Trains’.[[209]](#footnote-209)39 Although Pullman’s dominance in the overseas markets was weakened to their home industries through tariff imposition and increasing capital, the strong British capital market regenerated growth by 1925 through a major investment programme to build 190 new all-steel Pullmans in Britain (almost all first-class) for services managed, operated and hired - through complex arrangement - by the International Sleeping Car Company from France to Spain, and Switzerland to the Black Sea.[[210]](#footnote-210)40 The London company became the dominant influence for luxury rail facilities and their greater involvement (with the support of the host railways’ Chief Mechanical Engineers) in carriage design and associated standard icons, further reduced the technological and design discretion for the industry. Pullman management therefore based its inter-war strategic objectives and decision making on their earlier perception of the evolving travelling market, and with some anticipation of the consequences of its volatility. They broadly sought to reduce the uncertainties of demand, and the attendant risks to their business, through sophisticated marketing and policies which lent itself well particularly on the Southern, with its affluent commuter belt, but not necessarily on other railway company lines. These policies developed rapidly throughout the inter-war period as their major opportunities moved from domestic, to significant European demand.

3.2.3 Pullman marketing

Barely twenty years old, the British Pullman Car Company reached its zenith in the late 1920s by securing many new contracts and building up a fleet of cars, and its immediate future looked reasonably secure. These years also witnessed the launch of its latest luxury vehicles for the ‘Continental Boat Train Express’, supported by an encouraging record of safety on the rails that provoked passengers ‘to show as much interest in the civilised nature of railway travel and novel facilities that might beguile them’.[[211]](#footnote-211)41

Accentuating the domestic comforts of Pullman travel probably also eased women’s acceptance as well as invalids of ‘the train’, helping to regulate interaction between the sexes when travellers came together in the confined, limited space of the carriage interior.[[212]](#footnote-212)42 The unparalleled safety, comfort and speed of British express trains was a staple of the Pullman company’s efforts to persuade people to travel more, at a time when competition was fierce from railway operators generally, and the spread of private motoring and other forms of transportation rapid.[[213]](#footnote-213)43 The Pullman management recognised the need to re-engineer their trains to be suitable as masculine spaces, which might also appeal to the growing numbers of women with the time and money to travel. Such a narrative embeds the consumption of railway travel generally in a history of personal mobility understood as a commodity. In a market economy, as soon as people have any choice about whether to move, and if so by which means, their mobility becomes shaped by the commercial cultures of transport providers. Such commercial cultures are therefore constructed and communicated through a wide range of literary, visual and physical media including technological objects and spaces, such as Pullman cars.[[214]](#footnote-214)44 As Kroen argues that gender infuses the history of consumption and hence that of commercial cultures. The growing acceptance of the inter-war consumer turned both on men’s increasing consumption and on women’s assertion of full political, economic and social status.[[215]](#footnote-215)45

As a result, in the face of their competitors, the railway and Pullman companies’ marketing reflected and contributed to the gendering of inter-war mobility. Even before serious competition from motor cars, buses, trams and unregulated coaches and, even between themselves, the companies had to strenuously market to persuade people to travel. The Pullman Company had little sense of how successful their initiatives were beyond the sale of supplementary tickets for the total number of journeys made, and surviving statistics do not readily allow for a more sophisticated analysis. But once war-time restrictions on marketing had been lifted in 1921, road and railway company competition almost suddenly intensified Pullman’s efforts.[[216]](#footnote-216)46 By the late 1920s at the latest, all social classes had a road alternative for many, perhaps most, journeys: if they travelled by train, it was generally because they chose to do so. Special excursion and tourist fares, shorter journey times, and improved amenities made the train more attractive, although Pullman’s knowledge of how much marketing contributed to the retention or generation of business remained fairly rudimentary.[[217]](#footnote-217)47

How did this develop stimulate growth and encourage both men and women to travel by extra-fare ‘Pullman’? This chapter also argues that Pullman and their close reliance on the railway companies their vehicles served, sought to primarily persuade businessmen that the train offered a suitable environment for them to travel. Prior to the outbreak of World War 2 in 1939, Pullman management also increasingly evidenced some sensitivity to the female market, but this approach was not new. Thirty years before, in an age which generally favoured conspicuous consumption by the rich, pictorial advertising had become more sophisticated in its use of attractively dressed ladies ‘with abundant fur and lace trimmings and […] giant hats resting on hair constructions so ingeniously built-up’ that had first appeared around the time of the 1908 inaugural run of the ‘Southern Belle’. Both official booklets and posters appeared to target women as individuals and household decision-makers, as well as frequent illustrations showing a series of family groups.[[218]](#footnote-218)48

Nevertheless, during the inter-war period, Pullman’s own marketing was conservative: first in the sense that they traded heavily on familiar cultural resources developed by their Edwardian predecessors; and, second, in their failure to fully exploit the commercial possibilities of women’s increased spending power. Yet Pullman demonstrated fresh thinking in persuading men and women to take their trains and construct as a desirable mode of travel, a position that was simultaneously taken up by the railway companies. Men were invariably understood as the primary consumers of ‘de-luxe travel’, with male norms framing the ways in which a developing secondary market of women and children was perceived.[[219]](#footnote-219)49

Overall, as far as Pullman management was concerned, their facilities and services both literally and symbolically transported an alternative form of transportation which would be enjoyed by all its passengers. Soft furnishings, artistic depictions, silver cutlery, fine bone china and patterned crockery were often represented as appealing to women, but the reality was that many men enjoyed them too. While the ‘Big Four’ railway companies were among the largest business organisations in inter-war Britain, steeply hierarchical and engaged in the kinds of systematic efforts to persuade people to travel, great efforts were made to engage in ‘official’ marketing, branding and public relations.[[220]](#footnote-220)50 Pullman management worked closely with the railway companies on whose lines their cars ran, and records suggest they often initiated additional or better publicity to mark a particular event, inauguration or some special service feature. These initiatives continued to use textual media that had been introduced earlier in the nineteenth century, such as books, brochures, handbills, timetables and newspaper and magazine advertisements.[[221]](#footnote-221)51 Pre-World War 1 Pullman services were repeatedly advertised with detailed descriptions, wholly separate of their services and supplementary charges, and which consistently included interior photographs showing off the ‘Pullman style’ and latest facilities.

Pullman’s operational staff, in particular the on-board attendants and conductors, played a significant role in mediating between the company’s slogan ‘Pullman and perfection’, and their potential passengers. Almost from the beginnings of the British company, these well-trained staff (often recruited from the armed services), were perpetually reminded by regular internal memoranda of the importance of ‘selling transport to our customers’, and remembering the values of the company, an imperative underpinned by the threat that competition posed for wages and jobs.[[222]](#footnote-222)52 (The growing power of the trade unions which challenged the more direct forms of discipline familiar on the railways, did not seriously affect the Pullman company during much of the inter-war period, as the staff were generally non-unionised; a situation which altered much later in the 1950s and discussed in a separate chapter).[[223]](#footnote-223)53 The Pullman quarterly in-house magazines: *The Pullman Car Guide, The Golden Way* and *A Princely Path to Paris*, for instance, were central to the management’s ideological control of the workforce, but importantly they also targeted external audiences. Although there existed detailed differences in content between these publications – they were all for passenger use and editorial direction rested firmly with management. Unlike the railways’ own magazines, the L.N.E.R. and Great Western Railway publications, for example, which were sold to its employees and featured short stories and official accounts of railway business, through to entertainment and news about railway staff and social events. Pullman magazines, by contrast, primarily outlined what the passenger should expect of train staff, as well as official photographs of selected accommodation, and destinations served by its trains. They were also a source of detailed timetables and listings of supplementary charges, in addition to repeat advertisements of cigarette brands, confectionary and household products: Abdulla cigars and cigarettes, Wrigley’s chewing sweets and Empire tea, for instance.

*The Golden Way* (published from circa 1912 to 1941) habitually featured diverse cover images by artists, including George Barbier, and so-called ‘Finlay natural coloured’ photographs of the latest cars, as well as a series of detailed descriptions of places of interest served by Pullman. With a quarterly print run by the mid-1930s of 12,000 copies, the publication also recorded aspects of official commercial culture which management hoped their on-board staff would internalise, and then behave accordingly. They were not just an articulation of managerial imperatives, but a window to encourage attendants and other graded staff to propose new ideas and share passenger experience offered by the lady, lord or sir (without naming) – suggesting the gendered as well as the class dimension of this audience.[[224]](#footnote-224)54

By exploring official and semi-official commercial cultures together, broadly construed, it becomes evident that the marketing of inter-war Pullman publications was constructed to appeal primarily to the gentleman, keen for both himself, his wife and family to enjoy up-to-date travel in the comfort and safety of Pullman cars. By the late 1920s, the publicity value of breaking records and speeding up trains was widely recognised by the ‘Big Four’ railway companies as well as Pullman management. The marketing appeared to have intensified on the Southern Railway at this time, which coincided with the increasing volumes of advertised flights from Croydon airport to Paris which had a potential impact to the loadings of the ‘Golden Arrow’. At the height of Depression in 1931, for example, a Pullman brochure in conjunction with the Southern Railway was released to the public advertising reduced fares to Paris, while one anonymous correspondent asserted that ‘speed was king’ during a time when steam traction (and new electric trains) was being exploited for its exceptional speeds for commercial gain.[[225]](#footnote-225)55

Restoring journey times with the lifting of line restrictions was due to a better maintained permanent way, to something like that had been achieved pre-war, and in turn maintained the long-distance express train’s superiority; further accelerations of the very best trains from the early 1930s such as the boat trains running between London and Dover, or the long-haul ‘Queen of Scots’ to Glasgow helped the Pullman Company keep a competitive edge on these prestigious and potentially lucrative routes.[[226]](#footnote-226)56

Rarely represented in isolation, service speed and, by its association the saving of time, was generally linked to other desirable attributes, including the specialised facilities of full meal service on-board marketed as offering still greater moderate economy. During the inter-war period, new technical innovations were reported on Pullman cars, particularly improvements in sound insulation, pressure ventilation and heating, and new modern interior finishes, even if in practice the essential comfort of the ride over some lines due to wear and tear was not always very smooth.[[227]](#footnote-227)57 While patriarchal, official Pullman and railway company culture constructed the desirable attributes of rail travel: speed, design and luxury as gender-neutral, this approach concealed a set of assumptions, as highlighted by the L.N.E.R. company magazine. As argued by Divall, ‘deeply enmeshed in wider societal ones about the still gendered, if changing, spheres of work, leisure and the home […] took men as railways’ primary consumers.’[[228]](#footnote-228)58

Probably the best-known Pullman expresses and their one-time streamlined counterparts from the mid-1930s, were consistently represented as serving the business community and thus, inferring at least, men, although their attraction to a social elite indulging in high-end leisure also admitted women. These trains were of low-capacity as passengers were limited to the number of seats - as no standing was allowed. For the most part they were quite well used and profitable.[[229]](#footnote-229)59 Marketing to attract greater numbers of women travelling on their own started to take place in the late 1920s, where Pullman management promoted the services of the on-board Pullman conductor who was always on hand to help with travel arrangements and advice, as well as advertising the provision of a small number of ladies coupé compartments which could be reserved in advance.[[230]](#footnote-230)60 By 1935, women’s independent use of ‘extra-fare’ trains were also noticed – in a series of colourful and decorative posters designed by Edwin Morton and issued jointly by the L.N.E.R. and Pullman companies for the ‘Yorkshire Pullman – Hull and London in 3½ hours’. These show a well-dressed lady seated in a chintz and coloured armchair surrounded by delicate napery and bone china. Coquettish, wilful, sporty and often smoking was by now the usual Pullman portrayal of young middle-class women.[[231]](#footnote-231)61 A separate subsequent series of publicity material offered something that appealed to men in ways that did not impugn their masculinity. The train’s interior represented a domestic space which had origins to the nineteenth century enabling Pullman management to reconcile the gender- and class-based apprehensions and insecurities associated with this highly mobile space, with its expanding role in collective and individual experience. As others have observed, the railway carriage became an in-between or hybrid space, neither fully public nor private.[[232]](#footnote-232)62 The railway companies and Pullman’s principal strategy was to strengthen the representation of trains as spaces in which social interaction between strangers was mediated by domestic norms. They were helped in this by the continuing, and arguably strengthening, appeal of the home among men as well as women.[[233]](#footnote-233)63 Even so, in specifically marketing to men, the railways had to be sensitive to the fact that, as Francis argues, there were ‘definite limits to the “domestication” of the male’ in the inter-war years.[[234]](#footnote-234)64

As with other modes of inter-war transportation, including aircraft, ocean liners and trams, trains also contrasted an engineering aesthetic of external surfaces and the use of new materials – stainless steel, rubber and emerging plastics with an eclectic variety of interiors as epitomised by Pullman cars, and as detailed more fully in chapters 6 and 8. Marketing by the railway companies emphasised predominantly the most common and traditional of interior compartments. Easily portrayed as a small living room, the space, generally open to both sexes, symbolised the social status of large segments of the inter-war middle and skilled working classes. The more usual image however was of a space fashioned according to male norms and expectations.

On the Southern Railway, travel writer and correspondent E. P. Leigh-Bennett, with a tightly-targeted audience of predominantly upper- and middle-class men, by contrast, was exceptional only by virtue of the detail through which he constructed the domesticated mobility:

There is an air of calm decorum about the Pullman cars … even the voices in the saloons are conversationally subdued … while you are immersing in the London morning paper this princely caravanserai on rails had moved sedately out of the city. The suburbs are already flicking past the long low windows. You would not have noticed this even, were it not that one of the attendants’ pads towards your armchair along the soft carpet with cocktail glasses.[[235]](#footnote-235)65

The notion of privacy was a key element of the domesticity suggested by this representation.[[236]](#footnote-236)66 Pullman’s small marketing department attempted to deal with the threat to privacy by emphasising the social exclusivity of first-class accommodation. From what can be determined, advertising photographs and posters in the 1930s rarely showed more than three people in the main saloons, which even in first-class were usually designed to accommodate eight or ten passengers.[[237]](#footnote-237)67 The challenge of marketing an impression of privacy was exacerbated when the Southern Railway introduced the new electric ‘Southern Belle’ in January 1933, featuring semi-open accommodation and ingenious built-in saloon alcoves, cocooning the (first-class) seated passenger. These were designed to cause minimal disturbance when passengers or attendants were walking through the cars and offered privacy.[[238]](#footnote-238)68 The marketing domesticity to men faced yet another challenge as Pullman had to ensure that the male passenger was not emasculated by indulging in the pleasures of rail travel. Built for the ‘Southern Belle train in 1908, a Pullman car named *Grosvenor* was advertised as a ‘smoking car’ with leather covered armchairs and dark mahogany inlaid panelling, more suggestive of a gentleman’s club. Generally, and more precisely Pullman car interiors were a mixed-sex space which could not be expected to conform to an overwhelming masculine aesthetic akin to men’s rooms, such as the study or library found in upper- and middle-class houses. It was allowed that men might appreciate the interior’s domesticity. Although the evidence is limited, it appears the dominant aesthetic portrayed in marketing images of the Pullman car echoed the cautious, conservative uniformity of middle-class domestic interiors of the 1920s and 1930s.[[239]](#footnote-239)69 This emphasis on traditional domestic values played on middle-class femininity might even have had the advantage of making rail trips, including those overseas and in the safety and comfort of a Pullman car, more attractive to the secondary market of women travellers.[[240]](#footnote-240)70

Pullman management (as well as the ‘Big Four’ railway companies) endeavoured to acknowledge and protect the male traveller’s manliness by consistently ‘showing men to be more interested in engineering than technologically inept women’ argues Divall, and it seems from the mid-1930s, the company adopted an alternative, subsidiary strategy.[[241]](#footnote-241)71 The streamlined-modernist aesthetic of the steam locomotive was one aspect; various extremes of modernism characterised Pullman car interiors, particularly featured in their latest stock – rendering them suitable for the business community – largely a male one. Later, though this policy was relaxed in the 1940s and 1950s, when the Pullman Company simply relied on elements of safety, comfort and convenience as strong selling points, with novel innovations including on-board magazine and book selling, and a wider introduction of the ‘cocktail bar’ car available to all classes.[[242]](#footnote-242)72

**3.3 The construction of cultural distinctions – Pullman style**

The named trains: ‘The Golden Arrow’, ‘The Southern and Brighton Belles’, and post-1959 ‘The Blue Pullman’, for instance, each record their identities akin to world-famous personalities, and document individual contributions to the nebulous, but endlessly evocative reflection of social deportment and *haut-monde* called the ‘Pullman style’.[[243]](#footnote-243)73 Aesthetically, that style was initially at least a composite of period-piece echoes and short-lived notions of the contemporary – from the opulence of eighteenth and nineteenth century artists, including Pergolesi, Piranesi, the Adam brothers, and Hepplewhite among others, to the high-tech in the third decade of the twentieth century, and later still in the British Railway era - the so-called train of tomorrow, the ‘Blue Pullman’ with its air-conditioning and airline-style features.[[244]](#footnote-244)74

Available to those accustomed to it – as well as to those with the means to buy it – luxury as a mode of travel was only the first of many Pullman contributions to railway carriage design. The Pullman cars sense of class, as distinguished from a sense of style, was linked to that phenomenon of social affectation in matters of propriety and seemliness that gave social grace its meaning.[[245]](#footnote-245)75 Yet, decoratively speaking, the first British-built vehicles (1908) were a product of a kind of taste probably as misguided in their parochialism and banality as the styles were short-lived. ‘It is difficult to rein the overmastering enthusiasm inspired by the interiors’, said one anonymous critic, ‘the passenger saloons reveal, down to their smallest detail, a fine appreciation of aesthetic fitness. The modern influence undoubtedly exists, but rampant modernity has been studiously and successfully avoided’.[[246]](#footnote-246)76 The almost sacerdotal sombre interiors of these vehicles were hardly noticed otherwise in a period when British taste proudly embraced domestic lack of show as an element of national character.[[247]](#footnote-247)77 As individual as the ‘Southern Belle’ cars were, their well-crafted eclecticism was but a prelude to the search for a style that would turn 1930s Pullman cars into household names of contemporary clichés.[[248]](#footnote-248)78 Maple and Company, Waring & Gillow and Martyn and Company were all commissioned to furnish Pullman car interiors to the designs of the Pullman Board, and to their credit, these companies were the first to introduce sliding lights above the large windows (and later followed by railway companies), flexible gangway connections and hygienic lavatories, changing for good the expectation that a railway journey would consist of many hours enclosed within a restricted poorly ventilated compartment with small windows, as was often the case on ordinary services into the 1960s.[[249]](#footnote-249)79 Until the mid-1920s, however, the designers continued to look to the past for interior artistic inspiration. Later, the distinction of Pullmans lay not in what they advanced technically but in what they consolidated, and in what, in decorative terms, they preserved. The first of their kind quickly became known as ‘palaces on wheels’; these vehicles were triumphs of a rampant historicism sharing schemes of historic interior design which emulated the decorative conservatism of the British establishment – its taste for well-crafted woodwork and patterned upholstery, its abhorrence of anything overdone or remotely imaginative.[[250]](#footnote-250)80 (See figures 3 and 4).

By 1927, the Pullman cars in theory and in fact, may well be the first vehicles - in a succession leading to the final cars - the ‘Blue Pullman’ and the 1960 Northern services replacements – to embrace the ‘modern’ at the very moment when railway history was becoming a sort of romance of the past.[[251]](#footnote-251)81 In any case, these later cars were the product of enlightened company directors, following the death of Davison Dalziel, who were against repeating even the most celebrated innovations of their predecessors, and welcomed all manifestations of the present, including the emerging decorative arts and to a certain extent streamlining.[[252]](#footnote-252)82 Instead of appointing one designer to coordinate the décor as had been the case during the Dalziel ownership of the British company, the builders were asked to commission a team of craftsmen to work in terms of a principle born of an idea – that new Pullmans should be in all ways a creation, in no way a reproduction.[[253]](#footnote-253)83 This idea probably came from Sir Follett Holt, the new Chairman of the Pullman Company, and was potent enough to change the means and methods by which Pullman cars would thereafter be constructed and furnished.[[254]](#footnote-254)84 No longer would the fleet be rolling anthologies of period styles or reliquaries of national memorabilia; each in its own way would now be an original. Consequently, the first batch of cars built in 1926 offered the way to a development which, at the tail end of their evolution, luxury rolling stock generally had become aesthetic objects - a mixture of geometry and modernism that formed the basis of the inter-war ‘Pullman style’.[[255]](#footnote-255)85



**FIG.3. INTERIOR VIEW OF FIRST-CLASS PULLMAN CAR ‘PHILOMEL’, FEATURING ADAM-STYLE MARQUETRY PANELLING AND BRASS FIXTURES AND FITTINGS**

(Metropolitan Carriage, Wagon & Finance Co, 1926 for the Southern Railway)

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)



**FIG.4. INTERIOR VIEW OF THE FIRST-CLASS SALOON OF COMPOSITE CAR ‘RITA’, FEATURING ART-DECO LANDSCAPE MARQUETRY PANELLING AND CHROME FIXTURES AND FITTINGS**

(Metropolitan-Cammell Carriage, Wagon & Finance Co, 1932 for the Southern Railway Electrification)

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)

Realised first by the British, this style was soon emulated by three of the ‘Big Four’ railway companies with their own build of luxury carriages. The L.M.S. introduced, for example, club or lounge cars for the ‘Royal Scot’ in 1927; the G.W.R. ‘Ocean Liner Saloons’ in 1931 and the L.N.E.R. offered an array of special hairdressing, cinema and cafeteria cars on some of their long-distance services, while the *West Sussex Gazette* reported in 1936 ‘it is with the Southern Railway that the Pullman Car is particularly associated’.[[256]](#footnote-256)86 Before long, Pullman’s success would create an attitude toward up-to-date accommodation for its own sake and a determination to replace the decorative excesses of the early century with the introduction of the extravagances of chrome and plastic. This drive to be at all costs new would not end until the ‘Blue Pullmans’ by which time it proved that quality was impervious to misguided notions of contemporaneity and, to misapprehensions of the modern that produce the modernistic.[[257]](#footnote-257)87 The end of the 1920s produced a melange of effects in a broadly ubiquitous international style epitomised by, more often than not, Pullman’s oval paned passenger vestibule doors, cathedral glass lavatory windows and decorative icons, including the reading lamps at every table, seen to best effect in virtually every important train service on Southern-based railways.[[258]](#footnote-258)88

In some respects, art deco - as it later became known - was passé before it was new, which by 1933 had become the scheme governing the new Brighton line Pullmans, designed with the full agreement of the Southern Railway.[[259]](#footnote-259)89 Repeated encroachments by the angularities of this modern style and intimations of what would later be classified as ‘high tech’ were increasingly in evidence elsewhere, including some ordinary railway rolling stock, as well as on the L.N.E.R.’s expresses, ‘The Flying Scotsman’ or the ‘extra fare’ streamline trains, the ‘Silver Jubilee’ and the ‘Coronation’.[[260]](#footnote-260)90

Continuing a trend that began in the Edwardian period and would soon be decisively reversed in later decades, the Brighton Pullmans catered to almost three times as many passengers in third-class as those accommodated in first-class. Yet so-called luxurious, they may have been, the trains were so configured as to reserve nearly all its splendours for the affluent. In third-class the accommodation was efficient and simple presaging a time when all differences in amenities and luxurious appointments would be minor.[[261]](#footnote-261)91 (See fig.5).

The next wave of brand new cars did not take place until 1960 (although a pre-war order held in abeyance for many years, was finally completed in 1951/52), at a time, too, when relationships with railway managers and new regional control, were no longer on personal levels previously encountered, and corporate ethos anticipated radical change.[[262]](#footnote-262)92 This is especially noted much later during 1958, when designs were in-hand to introduce the new cars on the Northern services, backed and agreed by the newly formed British Transport Commission, as outlined in chapters 8 and 9. Although they were to use British Railways standard underframes and coach body shells, they were still distinctive in external appearance, apart from their traditional umber and cream Pullman livery and recessed inward-opening vestibule doors.[[263]](#footnote-263)93 An example of the Pullman management’s increasing post-war conservatism was inadvertently highlighted in a June 1958 ‘Pullman report’ by *Trains Illustrated* who suggested that ‘some unusually shaped window frames were a possible feature’, too, while inside, several highly attractive schemes of modern décor and concealed lighting were fitted.[[264]](#footnote-264)94

The British Transport Commission’s Design Officer, wrote to Pullmans’ Managing Director, Colonel Frank Harding concerned about the Pullman management’s assumed lack of stylistic awareness:

I felt I must drop you a line about a matter which you know is giving me very deep concern, namely the window shapes of your new replacement vehicles.

When the Design Panel was first set up, the Commission issued a paper in which we were told that we must be very careful not to conform to any passing fashion, and that we must concentrate on designs that would stand the test of time. I think you know that it is my feeling that the particular shape of window you now propose will not stand this test, and what is more, I feel sure that, whether or not this window is fully adopted, in a year or two from now you yourself will come to the same conclusion.[[265]](#footnote-265)95

Both with regard to the new locomotive-hauled cars and, more especially, the ‘Blue Pullman’ diesel units, the company’s senior managers saw Williams’ comments as ‘unwarranted interference’.[[266]](#footnote-266)96 However, his frustrations emerged in a letter he wrote during October 1959 to the consultant designer appointed to advise on the East Coast vehicles:

This job has, I am afraid, been rather tiresome to both of us, and the length of time it has taken to persuade the Pullman Car Company to see our point of view has undoubtedly had an effect on the overall cost of the work.[[267]](#footnote-267)97

In their decision-making to find the suitable builder of these new vehicles, the Pullman management had originally approached no fewer than six rolling-stock manufacturers with ‘preliminary enquiries’ relating to the construction of the proposed new cars. It appears however, that apart from Metro-Cammell, the only company which had submitted a detailed positive response was Cravens Ltd of Sheffield. Although this latter company played no part in the expansion of the Pullman fleet in the inter-war period, prior to 1914 Cravens had supplied a total of 20 first-class Pullman cars for Scottish-based services.

For the new plans, windows featured semi-circular ends, while lavatory windows completely circular were not entirely unknown in railway carriages overseas. Among such vehicles, perhaps the most striking were the series of tubular main-line coaches introduced by the French Etat Company in 1935, known as *‘saucissons’* (sausages).[[268]](#footnote-268)98 However, more immediate inspiration might have been provided by the American Budd Company’s ‘Pioneer 111’, an experimental ultra-lightweight prototype suburban coach design, which had similarly shaped windows and had been widely featured in the technical railway press as recently as 1956.[[269]](#footnote-269)99

**3.4 Streamlining**

The early years of the twentieth century were marked by rapid progress being made by the various railway companies as previously noted in the highly competitive routes to the North and South.[[270]](#footnote-270)100 Streamlining was a much-talked about innovation, and while not a Pullman invention, its widespread application in the 1930s (and much later, the 1960s) to the design of Pullman vehicles was Britain’s contribution to the development of prestigious and faster timetabled services, while at the same time capturing and retaining public imagination.[[271]](#footnote-271)101 It emerged in the context of serious and often contentious discussions – which raged among British cultural commentators, designers and others – concerning the need for an authentic national aesthetic to replace Britain’s artistic dependence upon Europe.[[272]](#footnote-272)102

During the 1930s, the exhibitions of European applied art in public buildings, including department stores, railway stations as well as various forms of transportation had prompted the question ‘who are our designers?’[[273]](#footnote-273)103 This became the central concern of an editorial in *Good Furniture Magazine* in 1929.[[274]](#footnote-274)104 These views were not unusual in the climate of nativism that existed in Britain at that time, and favoured the interests of the established inhabitants over those of immigrants.[[275]](#footnote-275)105 Frankl argues that both European émigré and native-born British designers had contributed to a vigorous modern design movement which influenced aspects of daily life.[[276]](#footnote-276)106 Increasingly, too, British decorative arts journals showcased the work of Pullman car designers, presenting their work as ‘charming’, ‘subtle’, ‘poised and graceful’, equal in quality to that of European designers, as well as more appropriate to English/ British tastes.[[277]](#footnote-277)107

Not everyone accepted ‘charm’ as an essential element in modern British design, however. In an effort to put an end to being ‘deceived by the external charms of decoration’, an article in the *Magazine of Art* recommended the elimination of ornament and the reduction of an object to its ‘primary form’.[[278]](#footnote-278)108 In the following years after the 1932 Brighton Electrification and the introduction of 38 new Pullmans, the promoters of Modernist design would become even more vocal. Yet the notion of charm was not altogether lost; instead, it was transformed, with the rise of notions of styling. As Waring & Gillow observed, for instance, styling had addressed the ‘psychological’ dimension of design so as to ‘appeal to the consumer’s vanity and play upon his imagination’.[[279]](#footnote-279)109 One of the devices frequently deployed by stylists was streamlining; while offering a symbol of science and rationality, it was also used to appeal to ‘irrational desires and thereby seduce potential passengers’.[[280]](#footnote-280)110

Earlier, during 1928, heralded the introduction of new all-steel Pullman cars for the L.N.E.R. ‘Queen of Scots’ service, whose interiors were decorated and furnished with all the high-quality trappings and geometric designs to all the panelling that Pullman could provide.[[281]](#footnote-281)111 In anticipation of the 1929 stock market crash the need for mass production and for ways to appeal to the passenger by active salesmanship meant that new approaches to design were vigorously promoted. The application of ‘modern’ design allowed products to express abstract qualities that passengers found irresistible, while a ‘new field’, that of the industrial designer, was emerging to facilitate this method of stylistic obsolescence.[[282]](#footnote-282)112 The adoption of such views by British manufacturers prior to World War 2 aided the success of the emergent genre of the ‘industrial designer’ or ‘stylist’. Often seen as the logical and mature leaders of the country’s indigenous design movement, it was promotion and development of their work during the Depression, for example, that the self-conscious comparisons of British and European design began to wane.[[283]](#footnote-283)113 An emphasis on Pullman styling to promote mass consumption came to be seen as the hallmark of good taste and British design.[[284]](#footnote-284)114 Although streamlining was eventually widely adopted for the design of consumer goods, it made its greatest impact on the public imagination in the area of transportation.[[285]](#footnote-285)115 By the early 1930s, British railway companies generally had lost many of their passengers as a result of the Depression and increased competition elsewhere. The L.N.E.R. introduced streamlined locomotives and the Pullman Car Company provided refurbished rolling stock to glamorize the image of their services. Streamlined locomotives which hauled the ‘Yorkshire Pullman’, were exhibited at rail depot open days which helped to popularise both rail travel and the new style.[[286]](#footnote-286)116 Although these trains were not new to exhibitions, examples had been seen at the Empire Exhibition in 1924 and 1925 where thousands of visitors saw them, further popularising the style across the nation.[[287]](#footnote-287)117

The application of contoured bodylines, distinctive livery, smooth surfaces and horizontality was intended not only to decrease the vehicles’ air resistance but also to provide a style expressive of change and modernity, while at the same time suggesting comfort and restfulness.[[288]](#footnote-288)118 Streamliners proved successful during the Depression, sometimes having to turn passengers away – though railways as a whole were increasingly underused.[[289]](#footnote-289)119 Streamlining Pullmans was often applied to a partial adaptation: mainly interiors and accessories, including diminutive items, such as modern flat cutlery, designs of which were copied from the (1937) L.N.E.R. ‘Coronation’.[[290]](#footnote-290)120 Significantly many British industrialists, including Pullman Chairmen often had backgrounds in printing and design activities, practices that were particularly applicable to the styling of much railway carriage interiors. Although streamlining had been explored by product and vehicle designers for some years, the Pullman Board made a bold attempt with the design of the new electric ‘Southern Belle’ in 1933. The result was an encouraging vision of the future, and probably helped to popularise the style.[[291]](#footnote-291)121 *The Times* report of the Southern Electric Scheme produced numerous images of Pullman car interiors which were reprinted in the Sunday supplements.[[292]](#footnote-292)122 Like many other first generation British industrial designers, G.F. Milne had been to Europe in the early 1920s; the horizontal lines, flared body work and rounded corners in their designs have precedents in the expressive architectural sketches made by the German architect Erich Mendelsohn, for example. But Milne’s visionary statement encapsulated contemporary British aspirations.[[293]](#footnote-293)123

For all intent and purpose, 1937 was a watershed year for streamlining. In addition to the public interest surrounding new trains, railway companies such as the L.N.E.R. adopted streamlining as a major conference theme at its annual meeting.[[294]](#footnote-294)124 The same year saw the introduction of the ‘Coronation’ which was visually, aerodynamically and structurally streamlined. Its exterior was painted in a two-tone blue and was integrated into a visible whole in order to direct air currents and reduce turbulence at speed, and its undercarriage and framework were fused to add body strength.[[295]](#footnote-295)125 As streamlining developed into a full-blown craze, railway company exhibitions presented displays of British locomotives and industrial design whose elementary geometric forms resembled those of modernism in Germany and France.[[296]](#footnote-296)126 In the wake of these exhibition’s critique of streamlining, proponents of the style more vigorously defended it, both as *the* expression of the age – that is, speed, efficiency and science – and on aesthetic grounds. In his overview of British industrial design, Haresnape defended streamlining in the design of railway carriages and stationary products.[[297]](#footnote-297)127 He regarded the essential task of the industrial designer was to express in everyday objects the most vital of contemporary values. ‘In its own menial form’, a streamlined product was as ‘conspicuous a symbol … of the age’, as the ‘symbol of the cross’ was to the medieval mind’.[[298]](#footnote-298)128

Van Doren defended streamlining, claiming that what ‘many attacked as a ‘faddish style’ was actually the ‘technological result of high-speed mass production’.[[299]](#footnote-299)129 He argued that in plastic-moulded and pressed steel-sheet products it was more efficient to employ designs with gentle curves and rounded corners, writing that ‘what may thus appear to be a captious preference for voluptuous curves and bulging forms in place of a more athletic spareness proves to be one result of the evolution of fabricating methods and assembly-line techniques’.[[300]](#footnote-300)130 Additionally, Van Doren argued that the style and streamlined form on aesthetic grounds, was a visual metaphor for progress, and the egg-shape it often depended on as a more ‘dynamic’ shape than the ‘static’ circle and sphere found in classical design.[[301]](#footnote-301)131

By the end of the decade, streamlining and geometry and Pullman elements of luxury shared the same stage as the railway companies. Showcasing the products in many services from main-line stations, significantly increased the profile of industrial design by associating the new profession with the vision of the future.[[302]](#footnote-302)132 This was the much later theme in 1951 for the Festival of Britain, in which its architecture reflected the popularity of design as well as preference for simple, colourful, geometric forms – as highlighted in the Pullman displays of their latest car interiors and earmarked for their flagship train, the ‘Golden Arrow’.[[303]](#footnote-303)133 Such design was accepted as ‘good taste’ by designers and critics, although three years earlier, in 1948, Giedion considered streamlining and the angular look retrogressive.[[304]](#footnote-304)134 Since its inception, the streamlined style had been presented as alternately restful and an expression of speed, as well as the natural outcome of science. Giedion argues that all styles, even streamlining, had a history.[[305]](#footnote-305)135 Rejecting the popular assumption that it was based solely on the image of speed, he suggested instead it ‘derived from the lush decoration shown at the Paris 1925 Exhibition’.[[306]](#footnote-306)136

Streamlining was now effectively defined in opposition to ‘good design’. Giedion also emphasised the importance of drama and power, adding that British design expressed ‘cleanliness, dramatic shapes, and powerful forms’, echoing the expressive values of British design which the Pullman management had grasped and adopted in their interpretation of the style.[[307]](#footnote-307)137 Though restricted by the need for economy, Rourke has argued that ‘the British had practised a free sense of personal decoration’ and valued material goods for the emotional and symbolic meanings they evoked and the ‘pleasure’ they provided.[[308]](#footnote-308)138 In other words, they enjoyed goods with charm and personality and, by extension, in their travels recognised the importance of cosy soft furnishings and ornamentation of Pullman cars as an extension to home. Rourke’s perspective helped to define a British art that was diverse and expressive without denying non-native influences.[[309]](#footnote-309)139 In this expansive view, Pullman streamlining can therefore be recognised, not as a purely British style without a history, but as a complex product of twentieth-century modernity – a product of a European and transatlantic collaboration that embodied the contradictions of modernity. Both restful and dynamic, streamlining reflected and responded to the fluid changes of a modern world.[[310]](#footnote-310)140

**3.5 The conflicts of Pullman design**

In their effort to shape public opinion, the Pullman Car Company appeared to make concerted attempts to probe design styles, hallmarks and sought to improve levels of comfort throughout their existence. Although the Edwardian period had a tendency to revive popular styles from previous eras and mix them together to create modern pieces, powerful *avant-garde* influences were nevertheless at work, often resulting in quite an eclectic marriage of stylesand influences. Besides its eclectic elements, the other most identifiable characteristic of Edwardian furniture used in Pullman cars displayed a distinct change against the heavy and often darkly-finished, heavy ornamented Victorian styles that preceded it.[[311]](#footnote-311)141

Evidently, by 1914 various batches of eight-wheel vehicles were introduced to South Eastern Railway services and, similarly, twelve-wheel cars built specially for the Caledonian Railway in Scotland, looked again to the past for their interior designs, decorated in a flamboyant, bold and determined way. Varied marquetry panelling was used chiefly as ornamentation, whose origins dated back to the sixteenth century using inlaid veneers of wood, or ivory, stone or semi-precious metals, fitted together to form a design or picture.[[312]](#footnote-312)142 For what appeared to be Pullman’s take on popular or revitalised, classically-inspired designs, at least sixteen vehicles were said to be ‘in the distinctive style’ of the seventeenth - and eighteenth – century leading architects, including the Adam brothers or Greek Revival. Almost all the British Pullman cars built to 1926 featured elaborate schematics often displaying sinuous curves, flora and a profusion of tendrils. While many schemes appear to have been influenced by emerging art movements and deemed contemporary, others dated quickly, becoming curiosities by the 1950s.[[313]](#footnote-313)143

By ambitiously developing products and services, Pullman not only conveyed its personality and values, but demonstrated it understood the needs of its affluent passengers at the time. As Merk argues, for brands to succeed in a competitive environment they need to build a ‘loving’ relationship with their audiences and to construct an emotional engagement.[[314]](#footnote-314)144 Some of the earliest Pullman publicity material, particularly *The Pullman Car Guide* magazine had a tendency to outline all the interior trimmings and little luxuries of their newly introduced vehicles to the prospective passenger. The June 1925 issue, for instance, makes a special point about the various types of armchair moquette, new design of table lamp and the pattern of Axminster carpet, that probably helped explain the charm of travelling by Pullman.[[315]](#footnote-315)145

Throughout the inter-war period, railway publicity material generally marketed long-distance travel as a refined, reliable, civilised way to travel, and the focus was plainly on the well-heeled female passenger to attract custom, when almost all other publicity targeted the gentleman and business traveller appealing through elements of speed and design. Nevertheless, in order to make a genuine connection both to the brand and what it had to offer at the time, the craftsmanship, particularly the striking and almost decadent interior schemes became an integral part of their *raison d’etre*. Change and continuity therefore characterised much Pullman car interior design throughout the inter-war years. Framed by de-industrialisation, political and economic realignment taking place in Britain, and nostalgia for selected periods of ‘English’ and the cult of ancient history, the Pullman management response to varying tastes proved increasingly distinctive and remarkably varied. Merk argues that the creative dimension of interior colour co-ordination of furnishings with quality fixtures and fittings ranked as one of the most essential components for success in the luxury industry. A single object, such as a marquetry panel, could hardly go further in conveying the impression of order, harmony, integrity and attention to detail.[[316]](#footnote-316)146

With a notable start-up or development of Pullman routes after World War 1, a new distribution of ownership assets and, more importantly, new forms of corporate management development, brought about gradual construction and aesthetic changes to vehicle design, with the desired effect of sustaining long-term viability which, as Drucker identifies is ‘key to business success’.[[317]](#footnote-317)147 At considerable monetary costs to the Pullman company, Davison Dalziel had paved the way by ambitiously ordering many new British built cars, in batches and often for specific services. At the outset, some of the leading furniture companies, particularly Waring & Gillow, designed the car interiors, taking inspiration from neo-classical elements or an eclectic mix of styles, which were closely in tune with contemporary (and expensive) tastes at the time.[[318]](#footnote-318)148

Following the company’s breakaway from its American parent, and increasing scale of its operations and engineering focus for servicing, remodelling and occasionally building new vehicles, the management evidenced a growing business acumen, which ultimately transformed them into a sophisticated, and not so insignificant work force. From the onset of Dalziel control, through to the 1960s there was an ongoing awareness of interior design practicalities, invariably dictated by the latest fashions and home furniture guides from the leading departmental stores, including Harrods, Selfridges and Heal’s. (Oak, mahogany, satinwood and almond wood, later replaced by exotic woods by the mid-1920s, were almost always featured in Pullman cars, and reflected designs often used at the time in home furnishings).[[319]](#footnote-319)149

The Pullman company also retained highly skilled craft workshops, and continually developed close working relationships with specialised and technologically savvy partners, including a transitory, intellectualised design office/liaison (during the late 1940s) in co-operation with the long-standing Baynard Press.[[320]](#footnote-320)150 In their quest to improve facilities and rival competitors, management liaised with leading industrial companies seeking to keep pace with industrial and engineering developments. One early example, recorded in March 1925, outlined a series of discussions that had taken place exploring the use of weight saving (block cast type) ovens with the North British Aluminium Company, and another, in June 1936, offered a host of possibilities with the British Moulded Plastics Trade Association to find economies of scale with acrylic textiles and Bakelite products.[[321]](#footnote-321)151 Although both were curtailed by high costs, some success was found in the late 1940s with the provision of synthetic table cloths which had extended life expectancy. Pullman management also maintained a good business relationship with Crayonne Limited, makers of the celluloid lamp shade (of so-called ‘unbreakable’ form), and also with the product designer, Albert Woodfall (who laid down many of the ground rules of industrial design in plastics while heading British Industrial Plastics’ Product Design Unit) by testing brightly-coloured tableware, fixed menu holders, table cloth fasteners and lavatory fittings (toilet seats included) all made from urea formaldehyde, took place during 1948 and again in 1951 on selected Brighton line services, only to be all eventually rejected after trials.[[322]](#footnote-322)152 However, an order of ‘Melaware’ crockery was introduced to Southern Region services in the late 1950s (coinciding with trials using Warerite panelling and the successful use of ‘blisterproof’ laminated plastics for lavatories and pantries). The company provided and contributed towards an optimum creative climate for the development of countless pioneering or design solutions, including the wide-spread use of draught-excluding equipment used on many railway carriages, in addition to Pullmans; double glazing used in the ‘Golden Arrow’ cars and experimenting briefly with air conditioning equipment (1950/51).[[323]](#footnote-323)153

Discussions also explored the use of polyethylene products under licence from Imperial Chemical Industries in 1950/1 for vehicle insulation. Inexplicably, management sanctioned the use of the hazardous (and volatile) Limpet sprayed blue asbestos, a cheaper substance which was readily available for cars built in 1951 and 1952.[[324]](#footnote-324)154 In an era when ‘club’, ‘lounge’ and ‘observation’ cars were so long a fashionable feature of many long-haul American services, as well as holiday routes in Scotland, the concept and novelty of a cocktail bar and meeting area on board a Pullman train seemingly took on a renewed meaning, particularly after World War 2.[[325]](#footnote-325)155 Supported by various railway company and government compensation guarantees subsequently, the Pullman management quickly rose to the challenge by co-ordinating the renovating and repair of war-damaged vehicles as swiftly as possible, reviving old services under contract and introducing new ones.

As Haresnape argues, Pullman experienced what might best be described as a short-lived ‘honeymoon period’ of increased passenger receipts, at a time when rivalry from any contemporary adversaries was then at an absolute minimum. (In any event, Pullman continued to enjoy an exclusive catering contract on the Southern Railway).[[326]](#footnote-326)156 Even though there were still severe restrictions of metal, timber and other building materials in force, the company soon embraced the ever-developing polymer age, through exploratory discussions resumed once again with specialist manufacturers. While it remains unclear as to what these trials fully entailed, experimentation with plastics, laminates and also anodised metals (in place of expensive inlays) and vehicle air-conditioning is recorded, utilising a number of war-damaged cars.[[327]](#footnote-327)157

In hope of better things to come, the Chairman, Stanley Adams, who had vested interests in the developing metal and plastics industries, the decision to introduce additional new-fangled bar cars – one vehicle refurbished entirely in pink and grey Warerite material, and designed by Richard Levin of Bakelite Limited – on both the flagship ‘Golden Arrow’ and Ostend services and, later, others introduced to the new ‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’ (1948) and ‘South Wales Pullman’ (1955), proved to be innovative and forward-looking curiosities, as was the ‘Devon Belle’ train (1947) with its neoteric observation car.[[328]](#footnote-328)158

While the ‘all-plastic bar car’ did in fact receive a mixed reaction from the management – due to its lack of supplementary fare seating – the Ostend car (with its bar area incorporating Sanderson’s materials and Dunlopillo stand-up seats – a Pullman innovation) was also chosen for public relations purposes, including business meetings.[[329]](#footnote-329)159 Although there is evidence to suggest that a much larger proportion of cars for (unspecified) services would be refurbished than were in fact realised, costs continued to spiral, while materials were invariably difficult to secure in large quantities; a frustrating position which remained unchanged even by the early 1950s.[[330]](#footnote-330)160 The 28-year old vehicle named *Malaga* and allocated to the ‘Golden Arrow’ in 1949 was one such car that did receive a revamped interior, and advertised widely.[[331]](#footnote-331)161 Finished-off in anodised copper, aluminium and walnut, replacing its original wooden panelling and inlays it was noted for its modernity and connection with J. Starkie Gardner Limited of Wandsworth, famed for restoring many important examples of decorative art work.[[332]](#footnote-332)162

In the event, other than an ad-hoc program to gradually plate many wooden bodied Pullmans sheathed with exterior aluminium panels, and the upgrading of countless pantries, lavatories and table tops finished-off with laminated Formica and melamine materials (in addition to the completing a pre-war order for three new vehicles at Preston Park works during 1952), all other plans came to a temporary halt during 1953 coinciding with the retirement of Board member, H E Fitzalan-Howard (2nd Viscount Fitzalan of Derwent, 1883-1963).[[333]](#footnote-333)163

It is wishful thinking to draw any firm conclusion, especially where the evidence is sometimes over-zealous, incomplete or contradictory, but could it be the vehicles that were completely refurbished in the 1940s are compelling evidence of a metamorphosis experienced by the Pullman Board members following the death of its first Chairman, Lord Dalziel, shaped later by promising business strategies and partnerships, that never quite fully materialised?

To some effect, the Pullman management remained influenced by the construction of ‘English’ and later, ‘British’ interpretations of modernity at crucial moments from at least 1920 to 1960.[[334]](#footnote-334)164 Typically, this period has often been characterised as one long trade depression, and undoubtedly the economic transformations that occurred during the period had the profoundest effect on design.[[335]](#footnote-335)165 Aspects of pre-nineteenth century English design were researched assiduously once British ownership took control of the Pullman company, when the evaluation of eighteenth-century furniture was closely linked with new house designs in numerous, and supposedly, easily recognisable styles.[[336]](#footnote-336)166 Integral to a capitalist environment that was changing, design also provided an effective instrument in the company’s extravagance – evidenced by diverse carriage interiors: moquette patterns, lacquer work, marquetry panelling of exotic woods as well as other furnishings. National newspaper articles suggest that until at least 1952, Pullman management attempted to keep up with the latest fashion trends, by introducing seasonal fashion shows on their international trains and referencing so much to either the past, the contemporary (and, later with the help of external influence and direction, the future).[[337]](#footnote-337)167

Drawing upon the work of Cheryl Buckley in a later chapter and art critic Roger Fry, both of whom argue that design particularly during the inter-war years responded not only to regional exigencies, but also to international initiatives.[[338]](#footnote-338)168 From the Pullman perspective, surviving evidence suggests this was intentionally applied to a wide selection of their fleet introduced at various times for different services. Many of the cars allocated to the ‘Golden Arrow’ and ‘Brighton Belle’ featured a British interpretation to French ‘Streamline Moderne’ in terms of metal work, fabrics and use of colourful new materials, including celluloid plastics, for instance.[[339]](#footnote-339)169

Articulated as noteworthy and comparable by various proponents, modernism was seen as ‘transmuted in various transport guises as it interacted with English regional traditions, responded to historical precedents, reworked decorative and figurative idioms, adapted to manufacturing conditions and priorities and took account of passenger desires’.[[340]](#footnote-340)170 To many observers, such artistic considerations for the long-distance traveller offered a new sort of narrative about Britain – as a mix of the progressive and the anachronistic.[[341]](#footnote-341)171 An emphasis on the ‘visual’ was an important feature of modernity – combined with a sense that life had quickly progressed via the latest luxurious trains. Everyday goods were also susceptible to overseas influences, including ‘jazz’ motifs – angularity, bold colours and bold patterns. However, Pevsner, a British scholar of history of art and architecture, cited ‘un-Englishness’ as an essential feature of this tumultuous period, that émigrés and, to a large extent, French influence made to various forms of transport, including the complexity of railway carriage interior designs adopted not only by Pullman, but also the main-line railway companies.[[342]](#footnote-342)174

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**FIG.5. INTERIOR VIEW OF THIRD-CLASS PULLMAN PARLOUR ‘CAR No.81’, FEATURING ‘MALTESE-CROSS’ MARQUETRY PANELLING AND ART DECO MOQUETTE. NOTE: PULLMAN CAR CO. ‘GOLDEN WAY’ MAGAZINES ON**

**TABLES.**

(Birmingham Carriage & Wagon Co, 1930, for the Southern Railway)

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)

It could be argued that to be progressive, competitive and forward-looking, the only logical approach to sustain revenue levels and attract new custom was to embrace a programme of up-to-date vehicles and press for a wider network of services. The Pullman Board intentions of expansion plans and securing new vehicles at great expense were short-sighted or simply wishful thinking, as a comparative study of the improvements made by the railway companies own restaurant and dining car facilities show that they offered accommodation and meals generally of a quality and on a par with anything Pullman could offer, and usually without a supplement.[[343]](#footnote-343)175

**3.6 Conclusion**

In sum, manufacturers and designers all played a crucial part in promoting British products, as did writers, journalists and theorists, while architectural periodicals often featured the latest Pullman car interior (or advertisements as mundane as the latest rubber mattings, carpets or seat moquette generally endorsed by the furniture makers Waring & Gillow). Critics and campaigners conversely published information on emerging taste and design, cajoling consumers, designers and manufacturers.

It is also evident that the parameters of ‘modern’ design, so much a focus during the inter-war period, had shifted significantly during a relatively short period of time, from the diverse and the contradictory to the contemporary and functional. During the 1950s, critics had argued that design and style in Pullman cars appeared almost predictable, authoritarian and patrician. Its overly didactic stance was partly explained by its marginal institutional presence across Europe thirty years before. During the 1960s, its precarious standing in Britain changed again, reflecting patterns of business and other influences exerting greater control.

A key component in the Pullman management’s commercial struggle to stave off competition was nevertheless the perspective of so-called civilised travel. The company’s marketing, often linked to the host railway company, emphasised the attributes of safety, speed, reliability, comfort and so on, that had made luxury ‘extra fare’ travel an integral part of inter-war consumption. A decades-old record of providing safe and secure transport was an important part of Pullman’s efforts, but the emphasis given to safety was informed by the ebb and flow of the wider public’s perceptions of other forms of transport, including the private car, buses and long-distance coaches. The trains capacity for refined, civilised transportation and temporal economy even in the best available accommodation, strong marketing points from the 1920s through to the late 1940s was given still greater emphasis.

Gender was deemed central to all this, most notably with regard to luxury rail transportation construction as civilised male mobility. Travelling by train and the constructions made of safety, speed, comfort and convenience made by the railway companies was construed not only to appeal to men, but to women also. However, the railway’s understanding of gender relations across the spheres of work, leisure and home encouraged what could be termed a conservative, patriarchal construction of female mobility enacted chiefly within parameters defined by men’s social roles and mobilities. The earliest Pullman Company literature offered to passengers suggest that an effort had been made to identify women as a market worth developing. While design, speed and streamlining ran the risk of emasculating men, the representation of the lounge-like Pullman interiors as an extension to domestic space or to home addressed this issue in a number of ways. Men were called upon to experience the train on terms analogous to their supposed enjoyment of the home: as a space in which women’s aesthetic preferences might largely prevail.

The Pullman management responded by balancing their marketing of the train’s comforts with a continuing emphasis on speed and technical excellence, as well as asserting a comforting presence of both guard and conductor on almost every train, in addition to a large on-board staff of dedicated attendants. The well-known little extra luxuries that defined ‘Pullman-style’ and, to a certain extent became modernist, transcended the traditional gendering of domestic aesthetics.

Marketing, of course, does not necessarily or automatically transform into increased ticket sales, and it would be invaluable to know how women and men responded to Pullman’s commercial overtures. The best that the Pullman Company could hope for was to make a convincing claim that new technologies such as up-to-date innovations, the incorporation of new materials and electric trains were faster, safer and more comfortable than ever before.

**4.0 The development of Pullman Company business, 1910-1939**

**4.1 Introduction**

Adopting a conservative definition of a small business as one with fewer than 200 employees, the original American-owned Pullman Company had no more than 60 employees by 1906. It is not only size that distinguishes small companies - privacy and owner-management are considered important in this analysis of a small-scale enterprise. The British Pullman Company was owned, controlled, and managed by Davison Dalziel, who from 1907 purchased it from the American parent, with a view of running it at a profit, and to operating it only on routes that would pay their way. The Company’s registered office was moved from London Bridge station to ‘commodious premises’ at Victoria station, which also became its headquarters from 11 December 1911.[[344]](#footnote-344)1 With-in nine years, Pullman emerged as one of the largest railway service providers in Britain, its development had been dependent upon the goodwill of just a few railway companies, and the expansion of new or established services.[[345]](#footnote-345)2 Although many other railway companies had refused to accept the offers of Pullman, they had nevertheless been influenced by them, and some almost slavish copies of Pullman ideas appeared in Britain from the turn of the nineteenth century. Features such as bogies,[[346]](#footnote-346)3 vestibules[[347]](#footnote-347)4 and electric lighting were introduced by the pioneering work of Pullman to many railway lines.[[348]](#footnote-348)5

The building of new vehicles radically changed some of the basic characteristics of the railway industry before the 1920s, for the introduction of third-class ‘extra-fare’ Pullman accommodation in 1915, for instance, soon established on the short-haul runs from London to Brighton, became a long-standing feature lasting until 1972.[[349]](#footnote-349)6 However, by 1920, it appears that the habit of Pullman travel on Southern services (briefly suspended during 1917 on the instructions of the Ministry of Transport), was well established on South Coast services, particularly, that its subsequent growth was largely a function of the fourfold increase of additional services introduced to timetables and working to complex rotas, which competed for both the business and leisure markets. Yet it appears that the travelling public was increasingly dependent on ticket prices rather than on any changes in the habits of consumption. (see appendix 9).

Pullman receipts in Britain exhibited a marked increase – from average annual earnings of £19,306 in 1915 (almost annually since 1912) utilising 73 cars,[[350]](#footnote-350)7 to approximately £225,000 in 1926 with almost 200 cars.[[351]](#footnote-351)8 (See appendices 2 and 3, which record known annual earnings from 1907-1939). This elevenfold increase is explicable in terms of new overseas promotion and expansion where the company offered experience, stability, and funds in search for security of physical capital and stocks.

In the vanguard of Pullman’s penetration of business on mainland Europe from 1925, and in his capacity as President of the Board of Directors, as well as Chairman of Pullman, Dalziel recognised that in addition to using the services of Thomas Cook and Son, the travel agencies owned by Wagons-Lits in Paris, Milan, Rome, Madrid, Brussels, Bucharest and Amsterdam would benefit from advertising Pullman accommodation and ticket sales for the new services running on the Continent as well as those established in Britain.[[352]](#footnote-352)9 It appears much of the impetus for 1920s growth in passenger numbers came from publicity and new offices.

Pullman management established a cordial working relationship with the Wagons-Lits organisation two years earlier, in 1923 at least, in order to compete with old-established rivals and these were still modestly important at home, but lagged in overseas development.[[353]](#footnote-353)10 Such developments were also associated with a general trend towards partnership concentration. Although surviving detail is incomplete and certain services appear nebulous, the two leading Southern railway companies (the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway and the London, Dover & Chatham Railway) earned during the period 1910-1923 on average around 65 per cent. of all first-class travel to the South Coast.[[354]](#footnote-354)11 The domestic passenger market was by no means as limited as was the case with Pullman travel elsewhere. Conversely, on competitive routes to the North, the Great Northern Railway, the predecessor of the L.N.E.R., was responsible for transporting ‘half of all passengers to Newcastle and beyond’, and closely rivalled by such other giant concerns as the London & North Western Railway from Euston and the Midland Railway from St Pancras.[[355]](#footnote-355)12 Even though no complete data has been established to determine passenger numbers or values accrued throughout this time, it is clear that the Pullman management recognised the revenue potential and numerous attempts were made to secure a contract.[[356]](#footnote-356)13 This only successfully came about following the forming of the ‘Big Four’ in 1923. With regard to the Northern traffic, an editorial of *Modern Transport* were realistic in their assessment at the time: ‘Pullman services simply enhanced those offered by the L.N.E.R’.[[357]](#footnote-357)14 That said, the extension of Pullmans competing with the host railways’ dining, restaurant or lounge cars took on a new identity as a developing response to public need.

Under the pressure of genuine competition, the growth of Pullman as well as ordinary services reflected an increased emphasis of better and much improved rail travel or, in the words of one company brochure, ‘Pullman and perfection in travel’.[[358]](#footnote-358)15 In this respect the early 1920s was a crucial period and reflected the general pressure to cater for the masses. The competitive nature of transportation was not only embracing the railway companies themselves, but also many long-distance unregulated bus and coach routes nationwide.[[359]](#footnote-359)16 As with other forms of specialist travel, extension of Pullman services also brought concentration, while particular services offered by railway companies, by contrast, were more often than not long-established and attracted a committed following.[[360]](#footnote-360)17 With this development, and with the associated trend towards offering similar facilities, invariably at a premium or ‘extra fare’, a new era of passenger structure was created: the era of mass transit and competition, each benefiting from the economies and interlocking connections with companies, via a complex network of agents, and an overlapping set of markets.[[361]](#footnote-361)18

The structural and administrative implications of these various changes brought Pullman business patterns of development into sharp focus. Although formed as a wholly British company, entirely separate from its American parent as previously outlined, it entered the early twentieth century as a private example of a new breed offering something different on a relatively small scale. After a period of stagnation under American ownership, a new vigour on the part of its British management spurred the Pullman Company to fresh heights with the introduction of the ‘Southern Belle’, a first-class only train running from London (Victoria) to Brighton.[[362]](#footnote-362)19 As briefly described, this train was the first indication under Dalziel’s ownership of a determination to bring ‘Pullman’ into the public arena once again, whose seven vehicles ordered and built by a British firm, the Metropolitan Amalgamated Carriage & Wagon Co of Lancaster were described as ‘the most luxurious train in the world’.[[363]](#footnote-363)20 With the appointment of an enterprising secretary, Stanley Adams, all this changed.[[364]](#footnote-364)21

The limited catering business onboard Pullmans, which had long stagnated and been unresponsive to mounting competition and innovation in the railway industry at large, was also overhauled following the appointment in 1919 of a new catering superintendent, Claude James, who trained with the Royal Navy.[[365]](#footnote-365)22 A wide range of hot and cold meals throughout the day were gradually introduced to almost all services, as kitchen plants were added to Pullman trains; culminating with as many as four trained chefs allocated per train, cooking four or five course meals for up to 300 passengers at their seats.[[366]](#footnote-366)23

Conditions for investors and private shareholders were also improved, agents’ commissions were made more attractive, and a new commercialised attitude was seemingly adopted.[[367]](#footnote-367)24

Finally, stimulated by the arguments of its board of directors and the subsequent post-World War 2 appointment of Colonel Frank Harding, as general manager, the Pullman Company was one of the first railway-related companies, albeit briefly, to enter the field of all-inclusive tickets i.e. travel, supplement, on-board tip and meal ticket combined.[[368]](#footnote-368)25

**4.2 The drive for expansion**

During the period 1915-1929 the British Pullman Company was transformed. Once World War 1 was over, the usual working agreement between Pullman and the British railway companies was to the effect that the former continue to provide the vehicles, complete with attendants and catering arrangements and the latter to haul them; no monetary transaction taking place.[[369]](#footnote-369)26 The maintenance was shared between the two parties and later still, the Southern Railway’s management, newly formed in 1923, agreed a fixed annual rental with Pullman management for each car running on their system. (In absence of evidence to the contrary, it is assumed that a similar agreement applied to the L.N.E.R).[[370]](#footnote-370)27 Earlier, during 1917 W. S. Laycock Ltd, originally a railway plant and stores contractors and gas and electric light fitters and supplier of fixtures for Pullman, had been acquired by Dalziel in anticipation of being used after hostilities had ended.[[371]](#footnote-371)28 The railway manufacturing industry had in fact been deeply involved in the war effort, and such items as new Pullmans to work new services would not be contemplated in workshop programmes, which in the event had been ‘much more concerned’, as argued by Gregory ‘to provide such things as hospital ambulance trains for shipment across the Channel, to care for the wounded soldiers and to transport the dying’. Material to build new carriages was also ‘exceedingly scarce’.[[372]](#footnote-372)29

Rail travel it seems was now no longer the hardship it had once been, and was beginning to be enjoyed for its own pleasures, with the cognoscenti savouring the merits of particular trains and lines over others. For the upper classes Pullman travel had attained the snob appeal of ‘one-upmanship’. This belonged to an era of social history known loosely as La Belle Époque at a time of relative peace and great prosperity.[[373]](#footnote-373)30 The well-heeled clientele popularised Pullman travel and made it fashionable, as much through the social columns of the newspapers as by the publicity the Pullman and host railway companies themselves sought as endorsement of their trains and the services they provided.[[374]](#footnote-374)31

As the standards of luxury accommodation and service were being established by the railway companies, so its competitors sought to compete for their first-class trade on the same terms of reference.[[375]](#footnote-375)32 Inevitably, chief railway engineers looked to accomplishments made by architects to assist in designing on a smaller scale the interiors of their rolling stock, including work based on an interpretation of classic eighteenth century architectural styles. Whilst these were never intended to be period revival schemes per se, they emerged rather as a characteristic ‘grand-luxe style’.[[376]](#footnote-376)33 Railway managers soon realised that the purpose of such architecture was to create a mood of well-being by way of a classic elegance to be enjoyed and interpreted. Although not proof-related to Pullman developments, Bouin and Chanut argue that the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, began to assert a significant influence over architectural design and the decorative arts in the home, at sea as well as on the railways generally.[[377]](#footnote-377)34 Indeed, the functional attractiveness of the designs aroused great public appeal throughout France and England, as contemporary architecture, bold fluid lines of form and new manufactured goods began to set a general pace of an altogether more liberalised approach to living. The ‘Big Four’ railway companies soon responded and by photographic evidence so did Pullman. From what can be determined, the spirit of modernity illustrated at the Paris Exposition went to the rails less than a year later evidenced by the decoration of a batch of six new Pullman cars specifically designed for the Hastings line, completed as replacements for much older vehicles.[[378]](#footnote-378)35 The only advance of modernity suggested by the exteriors of these new vehicles, argues a *Modern Railways* correspondent, was the water-raising apparatus uniquely featured below each body. However, only on entering the saloons was one first struck by what designers might today call the ‘wow factor’. The saloons presented a modern coffered ceiling, indirect lighting scheme and highly polished veneer walls with marquetry depictions of geometric shapes and flora rather than classical period designs; hat racks and other work some rendered in satin silver – a break-away from the more usual ormolu or lacquered brass.[[379]](#footnote-379)36

All these aspects asserted a new expression of railway luxury, expressed in the variety of schemes and geometry of the vehicles themselves, rather than the classical references of the traditionally-appointed Pullman car. The Hastings Pullmans were some of the first to effectively bring the ‘International style’ of decorative design to British railways. These vehicles were bold, brash, and despite those who might have derided them as an expression of expensive vulgarity, *Camilla, Latona, Pomona* as they were called, and their sisters ‘carried more first-class passengers than their predecessors’ for the first year of their operation[[380]](#footnote-380)37 which reconfirms one Northern newspaper’s report that generally the Pullman services ‘offered many material advantages to the railway companies’.[[381]](#footnote-381)38

Nevertheless, in the case of future builds, the decision to adopt any new direction of design involved the considerable risk of failing to find favour with the travelling public, or the decorative scheme going out of fashion. While individual interiors could be redecorated during a vehicle’s periodic overhauls, any significant change in social structure generally would have to show some signs of greater permanence before being adopted aboard new (and expensive) Pullman cars. Thus, for a short period at least, Pullman management continued to live with the limitations of an approach to accommodation design that had merely grown along with the steady increase in the fleet size, without being rethought or rationalised.

