‘Home on the Rails’: The design, fitting and decoration of train interiors in Britain c. 1920-1955

Thesis

How to cite:


© 2022 Amanda Stevens

cc https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

Version: Redacted Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher’s website:
http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.000146b5

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online’s data policy on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.
Amanda Stevens M.A.

'Home on the Rails': The design, fitting and decoration of train interiors in Britain c. 1920-1955

Submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy

in Art History

An AHRC funded award in partnership with the National Railway Museum (Science Museum Group) and the Open University

Submitted August 2021
Abstract

This thesis aims to show that an analysis of the interior design, fitting and decoration of railway carriages in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century, adds substantially to design history as well as both transport and mobilities studies. While design history of the interior has tended to centre on the domestic, railway history has focussed on the locomotive and been interested in technological aspects of speed and efficiency or the unusual carriage. This work concentrates on the everyday carriage, and the expression of the British amalgam of traditional and modern styles within it.

Through an examination of objects, drawings, textiles, photographs and archives, and by applying methods from the fields of contemporary human geography and anthropology, sociology and social science the railway carriage is shown to be capable of carrying multiple layers of meaning over its lifetime. In this way, choices of designs and designers, known and unknown, are shown to mediate cultural values and create customer expectations.

The thesis also brings feminist theory and ideas of nationalism to bear on the Super Saloon of the 1930s where the professional domestic decorator’s work coexisted with that of the railway company designer. Dialogue between traditional and modern modes of interior decor was found to continue in the Mark 1 carriage of the early 1950s and in royal carriages. The public and private were also juxtaposed when new technologies and materials, found for example in the home, in commercial milk bars and in the cinema, were introduced into mobile seating and dining spaces. Object choice and passenger experience of compartment and open style carriage layouts showed that the latter became culturally associated with leisure and modernity. These findings affirm the possibilities created by transport interiors for an enriched understanding of culture through design.
Acknowledgements

A century ago, Britain was affected by a global pandemic. This thesis, partially set in that context, has been completed in the grip of another. But this does not detract from the enjoyment I have had in researching and writing it. I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council for the funding and for enabling new links to be made between design, society and transport history as part of a collaborative doctoral partnership. My supervisors Dr Clare Taylor and Dr Susie West at the Open University have skilfully guided me through the process of academic research and writing with patience and professionalism. Anthony Coulls, my supervisor and senior curator at the National Railway Museum has been a great encourager and fount of railway knowledge. Thanks are due to all three for the way they worked together and enabled me to access people and places. The National Railway Museum has been intrinsic to the research and I am grateful to those in the Search Engine archive and library Andy Croxton, Peter Thorpe and Tania Parker. The research/curatorial team warmly welcomed me to the North were so helpful: Angelique Bonamy, Bob Gwynne, Charlotte Dennard, Ed Bartholomew, John Clarke, Karen Baker, Leena Lindell and Oli Betts.

The input of volunteers at Heritage Railways around the UK has been a vital part of the fieldwork element of the research. At Keighley and Worth Valley Railway Trevor England and Pete Eastham shared so much of their knowledge and time and I was fortunate to meet Pete Skellon, part of the Bahamas Locomotive Society. His investigative work on the Learning Coach was a genuine inspiration, which he generously shared. I also appreciated the time Hugh McQuade spent with me at the Severn Valley Railway and the hospitality of Mick Howse at Didcot Railway Centre and Peter Rance in their archive. Richard Salmon at the Bluebell Railway and Murray Brown at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway were equally as forthcoming with their time. The knowledge of conservators has also been important to this project: I was very thankful that Chris Binks and Sophie Adamson at the NRM and Wendy Anderson and Stephen Middleton at Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway were willing to share their expertise with me. It was also a privilege to be able to present early material at the Geffrye Museum and later work at the NRM and to receive constructive feedback which added to this work.

Navigating large archives is always a challenge. I am grateful to the staff at the National Archives, Kew; staff at the British Library, the London Metropolitan Archive, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Victoria and Albert Museum Art Library for their patient direction. Archivists have been foundational to this thesis. I would like to thank: Elaine Arthurs at STEAM, Lucy Lead at Wedgwood, Jennifer Piepersell at the Gordon Russell Museum and Julie Crocker at the Royal Archives, Windsor, who also generously facilitated the sharing of an early version of chapter seven with the NRM as part of their newly funded project in the Station Hall. Also, Zoë Hendon at MoDA, Ben Russell at the Science Museum, Martha Capwell-Fox at the Canal Museum, Delaware, USA and Emma Paragreen at the Sheffield Assay Office have all helped me unearth material.
Individuals too, have generously shared their work. Thanks are due to: Jonathan Cleaver for information on Templeton carpets, Antony Ford for his Pullman photographs, David Lawrence for BR material and Keith Harcourt for his gift of books and for accessing a much appreciated grant from the Historical Model Railway Society. Since arranging travel and accommodation ‘over the Tamar’ was so necessary, all those in administration at the Open University and the Science Museum should be thanked too. Also, Rev Steve Wild, Chair of the Cornwall District of the Methodist Church has been very supportive by giving me the freedom to study whilst doing what I was able as a Church minister.

But I would not have been able to produce this work without Alex, who has unstintingly and uncomplainingly sustained me through the illness and death of my mother, kept the household running and accompanied me on railway and design adventures through rain and snow (and sun)……..
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Volume 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Situating British railways in the twentieth century</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: The railway carriage as modern architecture</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Fitters and designers of the railway carriage interior</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Provision for passengers: sitting</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Provision for passengers: dining</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: Provision for passengers: sleeping</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7: Designing for the royal family: the bespoke interior</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: List of carriages</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Fieldwork questionnaire</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Volume 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title page</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS

BIIA British Institute of Industrial Art
BL British Library
BR British Railways
BoT Board of Trade
BTC British Transport Commission
CAI Council of Art in Industry
C and W Carriage and Wagon
CoID Council of Industrial Design
CME Chief Mechanical Engineer
D Diagram
DIA Design and Industries Association
DRC Didcot Railway Centre
GA General Arrangements
GER Great Eastern Railway
GWR Great Western Railway
HE Historic England
KWVR Keighley and Worth Valley Railway
LBR London and Birmingham Railway
LNER London and North Eastern Railway
L&NWR London and North Western Railway
LMS London Midland Scottish Railway
LTPB London Transport Passenger Board
MoDA Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture, University of Middlesex
NER North Eastern Railway
NPG National Portrait Gallery
NRM National Railway Museum
NYMR North Yorkshire Moors Railway
OUP Oxford University Press
PH/ALB Photo album
RA Royal Archives
RE Railway Executive
RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects
RSA Royal Society of Arts
SDR South Devon Railway
SM Science Museum
SR Southern Railway
STEAM GWR Museum Swindon
SVR Severn Valley Railway
TfL Transport for London
TNA The National Archives
VCT Vintage Carriages Trust
V&A Victoria and Albert Museum
SSPL Science and Society Picture Library
WW World War
GLOSSARY

**Arch rail** a curved horizontal rail forming the top part of the framing of a vehicle body end

**Armrest** a component of the passenger seat on which to rest the arm. Sometimes movable from upright to horizontal

**Articulated bogie**, where the bogie shares two carriages at one end

**Blenkinsop rack- rail** a toothed wheel developed by Murray and Blenkinsop for use in conjunction with the Blenkinsop rack- rail

**Blenkinsop system locomotive** drives itself along the track by means of a rotating gear engaging with a particular design of rack

**Bogie** a swivelling wheeled structure to guide or support a locomotive or railway vehicle, usually four or six wheeled

**Brake carriage or van** a carriage with a brake which, when pulled, can stop the whole train and not just the carriage within which it is situated. Some carriages had a brake compartment at one end

**Buffet car** a vehicle, normally a carriage, where refreshments rather than full meals are served

**Cant rail** a longitudinal, horizontal supporting member for a carriage roof, where the coach side meets the roof

**Car** a term for any passenger or freight vehicle but in the UK used primarily to describe a carriage used on London Underground. Also a term used as a substitute for carriage in the USA in relation to Pullman

**Carriage** a railway vehicle for carrying passengers, sometimes known as a coach or car

**Carriage and wagon works** the part of the railway works where the carriages and wagon exteriors and interiors are constructed and maintained

**Coach** a term used as an alternative for carriage but normally meaning motor coach, a passenger vehicle used on the road

**Compartment** a partitioned off section of a carriage, with seats facing and opposite to the direction of travel

**Composite carriage** a passenger vehicle incorporating two or more classes of passenger accommodation

**Cornice** the moulding, often ornamental, along the line of the cant rail
**Corridor** a passageway through a passenger vehicle giving access to the compartments and the brake van/dining room/kitchen/vestibule

**Coupé** a private half-compartment, usually situated at one end of the carriage, usually found on Pullman carriages

**Dining car** a carriage fitted out for dining

**Door ventilator** a ventilator situated on an external door above the droplight

**Droplight** a window, normally integral to the carriage door, lowered and secured with a leather strap or spring clutch

**Electric railway** a railway whose energy source is electricity rather than steam or internal combustion

**First class** a carriage or compartment offering the most luxurious and expensive travel class of seats, space and service on a train, passenger ship, airplane, bus, or other system of transport

**Gangway** a section that enables passengers to walk between carriages Pullman gangway; a corridor connector

**General Arrangements** are drawings that present the overall composition of an object. Depending on the complexity of the object, it requires a number of different projections, e.g. plans, sections, and elevations, spread across several different drawings

**Light** a generic term for a carriage window

**Loading gauge** the absolute size limit for rail vehicles proceeding over a given stretch of line or group of lines measured both laterally and vertically. It can vary considerably for the same track gauge

**Open carriage** without compartments, with seats arranged either side of a central aisle

**Preserved railway** a section of abandoned railway that has been restored and reopened by enthusiasts, who operate train services with preserved locomotives and rolling stock

**Pullman car** a specially appointed saloon car, originally of US design, in which passengers were served refreshments at their armchair seats on payment of a supplementary fare

**Rack railway** a line using a mechanical system with an arrangement of metal teeth set continuously along the track to engage pinion wheels of cogs to enable trains to climb steep gradients
**Railcar** a passenger carrying car running singly or with others, propelled by integral light steam, petrol or diesel engine or by electric traction

**Restaurant carriage** or car a vehicle fitted out for dining

**Roof stick** a curved horizontal rail forming a transverse roof support

**Royal carriage** a passenger vehicle specially designed for and dedicated to the conveyance of royal passengers

**Saloon** a railway passenger carriage with an open internal layout

**Sleeping carriage/car** a carriage equipped with beds and other facilities to enable passengers to sleep throughout their journey

**Sliding window ventilator** a ventilator situated in the upper part of a carriage window and comprising one or two moveable glass panes that slide sideways to admit air

**Solebar** the heavy section forming the main side members of the carriage underframe

**Tavern Car** a specialised restaurant car with internal arrangements modelled on an old English tavern

**Third class** a carriage or compartment offering less space and basic seating or sleeping accommodation on a train, passenger ship, airplane, bus, or other system of transport. These types of seats increased in number in the twentieth century

**Train** a number of coupled railway carriages, vans, or wagons (usually including the locomotive by which they are pulled). Also, a single railcar in transit

**Train set** a formation of (usually) passenger vehicles

**Tumblehome** also known as turnunder, refers to the incurving portion of the body-side panelling as it approaches the solebar

**Underframe** the supporting frame for the carriage

**Vehicle** any item of rolling stock, powered or otherwise, capable of being moved along a railway track

**Ventilator** a device mounted in the roof or walls of the carriages to enable air to move in and out of the space, also known as door ventilator, louvred ventilator, roof vent, roof ventilator, sliding window ventilator, Stones ventilator, Dewell’s ventilator

**Vestibule** an enclosed space at each end of a railway carriage giving access to the seating areas and to adjacent carriages

**Waist** the widest part of the body of a carriage
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Introduction

1. Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson (1889-1946), Amongst the Nerves of the World, c1930

Chapter 1

1.1. Enid Marx, The Knights of St John’s Tavern, St John’s Wood (Recording Britain Project), ca. 1941

1.2. Compartment interior, GWR, Holiday Haunts, 1939

1.3. LMS carriage, British Empire Exhibition, 1924

1.4. Tom Purvis, LNER poster, 1930s

1.5. Luggage label, 1947, SR

1.6. Leonard Cusden, GWR poster, 1935

1.7. Louisa Puller, The Railway Station at Tetbury, 1942


1.9. Serge Chermayeff for Waring and Gillow, bedroom, photograph

1.10. Bassett-Lowke, model of LMS first-class kitchen and dining car, 1932

1.11. Bon Marché Pavilion, 1925

1.12. Raymond Lowey on his streamlined Pacific K4 locomotive, 1936


1.14. R. M. Peary, Railway Map of British Isles, c 1939

Chapter 2

2.1. GNR corridor composite no. 2701, 1922

2.2. Sectional drawing, LMS standard corridor third class compartment, 1920s

2.3. Homer and Wilkinson, Stockton and Darlington composite railway carriage, 1846

2.4. Interior showing longitudinal seats, 1915, LNWR/LMS electric train

2.5. Sectional view, LMS standard corridor third class compartment, 1920s
2.6. Half sectional view, LMS standard corridor third class compartment, 1920s
2.7. Panel treated to resemble wood, East Coast Joint Stock, 1908, Full brake van no 82
2.8. BR Mark 1 21059, 1955, Brake corridor composite
2.9. Diagram, GWR composite carriage, 1928
2.10. Diagram, Mark 1, 1951, from book of Mark 1 diagrams
2.11. Diagram, Mark1, 1952, from book of Mark1 diagrams
2.12. Typology of all layouts and functions of carriages

Chapter 3

3.1. Plan of Wolverton Carriage and Wagon Works, 1926
3.2. Film still, Sewing droplight straps, *Corridor Third*, 1934
3.3. Luggage rack netting, string, c 2018, LMS no. 8761
3.4. H. R. Roberts, 1924, King George V and Queen Mary watching a seamstress at Swindon Works making luggage rack netting
3.5. Film still, fitting luggage rack netting, *Corridor Third*, 1934
3.6. Photograph of women workers at the Royal National Institute for the Blind workshops, 1937
3.7. French Polishing carriage doors, GWR workshops, 1930
3.8. Trimming Shop, GWR workshops, 1937, photograph
3.9. Photograph of making brass fittings, unknown workshops, 1914-1918
3.11. Door hinge, metal, n.d. LNWR
3.13. Film still, Mr Pugson, *Corridor Third*, 1934
3.15. R.S Grey, LMS carpet design, Ink on waxed linen, 29 November 1934

3.17. First-class restaurant car, dining section, LMS Lot 852, 1935

3.18a. J. E. Davies, machine part, GWR sketch books, pencil on cartridge paper, 1940s

3.18b. Blenkinsop rack rail system

3.19. Graham Sutherland, Carpet, Dorchester Hotel Dining room from *Furnishings From Britain 1948*, Trade Magazine

3.20. F.C. Garforth, Carpet designed for Heal and Son Ltd, 1927

3.21. Domestic rugs, Arding and Hobbs catalogue, 1937

3.22. White oak veneers, 1934, Restored LMS first class no. 7511

3.23. The Ballroom, Wimborne House, 22 May 1888, photograph

3.24. The Boudoir at Crathorne Hall, June 1906, photograph

3.25. Arnold Hills, The Hall at Monkhams, Dec 1893, photograph


**Chapter 4**

4.1. LMS third class seating, brake carriage no. 5987

4.2. Diagram G22 60 of Super Saloon, Trollope only interior

4.3. Diagram G22 61 of Super Saloon, Trollope and GWR Swindon works joint interior

4.4. Film still, Interior of GWR Super Saloon

4.5. Sectional drawing of LNER third class compartment, 1938

4.6. Cross section of carriage seat construction, 2019

4.7. Sectional drawing of first-class LNER seating, 1938

4.8. Advertisement for David Moseley Stand, Olympia, 1931
4.9. Seating, third class brake carriage LMS no. 5987
4.10. Padded headrest, first class, SR, 1947
4.11. First-class seating and moquette, GNR no. 2701
4.12. Third class seating with velvet upholstery, GNR no. 2701, 1922
4.15. Tom Purvis, LNER poster, 1930s
4.16. Ceiling-lights, ceramic, third class compartment, GWR no. 3755
4.17. Film still, *Is This Your Life?* 1957
4.18. Diagram of Pullman interior, 1951
4.19. Pullman carriage interior
4.20. Trollope and Sons, Interior of GWR Super Saloon
4.22. Drawings from Imperial Airways seat patent, 1938
4.24. Interior of Trollope and GWR Super Saloon
4.25. Interior of living room, Barnes, London, 1930
4.27. Trollope Interior, Super Saloon
4.28. Bedford Lemere The Morning Room at 17, Upper Grosvenor St, London Sept-Oct 1927, photograph
4.29. Lamp, Super Saloon, 1932
4.30. Lamp, Pullman, n.d
4.31. Wall light, Super Saloon, 1932
4.32. Shelley tea set and coffee set in ‘Vogue’ pattern, 1930

4.33. F.G. Sheldon, design for Super Saloon coupé light, pencil on cartridge paper, c1931/2, (NRM)

4.34. Agnes Pinder Davis, carpet design for Long Gallery, *R.M.S Queen Mary*, 1936

4.35. Postcard, tourist lounge, *RMS Queen Mary*, 1936

4.36. Interior, third class open, GWR no. 1295, 1937

4.37. Seat-ends, third class open, GWR no. 1295, 1937

4.38. Paul T. Frankl, skyscraper desk and bookcase, walnut, 1928

4.39. Percy Loveday, Marquetry sample, c1930s

4.40. Cube light, glass, third class open, GWR no. 1295, 1937

4.41. Cube teapot, (c 1940s), SR

4.42. Gaumont Palace Cinema, Union St, Plymouth, 1931

4.43. Interior, ‘Tourist’ stock LNER no. 56856, 1938

4.44. Seats, ‘Tourist’ stock LNER no.56856, 1938

4.45. Drawings, coach seats, 1920s

4.46. Sectional drawing ‘Tourist’ stock seats, LNER no. 56856, 1938

4.47. Motor coach interior, Eastern Coach Works, c 1930s

4.48. Interior, third class open, SR no.1469, 1950

4.49. Edward Bale, Canteen, Colliery Buildings Lancs, 1930

4.50. Seat-end, Rexine and ‘Chain-link’ moquette, SR 1469, 1950

4.51. Mock-up of Mark 1 third class corridor compartment, 1951

4.52. ‘Boomerang’, moquette for third class carriage, BR Mark 1, 1951

4.53. ‘Crows-feet’, moquette for third class carriage, BR Mark 1

4.54. Textile sample, hydragillite, 1951, Festival of Britain Pattern Group, 1951
Chapter 5

5.1. Luncheon Basket, GWR, n. d.

5.2. Snack boxes, GWR, c1920s, B&W photograph

5.3. Diagram, first-class dining carriage, LMS no. 7511

5.4. Dining car, third class, Midland Region, 1914

5.5. Lincrusta, Midland dining car third class, 1914

5.6. Dining car interior, GWR Holiday Haunts, 1939

5.7. Film still, from Pathways of Perfection, 1937

5.8. A.R.S., chairs, LNER, 1933

5.9. Interior, first-class restaurant car, LNER, Railway Engineer Magazine, Sept. 1928

5.10. The Great Dining Room, Chatsworth House

5.11. Bench dining seats, restored first-class LMS 7511, 1934

5.12. Interior of Great Northern Hotel, 1935, photograph

5.13. Interior, first-class dining carriage, LNER, 1924


5.15. Sugar bowl, silver plate, SR, 1931

5.16. Top to bottom: fish knife, silver plate, ribbed handle

Scimitar knife, stainless steel, Mappin and Webb, plain handle

Blunt ended knife, stainless steel with plastic handle

5.17. Knife and fork, stainless steel, LNER Coronation ware, 1937

5.18. Saucer, Wedgwood, ‘Summer Sky’ pattern, earthenware, GWR, 1938 or 1954

5.19. Teapot, water jug, cup and saucer, Wedgwood Queen’s Ware gilt pattern decorated with underglaze print and onglaze enamel decoration, LNER, 1934

5.20. Alfred Meakin, ‘Keswick’, China ware, LNER, 1928
5.21. Diagram 167, LNER Buffet Car, 1933
5.22. Interior LNER Buffet Car, 1933
5.23. Advertisement for Dr Pepper Soda Fountain, 1939
5.24. Door handle, chrome, LNER Tourist third open no. 56856, 1930s
5.27. Marcel Breuer, chair, canvas and tubular-steel, 1927
5.28. Robert Cromie and Mollo and Egin, interior, café of Ritz cinema, Southend, England, 1935
5.29. P.C. Tubular-steel chair, Ink drawing on waxed paper, LMS 1936
5.30. P.C., designer of tubular-steel chairs for LMS, 1936
5.31. P.C., Steel and rubber chairs, 1936
5.32. Interior, GWR buffet car no. 9631, 2019
5.33. Modern Diner, USA, 1930s
5.34. Interior, GWR buffet car no. 9631, c1934, photograph
5.35. Maxwell Fry, Milk Bar Interior, 1937
5.36. Refreshment trolley, 1918, Paddington Station
5.38. Chef in kitchen of GWR restaurant car no. 9672, 1938
5.39. Interior of Tavern Car, SR, 1949
5.40. Diagram, Tavern Car, 1949,
5.41. Diagram, BR buffet car, 1951?
5.42. Interior, first-class dining car, BR Mark 1, 1951
5.43. Design for Dining Chair, SR, 1947
5.44. Ken Roberts, Restaurant second open BR Mark1, 1951
5.45. Ken Roberts, restaurant second open, BR Mark 1, 1951, no.1013 D 56
Chapter 6