4.2.1 Business offices

In light of the expanding network of Pullman services, and anticipated projections at this time, the pressures which produced large-scale, Northern and European offices can now be considered. The first point to be borne in mind is that the era was characterised by an intensification of competition which placed a new emphasis on marketing for all travel businesses.[[382]](#footnote-382)39 The competitive eagerness which extended Pullman services even affected the staider field of ordinary train services. Advertising expenditure soared from the mid-1920s, supplementary rates were competitively cut at week-ends to appear attractive and dividend payments generally increased annually, ticketing from one railway to another were simplified and liberalised, sales representatives were employed.[[383]](#footnote-383)40 Significantly, the rise of mass marketing on the ‘Big Four’ railways coincided with the drive to be competitive for business with growing long-distance coach and bus companies. On the Continent, the Wagons-Lits Company had, for instance, perfected a host of selling techniques, including centrally-located and attractively appointed offices offering a host of publicity material and personal service which were closely followed by Pullman.[[384]](#footnote-384)41 As a result, in Britain the impact of offices like those of the Wagons-Lits Company in Mayfair was said by one journalist to be like ‘a revelation in new services de-luxe, where no [travel] arrangements are overlooked’.[[385]](#footnote-385)42

Qualitatively the few Pullman offices were generally functional but insignificant, and located only at main line stations in London (other than the company’s West-End ticket and information bureau located in Regent’ Street), district offices in Newcastle and Glasgow (the latter sharing with the Wagons-Lits Company), but their impact from 1926 – on sales techniques and the transformation of the market by the development of investment – was considerable.[[386]](#footnote-386)43 Compared with the situation with the ‘Big Four’ main-line booking offices and associated facilities, competition for the lucrative so-called ‘luxury’ or ‘extra fare market’ took somewhat different forms. This was largely due to differences inherent in the product itself - some railway companies, including the L.M.S. and L.N.E.R. offered their own short-lived luxury trains, which were in effect ordinary carriage types with added decoration or lounge seats and table lamps, the habit of which became widespread and ingrained.[[387]](#footnote-387)44 For these reasons, competition was more likely to be concentrated on the extra refinements, including personal at-seat service and the quality of amenities being offered. Yet although competition was potentially fierce on the Anglo-Scottish routes, for instance, it was (perhaps for that very reason) substantially mitigated by agreements on fixed travel tariffs by the railway and governmental operating committees then in force.

The so-called ‘Tariff Offices’ had accounted for ‘over 90 per cent. of the business’ from the main-line railway companies as early as 1914.[[388]](#footnote-388)45 As a result, they were often criticised for having ‘banded themselves together into what is virtually a trade union, having for its object the restraining of competition and the upholding of travel rates’, although in practice, market forces continued to exert a strong pressure on regulated enterprise.[[389]](#footnote-389)46 A similar association operated in the field of ‘extra fare’ accommodation on the lucrative short-sea routes from Dover and Folkestone to Calais and Boulogne. Even so, in both fields competition still had a powerful role to play for the public were increasingly in a position of great strength, particularly where almost identical services operated on the same lines between rival companies.[[390]](#footnote-390)47

Following the expression of interest by the L.N.E.R., the first de-luxe service launched by them was the ‘Harrogate Pullman’ which started on 9 July 1923, running non-stop from King’s Cross to Leeds, where it reversed and continued to Harrogate, Ripon, Darlington and Newcastle and vice versa. To provide sufficient cars an order was placed for the first time of what was later to become known as the ‘standard Pullman car’, the ‘K-type’.[[391]](#footnote-391)48 Given the ‘conspicuous success’ which followed the Harrogate train, the Pullman management, persuaded the L.N.E.R. to run another train, known as the ‘Sheffield Pullman’, routed via Grantham and Nottingham in 1924.[[392]](#footnote-392)49 Despite a publicity drive to advertise the new service, this train was by contrast very poorly loaded, and to attract business, it was extended to Manchester in the spring of 1925, again without success, and in the autumn saw it withdrawn completely. The cars were however subsequently transferred to another new service, the ‘West Riding Pullman’ serving Leeds and Bradford. By comparison, the ‘Harrogate Pullman’ proved popular enough for the railway authorities to extend it right through to Edinburgh from Newcastle, making it the first (and only) all-Pullman train to run in Scotland.[[393]](#footnote-393)50

For both the railway industry in general and the Pullman Company particularly one of the most critical responses to these new market opportunities lay in the adaptation of organisation and the application of effort. Luxury, supplementary- or extra-fare travel, if it was to expand, had to be *sold*, and the effective point at which business was done was therefore the contact between agent and prospective passenger. Personal influence, meant that the head office manufacturers the article, or in other words, Dalziel and his secretary brokered the deal, but had to look to its middleman to get the bookings.[[394]](#footnote-394)51 Whatever else was important, an effective and vigorous agency network was indispensable to growth. As a result of all this, the increase in the number of agents was to some extent an index of both Pullman expansion and competition. In London alone, by the late 1920s the leading departmental stores, including Selfridges, Whiteleys, among others, all featured travel agencies of varying size which promoted and sold Wagons-Lits and Pullman tickets. Later, with the Pullman Company acquisition of Thomas Cook & Son, the historic travel agency founded in 1841, the prodigious extension of the number of agents involved, as well as 150 offices throughout the world, also led to important changes in organisation.[[395]](#footnote-395)52 For the concentration on the point-of-sale, together with the need to control the new agents, led inevitably to a rapid decentralisation of sales policy and control. In the first instance, this trend was represented by the appointment of professional, salaried officials – superintendents of agents at the Berkeley Square Offices whose task it was to supervise and instruct all London-based agencies, to follow up their company contacts and economise on their time, as well as press for business in a continuous and systematic way. Tables of services, routes, types of accommodation (first-, second- or third-class) some of which offered coupé compartment or more generally saloon seats, and lists of supplementary fares covering all sectors - regardless of railway company over which Pullmans ran - noted as an ad-hoc approach to business before 1919 - were all-embracing by 1927.[[396]](#footnote-396)53

Inspectors or conductors first appeared in their modern role previously with the American counterpart, but these were trained to be on-hand to collect supplements and offer travel guidance to passengers whilst on board. On boat trains and long-distance services, particularly, a large crew including inspector, attendants of numerous ranks, chefs and porters were featured. Conductors were expected to travel on the boat crossings to seek new business. On the South Coast services, it was estimated that there were about 400 personnel by 1929 and 70 on Northern services.[[397]](#footnote-397)54

The appointment of salaried canvassers or conductors to travel on the boats, however, inevitably posed the need for a further extension of systematic control. Their expansion was directly associated with the increase in cross-Channel passengers coinciding with new and much larger vessels being introduced. These were more suited than distant head offices for the tasks of general supervision – besides being needed to relieve some of the pressures of clerical work which had naturally mounted at head offices when inspectors had first been appointed.

Finally, the proliferation of city agencies and of inspectors itself produced new problems of control and supervision for the head office.[[398]](#footnote-398)55 This, in turn, led to a third stage of structural development in early twentieth-century travel market: the appearance of agency managers.

The Pullman Company appointed its first inspector of London booking offices in 1910; a feature broadly extended over the coming years.[[399]](#footnote-399)56 The creation of district, division or regional offices, even though initially small, occurred when Pullman secured contracts to run their cars on the Metropolitan Railway (London Underground system) in 1910 and on the Caledonian Railway, Scotland, in 1914. These various moves meant that immediately after World War 1, the Pullman Company relied on two relatively new types of official – the inspector and the booking office manager, both of whom were products of the new climate of luxury travel enterprise. With the increased complexity and heightened competition of rail travel, such professionals soon came to play a crucial role in securing company business travel arrangements, and expanding the catering of large corporate functions.

Changes in travel markets and in market structures involved a substantial measure of devolution, but agencies and booking offices also had to be fitted into a co-ordinated (and, in the last resort, central) plan of action. Based on surviving papers of a shareholders meeting in 1926, it can only be assumed that Dalziel envisaged new forms of central control (for example, agency departments) would be fashioned, where managers might have to undertake routine tasks.[[400]](#footnote-400)57 Although an agency manager was first appointed pre-World War 1, his role at the continental booking office at London Victoria station, was somewhat ambiguous given the limited information available.[[401]](#footnote-401)58 His small department was organisationally part of the secretary’s office and, while he had the task of providing general supervision, advice, and help in matters relating to the issuance of tickets on different railways in Britain and connected bookings overseas, he had no responsibility for technical matters concerning the types of vehicles involved in a particular service or what meals could be made available onboard. Put another way, the railway agencies located around London’s termini stations and, later, numerous department stores were still the basic charge of the secretary and, even more important, of the managers of the various ticketing outlets. This situation is understandable, for the Pullman Company was still a highly departmentalised company; there was as yet no specific general manager (although a Board of Directors, chaired by Davison Dalziel was established in 1915), and the authority and initiative of departmental managers was seemingly unquestioned. The result, however, was that no unified control was effectively established over the growing branches before the inter-war period. In this respect the Pullman Company offered a sharp contrast to the leading railway companies which had already centralised and unified their management structures.[[402]](#footnote-402)59 In part, this was because the Pullman Company was still relatively conservative, small in size and generally controlled by Dalziel, the company’s one-time owner. But it was also because, in spite of its genuine growth and sales success, it still did not rival some of the railway companies own special services or vehicles, which were seen as equal if not better than most Pullman cars.[[403]](#footnote-403)60

4.2.2 The Rise of Large-Scale Offices

The intensification of competition and the extension of branch structures and travel agencies in the early twentieth century led almost inevitably to an increase in the cost of doing business. This was particularly marked in the case of booking long-distance seats across various railways, including those on the Continent with different price bands, fees, taxes and regulatory requirements.[[404]](#footnote-404)61

The increased cost of doing business was associated with a very substantial increase in the size of individual offices. It occurred to contemporaries that the rising costs of arranging travel might in fact be one cause of the appearance of a group of independent agents, seeking to minimise costs by securing some economies of scale and working closer with the railway company booking offices.[[405]](#footnote-405)62 In domestic Pullman reservations, however, the cost advantages of large-scale operations were not obvious. Indeed, there were relatively little variations in the average expense ratios of five offices, all London-based, was 30 per cent, but two of these had ratios between 33 and 35 per cent.[[406]](#footnote-406)63 Nevertheless, in contrast to the situation in the booking office dealing with reservations only, the cost of transacting was in some measure related to the scale of operations.

Whatever the role of rising costs and economies of scale, the indisputable fact about the structure of the de-luxe ‘extra fare’ market in this period was, indeed, a tendency towards consolidation. Pullman travel, in every sense, was becoming ‘big business’.[[407]](#footnote-407)64 For not only was its social and economic role being enlarged, but both the average size of London agencies and the relative reliance of Pullman’s association with Thomas Cook & Son (and eventual ownership) increased.

The growth of large-scale enterprise was not, of course, confined to the Pullman Car Company; it was a trend which increasingly characterised much of British railways in the generation or so before 1915 particularly with railway company ownership of shipping lines, hotels and waterways, including docks.[[408]](#footnote-408)65 To some railway managers, it seemed the result of a new business psychology – the ‘passion for bigness, for big things’ – which could be seen not merely in luxury travel, but in other forms of transportation and ownership portfolio.[[409]](#footnote-409)66

More generally, however, it is clear that market forces – particularly the fears and opportunities of competition – were largely responsible for the emergence of the railway company’s interpretation of ‘de-luxe travel’. Constant growth and geographical extension became an indispensable means of self-defence. The momentum of expansion had to be maintained, and during 1929 the ‘Big Four’ companies each featured, momentarily, Pullman car services running on their lines, often in direct competition with their own well-known and publicised services: The ‘Flying Scotsman’, the ‘Royal Scot’ and the ‘Cornish Riviera’, for example.

So far as Pullman management developed and strengthened their position, diversification of their business was considered, thereby strengthening departments, which were inevitably in a position of some advantage. In the search for new business, as one journalist remarked, ‘the most potent factor is connection’.[[410]](#footnote-410)67 It was for this reason that the most crucial period in the rise of intensive Pullman car services was during much of the second and third decades of the twentieth century. For it was then, by a process of growth and amalgamation, that Pullman management were able to offer so many services, albeit some only momentarily.[[411]](#footnote-411)68 In so far as an extended system of branches to promote and sell ‘extra fare’ tickets had become essential it became logical for almost all offices to issue ‘through’ tickets to other lines to the prospective passenger. On the other hand, apprehension as well as ambition were at work: booking offices increasingly found that they could only defend themselves against competition by offering a much wider range of services and amenities, including publicity material. At the same time, too, the extension of non-railway related functions that Pullman management co-ordinated and provided, such as catering arrangements at the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary (1935), as well as corporate functions added a powerful incentive.[[412]](#footnote-412)69

In general, therefore, it could be said that the rise of London booking agencies was ‘probably as much due to a desire to maintain valuable connections with the public as to provide facilities for their demands’.[[413]](#footnote-413)70 This movement was particularly marked by the increase of private hiring of individual Pullmans or whole trains, for it was in this respect that the importance of ‘connection’ was most marked with frequent use by the British royal family, as well as statesmen, business men and large organisations. There were various reasons why this process was brought about by amalgamation rather than the steady evolution of individual offices. First, where Pullman wished to undertake a new line of business it obviously made more sense to acquire a going concern with an established management, agency network, and connection. Second, amalgamation was the quickest, and often the easiest way to increase the size of operations. Third, the new partner brought in more business of the old type as well as new, and fourth, amalgamation automatically reduced the potential area of competition. In addition, of course, there was the prospect of economies resulting from the avoidance of duplication. Amalgamation rarely led to significant cost reduction by the effecting of speedy economies. As later experience was to show, the nature of Pullman car operations – involving Thomas Cook agents, a sense of corporate momentum and institutional inertia – meant that these economies could be achieved slowly, because they involved the sinking of corporate identity, the closing of agencies and in some cases, the reduction of staffs.[[414]](#footnote-414)71

Amalgamations had, of course, taken place throughout the early twentieth century with numerous railway companies.[[415]](#footnote-415)72 Although the relatively unstable years of the 1900s (or earlier) had been marked by the absorption of large numbers of small and often insecure railway companies, it was only in the second decade of the twentieth century that a more modern-type of amalgamation movement reached significant proportions. In the period circa 1923-1931, for example, an average of 2 Thomas Cook, Wagons-Lits and Pullman offices annually amalgamated or opened. In the five years 1935-1939, however, the average number reached 5, and in 1931 alone no less than 11 offices lost their separate identities or closed; most probably due to the worldwide slump.[[416]](#footnote-416)73

Some of these amalgamations involved the joining-together of ticket agencies, as when the Pullman Car Company was affiliated to the Greek-owned Chandris Lines’ small reservation offices for ocean passengers and the issuing of railway-related travel tickets.[[417]](#footnote-417)74 Although this appeared a minor organisational change, it had significant results, for the amalgamation of railway-owned ticket and booking offices and the request for fees to be paid direct to the Pullman Company. To some extent this last development was a consequence of the attraction for railway companies to streamline their procedures by seeking to extend connections throughout the country, and access the potential business of their own shipping services to Continental Europe.[[418]](#footnote-418)75 For Pullman it was practical business to hire out a Pullman car to a shipping line, irrespective of the numbers travelling in each vehicle, rather than the sale of individual seats. But the disappearance of specialist luxury travel offices was the outcome of the struggle to secure business during the years of the slump.

In his earlier report to shareholders in 1926, Dalziel cited various examples of cyclic business trends and predicted that developments would eventually be controlled with Pullman’s lead, supported by the Wagons-Lits agencies overseas and Cook’s for domestic transacting business requirements from train hire to corporate catering contracts.[[419]](#footnote-419)76

In one respect, of course, Dalziel had anticipated the most significant feature of this process; for the Company was a pioneer of supporting major catering events, as noted above, as well as repeat business in the shape of corporate events and company outings, and such like. To this extent, therefore, it had been both fortunate and prescient. On the other hand, however, the momentum which had transformed its situation before World War 1 continued to push up its income in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The fact remained that its growth was hardly at all characterised by the combinations which other companies used as devices for rapid and dramatic expansion.

In avoiding any other participation with rival companies, excepting Wagons- Lits and the Cook’s organisation, the Pullman Company expressed satisfaction with its own long-established arrangements. As a result, it did not attain to a great expansion and differed in degree, rather than in kind, from its numerous competitors pre-World War 1. This meant that it shared with them most of the difficulties which were the result of growth and diversification and, in particular, it encountered the problems of distant management and control implicit in rapid growth.[[420]](#footnote-420)77

**4.3 Scale and management**

Prior to the partnerships of the first quarter of the twentieth century, the growth of the Pullman Company had created administrative problems which, in turn, had produced increasing managerial professionalisation. Unlike the railway companies and other service providers (including Wagons-Lits in Britain and overseas or the German-owned Mitropa Organisation both of which operated sleeper and dining services in Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and further afield), agreements tended to retain a traditional role as against company officials, that was in the administration and investment of assets.[[421]](#footnote-421)78 Even though booking offices and agencies were considered essential, there emerged a basic distinction between Pullman management who supervised the company’s business and managed its funds, and the officials who were responsible for the management of its railway agreements and collection of supplementary charges.

It was during January 1931, eight years after the Pullman Company entered into agreements to develop an overseas network with Wagons-Lits, that problems arose due to the complexity of contractual interpretation and transparency of information between the two companies which led to the Pullman Board seeking legal opinion. In the opinion of counsel:

the contract is not cumulative in its effects – that is to say, if losses are made in any one year they do not accrue to the succeeding year, each year standing on its merits … [and having met] taxation, maintenance, interest and amortisation charges [the Wagons-Lits Pullman services] have left, so far, no profit. 79

The very forces which produced an urgent demand for ‘general management’ also explained the more independent role which managers could, and had, to play. The resulting increase in travel management meant not only new roles for the Pullman Board to consider, but also a sharpening of the distinction between different department heads at home and abroad. The same specialisation of function which made it almost impossible to keep track of, raised new issues about “gentlemen’s agreements” originally secured by Dalziel, and the need to co-ordinate and closely control their operations. For the Pullman Company, the emergence of strong and relatively independent departments did not bring any particularly severe administrative problems until the end of 1928. This was because the size and scope of the company’s business did not reach critical levels until the early 1930s. Even though there was a great deal of uncertainty pre-World War 1 and post-World War 2, the company was still sufficiently small to attain co-ordination in informal and personal terms with several of their long-standing connections - particularly in the company’s infancy the Southern-based railways and, later, of course, with the Southern and London North Eastern Railways.[[422]](#footnote-422)80

There were, however, potential difficulties of organisation and control in Scotland and (Southern) Ireland. As remote as they were, the main reason for this was that at the official administrative level the inherited structure gave a considerable degree of independence to the individual departments. There appeared to be no built-in tendency to active co-operation, and the Irish operations were for the most part operated under a separate company, with the head office secretary (based at Mayfair Place, London) making an annual trip to audit the accounts.[[423]](#footnote-423)81 In some instances, co-ordination could be imposed from above when Dalziel was Chairman, but after his death in 1928, there remained increasing problems of long-term growth which could not so easily be resolved, because no institutional arrangements existed for their resolution. Among the most important of these, was the question of control on a non-departmental basis, as the company extended the geographical scope of its activities away from London and the South Coast to Scotland and ultimately abroad.

In this respect, the Pullman Company lagged behind developments in the railway industry generally – which was quicker to recognise the need for what is now called ‘general management’.[[424]](#footnote-424)82 The growth of the company’s business had been associated with the emergence of strong, vigorous and independent department agencies. Paradoxically, however, those outlets, precisely because they were remote or independent, posed a mild threat to the continuance of growth. Post-World War 1, the lack of active and firm central guidance and co-ordination became apparent following Dalziel’s death. Large-scale and international business arrangements could no longer be run without the formal co-ordination of departments and the railway company managements over which Pullman services ran. The successor to Dalziel, Lord Ashfield, the creator of London Transport, appointed a special committee to consider ‘whether in view of the increased and increasing operations of the company the existing system of management is best suited to the requirements of the Business’.[[425]](#footnote-425)83

This committee proceeded to take verbal and written evidence from all the principal officers of the company, including the Irish, Northern Divisions (Scottish) and Wagons-Lits, and in its interim report in February 1929, indicated that there was ‘a consensus of opinion that the present system is not entirely satisfactory, and your committee consider that some central authority for general management should be created’.[[426]](#footnote-426)84 For this purpose, the committee recommended the appointment of a ‘Committee of Management’ consisting of:

a lead manager and two governors, which were to meet weekly, at which time different department heads were to be present – with a regular meeting at least once a month at which all heads of departments should collectively meet the governing body to consider any business affecting the company.[[427]](#footnote-427)85

These recommendations were informally adopted in the autumn of 1929 and appointments for the key positions were secured. It was acknowledged that the Pullman Company suffered from being ‘probably the only railway catering and service provider of any importance which has no manager of management committee’.[[428]](#footnote-428)86 The idea of a general manager had originally been rejected by Dalziel in 1918, at least, on the grounds of ‘consideration of internal arrangements’, relying on his secretary to make appropriate contact with other departments, as and when he felt it necessary.[[429]](#footnote-429)87 (The prospect of difficult relationships if a new and senior official post were created above the existing semi-independent and senior managers was probably considered anathema by Dalziel). In the event, the formation of a committee was a poor substitute for the appointment of a full-time general manager (who eventually was employed) in terms of his positive function and of providing a focus for managerial representation at the various offices.[[430]](#footnote-430)88

The company suffered by not making the sort of explicit appointment that had already greatly influenced the managerial evolution of railway companies generally. To take examples, the L.N.E.R. owed much of its early success to the appointment of Sir Ralph Wedgwood as their chief general manager’ in 1923; and the Southern Railway recognised the needs of its important and expanding international business by appointing a general manager, Sir Herbert Walker from 1923-1937.[[431]](#footnote-431)89 Nor was this trend towards a single executive head merely a corporate fashion; it is clear from these and other examples that the drive, unity, and purposefulness which were essential for profitable growth could best, and perhaps only, be obtained by a concentration of authority and responsibility.

**4.4 Conclusion**

Just prior to the outbreak of World War 2, the period had become an age of general managers as far as the development of the Pullman Company was concerned. In the past, it was almost as if the rise of company personalities could only be sustained by the efforts of outstanding and powerful individuals. It was this element which was likely lacking at Pullman under the mantel of Dalziel. However, the company’s transformation after his death could be attributed to new and influential departmental managers who broke away from inherited attitudes, and pushed it into an advanced mode of business behaviour at crucial times of trade depressions and the aftermath of recession. But in spite of this, and in spite of the efforts of Pullman’s various secretaries (effectively also holding the joint position of manager), but that position alone was fully created on a permanent basis just prior to World War 2, there could be no effective alternative to an explicit decision to create a new and much more powerful post. Until then, and taking the committee management into account, the Pullman Company, compared with most of its leading competitors and the ‘Big Four’ railway company managements, lacked a clear line of organisational authority and avoided rather than confronted the problem of twentieth-century organisation. The committee of management was an anomalous development, precisely because it was charged with a management, as well as an over-all policymaking and supervisory function. As a result, Pullman management, in contrast to the ‘Big Four’ railway companies, avoided rather than confronted the problem of twentieth-century organisation. Indeed, the postponement of radical change only aggravated the problem. By continuing and enhancing the independent authority of individual departments during much of the inter-war period, created unnecessary prolonged ramifications which persisted into the 1950s. Even with the new arrangement, the governors could not be expected to accumulate the necessary knowledge of detail or continuously devote the necessary amount of time to the tasks of management. There was still, therefore, a gap between the chosen instrument of general management and the departmental officials. In the last resort this gap could only be closed by the creation of another management.

In the category of ‘luxury travel’ at large that level had developed fully during the two decades after World War 1, as a logical and necessary complement to the growth in scale and scope which had transformed one of the railway’s most important service providers. Although Pullman management control under the Dalziel mantel appeared progressive during the 1920s, the Board soon became essentially passive after his death, to such an extent, that subsequent developments in terms of expansion were only seen as negligible. Their ability to see the need for, and then make determined decisions simply did not happen and, as argued by Hannah, the personal control of British business continued to dominate policy-making at this time. The new administration neither questioned the traditional policy nor changed much in the way of operating structures. In fact, the fundamental structure of the whole concern only marginally altered in function, relying at all times with what had gone on before. This matter was particularly brought to a head almost immediately after World War 2 with tensions developing between the tendencies towards confrontation and co-operation with trade unions, as outlined in chapters 6 and 7.

**5.0 Industrial relations during the inter-war period**

**5.1 Introduction**

On the whole business historians have underestimated the industrial relations activities of employers, particularly those working in the luxury or extra-fare sectors of the railways during the inter-war period, including the Pullman Car Company whose staff were non-unionised.

The chequered history of British industrial relations between the world wars provides an appropriate background against which to conduct such an inquiry where the demands created by the formation of the Triple Industrial Alliance between the railwaymen and transport workers increasingly challenged the existing order. In order to gain a sense of how the changing view of the role of unions affected management of the Pullman Company, business not labour organisation records have been used to examine industrial relations.[[432]](#footnote-432)1 The period during the slump years, in particular, was one of painful economic transition for the ‘Big Four’ railway companies in general, a time when both sides of industry sought to protect their vested interests.[[433]](#footnote-433)2 Unlike the railway companies, incidental conflicts developed between the Pullman Car Company management. The latter, under the direction of a small management, tried to establish and provide means for interpreting collective agreements with their labour force who were mainly non-unionised - an ironical situation where Pullman were in a business sector that was highly unionised and where unions were powerful - on the basis of a mutual recognition of the legitimate rights of each party, and those who were alien to co-operative bargaining with the unions and apparently anxious to contain their effective power.[[434]](#footnote-434)3

The tension which ultimately developed during and immediately after the war between the inclination towards confrontation and co-operation was heightened by the ‘negative voluntarism’ of the state, by which collective bargaining was encouraged but left to take its own course, free from government interference.[[435]](#footnote-435)4 It was against this background, with an absence of policies specifically designed to provide adequate minimum standards of life or the security of full employment, there was no sound economic basis on which collective bargaining could develop its potential to the full.[[436]](#footnote-436)5 Saul has attributed the managerial weakness of Britain’s railway sector on the verge of war to the fact that ‘its prominent men were trained in the highly traditional atmosphere of company workshops’, and therefore had little capacity to absorb the benefits of modernised production processes, for example.[[437]](#footnote-437)6

Davenport-Hines argues it was only following Davison Dalziel’s chairmanship of the Wagons-Lits board and president of the Managing Committee as well as Pullman in the early 1920s, that he was able to tighten his grip on all aspects of control, even though the company was beginning to experience slow but meaningful organisational change.[[438]](#footnote-438)7 Although Wagons-Lits dwarfed Pullman in size and prosperity (by 1927 it owned over 1,287 sleeping cars, 717 restaurant cars and 182 Pullman cars, by contrast, the Pullman Company had about 194 vehicles in Britain), new ambitious schemes had nevertheless been generated by the unification of Dalziel’s interests and his arrangements of introducing Pullman services to Continental Europe were immediately supported by 165 Wagons-Lits-owned or affiliated travel agencies.[[439]](#footnote-439)8

Undoubtedly aware of the prolonged 1894 Pullman Strike of its American parent company which proved a turning point for US labour laws,[[440]](#footnote-440)9 Dalziel spoke often about cordial co-operation and industrial reconciliation at Annual General Meetings. With astute manipulation of the newspapers he owned, and local opinion in the vicinity of where the Pullman workshops were located (including those at Battersea, London), these had a large part in creating his business reputation and influence, and he was keenly aware of his public image - he encouraged publicity and political acclaim for its own sake, and appeared to take increasing pleasure in newspaper interviews.[[441]](#footnote-441)10 As Chairman of the Pullman Car Company, Dalziel also used his persuasive powers and political connections, ‘producing emphatic and memorable phrases in his speeches and writings’.[[442]](#footnote-442)11 His management, in turn demonstrated long-term, progressive views of prevailing economic conditions to modify their relations with labour accordingly, while the ‘Big Four’ Railway Companies on the other-hand were almost always traditionally suspicious of their work-force and often averse to compromise, even in the short run.[[443]](#footnote-443)12

However, because of the limitations of available sources, it is difficult to do full justice to Pullman’s role in the development of industrial relations during this period. The material which exists concentrates on the mid-1920s in particular, with greater focus towards the General Strike of 1926, offering little indication of the implications for collective bargaining of changes in scale and corporate structure of industry. Since the Pullman management held an essentially passive role and were, by comparison to the railway companies, small-players incurring increasing costs in a competitive environment, it is claimed to have coloured the development of the regulation of industrial relations, during the post-World War 2 years, as discussed in subsequent chapters. It is therefore worth investigating, albeit on a modest scale, how far the evidence of Pullman activity substantiates this characterisation of the inter-war period particularly as its employees were non-unionised in a sector that was highly unionised and where unions were powerful. Such a survey may also prompt others to engage in the necessary primary research on which a more composite and analytical approach to the problem of the industrial relations activities of railway employers generally can be built.

**5.2 Post-World War 1 adjustment**

The trade union movement which the Pullman Car Company, and other industries faced to varying degrees at the end of World War 1 had undergone a radical transformation, and appeared to pose a serious threat not only to the well-being, but to the very future, of the existing capitalist order.[[444]](#footnote-444)13 During the war years, trade unions gained new status and power. Their collective bargaining rights were extended; national wage agreements became standard rather than exceptional, and both government and employers, including the Industrialist, Dudley Docker, a well-known figure of substantial influence in Britain’s foremost rolling stock companies and Davison Dalziel, in his latter role of entrepreneur in finance and service industries, found themselves having to seek the consent or support of the labour-force in order to execute their plans.[[445]](#footnote-445)14 Other developments made the railway industry generally fearful of the terms and conditions under which peacetime negotiations with labour would be conducted. Traditional wage differentials, for instance, were seriously undermined during the war and despite labour’s advances there emerged a distinct feeling of ‘unequal sacrifice in the face of substantial wartime industrial profits’.[[446]](#footnote-446)15 The formation of the Triple Industrial Alliance in 1913 between the railwaymen, transport workers as well as miners for the purpose of joint industrial action in support of each other’s demands provided, in theory at least, the means by which they could bring important sectors of the industrial economy to a virtual standstill.[[447]](#footnote-447)16 The war had simply added to this potential threat by increasing substantially trade union membership and prompting close co-operation between unions in the same industry, reassuring them to act in unison in the presentation of industrial claims.[[448]](#footnote-448)17 By 1918, the major unions had elevated this trend to a conspicuous policy of formulating national programmes, which members of the Triple Alliance sought to submit concurrently to employers and the government at the end of hostilities.[[449]](#footnote-449)18

To the threat of trade union pressure was added the problem of local negotiation with the shop stewards’ movement. Unofficial action to press home labour’s enhanced bargaining strength had found its most powerful expression in the railway-related industries where an effort was made to redress the balance in favour of employers which had resulted from labour dilution (that is, the use of semi-skilled and unskilled labour in skilled jobs).[[450]](#footnote-450)19 The government’s insistence that shop stewards should be formally recognised and consulted over dilution angered employers, although Pullman at that time took a passive stance.[[451]](#footnote-451)20 The recruiting of Pullman catering and engineering staff at all levels, for instance, was selective and the skills required of the job were handed down, where set procedures and drills with most tasks were performed by the train crews or by apprenticeship at workshops. Long before the setting up of industrial training boards, the Pullman management appeared to appreciate the value and time of training and refresher courses which recommenced early post-war – one of their objectives in business was to contain the ‘overhead’ considered to be unproductive and not revenue earning.[[452]](#footnote-452)21

In addition, the activities of the shop stewards and the extension of government control to the railways during and immediately after the war, had popularised the grand idea of workers’ control or, at the very least, state ownership of industry which encouraged the conviction that political, and especially industrial action could effectively break-up the capitalist control of the means of production.[[453]](#footnote-453)22 Acceptance of trade unions as equals in the affairs of industry had become so much a part of wartime industrial awareness, that railway managements had begun to consider seriously their own strategic position in the immediate post-war world.[[454]](#footnote-454)23 The several attempts made before 1914 to provide a central organisation among employers had all failed, but war-time conditions provided an effective catalyst. By striving for national collective bargaining and by itself becoming directly involved in private companies, like the Pullman Company Limited at the time (until 1915 when it was transformed into a public company and restyled as the Pullman Car Company Limited), the government played an important part in encouraging the expansion and development of national employers’ organisations.[[455]](#footnote-455)24

The disjointed or incoherent industrial and commercial representation which existed prior to World War 1 was, if anything, later accelerated and trade associations, and employers’ organisations within the railway industry generally gained in strength and authority.[[456]](#footnote-456)25 A formal structure did however emerge to provide for the consideration of labour matters at national level, and was to prove of some significance in later years to the Pullman Car Company who progressively struggled to adapt to external constraints, particularly during the early post-World War 2 years, as outlined in chapters 6 and 7.

**5.3 Patterns of authority in the 1920s**

When the post-war boom broke in 1920 the balance of power shifted significantly in favour of business men. Dudley Docker and Davison Dalziel, who had both manipulated and owned newspapers, were also subjected to public scrutiny which had played a large part in creating their business reputation.[[457]](#footnote-457)26 Dalziel had known Docker since placing orders with the Metropolitan Carriage Wagon & Finance Company (originally the Metropolitan Amalgamated Railway Carriage & Wagon Company) in 1908, although Davenport-Hines argues they were ‘afterwards said to be on bad terms’.[[458]](#footnote-458)27 Although no record of why this was the case can be substantiated, the available evidence suggests that throughout much of the inter-war years almost all Pullman interests were, in the main, clustered around the Docker-owned companies, including railway carriage construction, paints, varnishes, furnishings and, importantly, finance.[[459]](#footnote-459)28

Abrupt deflation, an onset of large-scale unemployment, and a general and strong pressure on wage rates of declining trades caused intense foreign competition during 1921, with unionists defending standards rather than trying to raise them by threats of direct action.[[460]](#footnote-460)29 In this spirited defence lay probably the origins of the General Strike, not least because the employers’ efforts to reduce wage rates - to a degree directly involving the Pullman Car Company staff - nevertheless seriously disturbed relations in essential basic trades throughout the country, and dictated the terms under which peaceful compromises could be attained in most others. They were conducted, furthermore, against the backdrop of an official deflationary policy which, in its contention on seeking stability through restoration of the gold standard at the pre-war parity, put a high premium on the reduction of domestic, especially labour costs.[[461]](#footnote-461)30

With renewed vigilance, Pullman management continued to maintain throughout their long-standing refusal to allow trade unions the right to regulate the wages and conditions of their workforce. Still under the very personal basis advocated by the Dalziel mantel, the company was sustained by a straightforward organisation with a comparatively small management structure almost until his death (see appendix), which ran their departments on a very personal basis with the inspectorate and railway companies over which their cars ran secured by relatively long-term agreements at the time.[[462]](#footnote-462)31 Their major source of revenue continued to be ‘derived […] from the supplements charged to passengers based on distances travelled and from the receipts for meals and refreshments served in the Cars.’[[463]](#footnote-463)32

However, one of the first major difficulties encountered during the immediate post-war years were the significant delays experienced with new orders, particularly during 1921 when the Clayton Wagons Company of Lincoln, who were contracted to supply 20 new Pullman cars for the Great Eastern Railway governed by strict time-scales, sought to reduce demarcation disputes between its skilled workers.[[464]](#footnote-464)33 These disputes allegedly impeded its management in effectively utilising its labour, especially in the manning of machines.[[465]](#footnote-465)34 It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that a dispute with the Amalgamated Engineering Union (A.E.U.), who sought from its inception in 1896 to preserve the power to manage and to keep the peace, over who should have the right to decide overtime working, eventually led to a lock-out, one year later in 1922. This resulted in further delays in completing what were seen as prestigious orders earmarked for completely new business routes, and which were already widely advertised and planned by the railway company promoting inaugural trips.[[466]](#footnote-466)35

The employers’ insistence on being the sole arbiters of working conditions during a time of large-scale unemployment indicated to the A.E.U. ‘that they have learned nothing, but circumstances are of no account, that they still harbour the old idea of master and men’.[[467]](#footnote-467)36 It is arguable that the engineering workers’ identification with the demand for workers’ control, and the marked sectionalism of union organisation strengthened the employers’ offensive, was portrayed as a spirited defence of the existing system of ownership against those who appeared determined to destroy it. Be that as it may, in practice, it probably spread suspicion within the industry and hampered any moves towards a positive reform of collective bargaining.[[468]](#footnote-468)37 From the management’s point of view, the rights of trade unions had been closely defined whilst theirs remained satisfactorily vague.[[469]](#footnote-469)38 In the wake of their success, the Pullman management were able, in subsequent years, to resist demands for the restoration of wages to their pre-1922 level, and during the long period of the slump, to impose further wage reductions, where deemed appropriate.[[470]](#footnote-470)39

After World War 1, the Pullman organisation was viewed ‘similar to that of a regiment’ and although ‘it was a hard taskmaster demanding a certain standard of conduct, discipline and deportment … the staff, argued by Morel, were a *corps d’elite’*.[[471]](#footnote-471)40 A number of other factors which enabled them to confront the difficulties ahead, especially the General Strike that was to come, also operated in favour of those elsewhere in the railway industry. Systematic consideration of the differences between employers and workers, for instance, had been firmly entrenched within the industry since the nineteenth century and railway companies generally had managed to command a marked degree of discipline, and co-operation, from their workers by adopting the same federal form as the union amalgamations in order to resolve conflicts of interest. In contrast to Pullman employees at this time, railway workers remained strongly unionised though they failed to match the growth of employer strength and lacked any effective concerted policy until after World War 2, which is considered in chapter 6. Nevertheless, during the inter-war period railway employees remained successfully locked with their employers in a struggle to improve efficiency and prospects.[[472]](#footnote-472)41

It would of course be ill-considered to infer from the evidence presented so far that the transformation in the economic climate already developing in the 1920s seriously damaged relations between labour and capital in the railway industry. As might be expected, the Pullman Company was not forced to adjust to such drastic changes in their market and competitive environment as those in other areas of transportation. The reality of economic depression did not entirely obliterate the co-operation and respect fostered between the two sides in more prosperous, stable times.[[473]](#footnote-473)42 Later, during February 1927, the *Modern Transport* correspondent, reflected on the previous year and congratulated the Pullman Company:

for withstanding the shock, first by the railway strike and subsequently, the prolonged coal strike, which brought the majority of luxury-type services to a standstill, while the working charges in all departments, with the exception of the commissary supply, remained the same.[[474]](#footnote-474)43

Faced with a reduced demand for their services throughout that time and, during the intermittent slump years, Pullman employees relied on the legacy of mutual respect between them and their employers. The majority appear to have had little sympathy for unionists or at any time notions of company unionism. In any event, by July 1935 at least, as a condition of employment (during the period of an apprenticeship, for example), employees ‘shall not be, or become a member of any Trade Society or Trade Union […] or take part in any trade dispute’.[[475]](#footnote-475)44 In his bid to exercise a strong executive control over the company, Dalziel continued to promote his standard instructions for Pullman employees, whose terms and conditions of service included:

all persons employed must devote themselves exclusively to the Company’s service […] where every employee must make himself thoroughly acquainted with, and will be held responsible for a knowledge of and compliance with, the whole of the Rules and Regulations.

In addition to this, Dalziel also encouraged the sanctity of agreements entered into between both parties, reminding all departmental heads ‘that the railway was the master and Pullman was a contractor’.[[476]](#footnote-476)45 Such co-operation with staff was probably made easier by the fact that Pullman employed a relatively large proportion of families around Battersea, South London (and later Brighton), which tended to perpetuate arrangements for settling disputes, although by the late 1940s committee meetings had become the norm.[[477]](#footnote-477)46 While the Pullman services were the first to suffer from strike action, evidenced by an abrupt and almost complete shutting down of its business, Dalziel stated that:

it is not my province […] to moralise upon the folly of the recent troubles, but as they are reflected, if in a minor degree, upon the fortunes of your enterprise, so they did in a much greater degree affect industry and employment.[[478]](#footnote-478)47

In truth, Pullman’s contractual obligations, development and construction work were temporarily arrested, including an order of 90 vehicles mostly built in Britain for new continental services.[[479]](#footnote-479)48 Even though the majority of Pullman engineering and bodywork staff at the workshops and maintenance depots were not unionised either, unlike their railway counterparts, regular negotiations with Dalziel continued to prove exceptionally friendly and met surprisingly little resistance from his workers.[[480]](#footnote-480)49

Evidently the management could not avoid imposing reduced wages during 1926 in the commissary departments (and later to all employees at the height of the slump between 1929-1932), it succeeded in gaining their support for a joint investigation of the cost structure of the ‘de-luxe’ market as a preliminary to deciding the most effective means of meeting increasing national competition from other forms of transportation, including airways and unregulated long-distance bus companies.[[481]](#footnote-481)50 At a subsequent shareholders meeting in 1927 Dalziel declared:

in [doing] justice to our staff […] reference to their loyalty, which never wavered throughout this troubled period, and, while our share in keeping all our men on full pay added to our financial burden, it was only a fair tribute […] to the devotion and good feeling they showed towards us.[[482]](#footnote-482)51

Equally, to their merit the Pullman management refrained from any concerted attempts to weaken or damage relationships with those few employees who held union membership, and sought to preserve the long-established and trusted collective bargaining machinery.[[483]](#footnote-483)52 Their actions demonstrate the importance of recognising the extent to which an employer’s views of industrial relations are determined by the nature and effectiveness of the trade union body within the railway industry. It also probably enhanced a feeling of stability and security for those in employment. As was often the case, Dalziel was aware that by far the most troublesome of problems were caused to Pullman by industrial action on the railways. ‘It may be threatened or real, but the damage was equal. A threat of a strike or a go-slow and there was an immediate drop in business.’[[484]](#footnote-484)53

The indication of mutual co-operation therefore, even if selective and conditioned by the particular economic problems facing representatives on each side, is a reminder of how much the history of industrial relations during the 1920s arose from the problems of those businesses where Pullman were highly reliant, including coal and, to an equal extent, operational railways and engineering industries. Prompted by a habit of responsible negotiation to safeguard the collective bargaining machinery, even at the most critical moments in the advance of competition of ‘de-luxe’ services from the railway companies themselves, wage adjustments regardless were subjected to careful examination by both sides through the recognised negotiating machinery that was widely developing.[[485]](#footnote-485)54 Dalziel also characteristically ensured that the wage reductions imposed initially during the 1921-2 downturn determinedly left rates above minimum union levels imposed elsewhere, including those organisations widely reported in the press (a case in point being Unilever), and that the blow was softened by the almost simultaneous introduction of unemployment, sickness, and benefit payments.[[486]](#footnote-486)55

Dalziel’s firm conviction appeared to be based upon economic circumstances which should never be allowed to obliterate justice and humanity and to his mind the major problems of labour relations in a maturing industry could be solved only by sustained co-operation – not excluding labour participation in management – and respect for the rights and obligations of each side.[[487]](#footnote-487)56 These ideas are found to be rare amongst the majority of contemporary business men. Moreover, even when they existed their practical application was never entirely free of subtle means of asserting managerial authority. Dalziel, on the other hand, offered a generous benefits policy, including sick pay, for instance, which was a palpable ploy to retain the loyalty of his staff and to weaken any direct trade union involvement.[[488]](#footnote-488)57 From around 1926, if not earlier, Pullman began to sponsor profit-sharing as an effective means of promoting better relations with labour. Fundamentally, the scheme of ‘co-partnership’ entitled staff of all ranks after eight years’ service to ordinary shares allotted in proportion to wages.[[489]](#footnote-489)58 Since the value of shares fluctuated with the profitability of the company it was hoped, by binding the labour-force to the firm’s interest, it would avoid undue loss and efficiency. Pullman on-board employees stood to lose any gratuities if they left the firm and went on strike. For those workers who had more than fifteen years’ service there was a further incentive of possible promotion to a privileged staff grade at the discretion of the management. Dalziel’s policy towards labour, though fair and generous compared to contemporary standards, included elements of a ‘cynical bargain by which “benefits” were traded off against hard cash … so that Pullman (and by association Wagons-Lits) continued to gain a staff [both] contented and comparatively cheap’.[[490]](#footnote-490)59 In the years before the General Strike, where the company was faced with a sudden break in the economic climate which transformed both business prospects and the ingrained power of organised labour, it was of course preoccupied with the particular problems of the service industry generally, and sought to safeguard as pragmatically as possible their future viability and managerial authority. In this they were helped by the fact that employers’ organisations at industry and national level at large had gained in strength and influence and had managed to retain a large degree of autonomy.[[491]](#footnote-491)60 Throughout this time governments had progressively sought to ‘educate’ labour into accepting changes in the social order through gradual constitutionalism, whilst the Labour Party actively reduced its radical plea for the complete transformation of industrial ownership and control to a search for a regulated form of capitalism which necessarily implied a distribution of effective power between leaders in industry and workers.[[492]](#footnote-492)61

More obvious in its effect was of course the impact of industrial recession. The rapid deflation between mid-1920 and mid-1922 abated the trade unionist’s conception of the potentialities of direct action, and expectations of continually improving conditions that many were content to hold on to the gains they had already made. It was not so much that industrial relations had been transformed for the better by the extension of practical forms of joint consultation based on traditional voluntary procedures, as the fact that labour’s prevailing attitudes and expectations were sufficiently inhibited by the economic malaise to suit the available machinery.[[493]](#footnote-493)62 This was of little comfort to the Pullman Car Company where labour’s rear-guard action was more sustained if only because it was under greater pressure to establish, and expand, their services with the minimum of labour unrest.

**5.4 Post-General Strike**

Unlike some industrialists, including Dudley Docker, who took a personal interest in the outcome of the owner-employee offensive before 1926, it is of some interest to examine how far the episode marked the sharp break in the general attitude of the Pullman management – for both good and bad.

Enthused with success after the collapse of sympathetic trade union support for the General Strike and the aftermath of a prolonged coal strike, many employers pressed even more vigorously for the abolition of the national minimum wage and for a longer working day.[[494]](#footnote-494)63 The Pullman management did not pursue any significant changes, as the average hours already worked per day were often greater than 10 for most of its ‘on-board train’ employees.[[495]](#footnote-495)64 During the following year, in 1927, four new directors had been appointed: Lord Ashfield, Stanley Adams, Sir Follett Holt and Sir Edmund Wyldbore-Smith; the latter two names having worked for many years with Dudley Docker and noted for their vast experience of railway-related business.[[496]](#footnote-496)65 The government, however, proved difficult in insisting that national negotiations should be resumed between the parties. Angered by the prolonged disruption of established procedures and agreements through the organised withdrawal of labour during the General Strike, all the railway companies joined in the agitation to endeavour restricting the effective power of the trade union movement.[[497]](#footnote-497)66 Scheduled train services continued to be heavily restricted, as coal stock for steam locomotives to run them was in dire need of replenishment. Almost all boat train services on the Southern Railway with Pullman accommodation, for example, were in the main cancelled and those few that ran were fully subscribed with advance bookings.[[498]](#footnote-498)67

Despite the retaliation and recrimination practised by non-railway industrialists after the 1926 dispute, it should be emphasised that the important shift towards closer collaboration between the two sides of industry are as evidenced in the Mond-Turner talks. These discussions sprang essentially from the culmination of a number of factors making for industrial co-operation after 1926.[[499]](#footnote-499)68 The railway companies recognised that to fight the powerful trade union movement was costly and to a large degree self-defeating, inasmuch as the essential need to boost efficiency and rationalisation demanded the assistance of the unions. Moreover, it was not unreasonable in the prevailing circumstances to expect such collaboration to be readily forthcoming.

The co-operative mood within the railways and, by close extension, the Pullman Car Company, was reinforced by a favourable movement of public opinion, firm political support from the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour, and the relatively favourable economic climate between 1926 and 1929 which improved the levels of consumer expenditure, and gross domestic capital formation.[[500]](#footnote-500)69 The Mond-Turner episode proved to be of interest from the railways’ perspective, given that all of the delegates fundamentally opposed the suppositions on which it was based, leaving those involved conceding to the unions’ right to be consulted over questions of general industrial policy.[[501]](#footnote-501)70 Indeed, much of the joint discussion had centred on devising permanent machinery for industrial co-operation. As argued by Bonavia, the railways – and by implication Pullman – were intimately involved in labour matters than many organisations elsewhere, and were to a greater extent influenced by relationships and long-standing traditions.[[502]](#footnote-502)71 ‘Whereas the mainstream of British trade unionism thinking in the 1920s moved towards co-operation in a far more positive form than ever before’ argues Hattersley, ‘the employers who wished to reciprocate had to struggle against the tide of their own organisations’.[[503]](#footnote-503)72

By the 1930s, the railways were able to resist the demand by their work-force for national wage determination and industrial reorganisation, and continued successfully to modify conditions to meet the needs of competition. It remained patently clear that solutions were to be sought in accordance with the strict and narrow view of industrial relations which put the Railway’s and Pullman managements’ prerogatives – including the prerogative to determine wages – far above long-term and costly considerations of amalgamations and co-operative selling.[[504]](#footnote-504)73 As the railway unions progressively clamoured for more amalgamation, standardisation, and control of production, the respective managements of each of the ‘Big Four’ railway companies invariably amended existing agreements over working hours in an effort to impose a longer working week in the industry.[[505]](#footnote-505)74 Wage disparities and working hours between railway workers, and those contracted to the Pullman company, continued to bore witness to the employers’ willingness to renounce existing collective agreements and peace was restored only through the intervention of the Ministry of Labour.[[506]](#footnote-506)75

In the face of open disunity amongst the separate trade union organisations, the employers were under little pressure to forego the more traditional means of cost reduction in favour of any schemes of industrial reorganisation other than those that they thought were necessary. Nor was the Pullman management any less reluctant to give way to the spirited resistance of the unions to wage reductions during the slump (between 1929-1932) even at the potential cost of a breakdown in regular communication between the two sides.[[507]](#footnote-507)76

However, the unions recognised and subsequently demonstrated their full support to the railways when, following the Budget announcement in 1929 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Winston Churchill, who confirmed that ‘Railway Passenger Duty’ would be abolished if the capitalised value was spent on improvements by the ‘Big Four’ Railway Companies. This was seen as an opportunity to create much needed employment at a time of emerging economic difficulties.[[508]](#footnote-508)77 In character of egalitarian principles and a promising hope to thousands of unemployed skilled tradesmen and labourers, each Railway Company announced their proposals; the Southern Railway, for example, issued an official announcement during October 1929 guaranteeing to spend at least 80 per cent. of their share of the duty by extending electrification of the main lines to the South Coast, which was completed by November 1932.[[509]](#footnote-509)78 Taking advantage of the material encouragement offered by the Government, the Southern Railways resultant agreement also embodied a total of 38 brand new all-electric Pullman cars built at a cost of almost £ 210,000, ordered through and built by the Metropolitan-Cammell, Carriage, Wagon & Finance Company whose Chairman was Dudley Docker.[[510]](#footnote-510)79 By Pullman’s close association with the Southern Railway and its scheme to electrify with the support of the trade unions, Leigh-Bennett in his article ‘The Last Word’ explained that they ‘had pushed steadfastly through the gloom of the country’s deepest depression and had shown what dogged enterprise can accomplish in spite of it all’.[[511]](#footnote-511)80

As regard the Mond-Turner talks, there is assuredly some truth in the view that these not only improved relations at the higher levels of the railway management at this time, but generally educated employers, too, in later years to accept the downward ‘stickiness’ of wages and to seek less painful ways of adjusting to economic decline.[[512]](#footnote-512)81 Even as late as July 1937, nine years after Dalziel’s death, the much larger Pullman management team anxious to maintain the status quo, recognised income levels were annually decreasing. In a bid to encourage custom they agreed, for example, to a significant reduction of the supplementary charges on the London, North Eastern Railway long-distance services - by approximately 25 per cent. (in line with the streamline train supplements), a measure it was said ‘would sustain and attract business and maintain their workforce levels’.[[513]](#footnote-513)82 During the cyclic years of depression and business activity throughout the inter-war years, Pullman management’s basic desire to preserve some continuing element of conciliation and compromise with their workforce are also noted. Unlike the bargaining between railway companies and militant trade unions, wage and price instability, and large-scale industrial conflict, the Pullman Company appeared to be much more on the alert particularly during the immediate post-General Strike years, and it is arguable, in any case, whether the successful establishment of formal co-operation would have been of exceptional benefit where only a fraction of their workforce had any affinity to a trade union at that time.

**5.5 Conclusion**

The paucity of surviving material on the industrial relations activities of the Pullman Car Company makes it challenging to provide a complete or industrially balanced account of the factors which influenced Davison Dalziel and his successors’ in their relations with labour between the inter-war period.

Despite the demands following the formation of the Triple Industrial Alliance between the railwaymen and transport workers, it is clear however that Pullman continued to exploit their position as profitably as possible by choosing a strategy best suited to the prevailing circumstances, and most likely to achieve an acceptable outcome with the minimum of disruption to their services. Almost all Pullman employees remained non-unionised, yet they worked in a sector that was highly unionised and where unions grew powerful. It is recognised, however, that any general explanation of employers’ labour activities and preference for particular types of bargaining arrangements should include an examination of management’s objectives, both commercial and political, as pursued under different structural and economic conditions. To this extent, the variety of factors which predetermine the attitudes and expectations which Pullman management brought to bear on an industrial relations problem are of critical importance. The posture ultimately adopted was by the desire to avoid industrial disputes depending on tactical strength; by the need to equalise wage costs and working hours in line with the railway companies; by a determination to defend managerial authority following the death of Dalziel; and to preserve the viability of collective bargaining when the institutional needs of both sides coincide.

To all these influences must be added such indeterminate, but no less important considerations of Pullman’s perception of the factual situation; its sympathy for and understanding of the employee; its skill in bargaining and persuasion; its motives; future expectations; and not least its judgement of the feasibility of obtaining its objectives. Such constraints rarely figured in Pullman’s public defence of its actions, but the temptation to reduce the causes of conflict to crude issues of class warfare, if never entirely misplaced, could nevertheless distort the picture and give undue weight to the claims and aspirations of the labour participants only. In so far as research into Pullman activity continues to cast doubt on the accepted judgements of entrepreneurial behaviour in the past, it would be short-sighted to overlook that employers’ relations with labour might not be influenced by factors held to be as just, rational, and defensible as those challenged by the unions.

Although fragmentary, the evidence presented here emphasises how little is known about developments at establishment level and how much the systematic consideration of the relations between luxury-travel and the ‘extra-fare’ sectors of the railways and its employees between the wars has been neglected. Furthermore, in so far as the attitudes and expectations of Pullman management during and post-Dalziel involvement were critically important, it would be as profitable to examine, how far the growth of large-scale concentrated production eroded or reinforced traditional forms of ownership and control and to question, whether professional managerial groups, as paid labour, fostered particularly distinctive relations with the work-force. Nor is the role of tradition without some significance. The Pullman Car Company, if nothing else, continued to strive and defend what they believed to be long established rights.

Since industrial unrest, restrictive trade practices, resistance to technical change, and encroachments on managerial authority have so obviously obliged the Pullman Company and to a greater extent railway companies to react towards the labour interest, it is only by fostering a more deliberate study of the motives, aspirations, strategy, and success of Pullman (and by some obligatory association the railway companies) that we can hope to understand fully the past record of industrial relations and with it a major factor in the development of the luxury sector and that of the Pullman Car Company.

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**FIG. 6. INTERIOR VIEW OF PRESTON PARK WORKS, BRIGHTON c.1946**

(Photograph: Courtesy of J. Kent, Brighton)

**6.0 Design and identity**

**6.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to challenge Cheryl Buckley’s notion that national identity resides in tradition and history, and paradoxically enterprise and innovation were key to business success. Opportunely, Pullman’s flagship train, the international ‘Golden Arrow’ is used as a test bed because the service suitably straddles an almost continuous period of this thesis from its early origins to its latter operating difficulties and demise. This service will also be examined to determine whether or not the image of Pullman cars promoted a vision of Britain that was fundamentally rooted in tradition, irrespective of trade depressions and changing trends. This chapter will also explore the permeability of design cultures at crucial moments from 1926 to the 1950s, and the contingent relationships between identity, design and modernity. Although this period was beset with economic dislocation of world trade recession, world war and its aftermath, the question of whether the Pullman vehicles themselves were considered travelling showcases or simply a pragmatic focus on products and consumption will be appraised.

As with new railway stock generally introduced at one time or another to railway systems, new Pullman cars were no differently treated in their promotion. Their credentials were viewed from the onset with high-quality and progressive graphics in unified design schemes that maximised the visual impact of their message. Advertising posters and brochures were often strategically designed to convey a taste of the high style a passenger would experience on board any Pullman service. Although the rolling stock were described by publications to the nation at large, and in detail of the unique traits which made no two cars identical, their interior designs might be termed a reflection of a growing awareness of English and also British traditions which developed interchangeably in what Buckley describes as the ‘politics of style’. The arrangement of this chapter therefore explores the connected themes of modernity, identity and innovation, underpinned by pre- and post-war business arrangements of the Pullman Company.

**6.2 ‘The Politics of Style’**

The technological progress of carriage building generally became not just a matter of prestige for the railway companies connecting with the ‘short sea route’ services to the Continent, but a national imperative to help drive the industry forward.[[514]](#footnote-514) *The Daily Mirror*, a paper originally pitched to the middle-class reader and reputedly with the largest net sale, reported on the ‘most luxurious train on view in a London station’ staged by Pullman management to show-off to a wider audience the latest technology and interior refinements of their new cars.[[515]](#footnote-515) Within the Pullman Company that narrative was consistently one of striking the optimal balance between the expectations and needs of the traveller, but the passenger experience was always paramount in driving the developments that were to be adopted.[[516]](#footnote-516) Just after the inaugural run of the ‘Golden Arrow’ to Paris in 1926, Dalziel (now, Lord Dalziel of Wooler) announced:

The [Golden Arrow] event probably marks the most important innovation in travel between England and France … and proves that the Pullman habit will now take a firm hold of the leading French and other Continental railways. There is already talk of a wide extension of these services in the near future. It is not without interest that the Pullman Company is a partner with the Wagons-Lits in the financial results of the development of Pullman services on the Continent – an arrangement which is likely to prove of the highest value to the Pullman Company in coming years.[[517]](#footnote-517)

Dalziel endeavoured to demonstrate that good design could bring style and efficiency and this was shown to good effect by replicating identical amenities on offer on both sides of the Channel in co-operation with the British and French railway companies and port authorities. The distinct umber and cream livery, and coat of arms (of either Pullman or the Wagons Lits Company) was for instance used on all vehicles, while colourful avant-garde publicity posters matching on both sides of the Channel (either in French or English), as well as staff uniforms was central to this activity to enhance a seamless passenger experience and, providing reassurance for the traveller of a safe and comfortable journey.[[518]](#footnote-518) On similar parallels to the American parent company, passenger comfort remained at the core of design considerations, and while express speed was often seen as the enemy of safety, it was also sacrificed for increased luxury.[[519]](#footnote-519) Throughout the inter-war period ‘de-luxe’ supplementary or ‘extra-fare’ accommodation had become ‘firmly established’, and to travel by Pullman was to enter a realm of transformative glamour and escapist fantasy argues Hasenson.[[520]](#footnote-520) ‘Spectacle’ was a recurring key idea, and for many passengers, fashion was central to the travelling experience. It was the capital to capital service, better known as the ‘Golden Arrow’ (or French equivalent ‘Fléche d’Or’) that gave passengers opportunities of catching sight of, and even the opportunities to speak with, celebrities, statesmen and diplomats who were travelling abroad.[[521]](#footnote-521)

British-designed and built ‘steel-framed’ vehicles dedicated for ‘Golden Arrow’ service on the Southern Railway, as well as brand-new ‘all-steel’ cars used on the French Nord Railway, promoted the reputation of English luxury goods within the continuing tradition and high-style British decorative interior. Such features including carpet and armchairs featuring revival patterns: ‘Vine’, ‘Oak leaf’ and ‘Crimped ribbon and wreath’, more usually associated with the Georgian and Regency periods were outlined in some detail. Buckley argues that the decorative elements ‘matched or exceeded’ the very best of Britain’s decorative arts and, as such, the ‘Golden Arrow’ developed a growing reputation which broadly came ‘to represent the highest standard of luxury travel by train’.[[522]](#footnote-522) Its reputational value arguably bolstered Britain’s position as a leading centre, on par with France, for the production of luxury goods and consumption, an agenda foregrounded one year or so earlier at the Empire Exhibition of 1924/5.[[523]](#footnote-523) By 1927, however, an important thematic strand of Pullman’s decorative schemes presented the art and so-called traditions of old ‘English’ culture while positioning the ‘Golden Arrow’ at the end of an ancient tradition of creativity and history which included, for example, references to the ‘Field of the Cloth of Gold’ (1520) and England’s one-time ownership of Calais (accompanied by colourful artists’ impressions), through which the corresponding French part of the ‘Golden Arrow’ service traversed.[[524]](#footnote-524) The decoration of many of the British Pullman cars had generally tended to emulate stately homes with marquetry panelling, as the main decoration, in supposedly recognisable historical designs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although detailed oak and mahogany furniture was a standard feature, there was also an attempt to introduce up-to-date vehicles embodying new methods of construction, insulation and ventilation.[[525]](#footnote-525) A sense of observing current trends in modern interior design did not however become so immediately clear until around 1932, some four years after the death of Lord Dalziel, with the introduction of what would later become the electric ‘Brighton Belle’ train with its showcase art deco interiors. These vehicles were characterised by marquetry panelling depicting Sussex landscapes – windmills, harbours, water mills and cottages, for instance, and whose construction and modernist aesthetics were ‘very different from that of Pullman cars hitherto constructed’.[[526]](#footnote-526) (See figure 4).

The continual need to promote specific refinements as a civilised form of travel were, of course, by no means restricted to the Pullman Car Company. Considered by the various railway managements, too, attractively-appointed trains were incorporating new-fangled technological developments including electric cooking, rather than coal, for instance, and by the mid-1930s, greater use of synthetic materials, such as ‘Rexine’, was featured throughout new rolling stock introduced by the L.N.E.R., including their streamline trains: ‘The Silver Jubilee’ and ‘Coronation’.[[527]](#footnote-527) The ‘Big Four’ railway companies increasingly showcased aesthetic distinctiveness, paying stylistic homage to the English and, more globally, the British past through combinations of a modern interpretation of period styles and materials, as well as employing richly produced promotional material to market its best trains.[[528]](#footnote-528) Style was therefore employed as a commercial weapon and, as argued by Buckley, it gained particular success, proving popular with affluent travellers who ‘admired the special appointments’, which invoked England’s aristocratic past.[[529]](#footnote-529) On the other hand, Cohen counter argues that Britain was still broadly living in the past throughout the 1920s and 1930s and England’s contribution to the modern movement was at best, ‘trifling’, although importantly she concluded that furnishings aimed to avoid the appearance of eccentricity – a marked departure from the Edwardian period.[[530]](#footnote-530)

A significant promotional piece by sheer volumes was published to coincide with the inauguration of the ‘Golden Arrow’ on 11 September 1926, suggesting that the ‘balance between the conservative and the modern had been perfectly struck’.[[531]](#footnote-531) With ‘de-luxe’ accommodation limited only to first-class ticket holders (until 1932 when second-class were also admitted to the French train), the ‘Golden Arrow’ presented itself, in Hill’s words, as ‘a name that lent itself to advertising and moneymaking spin-offs, as well as capturing the imagination of potential travellers’.[[532]](#footnote-532) However, the use of detailed descriptions of the aesthetics prevailed on Pullman services elsewhere including, for instance, topical illustrations published in *The Railway Engineer* during 1924. A full-page advertisement reproduced images of a batch of newly-released Pullman cars from the carriage builders, as well as an interior view of the ‘*Milan* car, designed in the Greek style of ornament, beautifully finished in pear wood with carpets and upholstery in saxe blue’. The frontispiece also featured a busy scene at King’s Cross station with the departure of the ‘Harrogate Pullman’, where passengers are depicted boarding in a civilised manner and all appearing to wear the latest fashions.[[533]](#footnote-533) Even though such examples in railway journals are relatively numerous at this time (before and after the launch of the 1926 ‘Golden Arrow’), the interior design of some cars later attracted increasing critical scrutiny in more than one respect. Nationally minded commentators in London vocally questioned the patriotic credentials of transportation, which broadly suggests Pullman cars, on which they detected undue foreign aesthetic influence. Irrespective of their British build and engineering in many instances, and close association to Dalziel, ‘several vehicles’ (though not Pullman in name) introduced for the ‘Continental Express’ (the direct forerunner of the ‘Golden Arrow’) caused heightened discussion in patriotic circles for the Louis XIV and Louis XV styles (among others) featured in the passenger saloons and, although acceptable in other rolling stock constructed during the Edwardian age, now represented an interest in some artistic circles.[[534]](#footnote-534)

The increasing involvement of foreign architects at the furniture supplier, Waring & Gillow, the one-time preferred designer of Pullman car interiors, and the preponderance of French and Italian styles in a train that represented Britain at home and abroad was to some extent increasingly problematic. For the British Empire Exhibition in 1924 and 1925, for example, a brochure produced to celebrate Waring & Gillow’s contribution drew attention to a number of specifically ‘British’ and ‘English’ traits, although significantly the terms were used interchangeably. Titled *Past and Present*, this brochure underlined tradition and continuity, craftsmanship and artistic training. After describing the company’s exhibits at Wembley, including their association with the furnishings of two Pullman cars namely *Argus* and *Cynthia*, the detailed interiors were thus describedas ‘a modern tendency in period decoration, dependent upon simplicity, and simple masses, as well as beauty and richness of material used’.[[535]](#footnote-535)

The cultural and artistic reform periodical the *Burlington Magazine* hurled an acerbic charge of aesthetic high treason against Waring & Gillow – and, by default, the Southern Railway and Pullman Company who both enjoyed repeat commissions using their designs. This publication considered the new luxury services as nothing more than a ‘faulty national symbol to showcase distinctly British cultural achievements to the wider world’.[[536]](#footnote-536) These attacks carried a particular punch in Britain because of the alternative designs and general trends that were emerging, as acknowledged by Buckley.[[537]](#footnote-537) A wider public might have sensed that a prominence of period styles in contemporary culture anachronistic. Only two years earlier a Pullman car named *Geraldine* (first introduced to the ‘Sheffield Pullman’) was described in detail by *Modern Transport* with its ‘Japanese-inspired lacquer panels of oriental scenes … typical of Queen Anne design’, which now appear at odds with the latest criticisms.[[538]](#footnote-538) The ‘Bloomsbury set’ argued that social change and new modes of industrial production generally, had propelled Britain irreversibly into modern times.[[539]](#footnote-539) Rather than revive the styles of the past, this new age called for ‘distinctly modern forms of expression’.[[540]](#footnote-540) Contemporaries counted among the technological artefacts of the railways a literal embodiment of modernity (principally seen on mainline services), which exemplified the cultural dilemma of this period. As Cohen observes, ‘ultimately caution was the watchword and caution bred uniformity’.[[541]](#footnote-541) Although the interior trappings surrounding first-class Pullman passengers were at this stage detailed in the popular press and railway publications, and invariably described as ‘the finest in their class’, the complete absence of second- and third-class passengers on the ‘Golden Arrow’ at this time also raised the spectre of social tensions between rich and poor.[[542]](#footnote-542) Indeed, the public time table for April 1931 recorded that ‘… it will not be possible to carry second-class passengers […] owing to the necessity for preserving [the] unique character’ of the service.[[543]](#footnote-543) To counter potential image problems, the Pullman management in liaison with the host railway company, drew attention to improved or additional facilities on other services for the ‘ordinary traveller’, where second-class accommodation was available on some international Pullman trains, as well as third-class on many Brighton or Bognor line services, for instance, the latter deemed to be ‘more suitable for day trippers’.[[544]](#footnote-544) Change and progression therefore characterised design and style in early twentieth century Britain, and this can be broadly seen in the Pullman car interiors of the inter-war period, which signalled an initial response to national exigencies as well as international initiatives.[[545]](#footnote-545) As argued by Buckley, framed by de-industrialisation, political and economic realignment and coexisting with nostalgia for selected periods of ‘English’ history, design in Britain also articulated ‘the maelstrom of modern life’.[[546]](#footnote-546) Defining design not just as ‘things’ but also as a matrix of interdependent practices, Buckley challenges the ways in which it represented and constructed modernity at crucial moments during this period. Integral to a capitalist economy that was in transition, design also provided an effective tool on Britain’s railways by self-fashioning and referencing the past, present and future. The promise of ‘personality’ or ‘character’ originally championed by Dalziel and inherited by his successors, became for many a more restrictive form of class expression.[[547]](#footnote-547)

**6.3 New beginnings and Pullman expansion**

The annual general meeting of the Pullman Car Company held on 10 May 1926 showed an increase in gross earnings of £ 15,336, as compared with the previous year, and the balance of profit and loss an increase of £ 6,068.[[548]](#footnote-548) These profits had been obtained notwithstanding the fact that there were additional capital charges which had not yet proved fully remunerative, and that consequently the benefits arising from business extensions in Britain and overseas was only partially reflected in the accounts. *The Railway Gazette* correspondent suggested that ‘there was a satisfactory improvement, although owing to the generally unsettled conditions of the world’s affairs, increased costs had been inevitable’.[[549]](#footnote-549) Since the closing of the accounts and a dividend payable of 7½ per cent., the company’s affairs, then under the chairmanship of Lord Dalziel, had been steadily improving, and until the date of the General Strike in Britain the company’s receipts showed a substantial improvement over receipts at the corresponding period of the year before.[[550]](#footnote-550) During the strike almost all luxury and ‘extra fare’ vehicles had been taken out of traffic, with only a few Pullman cars being used on the Continental services of the Southern Railway. The whole of the Pullman staff had reported for duty, and held themselves in readiness to do whatever they were called upon to do for the good of the general situation and for the good of the company.[[551]](#footnote-551)

Unlike the post-World War 2 years which witnessed growing trade union intervention and far-reaching industrial challenges for the Pullman Company, as discussed in later chapters, staffing demands or difficulties during the inter-war years were almost non-existent and the majority remained non-unionised.[[552]](#footnote-552) In the circumstances of the General Strike and the laying-off of staff in other sectors of industry and transportation, Pullman staff were the exception; their wages were personally paid by Dalziel from his own purse during the duration of the strike, for which railway historian Renzo Perret argues had ‘cemented Dalziel’s hold over his staff’.[[553]](#footnote-553) In the event, a reported ‘grateful and faithful staff’ were able to employ a certain portion of their time ‘in taking steps to improve as much as possible the condition of the cars, and in other useful work, and therefore the whole their time was not lost’.[[554]](#footnote-554) As the *Western Mail* succinctly reported, ‘Dalziel announced that members of the train staff not being union men will, in consideration of their invariable loyalty to the company receive full pay during the strike, but will be required to report regularly for duty’.[[555]](#footnote-555) However, by the end of 1926 the Pullman Company’s interests abroad looked encouraging. Under their working agreement with the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits (Wagons-Lits) who were developing Pullman-type services in various parts of Europe, the Pullman management in London gave their Belgian and French counterparts exclusive rights, for a fee, to establish ‘de-luxe’ services on practically every mainline railway in Continental Europe. To facilitate the process, Pullman management were able to enter into progressive discussions because Dalziel held the position of Chairman and *Président du Conseil* concurrently for both companies.[[556]](#footnote-556) Previously, in October 1925, a letter appeared in *The Times* from Dalziel indicating the imminent introduction of many new all-Pullman car services throughout Europe.[[557]](#footnote-557) The so-called ‘princely path to Paris’ was about to be established – and fully endorsed the following year by the delivery of new ‘all-steel’ cars for running on French railways. These first-class Pullman services soon promoted accelerated connections; swifter customs arrangements (where appropriate); and seamless high levels of comfort between London, the business centre of Europe and Paris, the cultural capital (and destinations beyond). The high pinnacle and culmination of Dalziel’s visionary aspirations and investment, was the creation – among others – of ‘one of the world’s most celebrated trains of the twentieth century’, the cosmopolitan ‘Golden Arrow’.[[558]](#footnote-558)

As a result, on 11 September 1926, two 10-car, all-first-class Pullman trains began to ply between Paris and Calais and vice versa, connecting with an all-Pullman train between London and Dover.[[559]](#footnote-559) On the first trip, a group of international journalists and writers travelled as VIP guests in order to report on the experience. Through the pages of the press, a broad section of the public was able to consume descriptions of the most up-to-date Pullman cars and to participate in the social fantasies they conjured.[[560]](#footnote-560) The event was also shown to good effect by colourful images of the numerous interior designs, including so-called icons of luxury or civilised travel: table lamps, armchairs, silverware and bone china. These images in booklet form were commissioned by the Pullman Company with accompanying details of ‘how this fine train in 1926 is compared to the age of pageantry and bejewelled magnificence’.[[561]](#footnote-561)

**6.4 Cyclic trade depressions**

Although the British train had in fact been running on the same route for many years, it was not correspondingly christened ‘Golden Arrow’ until 1929, the year the Southern Railway commissioned a new cross-Channel steamer with contemporary appointments to complement the advertised ‘trains de-luxe’.[[562]](#footnote-562) The ‘gold’ in Dalziel’s title was an allusion to the Wagons-Lits company’s golden jubilee that inaugural year of 1926. The publicity brochures gave the impression that the ‘Arrow’s’ all-first-class Pullman passengers appeared cocooned from practically everything but mal-de-mer. Up until 1931, the Pullman was despatched from London ahead of the ordinary boat train, to allow its passengers leisurely first choice of accommodation on board ship.[[563]](#footnote-563) On the other side of the Channel, the French Customs agreed to forgo the quayside inspection and deal with ‘Arrow’ passengers *en route.*[[564]](#footnote-564)‘In those heady early days’, Hasenson argues:

bookings were very heavy and the journey a social occasion as much as anything else. To travel on the “Golden Arrow” still meant something, and those who came to see their friends off probably did so as an excuse to admire the design of the cars.[[565]](#footnote-565)

Not the least remarkable aspect of the service was the marketing acumen, noted by Behrend as ‘years ahead of its time’, shown to good effect by Dalziel in his concern to imprint a common design identity on both British and French trains.[[566]](#footnote-566) A critical issue in the prolonged negotiations with the Nord Railway of France had been Dalziel’s determination to equip the French train with only British-built Pullmans. His aim was to have all cars finished internally with similar amenities and styling as those found on British Pullmans, as well as finished externally in the same lined livery of umber and cream (changed to dark blue and cream in 1932, when the French ‘Golden Arrow’, its traffic eroded by the economic depression, took in second-class Pullmans).[[567]](#footnote-567) As the *Western Mail* reported a year before, in 1925, that Dalziel was ‘devoted to the provision of further rolling stock and to the general purpose of the company’s rapidly expanding business’.[[568]](#footnote-568) The creation of second-class, necessitated marketing campaigns to present the new service as both affordable and aspirational for the lower-middle classes.[[569]](#footnote-569) The appointments of these vehicles were designed to be comfortable, and featured fixed three-abreast seating which accommodated a greater number of passengers than their first-class two-abreast armchair counterparts. As the Southern Railway magazine, *Across the Points,* commented in reference to a series of subsequent press advertisements, ‘the idea of travelling to Europe inexpensively is put forth but there is no suggestion that second-class accommodation is “cheap” excepting from the monetary standpoint’.[[570]](#footnote-570) Every last item of tableware and linen for the French cars was at first supplied from the Pullman Company’s London depot, all in a drive to promote corporate image-building and a seamless city to city operation. Apparently some first-time ‘Arrow’ passengers, were incredulous to find, that a change of transport modes at the Channel ports was required.[[571]](#footnote-571)

In their attempt to be the leading service provider on the railways, the Pullman Company also promoted many novel features at one time or another on the ‘Golden Arrow’, including on-board book and magazine vendors, gramophone and wireless apparatus, fashion shows (as per footnote 10), ‘luxury automobile hire’ by Victor Britain Limited and special taxi services connecting with passengers at termini stations.[[572]](#footnote-572) In particular, the company began to operate its own road bus service between London’s King’s Cross and Victoria termini to transfer passengers between the Northern Pullman services, then being established, and the Pullman boat train services to Europe. The aim was to encourage European-bound travellers from the North of England to go Pullman to the Continent the whole way.[[573]](#footnote-573)

Between the wars, a regular release of detailed publicity material explained that all the latest vehicles - regardless of which service they formed - were decorated by leading furniture companies, with references to either Morison, Martyn and Maple & Co, whose latter Chairman, Sir John Blomdell was a friend of Lord Dalziel, while the majority of those used on the ‘Golden Arrow’ were completed by Waring & Gillow. One of the inaugural publications explains that:

One [car] has old rose leather armchairs on a dove-grey carpet; another blue leather on a deeper blue carpet; a third crimson; and so on. Inlaid mahogany walls … clothes brushes and scented soap in the ultra-modern lavatories. Nothing has been overlooked that makes for supreme bodily comfort.[[574]](#footnote-574)

In later magazine publications, endorsements regarding popularity by way of loadings, rather than aesthetics was made. For instance, Dalziel remarked early in 1927:

I think I am right in saying that no train in the world carries daily so many first-class passengers as the 10.45am London-Dover Pullman, and after that no other train in Europe so many are to be found on an average in the ‘Golden Arrow’ between Calais and Paris.[[575]](#footnote-575)

Unfortunately, the detailed magazine reports of the new Pullman cars design elements, general appointments (and even their eventual arrival into service), had been overshadowed to some extent by the earlier General Strike which swept through Britain during May 1926, and the costly delays experienced with their release from certain Builders. The Dover and Folkestone Pullman services had all been curtailed, and one of the few that ran, the Newhaven boat train, did so to revised timings.[[576]](#footnote-576) Reflecting on the impact the General Strike had made to Pullman business generally, Dalziel advised at a subsequent Ordinary General Meeting of the Company:

in all the circumstances, there is reason for congratulation that we have withstood the shock as well as we have done. First the railway strike, and subsequently the coal strike, brought the great bulk of our services to a standstill, while the working charges in all departments, with exception of the commissary supply, remained the same. Not only did we suffer from the abrupt and practically complete shutting down of our earnings, but it was unfortunately only by slow degrees that, even when peace was declared, we were able to recover our normal working conditions.[[577]](#footnote-577)

At this time, one of the transport mediums which began to pose a serious threat to Pullman revenue – air traffic – was one of the first to show significant increases in patronage during the industrial unrest, when the Parisian edition of *Matin* advised that the Nord and State Railways in France decided to suspend many passenger trains connecting with the cross-Channel boats. At Le Bourget aerodrome, the traffic showed an increase of 45 per cent. over that of the previous week, while at Calais, the hotels were crowded with passengers held up by the strike.[[578]](#footnote-578)

As normality returned, particular attention was paid again to raising the company profile, and advertisements were numerous including, for instance, one by the Master Cutler of Sheffield, who endorsed the newly designed company monogram and coat of arms that was stamped on all silverware, which gave an added sense of Pullman management working in close liaison with Britain’s industries. The registered Pullman coat of arms, reflected in a standard monogram design, and used in press advertisements contributed to a growing prestige of the company and its fleet of cars.[[579]](#footnote-579) By 1930, photographic evidence suggests that changing fashion dictated for pure lines, large floral patterns, a simple typeface and the monograms designed for the ‘Golden Arrow’ particularly for its two classes (in France only) all reflected this bold aesthetic.[[580]](#footnote-580) In acknowledging and concurring with Buckley’s argument that English and British design were probably interchangeable, the ‘Golden Arrow’ could claim to showcase some of the best contemporary work of English and regional artists, decorators and craftsmen during the inter-war period. Through their eclectic styles, the vehicles strove to lend aesthetic distinctiveness, to the point that they ‘functioned as ambassadors of a nation’s design achievements on the railways’ and the publicity materials that introduced them matched the message.[[581]](#footnote-581)

However, despite the attractions the service might have offered with its supposedly recognisable designs of the car interiors, by 1929 one of the seemingly cyclic trade depressions was beginning to grip the country, resulting in an overnight impact on luxury services where demand for Pullman accommodation plummeted. In the United States of America, the Wall Street Crash greatly compounded the difficulties on a global and prolonged basis, lasting for many years and making already demanding matters even worse.[[582]](#footnote-582) Just five years after the inauguration of the ‘Golden Arrow’, the Southern Railway management announced that given the continual industrial depression and consequent loss of traffic, the all-in tariff from 15 May 1931 would be reduced from £ 5 to £ 4 12 shillings and 6 pence, including Pullman supplement. (1932 was recorded as a particularly poor year for cross-Channel receipts compared to the previous year: 1,440,000 passengers in 1931 reducing to 975,000 in 1932; a 32 per cent. drop in traffic.)[[583]](#footnote-583) So desperate was the situation that ordinary Southern Railway rolling stock was introduced into the Victoria-Dover train (as well as combining several other services), with the steamer *Canterbury* accepting non-Pullman passengers for the first time.[[584]](#footnote-584) Having weathered the most difficult of circumstances, the Pullman management agreed to continue running a reduced train of just four first-class Pullman cars, coupled to a host of ordinary first- and second-class carriages in its formation.[[585]](#footnote-585) Yet during 1931/2 at least, *The Burlington Magazine* continued to evoke the subjects of tradition and modernity by referencing the metropolitan and the rural in design, once again citing the railway industry’s latest new trains, irrespective of the fact that dwindling custom might potentially mean economic collapse.[[586]](#footnote-586)

Although by the mid-1930s, Pullman travel and the railway company receipts generally improved, for many cinema goers, Pathé News regularly brought to their attention Pullman cars - usually only exterior views - conveying visiting Heads of State, royalty and film stars. One such occasion was a State visit made by their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to France in July 1938.[[587]](#footnote-587)

**6.5 The Post-War revival of the flagship train, 1946**

After the severe hardships and destruction brought about by years of relentless war, the early reinstatement of refreshment facilities in peacetime on most Eastern Section trains in Britain - excepting at this stage Continental services - was probably seen as a welcome return, with the catering provided by the Pullman Car Company.[[588]](#footnote-588) By additional arrangement, several old non-supplement Pullman buffet cars were also introduced on the relief Dover Boat Trains operating progressively from December 1945 and, in respect of catering on their own services, an agreement was formally approved with the Pullman Company to ensure that no percentage rental in respect of catering receipts would be charged against them. As was always the case, Pullman would nevertheless pay the Southern Railway the usual buffet car rental of £10 per annum, plus cleaning charges with regard to ‘extra-fare’ accommodation.[[589]](#footnote-589)

On 3 January 1946, the Southern Railway released its timetable for cross-Channel Services between England and the Continent.[[590]](#footnote-590) As it transpired, the Railway Company’s ability to reintroduce all the familiar pre-war services were not so extensive as had been hoped. The explanations given were:

1. Only some of the Southern Railway steamers had been returned from war service.
2. Only partial reconditioning had been possible.
3. The Channel ports had not yet been freed from some of the war-time obstructions to normal working.
4. Longer sea passages were necessary.
5. More time would be required for examination of passports and baggage.
6. The Continental Railway systems were still suffering from the effects of war damage.

However, according to the Railway’s Traffic Officers’ conference minutes three weeks later, significant progress had been made during the interim.[[591]](#footnote-591) It was also widely reported by 15 January that preliminary arrangements were already in-hand to resume a passenger service between England and France via Dover-Calais, aimed precisely three months later, from 15 April. A ‘daily de-luxe passenger service’ was promoted (by the printing of 10,000 leaflets, repeated in several tranches, and also posters and handbills, similar in design to ephemera originally produced for the service in 1929), announcing that on and from Monday, 15 April 1946, the restoration of the ‘Golden Arrow’ would take place, once again, to and from the Continent via Dover-Calais.[[592]](#footnote-592) Reflecting on the inter-war publicity material and the Pullman management’s determination to show the cars as representations of fine period art, references to any of the interior aesthetics or specific design elements hitherto known were now consigned during the period of austerity to the past. Throughout the 1940s, terms such as ‘de-luxe’ and ‘armchair comfort’ were favourably used in all known publicity material, excepting details of a new cocktail bar car.[[593]](#footnote-593) Widely reported, the addition of this revamped twelve-wheel buffet car (of 1917 vintage) known as the ‘plastics’ bar car – fitted out in previous months with an ultra-modern Warerite laminated plastic interior of pink and grey, rather than inlaid mahogany panelling, ran hot necessitating an emergency stop on the ‘trial’ or ‘press’ run at Folkestone Central to cool off.[[594]](#footnote-594)

Unusually this vehicle had neither exterior Pullman fascia branding nor centrally located running name or number at this time – except fine gold-coloured lining and coat of arms. The ‘plastics’ car was one of a number of vehicles earmarked by the Pullman management during the early post-war period for modernisation; the work in this instance being undertaken primarily by polymer specialists Bakelite Ltd, in collaboration with other contractors who possessed specialist knowledge with metalwork and modernistic tendencies, such as J Starkie Gardner of Wandsworth.[[595]](#footnote-595)

Even though the arrival of the train was five minutes behind schedule, the special guests were given an ‘enthusiastic reception’ at Dover Marine by a representative gathering of Dover people, headed by the Mayor, Councillor A. T. Goodfellow, reported the *Dover Express*.[[596]](#footnote-596) The following Monday, 15 April, the ‘Golden Arrow’ resumed public service, seen off on its first post-war departure by Mr Alfred Barnes, Minister of Transport.[[597]](#footnote-597) The B.B.C. Home Service broadcast a world-wide Dover-Calais feature that evening (and subsequently) from Dover Castle and the quayside to mark the train’s re-inauguration. (The transcript acknowledged the revival of the links between Britain and France and interviewed residents in both Calais and Dover. Although it was a celebrated occasion, the opportunity was not taken to describe in any detail the interior décor of the train).[[598]](#footnote-598) Reporting for *Modern Motoring and Travel*, Lindsay Shankland explained that the pre-war ‘Golden Arrow’ was considered ‘to be the last word in trans-Channel comfort’, and its re-inauguration had ‘probably recaptured some former exclusiveness with its five first- and two second-class cars’.[[599]](#footnote-599) The *Southern Railway Magazine* added: ‘could anything more fittingly symbolise the coming of peace than the restoration of the “Golden Arrow”’.[[600]](#footnote-600)

Rather than rely on the well-laboured comforts and design elements of the vehicles themselves, that had almost always featured in pre-war publicity, the travelling public became aware of, ‘amidst the bonds of rationing’ new novelties on board.[[601]](#footnote-601) These included a mobile bookstore service in conjunction with WH Smith and Son, and for the first time a radio ‘public address’ in each Pullman car fitted with loudspeakers, and operated by the conductor in charge. Champagne again headed the wine list, but the image was slightly tarnished ‘by being non-vintage’ and the fact that little else distinguished these vehicles from those running pre-war.[[602]](#footnote-602) At Victoria station, a large gated archway, brightly painted was situated at the entrance to platform 8, the newly-designated Continental arrivals and departures platform.[[603]](#footnote-603)

While heavy military traffic continued to require accommodation, restoration of civilian traffic was still partially handicapped, and considerable use had been made of the port of Folkestone. On 11 October 1946, just six months since its re-inauguration, the ‘Golden Arrow’ carried its 100,000th passenger.[[604]](#footnote-604)

In what was seen as a devastated Europe, the Pullman link and the gradual improvements being made to rail travel gave the press the impression that peace had again returned.[[605]](#footnote-605) The second anniversary of the ‘Golden Arrow’ in 1948 was celebrated on both sides of the Channel with locomotive crew exchanges (repeated from the previous year), an on-board fashion parade with mannequins showing off furs and winter capes by Jaeger and Harrods (during summer!); a buttonhole for every female passenger; long-awaited replacement badged crockery and embroidered napery; all this in addition to the presiding Miss Paris and Miss London flagging away their respective trains.[[606]](#footnote-606)

**6.6 ‘New Look’ designs and principal operating difficulties of the ‘Golden Arrow’**

By June 1951, a new re-equipped train with vehicles featuring double glazing and ‘New Look’ interiors had been introduced in England, which coincided with the Festival of Britain Exhibition held on the South Bank of the Thames, where several of the Pullmans with a new type of steam locomotive were briefly on public display. As argued by Buckley, the Festival underlined the complexities and contradictions of design, but it was also ‘a harbinger of things to come’.[[607]](#footnote-607) Its organisers believed that it offered ‘a new sort of narrative about Britain: an exhibition designed to tell a story mainly through the medium, not of words, but of tangible things. Overall, the Festival was an odd mix of the progressive, the paternalistic and the anachronistic, seen to good effect with new Pullman cars in the familiar livery and with the usual trappings.[[608]](#footnote-608)

The eclectic mix of each of the eight new vehicles earmarked for the so-called ‘new Golden Arrow’ of 1951 were in marked comparison to the pre-war vehicles because they were devoid of any historical references in terms of the marquetry or furnishings, and preferring to opt for neat simplicity in the design and colour co-ordination. Throughout the early 1950s, boat train services from Victoria were still in much demand and, worked to complex schedules often utilising all-timber Pullman cars that first saw service on the Dover and Folkestone workings from 1910.[[609]](#footnote-609) Even though the older vehicles were dated in their styling and construction, they each had a varied and often distinguished career.[[610]](#footnote-610) Rebuilt, modified and many reclassed as travelling conditions changed, invariably led to individual variations appearing at this time, particularly as regard interior alterations and other detailing.[[611]](#footnote-611) By 1957, many Pullmans were allocated to a pool of vehicles for the special Waterloo-Southampton ocean liner services. These arrangements were in accordance with existing stipulations set down by the British Transport Commission (B.T.C.), who had earlier purchased the controlling interest of the Pullman Car Company as governed by an agreement dated 1 January 1953 (and due to expire by 30 September 1962).[[612]](#footnote-612) Notwithstanding, the long-standing provision of ‘extra fare’ accommodation, Pullman remained the train caterers on the South Eastern and Central Sections on what had become the Southern Region.[[613]](#footnote-613)

The ‘Golden Arrow’ continued as a daily service in each direction throughout the 1950s, and one, two or sometimes three ‘extra fare’ Pullman cars providing a train refreshment service, continued to be featured in most of the Continental boat trains via the ‘short sea routes’.[[614]](#footnote-614) However, by 1955, the financial results for these services, made it clear of the increasing difficulties being expressed with these long-established services, and how their patterns and profitability had changed since their post-war reintroduction. Inevitably questions were periodically raised about their viability and prospects.[[615]](#footnote-615)

At various times, an approach had been made to the French railway authorities (the State Railway Company, S.N.C.F. and Wagons Lits) to alter the timing of the poorly patronised ‘Golden Arrow’ outward service. This was considered ‘not likely to be successful’ and both the Railways and the International Services & Shipping Sub-Commissions closely reflected upon the Pullman Company’s position.[[616]](#footnote-616) While it was presumed that the B.T.C. would decide global future policy, the Southern Region management considered that they should make up their own mind and recommend to the Commission what was the most desirable form of catering service for the Region, not only for the forthcoming Eastern Section electrification but on all the other lines as well.[[617]](#footnote-617) The question was put to the Traffic Officers, so that recommendations on what form of service would best serve public needs and train service requirements.[[618]](#footnote-618)

The ‘Golden Arrow’ departure times continued to fluctuate considerably throughout the early 1950s to such an extent that passenger numbers ‘fell off considerably as a result’.[[619]](#footnote-619) During February 1954 and March 1955, diesel electric motive power was introduced on trials, which soon prompted a full study of the train’s loadings by May 1956. These findings showed that the train continued to be very lightly loaded in the down direction, and although receipts were much better in the up direction, it was not a full train by any means, and the provision of a composite train (composed or ordinary stock and Pullman cars) carrying ‘Golden Arrow’ Calais passengers was at this time considered to economise the mileage, engine power and the train crews.[[620]](#footnote-620)

In the management meetings that followed, questions arose as to whether figures could be produced by the French authorities to establish if an altered timing made to suit them, would materially improve the position on inward journeys. If not, consideration was given to reverting to the old timing and persuading French authorities accordingly.[[621]](#footnote-621) During the course of their enquiries, it became abundantly clear that the older Pullman cars with outdated interiors were far from favourable because of their bad running and amenities, while any conversion work, ‘would still have too much timber about them’ – meaning that their age and given their build were increasingly a potential fire hazard and would probably not withstand any serious derailment.[[622]](#footnote-622) Indeed, the chief carriage & wagon engineering officer on 7 May 1956 endorsed this point: ‘certainly does not recommend that vehicles of wooden construction be renovated and covered with steel or alloy sheeting as suggested by Mr Adams [the Pullman Chairman]’.[[623]](#footnote-623)

In essence, Pullman travel was now perceived differently. The last Chairman of the company, Sir John Elliot, recognised that the conditions confronting the Pullman Company (and also the Southern Region) were due to the change in type and habit of passengers travelling on Continental services. In his view, the character of passengers using Pullman services had notably changed by the mid-1950s.[[624]](#footnote-624) A good indication of these changes were seen in the contemporary publicity material, especially brochures and booklets, each of which had significantly altered in illustrative detail and content since the inter-war period, not least from the decade before. Although contemporary, and more often than not illustrated by artists’ impressions of principal places of interest concerning the respective destination, the 1950s prospective traveller was given information of what the service offered, rather than what the vehicles might feature in terms of decoration or design as in pre-war days. Subject to the season, the Southern Region issued a new travel brochure almost every nine months or so, showing revised times and ticket prices. Typically, the 30 September 1956 to 1 June 1957 example, states that ‘for luxurious travel this famous Pullman service is unequalled. Relax in a spacious armchair, enjoy the delightful atmosphere of the cosy “Trianon” Cocktail Bar, the best of food and wine…’[[625]](#footnote-625)

The Pullman Company recognised that in addition to their responsibilities as a public company with private preference shareholders, it also had a duty to the B.T.C. who held all the equity, and expected them to maintain the services on a profit basis. Unless there was some very early reduction in costs of building, maintenance and operating, and unless the travelling public were prepared to pay more for the services they desired, Pullman management could not hope to build and operate new cars successfully.[[626]](#footnote-626)

The principal difficulties of operating all the Continental boat train services were the short runs to the coast from London, compounded with the problems of corridor service, i.e. the selling of light refreshments. Pullman cars were in the first instance not designed or equipped for this type of composite service, and it was deemed impossible to carry sufficient equipment to serve a whole train. Proper service could be given to passengers seated in a Pullman car, but even if the corridors were unimpeded, it proved difficult to give an adequate service to passengers in corridors.[[627]](#footnote-627) It was subsequently suggested that these services could best be covered by ordinary buffet cars at which light refreshments could be served at the counter, and that no attempt should be made to provide service in the corridor.[[628]](#footnote-628)

The new (1951) cars on the ‘Golden Arrow’ were valued four years later at £ 126,941 and continued to operate at a small profit, despite the late timing of the train on the down journey.[[629]](#footnote-629) The connection from Calais operated with only three or sometimes four first-class Pullmans by this time, and it remained questionable as to whether the train should be kept on the afternoon timing for the sake of this connection. If instead it were re-instated in the morning timing, with the normal connection Dover to Calais, it was viewed as potentially more passengers who wished to get to Paris in good time, and perhaps no sacrifices would be made in abandoning the link with the French capital.[[630]](#footnote-630) In the event, the continental superintendent at Victoria corresponded with the general manager at Waterloo during February 1957, outlining his increasing concerns and ‘talking points’ for future discussions. His closing remarks indicated the seriousness of the situation in light of the poor loadings of the ‘Golden Arrow’ -

which had been hastened by the S.N.C.F./Wagons-Lits action to retime … frankly [making it] difficult to justify the continuance of an all-Pullman train London/Folkestone-Dover/London. Generally, the down service is very poor, and worse in Summer when the train departs at 2pm, i.e. after lunch time’.[[631]](#footnote-631)

Later still, the issues regarding measures of economy came back again repeatedly for addressing, where it had been firmly suggested the ‘Golden Arrow’ could be made into a composite train with four Pullmans and the balance with ordinary carriages. Although this option had not been agreed by the chief operating superintendent, it appeared on the face of it, to be a solution.[[632]](#footnote-632)

However, it was also recognised that such a change could deliver a blow to the character (and snobbish appeal) of the train, and in view of an inconclusive exchange of correspondence, such a solution was not immediately recommended. Needless to say, the Pullman general manager, Frank Harding, was against the idea of a composite train for the flagship service.[[633]](#footnote-633) At the superintendent’s office, it was generally felt that the service should be advertised solely as between London and Calais, and that the outwards ‘Golden Arrow’ should revert to the morning departure and serve, for instance, the ‘Blue Train’ serving Nice, Monte Carlo and other Mediterranean resorts. This proposition ‘would please the Pullman Car Company, but would it please the French? … we must not let the name of “Golden Arrow” go; at least it has an advertising value’.[[634]](#footnote-634) The correspondent further remarks:

I cannot help wondering if we should not do better by cutting the Pullman cars out altogether and substituting [ordinary] buffet cars. We advertise in our publications that passengers in ordinary carriages can obtain meals, the idea being that this should be done from Pullman cars. In practice, it does not work satisfactory - and we get many complaints.[[635]](#footnote-635)

At a subsequent meeting between Pullman’s general manager and the region’s assistant general manager on February 1957, it was finally agreed that the Dover/ Folkestone boat trains, except the comparatively modern ‘Golden Arrow’ would continue to be steam-hauled until Stage II of the Kent Coast electrification scheme, in June 1962, when they would be fully replaced by multiple unit trains with buffet cars. ‘The present Pullman cars are old and will need replacement before then. It is proposed that they be replaced by new British Railways standard buffet cars, on temporary loan until the electric stock is available in 1962’.[[636]](#footnote-636) On the Newhaven service, it was recognised the Pullmans in use were also very elderly and ‘must be replaced very soon’.[[637]](#footnote-637)

In sum, 10 Pullman cars would be withdrawn immediately from the Kentish services and no Pullman replacements were required, as well as an additional 34 vehicles on other Southern-based services, making at this stage, 44 cars requiring replacement at this time, although a total of 56 were later converted into holiday ‘Camping Coaches’.[[638]](#footnote-638)

As far as the Pullman Company were concerned, the key to the replacement programme by this time lay in the new building of modern Pullman cars for the Northern Regions (from London King’s Cross) and the cascading of younger cars from those services to the Southern. While at this stage, Pullman management were not wholly aware of the expansion plans of the B.T.C. and what would later evolve into the diesel ‘Blue Pullmans’, it was considered that any new builds must be completed by 1960 at the latest. ‘Any later programme of building might well mean that old Pullman cars at present running on the Southern Region would have to be “stopped” as being unfit for further running and no stock of any kind would be available for replacing the “stopped” cars’.[[639]](#footnote-639)

**6.7 Conclusion**

The cyclic trade depressions and economic collapse in the late 1920s, the reshaping of Britain’s ‘Big Four’ railway companies, as well as changing class identities, all contributed to a realignment and fragmentation of what constituted ‘Britishness’ in the early part of the twentieth century. By tracking these relationships this chapter supports Cheryl Buckley’s view of society and design and how they interacted.

The Pullman Company simultaneously evoked tradition and modernity with a fleet of cars that referenced the metropolitan, and the rural, to interior design. In her analysis of Britain during the inter-war period, Buckley has argued that design, particularly in terms of ‘Englishness’ remained important, encapsulating historical revivals and an ongoing concern for the vernacular. For Pullman, the deployment of certain ‘English’ traditions may have had appeal during the inter-war period, but to determine whether they were particularly effective in representing ‘Englishness’ or were even to passengers’ taste is difficult to evaluate. However, an idealized ‘English’ past was conjured up by a continual engagement with traditional scenes of rustic life that were intimately tied to the ‘English’ countryside, including water mills, windmills and other scenes shown to good effect in some Pullman car interiors built in 1932. These representations were broadly captured by the Pullman Company prior to the outbreak of World War 2 and were considered modern but were not repeated, although an ongoing interest in French and Italian designs overlapped, as well as some enthusiasm for non-Western arts, including Japanese lacquer work. In such a context ‘Britishness’ was increasingly permeable, providing the ideological setting to a consumer potential represented by the railway companies and, more importantly, the Pullman Company with its developing foothold in Continental Europe. If ‘Britishness’ represented expansionism, then ‘Englishness’, by contrast, could be construed to capture the private and primitive located in the countryside rather than in the city and town, as argued by Buckley, and that a sense of modernity at different times had not necessarily been overlooked, but renegotiated in different ways. In this chapter, change and continuity functioned together in the case of Pullman cars, when business arrangements governed their patterns of operation up to and including the late 1950s. The business arrangements were only later called into question with the increasing challenges of an increasingly ageing stock and the changing character of passengers travelling ‘Pullman’ where such design distinctions no longer mattered.

During the Dalziel regime, the Pullman Company had nurtured a corporate ‘modernist’ view which took on a wider, recognizable ‘international’ style, with the introduction of the ‘Golden Arrow’. As Buckley rightly observes that, during crucial moments a concern for specific periods of history and particular representations of the ‘English’ past also characterized the activities of a number of manufacturers, notably the furniture producers Waring & Gillow. In part, this was in response to market changes and a capitalist economy that was in change, as Buckley identifies, and to which Pullman allied itself with, as it attempted to establish new markets and appeared in touch with latest trends by referencing the past and present.

The re-establishing of the ‘Golden Arrow’ service in 1946 was encouraging, and within five years, newly-built Pullman car interiors were noted to be altogether different, a bold statement in a challenging environment to suggest that the Pullman Company were progressive. These featured uncluttered interiors which provided for a design language not that dissimilar to Continental modernism, but with broader appeal as a result of its connection with ‘English’ traditions.

**7.0 Policy and aspirations**

**7.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to consider whether the Pullman Car Company’s policies and operational goals, image, management, revenue growth and customer base, were successful enough during the inter-war period, for it to resume a viable business following cessation of World War in 1945.

In determining both financial and performance values, the quantifiable measures have been linked to a contextual analysis of known company results from the 1920s and throughout the 1930s, and during war-time government control. This is in addition to determining the relationship and influence of the railway companies and operations it served.

**7.2 A developing enterprise**

By 1929 Pullman served as a catering contractor and a provider of luxury vehicles on all ‘Big Four’ railway companies. Allied to Wagons-Lits, the company owed its successful integration into railway operation by its ability to adapt itself to public requirements as interpreted by railway managements, including developing special party traffic and converting some vehicles to ‘supply cars’ to enable large numbers to be served their refreshments on their trips to the South Coast.[[640]](#footnote-640) Even with these measures in place, it had been a fight against the odds, odds of a varying and severe nature, but none more frustrating than the conditions in which all the railway companies were compelled to compete - the onslaught of road transportation which included unregulated buses, trams and the private motor car. This formed so large and vital a part of all management considerations during the inter-war years that Pullman’s progress ran almost parallel with those of its two closest allies, the Southern Railway and the London & North Eastern Railway (L.N.E.R.) – and before that date their antecedents.[[641]](#footnote-641)

From the early days of the British-owned Pullman Company, senior management rested with the ‘think big’ concept under the domination of Dalziel, and had entered one of the most dynamic, but also uncertain periods in its entire history, with an organisational structure achieving a notable degree of coordination with its rivals (Wagons-Lits and the Mitropa Company) under what had previously been viewed as warring interests.[[642]](#footnote-642) The Pullman management themselves were recruited from the Army and Navy whose ideas of uniform, and discipline were readily observable in practice. The growth of a management system that was both effective and efficient probably owes much to these principles. A clear chain of command through executive officers was one way of relieving the day-to-day decisions on every subject of an expanding company from staff to servicing.[[643]](#footnote-643) The model pyramid of power adopted appeared to work well and, during these expanding years and revenue growth, a book of rules and regulations was introduced by 1921.[[644]](#footnote-644) Managers were the key figures in the salaried hierarchy who were instrumental in making the company work well. The Pullman ethos attracted those who had made their careers outside the railway or catering environment, but felt drawn to the disciplined activity of running trains in which three factors almost always precipitated the rise and fall in Pullman traffic: fluctuations in the level of economic activity; the change in the pattern of internal trade; and the rise of a new form of transport.[[645]](#footnote-645)

The network planned by Dalziel expanded far beyond the original agreement to run Pullmans on the London-Brighton line. By 1928, under his control the company owned or had proprietorial or vested interest in almost 500 vehicles in England and on the Continent, and it also acquired and rented railway property, including stores, and refreshment and dining rooms at various London terminal stations.[[646]](#footnote-646)

With a greater share in luxury travel, Pullman boasted that it was the choice of statesmen, royalty and other visiting heads of State. The popularity of the Pullman car in this country, argued *The Railway Magazine* shows that ‘the British passenger has no objection to the principle of the supplement, provided that he is satisfied with what he receives in exchange for it’.[[647]](#footnote-647) The Pullman Company’s reputation amongst travellers also rested on its safety record. Although it was not immune from serious accidents, the company’s widespread use of high-quality materials, and an increasing number of all-steel vehicles - put it at the forefront of developments relating to the safe working of trains. From its inception the company paid attention to the efforts of the carriage builders and their supervision, but whatever their design, the Pullman cars had a distinct ‘look’, a family likeness that made them instantly recognisable. The umber and cream livery, gold lining, running names and table lamps were evocative in the 1920s when expansions of luxury services across the British Isles made regular headlines. In the same way, the umber and cream livery used for much of its fleet was a unique feature that remained constant for almost all of its existence and later, under British Railways auspices the branding of Pullman cars from the late 1960s specially adopted a ‘modern’ livery to distinguish them from ordinary carriages.[[648]](#footnote-648)

The company’s image was, in the inter-war period particularly, dictated by its publicity department in close liaison with each railway company it served. As Pullman developed its services, it became ever more adept at publicising its activities through its corporate style, new stories or striking publicity material.[[649]](#footnote-649) The publicity department also helped promote services that were not traditional railway activities, for instance, mass catering at the Silver Jubilee celebrations in London for King George V in 1935; as well as catering for almost all ordinary restaurant and dining car operations belonging to the Southern Railway where it retained a unique, long-standing contract.

Above all, the reputation of the Pullman Company rested on its people, the hundreds of Pullman employees who made the significant network of services run smoothly. The company was, for the most part, a ‘paternalistic’ employer, providing support and assistance to its staff, for both philanthropic and pragmatic reasons; this benevolence was rewarded by a workforce that was broadly loyal to the company (with minimal turnover), maintaining its long-standing traditions and showing pride in its achievements. The in-house magazine the ‘Golden Way’, for instance, was endorsed *indirectly* by the staff, who were quick to praise its glorious past and defend its operations.[[650]](#footnote-650)

**7.3 Company performance**

While Dalziel spearheaded the organisation, his Board supported a bold plan that depended on the positive impression made on the shareholders i.e. in their bid to raise money from investors with expansion plans and designs for new rolling stock. Considerable diplomacy was required, for not everyone viewed Pullman travel with enthusiasm, including some of the Railway Companies who remained lukewarm. If their schemes were to be approved, further investors would provide the capital needed to complete the next stage of introducing a whole fleet of English-built cars, displacing the older American vehicles then running in service (the last in fact not retiring until 1932).[[651]](#footnote-651)

Earlier, in 1920 the management took the advantage by acquiring second-hand vehicles that were once ‘ambulance carriages’ used during World War 1. These were sold at a considerably knocked-down scrap price for conversion into Pullmans; the remodelling taking place at the Lincoln-based company of Clayton Wagons Ltd. This purchase helped with a shortage of vehicles required for excursion work, then building up, while readily having to-hand good quality teak and mahogany timbers to rebuild the bodies.[[652]](#footnote-652) However, some ground to rivals was lost in Pullmans’ operational goals, particularly when the railway companies own restaurant and buffet cars were being phased into service and considered to be as good as Pullman cars, notably on the London, Midland & Scottish Railway.[[653]](#footnote-653) Dalziel remained cautious in his expansion dealings and had not forgotten the saga of the earlier ‘English Subscribers’ who formed a stand-alone Pullman subsidiary during the early 1900s. It transpired the syndicate to which they belonged, was crippled by a torpor triggered by conservative leadership and a lack of finance.[[654]](#footnote-654) Dalziel was compelled to preside over lean years precipitated by economic depression and fluctuations in the general acceptance of luxury supplement-fare travel, while encouraging a continued inter-change of directors between Wagons-Lits and Pullman.[[655]](#footnote-655)

With an established and stable management, ideas and ambition permeated through the company at every level. Much of the credit for expansion and stability during the 1920s can be attributed to a robust Board holding both strategic and operational goals. The directors secured several new operating contracts, including Southern Ireland, and one further expanding services across the Southern Railway. In addition, they were able to find the finance to acquire new cars, in so doing created an impressive fleet of expensive vehicles whose construction costs were seen by the press as ‘greatly expensive’ at more than £5,000 each when compared to ordinary railway carriages of around £2,500 - £3,000.[[656]](#footnote-656)

Dalziel was conscious of company image, and had also done much to improve communications with employees and the press (having been a shareholder in the *Daily Express* and owner of the *Standard* newspapers).[[657]](#footnote-657) The company employed almost 600 staff at its height and the structure of Pullman was simplified by clear grading and positions of responsibility.[[658]](#footnote-658) Under the senior officers were the graded managers of the various departments (reservations, kitchen, inspection, finance, etc) which enabled the cars to be serviced, run to complicated rotas and victualled at various points. Although not high, wages for Pullman attendants were supplemented by tips by the more affluent passenger, many of whom were repeat travellers, and the staff enjoyed some measure of job security and were encouraged to stay on well beyond retirement age, which many did. [[659]](#footnote-659)

The company carried out an ambitious scheme to double the operating contracts in a period of ten years from 7 to 14 nationwide, and to work closely with oversees organisations, including the Wagons-Lits company and the travel agent Thomas Cook, in which Pullman eventually acquired a controlling interest.[[660]](#footnote-660) This essential task was complemented by more dramatic projects designed to broaden the appeal of the services offered – by introducing third-class cars converted from old first-class cars on almost all routes (first introduced in 1915), a process that later involved the dedicated building of numerous brand-new cars throughout much of the inter-war period. Such ‘rapid expansion of rolling stock was unparalleled’ anywhere else by its competitors or the main-line railway companies, as claimed by *The Railway Gazette.[[661]](#footnote-661)*

However, the flaw in this arrangement was that many of the new cars were built to dimensions or requirements for specific lines and services where certain types of traction, gradients, width or height restrictions were in force, a case which persisted before 1915 as outlined in chapter 2.[[662]](#footnote-662) The transfer of many older and heavier types (approximately 30 per cent. of the fleet in 1930) from one operating line to another, if pressed, was not always a viable option, especially where severe route gradients were in place.[[663]](#footnote-663) In addition, trains were slowed at various locations where congestion through traffic impacted on both ordinary and Pullman services. Nowhere was this more obvious than on the South Coast lines where Pullman had to compete with fast, ordinary expresses. The tare weight of certain cars, particularly those built of heavy timbers before 1923 and deemed to have had a limited life, also cost the railways more by the greater consumption of coal to haul them.[[664]](#footnote-664) The additional cost of providing many banking locomotives up steep gradients including, for instance, the Folkestone Harbour branch with its numerous daily boat trains, was one which the railway company could operationally ill afford to partake.[[665]](#footnote-665)

Nevertheless, the luxury sector grew steadily, frequented by the rich and famous, the film stars, visiting Heads of State and royalty.[[666]](#footnote-666) This arrangement was to the mutual benefit of the railway companies it served, such that the number of passengers using specifically Pullman services had almost doubled exceeding 3 million by 1924 (first-class); an increase of 8 per cent. on the previous year.[[667]](#footnote-667) This demand was largely generated by the growth of holiday traffic to resorts on the South Coast, but also by increased business from connecting services to Europe and beyond.[[668]](#footnote-668) These services, the company argued, ‘proved a great convenience to passengers travelling beyond Paris and London’. The success of these ‘experiments’ to increase the dedicated cars on the East Kent Continental boat trains, led to the company ‘ordering more attractive vehicles’ and operating expanding services agreed by the railway companies as demand flourished.[[669]](#footnote-669) By the mid-1920s the company secured contracts to operate their services on all ‘Big Four’ railway company lines, in addition to Southern Ireland, much of Continental Europe and Egypt carrying in excess of 6 million passengers annually.[[670]](#footnote-670) (By 1935, the Southern Railway also negotiated with the Pullman management to run the catering, a loss-making concern, on all their new train services to Brighton, Hastings and Eastbourne where every train included restaurant facilities).[[671]](#footnote-671)

During 1926, the Pullman Board made an important decision by appointing a general manager, Herbert Griffith (a position which later became permanent and full-time). He oversaw the process of improving the company with unified stock, including design and decoration and, later endeavoured to harmonise the working practices inherited from absorbed company contracts brought under its control. (Although not yet formally established until 1949, the later additional or revised duties of general manager and chief engineer would be jointly responsible to the Board, the former for all working arrangements). To cope with these changes, a new rolling-stock works facility was opened at Preston Park, Brighton during 1928 for remodelling, refurbishing and maintaining the cars.[[672]](#footnote-672)

In 1923, Pullman scored a major public-relations coup with the introduction of the ‘Harrogate Pullman’ which promoted an on-board fashion show during the summer months - and the first to be filmed by the Pathé organisation.[[673]](#footnote-673) With a non-stop run in the most up-to-date vehicles, this was billed by the company as ‘de-luxe travel at its finest’.[[674]](#footnote-674) The appearance of the train’s design was accompanied by a vigorous publicity drive by Dalziel, who arranged that two recently constructed (a first- and a third-class car) should be displayed alongside the latest and fastest steam engines at the British Empire Exhibition in 1924 (and repeated in 1925).[[675]](#footnote-675) According to a contemporary brochure (printed by the Pullman Company) the vehicles caused considerable debate when it was revealed they were of light-weight construction compared to earlier Pullman cars, and ordinary L.N.E.R. and Southern Railway carriages, and consequently would cost less to haul.[[676]](#footnote-676) These vehicles were built by the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co of Smethwick under the control of Dudley Docker who also had proprietorial interests in rubber, paint, varnish and oil.[[677]](#footnote-677) This highly ambitious scheme to renew the stock with up-to-date vehicles was met with astonishment in the popular press, and was the first of several major design changes produced in collaboration with the Pullman Board, Dalziel and Dudley Docker.[[678]](#footnote-678)Although in reality Dalziel’s authoritarian management style had become increasingly out of step with the changing labour situation, particularly the rise and impact of trade unionism, it is also likely that Follett Holt, his successor, wanted to stamp his own authority on Preston Park Works by pressing for the replacement of all-timber vehicles.[[679]](#footnote-679) Not a universally popular choice amongst the men at the works who apparently had some affection for the old cars, Holt had been a deputy to Dalziel’s Anglo-French commercial collaboration with the introduction of motor taxicabs in London, and although he did not have the same personality traits possessed by Dalziel he was nevertheless a competent rolling stock engineer, who would order numerous examples in the following 20 years of what are now seen as ‘classic’ Pullman designs and types.[[680]](#footnote-680)

Labour unrest and political uncertainty however overshadowed so much of this period. A miners’ strike in the autumn 1921 effecting the supply of coal for all train services, was followed by increasing industrial unrest. In April 1922 another miners’ strike, triggered pay cuts of as much as 50 per cent.[[681]](#footnote-681) As Pullman moved into a new decade, efforts were made to fight back and increase both the standing and the economic viability of the company. Although there had been increasingly large-scale investment with the Pullman Company in the years before 1914, in constructing British- rather than American-pattern Pullman cars, the resources needed to restore standards after World War 1, together with subsequent work on harmonising working practices with the railway companies on which their cars ran, meant there had been little opportunity to consolidate work done by the American parent in the early part of the 20th century.[[682]](#footnote-682) Even before the economic slump triggered by the Wall Street Crash by the end of the decade, the government had promised railway company guaranteed loans to enable them to invest in new services which would alleviate increasing unemployment.[[683]](#footnote-683) Dalziel recognised that these loans might indirectly allow the railways to consider more Pullman routes, and enhance their own passenger amenities at the minimum of cost to the railway companies themselves.[[684]](#footnote-684) The Southern Railway, proved to be one of the first to take advantage of this facility and, in co-operation with the Pullman Car Company, later secured almost forty new vehicles for their electrified Central Division services to Brighton. The proposals put forward by the Southern involved a capital cost of £ 2,000,000, and it was hoped that they would provide more than 200,000 ‘man months’ of work for the unemployed.[[685]](#footnote-685) By this time, almost a million men were out of work, so the various projects planned by the Southern represented a welcome development for the Pullman management.[[686]](#footnote-686) Although aimed largely at improving its ability to handle passenger traffic on the railway as a whole, the schemes and good will put forward broadly addressed two major difficulties facing Pullman management – first, Lord Dalziel had unexpectedly died. Even though he had become well-respected, his methods of business had left a number of complex loan arrangements with influential contacts and associates held in suspension. Unfortunately, the true extent to which the company (and his personal estate) were involved was then unknown; and secondly the need to speed up train services was almost impossible with their current fleet of cars – particularly those allocated, by schedule, to the Southern Railway of which at least half were greater than twenty years old and unable to sustain the anticipated accelerated speeds.[[687]](#footnote-687)

Although at this time private car ownership was still in its infancy, the Pullman holiday-train business was beginning to suffer as competition from unregulated bus companies, were providing quick and cheap transport to resorts reached by Pullman. Any advantage in speed that the railway might have had over road transport was lost on busy summer Saturdays as a result of heavy congestion at various points on the South of England main lines. It was therefore natural that all the railway companies, both in the North and South, wanted to invest a good deal of the available Government capital in work to speed-up holiday traffic at peak-times, which ultimately had some ramifications on the demand for Pullman facilities.[[688]](#footnote-688)

The Pullman Company remained above all else a catering organisation and, in one of its early guides published in 1924, explained that the management argued that it laid claim to a ‘standard of efficiency’ to look after its passengers ‘whether it applies to the modest high tea sandwich or a splendid repast served by attendants with the accompaniment of the choicest wines and spirits’. ‘Today’, it continued, ‘train meals are, perhaps, the greatest of all assets to modern travelling, and their production is the result of much careful forethought and ingenuity’.[[689]](#footnote-689) Feeding Pullman passengers was significant business: in 1923, for instance, more than 1.8 million meals and light refreshments were served in the cars, an increase of 4 per cent. on the year before in both first- and third-class. This total included more than half a million ‘luncheons’, 194,000 ‘dinners’, 86,500 breakfasts and 126,100 ‘high teas.’[[690]](#footnote-690)

The 1923 first-class ‘Continental Express’ tariff, for example, records that luncheon served on the train cost 4 shillings and six pence, and dinner on the return UP service five shillings - which in practice was 15 per cent. higher than conventional restaurant or dining rooms at railway stations, and almost 10 per cent. more for the privilege of consuming food in first-class, as compared with an identical menu served in third-class cars.[[691]](#footnote-691)

An alternative catering arrangement devised by the Pullman management for special events at Ascot and Lingfield races, for instance, where heavy traffic was anticipated was - the ‘Light Lunch Box’ - which cost from two shillings and contained sandwiches, fruit and cake ‘packed in a convenient form for passengers to take with them’.[[692]](#footnote-692) The effect on public opinion, both as represented by nationwide newspapers and Pullman passengers, was profound. While unkind things were said and written about the two Northern companies, the L.N.E.R. and L.M.S., the Southern was apparently less criticised, but Pullman seemed able to do very little wrong and many congratulatory comments from repeat customers were published.[[693]](#footnote-693) The company had always a close affinity to the various Southern-based constituent railway companies, and the fact that the Railways Act of 1923, which had overturned and eliminated so many railway traditions elsewhere, left things almost unchanged for Pullman which merely strengthened their hold upon the lines and services it served.[[694]](#footnote-694) Nevertheless, that year ended with some uncertainty for the country as a whole. The General Election, held in December, saw an increase in the numerical representation of the Labour Party, but neither Conservatives, Liberals, nor Labour had a clear majority over the combined strength of the other two parties.[[695]](#footnote-695) Despite this uncertainty, the Pullman management continued in a spirit of cautious optimism. The annual general meeting held on 17 December 1924, recorded a dividend of no less than 4 per cent. on the ordinary shares and there were several good reasons for rejoicing at that meeting, not least the ordering of a new set of cars for the ‘Continental Express’ from London to Dover.[[696]](#footnote-696)

During the course of 1924 passenger fares had in fact reduced, in anticipation of a reduction in expenditure. Traffic originating on the Southern Railway particularly had increased, by a total of 12,600,000 passengers (and Pullman numbers were approximately almost a fifth of the Southern total); the reduction brought the basic rate for third-class passenger travel down to 1½ pence per mile.[[697]](#footnote-697) Some of the most interesting parts of the report for the year related to the efforts expanding services beyond the Southern Railway, and to the L.N.E.R. where a new Pullman train, ‘The Sheffield Pullman’ was inaugurated (and, later, a ‘Manchester Pullman’) mostly with third-class accommodation. Evidently, both services never attracted the anticipated loadings predicted and both were soon withdrawn.[[698]](#footnote-698)

An event of 1924, which again showed how Pullman management was riding the crest of a wave, was the reported use by Their Majesties, King George V and Queen Mary (and suite) of Pullman cars from London to Dover. The event was captured on Pathé News and shown to good effect in all cinemas and recorded in the popular press to a wide audience.[[699]](#footnote-699) To some acclaim, too, involved important changes made by the Southern Railway in their accelerating almost all express trains featuring Pullmans.[[700]](#footnote-700) These improvements were advertised widely, although later over taken by the persistent labour troubles on the railways which had had ramifications on universal revenue,[[701]](#footnote-701) including, for example, a revision of plans and work to what amounted to a reduced timetable from 5 May 1924 onward.[[702]](#footnote-702)

This swift change was generally thought to be clear attempts to reduce expenditure, and recoup losses, by a reduction of the facilities given to the public.[[703]](#footnote-703) The changes in train service were actually the first stages in a long-term management policy of timetable re-organisation to meet the changing trends of passenger travel. Argued by Marshall, inspectors were put onto many trains to determine the number of passengers travelling against the number of tickets sold at the booking office or issued onboard the Pullmans.[[704]](#footnote-704) Where traffic was deemed to be light, the trains were often reduced in size or the Pullman cars locked. As a result of this investigation a daily saving of nearly 4,000 train miles was made.[[705]](#footnote-705) In other instances, previously independent trains were combined to work as far as a suitable dividing station; alternatively, other measures were taken to provide practically the same travelling facilities as before, without serious extra journey times.[[706]](#footnote-706)

These changes were no more than a prelude to the new timetables two months later during July, in which the Southern Railway in close conjunction with Pullman faced the difficult and wearisome task of entirely remodelling the passenger train services, noting that the Southern were under obligation to ensure that a fixed number of Pullman services ran in accordance with the various agreements in place between the two companies.[[707]](#footnote-707) A considerable amount of detailed work was involved and in the first place, the scheme was undertaken in order to ascertain whether a complete revision of all the passenger services would, in the aggregate, result in a more effective use of rolling stock and, importantly, locomotives for the same daily mileage.[[708]](#footnote-708) The guiding principle was to produce a practical timetable so arranged that as many sets of carriages as possible would make two trips a day, either from London to the provinces and South Coast and back, or vice versa.[[709]](#footnote-709)

The timings sometimes allowed a margin that was insufficient for the stock of an incoming train to be cleaned and used to form the next return train. It was a point such as this, that those responsible for the drawing up of the new Southern timetables had to investigate. It was soon found that comparatively little could be accomplished by piecemeal alterations; remedying one evil might easily cause another elsewhere.[[710]](#footnote-710) A decision was made to work in detail a complete new timetable for the whole system, which later had unforeseen ramifications on Pullman car loadings.[[711]](#footnote-711) The result for the railway, however, gave it a considerable saving in the number of locomotives and rolling stock required to work the same daily passenger mileage. Generally, this provided an equally liberal service to the public, with the additional advantage of standardised departure times, which of course could be more easily memorised. Viewed as a whole, the new timetables were quite as convenient as that which they superseded. ‘It was a more scientific and business-like structure than the old one’, according to *The* *Railway Gazette*, and ‘admirable as the latter as regards the frequency’.[[712]](#footnote-712)

Quite apart from the standardised ordinary train services, care was taken regarding the best approach for the Continental expresses, connections with the Cross-Channel steamers and connecting services to far flung destinations. A clear path for these trains, invariably with a set of Pullman cars in tow, was made where possible, and the promotional material promised convenient departures, cheaper fares and shorter journey times.[[713]](#footnote-713) As far as its own enterprise and developments were concerned, the Pullman Company was still receiving an excellent press. As reported in the nationwide newspapers it could do little wrong, but it seemed just as fashionable to heap odium on the Southern where bottlenecks appeared at stations and turnaround of trains slow.[[714]](#footnote-714)