6.1. Interior third class sleeping carriage, LMS no.14241
6.2. Part plan of LMS sleeping carriage convertible for day use, 1928
6.3. Sectional drawing, LMS third class sleeping carriage no.14241, 1928
6.4. Table that converts into a ladder, LMS third class sleeping carriage no.14241, 1928
6.5. Third class sleeping car interior, San Francisco Railroad, USA, 1905
6.6. First-class cabin, SS Lusitania, 1906
6.7. First-class, twin sleeping carriage, East Coast Joint Stock, 1922
6.8. First-class, twin sleeping carriage, East Coast Joint Stock, 1922
6.9. Advertisement for the Dixie Drinking Cup, c1910
6.10. Second-class *Wagon Lits* sleeping compartment, no.3792, 1933
6.11. Diagram, sleeping car no 3792, *Compagnie Internationale de Wagon-Lits et de Grands Express Européens*, 1933
6.12. Part of plan for sleeping carriage, LMS, 1928
6.13. First-class sleeping carriage interior, LNER by Waring and Gillow, 1930
6.14. First-class sleeping carriage interior, LNER by Waring and Gillow, 1930
6.15. First-class sleeping carriage interior by White Allom, 1930
6.16. First-class sleeping carriage interior by White Allom, 1930
6.17. First-class bedroom, SS *Normandie*, 1932
6.18. Bedroom in the Penthouse suite for Miss D'Oyly Carte, Claridge's Hotel, Brook Street, London, 1930s
6.19. Lewis W. Hine, Seamen and bunk beds, c1938
6.20. Third-class bedroom, SS *Normandie*, 1935
6.21. Third-class sleeping car, LNER, no.1348, 1947
6.22. A.C.K. Ware, second-class sleeping compartment, BR, 1954
6.23. A.C.K. Ware, first-class sleeping interior, BR, 1954
6.24. A.C.K. Ware, first-class sleeping interior, BR, 1954
Chapter 7

7.1. Diagrams of LMS nos. 799 and 798, 1939

7.2. Formation of royal train, ink on paper, Royal Journeys 1940–41

7.3. HM Queen Elizabeth II alighting from no. 799 at Newton Abbot, July 1952

7.4. Door handle, chrome, LMS no. 799, 1940

7.5. Helen McKie, *Waterloo*, Watercolour on paper, 1940s

7.6. Brian O'Rorke, Interior *RMS Orion*, Watercolour, 1934

7.7. Brian O'Rorke, Sectional drawing, Proposed Saloon for HM the Queen, London, 1939

7.8. Brian O'Rorke, *Queen’s Lounge*, no. 799, Watercolour on paper, 1938

7.9. Brian O'Rorke, *King’s Lounge*, LMS no. 798, Watercolour on paper, 1938

7.10. Brian O'Rorke, *Queen’s Bedroom*, no. 799, Watercolour on paper, 1938

7.11. Brian O'Rorke, *King’s Bedroom* no. 798, Watercolour on paper, 1938

7.12. Brian O'Rorke, Queen’s bed footboard, LMS no. 799, 1939


7.15. *Queen’s Bedroom*, LMS no. 799, 1940, black and white photoprint

7.16. *King’s Bedroom*, LMS no. 798, 1940, black and white photoprint

7.17. Marion Dorn, Curtains, LMS no. 799, 1939

7.18. Wall light, silk and brushed chrome, LMS no. 799, 1939


7.20. Dressing table, Penthouse bedroom, Claridges, 1936

7.21. King’s Dressing table, weathered sycamore, LMS no. 798, 1940
7.22. Radio cabinet, English walnut, LMS no. 798, 1940


7.24. Marion Dorn, wool carpet, London, LMS no. 799, 1936

7.25. Flap-table, bedroom, LMS no. 798, 1940

Introduction

Aims and objectives, significance

The interior of the railway carriage is a mode of mass transport that has received little attention from design historians. In the twentieth century, the carriage interior was part of everyday experience, for work, leisure or an expected luxury for first-class travellers. The primary aim of this thesis is to investigate how railway carriages were designed, built, and consumed by passengers between 1920 and 1955.¹ This is achieved by analysing the outworking of the British amalgam of styles within them, prevalent in early and mid-twentieth century architectural and interior design. Architectural design historians and railway historians alike have identified this combination of traditional modes of decor and decoration with the modern.²

Although design historian Penny Sparke participated in a railway conference in 2007, which engaged directly with objects and material culture, the carriage itself did not feature as a topic. Sparke noted that design historians could offer a ‘new approach’, away from ‘production orientated discussions’ to those relating to mediation and consumption, and it is to this gap in knowledge that the thesis attends.³ Tensions between the historical and the modern were evident in ocean liner interiors of the 1930s.⁴ It was a topic discussed in print media and on the radio, seen in locomotive building and the first diesel railcar of 1933 and was part of the national public discourse over the rebuilding of Britain after World War I.⁵ Britain in the period between WWI and WWII was a country of uncertainty and crisis.⁶ In terms of class, gender, leisure and work, materials, communications and, crucially, transport, it was a time where Britain was accommodating the past

¹ Hereafter known as carriage.
while embracing what Alison Light has termed ‘new forms of the present’. Design solutions to health, housing and everyday objects were integral to the national public discourse of reform. This included women’s emancipation and the adoption of new technologies, materials and products as part of a drive to rebuild the nation (Fig. 1). My thesis furthers these lines of investigation by analysing the issues of gender and nationalism in relation to carriage interiors.

A second aim is to demonstrate the importance of study of the design, fitting and decoration of the carriage interior. The domestic interior, rather than the transport interior, has been the focus of scholarly attention over a range of disciplines. By showing that an examination of the material culture of the transient carriage interior contributes to design history, a discipline primarily concerned with static spaces, this thesis thus fulfils one of the objectives stated in the Collaborative Doctoral Partnership document drawn up between the Open University and the National Railway Museum (NRM). By making comparisons with other transport, public and domestic interiors, the relationship between them becomes evident, shedding fresh light on how design decisions were taken, the designers involved and more widely on the cultural values of Britain during the early twentieth century. It also contributes to the stated focus of the NRM to ‘explore the huge impact of railways on Britain and the wider world’.

While the literature sometimes draws comparisons between the modern domestic, the public space and the railway carriage interior in relation to design, comfort and efficiency, these parallels have remained undeveloped. This thesis tests these associations and queries the way in which the interiors mediated shifting cultural values through spatiality, the choice of materials and objects. This is accomplished by examining wider relational networks and also the importance of the growth of leisure, branding and media in the public sphere. Most of the literature on railways centres on the locomotive, and on technological-based improvements in speed and efficiency. When the carriage interior is discussed, usually the focus is on a

---

8 Darling: 2.
11 A. Mullay, *Streamlined Steam: Britain’s 1930s Luxury Expresses* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1994).
select number of distinctive interiors such as the *Flying Scotsman*, which offered amenities such as a cinema and hairdressing, and interiors in both modern and historicised styles. These are often given prominence in order to illustrate facets of uniqueness by comparison with contemporaneous transport interiors such as those of the ocean liner, tram or motorcar. It is an objective of this thesis to expand this by considering carriages designed to be sat in everyday for work and leisure journeys, including the dining and sleeping car. Modern design was also manifest in architecture, everyday objects, textiles, cinema and photography and the use of new materials, yet authors have made little comment about their relationship to the design of the carriage. By foregrounding these new connections, this thesis will clarify the role of the carriage in mediating new design ideas.

As well as expanding knowledge of the carriage, the role of the designers involved is also explored, discussing both how they worked and collaborated with railway company staff (some of whom were also designers) and with passengers. By uncovering the contributions of both named and unnamed carriage designers, fitters and decorators and by investigating the decisions they made, this thesis seeks to uncover the significance of their contributions, thereby also enhancing the knowledge base of the NRM, where the major collection of objects and archives studied is held.

Modernism, also known as the Modern Movement, is a critical term for this thesis. Within the history of design, it marked a broad period starting in the late nineteenth century, characterised in a number of ways. Across Europe, Russia, North America and Europe as well as in Britain, a number of designers championed modernist aesthetics, often as a response against the historicised styles. These changes in style were underpinned by a variety of philosophical positions, but gathered around a desire for a clear relationship between function and form, setting new challenges for the role of ornament. Modernist designers subscribed to a belief in the potential of the machine and new technologies to create democratic futures representing individual agency. Objects and surfaces became notable for their flat, smooth, and light appearance associated with hygiene (an outcome of the ideology of better lifestyles through design) in contrast

---

to the carved or embellished decorations of the past. Geometric and abstract elements were evidenced in everyday objects as well as in art and architecture. Interior and public spaces appeared more open and flexible. From the close of WWI in 1919 to the Festival of Britain in 1951, Modernist interiors carried design innovations in forms and ideas; however, their presence in the interiors of the carriage, and its subsequent impact on the travelling public, are heretofore unexplored. The thesis therefore situates the carriage interior within the sense of the modern and investigates whether the railway companies, steeped in traditional modes of workshop practice in decorating carriages, were able to embrace its precepts.

**Literature review**

**Assessing railway literature through the lens of heritage**

The carriage interiors examined for this thesis have all been integral to the heritage industry, whether they have been in the process of refurbishment for use on a particular heritage railway or in a museum. Either way, their very existence means they are critical both to the financial health of the organisation which owns them, and to the town or wider area where they are situated. Writing in 1987, historian Robert Hewison critiqued the nostalgic impulse to see Britain as one giant museum, pinpointing the growth of railway literature in tandem with the heritage railways as a part of a governmental economic drive when Britain was losing its manufacturing industry.\(^\text{14}\) He acknowledged that mythologizing the past has a role to play in present national identity, creating a sense of stability at times of crisis; this would have been pertinent following WWII and the decline of the age of steam.\(^\text{15}\) However, in historian Raphael Samuel’s discussion of the policies of preservation, he extols the advantages of heritage in the sense that it offers opportunities for the voice of the consumers of heritage to be heard, history told through ‘unofficial’ narratives and objects, as history from below.\(^\text{16}\) Being alert to these views has been essential to my reading of the literature associated with the railways, prioritising a social rather than a technological reading of the sources.

**Writers on railways**


\(^{15}\) Ibid: 47.

The growing number of railway enthusiasts created a demand for literature of all types in the 1920s and 1930s from the railway press. This output was written by and aimed at hobbyists, employees and professionals. These publications have been a key source of primary and secondary material for the thesis, and can be framed as written outside the academic sector for ‘enthusiasts’, passionate and often deeply knowledgeable about transport history. Ian Carter, who is both an enthusiast and an academic, suggests that despite the vast output serving between three and five million enthusiasts and industry professionals in the UK, focus on the social and cultural history of the railway in the twentieth century has been limited.\(^\text{17}\) He gives an example of the kind of books produced by companies where the executives were themselves railway enthusiasts:

Ian Allan’s 1960s loose collections of photographs [are] thrown together almost without linking text. But […] even feeble collections like these accrete value over time, recording particular iterations of the British railway’s machine ensemble for late comers to study.\(^\text{18}\)

Enthusiast literature therefore is an important supplement to archive sources, particularly for historic photographs. However, railway companies often commissioned photographs when a new or special interior had been fitted and decorated. Photographs illustrating the interior in everyday use rather than posed for publicity purposes have been elusive.

Carter also makes a key point about the importance of distinguishing between the enthusiast’s literature from 1920 and 1955, and the increase in nostalgic material produced after railway nationalisation in 1948 when diesel replaced steam.\(^\text{19}\) Paul Atterbury’s prolific output of photographic works is an example of this. This later literature pays little attention to carriages, tending to regard them as ‘miscellany’.\(^\text{20}\)

A typical caption reads:

The decoration of dining cars was generally reflective of current trends in interior design. This 1920s LNER example broadly in the French style that

\(^{17}\) Carter 2008: 29.
\(^{18}\) Carter 2008: 25.
\(^{19}\) Ibid: 33.
was popular at the time in hotels and ships, is carefully colour coordinated and features concealed lighting and salon-type chairs.\(^{21}\)

These generalised observations homogenise dining cars, without reference to the social or cultural context or an examination of ‘French style’ in terms of design history. This thesis aims to remedy this lack, with a close reading of a variety of extant carriage interiors.

Key reference works have been written by the model maker and lifelong contributor to railway history, David Jenkinson (1934-2004). Head of Education at the NRM in the 1980s, Jenkinson produced a comprehensive two-volume reference work, covering the periods from 1900 to 1922 and from 1922 to 1953, on British carriages drawing on the plethora of magazines and focused on the timeframe of this project. His review, while not situated in the wider cultural context, acknowledged that very little dedicated research had been done on carriage materials and gave pointers to potential areas for further research on design, alluding to the way the carriage could be seen as imitating the domestic interior although he did not elaborate on this.\(^{22}\)

In Jenkinson’s second book, covering the period from 1923 to 1953, his arguments concerning design are expressed in terms of the rivalry between the Big Four. The Big Four were four principal railway organisations created or ‘grouped’ by Act of Parliament in 1923.\(^{23}\) In the literature, and in this thesis, these are; Southern Railway (SR); Great Western Railway (GWR); the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER); and London Midland Scottish Railway (LMS). British Railways (BR) was formed at nationalisation in 1948. Jenkinson’s observations about the British amalgam of styles are revealed by his choice of chapter headings such as ‘design tradition dies hard’ and ‘new ideas emerge—but slowly’.\(^{24}\) These statements convey how carriage design has been perceived in much of the literature.\(^{25}\) First, it has been regarded as embedded in the technological process. Secondly, the coupling of design and tradition was integral to the culture of the railway workshop

---

\(^{21}\) Ibid: 25.


\(^{25}\) Ibid.
where carriage building was moving into a period of mass production with new materials. Jenkinson argues that railways seemed to want to ‘move with the times’ without ‘incommoding their traditional methods’ of making the carriages; and that the longevity of the vehicle militated against making the interior ‘avant-garde’.26 Jenkinson further argues it was not just the traditional methods of building carriages that were slow to change but also the interiors. He posits a variety of reasons, the main one being that the railway companies did not want to cause offence to passengers, but also because fashions in contemporaneous domestic and High Street design changed so quickly that whilst carriages remained in operation it was not financially wise to attempt modern versions. He acknowledges, however, that in new vehicles ‘adventurous ideas began to appear’ in wall finishes, light fittings and upholstery cloth: that the use of new materials like plywood and Rexine helped create fresh designs, while ‘jazz’ patterns were introduced for upholstery.27 These tensions between the modern and the traditional are important to this thesis.

When Jenkinson was writing in the late 1980s and 1990s, he was one of the few authors to assess the interior decoration and design of the carriage. However, the vehicles were not surveyed within the wider cultural context of design nor in terms of the impact of wider cultural and social change but rather in terms of competition with the motor car. The strength of Jenkinson’s work is the way in which he couched in simple terms the changes in overall design in terms of corridors, open carriages, toilet facilities, dining and sleeping arrangements as well as decor to some extent. However, there is little discussion regarding the process by which these designs came to be implemented or executed within the railway company. Similarly, the impact or implications of the use of new materials, or the rationale for their inclusion in the carriage interior, were not been made clear; themes which have been investigated in this thesis. Also missing from Jenkinson’s narrative is any discussion regarding either railway company designers or commissioned designers, thus leaving many questions about design decisions unanswered. Similar omissions and issues are found in other key works relating to carriages

26 Ibid: 36.
27 Ibid: 37. Rexine was a trademarked artificial leather cloth fabric.
although Michael Harris’s 1985 survey of GWR carriages acknowledged that railway historians had neglected their interior design.\textsuperscript{28}

Scholarship that is more recent continues to draw out the social history of the railways, but without acknowledging the relationship between society and environment in the way that Design History calls for. Christian Wolmar and Simon Bradley focus mainly on the companies before they became the Big Four in 1923. While Wolmar achieved his aim of placing ‘the history of the railways […] both their construction and their social impact in one easy-to-read volume’, the interior design aspects of the carriage between 1920 and 1955 remained tangential to his study.\textsuperscript{29} Similarly, Bradley’s comprehensive work of 2015 is another example of how railway literature has developed over the period since the nationalisation of the railways in 1948. His survey of the railway in its broadest sense is written from a social history perspective. Drawing on a wide range of primary and secondary sources, from academic journals to fiction, he includes a substantial amount of information on the nineteenth-century carriage interior: ‘a space of confinement and of liberation, of solitude and of enforced companionship’.\textsuperscript{30} There are still omissions, however. Study of Bradley’s index reveals his assessment of women’s contribution to railway history. Their roles are ‘refreshment room staff’, ‘prostitutes’, ‘crossing keepers’ or ‘track maintenance labourers’. They are liable to be assaulted, to blackmail people (men in particular), to smoke and need the lavatory, usually in a separate waiting room.\textsuperscript{31} Such stereotypical labelling, together with the valorisation of male railway engineers, (‘Brunel was a marvel’), illustrates the need to apply feminist approaches to railway history.\textsuperscript{32} Bradley’s concluding observation that those women who have an interest in railways today, ‘may be drawn in because of their husband’s interests’, supports this claim and reinforces the notion that the audience for most railway books and magazines is assumed to be male.\textsuperscript{33}

In general, enthusiasts and historians focus on locomotives and economic and technological history. When design is assessed, it mainly refers to the locomotive...
as the object and to style as the aspect of design. *Streamlined Steam*, for example, written by A. J. Mullay in 1994, gives an overview of the locomotives run by each of the Big Four and their distinctive exterior styling in the 1930s; however, there is proportionally little content on the carriages which also had particularly modern interiors.\textsuperscript{34} When the carriage interior and design are mentioned it is usually in relation to a striking or atypical interior. The focus on the American, the glamorous and unique interior continues in *Transport Design: A Travel History* by Professor of Design, Gregory Votolato. For example, he discusses the Orient Express, comparing the interior with the luxury Pullman and the ‘carved wall panelling with painted mural inserts’ with a ‘grand hotel or stately home’.\textsuperscript{35} Taking the same train, Maya Champanari acknowledges what my survey will also demonstrate, that very little has been written about the carriage interior from an art or design history perspective.\textsuperscript{36} She claims an eclectic set of methods in her work, including the feminist and psychoanalytical, in which she compares the material culture of the carriage with the domestic home of the nineteenth and early twentieth century; underscoring Penny Sparke’s observations that in the nineteenth century ‘domestic parlours could be found in carriages’.\textsuperscript{37} Champanari echoes the enthusiast tradition by making very general statements about design, for example: ‘The decorative designs featuring in 1920s Orient Express carriages reflected the contemporary enthusiasm for modernist aesthetic’.\textsuperscript{38} However, she does not analyse what a modernist aesthetic might be, how this relates to the wider architecture of the carriage, or how this is executed in detail, nor the commissioning process.

Communicating railway history to a wider public, Head Curator at the NRM, Andrew McLean discussed the *Flying Scotsman* using a range of photographs including third-class interiors, a worker’s compartment and moquette upholstery detail discussed in the context of modernity. This book represents the current

\textsuperscript{34} Mullay 1994.
\textsuperscript{36} Maya Champaneri, ‘Rethinking the Orient Express’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of York, 2014).
\textsuperscript{38} Champaneri: 20.
strategic drive by the museum to present railway history from the perspective of
the ordinary person rather than the elite traveller.\textsuperscript{39}

Those involved directly in carriage design have also made contributions to the
literature. Adviser to the newly formed British Transport Commission in 1956, Brian Haresnape, draws on knowledge from his association with the BR Design
Panel:\textsuperscript{40}

The choice of décor for new construction seems to have been regarded as
virtually anyone’s pigeon, provided they expressed some supposed flair for
such things. It was often the wife of the chief mechanical engineer, or a
company director, or some member of the drawing office staff, who finalised
the interior. Consequently, the furnishings of a carriage were chosen on the
basis of personal preference (just as one chooses such items for one’s own
home) rather than with any proper understanding of the specialised
requirements of travel.\textsuperscript{41}

This commentary highlights some of the key questions investigated by this thesis.
Who did choose and finalise the decor? Was furnishing just a matter of the
personal preference of a railway company employee? What were the ‘special
requirements of travel’ and how were they taken into account and by whom? Were
design decisions really so gendered? Haresnape’s contribution is to place the
development of the exterior and interior of the train, in the period 1948-1983, firmly
into a wider British, European and American cultural and design context. He
touches on the use of new materials, noting post-war refurbishments by
(unnamed) specialist designers.

Another author who specifically places a rare lens on design, David Lawrence,
acknowledges the legacy of Haresnape in his recent work \textit{British Rail: Designed
1948-97}, which situates design in its industrial and modernist context but has as
its primary focus the train exterior, company branding, station buildings and their
architecture.\textsuperscript{42} Therefore, apart from a couple of notable exceptions, the design,

\textsuperscript{39} Andrew McLean, \textit{The Flying Scotsman: Speed, Style and Service} (London: National Railway Museum, Scala
Arts and Heritage Publishers, 2016).
\textsuperscript{42} David Lawrence, \textit{British Rail: Designed 1948-97} (Manchester, UK: Crecy Publishing Ltd, 2016).
fitting and decoration of carriage interiors has been a secondary focus in the railway literature where it has been viewed as playing a minor part in the railways economic and technological history. However, in the later twentieth century and more recently, academics and enthusiasts alike have expressed a desire to create a broader research landscape.