By the late 1920s, the speed of the Pullman express train services generally showed a good rate of punctuality of any in Great Britain, while the company had enjoyed the most remarkable immunity from accidents.[[715]](#footnote-715) These two features were in themselves a tribute to the engineering excellence and maintenance of their cars, and to a high sense the responsibility shown by the railways companies who hauled their cars and worked their services. Dalziel’s greatest work lay in the range of vehicles commissioned, offering the public hitherto unknown luxuries aboard a railway vehicle. Pullman reminded the travelling public that it was they who introduced the first flexing gangway between carriages; the first to introduce a dining car; the first to use controllable ventilation; and one of the pioneering companies to build all-steel vehicles for reasons of safety and fire prevention.[[716]](#footnote-716) These features and others were the fundamental ingredients of success which were looked at askance by the managements of railway and even bus companies.[[717]](#footnote-717) This was one of the greatest advantages of the organisation of the chief engineer’s department at Preston Park, which relied on its ‘traditional hierarchical management structure’ and remained always on the old pattern that had been set out by Dalziel when he acquired the company, and probably before that the American parent company. All the onboard staff – all the graded attendants, chefs and running inspectors appeared to work on the strength of the chief engineer’s department.[[718]](#footnote-718)

With good reports and an expansion of services to its name, gave way to a number of intense studies made by railway operators to emulate de-luxe travel, and some to sustained success, including the Great Western Railway, possibly to the detriment of the Pullman Company.[[719]](#footnote-719) (Photographs were taken by railway personnel of first-class Pullman accommodation between trips at London Old Oak Common, and within a year of terminating all services, the GWR commenced work on building their own luxury saloons in a similar style with running names, table lamps and armchairs for Ocean Liner services).[[720]](#footnote-720) While these new builds were representative of isolated, rather than of standard practice, the Southern Railway company continued to welcome more Pullmans to their lines on the principle that they were complementary to the programme of their own network development.[[721]](#footnote-721)

**7.4 The management of public affairs**

Railwaymen throughout the country became engulfed in the general debacle, and among trade unionists there was a great wave of sympathy for the miners, and this sympathy led to Trade Union Congress to take a step that was both injudicious and fatal for its interest, as addressed in chapter 5. The calling of a General Strike could have been very serious, but in their eagerness to support the miners the bulk of trade unionists completely overlooked the legal aspects of their precipitate action.[[722]](#footnote-722)

To those whose way of life was little affected by the shortage of fuel that followed, the General Strike was of far greater significance than the prolonged coal strike; but both had far-reaching effects firstly on the railways, but also on the Pullman services whose staff abstained from any support in fear of breaking their employment contract of service. At first there was a fairly general cessation of traffic, a near standstill, but all Pullman services were withdrawn for the duration of the strike (3-12 May) and the staff were subsequently laid off. According to *The Railway Gazette* ‘the loyal Pullman staff’ were to be congratulated by Lord Dalziel who claimed that:

it was the intention of his board that neither [staff] nor their families should suffer in consequence of acts for which they are in no way responsible. Members of the train staffs of the Pullman Car Company (not being union men) would receive full pay during the period of the strike. They would be required, as a condition, to report daily for duty at their regular times and places, and while their ordinary duties might not be possible they would be required to hold themselves in readiness for such work, and the rendering of such other assistance as might be desired in connection with the company’s interests.[[723]](#footnote-723)

A stream of staff members presented themselves at key locations to help preserve and store any perishables from the Pullman kitchens and safeguard any expensive foodstuffs and alcohol from looters.[[724]](#footnote-724) The skill in the management of public affairs by Dalziel was never shown to greater advantage than in his handling of his staff following the aftermath; but all his statesmanship could not bring the railway workers of the Southern and L.N.E.R. - reportedly ‘women and men in the thousands’ - who supported the strike action together.[[725]](#footnote-725) Preston Park Works was seen as ‘a house in order’, with an illustrious record, and a succession of first class engineers and carriage technicians to take the posts of major responsibility, ‘that the stability and efficiency of the works could be taken as something for granted’.[[726]](#footnote-726)

Dalziel nevertheless recognised the long-term seriousness that such disruptions could have on the company’s prospects, and that nothing could be promised by the railway companies. He advised at the Annual General Meeting in December 1926:

If we are to be guided by experience and not by hopes which might prove to have no foundation, we would not legislate in the conduct of our affairs for any period extending beyond the life of the Southern contract, namely 37 years.[[727]](#footnote-727)

Furthermore, outside circumstances caused the Pullman management to view the situation at Brighton in rather broader perspective. The L.N.E.R. ‘Flying Scotsman’ service, the L.M.S. ‘Royal Scot and the Southern Railways’ own newly- introduced boat train carriages all began to partake of a new pattern of high speed and non-stop services each with special appointments; all of which were offered on a ‘non-supplementary’ basis. It was but one step towards the systematic clipping of minutes off fast train schedules and steadily increasing the aggregate of high-speed mileage.[[728]](#footnote-728) So far as Pullman were concerned, discussions regarding introducing new or remodelled stock on faster timetables during 1927 were again considered in light of falling receipts, while ‘instituting the most stringent and widespread measures to reduce working expenses and waste’.[[729]](#footnote-729) But despite everything that was done the balance of income over expenditure allowed for the payment of no more than 5 per cent. dividend on the ordinary stock. Lord Dalziel in presenting the balance sheet to the proprietors at the Annual General meeting held on 23 November 1927, said in conclusion:

although gross receipts increased by 3.54 per cent. the reserve fund for depreciation are added £ 32,000 and £ 21,565, the latter being the profit resulting from disposal of certain of the company’s investments … in consolation of knowing that it is in the main due to an entirely abnormal state of affairs.[[730]](#footnote-730)

The Pullman management also recognised that as with the railways they served, the ever-mounting costs involved towards running the services and the costs of supplies, victualling and staffing, while not yet fully experiencing the effects of trade depression to the same extent as the railway companies, they were in need of that ‘spirit of co-operation from the men’ working the cars and in the works to the utmost extent in the years that were soon to follow.[[731]](#footnote-731) But in the interim, 1927 had proved a reasonable year financially; having witnessed a remarkable recovery from the heavy setback the year before. The ‘better than average financial results’ in the following year, reported *The Railway Gazette* ‘are the more notable seeing that in spite of the ruling depression on British railways the number of Pullman passengers has increased’.[[732]](#footnote-732)

During 1929-30, Winston Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, foreshadowed measures to relieve the burden of local carriage rates, and when the Rating and Valuation (Apportionment) Bill was introduced in the House of Commons in May 1930, its provisions included the prospect of some relief to the ‘Big Four’ railway companies, which in turn had ramifications for Pullman.[[733]](#footnote-733) In the Act which received the Royal Assent, a sum of £ 4,000,000 was apportioned to the railways for reduction of the effect of local rates.[[734]](#footnote-734) The managements of all four railway companies, as well as the Metropolitan railway, approached the three railway unions with a proposal to cancel enhanced staff payments and suspend the guaranteed day and week. What was ultimately agreed by all parties following negotiations, which could be described as a model of co-operative and sympathetic action by both sides, was the adoption that an all-round reduction of wages and salaries to an amount of 2½ per cent. should take place. In the event, such important matters were closely followed by the Pullman management who soon adopted a similar stance.[[735]](#footnote-735)

Although Pullman were to repeatedly experience the effects of trade depression throughout the next decade, almost on par with the railway companies, several contracts with the L.M.S. and the Great Western Railway were swiftly and unsurprisingly cancelled, on mutual grounds, by 1930 as discussed in chapter 3.[[736]](#footnote-736) The cars forming the latter company services, the short-lived ‘Torquay Pullman’ and the Plymouth ‘Special Boat Train Express’ eventually found new homes, with transfer to the Southern Railway for the new ‘Bournemouth Belle’ and ‘Ocean liner Express’; the latter for passengers to/from Southampton Docks. The L.M.S. cars were almost all old stock and equipment and most unsuitable to run elsewhere. They were later sold in 1934, at a ‘low price’ of £ 21,000 to the railway company against a book loss of £ 131,000.[[737]](#footnote-737)

The growing popularity of Pullman travel elsewhere, as reflected in the revenue growth achieved for the year ended 30 September 1930, allowed for a dividend on the ordinary capital of 4 per cent. The Chairman, Follett Holt, however cautioned the shareholders, at the annual general meeting held on 13 December, of the ‘growing seriousness of the competition from road transport and what has been and may be the attitude of the Railways towards Pullmans has been sufficiently evidenced by the action of the Great Western’.[[738]](#footnote-738)

The financial results justifiably gave the Pullman Board a sense of caution. Follett Holt was particularly aware that the then present-day traffic conditions could not be made out of supplements, and catering, in Pullmans sufficient to provide a fair return on the capital employed and the amortisation of the vehicles.[[739]](#footnote-739) Board minutes for the period 1929-1931 show that an unusual position was adopted, as regards any new builds - those cars introduced to the new ‘Queen of Scots’ service and a batch for the ‘Bournemouth Belle’ were almost all acquired on hire-purchase arrangements with the building companies (settlement being in the form of company shares rather than cash) or by complex loan arrangement with Dudley Docker.[[740]](#footnote-740) Although management displayed some diversity with interesting and enterprising developments, including an efficiency-saving co-ordination of road and rail excursions during summer seasons, made particularly attractive for tourists from overseas, there was resounding praise brought about by the Pullman service from King’s Cross to the North.[[741]](#footnote-741) This development, which provided a leading start-to-stop average speed of 65 m.p.h. over ‘long distances’ was reported to be the first so scheduled on any Pullman service up to that time.[[742]](#footnote-742)

The Pullman management, more than perhaps any other organisation closely associated with the railways, was one in which the character and quality of individual officers far surpassed what could be called the ‘terms of reference’ of their actual positions. Behrend has argued that the railway officers generally remained old-fashioned in outlook in the early 1930s, so much so that difficulties were not perceived unless it was too late.[[743]](#footnote-743) From what can be determined, Dalziel’s words of caution and quantifiable measures throughout the previous decade are reasonable enough to show that Pullman was in fact alive to the dangers, but that it was severely restricted by existing legislation and uncertain goodwill of the railway companies.[[744]](#footnote-744)

**7.5 The end of an era**

As might be expected, 1926 was an unfortunate year financially for the Pullman Company as it was for the ‘Big Four’ railway companies with the General Strike in May, and the prolongation of the coal strike practically down to the end of the year.[[745]](#footnote-745)

However, this was also the year for some festivity on both sides of the Channel with the introduction of the all first-class Pullman service ‘Flèche d’Or’ from Paris to Calais with a connecting train to London; indeed, it was also the year that an order for 156 new mostly all-steel cars (90 cars followed by a further 66) had been secured for construction in Britain at a reported cost of £ 533,000.[[746]](#footnote-746) Various types of vehicle were designed and built at Birmingham and Leeds, many of which were scheduled for the French trains while others, of narrow dimension, were earmarked for the severe width restrictions then in place on the Hastings line, and some to the Brighton line.[[747]](#footnote-747) Due to delays and shortages in place, all services were not introduced until the fourth quarter, by which time passenger numbers were already notably down.[[748]](#footnote-748) Faced with the seriousness of the situation the management instituted the most stringent and widespread measures to reduce working expenses. Dalziel, in presenting what would be his last balance sheet to the proprietors at the Annual General meeting held on 13 December 1927, said in conclusion:

The Pullman Company, in common with the railway companies of Great Britain was constantly concerned with policy towards road competition, and towards the ever-mounting cost of running the fleet of cars and associated costs, including fee sharing (i.e. the proportion of monies due on supplements made on certain services and railway company lines, for example: the L.M.S. who latterly took a 50 per cent. share of all supplements issued).[[749]](#footnote-749)

The death of Dalziel in April 1928, coincided with the beginning of the end in Pullman prosperity, while the Board continued to embark on an unceasing drive to sustain a prominent footing. The change in chairman could have been passed almost unnoticed. The organisation in every department remained completely the same, and it continued almost unchanged with many of the original directors for a further twenty-six years, until the British Transport Commission became involved with company affairs during 1954.[[750]](#footnote-750) Amid all the political influences, the stability in management and organisation continued to sustain a high degree of loyalty from passengers and workforce alike.[[751]](#footnote-751) On succeeding Dalziel, Lord Ashfield temporarily took the lead in Holt’s absence during his hospitalisation, but within months Holt continued to maintain a policy of retaining business where possible - a break-even state of affairs characterising much of the 1930s.[[752]](#footnote-752)

The availability of government funding for major projects to alleviate unemployment, enabled the railway companies such as the Southern Railway to add ‘a considerable number of tobacco kiosks’, which in turn sold ‘specially wrapped Abdulla cigarettes and cigars’ for the Pullman Car Company - which at one time were exclusively sold on board the Pullman trains. The lack of control of Pullman’s products, then sub-contracted, became all the more apparent when complaints about the standard of goods began to be directed to the Pullman management.[[753]](#footnote-753)

In the years prior to world war in 1939, travelling by Pullman – especially on its premier services, like the ‘Golden Arrow’ or ‘Harrogate Pullman’ – could be a luxurious and exciting experience. In his numerous articles about train travel, Wilkinson remarked that ‘there can be no finer prelude to a holiday and few things really more restful than a long journey by express Pullman’. In the *Golden Way* publication, among others, the writer noted that the journey ‘has about it a certain savour of romance, a spice of adventure, which no familiarity with railway travelling can destroy’.[[754]](#footnote-754) When Pullman invested in new all-steel cars for the ‘Queen of Scots’ service in 1928, Follett Holt, boasted that the train had ‘many novel features and refinements calculated further to enhance the comfort of those who travel Pullman’.[[755]](#footnote-755) Heralded by the railway press as a ‘great advance in construction achievements’, the interiors featured exotic woods from the Empire and, some of the best in materials.[[756]](#footnote-756)

An article introducing the new ‘Golden Arrow’ in *The Golden Way* of 1929 highlight passenger habits which may well now appear anachronistic. The English obsession with class was apparent, the writer observing that in four consecutive months that year, ‘Pullman performance was exemplary having purportedly carried 1.7 million First-, 313,000 Second- and 2.4 million Third-class passengers, but that the satisfaction derived from a superior class of travel is but transitory’.[[757]](#footnote-757) It was noted that men had a tendency to travel first-class Pullman if they could afford to do so and particularly on a business account, but that women when paying for themselves invariably travelled third-class.[[758]](#footnote-758) The introduction of Pullmans with larger open saloons with fewer (coupé) compartments had allowed travellers ‘to abandon the national habit of splendid isolation’, and this new boldness was also apparent in third-class cars, where passengers ‘do not hesitate to ask for just what they want’, the writer concluded.[[759]](#footnote-759)

Leaving aside the trials and tribulations suffered by the Southern Railway particularly, the 1930s represented a high-point for both electric and steam traction, and Pullmans began to run with some of the world’s fastest engines. As the decade progressed, other railway world speed records managed to steal some of the glory, capturing the public attention with streamlining in particular,[[760]](#footnote-760) while the Southern Railway continued to make much of the exploits of the all-electric ‘Brighton Belle’, featuring the latest Pullman cars in a range of publicity posters. The 60 miles between London and the seaside resort to which the train took its name, were covered in one hour non-stop at an average speed of 60 m.p.h; recognising the importance of this achievement, *The Railway Gazette,* also covered the train in detail. *The Times Supplement* writing in parallel, described it as a ‘triumph of British workmanship – a fitting tribute both to the skill of Southern workers and to the business acumen of management over the previous 25 years.’[[761]](#footnote-761)

By 1933 Pullman’s publicity and printing department, established by Dalziel in 1908, was already a valuable asset to the company working in close liaison with all four major railway companies as well as shipping lines. Whilst it had begun publishing books and brochures in earnest as early as 1910, and immediately after World War 1, this initiative was continued by broadening its range of titles from purely travel guides to many which dealt with technical subjects such as rolling stock construction and engineering, to decorative arts and crafts.[[762]](#footnote-762) Originally issued on a monthly basis, the *Pullman Car Guide* and the *Golden Way* continued on an increasingly large scale: 12,000 copies of the latter (1934) were printed quarterly (and later half-yearly) and given free to passengers’ onboard all Pullman trains, and sold at station kiosks.[[763]](#footnote-763) In all cases, the full Pullman network of services in Great Britain, the Continent and beyond were detailed, as well as advertisements, resorts and topical places of interest. The inter-war period also saw the development of more unusual forms of publicity, including jigsaw puzzles for children featuring scenic views of locations served by Pullman, and railway topics including, for instance, the ‘Golden Arrow’ or ‘Eastern Belle’, to name but a few. By 1928 the company had reached a ‘highly distinctive stage and that its identity is now definitely established, with its own individual traits and characteristics’.[[764]](#footnote-764)

It appears that little opportunity was missed to celebrate the coming of age of a certain service or introduction of new lots of vehicles. ‘The Southern Belle’, for example, was 21 years old in 1929 and was duly celebrated, and five years later, in 1934, elaborate ceremonies took place at London Victoria and Brighton to mark the occasion of its name change to the ‘Brighton Belle’ with a host of visiting dignitaries and a flourish of publicity material.[[765]](#footnote-765) In the event it seems that the company failed to make as much capital from the celebrations as it had hoped, despite the fact that many of the capital’s rich and famous were invited.[[766]](#footnote-766)

Away from its extensive rail network, the Pullman Car Company operated a number of ancillary services to support its core business. The introduction of taxis in London by Dalziel, and later omnibus services connecting London’s main-line stations to convey passengers from one Pullman service to another, was a pioneering development by the company.[[767]](#footnote-767) The growing importance of these new services had not been missed by management. Follett Holt, now with a knighthood, reported to shareholders that this new initiative, as well as ‘various catering opportunities of large proportion for government and the royal household were well under way’.[[768]](#footnote-768) However, by the end of 1937 the situation had not improved, and although the capital of the company had equated to £ 1,225,000, almost five hundred thousand pounds had been lost following a revaluation of the assets by R. Agnew and Sons at £ 750,000.[[769]](#footnote-769) Holt considered that in order the capital in the balance sheet should agree with the value of the assets, a proposal to write down the book values of the ordinary shares from £1 to one shilling was required - which in effect meant writing off £ 475,000 - being the amount of capital that was considered lost.[[770]](#footnote-770)

**7.6 Confronting difficulties**

As outlined in chapter 4, the great economic slump which developed into a worldwide phenomenon, struck the Pullman Company badly by the third quarter of 1931.[[771]](#footnote-771) Based on the reports published in *The Railway Gazette* and nationwide newspapers, the events were not so severe as they might have been because the ‘Pullman management had for some time previously initiated many measures of economy, including the reduction of their cars running in certain services, postponing non-essential overhauls, as well as reducing working expenses elsewhere’.[[772]](#footnote-772) During the year to September, the gross expenditure on railway and ancillary businesses, amounting to £ 230,685 showed a reduction of no less than 4.82 per cent. on that of the previous year. The serious falling off in traffic receipts, especially all the Continental boat trains, made a reduction in the dividend inevitable; but it was remarkable in a year of such deepening depression that the results were such as to justify payment of 2 per cent. on the ordinary shares.[[773]](#footnote-773)

So far as actual measures of economy were concerned, the profitability or otherwise of certain services, for instance, London to Portsmouth or London to Margate with one or two vehicles in a local stopping service had been under scrutiny for the past two years.[[774]](#footnote-774) Together with the withdrawal of a number of unremunerative services with immediate effect from the timetable, or as transpiring later, a notable reduction of the number of vehicles used, it appears no time was wasted to find meaningful economies of scale.[[775]](#footnote-775) Despite the severe recession, considerable enterprise continued to be shown by the management, including the highly publicised price reduction of all on-board set menus and a wider availability on almost all services promoting reduced fares for children and other special excursion and ‘week-end’ rates.[[776]](#footnote-776)

As might be expected, the results from 1931 - which also had a detrimental impact for 1932 - showed a worsening of the traffic position. As compared with September 1931, the September 1932 figures produced a further 24 per cent. drop in traffic receipts for third-class, and ‘over 40 per cent. first-class’.[[777]](#footnote-777) Taking the receipts as a whole, the average worked out at 9.34 per cent. This result reflected the unprecedented depression in the trade of the country during the whole year, but as if this were not enough, there had been another coal strike in January 1932 which in itself caused an impact and prolonged knock-on effects to both the railways, and also to Pullman.[[778]](#footnote-778) The decline in receipts was to an extent offset however by a decrease of no less than £ 300,000 gross expenditure on various business, and this amounted to no less than 48 per cent. of the fall in revenue. In his speech at the Annual General Meeting of the Company on 16 December 1932, Sir Follett Holt said, in respect particularly of the loss of traffics:

The disappointing feature is the falling off of revenue, but any of you who may be concerned in trade will well know what has happened during the last twelve months, and will understand the effect upon railways and travel generally.[[779]](#footnote-779)

Although weakened with the results, the current ratio remained reasonable in the circumstances, and future prospects had generally improved by the replacement of the Labour administration that took place earlier in the autumn of 1931 by a National Government, under the Premiership of Ramsay McDonald.[[780]](#footnote-780) By the time of the Pullman Company meeting in December 1932, little in the way of tangible results could be discerned from the urgent measures the new Government was taking to revive trade on the railways. That annual general meeting was also notable as being the first on record to confirm that that the directors were in discussion with the management of the Southern Railway to consider ways of introducing alternatives to Pullman steam-type stock in light of proposals to electrify the London-Brighton route. Under the heading ‘Electrification’, Sir Follett Holt said:

This initiative will bring prosperity to both companies and a welcome opportunity to invest in the Railways. Our very best car designs are currently being settled on and new innovations have been considered. These Pullmans will undoubtedly appeal to many of our passengers today.[[781]](#footnote-781)

The Southern Railway was indeed one of the first British companies to consider extensive conversion to electric traction on a main-line, and some interesting developments were to follow later, particularly the introduction of electric all-steel Pullman cars equating to an average of £ 5,400 each.[[782]](#footnote-782)

On 1 January 1933, witnessed the introduction of electric Pullman traction in the guise of 3 five car units for the ‘Southern Belle’ (later renamed the ‘Brighton Belle’) together with 23 ‘composite’ cars with mixed class accommodation, each individually decorated, for inclusion in express workings to the South Coast. Each unit and composite car ran to concentrated rotas, being some of the first trains scheduled to operate under demanding inter-city schedules of four return runs daily.[[783]](#footnote-783) Experience with these vehicles was apparently favourable that by 1935, with electrification continuing as far as Bognor Regis and Chichester, the Pullman management had hoped to acquire 30 more ‘composite’ cars, but building costs involved had already escalated within three years, making this project untenable.[[784]](#footnote-784)

The tangible signs of improvement did not appear quite so soon as had been hoped. Nevertheless, there was a welcome increase in passenger receipts during the latter half of the year, but Pullman management were also aware that they were tied into a number of contracts which were proving increasingly uneconomical. They wanted to trim these services to suit the geography, and other physical characteristics of its network - in a similar way as the much-publicised Beeching Plan tried to do, twenty five years later, for the railways of Britain as a whole.[[785]](#footnote-785) On the majority of Pullman routes in 1938, there was the over-riding fact that in England the pattern of passenger travel had always been drawn towards London. In Follett Holt’s notes to shareholders that December cautiously reminds them:

To purchase new rolling stock for unremunerative services [from the Midlands to the West Riding] that would have to be amortised at this time would be a condemnatory proceeding. If these premises are sound, then we should use our best endeavours to return to the shareholders all of their capital during the next 20 years. The Scheme proposed, which has been worked out with Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., the Company’s auditors, is therefore based on this object.[[786]](#footnote-786)

The impression of the great strength of the partnership that had been fostered between Lord Dalziel and his Board, and the part they played jointly in steering the company, allowed Pullman cars to be prominently put on display at various railway open days, including theRailway Centenary in celebration of the Stockton & Darlington Railway.[[787]](#footnote-787) During the same year, ten Pullman cars were on loan to the Italian State Railways on a temporary basis to inaugurate a ‘Milan-Cannes Pullman Express’.[[788]](#footnote-788) Another centenary was that of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1930 to which the Pullman management ‘assembled a rake of its latest vehicles for public display’.[[789]](#footnote-789)

Once the celebrations were over, those with the keenest perceptions would probably have noted that the company was faithfully working in accord - without some of the gusto characterised by the late Lord Dalziel. In the matter of express train speed, the ‘Brighton Belle’ and ‘Golden Arrow’ records were quickly taken by the achievements made by the L.N.E.R. and L.M.S. with their streamlined ‘Coronation’ and ‘Coronation Scot’ trains respectively.[[790]](#footnote-790)

In general policy, as well in train service the Pullman management continued to remain on a traditional footing, and its plans for the future were often in the form of renewing and consolidating the old, rather than striking out into new fields.[[791]](#footnote-791) Real progress on Pullman services was covert in the late 1930s when even the flagship train, the ‘Golden Arrow’ lost much of its appeal, with a reduction of just four first-class cars coupled to ordinary Southern Railway carriages.[[792]](#footnote-792) By far the most drastic action taken by management was the capital scheme and the revaluation of the company’s rolling stock and equipment in January 1938. This recommended a write down of the book values by £ 533,617 to £ 741,000 to reflect the current valuation of the company, and the resulting circular issued to shareholders was a clear indication that the management realised the time had come for careful investigation of the valuation of the ageing stock and equipment. The *Dundee Evening Telegraph* went so far as to publish ‘this means that over half a million has faded away. This scheme is called equitable but [it is] drastic’.[[793]](#footnote-793)

Sir Follett Holt presiding over the twenty-third annual general meeting later in December advised:

Being at the luxury end we are particularly exposed to the cold winds of a trade recession, and in addition to this set back we had to face the loss of net revenue arising from a reduction of supplementary fares on the L.N.E.R. section of our business. This was necessitated by the competition of the new luxury trains on that railway charging supplementary fares lower than ours.[[794]](#footnote-794)

1937/1938 [[795]](#footnote-795) 1,152,690

1938/1939 [[796]](#footnote-796) 968,260 (a drop of 16 per cent. on the previous year)

**Table 1. Numbers of Pullman Car passengers carried, 1937-1939**

Although no additional newly-built cars were introduced until after World War 2, eight cars ordered by management in 1938 as replacements for accelerated Northern services were not completed until 1951.[[797]](#footnote-797)

**7.7 Government war-time control 1940-1945**

January 1940 marked the end of Phase One of the war, so far as the Pullman Company was concerned.[[798]](#footnote-798) It was a phase of apprehension, preparing for the worst it was thought the enemy could then do, drastically reducing or withdrawing 90 per cent. of its services and making available vehicles, suitably equipped for War Cabinet members and notable personages. By 1941, the Minister of Transport announced the withdrawal of almost all catering vehicles, including the remaining Pullman cars in service.[[799]](#footnote-799)

With ongoing delays and a lack of any amenities soon ingrained in the public mind, the state of affairs were allegedly thought to rest entirely with the railway and Pullman companies themselves.[[800]](#footnote-800) The extent to which they had been controlled and restricted in the national interest by the Ministry of War Transport was scarcely appreciated at all. Under Government order they had been compelled to make do with older rolling stock and fixed equipment. There was now no room on the railways for any form of luxury train.[[801]](#footnote-801) Both the L.N.E.R. and Southern Railway discussed the terms of compensation under contract arising out of the withdrawal during the period of the war of the fixed number of Pullman cars allocated and running on their lines. There was, of course, a contractual obligation to compensate the Pullman Company for the loss of profit sustained, as had been the case during World War 1 with the Caledonian Railway, where the company had abruptly withdrawn the Pullmans from service without any consultation, which led Dalziel to instigate legal proceedings.

Whatever the legal position that might have been in 1940, the railway companies expressed a wish to keep the Pullman Company in funds to the extent necessary in order to provide for its depreciation liabilities in respect of the cars, and also to maintain its solvency. A detailed proposal and draft terms of compensation in Ministry of Transport files was discussed, with a suggestion of making a payment of £ 55,000 per year (which was, roughly equal to the pre-war rate of profit) for so long as the cars were out of service. At this stage of discussions, it was queried whether the Treasury would see any objection to a settlement to the Pullman Company on whatever basis may be considered reasonable by the railway companies and the Ministry of Transport.[[802]](#footnote-802) One month later, it is recorded that so far as the Ministry of Transport were concerned, the railway companies considerations were justified and ‘it would seem that they should be the best judges as to the value of the services of the Pullman Car Co Ltd’.[[803]](#footnote-803) Covertly and overtly discussions took place regarding the future of the Pullman Company once hostilities ceased, quite apart from any political influences that might have developed. ‘The company had a way of doing things differently from everyone else, and it rejoiced in the knowledge that it had, in many respects, that little “extra” that the others had only hoped’.[[804]](#footnote-804)

Financially, the effect of the Railway Control Agreement limited the net revenue in each of the later war years, mainly to an agreed annual payment due under that agreement; not unique to Pullman, but covering all transport companies as well.[[805]](#footnote-805) Despite the traffic conveyed up to 1941 on the S.R. and the loan of many vehicles for the War Office and Imperial Airways services, for instance, no dividend was paid during the war years; and one of the most damaging effects of the war was the progressive decline in standards of maintenance of the Pullman fleet - although unlike ordinary rolling stock - most Pullman cars were placed in store. The same could not be said of the ‘Big Four’ railway company fleet of carriages and permanent way. This was not due to any planned dilution of effort, but scarcity of labour and materials.[[806]](#footnote-806)

By the end of the war there were accumulated arrears of work on almost every vehicle. Four cars were completely destroyed and more than half the fleet had some degree of damage from enemy action.[[807]](#footnote-807) Translated into actual physical work, there was an arrears equivalent of about three years normal renewal work of refurbishment, painting, varnishing and running gear maintenance.[[808]](#footnote-808) A degree of uncertainty was introduced into the business generally in the desire to rehabilitate, because there was widespread apprehension as to the ultimate intentions of the railways and what the government wanted to do with Pullman.[[809]](#footnote-809)

The period of uncertainty and apprehension that had intervened before, during and after the war, and the vesting date for nationalisation of the British railways, the Pullman Car Company survived almost unchanged in its working arrangements. The spring and summer of 1946 saw some welcome improvements of train services on the Southern Railway - particularly whose management sought the help of the Pullman Company to reintroduce old services and in some instances, initiate new ones.[[810]](#footnote-810) Although there was a limitation on capital expenditure, a severe shortage of materials and an ongoing manpower problem, the Pullman Company was able to refurbish thirty cars for such services as the ‘Golden Arrow’ and ‘Yorkshire Pullman’. With regard to the wartime compensation arrangements, the trust fund at 30 September 1946 stood at £ 257,383 and the Pullman Company are noted to have ‘kept these monies separately invested in order to meet approved expenditure which is the renewal of cars, the remodelling of cars [and] war damage expenditure’.[[811]](#footnote-811)

**7.8 Post-World War 2 recovery**

Post-war recovery was however limited by the period of extreme austerity suffered in Britain after 1945. Given the Allied victory, the shortages and rationing seemed undeserved, but the fact remained that Britain had borrowed heavily to fund the war effort. The rehabilitation of re-introducing old services took some time since the railways themselves required extensive repairs. The severe weather also took its toll on all Pullman and ordinary services gradually being brought back into service - often delayed when the freezing conditions caused brakes to ice up.[[812]](#footnote-812)

The wave of optimism generated by the end of World War 2 led to a hope that in peace time the main-line railways could be restored to something of their pre-war glory. Pullman management had the benefit of agreements in place securing their services on both the Southern and L.N.E.R. to at least 1962, as well as governmental compensation plans.[[813]](#footnote-813) Leaving aside the damage caused by enemy action, day-to-day maintenance had declined sharply as the war continued, leaving the company a post-war legacy of maintenance work costing more than £ 200,000.[[814]](#footnote-814) Any immediate progress on tackling the backlog was limited by the more serious uncertainty surrounding the future of the railways themselves. Some railway staff had seen the advantages of centralised governmental control that had been so successful during the war under the Railway Executive Committee, and were keen for it to continue.[[815]](#footnote-815) The Pullman Car Company were not part of the controls in place, but given its independent working with the railway companies offered other possibilities. Thirty Pullmans were commissioned to run as special vehicles for military and Home Office requirements to which compensation arrangements between the Government and the Pullman management were in place, and which were called upon immediately war was over.[[816]](#footnote-816)

Given this difficult backdrop, the Pullman management actively sought new and alternative sources of fuel to heat and light their cars and, for cooking purposes, in the experimentation of bottled Calor gas.[[817]](#footnote-817) Before the war the company had carried out some feasibility studies to explore this possibility as well as adapting to electric cooking in many of their vehicles with kitchen plant, rather than coal.[[818]](#footnote-818)

With imminent Nationalisation of the railways, there was, however, some continuity at management level, but all board members were then approaching 70 years or older. The Chairman referred to the necessity of ‘obtaining a younger and more active general manager’ to cope with the reorganisation of the business at this time, appointing Colonel Harding to the post from 24 October 1945.[[819]](#footnote-819) (Although the Pullman Company had a combined secretary and manager position until the mid-1920s when Griffith was appointed ‘general manager’, the title of which had been seen by this time as a relic of the past by railway companies and abolished). Important though the new position was, it had been downgraded in comparison to the old role, as responsibility was shortly transferred into the upper echelons of the Railway Executive.[[820]](#footnote-820) To the passenger there seemed at first to be only minimal change. Pullman cars continued to run behind locomotives of the host railway, now Region, in the same livery and finish as was the case during the 1920s and 30’s and a ‘brief post-war resurgence of popularity’ was noted once again.[[821]](#footnote-821) The Railway Executive gradually began to exert a tighter centralised influence on the running of the railways and under Harding, staff attempted to maintain as much Pullman tradition as was feasible, preserving old working practices and opposing the spread of standardisation and restraint. Harding introduced a system of regular memoranda which cascaded to all levels and ranks of the Company.

The effects of nationalisation were also felt strongly at Preston Park Works, especially when Griffith retired in 1945. The post of chief mechanical engineer was altered, although the role retained the responsibility ‘for the efficient expenditure connected with the work done at Brighton Works of the Pullman Car Company and any other maintenance depot’.[[822]](#footnote-822) New departments, namely ‘carriage & wagon’ and ‘mechanical & electrical’ were set up in conjunction with the railway works as far away as Doncaster, who increasingly overhauled Pullman cars used generally on services from King’s Cross, while taking some of the business away from Brighton.[[823]](#footnote-823)

The close-knit workforce at Brighton began to change with the appointment of newcomers, largely from City institutions. Not surprisingly for a specialist railway community with traditions stretching back into the nineteenth century, there was opposition to what many saw as unnecessary change. Despite these pressing concerns, Preston Park Works’ practices were still hard to break, and until complete closure in 1963, the works continued to operate in much the same way it had done before.[[824]](#footnote-824) A congratulatory note was however published in November 1946, by *The Sunday Express* Editor (as reported also in *The Railway Gazette*) that highlighted the work that had been achieved since the cessation of war - ‘120 Pullmans were now back in service, covering a total of 25,000 car-miles a day, and that each traveller in a Pullman spends an average of 3 shillings and 6 pence (in addition to the supplementary fare)’.[[825]](#footnote-825) Within three years, the annual report of the Pullman Car Company showed £ 754,223 gross receipts for the year ended 30 September 1949 against £ 654,048 for the previous twelve months. Working expenses had however grown from £ 497,031 to £ 588,267 and the trading profit at £ 165,956 showed an increase of £ 8,939. After providing for taxes and depreciation, there remained a net profit of £ 72,203 for the year, which compared with £ 73,786 in the previous twelve months. The directors had stated that the full impact of increased wages amounted to £ 43,000, together with the higher price of commodities and greater provision for taxation, were responsible for the reduced net profit. After payment of interest on the 5 per cent. cumulative income stock to redemption at 31 December 1948, and the dividend on the 4½ per cent. preference stock to 30 September 1949, there remained a balance of £ 72,077 from which it was proposed to pay 12½ per cent. on the ordinary shares, leaving £ 55,749. All the indebtedness of the company had at that stage been paid off. The policy of a high standard of maintenance of rolling stock continued, and excess charges of maintenance amounting to £ 11,405 over the theoretical charge of £ 45,000 had been written off out of profits in that year.[[826]](#footnote-826)

Another important change for the Board of Directors took place early in 1946 when Follett Holt, in consequence of other commitments (and probably advancing age), resigned from the Chairmanship, though continuing to serve on the board in a lighter capacity.[[827]](#footnote-827)

**7.9 Conclusion**

The ad-hoc drop off in traffic throughout the 1920s and 30’s was much greater than can be accounted for by fluctuations and changes in the pattern of trade. The rise in private motor cars during the inter-war period made challenging inroads into traffic. Although it is impossible to state how much traffic was lost by Pullman to road transport, partly because the statistics relating to road traffic at the time are incomplete, the motor car proved to be a serious competitor in terms of both price and service. The long-distance L.N.E.R. journeys on Pullman did however retain the bulk of its traffic and regular clientele, but the introduction of long-distance limited-stop coaches was beginning to carry competition further afield by the early 1930s.

Pullman management found itself in very difficult situations during the inter-war years. On the one hand, they faced contraction and fluctuation in their basic heavy traffic due largely to the prevailing economic conditions and effects of strike and radical timetable changes (which were not always suitable to luncheon, dinner or tea), whilst on the other, they encountered rigorous competition from a more flexible form of transport which sought to rob them of some of their most valuable traffic. The solution to these problems did not lie entirely outside the powers of the company. It has been suggested, however, that the Pullman Board was conservative, unenterprising and failed to take steps to meet the needs of pressing matters. To a certain extent this is true particularly in the early years after World War 1, when they were primarily engaged with problems of reconstruction and raising much-needed capital.

Pullman did however attempt to valiantly resuscitate their fortunes over a sustained period of years in order to retain regular clientele, and to entice new custom. By way of promoting special excursion and cheap week-end rates potentially captured a wider audience of passengers. Greater reductions for children, as well as a wholesale revision of all its tariffs and supplementary fares allowed Pullman to tap into a broader spectrum of passengers who would not have necessarily considered Pullman travel as an option before. It could not be claimed they were wholly responsible for the fact that the remedies adopted were largely without effect. Their closest allies, the Southern Railway and L.N.E.R., were actively seeking to secure economies and improve efficiency on much larger and significant scales. Irrespective of the company and regardless of its size, operating expenses increased due to material and labour costs. Pullman reported substantial economies by reducing administrative expense, standardizing equipment where possible, and rationalising construction and repair.

Additionally, the company also improved and escalated methods of traffic working by more extensive common use of its rolling stock. By 1933, as has been seen, Pullman was working with 15 per cent. fewer vehicles of 1890-1908 vintage – compared with 1930. By reducing the number of car types (which were not always capable of coupling and running together), and by introducing all-steel vehicles of a standard pattern and design for longevity and multi-purpose use, among other operating considerations, the company had estimated to have saved about £100,000 per annum. Pullman also improved their facilities appreciably throughout the inter-war period to a level acceptable by the railway companies it served. The speed and frequency of the main line passenger services was increased through the reorganisation of timetables, and cooperation as well as goodwill of the railway managements concerned. Passengers also benefited by more comfortable Pullman cars, coinciding with cheaper railway fares meant that travelling by ‘extra fare’ trains was more affordable in keeping with rises in real incomes and changes in living standards and shown to great effect by modern-looking graphic illustrations on the Southern Railway – the only railway company to undertake a large-scale programme of reconstruction and modernization.

The benefits of modernization on the Pullman Company were significant, but expensive. Electric services on the Central section of the Southern were more frequent, more punctual, faster and cleaner than the steam ones they replaced, and passengers (commuters, businessmen and holidaymakers, alike) were invariably attracted to them evidenced by the increased volume of traffic.

Pullman management endeavoured to perform with great efficiency its undertakings when the impact of competition elsewhere became more acute. Evidently, much of the money earned was in fact invested in existing technique - the renewal of existing equipment - rather than in wholesale new technology, as was found to be the case with the L.N.E.R.’s programme of streamlined trains. Many of the improvements that were made only touched the surface, but under the chronic conditions prevailing during recession it is surprising to find that they achieved so much. Pullman seemingly suffered from the legacy of the past it was trying to develop when few other forms of luxury transport were available and passengers came to rely on them for the provision of any service however uneconomic and however wasteful of the resources it appeared to be. The compatibility requirement, combined with the size and cost of the fleet, made it an obstacle to technical progress, since the new always had to mate with the old. In consequence, evolution of improved rolling stock had been there, but there was still a tendency to rely on the older vehicles with dated equipment.

Whatever improvements Pullman management had made in their services, it is unlikely that they could have prevented motor transport or indeed the railways’ own restaurant, dining or buffet cars from capturing part of their traffic. Price was the crucial factor where coach, tram and bus companies were able to undercut the railways generally. To combat this, and in conjunction with the railway counterpart, Pullman management adopted a policy of reducing their own charges on many services which, by 1927, meant supplementary fares had been reduced to 50 per cent. below pre-World War 1 levels encouraging more passengers to travel ‘Pullman’.

To argue that these reductions were insufficient to allow the railways to compete effectively with road transport is misleading. Granted that short of reducing their charges to the same level as those of road transport, would no doubt have involved the railways in conveying passengers at a loss in many cases, it was impossible for the respective managements to meet competition on an equal footing. But this does not alter the fact that selective price changes could have enabled the railways to retain that kind of traffic which was the most profitable and dispense with the rest. Therefore, the important point is whether the actual reductions in charges were made in a way to secure the best results. Quite clearly this was not the case. Many of the changes were made indiscriminately and failed to differentiate sufficiently between good and bad traffic. Had greater attention been paid when making the concessions to the variations in the elasticity of demand for the services and costs of operation, the outcome in the long term might have been more satisfactory.

Pullman management appeared preoccupied with maximising gross revenue, however; in so doing they automatically sacrificed their net revenue since the additional expense incurred in meeting the requirements of concessionary passengers and in providing special services, often outweighed the gain in receipts. In short, adaptability, close working relationships with the railway managements and retention of passengers was key to survival in the inter-war years and beyond.

**8.0 Operational challenges, 1946-1954**

**8.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the post-war behaviour and decision-making capabilities of the Pullman Car Company management, its relations with the new British Transport Commission [B.T.C.], the Railway Executive [R.E.] and trade unions.

The prevalent notion that managerial discourse had moved progressively from coercive to rational and, ultimately, to normative rhetoric of control as set out by Behrend, a travel writer and self-styled Pullman historian is challenged. Additionally, the key research themes, including persistent labour disputes, the raising of capital investment, the style of management and an advancing technical obsolescence are addressed, questioning to what extent these assisted or hampered future Pullman Car Company operations, its rate of change and aspirational advance prior to and post nationalisation. Although the Pullman Company had found itself operating in a very different environment than before World War 2, a continuing legacy since the 1930s regarding proper remuneration of its workforce and the best utilisation of their effort and skill remained the daily task of management.

The company was a widespread organisation by 1946, and the managerial challenge which that presented also continued in peacetime.[[828]](#footnote-828) Apart from government war contracts, and compensation agreements with railway companies on which their vehicles ran, Pullman was forced to bide its time in the hope of not only restoring former services, but fulfilling its visions of further expansion.[[829]](#footnote-829) The war years simply made matters worse for both the railways and for the Pullman Company.[[830]](#footnote-830) The Pullman offices located at Victoria station were on four occasions damaged by fire and high explosives. As a result, many valuable records of Pullman history were destroyed.[[831]](#footnote-831) This alone accounts for some of the confusions that have arisen in various published works produced since that date, as outlined in the introduction.

Although 120 Pullman cars had suffered some damage of varying severity during the war years (60 per cent. of the roughly 200-strong 1939 fleet), the fact that many of them had been stored, some under cover, meant that in general they were in better condition than the mass of ordinary railway coaches, which had been in intense, continuous service with the minimum of maintenance for five years, and in many cases, worked to the limit to keep wartime services rolling.[[832]](#footnote-832) When the war ended, the railways emerged in a run-down state, and in an impoverished financial shape at a time when costs were rising sharply. As Gourvish argues, ‘the results of war-time use and neglect were clear. By 1945, there was a large backlog of repairs and renewals, and this greatly impaired railway operations for the rest of the decade’.[[833]](#footnote-833) There was no question of immediately restoring the pre-war express trains, including the streamliners, but it was feasible to reintroduce Pullman services and inaugurate new ones quite quickly.[[834]](#footnote-834) Just at a time when the railways could have done without it, there was an outpouring of passengers. This had commenced whilst the war was still on, in the summer of 1944, when the government had reluctantly agreed to allow civilians to travel by rail for holidays away from bomb-threatened areas.[[835]](#footnote-835) A war-weary populace, unable to use motor cars because of strict petrol rationing, had created chaos by thronging to the main-line termini in order to escape to the seaside. Until then the government had actively discouraged civilian journeys by rail, wanting to keep the carriage seats available for military use. However, the immediate post-war situation presented to the Pullman management was a promising one, although as always highly reliant on the co-operation of the railway companies and condition of the permanent way (railway lines, bridges, tunnels, and equipment).

From the point of the Pullman Board and its Chairman, Stanley Adams, who almost all held the same directorships since the 1930 (if not before), realised the strength of the company’s position, and quickly set in motion a programme of repair and refurbishment for its fleet of cars[[836]](#footnote-836) and, as a result, four Pullman cars began running just months after the conflict, from December 1945 on Kent coast services.[[837]](#footnote-837) From a financial perspective, the state of the post-war railways was however worse than it had been in the difficult years of 1930s Depression.[[838]](#footnote-838) The pressing need to respond to developments in road transport, improving productivity and showing a more aggressive attitude in the search for profitable business, for instance, had also been on the Pullman Board agenda for at least 20 years.[[839]](#footnote-839) However, the immediate prospects of a successful stand against competitors were far from good and, as Gourvish argues, ‘a major cause of anxiety in the period 1945-7 was the patent inability of the companies to restore their physical assets to pre-war standards’.[[840]](#footnote-840) Starved of investment and hampered by repairs, the Pullman management could do no more than offer a similar product to that of pre-war days. All railway services on the Southern Railway, for example, were slower and generally more unreliable; the hindrance of government restrictions on passenger train-mileages, prevented both the railway and Pullman companies from responding fully to the market.[[841]](#footnote-841)

As Gourvish further argues, that the situation was scarcely ideal in which to contemplate the difficult transition from regulated regional monopoly to the public ownership of an integrated transport system.[[842]](#footnote-842) It cannot be understated that there remained a serious problem of under-investment in 1945 as a result of war-time shortage, compounded by rationing and a dire financial crisis as costs to repairs had increased and replacement rolling stock limited.[[843]](#footnote-843) While European countries were experimenting, British railways were suffused in the tradition of steam engines and an operating system which did not necessarily meet passenger requirements.[[844]](#footnote-844)

Despite a considerable increase in traffic, renewal of the permanent way was reduced to under 70 per cent. of pre-war levels, and throughout 1945 and into 1947 ‘the deficiency amounted to nearly 2,500 track miles, or about two years’ work under normal (pre-war) conditions’.[[845]](#footnote-845) The problem of maintaining passenger stock, and the lack of repairs and maintenance during the hostilities meant that everywhere, including the Pullman Company, the queue for essential repairs lengthened and the average age of assets had increased.

It may be difficult to accept a more liberal war-time policy towards railway investment would have succeeded in preserving assets which were, it is generally agreed, in relatively good shape before World War 2.[[846]](#footnote-846) But it remains true, too, that the postponement of essential maintenance and renewals, coupled with the more intensive use of the network and the effects of war damage, proved to be an unfortunate legacy for post-war railway company and Pullman managements who remained reliant on each other. The results were felt well into the period of nationalised railways. Some major themes from pre-war years necessarily continued, however; the competitive struggle for custom and for market share were as fierce as in any world market. The years 1946 and 1947 presented greater difficulties for the railway companies which were certainly as acute, if not more intense, than those experienced in wartime. In the words of Savage, the official historian of inland transport during the war: ‘the problems of restoration and organisation which faced British inland transport when the war ended were scarcely less formidable than the transport problems encountered in the most difficult war years’.[[847]](#footnote-847) Strenuous efforts had been made to clear the arrears of maintenance and repair, but post-war shortages, of both raw materials and skilled workers, greatly frustrated the work of restitution. According to the R.E. the number of carriages under or awaiting repair by year-end 1947 had risen to 13.6 per cent. and construction of new vehicles during that year amounted to less than 1,200 which equated to just over a third of the capacity available in railway and contractors’ workshops. At the end of the year the total coaching stock was still over 4,000 fewer than in 1939.[[848]](#footnote-848) Investment in new works was curtailed by government control, and a batch of proposed ‘all-steel Pullman cars’ originally ordered in 1938 to replace 12-wheel wooden-bodied vehicles on the L.N.E.R. were suspended until 1949.[[849]](#footnote-849)

The operational consequences of post-war austerity were soon made obvious to all by the spotlight of peacetime publicity. During 1947, the railways attracted adverse criticism following a spate of serious accidents which produced over 120 fatalities. Even where train services were operated without incident, the deterioration in quality and service was a subject of widespread criticism.[[850]](#footnote-850) A fuel crisis during that year resulting in the temporary withdrawal of the L.N.E.R. Pullman trains, including ‘The Yorkshire Pullman’, was followed by one of the harshest winters on record, which resulted in a further round of rationing and severe cuts.[[851]](#footnote-851) On the other hand, although inhibited by the coming of nationalisation, the railway companies might have achieved more with a centralised, unified approach to the problems of shortages and restrictions. That there was scope for this, even in the climate of post-war restoration, was demonstrated in the latter months of 1947 when, with the new organisational structure for nationalised railways in its embryonic form, successful steps were taken to improve the conduct of passenger traffic.[[852]](#footnote-852) Signs of economic recovery, and expectations of a rise in coal output in 1947/8, provided the necessary stimulus.[[853]](#footnote-853) First, new Pullman services which contributed towards improving the inadequacies of the railways ordinary rolling stock, were newly introduced (or re-inaugurated) on many long-distance routes, including the ‘Devon Belle’, offering full meal services under restricted Ministry of Food Regulations.[[854]](#footnote-854)

For the first time since the 1930s – and almost two years after the war had ended – Pullman management also secured with the railway companies the facility of booking in advance both first- and third-class Pullman seats – unique at this time – which made ‘extra-fare’ accommodation a competitive attraction, particularly when ordinary seats could not yet be reserved.[[855]](#footnote-855) These examples, by showing what could be done with more determined railway and Pullman management, suggest that the companies had failed to seize earlier opportunities for lessening the effects of austerity restrictions.[[856]](#footnote-856) Commercially and financially the climate of 1947 was depressing.[[857]](#footnote-857) The financial results of railway and latter-day Pullman operations at this time are incomplete and the official and unofficial minutes are cryptic and, in absence of supporting material one can only speculate. However, the limited data released by the government indicate a marked deterioration immediately after 1945. The estimated net revenue of the controlled undertakings fell from £ 62 million in 1945 to *minus* £ 16 million in 1947, a reduction of 126 per cent., whereas Pullman revenue (1946/1947) remains unclear until a year later, in 1948.[[858]](#footnote-858) (See appendix 3 which gives known financial performance annually).

By the time the Labour Party returned to power, many ideas had long been circulating about the best way to provide a more efficient transport system in the future, embracing some kind of control Board.[[859]](#footnote-859) While definitions of ‘co-ordination’ remained contradictory, it was generally agreed during the war years that the relationship between transport modes should be defined more closely.[[860]](#footnote-860) Four months after the Labour Party took office, a clear nationalisation plan was made public by Herbert Morrison in a statement on 19 November 1945.[[861]](#footnote-861) This undoubtedly cast a shadow over managerial decision-making with-in the main-line companies which were to effect Pullman operations, diverting attention from the restitution of pre-war standards of service, to, first the pursuance of an anti-nationalisation campaign and then to a struggle pursuing medium- and long-term strategic planning.[[862]](#footnote-862)

The year 1948 was momentous as British Railways was charged with the commendable if rather nebulous objective of providing ‘…an efficient, adequate, economical and properly integrated system of public inland transport’ with the aim of breaking even ‘taking one year with another’.[[863]](#footnote-863) The nationalised sector was never set the task of profit maximisation, but rather a far more ambiguous target of serving the public good. The immediate problem was to recover of course from massive war damage, but there were far more serious underlying weaknesses in the industry which dated back to the nineteenth century. The railways in Britain were constructed in the age of *laissez-faire* capitalism, with successive Tory and Whig administrations consistently intervening only to uphold the principle of competition, and ensure monopoly abuse was avoided. The result was a network of many rival lines each in competition with the other which in turn fundamentally weakened the ability of more progressive undertakings to improve their part of the system. Even if the ‘Big Four’ Railway Companies had wanted to make great changes their scope was limited by a combination of political and public hostility to rationalisation, and lack of investment funds available because of cyclic depression during the 1920s and 1930s, the latter a ‘decade of considerable anxiety for railway management, in which increasing frustration with government control loomed large’.[[864]](#footnote-864) It was only after World War 2 that real change could take place and some of the historic problems could be seriously addressed.[[865]](#footnote-865) At a time when there were persistent restrictions of timber, steel and commodities such as luxury fabrics and, not least, the division of rehabilitation works between Pullman and the Railway workshops, with the help of war-time government and railway company guarantees, the Pullman Company was able to reintroduce quickly a number of ‘extra-fare’ services, including the ‘Yorkshire Pullman’ running to business timings and inaugurate completely new ones during the late 1940s.[[866]](#footnote-866) Although delivering an attractive alternative to ordinary trains during this brief period of post-war demand proved short-lived. Several new services, including the ‘Devon Belle’ and ‘Thanet Belle’ which catered for the seasonal holiday-maker lasted for only a couple of seasons, and the former reluctantly reprieved with a reduced set of cars.[[867]](#footnote-867)

The nationalisation of Britain’s ‘Big Four’ railway companies under the post-war Labour Government of Clement Attlee’s Transportation Act (1947), obviously affected the Pullman Company. Created as a part of its nationalisation programme, to oversee railways, canals and road freight transport in Great Britain, the general duty of the British Transport Commission [B.T.C.] under the Act was to provide an efficient, adequate, economical and properly integrated system of public inland transport and port facilities for passengers and goods. As an independent concessionaire, the situation of the Pullman Company continued to be similar to that of its principal stockholder and one-time former competitor, the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits of Belgium [Wagons-Lits]. To the casual observer its period of transition was so imperceptible, like much of the railway infrastructure, that virtually the whole Pullman car fleet, as well as the daily running of the company, still appeared more-or-less the same, as it did twenty or so years before.[[868]](#footnote-868) In particular, the management, almost all of whom were elderly gentlemen, worked according to processes that had changed little. Compounded by a patent inability of the railway companies to restore their physical assets to pre-war standards, this period typically featured long-standing companies – like the Pullman Car Company – failing to sufficiently move in an appropriate direction, both organisationally and professionally. Pullman services were nevertheless occasional headline news immediately post-war, and one such example was discussed in Parliament when Mr Evelyn Walkden, trades unionist and Member of Parliament for Doncaster (1941–1950), speaking of economies on the railways, claimed in the House of Commons that the L.N.E.R. ran the ‘Yorkshire Pullman’ for ‘sheer swank’ which carried only 292 people, when there might be 600 or more wanting to go from London to Yorkshire.[[869]](#footnote-869) The *Yorkshire Evening Post* correspondent took up the story and reported that ‘according to-day’s passengers, the Pullman is an absolute necessity, blessing and a great time saver’. One passenger, Mr R. N. Cox, a cork manufacturer apparently ‘laughed’ when the reporter referred him to the Doncaster MP’s remarks. ‘My view’, he said, ‘is that the Pullman is essential to cope with the volume of passengers in a purely business capacity if nothing else’. Another passenger working in the textile trade remarked:

I think the Government are a fine lot of fellows from an ideological point of view, but they would be in the bankruptcy court if they were in business on their own account. As for Pullmans being sheer swank, I would point out that they are the rule rather than the exception in America or Canada.[[870]](#footnote-870)

The early years of nationalisation were however a bleak period in terms of investment, and many writers have traced some of the railways’ enduring problems to this situation. Thus, transport economist Gwilliam has argued, that the difficulties caused by the accumulated disinvestment of the war and early post-war years was as a result of both the inadequacy of the war-time financial arrangements in place and the attitude of the post-war Labour Government. ‘Facing inflationary pressure [the government had] deemed that investment in railways was an expendable item in the short run’. Realising it was time for action, the B.T.C. came up with a massive modernisation plan in 1955 at an estimated cost of £1.2bn.[[871]](#footnote-871)

**8.2 The British Transport Commission**

For the development of railway staff welfare, training and education, and as a means of exchanging information between the newly established Commission, the Executives and the five major unions, the first meeting of the British Transport Joint Consultative Council [B.T.J.C.C.] was held on 25 January 1949.[[872]](#footnote-872) Credited for what had developed into the 1947 Transport Act, Sir Cyril (later, Lord) Hurcomb, Chairman of the B.T.C., Lord Inman, Chairman of the Hotels Executive (then also responsible for railway restaurant car services) were present, and representatives of the five major transport unions, including the National Union of Railwaymen [N.U.R.] – an industrial union founded in 1913 and representing 408,900 members by 1945 – making it the fifth largest union in Britain.[[873]](#footnote-873)

During the discussion, the N.U.R. raised a number of questions including why there were continued Pullman operations on Britain’s railways, which were now state-owned. Hurcomb clarified the Pullman position by explaining its services were provided under contractual agreements which would not expire for ‘some considerable time’ i.e. for a further 13 years.[[874]](#footnote-874) He added that it was ‘not unusual to have this kind of service on nationalised railways’ to subcontract ancillary services to private operators, and gave the example of the Wagons-Lits Company on the Continent who provided their own supplementary-fare sleeper and Pullman services in many principal trains. He further commented that the additional rolling stock owned by the Pullman Company and made available to the Railway Executive enabled British Railways to offer extra facilities which attracted remunerative passenger traffic, at a time when so many other ordinary passenger vehicles still required heavy overhaul or renovation due to excessive war-time use.[[875]](#footnote-875)

Table 2. identifies the traffic earnings (supplements and commissary) for 1938-1948. (The gross figure for 1948 was cited to the N.U.R.):

***Year Earnings Observations***

1938 £ 68,117 net[[876]](#footnote-876) Depreciation of rolling stock

1939 £ 42,380 net[[877]](#footnote-877) Operating 219 Pullman cars, until outbreak of war

1946 unknown Operating 196 Pullman cars

1947 £ 218,243 net[[878]](#footnote-878) Continental traffic boom

1948 £ 73,786 net[[879]](#footnote-879) (Gross £ 654,048)[[880]](#footnote-880)

**Table 2. Pullman Car Company Traffic Earnings, 1938-1948 (excluding war years)**

In their follow-up joint statement, Sir Eustace Missenden (Chairman of the R.E. and one-time general manager of the Southern Railway) and Lord Inman highlighted a key point about their views of the importance of the Pullman Company:

The British Railways will be called upon in the future to compete more than ever with the private car and with air travel, and they must provide a good service to meet individual requirements. The continuation of Pullman activities may well be a valuable asset in the creation and retention of passenger traffic on certain routes.[[881]](#footnote-881)

Previously, in the summer of 1948, the R.E. is recorded to have made a proposal to the B.T.C. with a request to consider a more up-to-date agreement to enable Pullman cars ‘to be operate over all lines of British Railways’.[[882]](#footnote-882) Although this request was soon declined, it was an indication, at least, that the matter might at some stage be reviewed in the future.[[883]](#footnote-883) In comparison, Pullman’s working relationship with the Southern Region’s management continued to appear close (as a long-standing reminder of the mutual respect with the former London, Brighton & South Coast Railway management fifty years before) and the region’s all-Pullman trains continued to earn an acceptable return, but many of the company’s other services, particularly those single car workings on the Brighton line were rarely a source of profit, if not yet actual loss-makers.[[884]](#footnote-884) Conversely, the Pullman Chairman addressed the difficulties experienced on the North Eastern and Eastern Regions, following the introduction in September 1948 of the weekdays ‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’ between Newcastle and London King’s Cross which had evidently been disputed by the representatives of the restaurant car staffs’ union.[[885]](#footnote-885)

The new R.E. was set the task of standardising the passenger carriage fleet, by taking what were considered the best features of the existing designs of the ‘Big Four’ railways and moulding them into a new design, to be mass produced in order to replace older stock as soon as possible. The privately-owned Pullman car fleet did not come under review by the R.E., but two important features which Pullman pioneered in Britain were in fact selected for new standard ordinary BR main-line carriages. (These were the Pullman gangway and coupling mechanism between vehicles which had previously been featured in earlier railway magazine articles, including *The Railway Gazette*).[[886]](#footnote-886)

By March 1950, the Pullman Company was again front-page news. The unions had demanded the withdrawal of Pullman services following the running of a special train from Tyneside to Liverpool for the Grand National at Aintree, causing some annoyance with Newcastle catering workers. Protests were made to the Railway Executive and to the N.U.R. because they claimed ‘British Railways could do the job with existing staff.’[[887]](#footnote-887) The *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* reported as to whether ‘those responsible for these threats ever ask why the Pullman service is the most popular on the railways today, even though at extra cost?’ Mr D. R. Siddall a correspondent from Halifax argued:

It is because an efficient, private enterprise company can run a railway restaurant (or anything else for matter) more ably and with more profit and satisfy more people than can the uninterested, disgruntled Railway Executive and its employees, let the union officials note how attentive Pullman staff are; how much better, more attractive and better served are the meals… Come along, British Railways […] stop grumbling. Let us see you earning your wages and making our railways something we can be proud of – and run at a profit, not as a taxpayers’ burden.[[888]](#footnote-888)

1951 was ‘Festival of Britain’ year, and the nation was anxious to show the world its potential as a marketplace of manufacture, invention and culture.[[889]](#footnote-889) To coincide with this important event, when a great surge of foreign visitors were expected, the Pullman management were able to introduce a new set of Pullman cars for the ‘Golden Arrow’ service, originally ordered in 1938, as outlined in chapter 5.[[890]](#footnote-890) These vehicles were designed to traditional patterns, and much material, including veneered panelling had already been made, and safely stored throughout the war years. By this time, the London-Paris services were threatened by other forms of transportation, including the rival air services of British European Airways.[[891]](#footnote-891) Wartime development of aircraft had given way to a new generation of civil airliners, vastly improved in comparison with pre-war days.[[892]](#footnote-892) Air travel was being actively promoted as the way to the Continent of Europe, making the train and ship combination look old-fashioned and slow, by ‘clever publicity’.[[893]](#footnote-893) The aircraft which were all heavily subsidised by government funds, featured female hostesses instead of the usual male attendants as on the Pullmans, to serve during the flights, and a great emphasis was placed upon ‘New Look’ bright and colourful interior styling of the cabins. However, a great deal of publicity material also surrounded the launch of the new ‘Golden Arrow’ cars where the interiors were said to have been ‘beautifully finished, offering high levels of comfort and cleanliness associated with the name Pullman’.[[894]](#footnote-894) For existing passengers and shareholders alike, the 1951-built cars were positive reassuring signs of Pullman’s private enterprise in the midst of nationalisation and standardisation.