The ‘mobilities turn’: the carriage interior in recent transport history

Unquestionably, the railway has been foundational to the development of modern Britain. At the heart of the Industrial Revolution in terms of technology as well as transportation, the purpose of the railways is profoundly implicated with both the economic and the social development of urban and suburban life. Just like the seaside resorts of the north of England, rural backwaters such as Cornwall were changed by the railway, which brought tourists into the region and enabled the development of the trade in flowers and vegetables with the markets of London. The importance of national networks of freight transport and the carriage of troops and armaments to the battlefronts of Europe meant that the railways were also central to political history. Boat and train connections extended tourism and business into Europe and America. Travelling by train for work and leisure became part of the experience of everyday life for many sectors of the population over the first half of the twentieth century. Sociologist John Urry, in his seminal work *The Tourist Gaze*, has argued that the mass movement of people for leisure purposes across the railway network, shaped a ‘major new component of modernity’.43 He identified the way visual practices like photography and illustrated guidebooks determined how the landscape was consumed: emphasizing the privileging of the eye.44 Tourism has become part of the wider mobility paradigm and Urry’s concept of ‘modes of mobilities’ are partially employed in chapter four as a means of examining excursion carriages.45

The interconnectedness of the railway in the social, political, geographic and economic lives of individuals and the country has enabled a more interdisciplinary approach to railway history. This is recognised in the development of academic publications such as the *Journal of Transport History* founded in 1953 and which

---

was for decades ‘firmly positioned within the framework of economic and social history’. The *Journal* is situated within a vast field, currently at four hundred publications annually and continues to be directed at an audience of academics, enthusiasts, and professionals. From its inception, railway and maritime history articles predominated, although in the 1970s academics analysed the role of automobility and there were a small number looking at aspects of women’s history. Any changes from mid-1980s onwards have gradually contextualised the subject with more articles based on social and cultural history encompassing labour history, oral history and issues of gender. Although Gijs Mom, Deputy Editor of the *Journal* in 2003, argued at the time that the contributions were fundamentally Anglo-centric, they have become less so, with a particular acknowledgment that mobility is not a recent human phenomenon. The current editor, Massimo Moraglio, has called for new methodologies but maintains that they ‘must always be firmly grounded on knowledge of the techniques and technologies at men’s [sic] disposal at different times’. He cites the potential relationship with a range of disciplines, but not art and design, (unless they come under the broad heading of cultural studies). These observations imply that the *Journal* has yet to embrace new theories in full. As part of the new direction an international ‘association of scholars, practitioners and concerned citizens who seek to encourage and promote historically informed understanding of transport, traffic and mobility’ was formed in 2004 entitled Transport, Traffic and Mobility, or T2M, which adopted the *Journal* as its principal mouthpiece.

**T2M and ‘new mobilities’**

Reframing transport history by including the interactions between people, material objects, infrastructures, representations, and embodied experiences in its remit, T2M has widened participation beyond railway history by inviting anyone sharing an interest in its activities to join. As noted earlier, design historian Penny Sparke

---

51 International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility, T2M, [https://t2m.org/](https://t2m.org/) [accessed 3 October 2017] describes the development of the *Journal of Transport History* since 1953.
observed a T2M conference in 2007, assessing that design history could make a contribution to the field.\textsuperscript{52} The intention to retain an interdisciplinary approach has been maintained, as was apparent from the website for the T2M conference in Paris in October 2019, entitled ‘Mobilities and Materialities’, although only one paper situated in the context of marketing and technology, touched on design.\textsuperscript{53}

Within this move to reframe transport history, scholarly advocates such as Professor Emeritus Colin Divall, who until recently was the Head of Railway Studies at the University of York, made representations for a new historiography, a ‘pluralism of methodologies and evidence […] concerning socio-material hybridity’.\textsuperscript{54} However, despite Divall’s view that transport history required a ‘cultural turn’ that is, a more interdisciplinary approach to the subject by attending to methods, sources and insights from the arts and humanities, much academic work has continued to focus on the advertising and marketing strategies of the rivalrous Big Four. These necessarily focus on textual and visual materials at one remove from the physical carriage; the carriage interior is not invoked as material, relational, constructed space in itself, an ideological product of the culture.

Spearheaded by the T2M movement, this recent growth of interest in what becomes termed the ‘new mobilities paradigm’, by Professors of Sociology Mimi Sheller and John Urry, has placed transport studies within the discipline of the Social Sciences to include anthropology, cultural studies, tourism and geography as part of the ‘mobility turn’.\textsuperscript{55} At a 2017 conference on ‘Mobile and Temporary Domesticities’, geographer and historian Professor Alastair Owens from Queen Mary, University of London, alluded to my presentation on ‘Home on the Rails’ as an example of the application of more contemporary methodologies which he framed within mobilities studies.\textsuperscript{56} He critiqued the breadth of the ‘mobilities paradigm’, also challenging academics to move away from elite and static histories.

\textsuperscript{52} Sparke 2007: 132.  
\textsuperscript{53} T2M, Annual Conference Website, \url{https://t2mparis2019.sciencesconf.org/} [Accessed 1 October 2019].  
\textsuperscript{56} The Mobile and Temporary Domesticities conference was held at the Geffrye Museum, London, on 10 January 2017 where the author presented a paper entitled ‘Home on the Rails’.
to ephemera and portable objects with malleable meanings.\textsuperscript{57} The next chapter shows how the methods I have selected to analyse objects both large and small are intrinsic to this contribution to design history.

**Investigating the carriage interior**

**Methods of data collection**

Gathering data was a complex task, which began with a search of the Vintage Carriages Trust (VCT) Railway Heritage Register. This was crucial in identifying the carriages, which are extant for the period of the project, their locations and originality regarding their interiors.\textsuperscript{58} The register enabled a list of suitable carriages to be selected for comparative purposes. I then visited the carriages, which were based at the NRM, followed by a selection at heritage railway centres, namely, STEAM museum in Swindon, the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway (KWVR), the Severn Valley Railway (SVR), Didcot Railway Centre (DRC) and Bluebell Railway. Since, in the past, there was no overarching strategy for the preservation of carriages, they have survived in an ad hoc way and in a variety of conditions, in daily use at heritage railways; or static and undercover in museums. Access to them was not always straightforward as some were undergoing refurbishment or partially dismantled in workshops. Others necessitated more than one visit. The carriages selected for discussion within the thesis were those with the greatest amount of original fittings and decoration or those restored to resemble the original. A fieldwork questionnaire helped in the analysis of the interiors and to record key information (Appendix Two). A small number of carriages used in the thesis are no longer extant. These were chosen as comparators, and to strengthen arguments. The final list of carriages used in the thesis is at Appendix One.

The input of conservators, carriage and wagon staff and heritage and preservation volunteers together augmented the VCT information which enabled me to ascertain how much of the interiors represented refurbishment, ‘best guesses’ reproduction, or original work. They provided access to their own or other relevant

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
drawings, papers and photographs and signposted to other knowledgeable individuals or books and archives.

One intention of the study was to use the fieldwork questionnaire as the foundation for an object biography. A complete history of each carriage could capture their textiles, histories, objects and associated paperwork, but it was often the case that materials and objects were incomplete or inaccurate, or in the case of the carriage itself, had been altered (often several times) and the provenance lost. Thus, the task of assembling object histories of everyday carriages in particular was difficult and had to be abandoned. Less problematic were those unique carriages where documentation had been made a priority by a museum, such as the LMS Queen Mother’s carriage (no. 799) situated at the NRM but even then, in the literature or oral history, references to a ‘royal train’ were often too ambiguous to be useful.

The main advantage of gathering primary information via the fieldwork questionnaire was that it naturally led to examining related primary and secondary sources in order to scope the object and related research areas and themes. The broad approach taken has been to visit carriages that are extant, ensuring that a wide range are represented across the time frame and to investigate the associated objects, drawings, textiles and documents produced by the railway companies. This has enabled themes to emerge which contribute to the overarching argument, which is that carriage interiors are paradoxical spaces where the traditional and modern in terms of design were held in tension.

**The interpretation of domestic interiors**

Domestic interiors offer unique insights into past lives and the way they have been represented through art and materiality.59 A lens on the domestic allows the wider design and cultural changes associated with people’s everyday lives to be perceived. However, more recently, the traditional narrative that the domestic is correlated with privacy and the home life of women has been challenged.60

59 More recently The Centre for the Study of the Domestic Interior, originally an AHRC research project and located at the Royal College of Art, has created a multi-disciplinary database which can be found at http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/projects/cetid/exploring-technologies-place-in-design-learning-and-teaching/domestic-interiors-database [accessed 12 May 2020]. See also The Centre for the Studies of Home at Queen Mary, University of London.

60 The exhibition, *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, held at the V&A in 2006, drew on objects and paintings of that period to explore the domestic interior.
Similarly, this thesis aims to show that the carriage interior is a permeable site for the production of culture in that it blurs the boundaries between public and private worlds. While Amy Richter has explored this idea comprehensively through the medium of the American railroad in the nineteenth century, it has not been analysed in the twentieth century or on British railways. Taking a decisive move away from technological and economic history, with a feminist approach to an examination of life on the cars, Richter concludes that any homely furnishings or decorations were not about making female passengers feel comfortable, but were tied to the business concerns of the rail companies and culturally informed social differences. This created a multifaceted and ambiguous notion of home. Richter’s view chimes with Divall’s observation of the carriage as a ‘hybrid-cum-domesticated space’.

Just as the domestic interior is ‘never merely private’ but also a place of ‘hospitality, business, production and consumption’, so too is the carriage interior. Despite the facility for a passenger to purchase a private space on a train for a journey, such as the coupé, or attempt to reserve a compartment for individual use, the carriage remains a public space, travelling through the landscape and socio-political context of the moment. Penny Sparke has listed the ‘forces which broke down the divide between the private and the public worlds’ which are: ‘occupants, engineers, and architects, space planners, upholsterers, interior decorators’. This thesis develops these concepts by examining in detail how some of these occupations may have affected the divide from a design and material culture point of view.

The study of design history emerged from art historical roots in both the UK and America. During the latter part of the twentieth century it was Nikolaus Pevsner’s book *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, first published in Britain 1936 and republished in 1960 as *Pioneers of Modern Design*, which laid the foundations for the discipline’s initial valorisation of particular designers, usually male producers of objects and mostly associated with the Modern Movement and its alleged...
precursors. In both Britain and America the subject developed in a fragmented way, focussing on furniture, advertising, appliances, technology and industrial design, resulting in the inception of the Design History Society in 1977 and the Journal of Design History ten years later. The field was critiqued in the mid-1990s in a transatlantic exchange of views between Professors Victor Margolin and Adrian Forty over definitions of design history. From this flowed the current emphasis on the benefits of situating the subject as part of an interdisciplinary approach to objects and images, a field informed by material cultural studies and anthropology but one where the boundaries do not need rigid definition.

Traditionally design history has researched the production of objects by means of examining education and training programmes, labour, resources, materials and the making process and by assessing the consumption of these objects in museums and collections. Grace Lees-Maffei pushes the research model further by arguing that ‘the world is mediated through objects which are designed’ and it is this cultural aspect, which is at the core of the methodology of my thesis.

Scholars have applied the ‘production-consumption-mediation paradigm’ to an analysis of both the real and fictional interior. While these spaces are normally domestic, ranging across several centuries, nevertheless the way in which they have been studied offers suggestions for the interrogation of the carriage interior. Many disciplinary approaches have been applied to the domestic interior, from anthropology to psychoanalytic methods and theories. Similarly, a variety of methods can be used to interpret the design, fitting and decorative elements of the carriage interior. In terms of methodological approaches, I have applied the material culture approach of anthropologist Daniel Miller (1954- ) for a number of reasons. Miller moves away from binary thinking, where the material and the cultural are opposed, to promote an awareness of dynamic relationships between objects and subjects in the world and the way objects articulate meanings beyond their original intention. This is important for this study as it allows the carriage, moving as it does through several iterations, to carry multiple layers of meaning.

---

67 Lees-Maffei 2018: 369.
68 Ibid: 11.
Miller shows how objects are not fixed but are appropriated and transformed, integrated in ‘constituting culture and human relations’, being part of human practices, composing them and being shaped by them. A material culture approach allows for an examination of how objects express cultural differences within society, how they have the capacity for breaking down barriers, for example between classes and genders, and connecting otherwise ‘diverse domains’. Similarly, Judy Attfield’s study of domestic objects illustrates how the co-existence of traditional and modern home furnishings in an interior exemplifies the contradictions inherent in modern life and I apply these concepts to the carriage.

Interdisciplinary approaches to the carriage and transport interiors

Foundational to those theorists who have moved beyond a purely technological or economic history is the scholarship of German historian and scholar of cultural studies Wolfgang Shivelbusch (1941-) whose work predated the contemporary mobilities movement in transport history. Schivelbusch explored the experiential aspects of travelling in a carriage. He emphasised the psychodynamics of being human, in all our physical and psychological aspects, encompassed by the moving train, which he termed the ‘machine ensemble’.

Scholars, mainly in the fields of human and social geography, have further developed these themes. Laura Watts and David Bissell centre their research on the way in which the individual passenger actively interacts with, affects and is in turn affected by the material environment. Using qualitative methods and an ethnographic approach, Bissell focusses on three key ‘different but related styles of visual engagement with the railway journey’. Of particular relevance to this thesis are the links he makes between the materiality of the interior of the carriage and ‘practices of vision’. He critiques Schivelbusch’s notion that the visual field is fixed, by demonstrating that the effects of day and night, time, light, and the

---

70 Miller 1987: 130.
71 Ibid.
74 Ibid: 27.
76 Ibid.
numbers of passengers together with lines of sight within the carriage create an altogether more complex, fluid travelling experience. Acknowledging that railway travel affects all the senses, not just sight, he highlights the ways in which the design and layout of the carriage interior (for example the way the windows do not line up with the seats) facilitates changes in the gaze of passengers, affects their bodily movement, and creates sensations of boredom and fatigue. Everyday practices are observed; reading for example is identified as a feature of passenger activity throughout the centuries and Bissell remarks on the sense of surveillance, whether between passengers or of luggage.77

Schivelbusch’s interest in the active nature of the passenger experience is also present in Laura Watts’ work on the literality of how space and time are created by ‘particular practices and performances’ during the railway journey.78 The passenger is ‘spatially active’ rather than a commodity, interacting with the materiality of the carriage, which ‘kicks back’.79 Although the interior design of the carriage and the objects within it are not her focus, the usefulness of this approach is to see the carriage interior as a socially relational space, made and unmade, not only by passengers but also by the, usually fixed, objects within it. This also applies to the personal portable possessions, which passengers bring with them from their domestic environment: ‘packed and unpacked’.80 These concepts, where material objects form an interactive part of the environment, some in a permanent, and others in a transitory manner, prevent the carriage interior from seeming an empty space of all but fittings and decoration, as is often presented in record photographs. Temporary exhibitions such as The Missing Passenger, held at the National Railway Museum in 2017, illustrated this use of space by imaginary passengers through the display of personal objects on the tables, sleeping compartments and seats.81 Although applying these more recent methodological approaches to the study of early and mid-twentieth-century carriage interiors should be undertaken with caution, some of the concepts (touch was excluded) such as comfort, materiality, interactivity, visuality and security serve to draw out the relationship between the carriage space and the passenger experience.

77 Ibid: 52.
79 Ibid: 720.
80 Ibid: 713.
Feminist art historians have utilised the theories of French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) who, grounded in phenomenological philosophical approaches, developed Freud’s structures of the unconscious. Psychoanalytic theory has implications for analysing power relations. For example, Lacan’s theory of the gaze emphasises its subjectivity, that what is seen is often subject to the imaginings of the beholder.\textsuperscript{82} When applied to people, the gaze can amount to a struggle over power and who is doing the looking. In a move away from traditional categorisations such as ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ where gender is determined by patriarchy, Bissell implicitly refers to these ideas in the way he discusses the impact the interior design of the carriage has on passenger gaze and surveillance.\textsuperscript{83}

This contrasts with the narrative of the carriage compartment as a ‘primal space for the enacting of symbolic and literal conflicts where the woman is usually the victim’, an approach touched on by Ian Carter.\textsuperscript{84} The exploration of these unconscious relationships is the work of psychoanalytic theory, which is a model of the human mind. To apply it to the experience of the carriage is unusual and normally applied to human psychosexual development. While these ideas have inspired innumerable literary and historical associations of crime in the carriage based on newspaper accounts, this is not the method of analysing the design, fitting, and decoration of the carriage interior adopted in my thesis.\textsuperscript{85}

The issue of whether interior space is gendered, and if so how, is a problematic one.\textsuperscript{86} Earlier scholarship has tended to follow contemporary perceptions of how spaces are associated with gender, such as the ‘female’ saloon and the ‘male’ library. Work, domestic, and urban spaces become gendered by association with their dominant users: the locomotive cab would, in this formulation, be understood as a male space. This simple dichotomy has been critiqued and extended to explore how cultural norms make a space a site of gendered activity and how

\textsuperscript{83} Bissell 2008: 52.
\textsuperscript{85} Ian Carter, \textit{Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
gender and everyday space is interlinked in a non-binary way. From a feminist anthropological perspective, the carriage space is inseparable from all the everyday personal and social activities that take place within it. In a cultural example, Emma Gieben-Gamel pinpointed the social relations within the hairdressing salon as fundamental to the construction of the space, showing how well known interior design strategies were used to ‘reassure’, and ‘convey respectability’ in exclusively women’s spaces. Women-only restrooms and ‘Ladies only’ compartments within the carriage featured on trains and stations into the 1970s but generally the compartment was open to both sexes which could become a source of conflict. As cultural feminist Judith Butler (1957- ) attests, this could be because cultures or laws punish those who fail to ‘do’ their gender correctly, having a stake in maintaining sexual difference. As passengers or producers, both men and women having their gender roles fixed in this way is intrinsic to space being produced by and productive of gender relations, a concept developed by feminist geographer Doreen Massey (1944-2016). The gendering of space has been applied to other environments such as shopping malls and everyday spaces. The application of gender theory to the carriage allows for an analysis of the roles of men and women in the production of the space, or as a space for the performance of gender identity. In Chapter two I outline in detail the theoretical perspectives on space employed in the thesis.

Feminist approaches to design are also used to foreground female interior decorators. Sparke’s 2003 work on the American interior decorator Elsie de Wolfe,
whose life marked the birth of modern interior decoration, is an exemplar. Penny Sparke, Anne Wealleans and Doreen Massey have all highlighted the contribution made by women designers to the interiors of various forms of transport, from the aircraft to the ocean liner and the carriage. Uncovering the influence women had on the design of the interior was noticeable in the major international exhibition and accompanying book *Ocean Liners* of 2018, organised by the Victoria and Albert Museum. This was a paradigm of the range of material culture applicable to transport interiors. Situated in its social, political and economic history *Ocean Liners* charted in a thematic way aspects of design from the nineteenth century to the present day, analysing the exterior as well as the interior design elements. Significantly, it was the authors’ consideration of the interior in the context of design history, which my study seeks to emulate.

Known for his social science approaches, theorist Pierre Bourdieu’s (1930-2002) anthropological work is also of interest. Certain aspects of his methodology have aided the investigation of the complex network of relationships which exist between design, the carriage and the wider sphere of goods acquired to indicate personal taste or distinctiveness. Bourdieu’s idea of the ‘field’ has provided a means of generally mapping and examining the interplay of power and capital within structural networks in a time of considerable social and political change between 1920 and 1955. Looking at the field is a way of examining links between personal and professional individuals within it; pertinent when considering the background of railway managers, why certain designers were chosen to decorate interiors, and why particular objects were part of the interior. Part of this analysis is the idea of symbolic or cultural rather than economic capital. In other words, were some designs or designers chosen by the railway companies because they represented ‘good taste’ and therefore would have attracted certain passengers? Closely allied to the field is that of the ‘habitus’, the everyday, the

---


cultural milieu, and the objects and people which constitute it. Because Bourdieu does not allow the social conditions in which art and objects are made to go unnoticed, his theory allows for a wide analysis of the railway workshop and the commissioned designers and carriage passengers all of whom constitute the habitus. The carriage object then becomes the focus of practices generated by the habitus where the lifestyles and distinctive ‘tastes’ of individuals and groups become evident. In such a methodology, values and ideologies are exposed and the social and economic networks of individuals, whether they are railway workers of all classes or designers commissioned for a specific job, become open to examination.

Design history, so often centred on the domestic and on canonical designers, has become more open to the investigation of transport interiors, while transport history and mobilities have become more open to fresh methodologies. This thesis lies at their intersection.

**Sources**

**Large objects: the carriages**

The primary sources are the large objects held by the NRM, and at some heritage railways (noted above and see Appendix One). I define large objects as the carriages themselves, while the small objects are those which were used in the interior. Each of the Big Four produced their own carriages at their separate workshops in Britain, although there were also independent carriage building firms. They sustained a fundamental process of making, primarily from wood and later from steel. The finishing of the interior was carried out in the workshop either by the railway employees, or by commissioned designers, or both. Mass production and the advent of new materials gradually changed the way the carriages were assembled, and the life of the workforce was interrupted by two World Wars. At the time of the Big Four most carriages were inherited from either the nineteenth century or from Edwardian builds by one of the one hundred and twenty railways which had run long and short distance routes across the country.

---

100 Ibid: 165.
102 Ibid: 37.
Each railway was marked out by its choice of style and paint colours, design, and decoration of the carriages.

There were at least 48,000 carriages in use at the grouping.\textsuperscript{103} With much variety in layout and design it was a complex picture, and as the 1920s progressed and the grouping consolidated, numbers gradually reduced to approximately 42,000 with 40,000 at nationalisation in 1948. Jenkinson noted that the changes in carriage decor, fitting, and design were more responsive to ‘changing fashions’ between 1923 and 1948.\textsuperscript{104} This indicated the period for the thesis as it enabled comparisons to be made between carriages owned by different railway companies each with their own interior design preferences. Furthermore these carriages were used for both work and leisure purposes, creating other opportunities for comparison. Finally, how the Big Four made the transition into one new BR brand and negotiated over design decisions in order to create the flagship carriage, the Mark 1 built from 1951 until 1974, was of particular interest.\textsuperscript{105}

There was a range of other significant rolling stock which was scoped for the thesis but now lies outside its remit. Often selected in the literature for their luxury interior decor and attendant service, for which passengers paid a supplement, carriages owned by The Pullman Company had originated in America and arrived in Britain in 1874 and many railway companies saw these as the exemplars for elite travel.\textsuperscript{106} The Big Four, running on selected routes, leased Pullman carriages. Also introduced over the period of the thesis was the autotrailer, sometimes known as the railmotor or railcar. This was a single ‘self-propelled passenger unit’ containing passengers and driver, which covered shorter routes and exhibited innovative technology for the time.\textsuperscript{107} Each of the Big Four initiated camping carriages, perhaps mostly associated with the idea of home, during the 1930s.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote[103]{David Jenkinson, \textit{British Railway Carriages of the Twentieth Century 1923-1953, Vol 2} (Bath, UK: Patrick Stephens, 1990), p. 41.}
\footnote[104]{Ibid: 36.}
\footnote[105]{Keith Parkin, \textit{British Railways Mark 1 Coaches} (Penryn Cornwall: Pendragon Books, 1991), p. 9.}
\footnote[106]{Geoffrey Kitchenside, \textit{Railway Carriage Album}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn (London: Ian Allan Ltd, 1980), p. 4. Many Pullman carriages have been preserved and are used principally on the Bluebell heritage railway. Antony Ford has published extensively on Pullman and completed his doctoral thesis entitled; ‘The Pullman Car Company, c.1910-1964: A Business History’, with the University of York in 2020.}
\footnote[107]{Simmons 1997: 411. An example of a 1934 GWR railcar is at the NRM.}
\end{footnotes}
These were redundant passenger coaches converted into holiday accommodation.\(^{108}\)

**Small objects for the carriage interior**

Collections of small objects relating to the carriage interior have been valuable to this study. Railway enthusiasts have been collecting ‘railwayana’, that is, objects associated with the railway, mainly since the end of steam powered locomotion in 1968.\(^{109}\) Many have not survived, but others have been described in books which have been useful for both their illustrations and explanations of railway company branding and styles of wares.\(^{110}\) However, because the objects have been removed from their contexts it has been difficult to link them with the carriages in which they would have been used. Most heritage railways have small groups of objects on display, which started life in the dining car and railway hotels. The large GWR museum, STEAM, in Swindon has an archive, while the NRM has the largest collections in Britain, situated in their open warehouse with much more in storage. Examples include tableware, flatware, ceramics, antimacassars, door handles, light shades and moquette samples. The scale models for exhibition purposes owned by the Science Museum and made by Bassett-Lowke Ltd enabled a closer look at interiors which were otherwise inaccessible or obsolete.\(^{111}\) As will be shown, the study of the material culture used in the carriage enables insights into the values and ideologies of the period.