As later events were to demonstrate, in certain respects these vehicles, as used on the ‘Golden Arrow’, exemplified a late and lost opportunity to demonstrate the railways’ ability to match progress in the air. It was not a question of inferiority in design or amenity, so much as one of failing to recognise shifting public attitudes and tastes. This was the commencement of the British post-war recovery, when the priority was upon change and exciting new developments, of which the airliner was seen a leading symbol. With their links to the past, the Pullmans appeared to belong to the ‘old school’ by comparison. On the other hand, it may be argued that the Pullman management was wise to resist change for its own sake, and to keep its standards for those who recognised their true qualities, even if this represented a minority in a potentially growing market.[[895]](#footnote-895)

During early 1952, the Pullman Chairman, Stanley Adams, made enquires with Lord Hurcomb regarding a business case that an extension of Pullman services might be considered to other regions of British Railways.[[896]](#footnote-896) On 13 May, Adams informed the Pullman Board that a reply had been received ‘intimating that the Commission could not grant any extension at the present time, but that the matter would have further consideration at a later date’.[[897]](#footnote-897) Although the unions had already raised objection to the Pullman presence, and hampered an immediate post-war extension of its services, during the following months – a key recurring point – the Pullman Company, the R.E. and the Hotels Executive negotiated new comprehensive operating agreements – which was essentially intended to erase inconsistencies between the existing separate pre-war Pullman agreements with the Southern and London & North Eastern Railways. These new agreements, signed on 1 January 1953, maintained the Pullman operations to the same lines of those two pre-nationalisation companies, and listed all the cars currently operating and allocated – some to specific services. Although the agreements were for a duration of no more than nine years, terminating at the end of the 1962 summer timetable period, these had been widely condemned by the Pullman management for not having extended the Pullman franchise for a longer period of time.[[898]](#footnote-898) In any event, it should be remembered that at this time the future undertaking of Britain’s other transport industries - including railways, freight, waterways and hotels - was again under review by the provisions of the (Conservative) Transport Act of 1953, the Railway and Hotels Executive were themselves inescapably wound up during that year.[[899]](#footnote-899)

By January 1954, the Pullman Chairman noted that ‘the guiding principle’ in drawing up these new documents had been that ‘neither of the contracting parties should benefit to a greater extent than on the old agreements’.[[900]](#footnote-900) While one of the proposals of the new legislation of the 1953 Act was to delegate more decision-making to the regions, most of the former R.E.’s headquarters staff became directly answerable to the transformed and enlarged commission – which now assumed a central co-ordinating role – under the chairmanship of General Sir Brian Robertson. The Hotels Executive was transformed into British Transport Hotels & Catering Services [B.T.H.C.S.], a management division of the B.T.C. headed by Frank Hole, while the former Executive’s second (and last) Chairman, Sir Harry Methven, became a part-time B.T.C. member. The appointment of a soldier was unusual but, in the field of transport, Sir Robertson was highly praised for ‘establishing and maintaining the extended supply lines to the 8th Army in North Africa in World War 2 and, as Britain’s senior representative on the Allied High Commission in Germany in the post-war years, had been closely involved in the organisation of the Berlin Air Lift.’[[901]](#footnote-901) Before re-joining the army at the beginning of the war, he had also had an extensive commercial record, including the role as managing director at Dunlop based in South Africa.[[902]](#footnote-902) Former R.E. (and future Pullman) general manager, who otherwise might have been suitable for the job, considered him ‘a gifted organiser’ as B.T.C. Chairman.[[903]](#footnote-903)

By early May 1954, the B.T.C. reported that it was hoping to secure a controlling interest in Pullman through a buyout of the company’s ordinary shares. An official statement, widely published in the national newspapers, including the *Birmingham Daily Post*, stated that it did ‘not expect to make changes to the control and operation of the Pullman services, nor that the specialised service given by the Pullman Company should be altered in anyway whatsoever’, adding that it was the Commission’s objective ‘to give consideration to the extension of this popular facility on other lines throughout the country’.[[904]](#footnote-904) This move was swiftly seized upon as ‘back-door nationalisation’ in both parliament and in the national press. The Pullman Chairman subsequently disclosed that the negotiations had actually been initiated by Pullman management, which saw minimal prospect of revenues increasing adequately to offset escalating costs involved with an increasingly ageing fleet of cars, and a realisation of the unlikelihood of raising large sums of fresh investment capital that could have been raised on the open market.[[905]](#footnote-905) Perceived by the company chief engineer, Norman Johnson, the company’s locomotive-hauled cars were already around 30 years old, if not more, and fast approaching the end of their commercial lives.[[906]](#footnote-906) An almost equivalent situation had in fact arose with the company some twenty years before, in the early 1930s, when the Southern Railway had assisted the Pullman Company, when it had been necessary to purchase a whole new fleet of 38 all-steel cars suitable for the Brighton electrification scheme displacing vehicles some of which were built in the 1890s.[[907]](#footnote-907) These replacements were the last new cars to have been delivered before World War 2.[[908]](#footnote-908)

However, despite these continuing difficulties, Pullman maintained a positive profile in the national press, although Mr Hugh Dalton, socialist party member representing Bishop Auckland (and former Chancellor of the Exchequer) brought some clarity into the ongoing discussions by remarking at an interview that the ‘overwhelming majority of the general public do not travel by Pullman’.[[909]](#footnote-909) A month later in June, *The* *Liverpool Daily Post* declared that a Pullman spokesman claimed that the ‘Company intentions were to keep going forward until such a time as Pullmans were running on the Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester routes.’[[910]](#footnote-910) There was some substance to this claim. Two months later, on 30 August 1954 – evading the prohibitive clause of greater movement in the agreements signed less than 12 months earlier – Frank Pope the B.T.C. member responsible for railway operating and commercial matters, wrote to B.R.’s six chief regional managers, asking them to communicate directly with Pullman’s general manager, ‘in order to see what vehicles could be made available […] for running over business routes not [usually] associated with Pullman car operation and not necessarily based on London’.[[911]](#footnote-911)

Nonetheless, at a regional managers’ meet at the Charing Cross Hotel in September, Pullman’s general manager disregarded the possibility of them being able to make a trainset available, or that his company was in a position to provide staff service running between provincial centres excluding London.[[912]](#footnote-912) Perhaps this was the source of his misapprehension that, as he apparently told Behrend, the B.T.C. had originally wanted the ‘Blue Pullman’ diesel units – not even considered at this time – to run ‘cross-country’?[[913]](#footnote-913) Any ‘trial’ services within the North Eastern or Scottish Regions were, of course, out of the question and, with established Pullman trains already serving the main business centres on the routes from King’s Cross, it was initially proposed that consideration should be given to providing Pullman ‘sections’ or composites of one first-class and one third-class kitchen car on selected London Midland and Western Region trains running to business timings. Subsequently, the Pullman Company’s general manager suggested that it could make available eight vehicles for such an experiment.[[914]](#footnote-914)

Throughout the autumn of 1954, numerous proposals by Pullman management were put forward of potential services, which in the event only attracted a choice of two Mondays to Fridays trains from Manchester to London (Euston) and balancing return workings on the London Midland Region [L.M.R.], to commence in mid-February 1955.[[915]](#footnote-915) The Western Region, itself, had originally advocated attaching some Pullmans to a selection of Wolverhampton- London Paddington and Cheltenham-London Paddington trains, but no matter where they could accommodate Pullman cars each Region encountered difficulty. Furthermore, the Southern Region had since made it clear that it had no intention to revive the flagging ‘Devon Belle’ service in 1955, despite reprieving it and using a reduction of cars the previous two years.[[916]](#footnote-916) With stock now being available, the Western Region was prepared to consider an all-Pullman service between Wolverhampton and Paddington – although Pullman’s general manager recommended that the train should, by necessity, be based in London rather than Wolverhampton as the Region had wanted, since the staffing and also the supplies and laundry were located near to London (Victoria) station.[[917]](#footnote-917) With finding suitable staff for this new train, and resolution of pay and improved working conditions to be settled, there had been a suggestion that the trial services should start a month after the meeting, early in January 1955.[[918]](#footnote-918) As the minutes reflect, ‘the proposed deferment was to enable anticipated questions from railway dining car staff to be examined and settled, including the differences of conditions of pay between Pullman staff and comparative grades of British Railways...’[[919]](#footnote-919)

Although Harding suggested there would be little difficulty in the staffs themselves being willing to work under Pullman conditions, an agreement with the N.U.R. had essentially precluded this. Notwithstanding, the B.T.C. honoured its stated intentions to expand Pullman services to other Regions, at first by introducing them in June 1955, to the Western Region. The ‘South Wales Pullman’ was inaugurated accommodating both first- and third-class passengers and featuring a novel bar car. While the introduction of the service was delayed by two weeks due to strike action, this had solely involved locomotive footplate men and had nothing to do with the problems of recruiting new staff on the Pullman train.[[920]](#footnote-920)

As later events were to testify, however, the activities of the N.U.R. were to prove considerably less agreeable to the introduction or expansion of Pullman services, particularly on the L.M.R., than had been predicted, and the trial services on those lines never actually materialised. These were short-term measures. In the longer-term, Pullman management faced the threat of the proposals of the B.T.C.’s hotels and catering department’s ‘Diesel Multiple-Unit Main Line Express Services Committee’, set up in June 1955. This committee had initially anticipated that the ‘at-seat’ food service on trains ‘of the future’ would be on airline-style lines with pre-prepared reheated meals – an idea that was anathema to the Pullman management who favoured freshly-prepared produce by on-board chefs in properly-equipped kitchens, and promptly lost interest in the project. The fast-food notion was swiftly dropped following the advice of the B.T.H.C.S. chief of restaurant cars and refreshment rooms, E. K. Portman-Dixon.[[921]](#footnote-921)

In the interim, Pullman management raised again their concern over the mounting losses of certain services on the Southern Region.[[922]](#footnote-922) During 1955, the company employed 327 on-board staff working on 182 cars on the Southern Region, and 58 cars on ‘Northern services’. For the 12 months to 31 December 1955, the Southern Region operations had made a net loss of £ 30,489 overall.

Table 3. identifies that the nominally all-Pullman trains showed a profit:

|  |
| --- |
| ***Service Profit/Loss***  ‘Brighton Belle’ (all-Pullman) £ 14,307  ‘Bournemouth Belle’ (all-Pullman) £ 12,868  ‘Golden Arrow’ (all-Pullman) £ 7,214  ‘Continental and Sundry services’ (£ 22,613)NET LOSS  ‘Composite Electric cars’ (£ 10,990)NET LOSS  ‘Ocean Liner Expresses’ (£ 10,878)NET LOSS  ‘Northern services’ (all-Pullman) £ 108,494\*  (\* with fewer vehicles and staff, compared to the Southern Region) |

**Table 3. Pullman services, 1955 results** [[923]](#footnote-923)

In anticipation of these results, the Pullman Chairman, with the full support from his Board, had earlier put forward a number of suggestions, including that 12 (unspecified) ‘electric composite cars’ built in 1932 for the Central Division (Southern Region) could be more profitably employed as part of a locomotive-hauled trainset for use on a northern route, such as London to Manchester. In the event the proposal failed to materialise as the conversion costs were considered too high, and the vehicles were considered in any case almost life-expired, the last four of the twenty-three cars were withdrawn by June 1966.[[924]](#footnote-924)

Although the B.T.C. technical officers appeared content to examine what might be entailed in the way of conversion work, the Southern Region’s general manager, gave his reservations in correspondence dated 2 December 1955:

If 12 cars are wanted for a new service, the simpler plan would be to break up the ‘Brighton Belle’ units … but it seems almost unthinkable to discontinue this traditional and long-established train and venture to suggest that an appreciable part of Pullman’s reputation and goodwill must rest on this pioneer all-Pullman service. We could hardly look our Brighton friends in the fact if we ever subscribed to such a step![[925]](#footnote-925)

Besides taking such proposed drastic measures, it would have been necessary to find replacement rolling stock to make up for the accommodation lost, while refreshment services were still considered essential and Pullman, in any event, remained the contracted caterer on these lines. In converting the electric multiple-unit type Pullmans to locomotive haulage i.e. pulled by, and heated by a diesel engine, the vehicles designed for the Southern third-rail electrification had non-standard running gear, including electric lighting, heating and cooking equipment which each drew power from the third rail, unique to the Southern, thus requiring complete conversion as they were incompatible for use elsewhere. Evidently, too, the existing internal layout of the composite cars was probably unsuitable for long-distance services – particularly if such vehicles were to be formed into a single trainset. The approximate cost of converting 12 cars was put at £ 55,000 which quickly proved to be untenable particularly given the low profitability developing and uncertainty over long-term property rights with a contract existing until 1962.[[926]](#footnote-926)

The need to keep pace with changes in demand for business travel were essential for Pullman’s survival, at a time when the management made endeavours to reform and meet the challenges of the new business environment. After years of neglect though, a significant proportion of money from any government plan would be required simply to aid the existing network back to its former health, although at this stage there was a promising future for the Pullman brand to be retained.[[927]](#footnote-927)

As a whole, Pullman travel was generally welcomed immediately post-war and, as outlined earlier, the reinstatement of old services, as well as introducing new ones, appeared to be a sign that the country was returning to some sort of normality, but by the mid-1950s the situation had changed and a climate of uncertainty existed with regard to long-term contractual rights.[[928]](#footnote-928) The new B.R. regions, formed around the management structures of the old ‘Big Four’ companies, remained largely autonomous in terms both of organisation and production of locomotives and rolling stock, most of which continued with pre-war tried and tested designs. Only the S.R. with its large electrified suburban network in south London inherited from the Southern Railway, operated a significant daily pattern of non-steam-powered trains with solitary Pullman cars.[[929]](#footnote-929)

Although largely unaffected by nationalisation, the Pullman Company gave a 15 per cent. dividend to its ordinary shareholders in 1953 (see appendix 5), and the company continued to remain closely allied to Thomas Cook and Wagons Lits.[[930]](#footnote-930) Stanley Adams was Chairman and Managing Director of Pullman and Chairman of Thomas Cook, whilst Wagons-Lits were still represented on the Pullman directorate by Monsieur René Margot-Noblemaine, the *Directeur-Generale* of the Wagons-Lits Company. (See appendix 1). It was a powerful alliance of interests, but there was one pressing problem that had not yet been resolved, namely an extension of the contract to operate Pullman cars on British Railways. As a result of the B.T.C. refusal, the Pullman management could not seriously contemplate the construction of any new Pullman cars and the 1951/2 ‘Golden Arrow’ cars were destined to be the last ordered by them completely to their own design and initiative.[[931]](#footnote-931) Change was however necessary in many aspects on the railways and, in light of what appeared to be only a brief post-war advance, supported by adventurous business acumen, the dated Pullman cars compared poorly to, and were at odds with, contemporary developments in competitive spheres of transport, especially aircraft and the private motor car.[[932]](#footnote-932)

**8.3 Establishing a role for Pullman, 1955-1960**

Unlike in Britain, the post-war governments on the Continent had shaped all stages of planning, construction and operation of railways.[[933]](#footnote-933) During the mid-1940s, there remained a poor period in terms of investment, yet the British railway companies had previously assumed that their assets could be maintained and renewed indefinitely out of revenue and, to an extent, this applied to the Pullman Company.[[934]](#footnote-934) One of the greatest organisational challenges for nationalised railways was to determine the right balance between centralised control and decentralisation, a problem to be faced probably by all business enterprises, none more so than the Pullman management.[[935]](#footnote-935)

1955 transpired to be a pivotal year in many respects, when the B.T.C. received governmental approval to proceed with a massive 15-year investment programme (estimated at approximately £ 1,200 million – or approaching £ 22 billion in terms of today’s money values) for the modernisation and re-equipment of British Railways.[[936]](#footnote-936) The ‘Modernisation Plan’ as it became known was hastily conceived and, as Gourvish argues, was flawed in its analysis of making up lost ground in light of the years that had elapsed and the progress that had already been made by European railways.[[937]](#footnote-937) Certainly, the plan was remarkably short of detail – and, while it was recognised the railways’ loss of market share for transport services generally since the 1930s, it contained little serious analysis of the reasons for that loss, while superficially it might seem extraordinary that such a ‘plan’ would gain government approval.[[938]](#footnote-938) Gourvish has argued that ‘organisational change, accompanied by suitable publicity is tangible if ephemeral proof that a government is ‘doing something about railways.’[[939]](#footnote-939) Whatever the wider politics, the plan was to be taken forward by the establishment of a number of specialist committees and study groups, formed of individuals drawn from both the B.T.C. headquarters and the railway Regions. From the perspective of the Pullman management, the most significant of these bodies were to prove to be the Traffic Survey Group which turned its attention first to passenger traffic policy, including Pullman services already in place, and the Diesel Multiple-Unit Main-Line Express Services Committee. [Express Services Committee].[[940]](#footnote-940) A diesel multiple unit or ‘D.M.U.’ had increasingly grown to become a popular concept on European railways, and British railway management thought that this type of equipment was not only modern and economical, but could offer a potential answer to their carriage replacement plans.[[941]](#footnote-941)

The Traffic Survey Group presented its first report in 1956, making separate recommendations for ‘local and stopping services’ (which, some seven years before the publication of Dr. Richard Beeching’s reshaping report, clearly acknowledged the necessity for the widespread withdrawal of uneconomic services), ‘suburban services’ and ‘main trunk services’.[[942]](#footnote-942) Specifically identified as the type of operation on which the future development of the rail passenger business lies, the ‘Express Services Committee’, was itself, further subdivided into three categories (two of which involved Pullman): ‘de-luxe express’; ‘limited express’; and ‘ordinary express’. Under the ‘de-luxe’ heading, the report posited that there would be some scope for existing Pullman car services to be considered for special diesel multiple-unit replacement.[[943]](#footnote-943) Although they were intended to provide very similar facilities, the proposed ‘de-luxe’ diesel multiple-units were still not yet themselves identified as Pullman trains. This was a point that, at this date, still remained unclear. Before World War 2, similar arrangements existed on the L.N.E.R. who operated its own ‘de-luxe’ supplementary-fare trains, competing alongside Pullman services, offering comparable standards of accommodation and service, as outlined in chapters 5 and 6.

During April 1956, the B.T.C.’s secretary general, circulated a copy of a memorandum prepared by British Railways chief carriage & wagon engineering officer, expressing some anxiety about the lack of any organisational arrangements for the renewal of the ageing Pullman car fleet. This stated that, of the 206 cars then in service, a quarter were wholly of timber construction and should be considered as life-expired, ‘some considerably so’.[[944]](#footnote-944) Not only did these veterans (among others, one constructed in 1908 for the ‘Southern Belle’ and twenty or so dating from 1910/14) incur very high maintenance costs by comparison to steel cars, but it had to be borne in mind that, following a collision and train fire at Barnes the previous December when 13 passengers had lost their lives, the B.T.C. assured the Ministry of Transport that it was ‘a policy aim’ to replace all timber-bodied passenger rolling stock within the next seven years (an aim that was destined not to be achieved).[[945]](#footnote-945) Pullmans repair workshop at Preston Park, Brighton, recorded the increasing costs involved in the maintaining of these elderly vehicles to front-line express services. It was considered by the chief engineer that much of the technology ‘should be considered obsolete’.[[946]](#footnote-946)

The secretary general’s memorandum recommended that the Pullman Company should be asked to submit ‘at once’ a programme for the condemnation and replacement of life-expired vehicles – although it would not be possible to commence the construction of any new vehicles until 1958 at the earliest.[[947]](#footnote-947) Opportunely, this question brought the whole future of Pullman operations on British Railways into focus, and as a result a policy paper was sought incorporating the recommendations of the Phillips Committee for B.T.C.M. consideration.

British Railways Headquarters traffic adviser at the B.T.C., remarked that there continued to be a reasonably high commercial value in the Pullman name and service as there were for various national airlines, including the British Overseas Aircraft Corporation (B.O.A.C.), adding that ‘one [could] safely assume that the Pullman people, given new stock, will develop new ideas of service on [their] own individualistic lines’ and that it would be a ‘mistake politically to hamper reasonable Pullman development’.[[948]](#footnote-948) In other words, the Pullman brand continued to be seen as an asset at this time, but markedly a declining one given the elderly stock, and even with their limited accommodation, long-distance Pullman services were still viewed by the B.T.C. as ‘a good paying’ business both for British Railways and the Pullman Company. Although diesel multiple-unit luxury trains would not come into service on a scale to enable them to supersede long-distance Pullman trains within the next 10 years, the Pullman Company’s plan to invest in a building programme would probably ensure the continuity of the brand in the foreseeable future.[[949]](#footnote-949)

Regarding the longer-term policy, the traffic adviser considered that concentration on a single provider of luxury train services would not be appropriate, arguing in favour of healthy rivalry and working relations between B.R. and Pullman. However, the B.R. HQ technical advisers who were asked for their opinion held other views. While they considered that there was no room both for B.R. ‘de-luxe’ trains’ as well as Pullmans, the only point requiring clarification at this time with regard to the forthcoming prototype diesel multiple-units was whether they should be identified as ‘Pullman’ trains from their conception. They thought not initially, and – whatever the main policy of the future for luxury travel and Pullmans was to be – ‘trials should run independently of the Pullman Company’ against the pledges made to Pullman management by the B.T.C.[[950]](#footnote-950)

During June 1956, the secretary general advised the traffic officer that Pullman’s Chairman, Stanley Adams, had again made contact with another idea that their most up-to-date vehicles in the Pullman fleet, delivered less than four years before and currently running in service on the ‘Golden Arrow’ (known as ‘U-type’ cars), could be more profitably employed on an ‘entirely new all-Pullman train, preferably to business centres in the North West, or if [that were] not possible, to Bristol’.[[951]](#footnote-951) For the Pullman Company, receipts from the ‘Golden Arrow’ had notably dropped since its service timings had been changed in October 1952 to provide an afternoon departure from London.[[952]](#footnote-952) This alteration was at the behest of the French Railways and Wagons-Lits (sharing operations in conjunction with British Railways and the Pullman Car Company) who could cover the connecting ‘Fléche d’Or’ service between Paris and Calais with a single trainset instead of the previous two.[[953]](#footnote-953)Adams suggested however that, until electrification to Dover called for new stock, the ‘Golden Arrow’ should continue in operation with older plated cars (vehicles with wooden bodies sheathed in aluminium sheet, so giving them a more modern flush-sided appearance). As might have been anticipated in view of his earlier observations about timber-bodied passenger stock, this suggestion was not well-received by British Railways Chief Carriage & Wagon engineering officer.[[954]](#footnote-954)

The traffic adviser further informed the secretary general that Adams’ proposal for a new Pullman service to Manchester had previously been considered by the L.M.R’s chief commercial, operating and motive power officers who themselves had concluded that compared to British Railway’s ordinary first- and third/second-class vehicles which could accommodate a maximum of 50 and 70 passengers respectively, the limited accommodation of locomotive-hauled Pullman cars (first-class 24 passengers and third-second-class 42 passengers respectively) was insufficient to allow them to replace an existing ordinary trainset, and as a result that an additional service could not be recommended.[[955]](#footnote-955) There was increasing opinion that the extension of Pullman services on ‘a piecemeal basis [was] not possible, and [the] first step over the next five or six years’.[[956]](#footnote-956) Given the unlikely acceptance by the French authorities to reconsider the timings of the continental train, such a policy review would also have prompted further questions as to the justification of the continued operation of the ‘Golden Arrow’.[[957]](#footnote-957) In July 1956, the report by the Philips Committee on the proposed ‘de-luxe’ diesel units was presented. Having previously accepted that the on-board catering facilities should be provided by the in-house B.T.H.C.S. – Pullman’s management remained quiet on the matter. Notwithstanding, the Commission subsequently considered that these new trains would, after all, be marketed and branded fully as Pullmans, the ‘responsibility for the construction of such trains (would be carried out either in B.T.C. workshops or by Contractors) would rest with the Pullman management in association with the technical and design staff at B.T.C. headquarters’.[[958]](#footnote-958)

On reflection, the activities of the Pullman Company had progressed sufficiently well since the end of the war to enable it to pay a dividend to its ordinary shareholders each year since 1949, but in contrast the fortunes of the nationalised rail network with which it relied on were by no means so healthy. Since 1948, government investment in the railways had rested only at a level that permitted them to continue to provide a service. Before nationalisation unilateral union action was rare; and a relatively sophisticated negotiating machine was developed in the inter-war years to cover the three unions as a group. After World War 2, the stability of industrial relations which had characterised the railways was threatened. The sacrifices made by railwaymen during war-time operations – including the unwavering acceptance of longer hours and the deterioration of working conditions arising from the neglect of maintenance – prompted demands for an improvement in post-war working conditions, particularly evident among the lower-paid grades with the level of remuneration offered and the hours worked to such an extent that a branch of the N.U.R. stated their long-term policy was to ‘abolish the Pullman Car Company altogether’ and to ‘persuade the national executive of the N.U.R. to take a more active part in putting this policy into operation’.[[959]](#footnote-959) Two of the Railway Executive’s principal tasks in its industrial relations strategy was to respond to the challenge of rising costs but refraining wage demands and reduce staff levels. In both cases it failed as it could not reconcile these objectives. The subsequent capitulation to union demands and government pressure certainly seems a failure on the part of the B.T.C. in the sense that it was scarcely compatible with the railways’ declining financial position and did nothing to prevent further union demands. Its aim to drag a massive industry, with railway and Pullman working practices based on Victorian precepts, into the mid-twentieth century did not necessarily guarantee success, and sometimes action merely caused new problems. At the same time railwaymen remained suspicious of new developments, highlighted by the Pullman management quest to expand their services.

Government approval was finally given to the B.T.C. in 1955 to embark on the ‘Modernisation Plan’ which gave the necessary impetus to the system, with its sweeping plans of replacing steam by diesel and electric traction, improving the tracks and above all of establishing new levels of passenger comfort, able to match those of the alternative modes of transport. By this time, Pullman management were of course mindful that much of their fleet was advancing in age and that only ten years before, assisting the country’s ‘war effort’ put a severe strain on the railways’ resources and railway system and a substantial backlog developed. As Gourvish argues, governments were responsible for some failings but solving the very real economic problems of the railways was not always aided by the intrusion of politics or the plethora of select committees, advisory groups and consultants.[[960]](#footnote-960) Notwithstanding, the question of life-expired cars still running at this time highlighted the immediate need for significant investment to replace much of the Pullman fleet.

**8.4 Conclusion**

The commercial value of the Pullman name and service remained enduring during the 1950s, and was seen as a valuable asset worth developing on certain routes. The B.T.C therefore looked to the Pullman Company in a renewed way, armed with the knowledge that there was generous finance at this time to invest in an improvement of the services in which it held a controlling interest.

The Pullman brand was deemed potentially useful in establishing the new levels of comfort and amenity which the plan expected. There was even now scope to introduce a new concept of Pullman, intended to compete with the internal airline services in terms of both speed and comfort. An important item in the B.T.C. announcement of the 1955 Modernisation Plan was that new high-speed luxury diesel multiple-units were to be built to operate between important cities and to contain all that was best to offer for the comfort and amenity of the passenger.

The government’s interest since the 1940s in the size of the railways’ operating deficit and the final balance (after meeting interest and central charges) had coloured its attitude to other matters in which it had taken a close interest, including industrial relations, investment and the provision of services, together with Pullman. All are key areas of managerial decision-making and all have been plagued by political interference, often of a general nature. Ministerial attitudes to the prospect of a railway strike certainly served to determine the pace and content of collective bargaining, particularly in the 1950s and during the early 1960s with the introduction of the ‘Blue Pullmans’. That the political and economic environment in which the railways and Pullman Company were required to operate was complex and frustrating is not in doubt, and the railways’ record in relation to investment and labour relations was not without blemishes. The ‘Modernisation Plan’ was a hastily conceived and flawed response to the need to make up lost ground. In the crucial area of labour relations, Pullman management faced the very real difficulty that catering staff generally were falling behind other occupations in terms of both pay and conditions, a situation emphasised by the Guillebaud inquiry.

Many of the old persisting attitudes from pre-war days, based on notions of quasi-monopoly, public service and the maximisation of traffic volumes were challenged. This chapter illustrates that some of the conventional yardsticks of managerial behaviour are problematic to apply. It is difficult, too, to look for entrepreneurship in the Pullman Board in its last years when the government-controlled investment levels and pricing as well as public attitudes had changed. Equally if the Pullman Company had remained a private company, its management might have benefited from more autonomous control, might have exhibited a swifter response in commercial terms and diversified its services, as it had done in the inter-war years (per chapters 2 and 3), but in any event, it was at all times reliant on the co-operation of the railway companies (or regions) it served. The next chapter analyses the compounded labour difficulties experienced by the Pullman management during the launch of the ‘Blue Pullmans’.

**9.0 Pullman management plans and strategies, 1960-1964**

**9.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the plans and strategies made by Pullman management - whilst under the ultimate control of the British Transport Commission (B.T.C.) - prior to and during the launch of the ‘Blue Pullman’ diesel units in 1960. In light of government approval to embark on massive railway investment and sweeping plans at this time, two important aspects are explored: firstly, the desire to improve levels of passenger comfort, matching those of the alternative modes of transport posing a threat, and secondly, labour relations during the assimilation of Pullman, to whom many National Union of Railwaymen (N.U.R.) members came to resent because the old company represented private enterprise and capitalism. As a result of the brief rejuvenation of the Pullman fleet under the B.T.C. and divergence between intention and achievement, a fresh look at the decision-making processes is necessary to determine why the railways and some Pullman services ‘lost’ sums of money while still being supported by governments making good their losses; all in the hope that they would do better next year. The evidence will show that Pullman’s own plans or aspirations were not always met - due in no small part to a combination, or refusal, to understand its commercial specialism, pure romanticism, and the potential need for some of its services. The primary purpose of this chapter is therefore to clarify the objectives and results pursued by Pullman management, conducted with gentlemanly leisure following successive government and railway management intervention after the 1955 Modernisation Plan. In reviewing these, it offers new perspectives of how a publicly funded organisation can waste national resources if it is given neither unambiguous direction nor self-correcting controls. With new found government willingness to lend for investment, after years of capital rationing, much of what was proposed was realised either for traffics it no longer had, or for traffics it should not have been trying to retain.

**9.2 An opportunity to modernise**

Since 1949 the activities of the Pullman Company had progressed comfortably enough to enable it to pay a dividend to its ordinary shareholders, whereas the fortunes of the nationalised rail network proved by no means so healthy, as government investment in the railways, following Nationalisation a year before, had rested only at a level that permitted them to continue to provide a service.[[961]](#footnote-961) The condition of the Pullman Company appeared so promising that just a year prior to the B.T.C. takeover in 1954, the Pullman management recommended a 15 per cent. dividend distribution, representing an increase of 2.5 per cent. compared with the previous year.[[962]](#footnote-962) Whilst creating a record, the results might have been considerably greater but for the French Railways strike which took place at the peak of the holiday season, and brought about an almost complete suspension of Continental travel.[[963]](#footnote-963)

During that same year, the Pullman management secured an ambitious catering contract at Apsley House, London, on the Coronation route of Queen Elizabeth II arranged by Viscount Fitzalan of Derwent, a Pullman Director. This involved the supply of more than 5,000 luncheons as well as running a substantial buffet on Coronation Day.[[964]](#footnote-964) In anticipation of increased demand, beyond normal traffic rotas, the management also accelerated the overhaul of their fleet of cars. The maintenance figure for paint, varnish and new furnishings alone for the year-end September 1953 was noted at £ 71,000 contrasting with £ 43,000 at September 1952.[[965]](#footnote-965) However, within months of the B.T.C. takeover an editorial comment appeared in the *Daily Express*, which gave a comparative view of ‘the differences the State makes when it takes over’. Travellers on the Southampton to London train, for instance, found ‘plenty to grumble about. Dusty Pullman cars, dirty tablecloths, soiled headrests, even missing light bulbs. This on a service that should be a showpiece for visitors.’[[966]](#footnote-966)

Some five years after Nationalisation, during 1953, the R.E. had proposed the continued use of the steam locomotive, and a large fleet of new locomotives to standard designs began to emerge.[[967]](#footnote-967) It was not because the B.T.C., or the Executive wanted to remain firmly in the ‘steam age’ – although there was a ‘prolonged romance of the steam locomotive’ – it was that the necessary funds for electrification (the ideal) or dieselisation (the compromise), were not necessarily forthcoming at that time from parliament.[[968]](#footnote-968) Annual losses on British Railways had continued to mount alarmingly, despite the optimistic but hastily conceived forecasts of improving returns set out in the Modernisation Plan with its capital expenditure of £ 1,240 million in 1955 money values.[[969]](#footnote-969) In one of the most thoughtful accounts prior to the Beeching years, the Plan falls between extremes.[[970]](#footnote-970) Critics such as business historian Joy see it as a ‘monstrous delusion, an ill-thought-out, ill-considered waste of money, founded on specious principles and lacking any proper consideration of the future role of railways and the relative values of their traffics’. Joy argues that ‘there was no hope of B.R. returning to profitable operation’ and in particular the Plan paid no attention to the need to trim the network, shed unprofitable traffics and improve productivity.[[971]](#footnote-971)

In the early days of loss-making it was believed that profits would soon return, so the government loaned the money to cover the deficits. But when it became obvious that these loans could never be repaid, the government decided that simply to write a cheque at the end of each year to cover the deficit would be a much more hygienic method of keeping British Railways in operation.[[972]](#footnote-972) Even though it desperately needed to build many new vehicles, the Pullman Company could ever have expected financial help on such a scale, but the Plan above all still looked to establish new increased levels of passenger comfort, to match those of the alternative modes of transport, including domestic airlines and long-distance motor coaches which had posed a growing threat.[[973]](#footnote-973)

Other critics, such as Bonavia, argue that the 1955 Plan was a wasted opportunity, a venture which, if allowed to continue to completion, would have produced a modern, efficient and successful railway, rendering unnecessary the costs involved in a new trunk road programme.[[974]](#footnote-974) Such ‘needs’ would in almost all other cases have been met at an early stage with a government decision to close down the firm and, possibly, to start again with those parts which could be made profitable, or were considered to be vital to the national interest. But while this plan might work with other large companies, including Rolls Royce, which involved the liquidation of the original company and a substantial renunciation of debts and other obligations to outside parties, with British Railways its debts to outsiders were guaranteed by the Treasury.[[975]](#footnote-975) As a nation-wide, integrated productive process, any change in the services provided by British Railways must be decided and implemented through its existing management structure.[[976]](#footnote-976) According to Joy, the interdependences in B.R. operations are such that any precipitate change forced by an outsider could very easily, in the hands of an uncooperative management, cause more real harm than apparent good.[[977]](#footnote-977) Moreover, Gourvish argues that railways are one industry, which must be given guidelines and constraints within which to solve their own problems. The real ‘railway problem’, he claims, was caused by successive governments’ unwillingness to specify either type of boundary to management discretion. The railway management cannot therefore be wholly blamed for the waste created by its unwise exploitation of the freedom given by governments’ failure to act responsibly. The truth lies between these extremes.[[978]](#footnote-978)

Since the 1920s it appears every attempt to restructure the railways and their finances was founded on the underlying principle that the steps proposed would ‘restore’ railway profitability and eliminate many pre-war operating deficits.[[979]](#footnote-979) It was reported that Ministers rose in the House to offer exactly this assurance.[[980]](#footnote-980) The B.T.C. looked freshly at the Pullman Car Company, armed with the knowledge that there was now ample finance to invest in an improvement of services, as well as a creation of new ones in which it now held the controlling interest. Up to this point the Pullman management were not so far involved in any capital commitment. The intention was that the new vehicles anticipated would either be bought or hired from the Commission or worked on some other basis of contract between the Commission and the Company. The Pullman marque could be useful in establishing the new levels of comfort and amenity which the plan anticipated. There was money to spend on replacing elderly pre-World War 1 vehicles and there was scope to introduce a new concept of Pullman travel, intended to compete with the domestic airlines on key routes in terms of cost, speed and comfort.[[981]](#footnote-981)

An important item in the B.T.C. announcement of the 1955 Modernisation Plan was that new experimental high speed luxury diesel multiple-units were to be built to operate between important cities and to contain all that was best to offer for the comfort and amenity of the passenger.[[982]](#footnote-982) The B.T.C. stated that, ‘Public reaction to these [trains] would be watched carefully, before increasing the fleet’.[[983]](#footnote-983) Although it did not immediately specify that these were to be Pullmans the B.T.C. implied as much, by the suggestion that they were to be luxury trains. In his speech to the South Wales and Monmouthshire Railways and Docks Lecture and Debating Society in October 1956, the Pullman general manager, Frank Harding acknowledged that at that time a ‘number’ of cars were officially life-expired. A ‘near future decision as to a building programme must certainly be taken’, he declared, although with a note of caution of the ‘increased costs of new builds’ and that undertaking modern interior designs would likely exclude the expensive marquetry work as featured in older cars.[[984]](#footnote-984)

When the Modernisation Plan was announced, the Pullman Car Company fleet was basically of pre-war origin (see chapter 5), although a considerable amount of work had been done in remodelling or rebuilding cars.[[985]](#footnote-985) There were still some of the massive all-timber 12-wheelers, as the cars with six-wheel bogies were described (see figure 1), in service and the company was not in a hurry to rid itself of these older vehicles, which were considered useful standbys when peak demands or private traffic might occur, including the Castle Bromwich section of the annual British Industries Fair where cars were stabled to form a club.[[986]](#footnote-986) The Pullman management was always quick to provide either outside catering or special trains for special events, including race meetings, and business parties.[[987]](#footnote-987)26 Pride of place, in this respect, was the constant use, firmly established during the 1920s by the Southern Railway, of utilising Pullman cars for members of the Royal Family, and visiting dignitaries of all nationalities arriving at the South Coast ports. The Southern Railway did not possess carriages of its own considered suitable for such occasions, choosing instead to allow the Pullman Car Company co-ordinate this special traffic. The unique feature of Southern Railway Specials was that the public often found themselves travelling in a Pullman car on an ordinary service, which had been specially prepared the day before for royalty, film stars or other celebrities, and they were waited upon by the very same staff. This well-established feature of operations, was left untouched by the B.T.C.

At first, The Modernisation Plan was to be at the saviour for both the promotion and demotion of Pullman cars. Unexpectedly, the demotion took place on the Southern Region, where the plan extended the third rail electrification to the important Kent Coast services, replacing the pre-war electric trains on the Brighton and South Coast routes.[[988]](#footnote-988) Only the ‘Golden Arrow’ and the ‘Brighton Belle’ Pullmans eventually survived these changes and continued as before. All the other Pullman car services on the Southern, including those used on the seasonal ‘Kentish Belle’ and all cross-Channel composite boat train services from London Victoria - which pioneered the use of bottled propane gas for cooking, a Pullman initiative in the early 1950s and promoted cheaper breakfasts on the railways - were replaced by buffet cars in ordinary train service staffed by Pullman.[[989]](#footnote-989) The London Waterloo-Bournemouth route was not an early candidate for electrification and the ‘Bournemouth Belle’ and Ocean-Liner Pullman services were not affected at this stage, although some vintage cars were replaced by more modern examples cascaded from Northern services. At this time the policy of the Pullman management of ‘plating’ their wooden-bodied Pullmans with aluminium sheeting was progressively pursued, giving many a more up-to-date appearance and an extension of life.[[990]](#footnote-990)

By April 1959, the Pullman fleet numbered almost 200 vehicles and the following year the earlier types of car from 1908-1923 were all earmarked for withdrawal, in batches, leaving the more recent examples to be switched around from Region to Region to fill the gaps.[[991]](#footnote-991) The Pullman Chairman, Sir John Elliot produced a reasonably convincing case for the B.T.C. to finance construction of a batch of replacement cars, quite apart from the forthcoming diesel luxury trains. These 44 cars would replace many of those running on the East Coast route, whose existing cars would then be transferred to other duties replacing all-timber bodied Pullmans still in service.[[992]](#footnote-992) As a result of the planned changes in the fleet, a re-assessment in the spring of 1960 by Pullman and B.T.C. managements took place, and 56 old cars were finally withdrawn from traffic and converted into self-contained ‘camping coaches’ at the Pullman workshops at Preston Park, Brighton. These were then sold to various British Railways Regions for an average of £ 900 each and located at different beauty spots around the British Isles.[[993]](#footnote-993)

Although the affairs of the Pullman Company, with increasing profits, continued to function under the B.T.C. contract with almost unchanged terms originating from the 1920s to run Pullman trains on certain lines, credit facilities were for the first time in the history of the company gradually introduced from 1958. This added attraction was designed for executives of firms, especially when there was spending on unforeseen entertainment. According to the *Railway Gazette*, ‘the scheme has proved very popular [particularly in trains that] convey many business acquaintances, there is a good deal of impromptu entertaining’.[[994]](#footnote-994)

The company had only a few more years to run at a critical time when the B.T.C. was itself in trouble with a mounting deficit. Joy argues that the way in which the B.T.C. incurred ‘self-inflicted wounds’ through the 1950s put no pressure on successive Governments to act more responsibly toward B.R. The only encouraging prospects of improved passenger services and developing a much-needed modern image was the forthcoming ‘new blood’ for the Pullman pedigree – the diesel-electric de-luxe Pullman trains, and the 44 replacement all-steel East Coast route cars. These would bring Pullman affairs back into the limelight on the eve when the contract was about to expire.[[995]](#footnote-995)

**9.3 New owners and new cars**

Following the B.T.C. agreement to build new Pullmans and fixing the railways’ annual investment, the Minister for Transport, Ernest Marples, reported that a working surplus of ‘between £ 50 million and £ 100 million’ would be achieved by the end of 1963 and profits in areas were now in sight.[[996]](#footnote-996) This is not necessarily an unsound aspiration: almost all of Britain’s railways were built in the nineteenth century at a time of high spending with the object both of serving customers, who would thereby profit, and of enriching their stakeholders. What was doubtful, however, was for the legislature simultaneously to demand profitability whilst denying, and for most reprehensively controlling fares and charges to seek electoral favour or restrain pay claims.[[997]](#footnote-997) At a particularly critical time, when the Commission had incurred major expenditure in fulfilment of the Plan, government approval had also been received for a pay increase for railway staff, coinciding with growing inflation. For six months in 1956, for example, the B.T.C. was allowed to increase freight charges, by only half the amount proposed but was ordered to freeze all passenger fares, including Pullman supplements.[[998]](#footnote-998) The total cost of this exercise was estimated to be in the region of £ 17 million, with cumulative effects in subsequent years, and it was not until much later, with the 1968 Transport Act, was there an acknowledgement that some railway services would probably never ‘pay their way’.[[999]](#footnote-999)

What was broadly proposed in 1955 emanated from events that took place some ten years before at the end of World War 2, and the dismal circumstances surrounding the operation of Britain’s railways. By comparison with many continental railways, B.R. deliberated and marked time between 1948 and 1955, although there were achievements in this seven-year period. For instance, the diesel multiple unit programme arose out of Commission-level consideration for low cost operation of secondary lines, replacing steam services. These trains were light-weight in construction and powered by on-board diesel engines, incorporated into one or more of the carriages and required no separate locomotive. Secondly, electrification proceeded on several suburban lines, including those from London (Liverpool Street), and other ambitious plans were in prospect. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, was an extensive ‘catch-up’ engineering programme, aimed to restore permanent way - track, signalling and motive power to allow resumption of pre-war speed and frequency. [[1000]](#footnote-1000) The progress and changes made between 1948 and 1955 has crucially to be seen against a background of continuing volatility in national and international political and economic affairs.[[1001]](#footnote-1001) The succession of threatening global circumstances affected not only availability of capital, but also much needed raw materials. The Berlin Airlift (1948-9) and the onset of the Cold War coincided with the establishment of the British Transport Commission; the Korean War (1950-53) followed, with the Malayan Emergency (1948-60) and the Suez Crisis (1956) all demanding phenomenal resources, whilst the United Kingdom struggled to maintain the role of Sterling as a Reserve Currency.[[1002]](#footnote-1002)

For British Railways and the B.T.C. further consequences arose from the re-election in 1951 of a Conservative government who were plainly opposed to public ownership and to the integrationist principles of the four main railway companies underlying the 1947 Transport Act.[[1003]](#footnote-1003) The abolition of the Railway Executive in 1953, and establishment of so-called quasi-autonomous Regional Railway Boards later in 1955, had repercussion in themselves, but the diversion of management effort from rail planning to reorganisation – a recurrent and persistent theme from 1948 – affected delivery of almost all policies.[[1004]](#footnote-1004)

The context of the Plan further revealed in Cabinet papers of January 1955 show how it was affiliated to the resolution of an industrial dispute, and was to prove politically beneficial.[[1005]](#footnote-1005) The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, summoned a special meeting of ministers on 10 December 1954, including the Lord Chancellor, Minister for Defence, Minister of Transport & Civil Aviation and Minister for Labour & National Insurance. The immediate objective was of course to avoid a threatened rail strike, arising from the frustrations of the annual pay round. The Prime Minister was said to remark that ‘for political and economic reasons’ every effort must be made to avert a strike.[[1006]](#footnote-1006) However, the Commission’s Chairman, Sir Brian Robertson, noted for his distinguished military service and one-time aide-de-camp to King George VI, had remarked privately that no offer could be made which would satisfy the trade unions if British Railways were to continue ‘to pay their way’. Their deficit was already expected to be £ 15 million and would be £ 20 million if the pay award were promised.[[1007]](#footnote-1007) The minister, John Boyd-Carpenter, recommended to the meeting that government should be prepared to offer financial assistance. The government would, in other words, be prepared to accept a larger, if temporary, deficit if this was needed to keep the railways going as Christmas and winter approached.[[1008]](#footnote-1008)

The Prime Minister argued that modernisation would not necessarily ‘bring back prosperity’ to the railways and remained hesitant about the longer-term benefits, whose ‘importance was shrinking’ and they ‘may play a smaller part in future’. That said intervention was swiftly needed, and Sir Brian was told that it ‘was his duty’ to pay reasonable wages and if this meant a deficit, in defiance of the Commission’s duty ‘to make the railways pay’, then he *should* be given a formal direction.[[1009]](#footnote-1009) The prospect of any railway strike was persuasive enough and the meeting concluded with general agreement that the government should view sympathetically any claim which the B.T.C. might make towards the capital cost of modernisation. In other words, and despite the Prime Minister’s view of the poor long-term expectations for the railways generally, the Cabinet used the plans of ‘modernisation’ or an ‘extensive engineering programme’ as an attractive persuasion for the unions to secure a new deal and avoid a strike - rather than setting a more plausible footing for the future of the industry.[[1010]](#footnote-1010)

What eventually evolved into the ‘1955 Plan’ was drawn up over a six-month period beginning in April 1954 by a committee of B.T.C. staff and Regional representatives, advised by functional sub-committees covering the various components. Although much preparatory work had already been carried out, as Skelsey has shown, an all-embracing railway development plan had been drawn up the previous year, to which Bonavia argues amounted to a gathering of existing but pigeon-holed plans, including an electrification programme, giving strategic priority to the East Coast Main Line from King’s Cross.[[1011]](#footnote-1011) The Report, a notably short-worded document amounting to 36 pages, lacked detailed tables or any maps and diagrams, and was short of financial detail – and, while it recognised the railways’ loss of market share for transport services generally since the 1930s, it contained minimal analysis of the reasons for that loss.[[1012]](#footnote-1012) In essence it was a policy statement than a plan, however, it detailed a number of important points which prefigure the statements of Dr Beeching, by dealing with the withdrawal of uneconomic passenger services and very old rolling stock, including Pullman cars with new replacements.

**9.4 An optimistic future for Pullman operations**

From the perspective of the Pullman management the most significant sub-committee was the Traffic Survey Group, which turned its attention to passenger traffic policy, including ‘de-luxe services’ and the so-called Diesel Multiple-Unit Main Line-Line Express Services Committee.[[1013]](#footnote-1013)

The Plan was not originally intended to be funded by government out of taxation: the B.T.C. was expected to find the necessary resources from its own reserves for depreciation and from external borrowing. The assumption was that improved efficiency and increased traffic would produce the finance to service these debts. Savings of £60 million a year were expected, for instance, from more efficient rolling stock and traction.[[1014]](#footnote-1014) In the event the collapse in the B.T.C.’s financial position after 1956, partly a consequence of government’s decisions on rates and charges, meant that borrowing powers had repeatedly to be enlarged, by specific Acts in 1957 and 1959, and from 1960 the Chancellor’s Budget contained provision for grants. The commission would never be in a position to repay either grants or debts, most of which were eventually written off - which means, in effect, that the taxpayer did eventually largely pay for the plan.[[1015]](#footnote-1015)

Sir Brian Robertson believed that the Plan was sound and offered a sensible way forward, and he emphasised in particular the national benefits in terms of improved efficiency and productivity, including the closure of 3,000 route miles of line:

The plan [will] produce its own economies. Over and above, however, the Commission are well aware … that greater productivity … is possible and necessary. We hope that this plan … will put new heart into the whole industry, and convince all who work in it that they belong to a live show with a fine future, and not a decaying anachronism.[[1016]](#footnote-1016)

This statement has to be considered in the context of the political discussions at 10 Downing Street earlier in December 1954. The B.T.C.’s own statement of the plan’s objectives was succinct: the modernised railway would attract and retain sufficient traffic to make the plan economically self-supporting, exploit the natural advantages of railways as bulk transporters of passengers, and concentrate on functions which railways perform more efficiently than their competitors. There would be beneficial effects alleviating traffic congestion. However, there was – especially by present-day standards – a cursory and unconvincing assessment of the financial outcome. Bonavia argues that profit and loss accounts and balance sheets for the plan were never feasible.[[1017]](#footnote-1017)

Following the tone of the Cabinet discussion in December 1954, many newspapers related the proposals in the plan to the negotiations with railway unions on pay and productivity. Broadly welcoming the plan, *The Times*, stated that British Railways needed both to re-equip their ‘obsolete railway system’ and to ‘repair their damaged relations with their labour’.[[1018]](#footnote-1018) While other newspapers, including *The Manchester Guardian* hailed a ‘new spirit which the public will welcome’ and thought that the government would, ‘if the worst came to the worst’, meet the bill.[[1019]](#footnote-1019) Other commentators, as astutely noted by Gourvish, saw the proposals as an overdue corrective to the evident lack of investment.[[1020]](#footnote-1020) As observed by Skelsey, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, R.A. Butler speaking in February 1955, accepted the ‘courageous and imaginative’ proposals and supported the principle of railway modernisation.[[1021]](#footnote-1021)

Envisaged from the start to be a careful, prudent, systematic approach to modernisation, the Plan recognised the need to retain for a period of years, at least, the best and newest rolling stock, including the all-steel Pullman cars of the 1930s, and if necessary, those dating from the 1920s, some with wooden bodies.[[1022]](#footnote-1022) The procurement of new up-to-date carriages was to follow a carefully-evaluated pilot scheme, testing a range of numerous manufacturers before proceeding with volume orders of ordinary and replacement Pullman stock.[[1023]](#footnote-1023) Gourvish argues that it is a reasonable assumption had the pilot scheme been allowed to take its course, ‘procurement would have settled on the prototypes with best performance’.[[1024]](#footnote-1024)

Execution of the Plan under the provisions of the Transport Act 1952 was partly devolved to the six regional boards which took office during early 1955. Their detailed proposals were announced in 1956 and, apart from the proposals in the plan itself, contained a range of further aspirations for extending Pullman car services running to luncheon and dinner timings whilst continuing to honour existing contracts (originally agreed pre-World War 2 and expiring in 1962). The Traffic Survey Group advised that under the ‘de-luxe’ category, ‘a limited scope for trains with a higher standard of amenities of which the existing all-Pullman services and the prospective Diesel Multiple-Unit Expresses are examples’.[[1025]](#footnote-1025) Although expected to provide very similar facilities, the proposed ‘de-luxe’ diesel multiple-units were still not yet themselves deemed to be Pullman trains. The government wanted to demonstrate popular outcomes to the Plan in anticipation of a General Election which was due in 1960, and to benefit from expected economies and from increased manufacturing activity. The devolution of power to the regional boards, and the ideological preference of the party of government for competing UK private sector involvement, led to a profusion of untried rolling stock designs that were criticised for being acquired too quickly.[[1026]](#footnote-1026) Before the pilot diesel scheme was complete and its numerous samples of locomotive were evaluated (equating to a profusion of untried diesel locomotive designs of 35 different types), came from at least thirteen primary suppliers, with performance ranging from outstandingly good – only 10 per cent, and direful for much of the remainder; many of which were very short-lived.[[1027]](#footnote-1027) Although the opening of the ‘floodgates of railway investment’ put pressure on existing suppliers of equipment, steam engines were only summarily condemned from May 1957 (even before the final deliveries under the existing programme had been completed) the Commission’s difficulties could be ‘attributed to organisational factors’.[[1028]](#footnote-1028)

By 1959 a series of diagrams in the B.T.C.’s annual report suggested that B.R. passenger receipts were in decline per passenger mile (in real terms), accompanied by a persistent decline in the B.R. share of the total market showed that the passenger business was, as a whole, in secular decline.[[1029]](#footnote-1029)68 But the total passenger business contained some specialised areas of great promise, particularly new Pullman routes which were to be fully exploited. This was to take much longer to obtain than the physical equipment. Delayed fare increases meant that B.R. prices were falling in real terms; this should have resulted in attracting business from its air competitors.[[1030]](#footnote-1030) Instead of drawing lessons from these facts, the B.T.C. continued to argue that the secular decline in rail carryings could be restrained, if not negated with improved service, and that the fault to raise prices in line with inflation was the fault of the government, anyway. The B.T.C. continued to honour its stated intentions to expand Pullman car services to other Regions, at first by introducing them, in June 1955, to the Western Region. For the very first time Pullman cars ran into Wales, on what was known as the ‘South Wales Pullman’. New services were also considered elsewhere, including Sheffield, while Pullman management were considering a proposal made to convert the Western Region London-Plymouth service known as ‘The Golden Hind’ to full Pullman status.[[1031]](#footnote-1031) The intention was to use the ‘Golden Arrow’ cars - the ‘Arrow’ itself being withdrawn altogether or reduced in size, but various objections were raised, particularly that this proposal would have been seen as a further provocation with the running arguments of the unions. Although the ‘Golden Arrow’ was not profitable at this time from Pullman’s point of view, as its timings proved unsuitable for meal service, it was still regarded as an important and prestigious service by B.R.[[1032]](#footnote-1032) As Haresnape argues, ‘even as the public demonstrated their enthusiasm for new Pullmans, the government had a far less appreciative view of British Railways’, and the B.T.C. was being censured for an increasing debt.[[1033]](#footnote-1033) Although the future of Pullman now seemed a promising one with regard to its renewal programme, certain passenger criticisms were increasingly reported by *Trains Illustrated*. In their September 1957 edition, for example, they claimed that with regard to the outdated stock used on the ‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’, ‘the Pullman facilities are much disliked in themselves […] and their provision with appropriate supplementary charge on a train […] is widely resented, and regarded by many as an undesirable piece of sharp practice.’ The correspondent goes on to say that ‘many passengers do not dine – about 50 per cent. [on the train] so that embarrassing situations arise at tables where some have a meal and others do not.’[[1034]](#footnote-1034)

**9.5 The Modernisation Plan results and the legacy of the B.T.C.**

The direct results of the Plan were both swift and comprehensive. In the following ten years Britain’s railways were totally transformed, to a greater extent than in any other period in their history. Although it was an imperfect response, the benefit to British manufacturers and workers was apparently immense, with consequent contributions to the wider economy.[[1035]](#footnote-1035)

It remains debateable whether the full implementation of the Plan, and replacement new traction and rolling stock under the principles originally outlined, would have produced the expected results is not known, though with all things considered it seems improbable. In the crucial area of labour relations, managers faced the real difficulty that railwaymen were falling behind other occupations in terms of both pay and conditions. This situation was underlined by the findings of the Guillebaud Review in 1960, which deprived the B.T.C. of any remaining shreds of economic stability, involving additional costs of £ 33 million a year.[[1036]](#footnote-1036) By then three separate inquiries into the railways were in progress: by the Commons Select Committee on Nationalised Industries (1958-1960), by the commission itself, reviewing progress with the plan (1958-1959) and by a private external review group appointed by the minister (the Stedeford Inquiry, 1960). Each of these, but especially the last, raised a great deal of concern. By March 1960 the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, announced a scaling back of the plan which would, he said, be ‘adapted to [the] new shape’ of the railway system (hence the proper title of the ‘Beeching’ report). A White Paper followed at the end of 1960, leading to the Transport Act 1962 which abolished the B.T.C., established the British Railways Board and ushered in the Beeching project which would closely examine the railways’ repeating deficit and dispelling the high hopes of 1955.[[1037]](#footnote-1037)

The summary end to full implementation of the plan after five years did in fact bring achievements: the well-known Pullman marque was considered of some importance in establishing the new levels of comfort and amenity which the plan perceived. There was now money to spend on replacing the vintage cars, with scope to compete with the internal airline services in terms of speed and comfort, but its failure to fulfil its own promise in terms of profitability, left a challenging legacy in government which endured for years.[[1038]](#footnote-1038) For a brief period, morale in the industry improved as Robertson had proclaimed, but as Gourvish argues the Modernisation Plan was a ‘hastily conceived’ and ‘flawed response to make up lost ground’.[[1039]](#footnote-1039) As scheme after scheme came to completion, leaflets, films and large billboards were erected along key routes hailing ‘British Railways Modernisation’ which as Gourvish thoughtfully explains is ‘tangible if ephemeral proof’ that a government is ‘doing something about the railways’.[[1040]](#footnote-1040)

The railways formed by far the largest element in the B.T.C.’s portfolio of waterways, port authorities, film (transport-related), hotels, railway police, railway shipping and tramways.[[1041]](#footnote-1041) In parallel with an investigation of B.R.’s activities being undertaken by the parliamentary select committee on Nationalised Industries, in 1960 Ernest Marples (the minister of transport), commissioned an independent study of recent railway performance and finances from a group of industrialists and business leaders, headed by Sir Ivan Stedeford, chairman and managing director of Tube Investments Ltd. One member of this group who stood out by reason of the searching nature of his questioning was Dr. Richard Beeching, from Imperial Chemicals. Although he had had little or no experience of transport, his salary demonstrated clearly, as Henshaw argues, that the private sector pay had outstripped that in the public sector – prompting salaries and pensions requiring drastic revision.[[1042]](#footnote-1042)

In response to his findings of these two bodies, Marples presented a White Paper in April 1961 that foreshadowed a further major overhaul of Britain’s nationalised transport industries. The most fundamental change envisaged was the establishment of a stand-alone British Railway Board (B.R.B.), while other B.T.C. undertakings would be hived off to a holding company with the aim of returning as much as possible to the private sector. In the short term however, Dr. Beeching was appointed to become a member of the B.T.C., succeeding General Sir Brian Robertson as Chairman from 1 June (and Chairman Designate of the future Railways Board).[[1043]](#footnote-1043) The improvement in the business approach of railways, argued by Gourvish, was still ‘far from complete and largely unchallenged’, as many of the old attitudes, based on the idea that B.R. was a quasi-monopoly public service, should seek the maximisation of traffic volume irrespective of cost.[[1044]](#footnote-1044) However, further changes of the composition of the B.T.C. were to follow later in 1961-1963, the most significant of which, from the viewpoint of the conduct of its hotels and catering activities, was probably the appointment of Philip Shirley, an accountant by training who was then Chairman of Batchelor’s Peas, based in Sheffield and a regular user of the ‘Master Cutler’ Pullman.[[1045]](#footnote-1045)

In his study of the ‘Beeching Revolution’, Hardy comments that Shirley ‘asked questions, he criticised, nothing escaped his attention … He operated at every level and crossed many normal lines of communication.[[1046]](#footnote-1046) Soon after his appointment, long-standing Pullman conductor Dix, of the ‘Master Cutler’, was to experience this approach when Shirley cross-questioned him on various aspects of the train’s loadings, receipts and operations generally, rather than approach the Pullman management directly.[[1047]](#footnote-1047) While it is true that Pullman’s controlling shareholder at this time was the B.T.C., the composition of the board of directors and day-to-day management (outlined in chapter 5) still remained distant from that of other railway activities, and conductor Dix told him that he should seek such information through the company’s head office. The experience simply highlighted that Pullman management were increasingly side-stepped from discussions at this time and appeared to be relaxed.[[1048]](#footnote-1048)

**9.6 The ‘Blue Pullmans’ and new East Coast cars**

The prestige passenger trains of the Modernisation Plan were what later became known as the ‘de-luxe Pullmans’ or ‘Blue Pullmans’, so-called because of their new ‘Nanking blue’ and white livery.[[1049]](#footnote-1049) (See accompanying photograph). These high-performance streamlined trains with two 1,000 H.P. diesel engines at each end and Rolls-Royce auxiliary power units, were completely experimental in nature due to their entirely new design, and technical developments in vehicle and bogie construction. They set a new standard of luxury for passengers, being the first British train-sets to be fully air-conditioned with fully enclosed gangway connections not previously featured on any rolling stock before; the advantages to the passenger were a draught-less and clean atmosphere, and improved and effective insulation against external noises.[[1050]](#footnote-1050)

According to the *Railway Gazette* who published a comprehensive series of features and reports of the trains inaugural trips on the Midland, and later Western Regions, claimed they were ‘visually attractive both in design and comfort terms’ with luxury accommodation where double glazed windows had passenger-operated venetian blinds between the panes.[[1051]](#footnote-1051) The interior was designed in association with consultant Jack Howe FRIBA, FSIA who also assisted the design panel with the exterior appearance of the streamlined front end, the usage of Egyptian serif block lettering and the new choice of striking blue and white livery.[[1052]](#footnote-1052)



**FIG 8. ‘BLUE PULLMAN’ FIRST-CLASS INTERIOR**

(Courtesy of Mr J. Kent, Brighton).

The finished product was a train, with many up-to-date features, including inlaid murals at the saloon ends and a mosaic finish to each toilet compartments floor and passenger-controlled water temperature, delivered to a capacious wash basin by a single spray nozzle; new silver plate and glassware, signs and notices, etc. There was airline-style seating for both classes of passenger (on the Western sets), with ‘Pullman-style’ attendant call buttons provided. The interior design was the subject of B.T.C. Design Panel study from initial mock-ups shown off at London main-line railway stations to the finished train.[[1053]](#footnote-1053) Sleek nose ends of the power cars were emblazoned with a newly designed elongated version of the Pullman Company coat of arms, devoid of any gold-coloured lining or classical names as associated with older Pullman cars. Menu covers, crockery and wine glasses were specially commissioned as was the silverware, including tea and coffee pots designed by master metalworker, David Mellor, and made by Walker & Hall of Sheffield.[[1054]](#footnote-1054)

The layout of the ‘Blue Pullmans’ of six or eight fixed vehicles was to allow rapid terminal turn-rounds, with a driving power unit at each end. The power/driving car weight was kept to a minimum with only the rear bogie on each motored (the adjacent bogie on the coupled trailer car each end of the train also had motors). The traction motors were fully spring borne, a new feature for B.R. train sets.[[1055]](#footnote-1055) In efforts to produce a revolutionary design of train with improved sound-insulation, heating and ventilation, designers went to significant lengths with sound-proofing and the use of new materials which gave a refreshingly novel and excellent travelling environment.[[1056]](#footnote-1056) These trains had one disappointing feature - their riding at speed was impaired. This was particularly unfortunate because great efforts had been made to secure an improved ride, by fitting the Swiss-designed so-called Schlieren bogie as widely used on continental railways, where it gave a smooth ride. The design just did not suit British track conditions or indeed the light weight of the carriages, and the powered bogies in particular at speeds of 90 m.p.h. were lively over track points and crossings. In the October 1960 edition of *Trains Illustrated*, Allen, noted ‘as to the riding … it could not be said that perfection has yet been attained’.[[1057]](#footnote-1057) In ‘Three Years of the Blue Pullmans’, travel writer Wilson noted (in 1963) that:

the cooking staff appreciate the train’s speed and smoothness in acceleration … they greatly dislike its occasional exuberance in riding … remove this cause for complaint, they will probably enjoy the best working conditions among train catering crews on B.R.’[[1058]](#footnote-1058)

Exhaustive and prolonged research modified some of the ‘Blue Pullmans’ worst excesses by the mid-1960s, but never brought them up to the standards of B.R.’s own Mark 2 standard coaches. Poor riding apart, the ‘Blue Pullmans’ were an excellent train from the passenger’s viewpoint as they were clean and modern and were immediately acclaimed by the public.[[1059]](#footnote-1059)



**FIG 9. FIRST-CLASS INTERIOR VIEW OF ‘MIDLAND PULLMAN’. NOTE THE VENETIAN BLINDS, RECLINABLE SEATS, LIGHTING AND BULKHEAD MURAL**

(Metropolitan-Cammell Railway Carriage & Wagon Company, 1960)

(Courtesy: Mr J Kent, Brighton).