Books on other items found in the carriage interior are frequently aimed at the collector. For example *Landscapes Under the Luggage Rack* depicts the prints and panels, usually carrying advertisements or railway company information, situated under the luggage racks where they could be seen by passengers.\(^{112}\) Other artworks such as paintings, drawings and engravings depicting the passing landscape or the interior made since the Victorian era often either feature as illustrations for exhibitions or in books written for a popular readership.\(^{113}\) Posters advertising the destinations of the Big Four have become part of current popular culture, featuring on calendars and tea towels but, in contrast with other artworks

---

\(^{108}\) Mike Fenton, *Camp Coach Holidays on the GWR* (Didcot: Wild Swan, 1999).


\(^{111}\) Founded in 1898, now the Hornby Company.


associated with the carriage interior they have been the focus of academic research as they shed their own light on design, modernity, culture and society.\textsuperscript{114}

**Primary sources: making the carriage**

The majority of primary sources used in this research are held by the NRM. Staff have catalogued and researched the majority of its large objects. The archives hold technical carriage drawings, the largest, detailed and most useful of which are called general arrangements (GA). Connected to these are smaller drawings in section or plan view, which provide detail as to materials used, finishes and other decorative aspects of the carriage interior. There are also railway company diagrams of the carriages, which estimate the tare weight, that is, the unladen weight of the vehicle once the number of seats and passengers has been calculated. The NRM has a vast railway archive containing collections from private individuals in addition to the railway industry. It also houses maps, photographs and film collections. All of these archive categories have been searched for materials for the carriage interior.

Available in the National Archives at Kew are primary documents concerning the Big Four. These record decisions made by managers of the major companies, but I found that detail regarding carriage interior design was less prevalent. Other, similar, primary documents are held in archives allied to the railway companies themselves, some of which are in uncatalogued collections such as the Keith Frankling set of drawings and blueprints of GWR carriage designs held at STEAM. Some primary documents are scattered amongst collections both with, and without, the carriages’ papers and photographs.

Primary documents also pointed the way to key research areas for the thesis. For example, the original document outlining the designers commissioned and the materials used for the LMS Coronation Scot interiors is at the Newton Abbot Railway Library.\textsuperscript{115} Shipped to represent Britain at the New York World’s Fair in 1939 and boasting innovative air conditioning, the interior finishing of the ‘Scot’


\textsuperscript{115} Newton Abbot Railway Library, ‘Description of Coaching Stock for the Coronation Scot Train for Exhibition in America’ (London: LMS, 1939).
used a range of ‘Empire Timbers’ suggesting that both traditional and modern technological approaches to interiors were manifest in the same carriage. Although this vehicle is no longer extant, the document underscored the research question, that is, how did the carriage interior represent tensions between the traditional and modern modes of decoration and working practices and how did this relate to a nationalist context?

**Secondary Sources: viewing the interior through magazines**

Periodicals and magazines are a key source of contemporary information for carriages while those of the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries include historical research. The NRM and the Newton Abbot Library carry most of the forty-six railway periodicals available. Railway companies’ staff magazines, such as the monthly *Great Western Railway Magazine*, also provided material. Railway magazine publishing has a long history with the first published in 1897. To take some key examples, *The Railway Magazine* grew from Moore’s monthly magazine (1896) and was aimed at the amateur enthusiasts’ interest in performance matters. It is still extant. *The Railway Gazette* was intended for the professional railway audience and today has the word ‘Illustrated’ appended to the title. *The Locomotive Magazine* was first produced in 1897 and then became the *Locomotive and Railway Carriage and Wagon Review* (1911-1959), the archives of which are held by the NRM. Many of the articles in the magazines from 1920-1955 are anonymous, however, the authors clearly regarded their audience as well versed in railway technical terminology as the writing is usually from an economic or technological point of view. The following example from the *Locomotive Magazine* of 1935 has a particular focus on the materiality of the interior of the new first-class sleeping cars of LMS. It provides an insight into the range of modern and traditional materials utilised, popular colours of the period and technical details:

> The berth compartments are finished in Rexine, there being four distinct colour schemes, yellow, green, blue and beige. The beds, which have a dummy head and foot of polished wood, are made up of a spring mattress on a spring frame with hair mattress above. Each berth has a sliding

---

116 Carter 2008: 42.
117 Ibid: 266.
extractor ventilator light also sliding shutter with louvres running on spring loaded pulleys.\textsuperscript{118}

A sample of 1930s magazine articles held at the NRM, such as \textit{The Locomotive} and \textit{The Railway Gazette}, revealed that authors were keen to convey the numbers of carriages built and by which workshop, mentioning details such as the kind of lighting, decor as well as the designers of the exterior.\textsuperscript{119} However, there was little discussion concerning decisions regarding use of materials, choice of interior design, designers, or the design context of the carriage.

Close observation of the carriages themselves during the fieldwork visits, coupled with an analysis of the primary documents and secondary sources as part of the literature review provided evidence and themes for the thesis.

\textbf{Outline of thesis structure}

The Introduction outlines the research question and themes, methods, sources and some of the theories used. It gives a rationale for the research time frame of the thesis. Chapter one then situates the carriage in the global, and more specifically British, context of the political, economic and cultural changes of the early twentieth century. In particular, the way modern industrial designers sought to impact on the rebuilding of the nation in terms of health, housing and everyday household objects is explored. Other groups were anxious that all that represented England would be lost after WWI and chapter one places the major developments of the railway companies into that milieu.

Chapter two introduces the carriage as mobile architecture and details the types of carriages extant between 1920 and 1955 in a new typology. This sets up the principal divisions by function, namely sitting, dining and sleeping, that are explored in detail in chapters four to six. The national, British, style of carriage is presented and theories of spatiality are explained and applied. I continue this approach in chapter three by focussing primarily on the designers and makers of carriages and then moving to the way designs and materials mediated nationalistic

\textsuperscript{118} Anon, ‘New First-Class Sleeping Cars, LMSR’, \textit{The Locomotive}, vol. 41, (1935), 278-280 (p. 279).

\textsuperscript{119} There are six hundred and forty editions of \textit{The Locomotive} magazine and \textit{The Railway Gazette} combined, from 1930 to 1939. The sample was five percent of the total as this was the number containing articles concerning carriages.
cultural values and gender, probing the concept of the British carriage interior as an amalgam of styles.

Chapter four concentrates on the passenger function of sitting, the everyday mode of travel by train. The way in which seating and interiors constructs social relationships is examined, and theory applied to show how space and seating plays their parts in constructing a milieu for passengers which they associate with cultural status and social difference. These concepts are applied again in chapter five, which analyses the dining functions, and again in chapter six, which turns to examine how sleeping was accommodated. Very few carriages were designed with specific, named passengers in mind. However, chapter seven analyses whether the design, fitting and decoration of two carriages built for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth during WWII were different or similar to the everyday carriage, and the part they played in creating and mediating royalty’s public roles and ideas of national identity.
Chapter 1

Situating British railways in the twentieth century

1.1 Introduction

This chapter situates the emergence of the Big Four railway companies and British Railways within the political, cultural and economic upheavals in Britain from c.1920 to c.1955. Changes in industry and technology, the nationalism of Empire and two World Wars, as well as debates around design and craftsmanship, tradition and modernity all affected carriage design and functionality. My analysis reinforces a rationale for the choice of the timeframe 1920-1955 as the research period for the thesis.

The dominance of the railways was challenged by the competitive growth in road, air and motor coach transport in the early twentieth century. This chapter shows how these changes were integral to the growth of mass tourism and leisure, to propositions about rural England, modern design, and the social and economic reconstruction of Britain after WWI and WWII. These ideas raise questions around the design, layout and type of the carriage for future chapters. I also introduce the principal individual and organisational advocates for modern design and detail their relationship with transport. The final sections of the chapter, concerning the railway companies, set the scene for a detailed analysis of the carriage interior in chapter two.

1.2 Political and economic upheaval during the decline of Empire

In the nineteenth century, the railways were at the centre of progress in industry, engineering, economics and nation building in Britain and its overseas territories. It was Queen Victoria’s (r.1837-1902) journey by train in 1842 that gave this mode of transport the royal seal of approval. By the time of her death, the unregulated network of privatised lines had contributed to urban growth, enabling a successful economy based on coal, iron, steel textiles and ship building to flourish, enhanced by the growth of ports, as freight was transferred from the train to ship for export. When Edward VII (r.1901-1910) succeeded the throne, Britain accounted for a quarter of the world’s trade and had a considerable global reach in terms of investments. The railway formed part of the British colonial attempt at exerting an imperialist ideology, for example in in Africa in 1872, creating the Union of South
Africa in 1910.\(^1\) In the first decades of the twentieth century, Britain was being overtaken in terms of its industry and exports by countries such as Germany and the United States through the application of new technology and more efficient modes of production.

WWI not only cost Britain a further blow in loss of life and world trade hegemony, but also the country’s grip on the idea of Empire, even though Britain reached its territorial peak in 1921. In Britain, the railway companies had had little competition, bar urban trams, yet increasing costs meant that the railways entered WWI in decline.\(^2\) These factors created an imperative for companies to collaborate, for example in transporting troops and armaments. Hence, the Association of Railway Locomotive Engineers, whose members included representatives of the main railway providers, were tasked by the government to share ideas concerning standardisation, including around carriage design.\(^3\) This set the stage for further railway cooperation. In 1918, a government Select Committee agreed that there would be efficiencies to be made by unifying the one hundred and twenty larger railway companies across Britain, excluding Northern Ireland, into four.\(^4\) The point when the railways began to collaborate, amalgamate and modernise after WWI was a turning point in both national and railway culture; it therefore provides an appropriate point at which to commence examining the impact of change on the design, fitting and decoration of different types of carriages, discussed later in the thesis.

The post-war national debt and the increased power of the trade unions seeking a living wage for their members led to the General Strike of 1926, and by 1932, nearly three million were out of work in an economic Depression.\(^5\) Yet the reality was that ‘there was still money in the Empire’.\(^6\) Hence, organisations such as the Empire Marketing Board stressed the need to buy products from the colonies, even while those colonies strove for independence.\(^7\)

---

\(^3\) Geoffrey Hughes, *Sir Nigel Gresley* (Catrine: The Oakwood Press, 2001), p. 73.
\(^4\) This grouping into the Big Four is discussed later in the chapter.
\(^5\) Ferguson 2004: 325.
\(^6\) Ibid: 326.
\(^7\) The use of Empire Woods is discussed in chapters three and five.
George V (1910-1936) saw the increasingly popular Labour Party share power with the Conservative party on two occasions as a ‘national government’, a coalition which oversaw the 1918 Representation of the People Act. This enfranchised more people than previously, including women over thirty years of age. The effect of the Act was to break the traditional link between property ownership and voting. However, it was not until the 1920s that the word ‘democracy’ moved into common parlance. The women’s movement went on to achieve votes for women over twenty-one years of age in 1929. Alison Light has argued that, after WWI, ‘Englishness [became] at once less imperial and more inward looking, more domestic and more private […] more feminine’. She highlights the freedoms, bodily, politically and culturally, that middle-class women enjoyed as a representation of an increasingly modern England.

For working-class women domestic service remained the principal occupation in the interwar years, just as before WWI, and these roles persisted as part time cleaning roles into the 1950s. Having domestic help ‘enabled middle-class women to lead independent lives without challenging the sexual and class divisions of labour’, freedoms underscored by the new and controversial ideas around birth control, and the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1923, where a women could divorce her husband on the grounds of adultery. However, during the 1920s and 1930s, the range of jobs for women increased with retail as well as industrial and office environments providing alternatives to domestic service. During WWII, women were able to be part of the war effort, fulfilling jobs that the absent fighting men could not.

The war years, 1939-1945, saw government, industry and the British population work together in a new way to defend the country. The railway companies responded by turning to making munitions, converting carriages to ambulance trains, and building special vehicles for the use of the Prime Minister and Allied

---

10 Ibid: 11.
commanders. However, by 1945, although the casualties had been less than those of WWI, the severest loss was financial, affecting shipping and trade. Britain was dependent on the United States for financial aid. Socially, the war was a catalyst for change in policy led by the Labour government and culminating in the launch of the welfare state, the National Health Service and the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen. A programme of reconstruction began, centred on nationalisations; of credit, fuels such as gas, electricity and coal, and transport, the latter formulated in the Transport Act of 1947.

The government also wished to ensure full employment. A post-war boom in basic industries and building ensued, aided by mechanisation using new methods of mass production. An increased use of new materials, and an emphasis on design in industry, begun in the 1930s, was showcased at the Festival of Britain in 1951. The strategic Festival design group included modernists such Ralph Tubbs and Gordon Russell but displays were a mix of traditional and modern, ranging from Wedgwood’s tableware, Mappin and Webb’s cutlery, Troughton and Young lighting, Shelley Potteries’ ceramics, and Heal’s furniture. The group commissioned individual designers such as Wells Coates, Brian O’Rorke, Graham Sutherland and Barbara Hepworth, among many others. The Festival took place on London’s South Bank but with an agenda for towns, cities and villages around the country to participate in a national celebration. It was a complex affair, encompassing ideas from the arts and sciences, leisure and culture, past, present and future. According to Beccy Connekin writing in 2003, ‘The Festival of Britain sought to […] cultivate the nation’s taste through education in ‘culture’. Transport was an important part of the Festival. As well as a display on the South Bank, the Land Traveller train and ship Campania visited key ports and cities, informing part of a larger discourse about society, art, and taste. It was at this point that the railways were nationalised into one organisation, and therefore an appropriate juncture at which to close the research period.

13 The ‘Ambulance Trains’ exhibition at the NRM, 2016-present, shows how companies had to quickly build new trains with specialised fittings of wards, operating theatres, pharmacies, kitchens and staff quarters.
16 Mary Banham and Bevis Hillier, eds., A Tonic to the Nation, the Festival of Britain 1951 (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).
17 B. Conekin, ‘The Autobiography of a Nation’: The 1951 Festival of Britain (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 10. The Festival of Britain is subject to a number of scholarly interpretations.
18 The Festival of Britain: 1951.
1.3 The emerging modern nation

This section interrogates the ways in which the railways were integral to the cultural and economic life of the nation into the twentieth century. Their expansion had enabled the mass movement of people, for example to the Great Exhibition of 1851, as well as to prizefights and football matches. Workers were able to travel further and railway construction caused mass dislocation to working class suburbs, while commuting to work or to country homes changed the shape of town and country living alike.\(^{19}\) The transportation of goods also enabled ports and rural parts of Britain to flourish through trade and tourism.

The era of mass travel and tourism

In 1831, the Liverpool and Manchester railway had conveyed thousands of people to the Newton races and excursion travel was born. Passenger journeys grew exponentially as the railway journey was quicker and cheaper than the conventional horse-drawn vehicle. The Railway Bill of 1844 meant that the railway companies had to provide third-class travel once a day, as well the usual first and second-class tickets.\(^{20}\) As a result, some companies abolished second class and lowered their fares. The Bill gave the government the right to buy new lines constructed after that date.\(^{21}\) This period has been termed colloquially ‘railway mania’ as networks expanded until by 1870 third class passengers made two thirds of passenger journeys. The establishment of Bank Holidays in 1871 meant that excursion trains took working-class people to the coast, extending mass travel.

Holidays and leisure periods had long formed part of the British way of life. Stemming from early pagan and Christian festivals, Wakes weeks, for example, remained part of local custom in the industrialised towns of the North.\(^{22}\) The growth of the railways served to enhance these celebrations, enabling families to travel to seaside resorts such as Blackpool and it was the railways, which

\(^{21}\) Ibid: 58.
sustained the growth of such seaside resorts in the early part of the twentieth century.

It was the motor car as well as the train that encouraged people to escape from ‘crowded city streets’, to find the ‘simple life’ in the West Country or Wales.\textsuperscript{23} The interwar period saw the development of inns, hotels and tea rooms along the new road network, established by the Trunk Roads Act of 1936, marked by those symbols of modernity, the petrol pump and filling station (Fig. 1.1).\textsuperscript{24} By the 1920s London also had the largest tram and Underground train system in the world, the capital acting as a hub for expanding motor coach and bus routes.

The Caravan Club, founded in 1907, was also part of a new form of leisure for the modern car owner. The car enabled those who could afford it, to take pleasure in the scenery and explore outside the urban areas in a way that was not restricted by railway timetables. By the 1920s, it was promoted explicitly at the lower middle class, who were beginning to be able to afford small cars, through magazines such \textit{The Motor}.\textsuperscript{25} Motoring was open to both men and women, and the advent of new fuels and lubricants meant that by 1930s cars were becoming more reliable and faster. Mass production methods also become part of the British transport industry so cost reduced and cars were redesigned for all year round use. Thus, holidays to the warmer, southern parts of Britain were possible in direct competition with the railway and motor coach.

While the car, caravan, train (and bicycle) were means of travel away from urban spaces, hiking and rambling were activities which also captured the imagination. The first ‘freedom to roam bill’ had had its roots in the Industrial Revolution, but it was not until 1931 that a government enquiry recommended the creation of a National Park Authority to select areas as National Parks.\textsuperscript{26} Walking was a popular way to keep fit, and to access the health-giving open air. The government's Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937 was part of this national drive to create a healthy nation, encouraging people to use their leisure time outdoors.\textsuperscript{27} Founded in 1935 the Ramblers Association took advantage of cheap railway tickets for hikers (Fig. 1.4). The countryside was open for exploration and various

\textsuperscript{24} Kathryn Morrison and John Minnis, \textit{Carscapes} (London: Yale University Press, 2013).
\textsuperscript{26} David Matless, \textit{Landscape and Englishness} (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), p. 123.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid: 131.
guidebooks for the curious observer were published directing the tourist in exploring, rediscovering and gazing at the landscape. For example, SR laid on special trains so that a mass ramble, led by the journalist and broadcaster S. P. B. Mais, could watch the sunrise over the Sussex downs.\textsuperscript{28}

Excursions to the seaside had been part of British life since the advent of the railways, encouraged by fare concessions during the 1920s, such as tourist, weekend, excursion and return tickets. The Holiday with Pay Act of 1938 encouraged large employers to facilitate works outings in the twentieth century, which were class specific and usually gendered.\textsuperscript{29} But the acceleration of growth in tourism and leisure time did not happen immediately.\textsuperscript{30} WWII saw an interruption in this gradual democratization of the seaside holiday, which continued into the 1950s and 1960s, fuelled by the rise in living standards and the concept of the ‘fortnight’s holiday’. The holiday camp, launched by Billy Butlin in 1936, provided a new leisure activity and by 1963, accommodated one million British holidaymakers each season across eight sites in the United Kingdom and Ireland.\textsuperscript{31} Filey Holiday Camp Railway station was created specifically to serve this expansion.\textsuperscript{32} Other companies reached out to the middle classes. By 1841, Thomas Cook had founded the railway excursion as a mode of British group travel followed by the package holiday, that is one with accommodation and travel included.\textsuperscript{33} By providing a guide, a group could have a tour by railway and sea as far afield as the Levant. The railway companies, each of whom had their own excursion departments, enabled this expansion.\textsuperscript{34}

During the early 1930s, ocean cruises started to become more affordable, attracting different classes of passengers through magazine and newspaper marketing. The introduction of the modern passport in 1915 also began to open up

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{31} Kathryn Ferry, \textit{The Nation’s Host} (London: Viking, 2016).
\end{thebibliography}
overseas travel more widely.\textsuperscript{35} Between 1919 and 1925, Cunard built thirteen new transatlantic vessels, although the launch of two new ocean liners such as the, \textit{Normandie} of the French Line \textit{Compagnie Générale Transatlantique} (CGT) and the \textit{Queen Mary} in 1934 was delayed by the economic down turn. Like the persistent use of distinct first and third classes in the carriage, the ocean liner was highly structured with spaces ‘discretely’ allocated from ‘upper deck to engine room and from bow to stern’.\textsuperscript{36} To attract customers, Cunard commissioned distinctly designed interiors employing an amalgam of modern French and British artists and traditional Empire timbers, echoing train interiors.\textsuperscript{37}