**FIG 10. FIRST-CLASS INTERIOR VIEW OF LOCOMOTIVE-HAULED PULLMAN CAR (MK 1 TYPE) FOR NORTHERN SERVICES.**

**NOTE: THE CONVENTIONAL MOVEABLE ARMCHAIRS AND SLIDING LIGHTS.**

(Metropolitan-Cammell Railway Carriage & Wagon Company, 1960)

(Courtesy: Mr J Kent, Brighton).

Whereas the ‘Blue Pullmans’ were a B.T.C. initiative, the 44 East Coast route replacement cars, at a net expenditure of £ 717,766 (with an average cost per car of £ 16,363) stemmed from a Pullman management request, subsequently authorised by the B.T.C. This alone explains why two completely different types of new Pullman car were built at the same time, and by the same builder for the same customer. The ‘Blue Pullmans’ were always considered to be prototypes requiring evaluation before any further orders were placed, whereas the East Coast cars were basically equivalent replacements, adequately up-dated for faster schedules anticipated by the delivery of new steam locomotives and fast diesel-electric locomotives.[[1060]](#footnote-1060) The difference in the vehicles was emphasised by the use of two contrasting liveries: a brand-new Pullman livery of ‘Nanking blue’ and white for the diesel cars, and traditional umber and cream with gold lining and running names and numbers for the new replacements.



**FIG 11. EXTERIOR VIEW OF MK1 PULLMAN CAR ‘EMERALD’ IN UMBER AND CREAM LIVERY WITH GOLD-COLOURED LINING.**

(Metropolitan-Cammell Railway Carriage and Wagon Co, 1960)

(Courtesy: Mr J Kent, Brighton).

The Pullman coat of arms noted on both vehicle types was redrawn at the request of the Pullman chairman, and also featured on some older cars following overhaul (The word ‘Pullman’ on the scroll was on a red background, while the lions could be compared with the lion supporters in the B.T.C. armorial bearings).[[1061]](#footnote-1061)

Although the replacement vehicles were similar to the standard curved body profile of British Railways carriage design, Pullman-type inward-opening doors were used at each end of the car, instead of the normal outward-opening BR swing doors. Partial double-glazed windows and a dual heating (steam and electric) ventilating system produced warmed and insulated car interiors. The colour schemes varied marginally between cars, and for the first-class, a 1+1 a side seating accommodation was featured, with the standard type of moveable winged Pullman armchair used. In the majority of cases these were old chairs from withdrawn cars, renovated, remodelled and re-upholstered. The Design Panel had given advice on the design of this stock and two new features were the use of spacious full-length aircraft-style luggage racks, and glass saloon partitions, giving a more ‘open’ saloon than previously found in Pullmans, although for the clientele who sought privacy, coupé compartments were retained. For the second-class cars, a new design 2+1 seating was produced, and it is worthy of note that such an arrangement (albeit with reclining backs) was at the time already considered suitable for the first-class in the ‘Blue Pullmans’. The economics of any longer providing the more usual low-density payload of one seat each side of the aisle were becoming increasingly questionable by the B.T.C., and the Metropolitan-Cammell East Coast replacement cars were to be the last Pullmans built new with this degree of space per first class passenger. In many respects these two designs for Pullman travel represented the parting of ways, because the affairs of the both the B.T.C. and the Pullman Car Company were both to undergo significant adjustment during the first three years that the new Pullmans were running. It was widely presumed that, the East Coast replacement cars with their ‘striking new features were the last bastions of Pullman tradition’, whereas the ‘Blue Pullmans’ were the trains of tomorrow, and ushered in a new era of rail travel.[[1062]](#footnote-1062)

**9.7 Delays with ‘Blue Pullman’ services**

Even before it made its highly-publicised debut, the ‘Midland Pullman’ provoked a great deal of resentment amongst the region’s own restaurant car staff, who were bitter about the intrusion of the profitable Pullman Car Company into this territory.[[1063]](#footnote-1063) At this time, the B.T.C. still held only the ordinary shares, and profits had to be shared with the preference shareholders, to which the union-led railway restaurant car staff, under the auspices of the National Union of Railwaymen (N.U.R.), an industrial union founded in 1913 objected. As a result, 839 men (out of 1,104 employed by the Midland and Eastern regions) went out on strike, while restaurant facilities had plummeted to only seven northbound expresses.[[1064]](#footnote-1064) As the *Birmingham Daily Post* reported concurrently:

The N.U.R. take the view that Pullman trains skim the cream off the more lucrative passenger traffic, leaving the B.T.C. restaurant cars with less profitable catering services. The basis of this attitude is that Pullman cars make profits for private enterprise at the expense of the nationalised restaurant and buffet services run by the B.T.C.[[1065]](#footnote-1065)

An argument between the British Rail Catering Services (B.R.C.S.) and Pullman had already escalated when the ‘Master Cutler/ Sheffield Pullman’ service was being proposed. B.R.C.S. staff who had formerly worked the withdrawn (ordinary) train of the former title were being made redundant, coinciding with plans being made to transfer selected Pullman employees to Sheffield.

Three months after the inauguration of the ‘Midland Pullman’, the L.M.R. arranged a meeting at Euston on 4 October 1960 to discuss a proposal to revise the timings of the morning departure of the ‘Midland Pullman’ from Manchester, which might allow for an extension of the midday run to Nottingham and back.[[1066]](#footnote-1066) Also on the agenda was the question of the possible employment of the second six-car Pullman unit, currently nominally held ‘spare’ at Reddish depot – although intensive riding tests were still being carried out under the auspices of British Railways’ Research Department. Chaired by the L.M.R.’s assistant general manager, this meeting was attended by key regional operating, and Pullman Company officers.[[1067]](#footnote-1067)

The recorded proceedings were opened drawing attention to a recent report in *The Daily Telegraph* which had stated that the Western Region’s mixed class 8-car ‘Birmingham Pullman’ was achieving around 90 per cent. capacity loadings and the ‘Bristol Pullman’ 60-70 per cent.[[1068]](#footnote-1068) However, Pullmans’ general manager explained that the report was ‘not accurate’ and advised the midday runs of both services were ‘not as heavily loaded as might be thought’ – although any corrected figures are not recorded.[[1069]](#footnote-1069)

Since the introduction of the ‘Midland Pullman’ on the L.M.R in July 1960, it was claimed that loadings had averaged around 60 per cent. on the morning service from Manchester and 75 per cent. on the evening return working.[[1070]](#footnote-1070) Although there had not been time to undertake a complete passenger survey, a number of regular users of the up service had indicated that they would welcome an earlier departure time – though not before 7.45 am. (The original departure time of 8.50 am proved to be far too late to attract many passengers who wanted to take a full breakfast. From the point of view of the Pullman management as the chosen on-board catering contractor, that was of course an important consideration). Accordingly, it was suggested that, from 2 January 1961, the Pullman should leave an hour earlier at 7.50 am, arriving at London St Pancras at 11.05 am. This would allow the desired infill return trip to Nottingham, departing at 11.25 am and arriving back in London at 5.45 pm, so as to allow the train to take up its existing scheduled return journey to Manchester at 6.10 pm.[[1071]](#footnote-1071)

The proposal was supported by the Regional officers’ present to employ the spare unit on a London-based return working to Liverpool (Central), with reversal at Manchester (Central) in each direction. However, if this plan were to be implemented, a spare locomotive-hauled train set would have to be available to cover the diesel units’ month-long overhaul periods in main works.[[1072]](#footnote-1072) Moreover, the demands of regular maintenance would probably require the provision of additional covered accommodation and facilities at Cricklewood depot – where there were significant staffing problems. In addition, the routine maintenance currently carried out during the week on the spare unit at Reddish would have to be done, on both units, at the weekends.[[1073]](#footnote-1073)

Pullman’s general manager advised that he could arrange for a train composed of what were described as ‘non-de-luxe’ Pullman cars to substitute for either diesel unit when diagrammed for works maintenance (see figures 2 and 3). At other times, he suggested, the kitchen cars could be kept in London, Manchester and Liverpool, to facilitate the emergency provision of composite formations with British Railways first-class stock, meaning a mixture of Pullman and ordinary carriages together.[[1074]](#footnote-1074)

At a subsequent meeting of a study group on 18 October, Pullman’s rolling stock superintendent, indicated that only four first-class locomotive-hauled Pullmans could at that time be made available.[[1075]](#footnote-1075) In order to make up the required seating capacity, the L.M.R. would be required to provide a 42-seat first-class (ordinary) carriage, and brake vehicles. At this meeting it was also stated that the annual works maintenance programme for the diesel Pullmans would actually necessitate the withdrawal of each unit for two full months, so that the spare locomotive-hauled set would be in daily service for a period of four months altogether.[[1076]](#footnote-1076)

Given the N.U.R.’s disposition to the provision of ‘private enterprise’ Pullman services on the L.M.R. in the first place, and the increasingly difficult negotiations that had had taken place between the union and the B.T.C. prior to the entry into service of the ‘Midland Pullman’, neither regional nor the Pullman officers involved in these discussions appear to have sensed that there could be further opposition ahead. However, on 17 November 1960, the N.U.R. assistant general secretary contacted the B.T.C.’s director of industrial relations, informing of his ‘considerable dissatisfaction’ of proposals to extend the Pullman to Nottingham. Any variation to the running of the trains would be regarded by the staff side as a further extension of Pullman services, which he emphasised was contrary to the policy of the union and ‘must be the subject of negotiation and agreement’. There followed a list of restaurant car services between Manchester Piccadilly and London Euston, and King’s Cross/St Pancras and Nottingham which, it was claimed, would be ‘adversely affected’ by the current proposals.[[1077]](#footnote-1077)

Foreboding of ‘unconstitutional action’ came within days, when N.U.R. members of the Hotels & Catering staff on secondment to the Pullman Company received copies of an undated notice signed by S. Phelan, secretary of the employees’ side of the ‘London Midland Restaurant Car Wages Staff Regional Council No 1’ advising that they ‘fight to prevent further extension … and must stand firm now if the Pullman Car Company get away with this’.[[1078]](#footnote-1078) A copy of this circular found its way to the industrial relations director at the B.T.C., who made his reactions clear in a letter addressed – but, in the event, evidently not sent – to the general manager of the London Midland Region, although the draft text was retained on file. In this it was recalled that the ‘Midland Pullman’ had been introduced ‘only after prolonged negotiations in a rather stormy atmosphere and that a clear undertaking [had been] given that there would be no extension of the services without prior consultation’.[[1079]](#footnote-1079) The draft outlined a proposal to call an urgent meeting with the N.U.R. at B.T.C. headquarters on 2 December 1960, at which the Pullman management, the Restaurant Car services and the L.M.R. would all be represented. (Although no record of this meeting has since been traced, in view of the imminent strike threat, the regional authorities had decided in any case to withdraw the Pullman’s poorly patronised midday runs altogether – although the retiming of the morning service from Manchester would proceed). Pullman’s management had little choice but to submissively comply with this decision, losing the right to manage.[[1080]](#footnote-1080)

It appeared that everything to do with the operation of the ‘Blue Pullmans’, particularly on the L.M.R., remained a highly sensitive matter at this time, and these flagship trains were still much in the public eye.[[1081]](#footnote-1081) It is also apparent that, the close relationship Pullman managers and staff had built up over many years particularly with their contacts on the Southern and Eastern Regions, simply did not exist on the London Midland.[[1082]](#footnote-1082) Staff relations were however not the only difficulties to affect the public standing of the ‘Blue Pullmans’. A report published in a railway journal in January 1961 went some way to detail the rough riding of the trains, which necessitated the attendants to place folded napkins under each cup to sop up the overflow.[[1083]](#footnote-1083) On a corresponding Birmingham service, for example, the correspondent ‘had been depressed to hear almost every passenger in our car justifiably complaining of the lively riding’.[[1084]](#footnote-1084)

Despite the current difficulties, the desire to extend the Pullman service to Nottingham had not altogether been abandoned. It was now the intention that the schedules originally planned for January 1961 should be introduced in the winter timetable on 11 September.[[1085]](#footnote-1085) But, this time, before meeting the N.U.R., management representatives of the B.T.C., London Midland, Hotels & Catering services and the Pullman Company thought it would be reasonable to hold a preliminary discussion ‘in order that the facts could be properly portrayed’.[[1086]](#footnote-1086) At this meeting, on 16 May 1961, the attendees were reminded that the catering staff on the ‘Midland Pullman’ were unoccupied for some seven hours in the middle of the day between the arrival of the up morning service from Manchester and the evening return working. It was considered that they would welcome the prospect of using this period more productively. Nevertheless, there were implications that were considered out of bounds. For instance, it was stated but not shared with the union – that the additional Nottingham service would ‘cost £ 10,000 per annum and that the anticipated receipts were something of the same order, so that the Region could break even and not make a profit’.[[1087]](#footnote-1087) It also appears that the regional representatives suggested that the Pullman units might be used for special workings at the weekends in connection with such events as the football leagues’ Cup Final as well as the Grand National at Aintree, for example. However, the general view was that it ‘would not be a sound tactical move to raise this question with the N.U.R. until the main consideration is cleared’.[[1088]](#footnote-1088)

The N.U.R. meeting that subsequently took place did not progress as well as hoped, as the union representatives - representing the majority of railway workers - continued to argue that the proposed midday service to Nottingham, ‘involving as it did additional Pullman Car mileage’, was a clear breach of the back-to-work agreement reached after the 1959 strikes.[[1089]](#footnote-1089) The current proposal ‘as with any other similar proposal affecting the diesel Pullman services was likely to cause difficulties in negotiation, but if there was some indication of what was to be the position vis-à-vis the Pullman Company after September 1962, when its contracts were due to end, this might lead to some ease’.[[1090]](#footnote-1090)

Given the developing arguments, there now appeared to be a real possibility that the dispute could involve other regions of British Railways.[[1091]](#footnote-1091) In light of earlier successful Pullman railtours, Ian Allan Ltd, for instance, had expressed interest in chartering a special Pullman train from London Liverpool Street to York and back on 16 September 1962.[[1092]](#footnote-1092) Since there was no large pool of Pullman cars lying idle at weekends on the Eastern region, such an excursion would necessarily have to have involved the use of Pullman cars – and staff –usually allocated to the S.R. On 12 June, the subject was raised at a meeting at King’s Cross of representatives of the staff side of ‘Restaurant Car Regional Council No.5’, the King’s Cross Local Council and the Liverpool Street Local Council. At this meeting, those present took the view that the running of any Pullman special train represented an extension of Pullman services – contrary to the N.U.R.’s stated policy – as, too, would be the retiming of scheduled Pullman trains. Further, it was unanimously agreed that in the event of any ‘special’ trains being run on the E.R. under the auspices of the Pullman Car Company, the restaurant car staff on the region would take action to avert its running. Ian Allan dropped its proposal shortly afterwards.[[1093]](#footnote-1093)

During February 1961, Beeching received a report on the ‘Blue Pullman’ services prepared by the commission’s general staff – ‘in consultation with the Pullman Car Company and the regional managers’.[[1094]](#footnote-1094) This had already been prepared earlier the previous year with the aim of ‘giving an appreciation of the financial effects of the existing experimental service; that which could be obtained by better use of the multiple-unit trains; the employment of locomotive-hauled Pullman trains as against multiple-unit trains; and proposals as to future policy on Pullman deluxe services’.[[1095]](#footnote-1095) The report summarised the current status of the ‘Blue Pullman’ services – with two six-car trains allocated to the L.M.R., one of which was ‘spare’ while the other was operating a curtailed service, and three eight-car trains allocated to the W.R., again with one lying ‘spare’. While the cost of constructing and equipping these trains had been nearly two million pounds, it was always envisaged to be ‘experimental’ in character.[[1096]](#footnote-1096) There followed a financial statement of the early returns from the operation of the diesel Pullman services. While it is difficult to make any meaningful comparisons between the net earnings quoted in respect of the differing periods of time surveyed on each region, a footnote suggested that it had been almost impossible, to disentangle what was genuinely ‘new business’, particularly on the Bristol route. Nevertheless, a sample of such figures as had been extracted by the B.R.B. suggested that that the annual profitable return of the capital employed (trains only) ranged from ‘an agreeable 15 per cent. for the ‘Midland Pullman’ (since the midday runs had been withdrawn; 16 per cent. previously) to 21 per cent. for the ‘Birmingham Pullman”.[[1097]](#footnote-1097)

The Pullman management had drawn specific attention to the fact that the introduction of the new services had led to a large rise in its operating costs, following its agreement with the N.U.R. to match the rates of pay and conditions of service relating to restaurant car staff. This increase claimed to amount to £ 50,000 in a full year had necessarily been spread across the company’s operations as a whole, and could not be said to have been directly incurred by the diesel services themselves. The result, as reported in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, involved precisely a 4 to 6 shillings a week increase for Pullman staff ‘announced by the N.U.R. [amounting to a] 3 per cent. rise in line with railway hotel and catering staff.’[[1098]](#footnote-1098)

At the same time, the report clearly acknowledged that the introduction of the ‘Blue Pullman’ services had provoked ongoing strong opposition from railway restaurant car staff on the grounds that their own employment and earnings were likely to be adversely affected, if regular passengers were drawn away and choose to travel ‘Pullman’.[[1099]](#footnote-1099) The report recognised that the plan to extend the midday ‘Midland Pullman’ service from Leicester to Loughborough and Nottingham had invariably been mishandled from the very start when the proposal had been publicised without any prior consultation with the N.U.R. It was claimed, however, that discussions had been reopened in the hope that the staff would now ‘be prepared to co-operate’.[[1100]](#footnote-1100)

While there was no mention of utilising the spare L.M.R. train, conversely the W.R. had committed itself to using its spare set to replace the existing locomotive-hauled ‘South Wales Pullman’ of 1920s stock in the coming winter timetable. At the same time the service would be reversed so that it would be based in Swansea rather than London. It was estimated that this would reduce train working expenses by around £ 7,000 a year and bring in additional revenue of some £ 5,000, so representing a total annual improvement in the region’s Pullman services of £ 12,000.[[1101]](#footnote-1101)

In comparing the traffic results for the ‘Midland Pullman’, prior to the withdrawal of the midday service to Leicester, with those services of the ‘Master Cutler/Sheffield Pullman’ on the Eastern Region – the most nearly comparable diesel locomotive-hauled services – it was considered that the excess of rail gross receipts over direct railway expenses per loaded train mile was just over 11 shillings for the former and 9 shillings for the latter, although loadings varied considerably during different times of the day.[[1102]](#footnote-1102) The advantages of locomotive-hauled trains compared with fixed multiple-unit operations, like the ‘Blue Pullman’ trains, were flexibility in the allocation and employment of various motive power (steam locomotives or diesel), and the greater freedom to vary train formations in response to booked demands, for example, using only two or three vehicles for a private party. On the other hand, the multiple units with driving cabs at both ends, allowed swift turn-rounds at terminal stations and greater opportunities for the incorporation of advanced non-standard equipment.

The report explained that the preliminary results from the ‘Blue Pullman’ experiment could be regarded as ‘not unsatisfactory’, and that they should improve as they became more firmly established and better utilisation of the spare train-sets was achieved. It was reported that on occasions, the morning services from Bristol and Swansea to London that all seats were occupied; no standing room being allowed and would-be Pullman passengers were turned away. There was a demand, if a limited one, for the type of ‘de-luxe travel’ these trains represented – especially among expense account executives.[[1103]](#footnote-1103) However, it remained questionable whether multiple-unit diesel trains were the best answer to this requirement, dependant as it was on morning and evening journeys from and to major business centres.[[1104]](#footnote-1104) Neither the various ‘Blue Pullman’ nor the locomotive-hauled ‘Sheffield Pullman’ midday fill-in turns had proved to have been particularly successful. The revenue-earning potential of the multiple-unit trains was adversely affected by these market characteristics, and by the need to provide a high proportion of spare vehicles languishing for inordinate periods of time in sidings, together with special maintenance criteria for almost all untried diesel designs, including the ‘Blue Pullmans’. As the report observed:

multiple-unit trains, even of the luxury type such as the [Southern Region’s] electric “Brighton Belle”, can afford a high utilisation where the business is fairly regular throughout the day, and where a quick turn-round can be achieved in a field of dense traffic and relatively short journeys.[[1105]](#footnote-1105)

In an attempt to make better daytime use of these expensive new trains, the N.U.R. could not put forward any justification against the proposed extension to Nottingham but had merely objected on principle to ‘an unauthorised extension to Pullman services’, as the basis of the agreement originally referred to whereby rail catering services would remain a railway responsibility.[[1106]](#footnote-1106) Two years later, on 2 October 1962 – when the midday ‘Midland Pullman’ service was at last introduced – the catering staff did not walk off on arrival at London St Pancras after the train’s morning run from Manchester, as previously instructed by the union, but they did reportedly retire *en masse* to the two kitchen cars when it reached Leicester, the previous Midlands terminal point. They did not reappear until it arrived back there on its return to London.[[1107]](#footnote-1107) It was the first time in known British Pullman Car Company history that the staff had refused to work a train. Generally, the passenger loadings in each direction remained very low, particularly from and between the intermediate stations – and the first-class fares, plus high supplements, were a likely deterrent to most travellers. In commercial terms, this was an inconvenience, rather than a catastrophe, for the few weeks before the protest imploded and full normal service was resumed, a rota of Pullman clerical staff from the head office travelled on the train to confirm that the doors were closed before departure from Leicester and Loughborough northbound and from Nottingham and Loughborough southbound, to pick up the seat reservation chart at Nottingham and seat any passengers boarding at these places.[[1108]](#footnote-1108)

**9.8 The 1960s: a transitional period and changing public tastes**

Almost as soon as the ‘Blue Pullman’ services were inaugurated in 1960 a particularly raucous criticism from within the B.R.B. increasingly circulated about what was perceived to be an extravagant ‘standby’ provision of conventional locomotive-hauled Pullman cars, intended to cover both programmed maintenance and any failures or accidents in traffic. The new trains were regarded as prototypes requiring assessment before any further orders were placed. With one of the two six-car train-sets nominally standing in sidings all week, this amounted to 100 per cent – although initially at least, the spare set continued to undergo intensive test running by British Railways’ chief mechanical & electrical engineer’s department in an attempt to eliminate the on-going riding problems, which were a feature almost from the beginning of entering service. A similar scenario existed on the W.R, where there was an ostensible 50 per cent. spare provision, with three eight-car mixed accommodation train-sets to work two services.[[1109]](#footnote-1109)

This was another sign of conservatism shown on the part of Pullman management for the standby provision for special stock in the 1930s had also been abundant.[[1110]](#footnote-1110) For example, the London & North Eastern Railway built a fourth streamlined train-set identical in layout to the two ‘Coronation’ and single ‘West Riding Limited’ rakes to provide general cover for these services, while the London, Midland & Scottish Railway had provided from the onset three sets for the two services operated as the ‘Coronation Scot’ during 1937. Although these were largely formed of upgraded and refurbished examples of its latest standard main-line carriages, the company aimed to provide spare provision when more up-to-date new stock was introduced in 1940 – a promising programme for better things to come that came to an abrupt halt due to the demands of World War 2. None of this had attracted known adverse criticism - not even when in 1933 three five-car all-Pullman (‘5-Bel’) electric units were supplied for the ‘Southern Belle’ (later, ‘Brighton Belle’) workings on the Southern Railway - and which were still running in the 1960s on a similar basis (two in service and one spare), as outlined in chapter 3. Electric traction was still seen at the time as more reliable than diesel.[[1111]](#footnote-1111)

All the cars allocated for use on the locomotive-hauled ‘South Wales Pullman’ services (including ‘spares’) from the commencement of service in 1955 were transferred on ‘long-term loan’ from the S.R Pullman pool to the W.R. When six years later this locomotive-hauled London-based service was replaced by the third ‘Blue Pullman’ diesel unit (based at Swansea), only two cars (the youngest) were repatriated to the S.R; the remaining 11 vehicles of 1923-1928 vintage were retained on the W.R as rarely used standby cover for the diesel units.[[1112]](#footnote-1112) In order to provide a readily available emergency substitute for a failed diesel unit, a ready-formed seven-car train of traditional cars was held in store at Old Oak Common, near London Paddington, which included two ordinary British Railways standard 42-seat open first-class carriages in the formation, painted in similar colours to match the Pullman cars.[[1113]](#footnote-1113)

At this time, the Pullmans dating from the 1920s were already considered ‘life-expired’.[[1114]](#footnote-1114) They were widely seen as being old fashioned – particularly in comparison with the ‘Blue Pullman’ units sporting their brightly-coloured new livery and modern amenities. The archaic appearance of the older cars in the standby set – each first-class car bestowed with a classically-inspired, running name – quickly led to it being dubbed the ‘Wells Fargo’ train by the on-board staff, a reference to a contemporary ‘Western’ series on television in which early American steam trains featured prominently.[[1115]](#footnote-1115) During the summer of 1962, it was decided to replace the carriages in the ready-formed standby train with more up-to-date Pullman cars. By 1964, Metro-Cammell second-class cars built in 1960, acted as first-class. These had been originally allocated to the East Coast route and made available following the withdrawal of the ‘Queen of Scots Pullman’ service in June. Amenity-wise, they too contrasted significantly with the much older 1920s vehicles.

Perceived public image also played a major role in determining policy on the London Midland. Although there was a standby locomotive-hauled Pullman as a back-up for all defects there was little immediate prospect of the ‘spare’ six-car ‘Midland Pullman’ unit entering service on the planned London-based working to Manchester and Liverpool, despite there no longer being any staffing difficulty in introducing additional services.[[1116]](#footnote-1116) However, the diesel units had been programmed to undergo lengthy periodic major overhaul and modification at Derby works, with an aim to complete all necessary work by the end of April 1963.[[1117]](#footnote-1117)

Even though consideration had been given to introducing the proposed service utilising locomotive-hauled cars, the line managers’ view was that ‘a considerable climate of opinion has been built up in favour of the diesel Pullman trains, and the introduction of a diesel locomotive hauled train with Pullman vehicles which are inferior to the diesel Pullman sets would probably have a bad effect on public opinion’, as posters and other publicity material continually laboured the modernity and improved comfort of the new Pullmans.[[1118]](#footnote-1118) In the case of the London Midland allocation, too, extra cars of 1923/1924 vintage were supplied so that a second scratch formation could be made up should the need arise.[[1119]](#footnote-1119)

Negative impressions are inescapable when analysing the decision-making processes of the Pullman management in their final years. Early in their history, as outlined in chapter 4, the immediate situation presented enormous opportunity to the company after World War 2 because of all the care taken with the storage of their cars during the conflict. As reported, many services were reinstated quickly, and these appealed to would-be passengers as seating was guaranteed and no standing was allowed, at a time too, when the railway’s own carriages were run down due to war use. Commendably, the management had realised the strength of its position, by quickly setting in motion a programme of repair and refurbishment for its fleet aimed at the lucrative third-class market. Indicative of the legacy of much earlier management practice, there was however a continuing propensity even as late as the early 1960s to retain some of the very oldest vehicles to work in main-line service alongside newer stock with differing and contrasting amenities.[[1120]](#footnote-1120)

As a direct result of the increasing difficulty to focus on expansive plans and the ability to raise capital, retaining a fleet of old vehicles not only caused increasing complaints, but a ban was already in force since 1948 that certain vehicle types by the East Coast traffic Superintendent could not be used, particularly the 12-wheel variety.[[1121]](#footnote-1121) Nevertheless, the Pullman management maintained their willingness to provide specially-formed trains for special events, adhering to well-established and familiar methods of inter-office arrangements invariably with the S.R’s counterpart operations management.[[1122]](#footnote-1122)

**9.9 The full integration of Pullman services**

During April 1961 proposals set out in the White Paper presaging the break-up of the B.T.C. and the establishment of a separate British Railways Board, the commission’s manpower adviser questioned the position of the Pullman Car Company.[[1123]](#footnote-1123) At that time, quite apart from the government’s plans for a future administration of the railways themselves and a serious review of railways’ competitive environment, the principal operating agreement between the B.T.C. and the Pullman Company was formally due to expire in September 1962 with no promise of an extension.

As a result of the B.T.C. refusal to extend the existing contracts and no prospects of making their own policy decisions, the Pullman management could not contemplate the construction of any new Pullman cars. There was continuing uncertainty about the way ahead, already strongly coloured by the frustrating experience of the ongoing objections by the N.U.R. with rates of pay and operations in the preceding two years.[[1124]](#footnote-1124) The White Paper had revealed that the new Board should take over in full those companies controlled by the B.T.C. whose activities were essentially connected with the railways, and had ‘also mentioned separately that [it] should take over railway catering services’.[[1125]](#footnote-1125) Pullman services aside, these were currently provided by the Hotels Executive, which was also anticipated to disappear, with its core business expected, at this time, to become one of the many responsibilities of the New Transport Holding Company.[[1126]](#footnote-1126) As it transpired, the Transport Act 1962 terminated the B.T.C. and established the British Railways Board, which took over the B.T.C.’s railway responsibilities from 1 January 1963. While the Act also enabled the rapid closure of around a third of British railways the following year and operating the remainder on the principles applicable to a private entrepreneur in a competitive market, it was to place the whole of the hotels business under the stewardship of the Railways Board. Argued by Gourvish, this notable change was achieved through the ‘personal intervention’ of Dr Beeching, the Board’s putative Chairman.[[1127]](#footnote-1127)

The primary decision makers and their subordinates were capable of matching their counterparts and brought new challenges, while Pullman management were keen to co-operate and Sir John Elliot (Pullman’s last Chairman) was sympathetic to maintain Pullman traditions, where possible. Adaptation to change and business efficiencies to reduce costs at Preston Park Works, the Pullman body and repair shop near Brighton were slow. Working expenses from 1959 to 1960, for example, had increased by over £ 100,000.[[1128]](#footnote-1128) Record profits were nevertheless made by the company (see appendix 4), and a policy to refurbish wooden-bodied Pullman car interiors gave many a more up-to-date appearance. There is little doubt that, in dealing with the persistent and severe problems arising from growing union concerns and its relations with British Railways, rather than long-established contacts as was the case in the inter-war period, Pullman management’s leverage had unfortunately weakened by this time.

Surviving records suggest that discussions with the Pullman management on a common machinery of negotiation did continue, and the logical outcome of this was a unified management working with a broadly loyal and unified staff, with a selected portion of them operating trains which carried the Pullman branding, with the usual trappings and a supplementary charge. As a further result, planned changes in the fleet took place in 1960, and as recorded earlier, 56 elderly cars were withdrawn from traffic and converted into camping coaches. These were then sold to British Railways for about £ 950 each.[[1129]](#footnote-1129) They were fitted out similar to holiday chalets or caravans, and parked in sidings at suitable rail-served beauty spots around Britain, where they could be rented for the season, an initiative that was finally abandoned in 1969.

On 10 May 1962 the Commission made its first notable move towards a defined corporate structure, deciding that the ‘balance of advantage’ lay with buying out Pullman’s 314 preference shareholders, in order to make the company wholly railway-owned - and representing a transfer from the private to the public sector, noting that in June 1954, they became the owners of the whole of the equity of the Pullman Car Company. The Pullman Car Company also had outstanding £ 386,000 of an authorized issue of £ 500,000 of 4½ per cent. cumulative redeemable preference stock. The owners of this stock had no voting rights and the holdings were not distributed, so the Pullman Car Company became wholly owned by the B.T.C. subject to the rights of the preference stock, and continued to be directed by a board appointed by the B.T.C. and the former management remained unaltered. As a contractual stipulation from nationalisation, shareholders were however entitled to be bought out at 21 shillings and 6 pence per share, these were currently worth only 13 shillings trading on the Stock Exchange. The operation could potentially cost as much as £ 400,000, but the B.T.C. hoped it could be achieved for considerably less.[[1130]](#footnote-1130) This was endorsed by the B.T.C. members for finance who wanted to avoid at all costs further industrial trouble with the N.U.R., as well as other scenarios, such as the railways hiring the cars from the Pullman company.

However, the plan must be viewed in the context of the B.T.C.’s appalling finances: the almost immediate response from the Ministry of Transport’s finance division was far from encouraging. ‘The case set out in the BTC note is weak’ it stated. Turning to specifics, it said:

The Railways Board (or B.T.C.) would borrow money at an interest of between £ 20,250 and £ 27,000 per annum and the stock pays only £ 317,400 per annum. This additional burden would fall on the taxpayer … Before lending money for this very poor investment (as it appears on these bare figures) we should need to be convinced as to the ‘intangible’ benefits of the proposals.[[1131]](#footnote-1131)

If the acquisition was purely a technical financial transaction involving no change in effective control, how would it simplify the management of the services, and possibly improve labour relations?[[1132]](#footnote-1132) Simply retaining the Pullman name would not suffice; even as a proposed separate section of the new catering organisation it was doubtful that it would meet approval in the eyes of the travelling public.[[1133]](#footnote-1133)

In an additional exchange of correspondence with the Ministry, the B.T.C.’s chief accountant, had later suggested that it was possible to make ‘immediate savings’ of £ 20,000 - £ 25,000 a year by bringing Pullman operations within the general railway catering organisation, with the consequential co-ordination of office, stores and maintenance procedures. Such savings would substantially exceed the anticipated interest charges; and the savings might be expected to double in the longer term. The commission was convinced that, so long as the preference shares remained in private hands, they would remain a potential hazard to whatever developments the new Railways Board might have in mind. The unions had previously raised the duplication of management involved by the present arrangements, and when this difficulty also had been removed, there was every possibility in their view that the objections to the development of Pullman services would be resolved, which in the event they were to limited success.[[1134]](#footnote-1134) This point was to be reinforced shortly afterwards, in June, when railway managers once more met representatives of the N.U.R. to discuss the projected introduction of a London-based ‘Midland Pullman’ service to Manchester and Liverpool, utilising the nominally ‘spare’ six-car ‘Blue Pullman’ unit. The union had repeated that their members would not be prepared to work this service unless they received an assurance that restaurant car and Pullman operations would ‘before long’ be brought together under unified management.[[1135]](#footnote-1135) While its objection continued to be based it seems on the impression that the Pullman Company was still a private enterprise undertaking, the permanent officials of the N.U.R. should have been aware of the purchase by the B.T.C. in 1954, but the problem persisted. Even when it was made abundantly clear the Commission owned the whole of the company equity capital and that it was an identified member, mention was sometimes made to the public holding of the Company's preference shares, and while these were publicly held the conviction would persist that it was a private enterprise.[[1136]](#footnote-1136)

One of the main elements in the controversy continued to be the unceasing question of how to provide staff for the trains. The B.T.C. stated that they were being introduced to retain and perhaps recapture some of the passenger traffic already lost to road and air, and the departure timings of the 'Midland Pullman' at both London (St. Pancras) and Manchester (Central) was particularly arranged to compete with growing domestic air services between the two cities. As a notable first step to resolving the difficulties, Pullman management offered to abandon its separate agreement with the N.U.R. under which there was an appreciable difference in working conditions between Pullman staff, and those working in British Railways restaurant cars, and instead to adopt the rates and conditions for restaurant car staff. (See appendix 9).[[1137]](#footnote-1137) Concurrently, a firm undertaking was given jointly by the B.T.C. and the Pullman Company in collaboration with the B.T.H.C.S that no redundancy should occur among restaurant staff as a result of the introduction of the new Pullman trains, and the Pullman Company undertook to offer all vacancies to existing restaurant car staff. On this point, the N.U.R. made another claim, that men recruited in this way from restaurant cars should be treated as being on loan from the restaurant car services, so that in case of any need they could revert to their former service and pick up their former seniority. It was initially agreed that this period of loan should be no greater than six months, but later the claim was made that it should be for a year. The arrangement was then changed to an indefinite basis.[[1138]](#footnote-1138) Staff so recruited wore the Pullman uniform and were managed (trained and instructed) by the Pullman Company, with the right of appeal jointly to Pullman management and to B.T.C. Hotels & Catering Services. As a result of the introduction of the ‘Midland Pullman’, there were no alterations made in the British Railways restaurant car services between Manchester and London, or redundancies. The new submission was considered acceptable since, on 2 August 1962, the agreement was sought from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Reginald Maulding who advised:

Since the purchase price would have to be borrowed at more than 4.5 per cent. the result would be to add the annual interest of the Commission some £ 3,000 to £ 5,000 a year … I considered that the Government might find some difficulty in justifying the provision of up to £ 400,000 from the Exchequer on what might appear to be the ‘nationalisation’, under some pressure from the trade unions, of the Preference Shares of this Company.[[1139]](#footnote-1139)

A copy of this letter was also sent to the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, and other key members of the government. Macmillan minuted the next day, ‘I see no harm in this transaction but little purpose. If the commission own the equity, they can surely do what they like about management’.[[1140]](#footnote-1140)

The official offer to purchase the Pullman preference shares was eventually made on 4 October 1962 by ‘Britravel Nominees Ltd’, which was incorporated 23 November 1954 as a private company with share capital, and described in the press release as ‘a wholly owned company controlled by the British Transport Commission’.[[1141]](#footnote-1141) The bid price was marginally lower than had been suggested in previous correspondence, at 17 shillings per share. At the same time the main Pullman operating agreement with the B.T.C. was extended for just an additional two months to 31 December 1962, in order to cover the period up to the expected vesting day – i.e. the date that the integration of the Pullman Car operations would pass to the control of the new British Railways Board. In the interim, acceptances had been received (equating to 96.2 per cent. of stock in issue) agreeing to the unconditional offer, coinciding with the announcement that Sir John Elliot (Chairman), Col Frank Harding (managing director), and Messrs René Margot-Nobelmaire and G L McLaren (both members since 1950) would retire from the Pullman Board when the company became a division of British Transport Hotels Ltd, itself a subsidiary of the new Railways Board.[[1142]](#footnote-1142)

Against the dire background of falling traffics, increasing financial losses and an unprecedented increase in car ownership, the first ‘Beeching Report’, *The Reshaping of British Railways*, was published on 27 March 1963. Britain’s railways were widely seen as being in decline and generally held in very low esteem.[[1143]](#footnote-1143) Naturally, attention has continued to focus largely on Dr Beeching’s proposals and ramifications for widespread line and station closures, while hardly any attention was paid to his positive verdict on main-line passenger services:

the introduction of the Blue Pullman services … heralded the luxury train of the future … where a demand capable of supporting quality services covered by supplementary charges is seen to exist, they will be introduced.[[1144]](#footnote-1144)

It would appear that the Board’s policy-makers had rather more ambitious expansion aims than the views of senior officers at regional level – at Board headquarters, in the regions and at British Transport Hotels – would prompt further considerations along the way. One of the first encouraging signs that the Board was sincere in its outline to consolidate and develop Pullman services came on 9 August 1963. In a letter to the deputy secretary at the Ministry of Transport, the B.R.B.’s technical adviser, sought approval for the expenditure of £ 2,735,800 on the projected coaching stock building programme for the following year.[[1145]](#footnote-1145) Among these plans for 200 ordinary mainline coaches of an improved type (the first production series mark 2 vehicles), were proposals for 12 additional ‘Mark 1-type Pullman cars’, at an estimated cost of £ 237,600. These vehicles were intended to wholly replace the remaining 12 all-steel second-class parlour brake vehicles constructed in 1928 and 1930, respectively that had been retained (and upgraded) on all East Coast services from London (King’s Cross) working together with the 44 new Metro-Cammell cars (of Mark 1-type profile) that were introduced in 1960/1.

Although the plan caused some contention, it was stated almost from the outset that there had been some doubt as to the justification for running the midday Pullman departure as a through train from London (King’s Cross) to Glasgow.[[1146]](#footnote-1146) Over the years there had been proposals that this service should terminate in Edinburgh or Newcastle.[[1147]](#footnote-1147) On the other hand, investigations undertaken during early 1963 - when the new cars had already been introduced to the ‘Queen of Scots Pullman’ - had shown that the ‘total average revenue per journey of £ 731 and one shilling exceeded the train’s direct movement costs by £ 569 and four shillings’. It was further claimed that the train subscribed to ‘indirect costs on every stage of the journey’ – negligible between Leeds and Harrogate, and between Edinburgh and Glasgow. However, further studies had suggested that the train’s withdrawal (effective in 1964) would not lead to any material loss of patronage overall, with the loading of other (ordinary) services with mixed accommodation likely to benefit from those passengers displaced from the Pullman. (The commercial justification for running a Pullman service all year round to/from Edinburgh, with its later extension to Glasgow in 1929, had in fact been queried by the L.N.E.R. Traffic Committee prior to the introduction of the ‘Queen of Scots’ title during 1926 and 1927).[[1148]](#footnote-1148)

In their deliberations, the Eastern and North Eastern Regions had subsequently concluded following the plan to build new cars, that an accelerated return service between London and Leeds, balancing the ‘Yorkshire Pullman’, and taking three hours in each direction, would provide more profitable employment for one of the two Pullman sets.[[1149]](#footnote-1149) The Scottish region representatives suggested that this proposal was evidently not acceptable to the other two regions.[[1150]](#footnote-1150) In the foreseeable future, it was agreed that, consideration should be given to the substitution of Pullman stock for the first-class accommodation in all four ‘Talisman’ services, where it was realised a number of second-class vehicles might be required and upgraded to first class.[[1151]](#footnote-1151) Although the business decision to build new cars had encouraging ramifications on replacing the life-expired all-timber 12-wheel cars, and others, still in daily use on the S.R’s ‘Bournemouth Belle’, it was agreed that upon their withdrawal from service, many more modern ‘steel underframe’ cars of the mid-1920s and ‘all-steel’ cars of 1928-1930 vintage working on London (King’s Cross) services would be cascaded, in stages, to work on the Southern Region.

At this juncture, the former secretary of the Pullman Car Company, E. J. Morris, representing what would later become the Pullman Division, raised ‘no fundamental objection to the idea of a truncated service to/from Leeds, but suggested that extension to/from Harrogate would be desirable’. (He was concerned however that Glasgow-based on-board ‘Queen of Scots Pullman’ train crew equating to almost 20, would be left without the prospect of any alternative employment).[[1152]](#footnote-1152) Another suggestion that was briefly promoted was for Pullmans to replace ordinary first-class stock in other selected departures from London (King’s Cross). It was argued that this would not be attainable because it would severely throw into disorder the more intensive traffic pattern – a general principle of the Beeching era – that had already been adopted for the train sets employed on the Yorkshire and Newcastle services.[[1153]](#footnote-1153)

Given the persisting and continuing challenge to traditional modes transacted by Pullman management, there appears to have been a genuine attempt made in 1962 - the final year of their contracts with British Railways - to avoid becoming embroiled with additional industrial trouble with the N.U.R. With the dawn of a new era, simple business typology developed: a direct result of plans aimed at increasing managerial control, linked to progressive structural adaptation.

**9.10 Difficulties ahead**

Arguably, of the major criticisms for the extended difficulty and mismanagement of British Rail services in its first 15 years apportioned between the British Transport Commission and successive governments, the greater share by far rested with the former.[[1154]](#footnote-1154) The immense staff economies made during the Beeching era demonstrated that the B.T.C. had been running a very inefficient railway. Even without the excessive and obsolescent investments of the Modernisation Plan, the inefficiency of British rail under the B.T.C. would have brought about the same financial collapse. The rail-users objective to have lots of train services, coincided with that of the trade unions, the respective managements, and the political sense of the government. However, it was the financial sense of government which was, seemingly unbeknown to anybody, that had been considerably flouted. An accessible railway with improved passenger comfort were what everybody in the country was probably anticipating. The railway managements, B.T.C., Railway Executive and the Pullman Car Company, had believed in the competitive years of the inter-war period, and that the power to co-ordinate the competing modes secured their future, unfortunately took on an almost impossible task.[[1155]](#footnote-1155) It could also be argued that they made it harder by their leisurely or composed pace, in both the speed with which they did things, and the yesteryear look of any of their acts. Possibly what appeared to outsiders as a gentle pace was in fact, as argued by Joy, ‘the best the B.T.C. could ever have achieved”.[[1156]](#footnote-1156)

It is likely that the well-meaning of co-ordination, as required by the 1948 Act, was now almost impossible, and as Joy further argues, the B.T.C.’s lack of progress was just a blind refusal to admit defeat at a self-sought task.[[1157]](#footnote-1157) Possibly, too, the unimaginative technical and operating developments were the best which could be achieved by managers whose development had been a precarious day-to-day existence in depression and war. Given that the monolithic railway organisation was increasingly unmanageable by the B.T.C, by concealing these inadequacies from the public and parliament, the B.T.C. and their successors lost significant credibility.[[1158]](#footnote-1158) The nation was assuredly led to believe that nationalisation would solve more problems than it created. The unions and the labour party were confident that relieving the shareholders would create a new era.[[1159]](#footnote-1159)

Although the B.T.C. did however try to give what the public wanted, the perceived ‘co-ordination’, to provide the profits which would in turn provide the public service, had failed very early on.[[1160]](#footnote-1160) With the change of government in 1951, ministers were quick to see this. Under the Modernisation Plan, the elimination of complaints about the railways and reappraisal of its services was clearly the mutual objective of both management and the government which in the public mind, ‘more’ is better, whether it applies to other forms of transportation or hospitals, schools and policemen. But what distinguished the railways in this group was that it was possible to state, unambiguously, how much was ‘best’.[[1161]](#footnote-1161) For the railways had substitutes, including long-distance bus and coach routes, etc, and users and governments could make choices. Users exercised this choice, and during the 1950s and 60’s they almost deserted the railway. The government’s ‘choice’ was not effectively exercised until Dr Beeching confronted it later in 1963; it unquestionably provided the money for the B.T.C. to make decisions on its behalf, resulting in some dismal results and worsening national prospects as it transpired.[[1162]](#footnote-1162)

These results had become clear during the late 1950s at a time when the B.T.C. was invariably behind in many of the objectives it was trying to achieve. By the time Beeching took over in June 1961, the B.T.C. had been through numerous committee enquiries, and finally was confronted with its errors and recurring deficits, which as Skelsey poignantly remarks by that time ‘the high hopes of 1955 [had] finally evaporated’.[[1163]](#footnote-1163)201

**9.11 The new Pullman Division**

On 1 January 1963, the merging of Britain’s rail-catering providers under a common management, long solicited by the N.U.R., was at last achieved with the formation of the ‘Pullman Division’ of British Transport Hotels Ltd (B.T.H.), which was also responsible for the staffing, welfare and provisioning of the restaurant-car services. While the new division assumed responsibility for the on-board services provided on Pullman trains, ownership of the cars was in fact transferred to the various British Railways regions to which they were allocated. B.T.H., itself was a wholly owned subsidiary of the newly constituted British Railways Board (B.R.B.). The Pullman Car Company was not formally liquidated, but simply became a ‘dormant company’ and listed in B.R.B. ownership.[[1164]](#footnote-1164)

Although the alignment of Pullman had in effect now taken place, much as the N.U.R. had so long wished, there were still some activists amongst members of the B.T.H. and its subsidiaries who disliked the very name of ‘Pullman’, and who had already created the problems with the operation of the diesel ‘Blue Pullman’ trains. These moves had, of course, represented a takeover of a relatively small company by a much larger organisation and, in doing so resolved the disparity of pay and conditions of former Pullman company employees. Takeovers of this nature are however rarely comfortable for those who are taken over. Indeed, some six months earlier, and oblivious to Pullman employees, the B.T.C. had indicated to the government that such a move was expected to save around £ 25,000 a year in the short term, and up to £ 56,000 from labour savings in the longer term.[[1165]](#footnote-1165)

In reality, as this study has shown the Pullman Company in terms of the management structure and its business was a somewhat imprecise organisation at this time. Historically, it had always relied on and had been closely associated with the Southern Region and its antecedents. Its core management team was still based in a very small suite of offices leased from the railway at London’s Victoria station. But, as had been shown in the company’s confidential report (see appendix 4) presented to the commission in 1959, apart from the ‘Brighton’ and ‘Bournemouth Belle’ services, and (very marginally) the prestigious ‘Golden Arrow’ London-Paris service, none of its operations on the Southern were by then profitable. Apart from some short-term impact with novel internal vehicle accessories, little had fundamentally changed in the interim.[[1166]](#footnote-1166) ‘Blue Pullman’ and East Coast cars apart, the Pullman fleet was increasingly showing its age, particularly when compared to the vastly improved ordinary passenger carriages of the standard B.R. design being introduced. Many ‘Blue Pullman’ features were later taken by BR and modified in the light of experience. The enhanced comfort of these coaches, with excellent bogie design, made a considerable commercial impression.[[1167]](#footnote-1167) As argued by Haresnape, the railway’s passenger managers began to view the Pullman trains as unnecessarily costly to run because of their extra staffing and array of kitchen equipment spread down the length of the train. The operating cost per passenger seat of a Pullman car plus the staff wages and catering, was now the weak point in almost any argument for their future retention.[[1168]](#footnote-1168)

There was, moreover, a substantial mismatch between the upmarket image the company liked to project with its operations on royal trains, and other special workings, over S.R. routes. Visiting heads of state, and other important personages arriving at Gatwick, Southampton or Dover were comfortably transported, in time-honoured tradition with red carpets on arrival at London (Victoria), which contrasted with the ordinary buffet- and pantry-car services that represented the everyday reality for much of its catering activities on southern lines, although some writers have claimed that by 1963 the catering vehicles were closed.[[1169]](#footnote-1169) Apart from those individual travellers who used them, it remains uncertain whether the general public associated these services with Pullman. It must also be questioned whether the Pullman name and its associated long-standing traditions meant a very great deal to many of the on-board staff employed on the company’s best known (and profitable) limited trains elsewhere on British Railways – particularly to those who had transferred from the regional restaurant car departments. There was, after all, no longer a fixed Pullman ‘presence’ on the ground at these trains’ provincial bases, now the most senior company representatives with whom they came into regular contact were the inspectors based at the main London stations.

Throughout early 1963, senior B.T.H. and B.R. officers conducted visits to the Pullman offices at Victoria, the Battersea commissary depot and the workshops at Preston Park, Brighton, to undertake a thorough review of Pullman operations and interview individual members of staff.[[1170]](#footnote-1170) A number of the latter were later to be slotted into broadly equivalent jobs within the B.T.H. organisation, but many were not, and faced redundancy.

In a letter, dated 21 March 1963, to the deputy secretary at the Ministry of Transport reported that:

As from the 1 January all the assets of the Pullman Car Company were transferred to the railways so that separate accounting has been eliminated, saving an audit fee of £ 1,000 a year … The Pullman laundry at Battersea has been closed. While the maintenance of cars is being taken over by the [British Railways’] Workshops Division … progress is being made with the Regions in the rationalisation of Pullman services and it is anticipated that some substantial reductions in loss-making services.[[1171]](#footnote-1171)

The later minutes for the B.T.H. Board meeting, on 18 April, noted that the integration of the Pullman organisation had proceeded smoothly and that, as anticipated, the Battersea depot had been closed on 25 March. This had resulted in a reduction of staff of 18 salaried and 55 wages grades.[[1172]](#footnote-1172) The largest savings were made by rationalization at Preston Park, Pullman’s dedicated workshops based at Brighton since 1928. Among his last formal duties as Pullman’s Chairman, Sir John Elliot visited Preston Park to open a brand-new up-to-date works canteen, replacing an old grounded Pullman car. According to contemporary press reports, he had then informed the assembled workforce that he had received an assurance from the B.T.C. that the works would be retained for at least two or three more years.[[1173]](#footnote-1173) Indeed, Carter argues that a memo from the Pullman Managing Director dated 26 October 1962 offered assurances that the ‘services and staff have earned a high reputation with the traveling public’ and the B.T.C. will ‘need to call upon all available Pullman energy and expertise’.[[1174]](#footnote-1174) However, by March 1963, they were told that it was now the intention to close the works early the following year.[[1175]](#footnote-1175) Consequently, they were advised to seek other employment as only a small number were likely to be offered jobs at Eastleigh works, which would henceforth be responsible for the maintenance of the remaining Pullman cars allocated to the S.R., while East Coast cars would be dealt with at York, rather than Doncaster. In his latter-day study, *Pullman and the Orient Expresses,* George Behrend dismissed a claim by the local newspapers that the ‘local member of parliament extracted from B.R. the admission that they did not really know what Preston Park did.’[[1176]](#footnote-1176) It is not unreasonable to assume that beyond the engineering staff most closely involved, probably few other senior railway managers appreciated that Pullman’s Preston Park Work was essentially a specialist body shop, working in conjunction chiefly with Lancing Carriage Works – to which, from a wider perspective, it acted in conjunction. It was, after all, the latter facility that was responsible for the upkeep and overhaul of all the running gear and brake equipment of the cars that passed through the Pullman works. But, by comparison with Lancing, which then employed some 1,700 workers, Preston Park, with approximately 100, was significantly smaller. With an anticipated rundown in rolling stock requirements generally, and greater dependency being placed on outside manufacturers for the provision of motive power units under the railway modernisation plan, the British Railways workshops division had been preparing proposals for a severe cutback in works capacity. These plans had only been presented to the B.T.C. in the autumn of 1962 – but they also envisaged in stages the complete closure of Lancing works over a three-year period.[[1177]](#footnote-1177)

At its meeting in October 1963, the traffic conference had strongly recommended that going forward there would be a need for only ‘one type of Pullman accommodation i.e. first-class, in place of the present Pullman first and Pullman second’. It had also been agreed that, in due course as and when cars were due for maintenance, the armchair seating in first-class Pullman accommodation should be on a 2+1 basis and a similar livery applied, as provided in the ‘Blue Pullman’ units. Although these policies could not be executed quickly, they had been subsequently approved by the Board.[[1178]](#footnote-1178)

By April 1964, the chief commercial officer’s department wrote to the chief supplies & contracts officer, to suggest that the proposal to construct six new brake-ended second-class Pullman cars for the East Coast services should be abandoned. For the longer term, the chief mechanical engineer and the design panel were also asked to examine the feasibility of converting the existing 1960 series of second-class cars and upgrading them to first-class.[[1179]](#footnote-1179) The traffic conference had further specified that future Pullman services should be modelled in order to:

cater for business passengers in the morning and evening peak periods, either as part of the regular service pattern, or as additional peak period services [but] where demand would not justify an all-Pullman train, the position [would] be met by running a Pullman section for first-class passengers combined with second-class ordinary stock.[[1180]](#footnote-1180)

The so-called Pullman portion or composite concept in ordinary trains was to be initially trialled on the East Coast Route following a practice used on the Southern Region.[[1181]](#footnote-1181) In the 1964 summer timetable, for example, following the withdrawal of the ‘Queen of Scots’, Pullmans replaced the ordinary first-class coaches on the London-based ‘Talisman’ service travelling north to Edinburgh and returning south in the afternoons. This was to be followed by a similar move on the balancing Scottish-based workings in September, displacing experimental carriages – known as ‘XP64’ that incorporated the ideas of the Board’s design panel on internal layout and furnishing prior to their possible adoption in the forthcoming series production of ordinary Mark 2 stock.[[1182]](#footnote-1182) These moves put pressure on the East Coast’s Pullman allocation and two ‘Golden Arrow’ cars were transferred from the S.R., while two second-class cars were also reclassified as firsts. Nevertheless, there was opposition to the imposition of compulsory Pullman supplementary fares on services that had not previously been subject to such charges and there was a drop in first-class patronage in consequence. By April 1965, ordinary first-class accommodation was reinstated.[[1183]](#footnote-1183)

The future arrangement of all Pullman services and any new vehicles was the subject of extensive deliberation between the officers of the Board, the regions and B.T.H. throughout the latter part of 1964.[[1184]](#footnote-1184) At one time or another during this period, new Pullman services were also proposed between London, and the West Country, in addition to revitalising former Pullman links with Harwich Parkeston Quay, while the Bristol service would be extended to/from Chippenham and Weston-Super-Mare, and the Bradford service to/from Halifax. While the ‘Midland Pullman’ units would both be transferred to the Western Region with the necessity of some cars downgraded to second class; a simple process of re-labelling. The S.R. would retain only the ‘Golden Arrow’ service to/from Dover with a small selection of remodelled cars, including reserves. These proposals were considered in great detail at a further meeting of the traffic conference held in May 1964, and included attendance by E. J. Morris from B.T.H, the one-time Pullman Company secretary.[[1185]](#footnote-1185) The following points were noted: that the E.R. was not in favour of having reintroduced Pullman accommodation on the ‘Hook Continental’ service to Harwich Parkeston Quay. The N.E.R. had neither the need nor the desire for two business services from Yorkshire. The continued portions from both Bradford and Harrogate joining at Leeds would meet the anticipated demand. However, in conjunction with the E.R., it was hopeful of retaining the London-based 6-car ‘White Rose Pullman’. The L.M.R. had not contemplated or could justify the replacement of ordinary first-class accommodation on their business services. The W.R. recognised that the maintenance cover proposed for the diesel ‘Blue Pullmans’ was unlikely to be adequate and ‘would submit a proposal for additional cars’ for these services. The Scottish Region accepted the proposals, but also called for a Pullman service to London from Glasgow via the West Coast Route, and ‘this would be considered jointly with the L.M.R’. The Southern Region intimated that ‘the design of the new electric service between Bournemouth/Southampton and London as … contemplated … did not provide for ongoing Pullman facilities.’[[1186]](#footnote-1186)

In proportion to the catering account figures supplied by B.T.H. in 1964, taking into consideration the usual overheads, the Southern Pullman services had made a loss during the previous year of £ 40,674, which contrasted sharply with profits of £ 60,717 on the East Coast group of services; £ 24,504 on the Western Region and £ 19,053 on the London Midland Region.[[1187]](#footnote-1187)

**9.12 Conclusion**

It is evident that the management structure of the Pullman Car Company barely changed from the inter-war years until 1954 when the B.T.C. started buying up the ordinary shares; by January 1963 it was a wholly-owned subsidiary, and later, simply part of a division of British Rail, by which time most the old umber and cream liveried vehicles – were destined to be withdrawn during 1967 - while retaining a high level of comfort, were seen as old-fashioned and a lingering icon from pre-war days.[[1188]](#footnote-1188) The same month that Dr Beeching revealed the Corporate Plan witnessed a sad event, in which Pullman cars played a prominent role: a special train conveying the body and mourners of the late Sir Winston Churchill on 24 January 1965.[[1189]](#footnote-1189) During much of its latter existence, the company provided cars and services of a quality that the railways generally could not. Such was the dedication of the management and staff that in due course, the idea of ‘Pullman and perfection’ was created, leading to their adoption on many main lines and invariably used for visiting heads of state and royalty. This was never likely to survive the depredation of war and the subsequent long years of austerity, nevertheless, the post-war restoration and renewal of Pullman services was hastily transacted and flawed to the need to make up lost ground after six lean and exceptionally difficult war years, as outlined in chapter five. Because of lingering war-time restrictions, including rationing and lack of direct competition, only a brief period of business success followed, where new and often novel innovations were offered to the travelling public. By the mid-1950s the perception of a modern, forward-looking company began to flounder, however. Management behaviour appeared to be slow or at best complacent only on securing business that was almost always in familiar territory, while the continued difficulties of working with the B.T.C., trade unions, and the reluctance to secure fresh capital due to lack of contract renewals reinforced further their tendency to cling to traditional patterns of ownership, control and management plans.

While the B.T.C. had purchased a controlling interest in Pullman in 1954, the company’s management into the early 1960s at least remained wholly distinctly separate from that of the B.T.H.C.’s restaurant-car services, becoming increasingly out of touch in a rapidly changing climate of public expectation and difficult labour relations. The unions continued to object to what they saw as expanding ‘private enterprise’ organisation operating on a state-owned railway, and being granted the catering concession on some of B.R.’s highest-profile – and potentially the most profitable and highest tipping – business train services.

The B.T.C.’s notable acquisition of all the Pullman preference shares had been created by a desire to resolve recent clashes with the unions and unrest with staff. There was also a clear desire to finalise this deal before the Pullman operating contract expired in 1962, and to finally rectify the generally inferior working conditions of Pullman employees and rates of pay into line with those of the restaurant car staff. On the other hand, for the B.T.C. to have taken its own break-even objective seriously, i.e. in any way other than the vain hopes of tomorrow, required managerial aptitude which were just not there. The evidence of some of its members to the select committee in 1959 shows that, even after the gross error of their ways had been pointed out to them, they still did not fully understand. If the top management had no understanding of the basic problems, the middle management had no capacity for carrying out the necessary repairs. It ultimately took Beeching to force them through.

If the B.T.C. was incapable and unwilling to act accordingly within the railway, the government appeared no more willing to face realities, as outlined in detail by Gourvish. This unwillingness to do what is right, when it might show that many previous acts must have been wrong, was probably a natural reaction. Pullman services which should have been reformed sooner, repriced, adjusted or even withdrawn by the mid-1950s were still operating in pre-nationalisation form in 1960, and all the intervening governments had been spared the nuisance and embarrassment which would have ensued if the B.T.C. had vigorously followed its formal instructions on all passenger services. The government ignored the warning signs as the B.T.C. collapsed, and it ignored the need for total reform, of its own approach to the problem as well as that of the railways, if the B.T.C.’s successor was to succeed. To extend the simile of chapters 4 and 5, in 1962 the government invited the new British Railways Board to find its own way. Dr. Beeching accepted an unusual and difficult remit, and the government was able to suddenly assume the role of protector of the public interest against the railway managers who were trying to reduce the services people had affection for but did not use. Joy has argued that the government’s and the B.R.B.’s objectives were both formally and practically in conflict.

The way in which the B.T.C. incurred self-inflicted wounds right through the 1950s, and the way in which Beeching accepted the task for the 1960s, put no pressure on successive governments to act more responsibly toward British Railways. Instead, as Joy has shown, they had an incentive to leave the railways in an impossible situation which was largely of their own making. It can be argued of course that whole organisations will try harder if faced with extremely difficult goals, but this appears to have been approached in a lukewarm manner by the Pullman management. It can also be argued that the amount of rail service provided under the arrangement was, possibly by accident, the optimal amount. With the best possible relationship between governments and the railway management, and to an extent the gentlemanly approach taken by Pullman, the net result would have probably been the same. Such an argument ignores the B.T.C.’s poor efficiency record. It is hard to conceive that had governments been more decisive and realistic in their management of the railways, the results would not have been much improved.

Ultimately, the government, the nation, and the railways, got the worst of all worlds. The ways in which the government influenced the railway management from 1948 only left them with a sense of outrage and a determination that they knew what was best for the country. Then, when the railways’ view of what was ‘best’ for the country directly contravened the government’s formal wishes, the government strung along with the railway managers’ optimism.

The Pullman Car Company remained something of an oddity as it was, naturally, a public private sector company operating in a business environment largely structured by the policies of nationalised bodies – the Railway Executive and the British Transport Commission. As Gourvish has convincingly argued, reforming unwieldy business organisations in the early 1960s, culminated with the introduction of American-based corporate planning techniques in keeping with those held by Drucker, a feature not necessarily something confined to the railways, but also many other forms of transport. By the mid-1960s, the stability with which the Corporate Plan seemed to promise help to neither management nor labour, was dependent upon British Railways’ ability to convince the government to keep the cash flowing than upon actually managing the railway.

Looking back to past events might be useful only for the clarification it can offer to the much more important advance of looking forward. By the mid-1960s, with grants for passenger services, B.R. provided only those services for which the customers were prepared to pay the full cost. This was the irrevocable lesson that B.R.’s de-luxe passenger traffic could not justify commercially with the volume and scope of service then being offered. A lot of confusion continues to exist over the conflict between what B.R. had tried to do, and what its financial results say it could commercially do. Within the mass of the railways, a moderately profitable railway was possible once loss-making activities were wholly eradicated.

As argued in this work, de-luxe Pullman services had a key role for only a brief time (later displaced by modern and supplement-free services), although those which were loss-making or out of place with demand were eventually withdrawn.

A railway system is very much like a living organisation and unless those working in it can be assured that their masters know where they are leading it, and be proud to seek the goal, their personal contribution to the enterprise will diminish.

**10.0 Conclusions**

The Harvard School’s basic appraisal and criticisms about British industry’s reluctance to embrace the economies of mass production and the re-organisation of firms towards ‘managerial’ enterprises, cannot be applied to the luxury railway market.[[1190]](#footnote-1190) The British Pullman Car Company was almost wholly reliant on strongly demand-led markets for its services. It follows that only those sectors which controlled, or could have controlled their markets can reasonably be criticised if they failed to embrace the structural changes advocated by Drucker. In considering the business history of the Pullman Company and its management decision-making, therefore, this thesis has considered the question of whether the luxury railway market could have sustained a supply-led market via marketing through much of the twentieth century in order to benefit from an expanding fleet. An increase in standardisation of vehicles would have permitted greater economies of scale, but to achieve production economies of the levels of other comparable businesses in Britain by the mid-1950s, the British Pullman Company would have required a wider network of fewer manufacturers to construct rolling stock, each producing more vehicles of fewer designs.

The industry’s failure to achieve these production levels was due to its inability to control the high-end luxury market. In the progressive years of the 1920s, the ‘extra-fare’ industry had moved towards standardised designs and batch production of components and vehicles. Thereafter, however, it became increasingly dominated by its market when it then served largely as a contract industry with much greater reliance on host railway companies. These same companies were themselves latterly improving their own take on Pullman-style travel in direct competition. The factors that led to this regression to contract outside manufacturing were three-fold, namely the determination of each firm to survive, the introduction and expansion of British railway company ‘extra-fare’ services and the isolating effects of the London-based overseas market.

**10.1 Demand**

The culture in the luxury ‘extra fare’ railway market, of preserving a broad market base to provide long-term contracts for the continuity of work for personnel and capital equipment had been present since the pre-railway era. To overcome market fluctuations, the Pullman Company sought continuity of work through some diversification, not just the leading-end product, but of a broader market base, a welcome new form of which was the introduction of third-class accommodation, as well as a limited number of second-class Pullman services. The culture continued as the company experienced sharply fluctuating demand during the latter inter-war period, which was closely related to cyclical movements in the domestic British economy, as well as to worldwide economic and political events. The ability of the Pullman Company to survive the low-points in these cycles, including non-railway related diversification, explains its continued existence post-1945. This became more significant later in the century as the very characteristics enabling its survival, a broad market base utilising an increasing ageing stock, progressively constrained its ability to compete with more enterprising services that specialised in standard up-to-date equipment without supplementary fares and often to faster schedules.

The rate of survival among British railway ‘extra-fare’ services of the ‘Big Four’ Railway Companies, contrasts with those of Pullman, which developed to exploit the rapid growth of their domestic market during the mid-1930s. They achieved this largely through specialisation in standard rolling stock production for flagship streamline trains or club-style accommodation but, without a broad manufacturing base. With their greater vulnerability to market trends, the railway companies, as well as Pullman, conformed with the fluctuations through diversification and often recruitment of short-term un-skilled labour. Pullman also increasingly developed a broad overseas market, with some services in Southern Ireland, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Romania and as far as Egypt, during the worst recessions in the British domestic market.

During the inter-war period particularly, the ‘extra-fare’ and luxury market growth and re-investment was as a response to, and recognition of, a reduction of the domestic main-line market and the uncertain and fluctuating overseas market. The marked divergence reflected in Dalziel’s policies and decisions resulting from these uncertainties, as too were the opportunities and innovations that later came about. These changes were also largely affected by the degree of confidence felt by the railway companies on whose lines the Pullman cars ran when it came to re-investment and expansion, and by the Pullman Company’s strong will to survive. Pullman was prepared to develop their business with the aim of securing contracts on all British (and Continental Europe) mainlines, with increasing emphasis from 1926 on batch production unique to certain services, requiring the expanding of capital equipment programmes and by then the increasing use of skilled labour.

Until the late 1940s, the industry under private railway company ownership controlled the ‘extra fare’ market, and evolved new decision-making practices varied from one railway company to another, policies for expanding (or limiting) Pullman services in marketing, selling and administration. The British Pullman Company begun with securing new contracts for specific services, using vehicles built with gradients, ceiling height and accommodating length all in mind. These are best seen to good effect on the timber-bodied 57 ft length cars used on the South East & Chatham Railway compared to the all-timber cars of 63 ft used on the Caledonian Railway in Scotland, as per chapters 2 and 3. Under the Dalziel mantel, the company had a notable intense burst of technological development, patents and material technology as well as design, to fulfil the railways’ requirements from 1908 to 1927 and, post-Dalziel 1928-1932, culminating with the introduction in Britain of the all-steel car. Pullmans then developed incrementally, in terms of material technology, design and interior aesthetics in an attempt to appease changing public taste, as argued by Buckley, but many interiors dated quickly. Rolling stock manufacturers, such as Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co; The Midland Railway Carriage & Wagon; Leeds Forge and the Metropolitan., emulated the earlier progressive role of railway manufacturers in pursuing purposeful standard design strategies, and demonstrated extraordinary progress in manufacturing development and technique, resulting in some standardisation of Pullman car types, of which five became prominent ‘types’ which figured as late as the 1960s. Dalziel pioneered new capital equipment in conjunction with Dudley Docker and production processes which reduced manufacturing time and cost for increasingly standardised and interchangeable, as well as reducing the requirement for labour costs. However, as the industry’s influence over its market declined by the mid-1930s, it largely lost the control over technology and design improvements with the transformation of customer-led markets in both domestic and overseas operations. This role was taken on the main railway companies and their associated workshops as well as consulting engineers, and as empirical advancement gave way to scientific progress with the introduction of streamline trains, much initiative of the Pullman ‘extra-fare’ services had passed to the railway companies themselves. The variety of Pullman contracts, with limited scope for standardisation and expansion, besides the resulting proliferation of designs, reduced considerably the opportunity for manufacturing economies.

As a service provider, the Pullman Company was too small and diverse to counter the rise of the large railway workshops who were constructing masses of standard-type rolling stock for both ordinary and luxury services, and too dependent upon the consulting engineers and railway companies to develop and expand widely. Pullman had no option but to accept the largely short-term contracting role, often inherited with railway mergers and, later, post-World War 2 Nationalisation, which would continue to be subject to the goodwill of the railway company concerned and market fluctuations for their services.

As Jenkinson has noted, the progressive manufacturers accommodated the new market requirements by Pullman, by pursuing specialised carriage production, more often contracting and awarding to the best tender, but occasionally, although rarely, building vehicles themselves.[[1191]](#footnote-1191)1 They introduced, as *The Railway Engineer* correspondent puts it, ‘care […] taken to maintain the well-known characteristics of Pullman cars’ as well as the ‘adoption of batch control procedures, as far as the market would allow’, the latter had done much to reduce production time and cost.[[1192]](#footnote-1192) By the late-1920s, therefore, there was a wide diversity of skills, capital equipment and production procedures, and the costs of manufacture were reflected in the news features of the railway press and shareholders meetings of the Pullman Company.

The general loss of market control by the mid-1930s and the lack of substantial vehicle orders after 1932 (excepting a 1938 order of seven cars on the L.N.E.R. which only materialised in 1951), prevented the Pullman Company continuing its progress towards greater standardisation as shown by the railway companies producing small batch orders for specific trains, i.e. ‘The Silver Jubilee’, ‘The Coronation’ and ‘The Coronation Scot.[[1193]](#footnote-1193) Had the industry not been subjected to these market changes, it is likely that it would have evolved in a similar manner to the carriage building industry in the United States.[[1194]](#footnote-1194) Had it not been for world war in 1939, the ‘Big Four’ railway companies probably would have had a sufficiently large market base to encourage further investment and specialisation in ‘luxury’ and/or ‘extra-fare’ rolling stock production, although passenger acceptance or popularity may have fluctuated with market recessions. These companies were of sufficient size to challenge anything Pullman could offer in terms of amenities, quality of service, pricing and food - in a similar manner successfully pursued by the Wagons-Lits Company in continental Europe, as seen in the results of the analysis of the L.M.S. Board in 1926.

Moreover, the luxury travel sector had quite different characteristics from the ordinary railway sector, and in which the builders of Pullman cars, governed by the expectations of the Pullman Board, retained discretion for specification and design, subject to the criteria of the railway company on whose lines the cars would run. Although there was scope for technological development, the small but numerous batches of cars introduced from 1908-1921 followed main-line practice with the best new materials and increasing performance specifications; all-timber construction however increased the weight of rolling stock compared to contemporary ordinary carriages or dimensions for specific railway lines. In some cases, any notion of transfer to another operating line was deemed impractical or even impossible. Conversely, the ‘Big Four’ companies, particularly the L.N.E.R. and L.M.S. engaged in main-line production, taking full advantage of their discretionary strength to develop and maintain fleets of increasingly standard designs. Their vigorous marketing and selling adopted much of the late Pullman practices but on a much larger scale, using literature, posters, trade fairs and travel agents. Production, similarly, used mostly standardised components in Britain, whilst Pullman was noted for its various orders overseas while accommodating variations of track and profile gauge required by the customers (the railway companies) in Spain, France, Switzerland, Egypt (through the auspices of the Wagons-Lits company) and elsewhere.

**10.2 Tactical Decision-Making**

The railway luxury and ‘extra-fare’ industry was generally successful in its tactical decision-making, although the failure of several early competitors before World War 1 confirms that adequate provision was not always made for sufficient working capital or to deal with market changes. From its outset the railway luxury and ‘extra-fare’ was run by, and was dependent upon, managing partners assisted by specialist managers. In the case of Dalziel, he habitually invested in the firms and companies that supported him. The employment of specialist and general managers was increasingly adopted by the Pullman Company, particularly from the 1920s as the business expanded to Southern Ireland, continental Europe and elsewhere and the company faced more demanding decision-making. A form of functional line management evolved in the offices, workshops and on the cars with a multitude of staff grading which delegated responsibilities for employment, procurement, sales and marketing, cost and financial accounting.

The standard and value of business information available to building proprietors and senior managers and Board members was generally good during Dalziel’s involvement. All five building proprietors who constructed Pullmans to order from 1908 were well versed in credit arrangements both in Britain and overseas and, within the limits of small batch restraints, in raw material limitation. Although cost and management accounting procedures were well developed before World War 1, however, the use of this information in making tactical decisions was somewhat variable. Several firms, including Birmingham Carriage & Wagon, used the information effectively, with separate management information for each of their main workshops, making them effectively ‘cost centres’. They thus conformed to good business practice as defined by Drucker.[[1195]](#footnote-1195) Other manufacturers of Pullman cars, notably Clayton Wagons, paid less attention to this detail and were less aware of cost escalation. They only survived in business until 1930. The Pullman contractors achieved a major adaptation of their skills-base, transforming often small concerns to a ‘family culture’ among their workers. Discretionary responsibilities for design, selection of materials and work administration was passed to the specialist managers. The shortage of craftsmen around World War 1, accentuated at times of high Pullman car demand, was alleviated by the introduction of self-acting machine tools and the employment of unskilled labour. The majority of tasks, however, continued to require the presence of fitters and cabinet makers. Pullman’s dependence on these specialist skills, meant that manufacturers were obliged to maintain skilled workers (carpenters, marquetry makers, etc) in employment as far as possible in order to maintain their breath of production. With the Pullman workshops being located in urban areas of Battersea and Brighton, paternalism was generally limited to works’ events and outings rather than fulfilling a deeper community involvement, although staff benefits including paid holiday and a sick fund pre-World War 2 were proportionately better than the service industry at the time. However, even these modest actions were seen by Dalziel and the Pullman Board as an important means of fostering a ‘family culture’ which helped to maintain employment continuity levels. Although paternalism was not as pervasive as in the large railway companies, the depth of the paternalistic endeavours at Preston Park, Brighton, mark them out as being the progenitor for the emerging luxury railway sector. Pullman management as well as manufacturers were obliged to confront major industrial relations issues during the General Strike in 1926, for instance, and were in the forefront of some of the major trade union disputes during the immediate post-World War 2 period. Manufacturing craftsmen still held real bargaining power.[[1196]](#footnote-1196) In contrast to the views of McKinlay and Zeitlin,[[1197]](#footnote-1197) however, there was no accommodation between the trade unions and the manufacturers over the erosion of skills and the employment of un-skilled labour. The issue re-surfaced with each claim of improved hours and wages in line with the railway company’s workforces. Even after the 1926 Strike, Pullman management left the issue unresolved for thirty years to be carried into the 1950s when the very name ‘Pullman’ caused some resentment and ill-feeling.

**10.3 Corporate Decision-Making**

Was the evolution of the Pullman Car Company largely imposed by the nature of its market rather than any limitations in enterprise of the Pullman Board? This runs counter to Drucker’s research, and others, that British industry did not pursue ‘managerial capitalism’ quickly enough.[[1198]](#footnote-1198) The success of some of the relationships with railway companies, especially the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway and the South Eastern & Chatham Railway which relied upon specialist managers demonstrated that many of the benefits were reciprocal and particularly long-lasting. ‘Partnership capitalism’ served the service industry and could accommodate generational transition through external recruitment and internal promotion, whilst attracting increasing managerial specialisation. Indeed, the effectiveness of partnership capitalism during the Dalziel era seems to have contributed to the slow introduction of managerial capitalism. However, progressive companies, such as Wagons-Lits and Mitropa were themselves early examples of managerial enterprise, and were just as influential in the conduct of the market on a grand scale as the partnership enterprises, but equally just as vulnerable to its limitations. The eventual development of the general manager at Pullman could not alter the dominance of main-line railways, which resulted in rolling stock design generally remaining in the hands of consulting engineers and railway company superintendents. Only a significant increase in the size of the manufacturing companies, through substantial investment or through amalgamations (Laycock, Leeds Forge and B.R.C.W., for instance) would have provided economies of scale sufficient to have encouraged a return of some market control to the industry.

Although Pullman succeeded in reaching a sustainable peak during the late 1920s, it cannot be said that the criticism that its management tried to maintain an assured income at the expense of investment for long-term growth is difficult to sustain. This was more a reflection of poor decision-making than a deliberate policy of financial benefit to the Pullman board members. As Payne suggests, the private limited company, like the Pullman Company, was a means to attract additional capital without the Board members having to give up full control.[[1199]](#footnote-1199) It is most likely that the ‘will to survive’ with Dalziel leading, was so strong that it actively discouraged mergers, although Wagons-Lits had progressively joined forces in order to consolidate markets particularly on Continental Europe’s railways where rivals, including the German-owned Mitropa Company were highly influential, and produced economies of ‘scale and scope’ with its Pullman-type services from 1925. Dalziel’s will to survive was perhaps a form of cultural restraint that Elbaum and Lazonick consider was one of the fundamental ‘institutional rigidities’ of the British economy generally.[[1200]](#footnote-1200) Regardless of being well-served with cost and financial accounts and other management information, the Pullman Board were generally poor at taking long-term decisions upon which the future of their company depended. Decisions relating to re-investment in capital equipment and diversification into and out of rolling stock manufacture were based on caution and uncertainty, and without the discipline of long-term business plans. Such caution led to conservatism with damaging long-term consequences. Long-term growth was perceived by Pullman to be less important than short-term survival and loyalty to their workforce. This conclusion supports some, but not all of the writings by Behrend.[[1201]](#footnote-1201) Indeed, it is also apparent that their strategic decisions were more dependent upon Dalziel’s personal persuasions than on clear business objectives.[[1202]](#footnote-1202) Resistance to change, perhaps the primary non-entrepreneurial influence on Pullman management, can perhaps be best summed up as being sentiment for their company and loyalty to their long-serving workforce. This resistance has been shown in the American context by Drucker and others to reflect proprietors’ social status and pecuniary awards, as well as their unthinking continuation of operational routines embedded in old corporate cultures.[[1203]](#footnote-1203) Possibly the best reflection of the feelings that determined the survivability of Pullman, in spite of dubious profitability on certain routes, was expressed by Haresnape when he argued that Dalziel had ‘moulded the affairs and policy [of the company] into the form they were destined to take for years to come’.[[1204]](#footnote-1204) *The Railway Gazette* correspondent’s views confirm how, even when all the management information may have strongly suggested a contrary action, decision-making was influenced by considerations not only by those seeking profit maximisation.[[1205]](#footnote-1205) Personal agendas, such as the individualism pursued by Dalziel, and the sentiment and loyalty, pursued by him, could override the search for a return on capital investment that may otherwise have dictated expansion or a withdrawal of service. These agendas serve to emphasise that the luxury rail market’s development, and possibly transport more generally, between the wars was determined not just by business judgement but also by personal persuasions.

There is scope to carry forward the conclusions reached in this thesis, through more detailed transport-related studies, including overseas companies, such as the Wagons-Lits and Mitropa Companies whose previous publications in recent years feature established facts, often without explanation or context. This will provide further evidence to confirm the motivations and varying levels of vision and entrepreneurship that were present in the specialist service industry. There is also considerable scope to follow through the conclusions of this thesis to determine how the ‘extra-fare’ luxury market evolved post-Pullman in different forms of transportation to the current day, which have faced the growing challenges of competition, with greater emphasis on increased output, standardisation and economies of scale and scope. Such enquiry would include the extent to which the industry’s technological and design development became a contributory cause in Britain’s growing reliance on standard non-descript services. With regard Behrend’s contention that, successively, the Railway Executive, the British Transport Commission and the British Railways Board wanted to be rid of Pullman as quickly as possible does not stand up to serious examination, beside the reality of the wholly unprecedented expansion of Pullman services post-World War 2.. This was achieved despite extremely agitated and prolonged opposition by the N.U.R. to the extension of ‘private enterprise’ operations – although latterly, the company was acquired by the British Railways Board. In the long run, however, it was essentially the acceleration and intensification of Inter-City operations utilising standardised train formations that was to undermine the whole concept of Pullman-type workings with dedicated – but frequently under-employed – catering crews inflexibly restricted to specific services.

In light of the evidence presented, the Pullman Car Company made an extraordinary contribution to luxury travel by way of technology and business development. Working partnerships with the managements of the ‘Big Four’ companies, as stated, made possible the co-ordination of technical and business talent, and entrepreneurial drive, which developed the luxury transport sector to such an extent that the Pullman network had reached its zenith with the participation of all ‘Big Four’ companies. Benefiting also from substantial foreign investments in Continental Europe, as well as Egypt and the Palestine, the company later became dependant on its monopoly of ‘extra fare’ services in the post-World War 2 period. It became subjected to increasing railway and road competition, and trade union activities that were modern in image with their advanced managerial organisations.

The vehicles themselves have been subject of chapters in books and magazine articles for more than fifty years. Conflicting stories have emerged, with statements based on secondary information or supposition and the repetition of supposition as fact. This work therefore attempts to disentangle the facts from the rest and provides new information. It also highlights some of the errors of previous commentators.

**APPENDIX 1**

**Board of Directors of the Pullman Car Company, from 1915**

**From 30 September 1915 [[1206]](#footnote-1206)**

Chairman Davison Dalziel, M.P.

Sir John S. Harmood-Banner, M.P.

Frank H. Houlder

Secretary and Manager Thomas Powell

(Registered Office: The Drawing Room Cars Company Ltd, Victoria Station, Pimlico, London, S.W.)

**1920-1923 [[1207]](#footnote-1207)**

Chairman Sir Davison Dalziel, M.P.

Sir John S. Harmood-Banner, M.P.

Richard S. Guinness

Frank H. Houlder

Count de Segur Lamoignon (Wagons-Lits V.P.)

René Nagelmackers (Wagons-Lits director)

Secretary and Manager Thomas Powell

(Registered Office: The Pullman Car Company Ltd, Victoria Station, Pimlico, London, S.W.)

**From 1928 [[1208]](#footnote-1208)3**

Chairman Lord Ashfield, P.C.

Stanley Adams (*and adviser to the Board in 1926*)

Sir Edmund Wyldbar Smith

Follett Holt

Accountant E. J. Morris

(Registered Office: The Pullman Car Company Ltd, Victoria Station, Southern Railway, Eastern Section, London, SW.1.)

**1944-1957 [[1209]](#footnote-1209)4**

Chairman Stanley Adams (retired in 1957)

Viscount Fitzalan of Derwent

Sir Basil Goulding, Bart.

M. René Margot-Noblemaire

General Manager F. D. M. Harding, O.B.E.

Secretary E. J. Morris

(Registered Office: 10 Mayfair Place, London, W.1)

**1959-1962 [[1210]](#footnote-1210)5**

Chairman Sir John Elliot

F. D. M. Harding, O.B.E.

M. René Margot-Noblemaire

Guy Lewis McLaren

Secretary E. J. Morris (*and also Board member*)

(Registered Office: 167 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1)

**APPENDIX 2**

**Pullman Car Company annual revenue, 1907-1920**

***Year Amount Observation***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1907 | Unknown. |  | Control of Pullman Company in British hands. (4) |
| 1908 | Unknown. |  | Introduction of the ‘Southern Belle’. (5) |
| 1909 | Unknown. |  |  |
| 1910 | Unknown. |  |  |
| 1911 | Unknown. |  |  |
| 1912 | £ 17,788 net. (1) |  | Gross annual revenue £ 30,000. |
| 1913 | £ 21,568 net. (1) |  |  |
| 1914 | £ 22,008 net. (1) |  |  |
| 1915 | £ 14,342 net. (1) |  | Formation of the Pullman Car Company. (1)  73 cars in fleet. (1)  Introduction of third-class Pullman cars. (6) |
| 1916 | Unknown. (2) |  | Temporary withdrawal of Pullman services. (7) |
| 1917 | £ 75,546 net. (3) |  | Temporary withdrawal of Pullman services. (7) |
| 1918 | £ 102,522 net. (3) |  |  |
| 1919 | £ 148,117 net. (3) |  | Re-introduction of third-class Pullman cars. (8) |
| 1920 | £ 192,000 net. (3) |  | Orders for 63 new cars. (9) |

*The Railway Gazette*, 15 October 1915, 386. See, also *Globe,* 9 October 1915, 9.

[Note: The Pullman Car Company was formed on 30 September 1915 to take over the business of the Pullman Company registered in 1882, free of any outstanding liabilities, the cars stocks, work on hand and goodwill and to provide and operate Pullman cars on various railways in Great Britain and elsewhere.] From 1907-1915, the Pullman Company under the control and private ownership of Davison Dalziel declared that:

Average annual earnings 1912-1915 applicable to interest charges had been £ 19,306 net before deducting depreciation but after provision for all renewals and maintenance.

The Pullman Company, ‘A conservative valuation’ by W.C. Shackleford was £ 235,275.7s.5d as recorded by *The Railway Gazette*, 27 September 1915, 388.

(2) *Mid-Sussex Times*, 26 December 1916, ‘Pullman withdrawal’, 6.

(3)In *Western Daily Press*, 19 July 1921, 8 and *Belfast News-Letter*, 19 July 1921, 3.

[‘Balance sheet delays’ 1918/1919 figures, as reported by *The* *Railway Gazette*, 26 March 1920, 505.]

(4) *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 2 November 1906, ‘Railway Travel Comforts- Pullman Cars in England’, 12; *Irish Times*, 2 November 1906, ‘Financial Paragraphs’, 9 and *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 2 November 1906, ‘Pullman’s New Chairman’, 2.

(5) *London Daily News*, 2 November 1908, ‘Luxurious Pullman Service to Brighton’, 5.

(6) *The People*, 12 September 1915, ‘Interesting Innovation on the Brighton Railway’, 2.

(7) *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 December 1916, 5.

(8) *Hampshire Telegraph*, 26 September 1919, ‘Success of third-class Pullmans’, 13.

(9) *Northern Whig*, 19 July 1921,’Prospectus’, 2, reported that:

‘the Share Capital of the Company stands at £ 500,000, in Ordinary Shares at £ 1 each, having been increased by the issue at par in 1920 of 250,000 Shares solely for the purpose of providing funds for the construction of additional rolling stock.

‘Sixty-three cars are in the course of construction and are on the point of delivery, and will shortly be in operation and earning revenue. The total of cars then owned by the Company will be 153.

‘The Debentures have been issued with the object of furnishing funds for the completion of the payments to be made in connection with the construction contracts of these new cars, approximately £ 285,000, and after redeeming £ 118,500 6 per cent. First Mortgage Sinking Fund Equipment Debentures now outstanding and taking into account instalments received or receivable on the issue of 250,000 new Ordinary Shares, there will be available for the general purpose of the Company the sum of £ 88,819 19s 5d, as shown in the certificate of Messrs. W. B. Peat & Co., the Auditors of the Company.’

**APPENDIX 3**

**Pullman Car Company annual revenue, 1921-1939**

***Year Amount Observation***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1921 | £ 181,499 net. (1) |  | Coal strike. 90 cars in service. 63 on order. (13) |
| 1922 | £ 246,829 net. (1) |  |  |
| 1923 | £ 80,609 net. (1) |  | 167 cars in service. 19 on order. (14) |
| 1924 | £ 90,320 net. (2) |  |  |
| 1925 | £ 105,212 net. (3) |  |  |
| 1926 | £ 93,418 net. (4) |  | The General Strike. |
| 1927 | £ 105,111 net. (4) |  |  |
| 1928 | £ 110,444 net. (5) |  |  |
| 1929 | Unknown |  |  |
| 1930 | Unknown |  | The G.W.R contract terminated. (15) |
| 1931 | £ 80,211 net. (6) |  |  |
| 1932 | £ 65,729 net. (6) |  | Receipts fell 18.05 per cent. Sep. 1931/1932. (6) |
| 1933 | £ 66,987 net. (7) |  | The L.M.S contract terminated. (16) |
| 1934 | £114,295 gross.(8) |  |  |
| 1935 | £ 59,876 net. (9) |  |  |
| 1936 | £ 81,742 net. (9) |  |  |
| 1937 | £ 87,257 net. (10) |  |  |
| 1938 | £ 68,117 net. (11) |  | Supplementary fare reductions made on L.N.E.R in line with the streamline expresses.  Pullman Car Company reorganisation: ‘Capital Reduction Scheme’. (17) |
| 1939 | £ 42,380 net. (12) |  | 219 cars in service (11) |

*Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 10 April 1923, 11.

(2) *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 26 April 1924, 15.

(3) *Daily Herald*, 4 May 1926, ‘Luxury travel on the increase’, 9.

(4) *Western Mail*, 25 May 1928, ‘Road Transport Competition’, 16.

(5) *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 17 December 1928, 16.

(6) *The Railway Gazette,* 16 December 1932, ‘Pullman Car Results’, 727.

(7) *Belfast News-Letter*, 30 January 1934, 3.

(8) *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 24 December 1934, 10.

(9) *Dundee Courier*, 13 December 1937, ‘Pullman Car Capital’, 2.

(10) *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 December 1938, ‘Pullman Cars – Lower Earnings’, 14.

(11) NRM, The Morris Collection, *The Pullman Car Company 23rd Annual General Meeting,* 19 December

1938, 1.

(12) *The Railway Gazette*, 15 December 1939, ‘Pullman Car Results’, 757-758. Note, too, that only 20 per

cent. of the company’s cars were in service following the outbreak of war. The total number of

passengers carried in 219 cars in 1938/1939 was 968,260, a decrease of 16 per cent. in comparison with

the previous year of 1,152,690.

(13) *Western Daily Press*, 19 July 1921, 8.

(14) *Pall Mall Gazette*, 10 April 1923, 14.

(15) TNA: RAIL 250/457 G.W.R. General manager’s report to the Traffic Committee, 9 October 1930.

(16) *Sheffield Independent*, 30 January 1934, ‘Pullman Reorganisation’, 8.

(17) *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 December 1938, 14.

**APPENDIX 4**

**Pullman Car Company annual revenue, 1946-1962**

***Year Amount Observation***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1946 | Unknown. (1) |  |  |
| 1947 | £ 218,243 net. (2) |  | L.N.E.R. 10 per cent. cuts to winter services. (11) |
| 1948 | £ 73,786 net. (3) |  | Gross Receipts £ 654,048. (12) |
| 1949 | £ 165,956 net. (3) |  | Gross Receipts £ 754,223. (12) |
| 1950 | £ 171,174 net. (4) |  |  |
| 1951 | £ 172,019 net. (4) |  |  |
| 1952 | £ 168,879 net. (5) |  | Gross Receipts £ 752,747. (5) |
| 1953 | £ 168,879 net. (6) |  | Gross Receipts £ 757,389. (6) |
| 1954 | £ 172,713 net. (6) |  |  |
| 1955 | £ 181,322 net. (7) |  |  |
| 1956 | Unknown. |  |  |
| 1957 | £ 92,594 net. (8) |  | Gross Receipts £ 889,507. (8) |
| 1958 | £ 71,033 net. (8) |  | Gross Receipts £ 844,050. (8) |
| 1959 | £ 171,749 net. (8) |  | Gross Receipts £ 901,613. (8) |
| 1960 | £ 189,858 net. (9) |  | Gross Receipts £ 1,028,476.  3 per cent. pay increase for about 600 Pullman Car Company staff. (13) |
| 1961 | £ 189,850 net. (10) |  |  |
| 1962 | Unknown. |  | From 1 January 1963, Pullman services were integrated with British Railways and managed as a Division of British Transport Hotels Ltd, a subsidiary company of the Railways Board. (14) |

1. Although no figures were released in 1946, company activities generating additional income were nevertheless reported by the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* on 19 December 1946, ‘Everyman’s Pullmans’, 2. Until the spring of 1948, a loan of 27 Pullman cars labelled ‘non-supplementary’ and painted in the railway company livery were recorded in service ‘to relieve [the] current shortage of L.N.E.R. stock’.
2. *Western Mail*, 7 Nov 1947, ‘Pullman Car - 25 per cent Arrears’, 4. [Note: in its article, the *Western Mail* advise that ‘largely due to the boom in Continental traffic now again under a ban, the Pullman Car Company reports a profit of £ 218,243.]
3. *The Railway Gazette,* 13 December 1949, 679, and 1 December 1950, 478. [Note: Sir William Stanier valued the rolling stock and ‘praised rebuilding and reconstruction work done in the works at Brighton’.]
4. *The Railway Gazette,* 1 December 1950, 478, and *Fifeshire Advertiser*, 2 Feb 1952, 7.
5. *Western Mail*, 17 November 1952, 8.
6. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 30 September 1954. Special note - ‘It is the determined policy of the British Transport Commission that the Company shall continue to operate precisely the same manner as heretofore. The maintenance of this policy has done much to stabilise the continued loyalty and good service of the Staff and to reassure the travelling public’. (point 5).
7. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 30 September 1955.
8. *Western Mail*, 26 October 1959, 3. See, also [partial] Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1958* (NRM, The Morris Collection).
9. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 31 December 1960.
10. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 31 December 1961 and TNA: AN 104/75 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 12 January 1962. (2936).

(11) *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 18 September 1947, ‘L.N.E.R. train cuts’, 4.

(12) *The Railway Gazette,* 13 December 1949, 679.

(13) Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1960* (with highest recorded working expenses of £ 851,555) and *Birmingham Daily Post*, 4 November 1960, ‘Pay Increase for Pullman Staff’, 7.

(14) *Newcastle Journal*, 5 October 1962, 2.

**APPENDIX 5**

**Pullman Car Company dividends, 1915-1962**

***Year Observation Year Observation Year***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1915 | Unknown. | 1936 | Unknown. 1962 Nil. |
| 1916 | Unknown. | 1937 | Unknown. |
| 1917 | Unknown. | 1938 | 3.5 per cent. (11) |
| 1918 | Unknown. | 1939 | Nil. |
| 1919 | Unknown. |  | World War 2 suspension of most services. (12) |
| 1920 | 5 per cent. (1) | 1946 | Nil. |
| 1921 | 5 per cent. (2) | 1947 | Nil. |
| 1922 | 10 per cent. (3) | 1948 | Nil. |
| 1923 | 10 per cent. (3) | 1949 | 12.5 per cent. (13) |
| 1924 | 7.5 per cent. (3) | 1950 | 12.5 per cent. (14) |
| 1925 | 7.5 per cent. (4) | 1951 | Unknown. |
| 1926 | Nil. (5) | 1952 | 12.5 per cent. (15) |
| 1927 | 5 per cent. (5) | 1953 | 15 per cent. (16) |
| 1928 | 5 per cent. (6) | 1954 | 15 per cent. (16) |
| 1929 | 5 per cent. (8) | 1955 | Unknown. |
| 1930 | Nil. (9) | 1956 | Unknown. |
| 1931 | Nil. (9) | 1957 | Unknown. |
| 1932 | Nil. (9) | 1958 | Unknown. |
| 1933 | Nil. (9) | 1959 | 10 per cent. (17) |
| 1934 | Nil. (10) | 1960 | 10 per cent. (18) |
| 1935 | 2.5 per cent. (10) | 1961 | Unknown. |

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3. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer,* 16 April 1924, 12. (Also included as part of a report in *Western Mail,* 26 May 1925, 14).
4. *Western Mail,* 5 May 1927, 15 and *Daily Herald*, 4 May 1926, ‘Luxury Travel on the Increase’, 9.
5. *Western Morning News,* 11 August 1927, 9.
6. *Western Mail,* 25 May 1928, ‘Road Transport Competition’, 16.
7. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer,* 17 December 1928, 16.
8. *Western Mail,* 30 January 1934, 1.
9. *Aberdeen Press and Journal,* 13 December 1932, 12. See, also *Belfast News-Letter*, 30 January 1934, 3 in respect of 1932/1933 and *Sheffield Independent*, 30 January 1934, 8.
10. *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 24 December 1934, 10, erroneously published that a dividend was made in 1933/1934, but this appears to have been delayed and transacted the following year 1934/1935. See, also confirmation in *West Sussex Gazette*, 15 October 1936, 2.
11. *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 Dec 1938, 14.
12. *Sussex Agricultural Express,* 22 May 1942, 6*.*
13. *Western Mail*, 1 December 1949, ‘Pullman Car Dividend’, 6.
14. *The Railway Gazette*, 1 Dec 1950, 478.
15. *Western Mail*, 17 November 1952, 8.
16. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 30 September 1954.
17. *Western Mail*, 26 October 1959, 3.
18. Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts* for the year ended 31 December 1960.

**APPENDIX 6**

**The Pullman Car Company fleet, 1915-1960**

***Year******Observation***

1915…73 cars (69 First- and 4 Third-class).[[1211]](#footnote-1211)

1920…90 cars (78 First- and 12 Third-class).[[1212]](#footnote-1212)

1923 …167 cars (136 First-, 1 Second- and 30 Third-class). 19 cars under construction.[[1213]](#footnote-1213)

1928-30…33 new all-steel cars introduced.[[1214]](#footnote-1214)

194 cars (151 First-, 43 Third-class and composite).[[1215]](#footnote-1215)

1932 …38 new all-steel cars built for the London-Brighton Electrification displacing elderly locomotive-hauled stock.[[1216]](#footnote-1216)

1951-54 … 10 new cars (previously ordered in 1938) for ‘Golden Arrow’ and special services.[[1217]](#footnote-1217) 206 cars in service (following purchase of controlling interest by B.T.C).[[1218]](#footnote-1218)

1959-61 … Introduction of new ‘Blue Pullman’ diesel units.[[1219]](#footnote-1219)

44 new all-steel cars for ‘Northern services’.[[1220]](#footnote-1220)

194 cars in service.[[1221]](#footnote-1221)

Disposal of redundant Pullman cars for conversion as

‘Camping Coaches’ (from April 1960).[[1222]](#footnote-1222)12

**APPENDIX 7**

**Examples of Pullman Car Company allocation of cars 1924-1930**

**1924 – 164 cars in service** [[1223]](#footnote-1223)1

Southern Railway (London, Brighton and South Coast section) 53

Southern Railway (South Eastern and Chatham section) 60

Metropolitan Railway (London Underground) 2

L.N.E.R. (Great Eastern section) 16

L.N.E.R. (Great Northern section) 16

L.M.S. (former Caledonian section) 17

**1930 – 194 cars in service** [[1224]](#footnote-1224)2

Southern Railway (London, Brighton and South Coast section) 62

Southern Railway (South Eastern and Chatham section) 56

Metropolitan Railway (London Underground) 2

L.N.E.R. (Northern section) 20

L.M.S. (Northern division) 48

Irish (Great Southern) [[1225]](#footnote-1225)3 6

**Pullman Car Company allocation of cars, 1949**

**1949 – 196 cars in service** [[1226]](#footnote-1226)1

Examples of detailed vehicle apportionment and allocation to specific services/region, including spares, as follows:

Eastern and North Eastern Regions (52 cars)

‘Queen of Scots Pullman’ 16 cars (6 First- and 10 Third-class)

‘Yorkshire Pullman’ 11 cars (5 First- and 6 Third-class)

‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’ 8 cars (4 First- and 4 Third-class)

Spare cars 17 cars (4 First- and 13 Third-class)

Southern Region (144 cars)

‘Golden Arrow’ 10 cars (8 First- and 2 Second-class)

Relief ‘Golden Arrow’ 4 cars (4 First-class)

Other Boat trains 3 cars (3 First-class)

Ocean Liner Boat trains 21 cars (21 First-class)

‘Bournemouth Belle’ 12 cars (4 First- and 8 Third-class)

‘Thanet Belle’ 3 cars (1 First- and 2 Third-class)

Hastings cars 3 Refreshment cars *‘non extra-fare’*

Spare cars 49 cars (22 First- and 27 Third-class)

Electric ‘Brighton Belle’ 15 cars (6 First- and 9 Second-class)

Electric Composite cars 23 cars (Mixed class accommodation)

(Note*: 52 cars of the 144 allocated to the Southern were all-timber construction*)

**Pullman Division allocation of cars, 1964**

**1964 – 194 cars in service** [[1227]](#footnote-1227)1

Examples of detailed vehicle apportionment and allocation to specific services/region, including spares, as follows:

North Eastern Region (62 cars)

‘Queen of Scots Pullman’ 20 cars (7 First- and 13 Second-class)

‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’ 9 cars (5 First- and 4 Second-class)

‘Master Cutler’ 6 cars (3 First- and 3 Second-class)

‘Yorkshire Pullman’ 12 cars (5 First- and 7 Second-class)

Spare cars 15 cars (9 First- and 6 Second-class)

Midland Region (20 cars)

‘Midland Pullman’ 12 cars (12 First-class)

Spare cars 8 cars (8 First-class)

Western Region (34 cars)

‘Bristol Pullman’ 8 cars (4 First- and 4 Second-class)

‘Birmingham Pullman’ 8 cars (4 First- and 4 Second-class)

‘South Wales Pullman’ 8 cars (4 First- and 4 Second-class)

Spare cars 10 cars (4 First- and 6 Second-class)

Southern Region:

‘Golden Arrow’ 9 cars (7 First- and 2 Second-class)

‘Bournemouth Belle’ 12 cars (4 First- and 8 Second-class)

Royal specials 4 cars (4 First-class)

Ocean Liner specials 18 cars (18 First-class)

Race specials 10 cars (6 First- and 4 Second-class)

Spare cars 7 cars (5 First- and 2 Second-class)

Electric ‘Brighton Belle’ 15 cars (6 First- and 9 Second-class)

Electric composite cars 23 cars (Mixed class accommodation)

**APPENDIX 8**

**Pullman Limited Trains**

East Coast Main Line

1. ‘Harrogate Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Harrogate, Newcastle, 1923-1925).
2. ‘Sheffield Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Nottingham Victoria and Sheffield Victoria, 1924-1925).
3. ‘Manchester Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Manchester Central, 1925).
4. ‘Yorkshire Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Harrogate/ Hull Paragon, 1925-1978).
5. ‘Queen of Scots’ (London King’s Cross-Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street, 1927-1964).
6. ‘Harrogate Sunday Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Harrogate, Sundays only from 1928, ceased 1967).
7. ‘Eastern Belle Pullman’ (London Liverpool Street to Felixstowe, Clacton and Skegness, etc., as well as along the Aldeburgh branch. Ran on one specific day of the week to each destination from 1929 to 1939 and did not resume post-war.
8. ‘Tees-Tyne Pullman’ (London King’s Cross- Newcastle Central, 1948 ceased 1976).
9. ‘Master Cutler/ Sheffield Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Sheffield Midland, 1958-1968).
10. ‘Hull Pullman’ (London King’s Cross-Hull Paragon, formerly Hull portion of ‘Yorkshire Pullman’, first-class only, 1967-1978).
11. ‘White Rose’ (London King’s Cross-Harrogate, operated as a Pullman 1964-1967, as replacement for ‘Queen of Scots’).
12. ‘Talisman’ – first-class only Pullman accommodation (London King’s Cross-Edinburgh Waverley, 1964-1965).

Midland Main Line

1 ‘Midland Pullman’ (*Blue Pullman* service, first-class only, London St Pancras - Manchester Central, also short workings from London to Leicester Midland or Nottingham Midland, 1960-1966). Replaced by ‘Manchester Pullman’ (London Euston - Manchester Piccadilly, 1966-1985).

Western Main Line

1. ‘Torquay Pullman Limited’ (London Paddington to Torquay and Paignton, 1929-1930).
2. ‘South Wales Pullman’ (*Blue Pullman* service after 1961, London Paddington-Swansea High Street, 1955-1973).
3. ‘Birmingham Pullman’ (*Blue Pullman* service, London Paddington-Wolverhampton Low Level, 1960-1967).
4. ‘Bristol Pullman’ (*Blue Pullman* service, London Paddington-Bristol Temple Meads, 1960-1973).
5. ‘Oxford Pullman’ (*Blue Pullman* service, London Paddington-Oxford, 1967-1969).

Southern Lines

1. ‘Southern Belle’ (London Victoria-Brighton, 1908-1934).
2. ‘The Continental Express’ (London Charing Cross/Victoria-Dover Marine or Folkestone Harbour, 1910-1929).
3. ‘Golden Arrow’ (London Victoria-Dover Marine or Folkestone Harbour, first-class only until 1939 with corresponding ‘Flèche d’Or’ service: Calais-Paris (1929-1972).
4. ‘Bournemouth Belle’ (London Waterloo-Bournemouth, 1931-1967).
5. Ocean Liner Pullman Expresses (London Waterloo-Southampton Docks, first-class only 1931 until 1939. Named trains from 1946, including the ‘Cunarder’ and the ‘Statesmen’, until 1967).
6. ‘Brighton Belle’ (*Pullman electric* service, London Victoria-Brighton, 1934-1972).
7. ‘Devon Belle’ (London Waterloo-Ilfracombe, 1947-1954, also a portion to Plymouth Friary until 1949).
8. ‘Thanet Belle’ (London Victoria-Ramsgate, 1948-1950).
9. ‘Eastbourne Pullman’ (*Pullman electric* service, London Victoria-Eastbourne, summer Sundays only, 1950-1957).
10. ‘Kentish Belle’ (London Victoria-Ramsgate/ Canterbury East, 1951-1958).
11. Boat trains with Pullman accommodation (London Victoria-Newhaven and Dover and Folkestone, 1910-1963).[[1228]](#footnote-1228)

**APPENDIX 9**

**Rail Fares and Pullman supplements**

Until the mid-1960s rail fares were dependant on the distance travelled and costed in old pence, ‘d’ (240d = £ 1). The third-class rate was defined by statute in 1844 as 1d per mile, which remained until 1914. (Rates in the highly inflationary period c. 1921 have not been established, when the £ was devalued by about 40 per cent. when compared to 1914).

Distances were given in public timetables, and in *Bradshaw*, throughout the latter’s existence (until 1961). A corresponding first-class fare varied from almost 2 to 1.5 times the third-class rate.[[1229]](#footnote-1229)1

**Period Rate/ mile Third-class Cost/ 100 miles 1st/ 3rd class ratio Cost/ 100 miles First-class** Pre-1914 1d 8 shillings, 4d Nearly 2:1 16 shillings

1928-1933 1½d 12 shillings, 6d 1.67:1 £1 0s 4d [[1230]](#footnote-1230)

1938-1946 1.575d 13 shillings, 1½d 1.67:1 £1 9s 10d

1949 2½d £1 0s 10d 1.6:1 £1 13s 4d

**Period Rate/ mile Third-class Cost/ 100 miles 1st/ 3rd class ratio Cost/ 100 miles First-class**

1953-1959 1¾d 14s 7d 1.5:1 £1 1s 10½d

1960 2d+ 17s 0d 1.5:1 £1 5s 6d

1961 2½d £1 0s 10d 1.5:1 £1 11s 3d

1962-1964 3d £1 5s 1.5:1 £1 17s 6d

**Pullman Supplementary fares (First-class only)**

Example: Single journey London – Dover/Folkestone or vice versa

1910-1921 [[1231]](#footnote-1231)3 2s 6d

1922-1935 [[1232]](#footnote-1232)4 3s

1935-1939 [[1233]](#footnote-1233)5 3s 6d

1946-1951 [[1234]](#footnote-1234)6 5s

1951-1964 [[1235]](#footnote-1235)7 6s

Note: Third-class accommodation was re-designated second-class on British railways in 1956.

**APPENDIX 10**

**Rates of pay for B.T.H.C.S. restaurant and Pullman car travelling staff, 1959 [[1236]](#footnote-1236)**

***Restaurant car staff – 44hr week*** ***Pullman car staff – 52hr week***

Grade Rate of Pay Grade Rate of Pay

Conductor, Class 1 £ 8 2s 6d Conductor, Class 1 £ 8 2s 3d

Conductor, Class 2 £ 7 13s 6d Conductor, Class 2 £ 7 10s 5d

Leading Attendant £ 7 5s 6d Leading Attendant £ 6 18s 3d

Attendant £ 6 19s 6d Attendant, Grade 1 £ 6 11s 4d

Attendant, Grade 2 £ 6 0s 6d

Attendant, female £ 4 11s 7d

Cook £ 10 1s 0d Senior Chef £ 9 9s 3d

Assistant Cook £ 8 3s 6d Cook, Grade 1 £ 8 9s 2d

Cook, Grade 2 £ 7 15s 3d

Kitchen Porter £ 7 15s 0d Pantry Car Attendant

Pantry Assistant £ 6 14s 8d

Kitchen Boy, junior Assistant £ 6 0s 0d Attendant, junior £ 4 10s 4d (max.)

*Plus weekly Allowance of 3s 0d for London staff No London Allowance paid*

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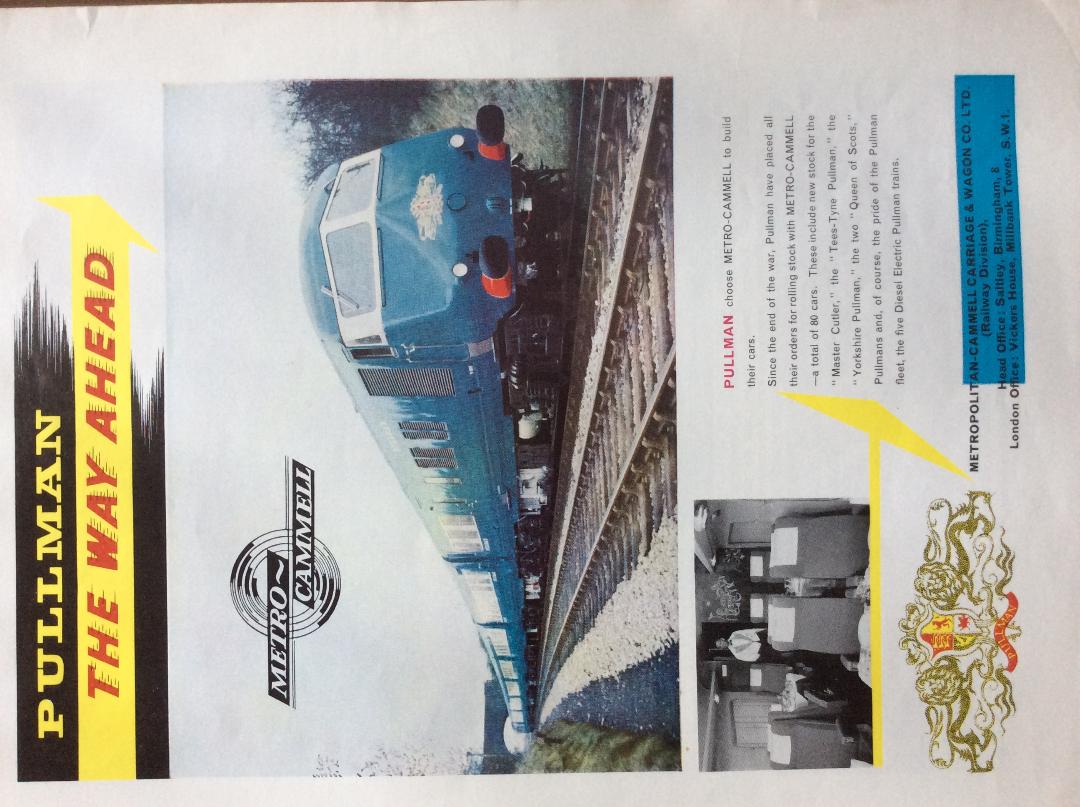
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72. *Western Daily Press*, 4 June 1874, 6. In Britain, having signed his operating agreement with the Midland Railway on 18 February 1873, George Pullman entered into a partnership with three London financiers, known as the English Subscribers. In turn, this group established a company known as the Car Syndicate Ltd with the objective of raising additional investment capital to underwrite the expansion of Pullman services in Britain and in Continental Europe. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. *Surrey Gazette*, 13 November 1875, 4; *Globe*, 2 November 1876, 8, and *The People*, 17 November 1895, ‘New Pullman Vestibule Train’, 6. See, also The National Archives (thereafter TNA): RAIL 236/678. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. The British Pullman Company Limited had been registered on 2 June 1882 as a subsidiary of the Pullman’s Palace Car Company. Although registered in London, the company was effectively wholly under the control of the American company. Pullman Company Limited, *Board minute book*, Newberry Library, Chicago, Ill, USA. See, also TNA: RAIL 953/14 London, Chatham and Dover Railway timetable of ‘The Royal Mail Route’, June 1882, advertising [in very small print] a Pullman Drawing Room Car. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, USA – *Pullman correspondence file ’16A’*. See, also Ralph L Barger, *A Century of Pullman Cars, Volume 2: The Palace* Cars (USA: Greenburg Publishing, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. TNA: RAIL 414/70 L.B.S.C.R. Records: Minutes and reports. As the L.B.S.C.R. Board minutes make clear, at one time and another, the railway did approach the Wagons-Lits Company to see if it could offer a better deal on the operation of saloon-type cars. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. *Surrey Gazette*, 13 November 1875, 4. [Note: In Britain, the term ‘drawing room’ was widely interpreted as being synonymous with ‘parlor’. In fact, in American usage it meant ‘a private compartment’ (a ‘withdrawing room’ – or coupé in later British Pullman terminology). Following the acquisition of the British Pullman Company from the late George Pullman trustees, the use of the American term ‘parlor’ was dropped in favour of ‘parlour’.] [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. With the exception of two vehicles that appear to have been assembled at the London & South Western’s Eastleigh Works. See, also for comparison, The Pullman Society (thereafter TPS) *The Golden Way*, No.87:1 (2011), 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. The British Pullman Palace Car Company had been registered on 2 June 1882 as a subsidiary of the Pullman’s Palace Car Company. (Pullman Company Limited, *Board minute book*, Newberry Library, Chicago, Ill, USA.) [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. *The Railway Gazette*, 7 September 1926, 295; Albert Mühl and Jürgen Klein, *Travelling in Luxury, The* *International Sleeping Car Company* (Germany: Ek-Verlag, 1998), 377 and *The London Gazette*, 8 July 1927, Davision Dalziel, 1st Baron Dalziel of Wooler, known as Sir Davison Dalziel, Bt, between 1919 [and until his death in 1928], 4406. See, also *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 2 November 1906, ‘Dalziel brings his experience and business capacity’, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. 25 *The Railway Gazette*, 18 March 1910, 303 and Brian Haresnape, *Pullman, Travelling in Style* (London: Malaga Books, 1987), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. 26 South Wales and Monmouthshire Railways and Docks Lecture and Debating Society, Session 1956-57, No.13, *A Hundred Years of Pullman* by Mr F. D. M. Harding OBE, 19. See, also *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 2 November 1906 ‘Railway Travel Comforts’, 12 and *Irish Times*, 2 November 1906, ‘Financial Paragraphs’, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. 27 *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 24 October 1908, ‘The Height of Luxurious Travelling – Gorgeousness of the Southern Belle’, 10; *Morning Post*, 2 November 1908, ‘Daily Pullman Express to Brighton’, 4; *London Daily* *News*, 2 November 1908, ‘Luxurious Pullman Service to Brighton’, 5; *The Railway Gazette,* 28 January 1910, ‘News Paragraphs’, 115, and *The Railway Gazette*, 11 November 1910, 520. Regarding the introduction of the Metropolitan services, see also *The Railway Gazette*, 14 January, 1910, 50. [Note: According to the *Western Daily Press*, 19 July 1921, 8, it was reported that the duration of the Metropolitan contract was ‘indefinite’.] [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. 28 George Behrend, *Pullman in Europe* (London: Ian Allan, 1962), 58. See, also TNA: RAIL 226/8; RAIL 226/39 and RAIL 236/678. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. 29 *The Railway Gazette*, 2 December 1910, 587. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. 30 *The Railway Gazette*, 18 March 1910, 303. See, also the *Locomotive Magazine*, 15 April 1910, 79-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. 31 *The Railway Gazette*, 31 January 1913, 136-138. A prediction made by the *Henley Advertiser*, 17 November 1906 [‘special luxurious railway accommodation upon an extensive scale’], 17. See, also *The Railway News*, 14 March 1914 (no page number) at TNA: ZPER 7/92 and, for contrast, *Western Daily Press*, who reported eight years later, on 19 July 1921, ‘90 cars were running with 63 in the course of construction’, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. 32 David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century*, *Vol 2* (London: Patrick Stephens Limited, 1990), 232, and *Modern Transport*, 15 August 1953. See, also David J. Jeremy (ed) *Dictionary of Business Biography: A Biographical Dictionary of Business Leaders Active in Britain in the Period 1860–1980*, *Vol. 2* (London: Butterworths, 1984)*,* Dalziel, Davison Alexander, 1852-1928 by R. P. T. Davenport-Hines.