Air travel, was equally becoming democratised between 1930 and 1955 although ‘the development of commercial air transport was a protracted affair, taking longer than rail or motorised road transport to evolve from a pastime for the rich’ until it became a boom industry in the 1950s.\textsuperscript{38} Airship pleasure flights to Paris were available by 1920.\textsuperscript{39} Flying was perceived as risky and expensive and there was only first class. British company Imperial Airways was geared principally towards the business traveller. Aircraft equipped with heating and electric light and providing personal service could carry only thirty-eight passengers at a time, hence the railway companies had little competition from the fledgling industry.\textsuperscript{40} The British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) grew out of Imperial Airways\textsuperscript{41} BOAC was the post-war face of British nationalism which contributed to the economic and cultural rebuilding of the country. Corporate design and the employment of women made it a modern mass transport service in which the railways had a financial interest.\textsuperscript{42}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[35] A history of the UK passport - Home Office in the media (blog.gov.uk) [accessed online 24 November 2020]
\item[40] Information provided by the Speedbird Heritage Centre, British Airways Museum. Author email exchange with Jim Davies, 14 November 2020.
\item[42] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
The railway network played a key part in the extension of tourism and leisure from WWI onwards. The train was a familiar part of the landscape while the motor coach and car were newer technology, which increased the reach of any tourist seeking the traditional way of life promulgated in interwar travel writing.43 Marketing as an organisational tool to attract customers was in its infancy in Britain, as opposed to the USA. However to compete with the car the train was marketed at first-class passengers as a masculine space. Building on the work of Hiroki Shin and Colin Divall, Alexander Medcalf has shown that railway companies, such the GWR, employed what would now be known as marketing strategies to target specific groups of customers.44 Divall has posited that the compartment was portrayed in posters, press advertisements and guide books, as a ‘quasi domestic space’ alongside masculine appeals to safety and speed, sport and leisure (Fig. 1.2).45 Medcalf has developed Divall’s work, showing that GWR paid attention to passenger complaints in company magazines and to responses to in-house debates on selling. The railway companies employed posters at stations, press advertisements, and guidebooks as a means of marketing their effectiveness as facilitators of travel to the seaside and countryside, their destinations and services.46 Sometimes these commented on the comfort and styling of carriages, as well as other tastes and passenger interests. These informed the design of staged photographs using models for GWR’s popular Holiday Haunts brochure; notice that the male figure is in charge of the map, imparting information to his female companions (Fig. 1.2).47 Pictures of holiday resorts indicated the range of destinations on offer by LMS at their 1924 British Empire Exhibition stand which, like the other railway companies, enabled passengers to explore the interior of a full-size carriage and admire models of both liners and carriages (Fig. 1.3).48 The Exhibition’s ‘Palace of Industry’ had an

45 Divall 2011: 184.
46 Medcalf 2012: 193.
48 Anon, ‘Railway Exhibits at the British Empire Exhibition’, Railway Magazine, 1924, pp. 468-474. The aim of the Exhibition, held at Wembley, London, was to show Britain leading the way in manufacturing, within the context of Empire.
emphasis on new products such as linoleum and steel domestic wares, as well as traditional silks, leather and wool goods. Both traditional and modern artists were represented.49

Rival railway companies like LNER and LMS employed artists to convey the railway and the places they served, often in a modern way to attract new passengers (Fig. 1.4). In contrast, GWR and SR frequently chose printed matter to represent an England of the historical or picturesque, as in the image of Sir Francis Drake playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe, and the milkmaid at work (Fig. 1.5). This conveyed the West Country as a destination for those comfortably off middle classes on a ‘flight from urban tiredness’ and looking for an escape from modernity.50 GWR also targeted families by using photographs of the ideal family life, which could be attained on a healthy, seaside, holiday together (Fig. 1.6).51 The advertising focus was mainly on places served by rail, depicted in photographs displayed within carriages, rather than carriage interior design and space.

1.4 Rebuilding England

Transport networks and the promotion of trade were not the only means of rebuilding England. Cultural geographer David Matless has analysed the nuances of the different views on ordering or rebuilding Britain after WWI, since ‘a village world with church and fields’ had become one under question.52 There was concern for the landscape, as exemplified by the conservation movement headed by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) founded in 1926, who were convinced that the government’s laissez-faire attitude to planning had destroyed towns in the past and, post-war, threatened the countryside, which was already suffering an agricultural depression. The CPRE’s work tended to focus on the visual element of the countryside as demonstrated, for example, by The Face of The Land, a photo essay published in 1930.53 Images in the book juxtaposed pylons of the new national electricity grid, roads and railways, with more pastoral images, as a way of showing a kind of British amalgam: ‘the truly traditional being

50 Ibid: 192.
51 Ibid: 198.
52 Matless: 45.
53 The authors of The Face of the Land were H. H. Peach and Noel Carrington. Peach was the head of the CPRE’s exhibitions committee and was a member of the DIA (discussed later). Carrington was a book designer and publisher, son of a colonial railway engineer.
true to its own age’. There were many fears and tensions at play: the dismantling of the landed estates and the selling of land, the rise of agricultural mechanisation and the inability of agriculture to support a growing urban population.

How to preserve the rurality of England in conjunction with the modern age was an ongoing debate during this period. It originated in the antiquarians who had recorded the myths and traditions of England centuries before. Topographic art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was re-envisioned in the WWII project **Recording Britain**. Enid Marx, John Piper and other well-known artists, were tasked to capture English national identity found in small-scale drawings and watercolours of buildings, such as taverns and churches, farms, canals and railways (Fig. 1.7).

Juxtapositions comparing the national past with the present were found in publications designed to educate the public. One example being Christian Barman’s pamphlet *Public Transport*, of 1949 part of *The Things We See* series commissioned by the Council of Industrial Design (CoID). This brought a fresh eye to the design of everyday objects, placing objects such as the railway carriage into its historical context and illustrating (in the image bottom left) its translation into modern transport (Fig. 1.8).

### 1.5 The growth of leisure time

During the early twentieth century, commercial leisure for the British population, and especially the working class, had a profound influence on popular culture. Talking pictures provided entertainment at one of the Odeon cinemas ubiquitous in 1930s towns and seaside resorts reached by train. Entertainment for the masses also took the form of the music hall, the public house, and dance halls. Although interwar upper class Society was more ‘fluid’ and associated with glamour and celebrity, these were the modern means by which they retained their difference to perpetuate privilege.
Shopping for goods has been seen as what has been termed the ‘Americanisation of leisure in London in the 1920s’.\textsuperscript{59} It was the United States where standardisation had expanded, extending to the mass production of consumer and domestic products, aided by advertising campaigns. The British High Street was changing. Easy availability of products in new large stores like the American F. W. Woolworth became ubiquitous alongside established British department stores such as Whiteley’s and Debenhams.

Exhibitions also promoted domestic goods. The advent of the Ideal Home Exhibition in 1908 chimed with the growth in semi-rural, spacious living such as in the new garden cities at Letchworth and Hampstead Garden suburb established before WWI, and subsequent demand for home comfort, decoration and technological innovation. Such products included efficient domestic household items, which in turn gave more time for consuming radio and the new television. Other housing estates, aided by the growth of suburban train and Underground services, were developed in the cities of the Midlands and South-East. These gave more of a focus for home and community as places of work and leisure. Car factories in the UK cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Oxford contributed to their flourishing. By contrast, the result of the decline of the textile and coal mining, iron and steel industries in the North of England meant that some groups of the working class were unable to partake in the growing prosperity and cheaper goods available in the early twentieth century.\textsuperscript{60}

This section has shown how, from the nineteenth century onwards, the growth in leisure and travel for all social classes was enabled by not only the overground and Underground railways, but also the affordability and availability of the car, motor coach, tram and even airplane. By marketing the train and its leisure destinations, companies added to its mass appeal and its structural contribution to the cultural life of Britain.

1.6 Modernism and modernity

After WWI, fought away from Britain but with a considerable loss of life, the return to peace conditions prompted an awareness of the need to rebuild and manage the pace of change, aspects of which have been indicated earlier. Rebuilding the

\textsuperscript{59} Ross: 33.
country challenged architects, reformers and politicians alike to define not just what to build, but how to design for a changing society. The picture was complex and invoked Britain’s sense of a relationship with artists and designers steeped in British design traditions, versus the new currents of debate that were present in Europe and the United States. This was made more visible through the mobility of artists, architects, and designers, arriving in Britain as refugees from WWI. Histories of art, architecture and design have tended to conclude that Britain was reluctant to embrace Modernism beyond a few isolated examples of ‘high design’ such as the De La Warr Pavilion: ‘traditionalism was the norm in architecture until the 1940s’. In a more recent critique, architectural historian Elizabeth Darling has countered that the emerging Modern Movement of Britain in the 1920s was grounded in a social, economic and political context and that Britain was not as dependent on European émigrés for ideas and innovation in this period as some earlier scholars, such as Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-1983), had indicated. Rather, Darling has asserted that the period between the wars laid more than a foundation for the Modern Movement and the subsequent reconstruction of Britain after WWII.

Architectural historian William Whyte has also noted that during the 1920s ‘the belief that modernism was foreign and that it was the tool of foreign architects was widely held’. This awareness of European design was partly because Britain had exhibited at the Exposition internationals des arts décoratifs et industriel modernes, held in Paris in 1925, and because modern designs featured in contemporaneous magazines and journals such as the Architectural Review, The Studio, and The Architect and Building News. The amalgam of craftsmanship with modern design therein was represented in exhibitions during the 1920s, for example, the image shows how the luxury furniture and furnishings company Waring and Gillow have used a conventional material, timber, to create a patterned, streamlined, curved bed footboard (Fig. 1.9).

---

63 Nikolaus Pevsner, Pioneers of the Modern Movement (London: Faber and Faber, 1936).
64 Darling: 14.
Emerging modern styles for a new Britain were juxtaposed with those relating to the Arts and Crafts tradition which had espoused a socialist based life of ruralism in a critique of mass produced goods and consumerism, as exemplified by Morris and Co. The Arts and Crafts ethos was also maintained by Ambrose Heal (1872-1959) during the period 1920-1955. His oak furniture adhered to simple designs in wood and he produced goods for the new suburban homes that revered the skill of the craftsman whilst acknowledging the advantages and inevitability of machines. Heal had patented a unit furniture system in 1915 at which time he became a founding member of the Design and Industries Association (DIA), an organisation whose membership networks became entwined with modern industrial design over the following decades.

The DIA was an ‘inherently modern group’ whose aim was to engage with technology and machine work in order to produce new goods that had as their slogan, ‘fitness for purpose’. The DIA had parallels with the German Werkbund, which had been set up to promote practical goods in a way which united craftsmen with manufacturers. An example was the work of Peter Behrens (1868-1940), who acted as consultant to the German electrical company AEG to design electrical appliances for the home. Part of the attraction of his work was its unity of design; the production of a recognisable style associated with a brand of goods. Such advantages for German trade did not go unnoticed by the British government’s Ministry of Reconstruction, which produced an ‘Art and Industry’ pamphlet with the aim of encouraging innovation in design for the stimulation of the faltering post WWI economy.

The DIA attracted members from the fields of architecture and beyond. Cecil Brewer (1871-1918), for example, was partly responsible for designing a new retail building with exhibition space, the Mansard Gallery, for his cousin Ambrose Heal; Heal’s of London were becoming a leading promoter of modern goods through retail and display. Charles Holden (1875-1960), was another architect who subsequently designed buildings for the London Transport Passenger Board (LTPB). Other members came from the area of transport, such as Frank Pick.

---

66 Nineteenth-century socialist and textile designer, William Morris (1859-1896), founded the firm.
(1878-1941), appointed Traffic Development Officer of London Underground in 1909. It was his radical reformation of the Underground’s communications through poster design and modern signage that brought him onto the DIA. Likewise, industrialist W. J. Bassett-Lowke (1877-1953) was an energetic reformer who had been designing and selling model trains of varying gauges since 1908 for retail, private clients and exhibitions (Fig. 1.10). According to his biographer, he was frustrated by the seeming tardiness of Britain to respond to modernism. Consequently, he organised excursions for DIA members to exemplars of design on the Continent. He had his small Georgian house at 78, Derngate Northampton redesigned by Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928), an architect and designer associated with Art Nouveau. But it was his own home, ‘New Ways’, also in Northampton and designed in 1925 by modernist Behrens, that was ‘accepted as the first modern house in Britain’.  

DIA membership was open to everyone and by 1923 numbered 602 members including H. H. Peach (1874-1936), founder of the firm Dryad Cane Furniture, which supplied furniture for ocean liners. Peach, with Noel Carrington, were members of the CPRE, and were ‘committed to planning and designing a new England’, and did not see an incompatibility between the modern and the preservation of the countryside. Other members included W. F. Crittall (1887-1956), manufacturer of metal casement windows immediately after WWI, and John Gloag (1896-1981), who at that time was an architectural technician and became a writer on design; part of the design reform network. In the late 1920s architect Raymond McGrath (1903-1977) joined with his friend, Cambridge don Mansfield Forbes (1889-1936). Engineer Wells Coates (1895-1958), and his friend and business partner, design entrepreneur Jack Pritchard (1899-1992), as well as the architect Maxwell Fry (1899-1987) were all notable members. Together, their promulgation of the modern message, through exhibitions, seminars and texts was
in step with the government’s need to intersect design with economic growth, in
the face of competition from cheap mass manufactured goods from the United
States and Western Europe. The message was not easily received. For example,
the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 served to promote goods from
Empire countries rather than a synthesis of design and industry in the way
espoused by the DIA (Fig. 1.3).77

As a network, the DIA created a synergy which enabled modernist projects to be
realised. In 1927, Wells Coates founded a firm to design and construct modern
houses as well as their furniture and fittings. The firm’s chosen name, Isokon, was
derived from Isometric Unit Construction, an allusion to Russian Constructivism.78
One of the company directors was Pritchard, an admirer of the Bauhaus School in
Germany and of the modern architecture of French architect Le Corbusier (1887-
1945).79 Pritchard and Coates built the first block of serviced, small, open plan
modern flats in London at Lawn Road in Hampstead. Interiors exhibited an
extensive use of plywood and fitted furniture. Early residents extended the network
of modernists in London. Émigré Walter Gropius (1883-1969), previously a director
of the Bauhaus was one resident, as was his associate from there, Marcel Breuer
(1902-1981), exponent of the International Style during the 1920s; a pioneer in
tubular-steel furniture. Chairs in his style are discussed later in the thesis.80
Following this period, into the 1930s, a small number of building projects such as
Finsbury Health Centre and Kensal House in London illustrated how the modernist
ethos was partly a reformist response to social need and not just architect driven,
part of the ‘narrative of modernity’; part of ‘new Britain’.81

Previously, in 1931, the DIA proposed an exhibition of Industrial Arts to support the
economy and build export trade. Architect Oliver Hill (1887-1968) was selected to

---

78 Deborah Lambert, ‘Arts and Espionage: The Lawn Road Flats in NW3’, Arts Society Lecture, 9 September
2017.
79 Le Corbusier advocated the use of new industrial materials and mechanised production, part of the ethos
of The Bauhaus situated in Weimar, Germany, which opened in 1919. Its educative and socialist manifesto
was concerned with ideas regarding the collaboration of artists, craftsman and abstract forms as part of
80 The term ‘International Style’ denoted the spread of Modernism as it became more widely disseminated
through progressive educational institutions such as the Bauhaus. Some examples were built during the
1930s, ‘despite a fierce antipathy to its radicalism expressed by Fascistic and totalitarian regimes that
sought to employ an architectural language geared to their overtly national or imperialistic aims’. Jonathan
81 Darling: 138.
coordinate the design of the show which included the work of Coates, Fry and Pritchard as well as architect Serge Chermayeff (1900-1996). Joined by graphic designer and at the time art director of the publishing house Lund Humphries, designer E. McKnight Kauffer (1890-1954), and Mrs Dorothy Braddell (1889-1981), designer and domestic planner, these modernists intended to show that a small flat could be efficiently and tastefully designed using British products. A range of displays, based within the premises of large stores around Britain, comprised of kitchens, ceramics, textiles, glass, and metal ware. The minimum flat was featured since several designers were producing furniture and equipment for restricted domestic spaces. Furniture design firm Gordon Russell Ltd was part of this movement. Their furniture and equipment to suit every budget were a response to the Housing Act of 1936, which enabled working class tenants to move into modern flats such as at Kensal Rise. Unit constructions and factory-made houses became associated with the modern as part of the plans for rebuilding Britain.

The burgeoning media was another way of promulgating the message of modern British design. In 1933, John Gloag, together with designers such as Gordon Russell, Maxwell Fry and Wells Coates chaired a series of BBC radio talks on Design in Modern Life. These discussed the ‘dishonesty of period styles and the preference for functionalism’. The aim was to educate the public about what constituted good taste, which may, or may not, involve pattern and texture, and to persuade them that an object was not modern simply by being streamlined. Gloag perceived interwar Britain as being in a period of transition in terms of design. While some wished to retain the forms and ideas that were appropriate in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for Gloag the industrial age meant that a new partnership between design and industry was required. He acknowledged that craftsmen-designers of the pre-industrial age, men [sic] whose practice of designing and making their objects went back thousands of years, were still working in the twentieth century. However, these were mainly small, rural family businesses, such as blacksmithing, carpentry and thatching, isolated from industry. In industry itself, their role had been replaced by ‘directing designers’ who

---

83 Ibid.
reduced the scope of the craftsman to using machines for making things. Based on problem solving or ornamenting, the craftsman’s method was guided by the materials available, the usual practices of making, and the function of the article. For Gloag, the craftsman had a respect for custom, rule of thumb, and memory of prototypes. Industry however, had enabled the making of identical articles; the designer aiming for ‘functional perfection which gives convenience and pleasantness in use, economy of material and reduction of parts, thus securing savings in production and assembly’. Such aims had an effect on the appearance of objects. They would look unvaried, but potentially flexible and efficient in usage, with fewer parts.

In his talks, Gloag traced design through architectural styles, starting from the simplicity of upright posts supporting a horizontal member or arch, to steelwork that was self-supporting and from which thin walls could be hung. He noted that design had popularly come to mean ‘ornament’ and ‘novelty’. William Morris, was critiqued by Gloag as a designer who had restrained the progress of industrial art through his attempt to revive handicrafts. Gloag was excoriating about the repetition of patterns and prototypes from the past, and the way the need for profit had diminished creativity. It was this view that was at the heart of the modernist message.

To reinforce his argument, Gloag valorised those leaders in industrial design, who were in a closer working partnership with manufacturers. For example, R. D. Russell, of Gordon Russell Ltd, was cited as the ideal designer, someone who experimented with combining traditional methods of crafting wood and the machine. Gloag mused:

The real character of the modern movement in design, and the discrimination of its most intelligent and imaginative exponents-industrial designers like Christian Barman, Wells Coates, Brian O’Rorke, R.D Russell,

---

85 Ibid: 23.
86 Ibid: 27.
87 Gloag: 97.
Grey Wornum—are unobserved by critics who still think that modernism is merely abstinence from decoration.89

Design critic Anthony Bertram conducted another series of radio talks with similar themes in 1937. Design in Everyday Things covered aspects of modern design in the home as well as housing the community. Bertram’s views came under attack and he tried to differentiate his views on the Modern, which he associated with ‘health and housing’, from the Modernistic.90 The term Modernistic had become a derogatory expression for the unnecessary streamlining of domestic objects. It highlighted the incongruity of decorative elements such as non-supporting beams on new houses to create a ‘Tudor’ look, or the use of sunburst motifs on a variety of domestic objects. As Julian Holder has pointed out, for the public, Modernism meant the Art Deco style which was flourishing in Britain during the 1920s and 1930s.91 Art Deco is a broad term for the design style associated with the Exposition internationals des arts décoratifs et industriel modernes in Paris, 1925. Then known as the style moderne, it grew out of a French tradition of luxury design and craftsmanship, with a strong interest in surface decoration; a contrast to the parallel emergence of the stripped down aesthetic from the Bauhaus school. Its stylized forms such as the zigzag, stepped effect and three line motif, seen on the exterior of the Bon Marché Pavilion at the Paris exposition, meant that they were easily replicable and therefore were found on the high street and in the suburbs (Fig. 1.11). Art Deco’s decorative effects were also labelled ‘modernistic’, known contemporaneously as ‘jazz modern’, or ‘Moderne’ and it can be difficult to distinguish between Art Deco and Modernism. The style evolved across the interwar period and between Europe and the USA, for example in the Streamlined Moderne of the 1930s.92 While scholars have acknowledged Art Deco as an aesthetic reaction to the historical styles which had been so prevalent, it was also in debt to them, transforming the traditional through the use of decorative wood

89 Gloag: 159.
91 Holder: 137.
veneers on walls and furniture and adopting angular, geometric shapes and clean lines.  

Contemporaneously, in the United States, the role of designers in creating consumer products for the home was advanced in a very different context. Urbanisation had spread more quickly, with design readily accepted as a profession, and designers such as Raymond Loewy (1893-1986) styled everyday products and trains. In 1936, Loewy was pictured posing on his streamlined Pennsylvania Railroad Pacific K4 locomotive, in juxtaposition with the traditional steam engine behind (Fig. 1.12). His designs for both locomotives and carriage interiors, as well as those of Henry Dreyfuss (1904-1972) for the New York Central Railroad, have become iconic images of modernity.

In Britain, design and industry were moving much more slowly as partners. The DIA-led shows in Britain coincided with Herbert Read’s (1893-1968) cry for a technical, rather than decorative approach to design in his 1934 publication *Art and Industry, the Principles of Industrial Design*. His book acknowledged the division between art and industry during Britain’s economic crisis, and proposed a solution through education, one which ‘related to the life of today’, with the teachers themselves focussed on consumer need and demand for ‘good design’.

In this climate of professionalization in design, the role of women remained secondary, and female designers in general over this period struggled to create an established professional identity or status. However, there were women like Prudence Maufe (1882-1976), who worked for Heals and designed the interiors of new GWR railcars in 1933, and Mrs Dorothy Braddell, who contributed to exhibitions such as the *Industrial Art in Relation to the Home* Exhibition of 1933.

In terms of the individual designer working at this time, the patriarchal trend of associating interior design with the amateur, domestic and feminine accounted for

---

96 Ibid.
the small number of women’s names on the original Council for Art and Industry (CAI) register of 1934. Some women designers managed to partially free themselves from those associations by designing for the industrial sphere, such as Susie Cooper (1902-1995), a potter who owned her own ceramics company, and Enid Marx (1902-1998), a textile designer for London Underground who also ran her own workshop (Fig. 1.13). Marx was one of the few women to be awarded a Royal Designer for Industry medal in 1944 and her comment on this reflects the status of the female professional and amateur designer in this period:

I now realise that, yes, I was pleased to be made an RDI, because I felt that, in this way, I was accepted as a professional; before, I was, like most other women artists and designers, just considered an amateur.100

The CAI sought to augment the register of designers in 1937 by involving E. McKnight Kauffer. His reply gives an insight into the way designers were perceived in this period. McKnight Kauffer divided designers into categories as follows: those whose names had not been recognised in the past but were becoming so due to the work of the DIA amongst others; freelance designers; designers who were also producers, and those designers who were also painters.101

To obtain more names, McKnight Kauffer suggested the CAI write to particular firms some of which had connections with providing textiles for railway companies, such as the Old Bleach Linen Company Ltd, T. F. Firth and Sons Ltd and John Holdsworth and Co. Ltd. In terms of designers who were also producers, he mentioned a transport contact, P. A. Staynes, ‘Decorator to the Canadian Pacific’ who was also an ocean liner interior designer. Names were garnered from a wide network of establishments including those with connections with the LMS such as Gordon Russell Ltd and Marion Dorn (1896-1964), the latter being part of

---

99 Set up by the Board of Trade.
100 H. Salter, ‘Enid Marx RDI: An Interview’, in Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars, ed. by J. Seddon and S. Worden (Brighton: University of Brighton, 1994), pp. 89-93 (p. 90). Enid Marx’s textile designs for train upholstery were included in an exhibition of her work held in 2018 at the House of Illustration, London and in 2019 at Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft. Examples of her work are found at the London Transport Museum. Any work for the Big Four has not been traced. The Royal Designers for Industry (RDI) scheme had been created by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), one of several key organisations which strengthened the place of design in the home and in industry, including the Society of Industrial Artists founded in 1930.
101 TNA BT/57/20.
102 TNA BT 57/20. Letter from McKnight Kauffer to Watkinson. This could be the P. A. Staynes who designed posters for Canadian Pacific Railway.
a network of designers commissioned for a variety of interiors from Eltham Palace to cruise liners, and also McKnight Kauffer’s wife.103 Traditionally well-known professional design firms such as Waring and Gillow, White Allom, and Trollope and Sons Ltd were commissioned to finish and decorate the interior of prestigious carriages.104 Yet these firms are not mentioned in any of the correspondence regarding the CAI register or the post-war Britain Can Make It exhibition, because the Council’s focus was to involve industrial designers and promulgate ideas of good design to the British public, and also because they were regarded as lacking in innovation.105

The CAI’s desire to involve craft with industry showed when Frank Pick, head of the CAI and Chief Executive of the LTPB wrote to C.L. Stocks, a member of the CAI based at the Office of the Commissioner to Crown Lands. He said: ‘it would be wise to give the craftsman a place alongside the industrialist in control of the new institution’.106 Consequently, CAI members strove to find craftspeople that had ‘the right feel’ and institutions such as Shoreditch Technical Institute were approached in order to find new designers.107 The minutes of the Working-Class Homes Committee, which reported to the CAI, showed how reforming modernists were aiming for ‘better furniture for working class homes’ and discovering ‘further sources of fresh designs’, by approaching craftsmen and art schools as well as manufacturers.108 However, there was resistance from the latter. Mr Marchetti of Crossley Carpets, Manufacturers and Spinners, a member of the Committee, was invited to contribute to the CAI’s national exhibition. His response was that such events should be targeted at manufacturers, rather than at the general public, because:

I am afraid it is largely ourselves and our direct customers who are largely responsible for the old-fashioned mistrust and shyness of trying to improve the artistic quality of our goods. It would be a different matter if we dealt

106 TNA BT/57/20.
107 Ibid.
108 TNA BT/57/20 11 November 1937 Minute 320.
direct with the public, but we are so largely in the hands of the distributors, who are equally as unadventurous. Between the two of us we seldom appear to give the public a chance even to improve their taste.  

Furthermore, he observed that, ‘our designers have very little opportunity of encountering contemporary movements in art [...] One only has to walk round the stands at the British Industries Fair, including our own, to see how far behind the foreigners we are’.  

It seems that ten years after The Council of the British Institute of Industrial Art survey, suspicions regarding foreign trade, modern design and nationalism were still evident and that, despite the CAI’s attempts to engage a range of designers and manufacturers, the tensions between art and industry remained.

These tensions continued after WWII and threaded through the formation of the Council of Industrial Design (CoID) in 1944 and its showcase event, the Britain Can Make It Exhibition of 1946, held at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The exhibition displayed differently furnished rooms illustrating the varying lifestyles of British families. Traditional and modern combined to introduce the public to the notion of good industrial design, but, as design historian Jonathan Woodham has commented, problems concerning definitions of ‘good design’ and misunderstandings between designers and manufacturers continued into the next decade with the Festival of Britain in 1951.

This section has demonstrated how discussions and activities around design, craft and industry in society intersected with ideas of modernism and nationalism: concepts which were part of a wide and public discourse in the period 1920-1955. Some named designers had relationships with the transport industry, including the railways. While these links are few on overground services, they are explored in further chapters.

The following section of the chapter introduces the four major carriage builders and after 1948, British Railways.

1.7 The railway companies 1920-1955

109 TNA BT/57/20 Letter from Mr Marchetti to Frank Pick, Sept 1937.
110 Ibid.
By 1923, the plethora of railways had grouped into four GWR, SR, LMS and LNER. The latter two, each with their termini in London, vied for customers to Scotland by different routes. The map (Fig. 1.14) illustrates the extent of their routes. These four railways became nationalised as British Railways (BR) in 1948. It was in 1923 that, due to the post-war economic problems affecting Britain, the need for so many locomotives and carriages was questioned. Inevitably, some vehicles were made redundant and it was at this stage that the question of preserving locomotives and the survival of carriages became important.

Each of the Big Four inherited smaller lines and also a number of subsidiary industries. The new four organisations took a while to settle into their respective groupings especially since GWR, for example, had a history and identifiable brand stemming back to 1833. Each had a similar, but not identical, organisational structure and appointed a General Manager who had control of the organisation, answering to a Board with Chair and President. Other committees had control of, for example, finance, traffic (that is, the operations of the trains), and engineering and commercial enterprises. The Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) was in control of carriage stock. During the research period there were four influential CMEs who are discussed further in chapter two. This section outlines some aspects of the Big Four companies that set them apart from one another, concluding with the elements in common.

London and North Eastern Railway

The LNER inherited three major railway companies, the Great Northern, the Great Central and the Great Eastern as well as the North British and the Great North of Scotland. Hence, from the outset, its railway lines stretched from Lossiemouth in the North West of Scotland, to Glasgow and Edinburgh, as well as Liverpool in the west and the major towns and cities of the East Coast, forming what was known as the ‘East Coast Mainline’ from London Kings Cross where the main administrative offices were based. Nigel Gresley (1876-1941) was appointed CME

---

112 An exception was the large Metropolitan Railway (which became the Metropolitan District Railway) of the nineteenth century, which became part of London Underground. Metro-Land refers to the new suburbs of London, which grew up along its route. See The Oxford Companion to British Railway History, ed. Jack Simmons and Gordon Biddle (Oxford: OUP, 1997), p. 319.

for the LNER at the grouping until WWII, and he was the primary influence on the company’s design over this period. The carriage building took place principally at the company’s own workshops in Doncaster and York.

Their livery did not set LNER’s carriages apart from the other three, but rather the teak body of the vehicle and later their logo, commissioned from Eric Gill (1882-1940), which introduced a new typeface. This became recognisable on the posters, publicity and signage of the railway company: the LNER ‘brand’.

Up until nationalisation, LNER did not invest heavily in carriage stock. For example, the company contracted Pullman carriages for restaurant services rather than building its own restaurant cars. Railway historian Michael Bonavia comments that the company was innovative in providing more seats and to ‘appear to modernise’, without building too many new carriages.\(^{114}\) He cites the suburban ‘Jazz Service’, so called because of the speedier timetable and external colour codes used to identify classes, routes, and destinations served, which ran between London Liverpool Street, Enfield and Chingford in the 1920s, as an example.\(^{115}\)

**London Midland Scottish**

The LMS was the largest company of the Big Four, distinguished by its maroon coloured livery. It incorporated London and North Western, the Midland Railway, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and the Caledonian and the South-Western Highland Railway. While the LNER took the East coast, LMS routes mainly serviced the West Coast of Britain, as far south as Bridgewater in Somerset and as far north as Thurso in Scotland. The main CMEs for the period were Henry Fowler, Ernest Lemon and Sir William Stanier, the latter from 1932 to 1944. The main carriage and wagon workshop was based in Derby, with another at Wolverton, and Lemon was noted for introducing modern production methods there from the time of the grouping. LMS was forward looking in other ways. It set up a research department and also a School of Transport at Derby. The Midland Line it inherited had pioneered third-class accommodation with upholstered seats

---

\(^{114}\) Bonavia 1980: 67.
on all trains and had contracted Pullman sleeping cars until it introduced its own third-class sleeping carriages in 1928.\textsuperscript{116}

The Great Western Railway

Following the grouping, the GWR was fortunate to remain virtually the same organisation, with the same name. Covering routes from London Paddington down to Penzance, it competed with SR for holiday traffic over these long-distance routes. GWR served parts of Wales as far as the ports; it also had lines into Birkenhead. The public had affection for the easily recognisable chocolate and cream livery of the carriages, which also adorned the motor bus service, pioneered in 1903 to reach the farther flung places of Cornwall.\textsuperscript{117} The company also launched the railcar, a carriage equipped with a motor bus engine. By 1937, it had eighteen of these diesel units for cross-country services.\textsuperscript{118}

The GWR only employed Pullman services on its Plymouth bound route to meet the ocean liners during the 1920s until GWR’s own Super Saloons replaced them. GWR was centred on Swindon for its entire works. The railway workers were housed there and the Company was a close-knit organisation, likened to a ‘family’ with its provision of welfare and social activities.\textsuperscript{119}

Southern Railway

The SR incorporated the London and South-Western Railway, the London Brighton and South Coast Railway; the South-Eastern and the London Chatham and Dover Railway in 1923. It inherited a high number of electrified lines, which ran out to the South coast resorts and ports such as Southampton, Portsmouth and Dover as well as on the Isle of Wight. It capitalised on its electrification programme which made journey times swifter for commuters into London. Eschewing electrification, the other three major companies chose to demonstrate their speed over their longer routes with fewer stops.

Although SR was in competition with GWR for holiday resorts on the North Coast of Devon, it also served the international traveller into Europe via the ports and its \textit{Wagon Lits} service, where the carriages were carried across the channel by ferry.

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid: 22.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid: 39.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid: 53.
\textsuperscript{119} https://www.steam-museum.org.uk/.
Financially secure, the company contracted refreshment services from the Pullman Company, although attempts to create passenger buffet services and other innovations were made. Railway historian B. K Cooper observed that the colour of the livery changed when the CME changed, moving from a dark green to a malachite green over the period.\textsuperscript{120}

All four of the major railway companies operating between 1923 and 1955 had business interests in other, related, enterprises. Freight had been a major source of revenue from the outset, but the transportation of passengers became more important as income from moving iron, coal and steel declined. In terms of smaller goods, the railway companies had a long history of involvement with cartage, employing horse-drawn vehicles (in some instances up until WWII) as a road collection and delivery service. The companies also had interests in other forms of transport and infrastructure including ships, canals, docks, and harbours. Furthermore, as motor bus services developed, railwaymen sat on their Boards of Directors. In 1929, the companies were able to operate air services by Act of Parliament.\textsuperscript{121} They combined interests in 1934 by forming a joint subsidiary company with Imperial Airways, amongst others, known as Railway Air Services, the main routes being in Britain until in 1934 when GWR and SR formed part of a company serving the Channel Islands.

The interests of the Big Four also extended into hotels. Ever since trains had had to stop so that passengers could utilise refreshment rooms at stations, the railway had been involved in providing accommodation, constructing hotels as part of the railway station buildings. The railway companies bought up some hotels, which began independently, and in 1841 the Midland Hotel was built opposite the station in Derby.\textsuperscript{122} Railway hotels were also built in most major cities across Britain, often linked with the tourist trade, for example seaside resorts in Cornwall, or grouse shooting in Scotland. The business of the hotel was linked to that of the railway restaurant carriage in that the company purchased drinks, and the Great Western Royal Hotel at Paddington even stored and supplied victuals and beverages for the GWR trains.

\textsuperscript{121} Bonavia 1980: 164.
\textsuperscript{122} Bradley: 478.
Several small railways had developed to serve the capital, connecting London with Britain, for example, the Metropolitan Railway expanded after 1919 into the outlying rural areas of Hertfordshire and Middlesex. The name Metro-Land was the creation of the Metropolitan Line’s publicity department and was aimed at growing residential areas for the middle-class commuter and leisure customer. This line was absorbed by the newly created LTPB in 1933, an urban transport system both above and below ground managed by Frank Pick. In an example of the intersection of design and transport, Pick’s ‘vision of public design’ brought all rolling stock, street furniture, signage, advertising and architecture (where possible) into a coherent brand that was recognisable worldwide.

**British Railways**

It was the government’s intention to bring the Big Four railways under public ownership and control. The aim of the post-war Transport Bill which took effect in 1948, was to integrate rail, road waterborne transport systems. The BTC, which had oversight of a number of Executive Committees, was thereby launched. The Railway Executive (RE) controlled the railways in their new regions, but it proved hard to convey the sense of a unified national network to the public and another Transport Act was ratified in 1953, when the RE was abolished and management decentralised to Area Boards. The new era of a single brand for one national railway company had begun and this marks the conclusion of the research period of this thesis.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has situated the inauguration of four main British railway companies, and a single, nationalised one, in the political, economic and cultural context of the first half of the twentieth century. It was a period of radical change for the population. Two World Wars created a sense of reflection on what it meant to be English in the face of a diminishing Empire on a global stage where distances were reduced by speed and ease of travel combined with technological innovation. This turn towards home raised questions, expressed in the arts and literature,

---

124 Bradley: 499.
about whether technology meant a loss of English rural traditions. The impact of urbanisation, new transport and leisure options, and the importation of domestic goods and ideas created new expectations for travellers and homemakers alike. Designers and artists queried publicly how industry and design could combine, not only to aid England economically and socially, but also to move the country into a modern future. This was worked out through architecture, art, objects, and exhibitions, but tensions remained around older/long established, inflexible industries and craft cultures.

Speeding through a contested English landscape were not only the new motor car and coach, but the railway. In what ways did the design of train carriages signify some of these controversies? Did changing notions of class, gender and interior spaces, manifest themselves in these moving objects? These questions are addressed in later chapters.

Chapter 2

The carriage as mobile architecture

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a context for subsequent investigations of the carriage over the years 1920-1955 by creating an historical overview of the design history of the carriage from the nineteenth century. As ‘large objects’ from a museum collections point of view, carriages can be viewed as mobile structures, capable of being analysed as built space. This chapter shows the gradual development of carriages from their inception up until the era of nationalisation, using drawings, plans and images from the National Collection and wider railway heritage sources. It investigates the construction of the carriage, its interior layout, and dimensions. By applying the theoretical work of Henri Lefebvre I speculate upon the factors impacting upon the range of possible interiors in terms of spatial design in vehicles for conveying seated passengers, as well as those with dining and sleeping functions.1 Equally, during the period 1920-1955 the way in which new materials and styles for interior decoration combined with long standing modes of making and finishing, is shown to be part of the national, British style of carriage.

The early carriages

This section describes the general dimensions and features of carriages at the time of the grouping, and then proceeds to analyse the principal changes in design. The image shows a carriage built in 1922 by the Great Northern Railway (Fig. 2.1). Fundamentally, a rectangular oblong in shape, its dimensions are thirteen feet in height, nine feet in width and, sixty-one feet, six inches in length. The structure for this shape, including the underframe, was almost certainly made of wood, and the dark, heavy appearance of the exterior is due to the use of teak as the construction material. The carriage illustrated is typical of those built earlier in the twentieth century, in that it shows the curved elliptical arc of the canvas covered roof and the wood panelled body-sides. The raised wooden beading strip, running the length of the carriage, delineates the exterior panel join.2 Large fixed rectangular glass windows are set into the body-side. At intervals are doors,

---

marked with the number of the class of the carriage (here, 3rd). The drop windows in situ allow the door to be opened outwards, onto the platform. In the image, the carriage is positioned on the tracks at the platform, ready for departure. The sectional drawing at fig. 2.2 shows the overarching external shape of the carriage and illustrates the internal compartment space, with the side corridor. How then did the carriage arrive at this structure and shape by 1922 (Fig. 2.2)?

Elite classes in Britain mainly used the small, horse drawn covered carriage suspended over four wheels for long journeys. It is from this enclosed shape that the stage or road coach was made to convey public passengers over longer distances in the early nineteenth century. Terminology used in the building of these road coaches was transferred to the railway industry and some terms, like ‘carriage’ and ‘coach’ are used interchangeably; carriage is used here. The first railway companies retained the idea of the small carriage in the form of a compartment, offering privacy and comfort. Fundamentally the early carriage consisted of what Jenkinson has termed ‘three stagecoach bodies joined together and mounted on a set of four wheels’, at first demonstrating continuity of form with a change in power source. This is illustrated by the Stockton and Darlington Railway Composite no. 91846 held in the NRM collection (Fig. 2.3). The design logic retained the social distinction between standards of travel and classes of passenger. On the exterior, this allowed for greater width of the carriage body and of window ‘lights’ for the first-class compartment, compared to the narrower, single window (in the door) for each of the flanking second-class compartments. Social distinction was at the heart of the refusal of the early railway companies to make adequate provision for third-class passengers until compelled to do so. Early designs for passenger vehicles also drew on the stage-wagon, a vehicle entered from the rear with longitudinal seats down each side of a central aisle enabling up to twelve passengers to be seated in a way which foreshadowed the open carriage of the twentieth century (Fig. 2.4).

---

4 Refer to glossary for detail.
6 Ibid: 8.
7 Ibid.
Carriage dimensions were not only founded on the shape of the stagecoach. They also had their origins in the size of the track gauge. Historically there had been several track gauges in the early days of the railways, but the Stephenson’s had used a width of four feet, eight and a half inches, based on the distance between the wheels of the horse-drawn coal wagon. This became the standard track gauge by Act of Parliament in 1892. The loading gauge also affected the dimensions of the carriage. It defined the maximum height and width for railway vehicles and their loads to ensure that they could pass safely through tunnels and under bridges, and keep clear of trackside buildings and structures. Since railway lines had proliferated during the nineteenth century, loading gauges could change, therefore carriage size could vary according to the physical structures on the route. By 1923, carriages were built up to each company’s prescribed limit in order to obtain as much room and airspace as possible in the compartments.

Although the carriage has deep roots in historical traditions, once established, it evolved in the decades leading up to 1920. Structural frameworks and underframes progressed from being all timber constructions to being part timber with iron (or then steel) and finally, all-steel. They remained separate elements of the construction until the 1970s and the introduction of monocoque designs. When bogies (see below) were introduced, the underframe was strengthened along the solebar as seen in the view of the carriage body in the drawing, and by trussing arrangements, to prevent the carriage sagging in the centre, thus maintaining carriage rigidity (Fig. 2.5).

Over time, the short carriages of the 1830s became longer, as the number of carriage wheels increased from four to six, eight, or twelve. At first, these were attached directly to the underframe upon which sat the carriage body, but they became part of the bogie, a swivelling wheeled structure which enabled the carriage to pivot and gave a smoother ride.

---

8 MDA, Railway Terminology Working Group, *Railway Object Name Thesaurus* (Cambridge: MDA, 2002), p. 274. The track gauge is the distance between the inside face of the track rails.
10 The loading gauge, see glossary.
12 Ibid: 19.
With the bogie were developed at least three devices to enhance passenger comfort and increased safety on track curves. These were the primary suspension, the tilting action of the bolster and a secondary suspension; all of which afforded the train greater speed.\textsuperscript{13} As carriage weight increased with more passenger amenities, so did bogie size and axle loading. Carriage wheels had to be adjusted also. Originally fully wooden, they moved to timber segments with iron centres, to being one-piece cast steel discs by the 1920s.

The carriage body shape altered over time. In the 1800s, the stagecoach sides were straight, designed to fit between large iron wheels, which would have restricted the space for passengers inside. Over time, the body sides were extended to cover the wheels and thus create a width to seat more passengers. This curved shape, created a smooth arc known as the tumblehome, turnunder, or clipper, the latter a term derived from the construction of ships.\textsuperscript{14} A gently rounded profile continued above the waist. In the mid-twentieth century, the body-sides straightened again with the increased use of steel panels. The profile visible in fig. 2.2 of the cross-section is an example of the historic design roots of the carriage. Windows, once small and placed very close together along the body-side exterior, became larger and therefore fewer in number. Exterior doors on a vehicle built in 1922 were similar in appearance to older carriages, only the shape changed in tandem with the profile of the body-side.

The superstructure defined the passenger environment most closely, and within the structural limits of railway engineering the history of the carriage is characterised by spatial variations. At the end of the nineteenth century although the non-corridor stock was ubiquitous, trains with side corridors began to appear in greater numbers. Lavatories, dining and sleeping facilities were initiated on long-distance services. The side corridor was introduced during the 1880s enabling passengers to access the facilities located at either end of the carriage (or sometimes in the centre) or in an adjoining carriage via the vestibule and gangway.\textsuperscript{15} These enclosed flexible spaces were either ‘standard’ or ‘Pullman’ gangways which linked carriages. A door at the end of each carriage, accessed

\textsuperscript{13} Jenkinson 1988: 21.
via a vestibule, provided a buffer for sound and heat loss from the gangway.\textsuperscript{16} As a whole, these essential components of the carriage structure permitted a range of variations of interior layout and fitting out. Changes in fixtures and fittings and overall passenger amenities, took the carriage further away from its road origins. As more people travelled during the nineteenth century, passengers began to demand increased comfort and facilities, for example, seats for third-class passengers were no longer made of wood but upholstered and sprung. Compressed oil gas as a method of lighting had been introduced in 1876 on the Metropolitan Railway (although GWR built their last gas lit carriage in 1911).\textsuperscript{17} Therefore, carriages were better lit and ventilation was equally improved. Warmth was introduced and more space provided.