    [Note: ‘The ordinary capital doubled to £500,000 in 1920, with £ 625,000 preference shares issued in 1923 at the time when Wagons-Lits was increasing its stake in Pullman’, 7.] [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. 33 *The Railway Gazette*, ‘The SE&CR Pullmans’, 18 March 1910, 303. See, also similar views reported thirteen years later in the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds* *Intelligencer*, 11 April 1923, 12. With regard vehicle costs see, *Leeds Mercury*, 10 May 1927, ‘Average cost of Pullman’, 3, which confirms that the average cost of a new vehicle at that time was approximately £ 6,000 each. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. 34 Although lacking a source, the percentage is quoted in *Back Track*, February 2005, ‘The Southern Belle’, 75. Note: The period from 1914-1938 witnessed substantial, though uneven, rises in real incomes and changes in living standards. See, Peter Scott, *The Market Makers, Creating Mass Markets for Consumer Durables in Inter-war Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 12-15. See, also *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 24 October 1908, 10; *London Daily News*, 2 November 1908, 5, and the *Morning Post*, 2 November 1908, ‘Daily Pullman Express to Brighton’, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. 35 NRM, The E.J. Morris Collection, Cession No. 1994-7152 (thereafter NRM, The Morris Collection): The Pullman Company Limited, *Extraordinary Meeting Notification*, Moorgate Street, London, 15 September 1915. See, also *Globe*, 9 October 1915, 9, and *The Railway Gazette*, 15 October 1915, ‘The Pullman Car Company’, 386-387. [Details of the Pullman Company formation at 30 September 1915, including assets, earnings and operating contracts.] [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. 36 *The Locomotive*, ‘Progress of Luxury Travel’, 15 January 1924, 7-12. See, also *Leeds Mercury*, 1 April 1883, ‘Vestibule Cars on English Railways’, 6, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. 37 Haresnape, *In Style*, 93. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, 18 March 1910, 308. [Principal dimensions: 57 ft 6 in. length cars of the South Eastern & Chatham Railway] and *The Railway Gazette*, 29 June 1923, 961. [63 ft 10 in. length cars of the London Midland Scottish Railway for the Caledonian Section.] and ‘2,441 Pullman Car Company engineering drawings in 101 rolls’, held at NRM, York, Cession 1996-7911 (part) and TNA: RAIL1204/55 letter dated 22 April 1924 from Dalziel to the works manager regarding a standard livery. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. 38 Mike Williams, *Caledonian Railway Carriages* (London: Lightmoor Press, 2015), 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. 39 *The Graphic*, 2 April 1910, 480. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. 40 *The Railway Gazette*, 18 March 1910 (Supplement), 1-4 and John Hypher, Colin Wheeler and Stephen Wheeler, *Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company: A Century of Achievement 1855-1963* (London: Runpast, 1995), 16 and 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. 41 *The Railway Times*, 28 March 1914. [No page number] and passenger complaints regarding supplementary fares, forty years later, in *Trains Illustrated*, September 1957, ‘Travellers Tales’. See, also Antony M Ford, Pullman Profile 5, *The Golden Arrow* (Crécy Publishing, 2018), 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. 42 *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Railway Companies as Public Caterers’, 8 May 1914, 625. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. 43 Haresnape, *In Style*, 94-99. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. 44 John Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain, 1880-1980* (London: Longman, 1994), 90. See, also comparative railway company timetable improvements in *North Eastern Railway Company, 1870-1914: An Economic History* by Robert J. Irving (Leicester University Press, 1976). [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. 45 Jürgen Klein, *125 Years - The Trains de Luxe – History and Posters* (Germany: Ek-Verlag, 1998), 292, and Lorna Frost, *Railway Posters* (Shire Publications, 2012), 13-21. For comparison, see also *Southern Railway* *Magazine*, Vol. X, No.117 (September 1932), ‘Posters’, 341; *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol.25:2 (2004): ‘Evaluating British Railway Poster Advertising – The London & North Eastern Railway between the wars’, by D. C. H. Watts, 23-56, and Vol.25:1 (2004): ‘Beyond the Bathing Belle: Images of Women in Inter-War Railway Publicity’, by Ralph Harrington, 22-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. 46 Williams, *Caledonian*, 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. 47 Williams, *Caledonian*, 237-240. See, also The National Archives of Scotland, NAS02024 BR-CAL-3-86, Minute of Agreement between the Caledonian Railway Company and the Pullman Company Limited, 25 and 27 November 1913 which includes a detailed schedule of services and numbers of cars employed. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. 48 Williams, *Caledonian*, 237-240. See, also *The Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald*, 2 December 1916, 7. [An army representative at a Tribunal held in Middlesex was reported to have said that he had made inquiries regarding the statement that the Pullman Company had retained its staff who were employed in conveying high officials to and from Folkestone. The facts were that out of 90 men employed only 22 were exempted. Many of the men were either under or over age.] [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. 49 *Backtrack*, March 2005, 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. 50 *The Railway Gazette*, 20 November 1925, 648, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. 51 *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Pullman Car Development in Britain’, 13 April 1923, 579. See, also *Western Mail*, 26 May 1925, 14, and *The Railway Gazette*, 21 and 28 May 1926, 678 and 708. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. 52 *The Locomotive*, Vol. 29, No.374 (October 1923). See, also *Hampshire Telegraph*, 26 September 1919, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. 53 *Modern Transport*, 7 July 1923, 5, and *The Railway Gazette*, 6 July 1923, ‘Pullmans on the L&NER’, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. 54 Pullman Car Company publication, *Wonder City* magazine (London: The Arden Press, March 1935), 15. Courtesy of Delicias Museo de Ferrocarilles, Madrid, Spain. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, 17 September 1915, ‘Third-Class Pullmans’, 269. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. 55 David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century*, Volume 2 (London: Patrick Stephens, 1990), 232. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. 56 Haresnape, *In Style*, 90-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. 57 *Modern Transport*, 23 October 1920, 12. See, also *The Globe*, 10 September 1915, ‘Trade Unions to Investigate – Third-class Pullmans on the Brighton line’, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. 58 Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages*, 232-233. See, also TNA: ZPER 7/92 *The Railway News*, 14 March 1914. [New Pullman cars on the L.B.S.C.R. to supplement and/or replace older vehicles running in mainline service]. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. 59 TNA: RAIL 1204/50. Copy letter from P. C. Tempest dated 2 August 1923 regarding the order of four more Pullman cars on the South Eastern & Chatham Railway. See, also NRM, The Morris Collection of correspondence between Dalziel and railway company managers. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. 60 *The Railway Gazette*, 10 May 1912, 487, and 512-513. See, also *The Railway & Travel Monthly*, Vol.5 (July 1912) and *The Railway Gazette*, 31 January 1913, 136-138. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. 61 Williams, *Caledonian*, 229. See, also NRM, The Morris Collection, draft railway company wordings, and also agreements signed or cancelled, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. 62 NRM, The Morris Collection. See, also *The Railway* *Gazette*, 19 December 1930, 813; the *Great Western Magazine*, July-August 1929, 314-315; Lucius Beebe, *Mr Pullman’s Elegant Palace Car* (New York: Doubleday, 1961) and Joe Welsh and Bill Howes, *Travel by Pullman:* *A Century of Service* (USA: MBI, 2004), 24-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. 63 *The Railway Gazette*, 13 December 1929, ‘Pullman and Perfection’, 37, and Behrend, *In Europe*, 114-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. 64 *The Railway Engineer*, February 1929, 71-73. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, 8 June 1928, 794; *The* *Railway Gazette*, 6 July 1928, 9-10, and Behrend, *In Europe*, 188. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. 65 *Modern Transport*, 7 July 1923, ‘Modern Innovations in British Rail Travel’, 5-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. 66 Cheryl Buckley, *Designing Modern Britain* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007). See, also Deborah Cohen, *Household Gods. The British and their Possessions* (Yale University Press, 2006) and for a selection of Pullman interiors showing an awareness of ‘historical’ styles, *Supplement to* *The Railway Gazette*, March 1910, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. 67 Don Carter, Joe Kent and Geoff Hart, *Pullman Craftsmen* (QueenSpark Books, 1992), an example of a works grounded vehicle used for other purposes, 61. See, also TNA: RAIL 647/36 the agreement between the Southern Railway and Pullman Car Company of land and buildings at Preston Park dated 22 December 1930, and also *Back Track*, Special Issue No.1, ‘The London, Midland & Scottish Railway’ (Atlantic Transport, October 1998), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. 68 Behrend, *In Europe*, 166-175 and Morel, *Pullman*, 167-168. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. 69 NRM, The Morris Collection, Pullman Car Company Christmas Card. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. 70 *The Times*, 25 October 1925, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. 71 *The British Gazette*, 12 May 1926, 4. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, 3 September 1926, 272, and the *Railway Magazine*, September 1926, 438-444. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. 72 Reproduced in *Modern Transport*, 19 February 1927 ‘Continental Extensions’ and NRM, The Morris Collection, Pullman Car Co *Ordinary General Meeting Report*, 14 February 1927. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. 73 *The Railway Gazette*, 21 and 28 May 1926, 678 and 708. See, also Edith Penrose, *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm,* (Cambridge, MA, 1959), 3-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. 74 Appointments are recorded in South Wales and Monmouthshire Railways and Docks Lecture and Debating Society, Session 1956-57, No.13, *A Hundred Years of Pullman* by Mr F. D. M. Harding OBE, 19. See, also Behrend, *In Europe*, 130, 162, 189-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. 75 Behrend, *In Europe*, 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. 76 *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 30 June 1923, 10. See, also Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages*, 82-116 and 200-231. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. 77 NRM, The Morris Collection, a reflection of company ‘historical practice’ noted in the *23rd Annual General Meeting Report* of the Pullman Car Company, Victoria Station, 19 December 1938. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. 78 *The Railway Gazette*, 17 September 1926, 328. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. 79 *Journal du Chemin de Fer* (Le magazine Belge de l’amateur de trains), No.226 (Dec/Jan 2018-2019), 47. [French text.] See, also ‘Dudley Docker’ by R.J. Irving, *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol.7, 2 (1986), 100-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. 80 *The Locomotive Magazine*, 15 April 1910, 79-81. See, also Haresnape, *In Style*, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. 81 NRM, The Morris Collection, the Pullman Car Company *Shareholders Meeting* *Report*, *Moorgate, June 1923,* 9. (Photocopy) [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. 82 D. C. McClelland, *Human motivation* (New York, 1987). [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. 83 Peter Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (London: Routledge, 2007), 193 and 201. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. 84 NRM, G3/98RP, *Pullman Car Guide*, June 1923 showing detailed tables of supplementary fares. See, also *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 25 April 1928, ‘Usual Pullman Supplementary Fees’, 5, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. 85 Behrend, *In Europe*, 62-79. See, also Pullman and railway publications, especially NRM, The Morris Collection, *The Golden Way* (WH Smith publication, January 1912), 16, and *Over the Points*, Southern Railway Quarterly Review Magazine (Curwen Press, No.16, December 1932), repeat advertisement: ‘Sunday by the Sea Cheap Day Return Tickets by Pullman Car Expresses’, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. 86 NRM, The Morris Collection, photocopies of *The Golden Way* (WH Smith/ Arden Press) publications: May-July 1929 ‘South Coast Resorts’, 2-4 and rear cover, and *The Golden Way*, July-September 1929, ‘Great Western Section’, 15, 18, 33, 61, 67 and rear cover, for example. See, also Morel, *Pullman,* 167-168. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. 87 Haresnape, *In Style*, 80-89. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. 88 Behrend, *In Europe*, 60 and Haresnape, *In Style*, 97-101. See, also Morel, *Pullman*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. 89 *Hampshire Telegraph*, 26 September 1919, ‘a modest surcharge’, 13. See, also Peter Scott, *The Market Makers, Creating Mass Markets for Consumer Durables in Inter-war Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 12-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. 90 *Modern Transport*, 23 October 1920, 12. See, also Haresnape, *In Style*, 100-101. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. 91 Williams, *Caledonian*, 237-240. See, also TNA: RAIL 1007/28 L.M.S. miscellaneous papers. Memorandum to Chairman, November 1927. ‘Pullman Company Proposal’. [Estimated supplementary values compared with actual receipts; all daily averages from 1925-1927.] For annual revenues, see appendix 3, 299-300. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. 92 NRM, The Morris Collection. Two copy letters from The Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd, Smethwick, dated 29 May 1923 and 23 July 1923 respectively. Both are signed by the Managing Director and addressed to the Manager c/o The Pullman Car Co Ltd. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. 93 *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 28 August 1926, 3. [Branding, and nicknames of trains.] [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. 94 NRM, The Morris Collection, Southern Railway letter addressed to Davison Dalziel, dated 30 January 1924 (ref: G.29.163). Unsigned copy. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. 95 NRM, The Morris Collection, Southern Railway letter addressed to Sir Davison Dalziel, dated 25 February 1924 (ref: A.G.29.163). Unsigned copy. [Also refers to new replacement cars, as well as improvements and various enhancements of Pullman services on the Hastings route.] [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. 96 *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 4 October 1913, 15, and *Gloucester Journal*, 15 November 1919, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. 97 *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Pullmans on the L&NER’, 6 July 1923, 4. See, also *Hull Daily Mail*, 2 July 1923, ‘L.N.E.R Company’s Enterprise - Super-Luxury on Rail’, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. 98 NRM, The Morris Collection, a copy of the *Pullman Car Company Shareholders’ Meeting Report, June 1923*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. 99 *Modern Transport*, 7 July 1923; *The Yorkshire Post*, 31 July 1923 and *The Railway Gazette*, 29 June 1923, 962. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. 100 Michael R. Bonavia, *The Birth of British Rail* (London: George Allen, 1979) and more generally Sean Glynn and Alan Booth, *Modern Britain: An Economic and Social History* (London, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. 101 *The Railway Gazette*, 13 April 1923, ‘Railway and other Meetings’, 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. 102 NRM, The Morris Collection, a copy of the *Pullman Car Company Ordinary General Meeting Report, 9 April 1923*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. 103 Morel, *Pullman*, 157, and advertisement, ‘Travel to the Continent in Comfort and Luxury – Pullman cars of the most luxurious type’, c.1910 [Footnote refers to the sale of tickets by company representatives, reproduced in Antony M. Ford, *The Golden Arrow, Profile No.5* (Crécy, 2018), 9.] [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. 104 NRM, The Morris Collection, a copy of the Pullman Car Company *Ordinary General Meeting report*, 9 April 1923, 1-5. See, also *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 11 April 1923, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. 105 *The Railway Gazette*, 13 April 1923, 579 and 602. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. 106 *The Railway Gazette*, 29 June 1923, 949. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. 107 *The Railway Gazette*, 21 and 28 May 1926, ‘Railway and other Meetings’, 678 and 708. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. 108 *A Car called Constance*, South Eastern and Chatham Railway Society publication in association with the Historical Model Railway Society (Amadeus Press, 2007), 18. See, also *The Locomotive*, 15 July 1949, 109-111 and D. W. Winkworth, *Southern Titled Trains* (David & Charles, 1988), 163-173. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. 109 Morel, *Pullman*, ‘Special Traffic’, 171-192. See, for example, *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 26 August 1927 of a trip undertaken by Queen Mary and lady-in-waiting, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. 110 *The Railway Magazine*, Vol. LXVII, July-Dec 1930, 392. Note: By 1938, the ‘Southern Railway employs 73 per cent. of the Pullman Car Company’s rolling stock’, *Sheffield Independent*, 6 January 1938, ‘Pullman Car Cut’, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. 111 Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages*, 215-231. See, also *Motherwell Times*, 21 May 1937, 4; *Daily Herald*, 14 June 1937, 19; *The Scotsman*, 22 June 1937, ‘Challenge of the Road’, 12, and 2 July 1937, ‘New Streamline Express’, 14; *Leeds Mercury*, 8 February 1937, 7, and *Yorkshire Evening Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 10 June 1937, ‘Coronation Trains First Appearance’, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. 112 Jeremy, *The Dictionary of Business Biography*, Davison Dalziel, 1-10. See, also Drucker, *Innovation*, 122-128, and *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 28 May 1928, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. 113 *The Railway Gazette*, 7 September 1928, ‘The Development of Pullman Car Services’, 295-296. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. 114 *The Railway Gazette*, 13 November 1931, ‘Manufacturing and Industrial Notes’ and *The Southern Railway* *Magazine*, January 1933, 3. See, also *The Tatler*, 4 January 1933, ‘The Southern Railways Electric Fliers’, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. 1 Americana Review, *Railway Passenger Travel 1825-80* (Scotia, 1918); Gregory Votolato, *Transport Design: A Travel History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 37-60 and G. Alexis, *The Golden Age of Travel, 1880-1939* (London, 1998), 16. For a comparative study of the developments of luxury travel on the Continent, see also, Friedhelm Ernst, *Rheingold, Luxuszug durch fünf Jahrezehnte* (Alba Buchverlag, 1977), 7-12. [German text]. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. 2 S. Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (Oxford, 1975) 12-24; J. Glancey, *The Train: An Illustrated History* (New York, 2005), 3, and Renzo Perret, *La Storia della Carrozze Pullman* (Editioni Elledi, 1982), 5-9. [Italian text]. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. 3 J. Husband, ‘The Story of the Pullman Car’ (Chicago: McClurg) in ‘History of Pullman Cars’, *Daily Telegraph,* 1929reprint for the Pullman Car Company. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. 4 George Behrend, *Pullman in Europe* (London: Ian Allan, 1962) and Brian Haresnape, *Pullman: Travelling in Style* (London: Malaga Books, 1987), 37-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. 5 F. Pole, *Felix J. C. Pole: His Book* (London: Town and Country, 1968), 157. For comparison, see also, Peter Goette, *Rheingold, Legende auf Schienen* (Ek-Verlag, 2014), 6-14 [German text]. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. 6 Haresnape, *In Style*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. 7 Potential competition from air travel with ‘Pullman accommodation’, as featured in the *Illustrated London News*, 20 December 1919, 23, and *Pall Mall Gazette*, 31 December 1919, 10, as well as imitation of Pullman standards in *Thanet Advertiser*, 8 November 1929, 2. [Pullman road coaches and trams.] See, also a report regarding ‘road competition’ in the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 December 1928, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. 8 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 December 1916, 5, for example. [Temporary withdrawal of Pullman Cars due to war-time conditions]. See, also Behrend, *In Europe*, 61, and appendix 3, 299-300. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. 9 Alec Hasenson, *The Golden Arrow* (London: Howard Baker, 1970), 10-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. 10 P. L. Cottrell, *British Overseas Investment in the Nineteenth Century, Studies in Economic and Social History* (Economic History Society, London, 1975), chapter 3, ‘The Growth of the Portfolio, 1855-1914’, 27-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. 11 Pullman Car Company publication: *The Golden Way* (WH Smith, January 1935), 9-14, confirm that services on the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (Caledonian Section), the Great Western Railway and Great Southern Railways of Ireland services are all ‘terminated’, whereas withdrawn services on the Continent are particularly noted as ‘suspended’. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. 12 Behrend, *In Europe*, 56. Note: As regards the Mediolanum ([Italian] Southern) Railway, no Pullman vehicle was to turn a wheel in revenue-earning service until June 1879. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. 13 C. Hamilton Ellis, *The London, Brighton & South Coast Railway* (London: Ian Allan, 1971), 15-46. See, also *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 2 November 1906 [‘there is unlimited room for extension.’] 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. 14 David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century* (Patrick Stephens, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. 15 Lucius Beebe, *Mansions on Wheels* (Chicago: Howell Press, 1959); George Behrend, *History of Trains de Luxe* (Vendome, 1982) and A. Mencken, *The Railroad Passenger Car* (Chicago: John Hopkins, 1957). [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
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506. 75 Hattersley, *Borrowed Time*, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. 76 Behrend, *In Europe*, 65. See, also Alec Hasenson, *Golden Arrow* (London: Howard Baker, 1970), 75. [Although Pullman wage reductions are not covered in any detail, other subjects including travel and Pullman fare reductions, as a result of the slump, are noted.] [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. 77 *The Times Trade and Engineering Supplement,* December 1932, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
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844. Richard W. S. Pyke and John S. Dodgson, *The Rail Problem* (London: Martin Robertson, 1975), 36-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-844)
845. TNA: MT 6/2805 Railway Executive minutes of meetings, 26 August 1947, ‘Physical Condition of British Railways’, 16, and Gourvish, *British Railways*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-845)
846. Aldrcroft, *In Transition*, 21; J Dow, *The Management of the British Economy 1945-60* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 4, and Gourvish*, British Railways*, 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-846)
847. Christopher Savage, *Inland Transport* (London, 1957), 639, also quoted in Gourvish, *British Railways*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-847)
848. TNA: MT 6/2805 Railway Executive minutes of meetings, 26 August 1947, ‘Physical Condition of British Railways’, 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-848)
849. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 5 July 1949. See, also *Modern Transport*, 9 June 1951, 6-7. [Note: Despite original intentions, the new ‘Golden Arrow’ cars were constructed with timber bodies rather than all-steel due to lack of materials]. [↑](#footnote-ref-849)
850. *Daily Mail*, 28 October 1947, 2, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-850)
851. G. Worswick and P. Ady (eds), *The British Economy 1945-1950* (London: Clarendon Press, 1952) and M. Sissons and P. French (eds), *Age of Austerity* (London, 1963), 169. See, also *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 23 January 1947, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-851)
852. G. Alderman, *The Railway Interest* (Leicester, 1973), 224-228. [↑](#footnote-ref-852)
853. E. Barry, *Nationalisation in British Politics* (London: Cape, 1965), 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-853)
854. TNA: MAF 75 Ministry of Food file. Permanent Record of Operations to 1954, 16 [undated]. See, also TNA: RAIL 1188/46 Southern Railway, 16 September 1946. Memorandum from the General Manager’s Office regarding the ‘Thanet Belle’. [Outline of the operation of an all-Pullman train from London to Margate and Ramsgate with proposed timings and works to do to prepare cars for traffic]. In addition, TNA: RAIL 1188/45 Minutes of meeting held on 19 September 1946 between the Southern Railway and Pullman Car Company outlines the project of the new ‘Devon Belle’ and *Southern Railway Magazine*, Vol. XXV, No.268 (July 1947), ‘The Devon Belle enters the service’, 129-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-854)
855. TNA: RAIL 1188/45 and 1188/46 Southern Railway proposed Pullman services, 19 September 1946, ‘supplements.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-855)
856. Haresnape, *In Style*, ‘Interregnum and Post-war Restoration’, 108-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-856)
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859. F. Craig (ed), *British General Election Manifestos 1900-74* (London: Macmillan, 1975), 32, 40 and 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-859)
860. TNA: RAIL 418/11 Gore-Brown Committee report on post-war policy, 16 October 1942. [↑](#footnote-ref-860)
861. L.N.E.R. publication, *The State and the Railways: An Alternative to Nationalisation* (London, 1946). See, also TNA: RAIL 390/14 L.M.S./L.N.E.R. Joint Committee minutes, 28 February 1946. [↑](#footnote-ref-861)
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863. H. Pollins, *Britain’s Railways: An Industrial History* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971), 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-863)
864. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-864)
865. Andrew Murray, *Off the Rails: Britain’s Great Rail Crisis – Cause, Consequences and Cure* (London, Verso Books, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-865)
866. *Yorkshire Evening Post,* ‘Yorks Pullman Blessing’, Thursday, 23 January 1947, 1, and Stewart Joy, *The Train That Ran Away. A Business History of British Railways 1948-1968* (London: Ian Allan, 1973). See, also TNA: MT 74/173 - restoration of cars on the LNER. [↑](#footnote-ref-866)
867. Morel, *Pullman*, 18. See, also *Southern Railway Magazine*, Vol. XXV, No.268 (July 1947), 129-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-867)
868. David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century, Volume 2: The Years of Consolidation, 1923-53* (London: Patrick Stephens Limited, 1990), 232-257. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.61 (2001), 8-11, and B.T.C. annual reports from 1948 at TNA: PRO AN 1-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-868)
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870. *Yorkshire Evening Post*, ‘Yorks Pullman Blessing’, Thursday, 23 January 1947, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-870)
871. Kenneth Gwilliam, ‘Institutions and Objectives in Transport Policy’, *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy*, No. XIII (January 1979), and Arthur Knight, *Private Enterprise and Public Intervention* (London: George Allen, 1974), 36-59. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways, 1948-73*, 94, the criticisms of Harold Wilson. [↑](#footnote-ref-871)
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873. Arthur Marsh, *Trade Union Handbook: A Guide and Directory to the Structure, Membership, Policy and Personnel of the British Trade Unions*. (London: Gower Press, 1979), 14. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways*, 123, 124-33, 219-24, 233-5, 238-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-873)
874. TNA: AN 109/824 Hotels Executive file on Pullman services. Extract from minutes of first meeting held on 25 January 1949. Marked ‘confidential’. Copy documentation regarding the British Transport Commission, including Pullman Car Company Board minutes dated 5 May 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-874)
875. TNA: MT 47/293 Agreement between the Railway Executive, Hotels Executive and Pullman Car Company. Minutes, 25 January 1949. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.60 (2001), 21-23 and No.78:2 (2008), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-875)
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878. Extracted from *Western Mail*, 7 November 1947, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-878)
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885. TNA: AN 172/1 Introduction of Pullman cars on trains. General file. [no date]. [↑](#footnote-ref-885)
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887. *Newcastle Journal*, 20 March 1950, ‘Race special annoys N.U.R. train staff’, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-887)
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889. Kenneth Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The People’s Peace* (Oxford, 1992), 16, and Becky E. Conekin, *‘The Autobiography of a Nation’: The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester University Press, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-889)
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891. F. M. Leventhal, *A Tonic to the Nation: The Festival of Britain 1951* (London: Albion, 1995), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-891)
892. Harriet Atkinson, *The Festival of Britain: A Land and its People* (London: Taurus, 2012), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-892)
893. Merton Jones*, British Independent Airlines since 1946, Volume 1* (London: LAAS International, 1972) and Phil Lo Bao, *An Illustrated History of British European Airways* (London: Browcom, 1989), 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-893)
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902. Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield Monty’s War Years 1942-1944* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-902)
903. TNA: RAIL 1007/28 Pullman Car Company paper by F. D. M. Harding, general manager, February 1953. [↑](#footnote-ref-903)
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910. *The Liverpool Daily Post*, 17 June 1954, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-910)
911. TNA: MT 47/292 Terms of Compensation Pullman Car Company and minutes, 5 September 1954. Copy of letter on file. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.78:2 (2008), 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-911)
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913. George Behrend, *Pullman and the Orient Expresses* (Private publication, 2000/1), 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-913)
914. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Ministerial discussions, 12 September 1954. [↑](#footnote-ref-914)
915. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Ministerial discussions, 12 September 1954. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.78:2 (2008), 44-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-915)
916. TNA: AN 157/44 S.R. Pullman Services. Meeting minutes, 2 October 1954. [↑](#footnote-ref-916)
917. TNA: AN 157/44 S.R. Pullman Services. Meeting minutes, 2 October 1954. [↑](#footnote-ref-917)
918. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 12 May 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-918)
919. TNA: AN 85/9 British Transport Commission minutes, 16 February 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-919)
920. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 12 May 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-920)
921. TNA: AN 8/131 Modernisation and re-equipment of British Railways, 12 October 1955. Note: Portman-Dixon himself was co-opted onto the Committee and acted as its catering adviser until it presented its report to the B.T.C. in July 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-921)
922. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 13 March 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-922)
923. TNA: AN 157/45 Southern Region: Chief regional officer’s file [No date]. See, also appendix 4 showing annual incomes (supplementary and commissary), 1946-1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-923)
924. Morel, *Pullman*, 56, and Ford*, Profile 4* (London: Noodle Books, 2012), 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-924)
925. TNA: RAIL 1204/98 Records and minutes of Board meetings, 16 December 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-925)
926. TNA: AN 85/9 British Transport Commission minutes, Volume 9, 16 March 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-926)
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928. Behrend, *In Europe*, 43 and Ford, *Profile 4* (2012), 95-113. [↑](#footnote-ref-928)
929. TNA: RAIL 1204/44 Pre-nationalisation railway companies. [No known dates]. [↑](#footnote-ref-929)
930. TNA: MT 47/292 Ministry of Transport file. Memorandum dated 18 December 1940.

     A situation that was queried in December 1940. The Ministry of Transport were unable to determine the precise relationship between Messrs. Cook and the Pullman Company, although it was noted that two of the Cook directors were on the Board of Pullman.  [↑](#footnote-ref-930)
931. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes (16 March 1953 and June 1954). [↑](#footnote-ref-931)
932. Gregory Votolato, *Transport Design: A Travel History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-932)
933. John Hibbs, *The Railways, the Market and the Government* (London: Institute of Economic Affairs. 2006), 42. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways*, ‘Introduction: nationalisation’, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-933)
934. TNA: RAIL 1204/3 Annual General Meetings’ minutes, 16 March 1951. [↑](#footnote-ref-934)
935. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 307-309. [↑](#footnote-ref-935)
936. David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy: The Fall and Rise of Britain’s Railways since the 1950s* (London: Leasing Edge Press, 1994), 36, and Terry Gourvish, *British Rail: 1974-97: From Integration to Privatisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-936)
937. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 568. [↑](#footnote-ref-937)
938. Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy*, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-938)
939. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 570, and T. R. Gourvish, ‘British business and the transition to a corporate economy: entrepreneurship and management structures’, *Business History,* Vol.29:4 (2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-939)
940. This Committee was chaired by Herbert Phillips, a former senior officer of the Great Western Railway. [↑](#footnote-ref-940)
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942. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Ministerial discussions, 16 June 1956. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No. 62 (2001), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-942)
943. TNA: AN 172/1 Introduction of Pullman Cars on train services, March 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-943)
944. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Ministerial discussions, 16 June 1956. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No. 79:3 (2008), 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-944)
945. H.M.S.O. report dated 27 June 1956. Lt. Col. G. R. S. Wilson, *Report on the Collision near Barnes Station.* [↑](#footnote-ref-945)
946. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 13 August 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-946)
947. TNA: AN 116/16 London Midland Region Board minutes, 1956-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-947)
948. TNA: AN 109/956 Hotels and Catering Services minutes, 24 August 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-948)
949. TNA: AN 157/44 Board meeting minutes, 16 March 1956 [Detail of franchise agreement not available.] [↑](#footnote-ref-949)
950. TNA: AN 109/956 Hotels and Catering Services minutes [No date]. [↑](#footnote-ref-950)
951. TNA: AN 109/956 Hotels and Catering Services minutes [No full date – July 1956.] [↑](#footnote-ref-951)
952. S.R. Cross-Channel Timetable, Winter 1952 (courtesy of Charles Long), and Hasenson, *Golden Arrow*, 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-952)
953. TNA: RAIL 1204/2 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, October 1952. [↑](#footnote-ref-953)
954. Hasenson, *Golden Arrow*, 93-94 and Behrend, *In Europe*, 111-132. [↑](#footnote-ref-954)
955. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies minutes, 18 September 1956. [↑](#footnote-ref-955)
956. TNA: RAIL 1204/3 Ministerial Meeting minutes, August 1956. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No. 79:3 (2008), 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-956)
957. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies minutes, 18 September 1956. See, also, Antony M Ford, Profile 5, *The Golden Arrow* (Crécy Publishing, 2018), 31-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-957)
958. TNA: AN 174/2050 Pullman Car Company minutes, ‘Conditions of Service’, 14 September 1956. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.79:3 (2008), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-958)
959. *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 28 November 1958, ‘Pullman Car Staffs want pay equality’, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-959)
960. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 210-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-960)
961. Stewart Joy, *The Train That Ran Away, A Business History of British Railways, 1948-1968* (London: Ian Allan, 1973), 13, and A. J. Pearson, *The Railways and the Nation* (London, 1964). [↑](#footnote-ref-961)
962. The Pullman Car Company *Directors’ Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending 30 September 1953*, 3 – conducted by Auditors, Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co, London. (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-962)
963. Francois Caron, *Histoire des Chemins de Fer en France* (France: Fagard, 1997), 48. [French text]. [↑](#footnote-ref-963)
964. The Pullman Car Company *Directors’ Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending 30 September 1953*, 3. (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-964)
965. Comparative studies of The Pullman Car Company *Directors’ Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 1952* and *Year Ending 30 September 1953*. (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-965)
966. *Daily Express*, 4 November 1954. A cutting from the newspaper was given to the office of Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan. Sir Brian Robertson commented on this to John Boyd Carpenter reassuring him that he had been at pains personally to insist that the change of ownership was not a result in lowering of the standard. See, also TNA: PREM 11/4031 and *The Railway Gazette*, 14 May 1954, 543. (A poem which offers unusual clarity regarding the B.T.C. intention to continue supplementary fares). [↑](#footnote-ref-966)
967. Brian Haresnape, *BR 1948-1983 - A Journey by Design* (London: Ian Allan, 1983), 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-967)
968. L.A. Summers, *British Railways Steam 1948-70* (London: Amberley Publishing, 2015) and *British Railways: The Early Years, 1948-1961* with Colin Divall (Strike Force Entertainment), DVD, 2013. See, also Joy, *A Business History*, 36, and David N. Clough, *Hydraulic vs Electric* (Ian Allan, 2011), 14-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-968)
969. T.R. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73, A Business History* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), ‘Deficits, markets and closures’, 173-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-969)
970. Charles Loft, *Last Trains* (London, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-970)
971. Joy, *A Business History*, 13-20. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways*, 566-579. [↑](#footnote-ref-971)
972. Colin Boocock, *British Railways 1948-1998. Success or Disaster?* (London: Penryn, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-972)
973. Frank Height and Roy Cresswell, *Design for Passenger Transport* (London: Pergamon, 1979). [↑](#footnote-ref-973)
974. Michael R. Bonavia, *The Organisation of British Railways* (London, 1971). See, also his article: ‘The Framework of Public Transport, *Journal of the Institute of Transport* (July 1953), 145-185. [↑](#footnote-ref-974)
975. Tanya Jackson, *British Railways: The Nation’s Railway* (London: The History Press, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-975)
976. Jackson, *The Nation’s Railway.* [↑](#footnote-ref-976)
977. Joy, *A Business History*, 22-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-977)
978. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973,* 256-7, 307 and 531. [↑](#footnote-ref-978)
979. Jackson, *The Nation’s Railway*, ‘In Search of an Identity’. See, also ‘An awkward fence to cross: Railway capitalization in Britain in the inter-war years’, by Gerald Crompton and Robert Jupe, in *Accounting, Business and Finance History*, Vol. 12:3 (2002), 439-459. [↑](#footnote-ref-979)
980. Derek Aldcroft, *British Railways Since 1914, An Economic History* (Newton Abbott, 1975). See, also *Back Track*, Vol. 29:5 (2015), ‘Putting new heart into the industry’, by Geoffrey Skelsey, 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-980)
981. Haresnape, *A Journey by Design*, 126-132. See, also Martyn Pring, *Luxury Railway Travel, A Social and Business History* (Pen and Sword, 2019), 162-170. [↑](#footnote-ref-981)
982. Metropolitan Cammell & Finance Company brochure 4/1957 of artist impressions of new trains, and George Behrend, *Pullman in Europe* (London: Ian Allan, 1962). See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.63 (2001), 23-24 and TNA: AN 8/131. [↑](#footnote-ref-982)
983. TNA: MT 124/50 ‘Long Term Plans for Railway Modernity’. [↑](#footnote-ref-983)
984. South Wales and Monmouthshire Railways and Docks Lecture and Debating Society, No. 13, *A Hundred Years of Pullman,* F.D.M. Harding, General Manager of the Pullman Car Company, 2 October 1956, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-984)
985. Julian Morel, *Pullman* (Newton Abbott: David & Charles, 1983) and Behrend, *In Europe*. [↑](#footnote-ref-985)
986. Haresnape, *A Journey by Design*, 129 and *The Railway Gazette*, 14 May 1954, 543. This venture began in 1953 to supplement catering facilities at the event, and to provide members and their guests with a rendezvous combining the amenities of a lounge and restaurant. [↑](#footnote-ref-986)
987. 26 Morel, *Pullman*, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-987)
988. Behrend, *In Europe*, 74, and Alec Hasenson, *Golden Arrow* (London: Howard Baker, 1970), 36-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-988)
989. *This is Europe* (Pullman Car Company publication, The Arden Press, 1957), 16-18, and *The Transport Gazette*, 1959. See, also *Worthing Herald,* 18 September 1953, ‘Cheaper Train Breakfasts’, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-989)
990. *The Railway Gazette*, ‘British Railways Camping Coaches’, 27 May 1960, 636; *The Railway Magazine*, Vol. 107, No.711 (July 1960), ‘Pullman Cars as Camping Coaches’, 449, and Antony M Ford, *The 12-wheel cars, Profile No.1* (Corhampton: Noodle Books, 2008), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-990)
991. The Pullman Car Company publication: Directors’ Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 1959, 4a, listing of cars in service and pending withdrawals. [↑](#footnote-ref-991)
992. TNA: BTC/3 AN 5/3 Agreement to build new Pullman cars, and correspondence between Metropolitan Cammell to F.D.M. Harding, Pullman general manager, 11 November 1957. A Draft Specification of the types of cars (with kitchen or without) is held at the NRM, Morris Collection. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, ‘New Stock for Pullman Trains’, 30 December 1960, 782. [↑](#footnote-ref-992)
993. *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 12 January 1961, ‘Vintage Pullmans as Holiday Homes’, 35-36. See, also Ford, *Profile 1*, 157-170. [↑](#footnote-ref-993)
994. Behrend, *In Europe*; Morel, *Pullman*; Haresnape, *In Style*. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Success of Pullman Credit Card Scheme’, 8 January 1960, 34. [The Pullman credit facilities was first introduced in the autumn of 1958. The basis of the system was a card bearing the name of the representative of the company concerned, signed by the holder, and produced when a bill for refreshments or Pullman supplement ticket is presented by the conductor. This pilot scheme was later adopted in British Railways’ own refreshment cars.] [↑](#footnote-ref-994)
995. Joy, *A Business History*, 148, and *The Railway Gazette*, ‘New Cars for East Coast Route Pullman Trains’, 30 September 1960, 397-398, and *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Inaugural Run of New “Master Cutler”’, 7 October 1960, 434. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways*, 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-995)
996. R.H.N. Hardy, *Beeching, Champion of the Railway*? (London: Shepperton, 1989); A.J. Pearson, *The Railways and the Nation* (London, 1964), and Richard Lamb, *The Macmillan Years 1957-1963: The Unfolding Truth* (London: John Murray, 1995), 482. See, also Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 285. [↑](#footnote-ref-996)
997. Joy*, A Business History*, 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-997)
998. A.J. Pearson, *The Railways,* and Joy, *A Business History*, 58-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-998)
999. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973,* 574, and *Back Track*, Vol. 29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-999)
1000. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 301-303. See, also Joy, *A Business History*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-1000)
1001. David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy* (Hawes, 1991), and Joy, *A Business History*, 18, 43 and 70. See, also *Back Track*, Vol. 29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1001)
1002. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 80, 84 and 98. See, also *Back Track*, Vol. 29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1002)
1003. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 101-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-1003)
1004. Joy, *A Business History*. See, also TNA: CAB 130, and *Back Track*, Vol.29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1004)
1005. *Reappraisal of the Plan for the Modernisation and Re-equipment of British Railways* (HMSO, 813, July 1959). [↑](#footnote-ref-1005)
1006. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 231-273. See, also ‘Revenue, Costs and Labour Relations’, 91-134. [↑](#footnote-ref-1006)
1007. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 260. See also, 91-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-1007)
1008. Joy*, A Business History* and Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 135-256. [↑](#footnote-ref-1008)
1009. Joy*, A Business History* and *Back Track*, Vol.29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1009)
1010. Joy*, A Business History* and Gourvish, *British Railways, 1948-1973,* 142-143. [↑](#footnote-ref-1010)
1011. Michael Bonavia, *British Rail, The First 25 Years* (Newton Abbot, 1981). See, also his article: ‘The Framework of Public Transport, *Journal of the Institute of Transport* (July 1953), 145-185, and *Back Track*, Vol.29:5 (2015), 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1011)
1012. *Modernisation and Re-equipment of British Railways* (London, 1955). [↑](#footnote-ref-1012)
1013. Haresnape, *In Style* and Gourvish*, British Railways 1948-1973*, 289, 402-404. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.64 (2002), 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-1013)
1014. Gourvish*, British Railways 1948-1973*, 273-284. See, also David N. Clough, *Hydraulic vs Electric, The Battle for the BR Diesel Fleet* (Ian Allan, 2011), 14-35 and 59-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-1014)
1015. Gourvish*, British Railways 1948-1973*, 566-582. [↑](#footnote-ref-1015)
1016. Bonavia, *The First 25 Years.* See, also Gourvish, *British Railways,* ‘The Modernisation Plan and Investment, 256-304. [↑](#footnote-ref-1016)
1017. Bonavia, *The First 25 Years.* See, also Gourvish, *British Railways,* 91-134 and567. [↑](#footnote-ref-1017)
1018. *The Times*, 27 December 1954. See, also *The Evening News*, 27 May 1954 ‘When British Railways take over the Pullmans’ (A cartoon sketch by Lee). [↑](#footnote-ref-1018)
1019. *The Manchester Guardian,* 5 January 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-1019)
1020. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 256-269, and Bonavia, *The First 25 Years.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1020)
1021. TNA: AN 172/2Introduction of Pullman cars on trains services. General file. See, also *Back Track*, Vol. 29:5 (May 2015), 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-1021)
1022. TNA: MT 124/50 ‘Long Term Plans for Railway Modernity’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1022)
1023. Kevin Robertson, *Blue Pullman* (London: Kestrel, 2005), 2-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1023)
1024. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 258. Note: Unlike Pullman, almost immediately post-war, a prototype stainless steel coach, built by the Budd Co of Philadelphia, U.S.A., was considered a potential replacement for older (ordinary stock) on British Railways. See, *Modern Railways*, June 1963, 416. [↑](#footnote-ref-1024)
1025. Behrend, *In Europe.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1025)
1026. Joy, *A Business History* and Haresnape, *A Journey by Design.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1026)
1027. David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy* (London: Hawes, 1991), and in Joy, *A Business History.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1027)
1028. Gourvish*, British Railways,* 288. See, also *Back Track*, Vol.29:5 (May 2015), ‘Putting new heart into the industry’, by Geoffrey Skelsey, ‘Procurement’, 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-1028)
1029. 68 Joy, *A Business History*, 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-1029)
1030. Haresnape, *In Style.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1030)
1031. South Wales and Monmouthshire Railways and Docks Lecture and Debating Society, No. 13, *A Hundred Years of Pullman,* F.D.M. Harding, General Manager of the Pullman Car Company, 2 October 1956, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-1031)
1032. Hasenson, *Golden Arrow.* See, also, Ford, *Golden Arrow* (2018), 34-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-1032)
1033. Haresnape*, In Style*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1033)
1034. *Trains Illustrated*, ‘Traveller’s Tales’, September 1957. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.64 (2002), 17, regarding new forms of meal preparation. [↑](#footnote-ref-1034)
1035. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-1035)
1036. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 300 and 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-1036)
1037. Bonavia, *The First 25 Years,* and Gourvish*, British Railways*, 402, 464 and 515. [↑](#footnote-ref-1037)
1038. See particularly, Joy, *A Business History.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1038)
1039. Gourvish, *British Railways,* 579. [↑](#footnote-ref-1039)
1040. Gourvish, *British Railways*, 570. [↑](#footnote-ref-1040)
1041. In D.L. Bevan, *The Nationalised Industries’*, in Derek Morris (ed), *The Economic System in the United Kingdom* (Oxford University Press, 1977); and Richard Pryke, *Public Enterprise in Practice. The British Experience of Nationalisation over Two Decades* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1971); and Christopher Savage, *Inland Transport* (HMSO, 1957); and G. Worswick, and P. Ady (eds), *The British Economy in the Nineteen-Fifties* (London: Clarendon Press, 1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-1041)
1042. David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy* (London, 1994). See, also Gourvish, *British Railways*, 307-388. [↑](#footnote-ref-1042)
1043. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 322. See, also G. Freeman Allen, *British Railways after Beeching* (Ian Allan, 1966), 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-1043)
1044. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 566-582. [↑](#footnote-ref-1044)
1045. Private papers of F. D. M. Harding, General Manager of the Pullman Car Company, in the possession of A M Ford. [↑](#footnote-ref-1045)
1046. R. N. H. Hardy, *Beeching: Champion of the Railway* (London: Ian Allan, 1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-1046)
1047. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Ministerial Discussions June-September 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-1047)
1048. Hardy, *Beeching*, 76. Note: According to the personal recollections of Angela Style, secretary to the chief engineer, Norman Johnson during the late 1950s, suggest that at this time the offices had ‘an atmosphere likened to a gentleman’s club’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1048)
1049. ****

      **FIG.7 THE WESTERN REGION 8-CAR ‘BLUE PULLMAN’ PROMOTED**

      **UNDER THE ADVERTISEMENT ‘PULLMAN THE WAY AHEAD’** (Courtesy of Mr J. Kent, Brighton).

      *The Railway Gazette*, 24 June 1960, 731. ‘The term “de-luxe” was applied by the British Transport Commission, suggesting an over-abundance of rare but desirable qualities which are not necessary for life.’ See, also *The Evening News*, 4 July 1960, ‘The Man in the 90mph Kitchen’, 8, which unusually advertises not only the special features of the trains but details the suppliers, for example, ‘Twyfords porcelain sinks’ and ‘Stone Platt electrical equipment’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1049)
1050. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1050)
1051. British Railways (Western Region) and Pullman Car Company publication (brochure): *Introduction of the South Wales Pullman Diesel Express Service*, September 1961, 5-8. (Courtesy of Charles Long). [↑](#footnote-ref-1051)
1052. *The Times*, 5 July 1960, 5 and *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 October 1960. [↑](#footnote-ref-1052)
1053. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 10. See, also Haresnape, *A Journey of Design*, 106-107. [↑](#footnote-ref-1053)
1054. *David Mellor Master Metalworker* (London: Butler and Tanner, 2006), 21. [This publication is an expanded and updated version of the book originally published to accompany the Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust retrospective exhibition: *David Mellor Master Metalworker* which opened at the Design Museum, London, in 1998.] [↑](#footnote-ref-1054)
1055. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 57. Note: the Pullman image was always one of at table attendant-service and luxury, to guarantee this no standing passengers were allowed in a Pullman car. [↑](#footnote-ref-1055)
1056. Keith Beddoes, *Metro-Cammell, 150 Years of Craftsmanship* (London: Runpast, 1999), and Sir John Elliot, *On and Off the Rails* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-1056)
1057. *Trains Illustrated* (London: Ian Allan), October 1960, report by Cecil Allen. [↑](#footnote-ref-1057)
1058. *Modern Railways* (London: Ian Allan), July 1963, ‘Three Years of the Blue Pullmans’ by Margaret Wilson. [↑](#footnote-ref-1058)
1059. *The Times,* 5 July 1960 and 19 July 1960. See, also later report in *Newcastle Journal*, 5 October 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-1059)
1060. The new replacement stock was exhibited at various locations prior to entering service. Although embodying new features their facilities were almost identical to the stock replaced. See, *The Railway Gazette*, 30 December 1960, ‘New Stock for Pullman Trains’, 782, and Behrend, *In Europe,* 101-113; Morel, *Pullman*, 102-107, and Brian Morrison, *British Rail DMUs and Diesel Railcars* (London: Ian Allan, 1998). See, also NRM, The Morris Collection: British Transport Commission letter signed by R. Glendenning to Pullman Chairman, Stanley Adams, 3 December 1957, ref: F11/9019/1. This outlines the responsibility of the Pullman Car Co in relation to the costs of the rolling stock being purchased. Sir Reginald Wilson thought it useful to set out the position relating to the two authorisations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1060)
1061. *The Railway Gazette*, 25 September 1959, ‘The Scrap Heap [!] – New Pullman Coat of Arms’, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-1061)
1062. Haresnape, *In Style* and *The Railway Gazette*, 24 June 1960, and *The Railway Magazine*, ‘New Cars for East Coast Route Pullman Trains’, December 1960, 847-849. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.83:1 (2010), 23-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-1062)
1063. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 23-35 and *Birmingham Daily Post*, 27 October 1959, 1 and 13, and 3 November 1959, 23, and *Belfast Telegraph*, 29 October 1959, 1. See, also *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 3 November 1959, 15 and 21, which refers to an internal strike at the manufacturers, by ‘about 20 men … likely to hold up production of both [new] models’ involving the National Union of Vehicle Builders’. The following day, the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 4 November 1959*,* reported ‘union bid to end dispute’, 27 and 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-1063)
1064. *Birmingham Daily Post*, 28 October 1959, 1. See, also *Daily Herald*, 27 October 1959, ‘Higher Tips of Pullman Staff than Restaurant Cars’, 9, and ‘All Change: Railway Industrial Relations in the Sixties’ by Derek H. Aldcroft in *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol.SS-1, 3 (1972), 180-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-1064)
1065. *Birmingham Daily Post*, 28 October 1959, ‘New Union Appeal’, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-1065)
1066. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2) General Manager files: Diesel Multiple Units ‘Midland Pullman’, minutes. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.88:2 (2011), 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-1066)
1067. P. E. Bagwell, *The Railwaymen: The History of the National Union of Railwaymen* (London, 1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-1067)
1068. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda. Note: *The Railway Gazette,* 19 August 1960, ‘Western Region Diesel Pullman Trains’, 206, suggests that the provision of two classes of accommodation on both routes should give a high ratio of seats occupied. [↑](#footnote-ref-1068)
1069. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda. [↑](#footnote-ref-1069)
1070. TNA: AN 174/2056 Conditions of Pullman service 12/1960 – 7/1961. [↑](#footnote-ref-1070)
1071. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.88:2 (2011), 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-1071)
1072. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 23-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-1072)
1073. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda, and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-1073)
1074. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, Appendix A, 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-1074)
1075. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. Notes. See, also ‘All change: Railway industrial relations in the Sixties’ by Derek H. Aldcroft, in *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol. SS-1:3 (1972), 180-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-1075)
1076. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1076)
1077. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2) General managers’ file. Introduction of Pullman cars on train services. See, also *Birmingham Daily Post*, 15 December 1960, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1077)
1078. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2) General managers’ file. Introduction of Pullman cars on train services. [↑](#footnote-ref-1078)
1079. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda. [↑](#footnote-ref-1079)
1080. Michael Esau, *On and Off the Rails* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-1080)
1081. Robertson, *Blue Pullman* and *Modern Railways Profile No. 10* (London: Ian Allan, 1985). See, also *L.M.R. Magazine*, Vol.11, No.8 (August 1960), ‘Britain’s First Diesel-Electric Pullmans – Lord Mayors of London and Manchester Inaugurate New Service’, 234-236. [↑](#footnote-ref-1081)
1082. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1082)
1083. *Trains Illustrated* (London: Ian Allan, January 1961). [↑](#footnote-ref-1083)
1084. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2.) General managers’ file. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1084)
1085. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2.) General managers’ file. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1085)
1086. TNA: AN 172/295 (Pt 2.) General managers’ file. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1086)
1087. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda. [↑](#footnote-ref-1087)
1088. TNA: AN 174/2055 Conditions of Pullman service – undated memoranda. [↑](#footnote-ref-1088)
1089. Haresnape, *In Style.* See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.88:2 (2011), 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-1089)
1090. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service, Pullman Car Company staff. Notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1090)
1091. Joy, *A Business History* and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1091)
1092. TNA: AN172/295 (Pt 2) General managers’ file, Pullman Car Company Circular, 2 June 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-1092)
1093. Morel, *Pullman*, 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-1093)
1094. TNA: AN85/9 B.T.C. ministries and papers, Volume 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1094)
1095. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. [↑](#footnote-ref-1095)
1096. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport general file, and Robertson*, Blue Pullman*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1096)
1097. TNA: AN 85/9 B.T.C. ministries and papers, Volume 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1097)
1098. *Birmingham Daily Post,* 4 November 1960. ‘Pay Increase for Pullman Staff’, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1098)
1099. Joy, *A Business History*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1099)
1100. TNA: MT 124/75 Transport ministries notes and personal recollections of Charles S.E. Long. [↑](#footnote-ref-1100)
1101. TNA: RAIL 1204/97 Pullman Car Company records, register of accounts. [↑](#footnote-ref-1101)
1102. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. See, also TPS, *Golden Way*, No.107:1 (2016), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1102)
1103. Haresnape, *In Style* and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1103)
1104. TNA: RAIL 648/146 Carriage working notices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1104)
1105. TNA: RAIL 1204/99 Complete record of purchase of ordinary share capital of Pullman Car Company and associated notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1105)
1106. TNA: RAIL 645/93 Traffic Officers’ Conference minutes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1106)
1107. Haresnape, *In Style*, Robertson, *Blue Pullman* and personal recollections of Charles S. E. Long. [↑](#footnote-ref-1107)
1108. Morel, *Pullman*, 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-1108)
1109. TNA: AN172/2 and RAIL 648/146 Carriage working notices and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, Appendix A, 150. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.91:1 (2012), 11 and British Transport Film, ‘Blue Pullman’, (in colour) directed by James Ritchie (1960). [↑](#footnote-ref-1109)
1110. Behrend*, In Europe* and Haresnape, *In Style.* See, also Martyn Pring*, Luxury Railway Travel* (Pen & Sword), 111-154. [↑](#footnote-ref-1110)
1111. David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century*, Vol. 2 (Patrick Stephens Ltd, 1990), ‘Super Trains of the 1930s’, 215-231 and 243. See, also J. C. Gillham, *The Age of the Electric Train* (London: Shepperton, 1988), and David Henshaw, *The Great Railway Conspiracy* (London: Hawes, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-1111)
1112. TNA: AN 172/2 General file. Introduction of Pullman cars on train services. [↑](#footnote-ref-1112)
1113. Robertson, *Blue Pullman*, 120. See, also Ford, *Pullman* *Profile 2* (2010), 53 and 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-1113)
1114. NRM, The Morris Collection, typed Pullman Company listing dated 25 May 1959 (Reference: RS.14/NJ.CE) with general condition of all-timber cars from ‘doubtful’, ‘poor’, to ‘fair’ and ‘good’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1114)
1115. Morel, *Pullman*, 109-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-1115)
1116. TNA: AN 172/2 General file. Introduction of Pullman cars on train services. [↑](#footnote-ref-1116)
1117. TNA: AN 174/2056 General file. Rates of pay and conditions of service. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.91:1 (2012), 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-1117)
1118. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies. Discussions regarding publicity material. [↑](#footnote-ref-1118)
1119. Robertson, *Blue Pullman* and Ford*, Pullman Profile 2* (2010),166. [↑](#footnote-ref-1119)
1120. Behrend, *In Europe*; Morel, *Pullman,* and R. W. Kidner, *Pullman Trains in Britain* (London: Locomotion, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-1120)
1121. TNA: AN 172/2 General file, introduction of Pullman cars on train services and Behrend, *In Europe*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1121)
1122. Haresnape, *In Style*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1122)
1123. TNA: AN 172/2 General file, introduction of Pullman cars on train services and TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.92:2 (2012), 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-1123)
1124. TNA: AN 174/2057 General file with rates of pay and conditions of service. See, also *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol.SS-1:3 (1972), ‘All change: Railway Industrial Relations in the Sixties’ by Derek H. Aldcroft, 180-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-1124)
1125. TNA: AN 109/161 Meeting papers between B.T.H.; N.U.R. and Pullman Car Company. [↑](#footnote-ref-1125)
1126. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies to 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-1126)
1127. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-1973*, 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-1127)
1128. TNA: RAIL 1204/99 Complete record of purchase of ordinary share capital of Pullman Car Company. See, also the Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts for 31 December 1960.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-1128)
1129. Haresnape, *In Style* and Ford, *The Golden Arrow* (Crécy 2018), 183-184. See, also branding and operating trains in *Express Trains*, No.4 (Ian Allan, 1978), ‘The final Metro-Cammell years’, 129-144. [↑](#footnote-ref-1129)
1130. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Transport management proposed purchase by B.T.C. of Pullman Car Company. Ministerial discussions. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.92:2 (2012), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-1130)
1131. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. For comparison, see comparative study during the inter-war period in *Accounting, Business and Financial History*, Vol.8:3 (1998), ‘Is management accounting just what management accountants do? Implicit cost analysis on Britain’s railways c.1923-1939’ by R. A. Edwards, 331-349. [↑](#footnote-ref-1131)
1132. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-1132)
1133. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service and, similarly from the private records of former Pullman traffic employee, Charles Long: ‘Working Notes’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1133)
1134. TNA: AN 174/2056 Rates of pay and conditions of service. [↑](#footnote-ref-1134)
1135. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-1135)
1136. Michael Esau, *On and Off the Rails* (George Allen & Unwin, 1982) - Autobiography of Sir John Elliot. See, also G. Freeman Allen, *British Railways after Beeching* (Ian Allan, 1966), 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-1136)
1137. TNA: PREM 11/4031 Transport management (1954-1962) proposed purchase by B.T.C. of the Pullman Car Company. Ministerial discussions. [↑](#footnote-ref-1137)
1138. Behrend, *In Europe,* and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1138)
1139. TNA: MT 124/73 Ministries of Transport and related bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-1139)
1140. TNA: AN 109/161 Meeting notes between B.T.H., N.U.R. and the Pullman Car Company. [↑](#footnote-ref-1140)
1141. TNA: PREM 11/4031 (Copy press release retained on file, but no date found regarding publication). See, also *The Railway Gazette*, ‘The Pullman Car Co. Ltd’, 12 October 1962, 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-1141)
1142. TNA: PREM 11/4031. See, also *The Railway Gazette*, ‘Pullman Car Company Stock Offer Unconditional’, 9 November 1962, 551. [↑](#footnote-ref-1142)
1143. Charles Loft, *Last Trains* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2013) 21-34, and *Modern Railways,* June 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-1143)
1144. TNA: AN 85/9 British Transport Commission, minutes and papers. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, 101:3 (2014), 68-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-1144)
1145. TNA: AN 85/9 British Transport Commission, minutes and papers. See, also ‘Engineers v. Industrial designers: The struggle for professional control over the British Railways Mark 2 coach, c.1955-66’, by Colin Divall and Hiroki Shin in *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol. 39:2 (2018), 145-169. [↑](#footnote-ref-1145)
1146. Morel, *Pullman* and Haresnape, *In Style* and TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.101:2 (2014), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-1146)
1147. TNA: MT 124/889 Transport ministries coaching stock proposals. [↑](#footnote-ref-1147)
1148. L.N.E.R. Traffic committee memorandum, ‘New Pullman service’, 2 September 1927 (John Morris Collection). See, also TNA: MT 124/889 Transport ministries coaching stock proposals and RAIL 390/1624 L.N.E.R. Traffic Committee minutes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1148)
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1150. TNA: RAIL 648/146 Carriage working notices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1150)
1151. TNA: AN 172/1 Introduction of Pullman cars on train services, and also brochure ‘New de-luxe amenities on the Talisman’, June 1964 (John Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-1151)
1152. TNA: RAIL 648/146 Carriage working notices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1152)
1153. Drawn from the recollections of former Pullman traffic employee, Charles S. E. Long. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.101:3 (2014), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-1153)
1154. Joy, *A Business History* and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1154)
1155. George Behrend, *History of Trains de Luxe* (Jersey Artists, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-1155)
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1157. Joy, *A Business History*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-1157)
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1160. Henshaw, *Railway Conspiracy* and Hardy, *Beeching.* See, also *Back Track,* Vol.29:5 (2015)’ Putting new heart into the industry’ by Geoffrey Skelsey, 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-1160)
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1162. Joy, *A Business History*, 40 and G. F. Fiennes, *I Tried to Run a Railway* (Ian Allan, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-1162)
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1164. Peter Dorey, *British Conservatism and Trade Unionism 1945-1964* (Farnham, Ashgate, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-1164)
1165. P. S. Bagwell, *The National Union of Railwaymen, 1913-1963: A Half Century of Industrial Trade Unionism* (London: Unwin, 1963), and P. S. Bagwell, *The Railwaymen – Volume 2: The Beeching Era and After* (London: Unwin, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-1165)
1166. TNA: AN 157/45 Southern Region: Chief regional officer’s file. See, a general railway company business approach, ‘Early Days of the Southern Railway’ by Sir John Elliot in *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol. FS-4:4 (1960), 197-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-1166)
1167. Haresnape, *A Journey by Design*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1167)
1168. Haresnape, *In Style*. See, also R.W. Kidner, *Pullman Cars on the “Southern” 1875-1972* (Oakwood Press, 1987), 53, and Ford, *The Golden Arrow* (2018), 156-157, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-1168)
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1172. TNA: RAIL 648/146 Miscellaneous books and records. [↑](#footnote-ref-1172)
1173. *The Evening Argus*, January 1963. Pullman Chairman visit took place in October 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-1173)
1174. Quoted in Carter, *Pullman Craftsmen*, ‘The Pullman Works and its Closure’, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1174)
1175. Elliot, *On and Off the Rails*, and Secker and Warburg, *Thomas Cook – 150 Years of Popular Tourism* (London, 1991). See, also Carter, *Pullman Craftsmen*, 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1175)
1176. George Behrend, *Pullman and the Orient Expresses 1872-2000* (Parchment, 2000), 119. See, also Carter, *Pullman Craftsmen*, 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1176)
1177. *Modern Railways*, November 1962, and TNA: AN 109/1092 Miscellaneous records. [↑](#footnote-ref-1177)
1178. Haresnape, *In Style,* 144-145, and Robertson, *Blue Pullman*. See, also TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.107:1 (2016), 4-8, and *Modern Railways*, January 1965, ‘A Corporate Identity, Pullman Livery’, 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-1178)
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1180. TNA: MT 124/889 Transport ministries new coaching stock proposal notes, and RAIL 648/146 Miscellaneous books and records ‘carriage workings.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1180)
1181. Haresnape, *In Style*, 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-1181)
1182. TNA: AN 172/296 B.T.C. general managers’ file ‘Midland Pullman’, and Haresnape, *In Style.* See, also *Express Trains,* No.4(Ian Allan, 1978), 136, and TPS, *The Golden Way*, No.107 (2016), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-1182)
1183. TNA: AN 109/1092 Working results, Pullman car services; AN 120/221 ‘Correspondence and papers’, and AN 172/296 general managers’ file ‘Midland Pullman’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1183)
1184. TNA: MT 124/889 Transport Ministries, new coaching stock proposals. [↑](#footnote-ref-1184)
1185. TNA: RAIL 1204/97 Pullman Car Company register of accounts. [↑](#footnote-ref-1185)
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1190. Peter F. Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (Butterworth Heinemann, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-1190)
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1192. *The Railway Engineer,* February 1929, 71-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-1192)
1193. Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages*, ‘Super trains of the 1930s’, 215-231. [↑](#footnote-ref-1193)
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1204. Brian Haresnape, *Pullman-Travelling in Style* (Ian Allan, 1987), 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-1204)
1205. *The Railway Gazette*, 27 November 1925, ‘The Calais-Paris and Other Continental Pullman Developments’, 696, for example. [↑](#footnote-ref-1205)
1206. *The Railway Gazette*, 15 October 1915, ‘The Pullman Car Company’, 386. [↑](#footnote-ref-1206)
1207. *Belfast News-Letter*, 19 July 1921, 3, and *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 11 April 1923, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-1207)
1208. 3 Behrend, *In Europe*, 189. (Note: Follett Holt became Chairman and Managing Director in 1928 after the resignation of Lord Ashfield. Baron R. Snoy of the Wagons-Lits Company joined the board in 1930 and Edward Ashton became Secretary and Accountant). [↑](#footnote-ref-1208)
1209. 4 The Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 30 September 1953.* See, also Morel, *Pullman,* 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-1209)
1210. 5 The Pullman Car Company Limited, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 1960* (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-1210)
1211. *The Railway Gazette*, 15 October 1915, 386. [↑](#footnote-ref-1211)
1212. *Modern Transport,* 6 November 1920, 3. See, also *Belfast News-Letter*, 19 July 1921, 3 and *Northern Whig*, 19 July 1921, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1212)
1213. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 11 April 1923, 12. Note: By the beginning of 1924, 126 cars were running on the Southern Railway (including 1 second- and 26 third-class), in Southern Railway memorandum dated 5 August 1924. Initials only. Unsigned. (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-1213)
1214. *The Railway Gazette*, 6 July 1928, 9 and *The Railway Engineer*, February 1929, 71-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-1214)
1215. *The Railway Magazine*, July-December 1930, Vol. 67, 392. [↑](#footnote-ref-1215)
1216. *Modern Transport*, 31 December 1932, ‘New Cars for London-South Coast Services’, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-1216)
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1218. TNA: AN 172/1 B.T.C. general file. Introduction of Pullman cars on train services, 8 September 1954. [↑](#footnote-ref-1218)
1219. *Birmingham Daily Post*, 8 September 1960, ‘New Pullman Diesel Train to London shows its paces’, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1219)
1220. *The Railway Gazette*, 30 December 1960, ‘New Stock for Pullman Trains’, 782. See, also *Newcastle Journal*, 22 April 1961, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1220)
1221. Pullman Car Company, *Directors’ Report & Statement of Accounts, 31 December 1959* in NRM, The Morris Collection. [↑](#footnote-ref-1221)
1222. 12 TNA: AN104/74 and AN104/75 Pullman Car Company Board minutes, 8 April 1960 and 12 January 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-1222)
1223. 1 *The Locomotive*, 15 January 1924, ‘Progress of Luxury Travel’, 7. Note by 1927, the average cost of a Pullman car was about £ 6,000 - quoted in *Leeds Mercury*, 10 May 1927, 3. For a schedule of cars operating on the L.N.E.R. in 1928 (by vehicle running ‘name’ or ‘number’) see, also TNA: RAIL 1204/28, Schedule dated September 1928. [↑](#footnote-ref-1223)
1224. 2 *The Railway Magazine*, July-December 1930, Vol. 67, 392, whose car allocation is partially incorrect. Note by 1938, the Southern Railway employed 73 per cent. of the Pullman Car Company’s rolling stock (*Sheffield Independent*, 6 January 1938, 8). It was the only ‘Big Four’ railway company that let out its catering contract. See *Daily Herald*, 4 August 1948, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-1224)
1225. 3 According to the *Londonderry Sentinel*, 13 August 1925, 7, only four cars, not six as stated, were ordered for the Great Southern Railway services. This figure is also confirmed by the report published by *Modern Transport*, 26 June 1926, 7, and *The Railway Gazette*, 9 July 1926, 45-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-1225)
1226. 1 *Western Mail*, 1 December 1949, 6, and the *Appendix to Accounts of the Pullman Car Company Limited*, at 31 December 1949, NRM, The Morris Collection. Car allocation extracted from *Pullman Car Company schedule of cars*, 1949. (Courtesy of Charles S.E. Long).

      Note: Originally in 1915, ‘a conservative valuation’ by W.C. Shackleford of 77 cars equated to £ 235,275. 7s. 5d. in *The Railway* *Gazette*, 27 September 1915, 388. See, also appendix 2. Note that during 1938, the rolling stock of 219 cars had been revalued from £ 1,274,617 to £ 741,000 (*Daily Herald*, 7 January 1938, ‘Depreciation of Rolling Stock’, 10). [↑](#footnote-ref-1226)
1227. 1 Car allocation extracted from ‘Pullman Division’ schedule of cars, 1964. (Courtesy of Charles S. E. Long).

      Note: Four years previous, the appendix to accounts of the Pullman Car Company Limited at 31 December 1960 confirms the cost or valuation of the rolling stock (194 cars) was £ 2,258,932 following the introduction of the 36 ‘Blue Pullmans’; 44 replacement cars for Northern Services, but after withdrawal of older cars for ‘camping coach’ conversion. (NRM, The Morris Collection). [↑](#footnote-ref-1227)
1228. Jack Simmons and Gordon Biddle (eds.) *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History From 1603 to the 1990s* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 405, Julian Morel, *Pullman* (David & Charles, 1983) and David Jenkinson, *British Railway Carriages of the 20th Century, Volume 2* (Patrick Stephens Limited, 1990). See, also *Express Trains* No.4 (Ian Allan, 1978), 113-144. [↑](#footnote-ref-1228)
1229. 1 NRM (Search Engine), Resource pack ‘Rail Fares’, November 2008, compiled by NRM librarian, Phil Atkins. [↑](#footnote-ref-1229)
1230. Note: The period from 1914-1938 witnessed substantial, though uneven, rises in real incomes and changes in living standards. See, Peter Scott, *The Market Makers, Creating Mass Markets for Consumer Durables in Inter-war Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 12-15. See, also Sidney Pollard, *The Development of the British Economy 1914-1950* (London: Edward Arnold, 1962), 85-87, and Guy Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain 1906-60* (Cambridge University Press, 1965).

      From 1929 until May 1931 an all-inclusive rail/ Pullman first-class fare was widely promoted from London-Paris or vice versa for £ 5. It was subsequently reduced to £ 4 12s 6d from 15 May 1931 due to world-wide recession. See, advertisement ‘Golden Arrow Service. Reduction in Fare’ (with a print run of 40,000 copies), in Antony M. Ford, *The Golden Arrow, Profile No.5* (Crécy Publishing, 2018), 69. See, also *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 December 1938, ‘Pullman Cars Lower Earnings’, 14, which reports that the lower earnings for the year ended 30 September 1938 ‘are attributed mainly to the reductions in supplementary fares made on the L.N.E. section’ [due to that railway’s own supplementary-fare streamline expresses, ‘The Silver Jubilee’ and the ‘Coronation’.]

      [↑](#footnote-ref-1230)
1231. 3 *The Railway Times*, 28 March 1914. [No page number] and Pullman Car Company publication, *Pullman Car Services*, April-May 1921, ‘South Eastern & Chatham Railway Continental Services’, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-1231)
1232. 4 Pullman Car Company publication, *The Golden Way*, March-April 1926, 12 [Brunel University Library, Transport Collection]. See, also NRM, G3/98RP, *Pullman Car Guide*, June 1923 showing detailed tables of supplementary fares on the L.N.E.R and Southern Railway. [↑](#footnote-ref-1232)
1233. 5 Pullman Car Company publication, *The Golden Way*, 15 May to 6 July 1935, ‘Pullman Resorts No.7, Hastings and St. Leonards’, 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-1233)
1234. 6 *Southern Railway Magazine*, May 1946, Vol.24, 81-83 and Pullman Car Company edition of *Londoner’s Diary* (Reginald Harris publications), June 1951, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-1234)
1235. 7 *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 6 September 1955, ‘Pullman fares to cost more’, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1235)
1236. TNA: AN174/2050 Rates of pay, 2 January 1959. Note at this time conditions of service for restaurant car staff included participation in B.T.C. (Male Wages Grades) ‘Pension Scheme and Sick Pay Scheme’. A voluntary pension scheme was available to Pullman Car staff as well as a voluntary sick club.

      See, also *Daily Herald*, 27 October 1959, ‘Higher tips of Pullman Staff than Restaurant Cars’, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1236)