Regarded as exemplars of passenger amenity and passenger space in open saloons, carriages owned by The Pullman Company had originated in America in the nineteenth century. Their arrival in Britain in 1874 could have challenged the railway companies to reconsider carriage design and the quality of the passenger experience.\textsuperscript{18} However, the passenger carriage that was pre-eminent in Britain by 1923 was wooden in structure, with an interior layout mainly consisting of compartments for sitting, with access to increased passenger facilities.

\textbf{2.2 The carriage body from 1923-1955}

This section sets out the material qualities of carriages during the research period, before moving on to a discussion of the spatial arrangements. The principal source for understanding carriage layouts is the technical drawing known within the sector as the General Arrangements (GA), which presents schematic drawings which represent the plan, elevations and sections of individual carriages. The section therefore offers a close analysis of these hitherto underused sources.

By 1920, British carriages had arrived at a pattern that would persist across the research period 1920-1955: long bodies, with steel underframes and increasingly with steel exterior body panels. The side corridor carriage with a door at each end prevailed for main-line services. The design of the carriage, built to the company

\textsuperscript{16} Jenkinson 1988: 46.
\textsuperscript{17} Jenkinson 1988: 62.
specification, even when contracted out to companies such as Metro-Cammell, was dependent on a number of limiting factors: the loading gauge, the curvature of the railway line, the weight of materials and passengers, the presence of tunnels and bridges on the line, and the cost and purpose of the vehicle.\textsuperscript{19} Despite these factors, and the variations they imply, a number of similarities in their construction between companies can be identified.

Firstly, there were similarities in construction materials. At the time of the grouping in 1923, the form of the carriage consisted of two parts, a body shell and a rectangular steel underframe, which sat on the bogie which guided and supported the vehicle on the rails. The underframe absorbed any shocks and carried the equipment for the power sources of electricity and gas for the carriage interior. The body shell included the frame of the carriage floor, itself constructed in a timber hardwood such as oak, mahogany or teak, while the floor itself would be made of deal (planks of softwood). The carriage body was effectively a timber-frame structure, of pillars and rails with infill panels (Fig. 2.6). The wooden side walls, and end frames, were assembled separately before fixing them to the carriage floor, followed by the corner panels and all the wall sections containing fixed windows (known as ‘lights’).\textsuperscript{20} The roof was supported from cant rails along the top of the walls, to which hoopsticks, wooden pieces bent to shape by steaming, were fixed. These acted as ribs to support roof boards (Fig. 2.6).

At the grouping, the elliptical roof became the standard shape for carriages, favoured because the weight of the roof could be carried directly onto the side framing and could be modified to suit tunnels.\textsuperscript{21} This arc shape gradually replaced the clerestory roof, in which the roofline was broken by a raised and glazed central section, a shape and name derived from ecclesiastical architecture intended to let light into the centre of the building.

Exterior roof finishes included canvas, soaked in weatherproofing media, and then fixed along the cant rails, the end arch rails and finally covered in mouldings.\textsuperscript{22} The body-sides, at the time of the grouping, were normally clad in wood, which often

\textsuperscript{19} Jenkinson 1988: 33.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
split or rotted. Gradually, galvanised steel panels began to be used for the bodies, although the latter could still be given a decorative treatment to look like wood (Fig. 2.7). Although companies, such as LMS in 1925/6, experimented with the all-steel body, they were not adopted widely until nationalisation. However, steel panels were used increasingly for the roof and floor; the latter with corrugated plates covered with a fireproof material. These changes resulted in aesthetic possibilities, moving from a heavy bulky exterior, to one with smoother, more modern lines. The contrast in the exterior body shapes can be seen in figs 2.1 and 2.5, where the wooden body is clearly arranged around the waist (the widest part of the vehicle) and the door with window light appears recessed, interrupting the bodyline. In contrast, the windows of the 1955 Mark 1 at fig. 2.8 are flush with the steel, creating a continuous bodyline.

The carriage was completed when the external doors, constructed separately, were fitted. The door was a complex unit as it contained the droplight and the lock. The droplight derived from the era of the stagecoach. The passenger from the inside of the carriage could operate its leather strap with large holes, held by a brass pin. This allowed the door to be opened by the external handle only as a safety feature. On suburban trains however, to aid speed of alighting, these doors had an internal handle. Over the door was a ventilator, phased out of production over time. Michael Harris has remarked that before the Big Four, carriage building was a stable enterprise. Carriages would be made in the workshops each week by a team of coachbuilders. Although the process was not one of mass production, nonetheless, the methods applied to the basic structural design and material range were orderly. It was during the period from 1917-1929, at the Wolverton Carriage and Wagon works, that the new production line method introduced by E. J. H. Lemon, in conjunction with Carriage and Wagon Superintendent Robert W. Reid, facilitated changes in carriage designs. The ways in which these changes in construction materials and methods, together with the introduction of new technologies, impacted on the interior carriage spaces are discussed in the next sections.

25 Jenkinson 1988: 44.
Comparing companies: changes in dimensions and spatial factors

This section explores the rationale behind the changes in carriage dimensions of the Big Four railway companies during the period 1920-1955. The differences and similarities between them and the factors that influenced their choices lays a foundation for understanding the interior decoration, fitting and finishing of the carriages in later chapters. GWR standard corridor stock carriages, for example, were normally either fifty-seven feet or seventy feet in length, introducing sixty feet carriages in 1929. By 1937, all their stock was eight feet, eleven inches wide at the waist.28 LMS carriages were sixty or fifty-seven feet long and LNER’s general service teak stock sixty-one feet and six inches in length and nine feet or nine feet three inches wide.29 Between 1929 and 1934 SR’s corridor stock was fifty nine feet in length, varying in width according to the branch line served. All interior spatial layouts had to take account of these fundamental structural dimensions.

Over the period of the Big Four there were few changes in the lengths and widths of compartments and their dimensions depended on the service for which they were intended which was calculated before embarking on carriage building programmes. These were periodic and influenced by a number of factors, such as national economic contexts, and their building policies and priorities varied according to reviews of old stock and whether refurbishment could be undertaken. Changes in technology were also accommodated, as were alterations and experiments made by rival companies. Building for special services, for example the GWR Super Saloons serving the port at Plymouth and overseas visitors discussed in chapter three, was weighed against the cost of refurbishment, conversion, or condemnation of old stock. There were other examples of changes in compartment sizing following a review of service provision. LNER’s CME Nigel Gresley demanded a standard size of compartment in 1923, but between 1928 and 1931, semi-open first-class carriage compartments were seven feet three inches between the partitions, as this type of carriage was expected to be part of specific inter-city train dining sets.30

The table below is my analysis of first-class compartment sizes across the Big Four and includes BR stock. It gives a general indication of the similarity and

---

30 Harris 2011: 43.
consistency in compartment sizes across the Big Four. Variations in size were according to amenities provided, for example, whether there were lavatories, a brake/luggage van or kitchen. First-class normally had less seats, more space, and this differentiation in terms of class continued from the time of the grouping into nationalisation. BR reduced the compartment size. On occasion, the variation created a ‘half’ compartment, seating two passengers whose view was a partition wall as well as a window. The GWR Super Saloons incorporated a coupé, which was a private compartment, set apart from the open saloon areas.

Table 1. General stock first-class compartment sizes compared, length x width in feet and inches. Numbers of seats per compartment compared, first and third class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LMS</th>
<th>Seats per side</th>
<th>GWR</th>
<th>Seats per side</th>
<th>LNER</th>
<th>Seats per side</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>Seats per side</th>
<th>BR</th>
<th>Seats per side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>7’3 x 6’6</td>
<td>2 in 1st, 4 in 3rd</td>
<td>7’6 x 6’0</td>
<td>3 in 1st, 4 in 3rd</td>
<td>7’6 x 6’3</td>
<td>3 in 1st, 4 in 3rd</td>
<td>7’6 x 6’0</td>
<td>3 in 1st, 4 in 3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-WWII</td>
<td>7’6 x 6’3</td>
<td>2 in 1st, 3 in 3rd</td>
<td>As above*</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>n/k</td>
<td>2 in 1st, 3 in 3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post WWII</td>
<td>7’2 x 6’6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*GWR suburban services during this period had compartment lengths of 6’ 9” for first-class, and 5’9” for third
Electrification had been experimented with as far back as 1914, but it was SR that embraced this new technology. In 1923 they inherited a considerable number of older vehicles which were steam hauled.\(^{31}\) When new stock was built from 1929 onwards, the carriages were normally fifty-nine feet long but throughout the inter war period, SR carriage stock at twelve feet four inches high, had three body widths: nine feet, eight feet six inches, and eight feet according to the track and tunnel arrangements on sections of their lines. First-class sat two per side and third class three per side.\(^{32}\) New stock built in the 1920s was targeted at the continental boat train services. These were longer vehicles of sixty-two feet in length and eight feet three quarters of an inch wide with three aside seating in third-class which was considered luxurious. SR carriages serving holiday destinations had more luggage space and provision for tables which could be removed, as did their rivals who also conveyed holiday makers.\(^{33}\) It was not until Oliver Bulleid became CME of SR in 1937 that the carriage increased in length, to sixty-four feet and six inches and a new continuous curve of the body-side gave passengers more spatial comfort.\(^{34}\) A year later, corridor carriages were designed so that the external doors were placed between compartments to enable the flow of passengers getting on and off the train.\(^{35}\)

However, the SR ran differently designed units on the electrified portions of their services. Between 1923 and 1930 SR completed the electrification of its suburban services moving from the electrical current being collected on an overhead wire to a third rail. The carriages, at their inception, were designed as compartments seating five-a-side.\(^{36}\) Over time they became longer trains, electric multiple units converted from steam stock. They consisted of ‘five-car units, the centre vehicle being a motorcoach with luggage space but no seating’.\(^{37}\) There were also diesel electric mechanical units for those lines not served by the electric units. Built in a

\(^{31}\) Jenkinson 1990: 16.
\(^{35}\) Ibid: 34.
\(^{37}\) Cooper 1983: 54.
non-traditional method they were ‘fabricated from sheet steel, stamped with openings and fixed into shape over frames’.  

After WWII, what Keith Parkin has termed ‘a commission of senior officers’ representing the Big Four were tasked with agreeing a standard set of dimensions as a solution to the various sizes of carriage in order to enable a smooth transition to nationalisation. The aim was to build standard stock to replace the pre-war carriages on all lines. Any new carriages had to be usable over the whole railway system and compatible with existing stock. Weight restrictions, safety issues and a post-war shortage of materials also had to be taken into consideration, which resulted in the advent of the British Railways Mark 1 carriage ranging in length between fifty-seven feet and sixty-three feet five inches up until 1954.

2.3 Carriage development: the impact of technology on design

This section looks more closely at how comfort and safety for the passenger was increased by the introduction of electricity, heating, new braking systems and asbestos into carriage design.

The use of gas and electric in the interior: companies compared

Despite gas being a fire hazard, its use persisted on the railways up until WWII, mainly on the older stock. The carriage carried cylinders, suspended from the underframe, with the gas taken to the interior lamps via small bore pipes, externally mounted. Since the lights were without pilot flames, they had to be individually lit from within the compartment: in order to adjust the light a cloth cover was provided to ‘shroud the gas globe and dim the compartment’. GWR introduced electric lighting on their new stock but unlike the other Big Four companies, did not have reading lights in either first or third-class carriages. By 1946, they had installed fluorescent lighting in the carriages. LMS persisted with gas, especially in their kitchen cars.

---

41 Parkin supplement, p. 49.
42 Jenkinson 1990: 32.
43 Harris 1972: 34.
While electricity as a power source was being actively incorporated into domestic housing, the issue for the railway companies was their reliance on ground mains, batteries and axle driven generators and charging points which were introduced throughout the 1920s and 1930s. These struggled to keep up with demand once electric cooking was starting to be introduced. However, over time, the introduction of electric lighting transformed the interiors of the carriages as passengers were able to control reading lights. Each compartment had two ceiling-lights and a two-way switch above the door allowed these to be dimmed. Individually switched reading lights were above seat backs in some carriages. Bed-head lights in sleeping carriages were also operated by individual switches. In the Mark 1 carriage of the 1950s the process of electric lighting remained similar until florescent lighting began to be introduced in the late 1950s. In the kitchen, electricity was available, but the main cooking stoves were still fired by solid fuel.

Heating the compartments and open carriages was imperative in order to compete with motor coaches which had heaters in the front and rear of open style vehicles by the 1930s. In 1900, rail passengers had been provided with a foot warmer for comfort. This heating was in the form of a hot water bottle shaped metal cannister filled with soda acetate crystals. It was pre heated and distributed to passengers. It was superseded by the use of steam heating. Steam from the locomotive was passed through a pressure reducing flexible pipe running under and between carriages. From each pipe a feeder led to an under seat radiator in the compartment, although sometimes the grille allowing the heat out was situated between the carriage external wall and the floor fitted with a decorative, pierced metal grille and controlled by valves inside the carriage. By WWI, most carriages were lit by gas and heated by steam although Southern Railways electric carriages became increasingly heated by electricity.

It was the rail accident at Armagh in Ireland on 12 June 1889 that had the most significant impact on the development of the railway train. On a single line from Dundalk to Armagh a train with fifteen carriages carried an excursion made up mainly of school children. On a steep gradient, the train stalled and a decision was made to divide the train. This train was using the old vacuum brake system which

---

44 Harris 1994: 79.
46 Ibid: 23.
relied on the ‘vacuum applying the brake and the admission of air to the train pipe releasing it’. If the train was divided this system would cease to work as the flexible brake pipe would be disconnected. Despite attempts at stopping the train rolling back down the track by using the handbrake and placing stones against the wheels, the train careered back into the oncoming train: there were multiple fatalities. The result was an Act of Parliament in 1889 to ensure that all trains were fitted with automatic brakes. However, the brake compartment of the carriage remained necessary in order that the guard could apply a handbrake as an auxiliary. One vehicle per train would contain the brake section. The brake could also be partially applied by the passenger in the carriage pulling the cord or chain, hence incorporating these into the interior was a necessity.

An accident at Quintinshill, near Gretna Green in Scotland, made the introduction of electric lighting to replace gas even more imperative but also had other design impacts. On 22 May 1915, following human errors within the signal box, a troop train, an express train and goods wagons were involved in a collision which resulted in a fire caused by the escape of gas. The presence of timber carriages ignited by fire resulted in a conflagration which saw the loss of over two hundred lives. Incidents such as these created changes in the design of the carriage interior through the use of asbestos. This fire retardant material had been used at the end of the nineteenth century in both industrial and domestic products. In the carriage, for fire inhibition, millboard ceilings being covered with paint or varnish were replaced with asbestos panels known as Limpet Board. A ceiling, which would have previously been ornamented, then painted or varnished became plainer, although an embossed asbestos paper was sometimes used for decorative effect. Asbestos was also used as a layer in the flooring.

In order to militate against fire, another carriage exterior design change was initiated. The streamlined modern appearance of GWR and LMS carriages from 1930 onwards was due to the use of steel sheets for the body-side, known as ‘flush clad’. The overall external appearance of the carriage was further smoothed by the way the window glazing was set ‘in a concealed frame immediately behind the outer steel sheets’, this, together with new rounded corners and simpler

49 Ibid: 212.
50 Ibid.
51 Sanders 1930s: 31.
liveries gave a more modern look.\textsuperscript{52} Despite the reputation of the all-steel carriage for absorbing the impact during an accident in 1928, LMS, having adopted the notion of a carriage with a steel superstructure, did not make their construction its policy. LNER after the grouping, unlike the other companies, maintained their practice of constructing carriages in teak up until WWII. The exceptions were the Tourist stock carriages built in the 1930s, which had an outer panelling of plywood.\textsuperscript{53} Similarly, SR did not wholly adopt the ‘flush clad’, exterior until after WWII. After nationalisation, standard requirements for the new Mark 1 were an automatic braking system, twenty-four volt electric lights, steam heating, interior reading lights and sliding ventilation windows within an all-steel body.

Windows and ventilation

Techniques of glass manufacturing had improved during the nineteenth century which allowed for windows with few or no glazing bars.\textsuperscript{54} Consequently, picture windows constituting single large horizontal panes within a frame were the norm in domestic housing from 1920 onwards. From the inception of the carriage, the means of receiving air into the carriage had been via the droplight, a vertical pane set into a wooden frame within the door structure (Fig. 2.6). However, as they were also used as a means of entering and exiting the carriage, these also let in rain and dust. By 1927, LMS were building carriages without external doors in the compartments of their carriages and dropped the waist of the vehicle. This meant they could incorporate larger windows into the vehicle, mainly in first-class.\textsuperscript{55} Double-glazing was applied in only some carriages across the Big Four in the period. Between 1929 and 1934, the SR modified carriage windows so that they were higher up in the corridors. Rubber began to be used in the mounting of windows, to hold the flat glass, rather than felt that had been soaked in boiled oil and screwed in from the exterior frame.\textsuperscript{56} Aluminium was also found to be resistant to corrosion and light and by the mid-1950s, this material was being used as window frames and door castings.

\textsuperscript{52} Jenkinson 1990: 34. \\
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid: 32. \\
\textsuperscript{55} Jenkinson and Essery 1977: 8. \\
\textsuperscript{56} Sanders 1930s: 33.
Such windows were constructed with a new means of ventilation above the upper section. These were called Stones or Dewel pattern glass ventilators.\textsuperscript{57} The Dewel ventilator, situated over the main window, comprised of ‘five swivelling glass vanes that could be adjusted by the passenger to face or trail the airstream past the carriage’.\textsuperscript{58} The Stones ventilator was made on a similar principle but with six or nine swivelling vanes.\textsuperscript{59} Another LMS innovation was ventilation in their sleeping cars via an electrically powered ‘fan driven circulation system’.\textsuperscript{60} It was not adopted across the range of carriages nor across the Big Four, but it was later incorporated into BR Mark 1 carriages.

2.4 Interior space: the compartment and saloon

The number of carriages owned by the Big Four has been calculated by David Jenkinson.\textsuperscript{61} Jenkinson’s table reveals that, at the time of the grouping, there were 48,214 carriages across Britain, therefore each one was not individually designed or distinct from others but was rather a mass object designed for everyday use. After WWII, and just before nationalisation, the number had dropped by 8,184 but the provision of seats per carriage had increased from fifty-one point six to fifty-nine point nine. This implies that there was less space for passengers.

To test this assumption further, I compared interior layouts and compartments through an analysis of diagrams of two carriages built some twenty years apart.\textsuperscript{62} The example in fig 2.9 is that of a composite GWR carriage built in 1928. It is evident that first-class passengers were offered compartments of seven feet three inches in width with a side corridor enabling passengers to access the lavatory. In the compartments marked ‘3rd’, these passengers were closer together, with eight travellers able to sit in one compartment of six feet three inches in width as opposed to six passengers at most in first-class. The GWR fifty-seven foot carriage was used on main-line services, which covered longer distances. The high number of exit doors aided speed of alighting onto the platform and a vestibule or gangway connected with other carriages. Other, similar, composites

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid: 14.
\textsuperscript{58} MDA: 105.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid: 257.
\textsuperscript{60} Jenkinson 1988: 85.
\textsuperscript{61} Jenkinson 1990: 41, Table 2.
\textsuperscript{62} It should be noted that a choice of two other carriages would produce different results and that the examples here make broad general points.
were built without a corridor, or with a brake compartment (which also accommodated the luggage and could sometimes been half the carriage size for holiday routes), or without a gangway or vestibule. While passengers in the carriage in fig. 2.9 had access to a lavatory in 1928, by the time of nationalisation BR were still building carriages with no lavatory. However, the Mark 1 of 1951 shows that the trend to offer first-class passengers more legroom than third class continued, but the overall space of the compartment was reduced, although the same number of seats per compartment remained in first class (Fig. 2.10). There are twenty-four first-class seats in the GWR fifty-seven feet carriage, and as there are no armrests delineated in third class, at least four could be accommodated in each seat, which would total twenty-four passengers. This amounted to forty-eight passengers overall, compared with forty-two in the BR vehicle. The BR vehicle is longer than the GWR composite, the spatial difference accounted for by the bigger vestibule area in the BR carriage. Therefore, there would seem to be more seats provided before nationalisation, but afterwards more vestibule space was available.

Moving away from the compartment type of carriage, fig. 2.11 shows a BR 1951 third-class open, or saloon, carriage illustrating the centre aisle with transverse seats on either side. Sixty-four passengers can be seated, considerably more than those cited above. This could infer that the provision of seats had increased because during the research period more open carriages were built. In the figure, the division is between smoking and non-smoking. Sometimes the name ‘compartment' persists; this refers to the partition behind the seats dividing the two spaces. Such structures added strength and stability to the overall construction. A variation of this layout would be a semi-open carriage, which would also have some compartments accessed by a side corridor as well as an open saloon area. Often the lavatory divided the two parts of the carriage, but usually lavatories were situated at the end of the carriage in the vestibule area. In the diagram, another variation is seen. The two lavatories are situated at one end of the vehicle and the adjacent carriage can be accessed via the gangway between them. The exit doors are accessed via the vestibule area at both ends of the carriage.

By comparing compartment sizes and numbers of passengers that could be seated in them, as well as the lengths of carriages across the Big Four and BR, it has been shown that while there was a variation between dimensions, these
existed within narrow parameters. This trend continued into the period of nationalisation when the number of seats increased due to the growing number of open carriages being built.

2.5 Interior layouts: the typology of carriages

Carriages were both numerous and highly variable in their spatial layout. The complexity of determining the range of carriages in existence, their function, and dimensions is captured in Geoffrey Kitchenside’s booklet on BR carriages which uses BR codes, that were used initially on the railway to define their use, their class and their layout. However, the considerable literature on carriages, as outlined in the introduction, does not give a clear analysis of the types of carriages that existed from 1900 until 1955. David Jenkinson produced his own typologies, also based on BR codes, but neither author analyses these in relation to ideas of space. The new typology created both clarifies and refines existing information, enabling new connections to be made between carriage layout and passenger function (Fig. 2.12).

At the time of the grouping, the Big Four not only inherited a large number of carriages from a number of companies, remodelling some and building others, they also disposed of many. In refurbishing, repurposing and building carriages, the companies principally maintained the early nineteenth-century distinction of the stagecoach as an enclosed compartment and the wagon as an open seating space, which became the saloon. Compartments can be understood in architectural terms. As single rooms, they are units that can be multiplied a finite number of times within the constraints of the dimensions of the carriage; whereas saloons can be regarded as ‘stretched’ compartments, which had fixed or moveable seating, with a central aisle that is a reminder of the lateral seating of the wagon. For these reasons, the typology uses a binary distinction between compartments and saloons to organise divisions of space in the carriage.

The typology captures the principal carriage layouts from 1900 to 1955, as far as can be ascertained. The typology prioritises space. Spatial divisions are expressed principally in terms of two spaces, compartments and saloons. All the

---

64 It should be noted that for every categorisation of a carriage type or generalization about its purpose and reason for building, there will be an exception. Hence this section can only make broad observations and conclusions.
carriages listed in the typology were organised around categories of fare: dedicated to first, second or third class passengers. A composite carriage had accommodation for both third and first class passengers in one vehicle, and therefore normally consisted of compartments, to separate the fares easily. There were also unclassified carriages. There were other key spaces within the carriage. A coupé was a compartment, usually within a saloon, which offered usually up to four people privacy and extra comfort for a supplementary fare. The vestibule area was the transitional small space at either one or both ends of the carriage, similar to a hallway in a domestic house, which allowed access to other carriages, the lavatory, and the external doors as well as the side corridor in a compartment carriage. On some corridor trains the external doors were situated partway along the body-side, but this arrangement does not form part of the typology. Some carriages had large open spaces, separate from the passengers, which carried the luggage, the handbrake and the guard. The open space of the saloon allowed for flexibility in the way the interior could be divided. For example, a kitchen could take up a whole vehicle, be part of a vehicle or, in a buffet car, be a small area in which to prepare snacks. Areas specifically to seat diners could be adjacent to the kitchen or in a separate carriage. The way some carriages were used interchangeably for sitting and dining, are designated in the typology.

The typology evidences the sheer numbers of carriages and the possible permutations for their internal layouts and functions, when inherited at the time of the grouping, and thereafter until nationalisation. An initial overview of the typology illustrates that the predominant function for carriages was the seating of passengers. This was mainly in compartments, but saloons and, less frequently, a combination of both spaces constituted the interior. A second observation is that the railway companies wished to serve food whenever possible, yet still retain flexibility in the use of the spaces. Finally, the number of sleeping spaces, when compared with the sitting and dining spaces, is small, and shows that conveying sleeping passengers was not a priority for railway companies over the relatively short distances across Britain.

The following table takes this analysis further and maps the information above onto dates of introduction to passengers:
Table 2. Compartments, open layouts and the year of their introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPARTMENT LAYOUT</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>OPEN LAYOUT</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compartments only</td>
<td>1830s</td>
<td>Seats in bays, partly partitioned, centre aisle</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts, with side corridor the length of the carriage</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Seats only, centre aisle</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts, with partial side corridor leading to brake/luggage/guard area</td>
<td>n/k</td>
<td>Open/Saloon area with side corridor leading to compts i.e semi-open</td>
<td>n/k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts, also with dining seats in an open saloon area</td>
<td>n/k</td>
<td>Buffet car</td>
<td>(1898)1930s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts, also with some dining seats in open saloon area and a kitchen</td>
<td>n/k</td>
<td>Kitchen only</td>
<td>1920s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts which convert to sleeping berths, with side corridor</td>
<td>3rd class 1928</td>
<td>Dining only</td>
<td>1890s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compts with fixed sleeping berths, with side corridor</td>
<td>1st class 1900</td>
<td>Pullman (USA) Day use, sleepers, dining</td>
<td>In UK 1874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Side aisle</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sleepers with seats converting to beds</td>
<td>1st class only 1873-1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table evidences that the compartment style of carriage interior was the longstanding and persistent mode of conveying sitting passengers. It shows that when open saloons were introduced they were principally used for dining, gradually becoming sitting carriages, which at first mimicked compartments by being arranged as partially partitioned bays. Clearly, most types of carriage in use during the research period originated in the Victorian era, but three new types were built specifically between 1920 and 1955. These will form the basis of subsequent chapter discussions, but are summarised here; namely, the kitchen/dining carriage, the buffet car, and the sleeper.
By the 1930s, buffet cars became a regular part of the train. These had very small kitchens and a counter area from which light meals and snacks were served by one or two staff. There was limited seating. LNER buffet car no. 9135 built at LNER’s Doncaster workshops in 1937 and in service until 1977 is now on display at the NRM. The small number of buffet cars in use up until 1933 had been rebuilt from third class carriages, some of which had been through WWI, thus it can be seen that from the outset their provision was related to the third class of passenger. In the 1930s a new programme of building was begun by LNER, an advocate of this style of delivering meals, who by 1939 had built more buffet cars than the other three companies combined. LNER was one of the first of the Big Four to introduce buffet cars to Diagram 167 which ‘were principally used in the North Eastern area of the LNER’ and no. 9135 is one of these, designated ‘Tourist Stock’, implying that these were used to serve the holiday coastal resorts. As part of general service trains, they were deployed where there was competition from road services.

First-class sleeping carriages had been in service since the nineteenth century. They were the longest vehicles, bearing the heavy weight of passengers and berths. As well as wash rooms, provision was also made for on-board attendants. According to the Railway Gazette of 1914, for the previous two or three years, Mr A. C. Morton (1840-1923) Member of Parliament for Peterborough and later Sutherland, had been campaigning for the instigation of third-class sleeping carriages on long-distance trains. Citing the case for business passengers to London from Scotland Mr G. Middleton (1876-1938), Labour MP for Carlisle, pursued his proposal, resulting in an Act of Parliament in March 1928. In response, by late 1928, LMS had designed new vehicles, which were based on ordinary third-class corridor carriages with seven compartments. Each compartment had four berths which could be used as seating during the day and

---

67 Harris 2011: 80. Kitchens and buffet cars are discussed in relation to eating in chapter five.
68 Anon, ‘Third Class Sleeping Cars’, The Railway Gazette, 17 July 1914, p. 73;
converted into sleeping accommodation at night.\textsuperscript{70} A 1928 third-class sleeper no. 14241 is part of the NRM collection and is discussed in chapter six.

This section has shown that, during the research period, ideas about the use of space in a railway vehicle began to change. At first designers, constrained by technological and structural factors, were limited to creating spaces, which continued to resemble the historical horse-drawn carriage. Gradually, these shapes extended in length so that more passengers could be accommodated. Safety features also had to be considered. Customer demand for amenities was incorporated into carriage design, but as these added weight to a vehicle, companies experimented with ways of reconfiguring the interior. Demand for refreshments and sleeping facilities led to interior changes in the twentieth century, as did the growing tourist market and competition between companies prior to nationalisation. The next section elucidates methods of analysing the evolving sitting, eating and sleeping spaces over the research period 1920-1955.

2.6 Theoretical approaches to analysing interior spaces on the train

By the twentieth century the small single space of the compartment, and the larger open space of the saloon, were the two key areas set apart for passenger transportation. These defined spaces can be regarded as spaces of social performance, which mediated everyday life, and will be discussed in later chapters, although it should be noted that, outside fictional accounts, evidence from peoples’ travelling experiences is limited. Compartments within the vehicle were themselves impacted by the introduction of new spaces; namely, the saloon, the side corridor, the vestibule, and the kitchen. These allowed more passenger movement throughout the train. The effects of such changes on passengers, and on the materiality of the space, the objects within it, furnishings and fittings, will be examined more closely in later chapters.

I now move to examining these spaces in the context of modernism. Although the carriage exterior and its interior share some characteristics with the static built environment, it is not a traditional architectural space, and I therefore begin by analysing the tensions between notions of professional and non-professional methods employed in its construction. Because of the mobile nature of the carriage object and the fact it is used as an everyday space, theoretical

\textsuperscript{70} Anon, 'Third Class Sleeping Cars', \textit{The Railway Gazette}, 16 March 1928, p. 354.
approaches need to be carefully chosen. For example, philosopher Martin Heidegger’s (1889-1976) reflections in *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* divide spaces of transit, such as railway stations, from dwellings which are fixed, ahistorical, rather than mobile spaces formed by social interactions, like the carriage. Drawing on Heidegger’s work, Gaston Bachelard’s (1884-1962) philosophical reflection on the *Poetics of Space* has been critiqued for his concentration on the interior space of the home without considering the wider national context, and for an emphasis on a bodily sense of attachment to a domestic environment. Bachelard’s theoretical perspective would not elucidate aspects of the carriage interior as I am assuming a lack of passenger attachment to such a space and the national context is critical to an examination of the public carriage interior. My intention is therefore to apply the theoretical approaches of Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991), as his work was born out the period of mass social, political and economic cultural change covered in the research period of the thesis. Furthermore, Lefebvre’s work, *The Production of Space*, is compatible with a material culture approach as he takes into account the modes by which space has been produced. In the case of the carriage that could be in the railway company workshop, or by the representations of space produced by a designer or draughtsman. This would encompass the diagrams, drawings and GAs of the carriages as well as any other form of representation such as a sketch or artwork and the way they contribute to the formation of social and cultural meaning.

Lefebvre’s work stresses that representational spaces, for example those depicted on railway posters, connect with the materiality of the space itself and interrelate to the other modes. Lefebvre also refers to what people do in spaces, in this case, when they are travelling.

This chapter has already indicated the power of the English elite to influence the design and structure of the railways in general. For philosopher Michael Foucault space, power and control are connected as he demonstrated using the example of the prison in his work *Discipline and Punish*, but for Michel de Certeau, incarceration can take place in everyday mobile spaces such as the carriage.

---

This thesis considers whether the carriage interior can be regarded as a rational, closed system in the way de Certeau purports, or whether people can resist the controls imposed on everyday life within it.\textsuperscript{75} Also relevant to the spatiality of the carriage interior are de Certeau’s ideas of space and place.\textsuperscript{76} These are not absolutely different but overlap, depending on the objects or people within them, with travel itself being a spatial practice. De Certeau evokes that sense of the ‘in between’ space created by boundaries, borders and bridges, which chimes with the work of anthropologist Victor Turner (1920-1983).\textsuperscript{77} Drawing on the work of Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957), Turner has used the term ‘liminal’ to refer to the way ritual operates so as to ensure the continued separation of one human group from another with the intention of their future reintegration into a new social role. Three stages have been identified as: separation, liminality, and reintegration, with liminality being the in-between space.\textsuperscript{78} In terms of periods of time, these stages can be applied to both persons, and societies, be they brief or extended, and can exist in a number of combinations.

Such ideas have been applied to in between places of transit, such as airports, railway stations, or trains themselves and have been adopted in a number of academic disciplines.\textsuperscript{79} Marc Augé, for example, has developed the work of de Certeau on ‘railway navigation’ where he uses religious language to interrogate the in-between, liminal space of the train interior.\textsuperscript{80} Augé regards these as in between spaces, or non-places of ‘supermodernity’, that is, superseding modernity and its characteristic intertwining of old and new. Festivals, fixed days, and events where people gather and mingle that aid memory and continuity, often mark historical spaces, which can be named and consequently associated with past events or people. In contrast, non-place is without these features. Augé’s idea of space is also related to the body, which can be regarded as a territory, taking up space, and he draws attention specifically to the sovereign, royal body of authority who can be associated with place and space (like a country or palace) as a signifier of anthropological space.

\textsuperscript{75} De Certeau: 111.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid: 115.
\textsuperscript{78} Originating from the Latin term ‘limen’, liminal refers to an intermediate state, a position created in this case by being in a train.
\textsuperscript{80} De Certeau: 113.
Being on a train can give the sense of passing through history. Landscape features, city names and castles of the past becoming simultaneously aestheticized and desocialised by guidebooks and tourism which tend to explain what can be seen, rather than experienced. In this way, space external to the carriage has been reorganised by the railway and other transport infrastructures. Augé calls this awareness of the past in the present mobility, the ‘essence of modernity’. He goes as far to name the internal space of the train, the ‘archetype of non-place’, defined partly by the individuals and their interrelations, the transportation itself and the texts within the transportation. Non-places have proliferated with the growth in transport systems on land, sea and air in the twentieth century. Augé perceives non-places as a threat to nationalism since they contradict the notion of Empire; they are harder to control, to dominate. Finally, he concludes, ‘Empire is never a non-place’ but rather, a ‘botched modernity’.

In this thesis, I use Augé’s ideas to analyse the carriage as a site of spatial ambiguity. Bodies inhabit the anthropological space, of the carriage. Their reactions to and interactions with the design and decoration of the carriage space is key to an understanding of the presence of the design elements. Other ideas of the sovereign body or royal figure within a non-place are explored in chapter seven on the royal carriage, whereas the buffet and dining car, compartment and open layout are examined as modern spaces where people meet and itineraries intersect. Schivelbusch also highlighted the idea of the carriage being a liminal space, a place even of ‘dysfunctionality’ linking such concepts to the upholstery as well as to the sense of space and time altering at speed. He explored the experiential aspects of travelling in a carriage, a space in which the traveller has a sense of not being fully present but finds him or herself in a place that cannot be defined by identity, inter-relationships or history. For Schivelbusch, the design of the interior of the carriage was regarded as a material response to a psychological reaction to the machine technology, mitigating its effects, rather than a functional necessity enabling a fragile body to be transported as a commodity. These

81 Augé: 61.
82 Ibid: 70.
83 Ibid: 92.
85 Augé: 68.
theoretical positions are used to explore the carriage as a site of the production of social relations in space, under particular conditions of modernity.

2.7 A ‘British’ approach to creating carriage interiors?

The final research question addresses the question of the relationship of design and a sense of nationality, both geographic and cultural. The impact of the Pullman Company carriage design from the USA was noted in the introduction. However, what was the British approach to the design and decoration of the carriage interior in the period 1920-1955, and why were certain styles and materials chosen and executed? The next section moves to identifying and analysing carriage interior design programmes in the British context; a sample of detailed case studies feature in subsequent chapters.

The railway routes of the Big Four penetrated most of the four nations of the British Isles, but their main termini were based in London, England, and this was the nation where the carriages were mainly built. In 1923, Englishness was the dominant cultural identity, therefore, in order to contextualise the design, fitting and decoration of the carriage interior, an understanding is necessary of how English national identity during the research period was conceived and perceived.

Cultural historian Philip Dodd argues that the cultural traditions and institutions of the twentieth century were ‘forged in the later part of the nineteenth century,’ and he cites the public school, the arts and educational methods as means by which the dominant discourse of Englishness became a key part of that culture.86 Likewise, the institution of the railway was one of the means by which England ‘represented both itself to others and those others to themselves’, having established itself as the maker of both nation and Empire before and after WWI through colonial expansion in Africa and India.87 Furthermore, as historical geographer George Revill has noted, ‘railways were central to the exercise of colonial power’ and early locomotive and carriage designs, exported to the United States, were then adapted to suit long-distance travel.88 Thus, Englishness was expressed through both engineering and technical aspects of locomotive building

and also through the design and interior style of its carriages. Representative of English culture and the expansion of the railway, with oversight of, amongst other elements, the carriage and wagon works, were the CMEs. As Frank McKenna has pointed out, those aspiring to managerial positions in the railway needed impeccable references; even the working class labourer who wanted to work for the railways would need a letter from the parish vicar to acquire work. The railway was thus a paternalistic institution, with work being kept in the ‘railway family’. Furthermore, according to Revill its ‘military- bureaucratic methods of management were fundamental to providing a corporate culture’. It is therefore not surprising to find the CMEs steeped in both elite English culture, and the culture of the railways, from young adulthood.

An overview of the backgrounds of key CMEs of the period 1910-1955 shows how C. B. Collett (1871-1952), and William Stanier (1876-1965) were both raised in upper middle-class families of the Victorian era, and were working at GWR in Swindon before WWI. Collett, enabled through family contacts, was employed in the carriage and wagon works as a draughtsman at the age of sixteen and was apprenticed through a number of workshops. He organised the GWR workshops for the manufacture of munitions during WWI, his patriotism resulting in an OBE. His colleague William Stanier had also spent time in the GWR drawing office and worked his way up through the posts at GWR until he left in 1931, at the age of fifty-six, to become CME at LMS. Likewise, Richard Maunsell (1868-1945), was born into a landed upper middle-class family, arriving in England from Ireland via the East India railway company. Despite family objections to engineering being a suitable occupation, their contacts enabled him to obtain his first job within the railway industry. He became CME at SR after the grouping. Nigel Gresley (1876-1941), later knighted, was also from a privileged background. Apprenticed at LNER in the carriage and wagon department, he became CME at LNER at the point of the grouping. These four men, also sometimes termed the Big Four, so

91 Ibid: 50.
92 Revill 2012: 75.
influential in carriage design, were therefore intrinsic to the discourses of the railway, modernisation and nationalism.

The background of these men shows that they were immersed in and had been inculcated in the traditional modus operandi of the railway works. Hence, there would have been few reasons for them to change the build and style of the carriages, particularly after the economic shocks post WWI and the Depression. However, that is not to say that the project of modernising locomotives and rolling stock as well as the railway system itself through technology, or the seeking of efficiency and progress, was incompatible with the traditional styles of carriage. Just as the machine age was beginning, ideas were being exchanged across countries. The CMEs had a history of learning about American railroads on formal visits. A large new style dining car was the result of a visit by Henry Hoy (Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway) to the USA in 1899.94 Furthermore, the era of mass production in the carriage and wagon workshops had been inspired by a visit to the USA and Canada in 1919 by Robert Reid of the Midland Railway, even though the all-metal construction of carriages had been adopted in the USA for decades.95 In 1927, the locomotive ‘King George V’ took part in the Baltimore and Ohio railroad centenary celebrations and railway company participation in American World’s Fairs continued throughout the 1930s.96

Therefore, just as the locomotives were an amalgam of traditional and imported approaches to design, the carriages also comprised of modern, American and European, technologies and styles alongside craft techniques which dated from the railway’s inception. Conventional methods of making seats juxtaposed with new patterned moquettes, rather than the Victorian velvets. Plywood, light and versatile, substituted for dense hardwood in some carriages and there were changes in armrests, window treatments, ventilation, lighting and upholstery design with new synthetic materials, such as Rexine, creating smooth washable surfaces.97 The compartment structure was the same in 1920 as it was in 1900, but influences in both domestic tastes and passenger amenity from Europe and the USA, driven by the consumer, became incorporated into the interior.

---

97 Jenkinson 1990: 43.
This was more evident in the design and layout of the open carriage, which tended to allow for a greater range of styles, especially the provision of individual seats. These ranged from the use of tubular-steel in the buffet car to historicised styles, an example of the latter being chairs of the Louis XVI style in the first class open dining saloon of the LNER Flying Scotsman, together with curtain pelmets, ceiling-mouldings and plasterwork as interior decor. In these ways, British carriage interior styles can be seen as an intersection of the modern and nostalgic, neither static nor pioneering. Within the carriage, the workmanship derived from decades of training and apprenticeship was applied to new modes. Designs, materials, shapes, and styles were tried out. As architect Ralph Tubbs wrote of his understanding of Englishness in design in 1942; ‘The English tradition is one of good workmanship and of the honest expression of materials and structure. It is also one of change’.

Conclusion

This chapter has established social relations of space and the expression of national identity as key questions for understanding the carriage interiors 1920-55. It is possible to analyse carriages as ‘moving architecture’ because their physical properties map well on to the Western architectural tradition of understanding architecture through three properties: structural soundness, function, and aesthetic quality. Issues of structural soundness have been discussed here through attention to construction and technology, while the typology has highlighted carriage functions and the presence of variation across the types. A discussion of spatial analysis has shown to be compatible with theoretical approaches described in the introduction. It is a combination of these which will be used in the following chapters to interrogate the three main functions of carriages and the design programmes deployed within them. The outworking of a British style, inflected by contemporary social and political concerns over Empire, gender and class will be the key strands of investigation.

Chapter 3

Fitters and designers of the carriage interior

3.1 Introduction

This chapter probes the assertion established in chapter two, that during the period from 1920 to 1955 the carriage interior consisted of an amalgam of styles. It does this in three ways. Firstly, I examine the contribution of designers and workshop employees to these interiors, discussing their role both within and outside two railway workshops, that of the GWR at Swindon and LMS at Wolverton. Railway workshops such as those of GWR were organised on hierarchical and patriarchal lines. From social activities, to housing and employment systems, the company was at the centre of generations of families. By applying the theoretical work of Doreen Massey, I examine the gendering of different spaces within the workshop. Were these fixed or permeable and did they provoke ‘social effects’ which translated onto the carriage?1

What was the contribution of workshop employees to the production of the amalgam of styles? Were the methods they used modern and innovative, and did they stem from established artisanal practices or from skills-based training? This contributes to the aim of the National Railway Museum to have a collection that is ‘well understood’, by developing knowledge of the construction of the object, and the contribution of makers and designers.2

Designers from outside the railway companies also contributed to the interior style. They were part of a very different world based around commercial work for hotels, restaurants and, sometimes, other forms of transport as well as private homes. Design historian Penny Sparke lists the pioneers who crossed the divide between public and private design worlds as ‘occupants, engineers and architects, space planners, upholsterers, interior decorators’, and I consider whether this gap can be bridged by the railway company.3

Secondly, the chapter interrogates these two contrasting design worlds by means of a case study of the GWR Super Saloons. Using heretofore unexamined plans,

diagrams, photographs and text I evaluate why the firm of Trollope and Sons was chosen by GWR to finish and decorate Super Saloon carriage interiors, alongside GWR’s own skilled workshop staff. By applying the theoretical work of Henri Lefebvre, Daniel Miller and Doreen Massey to a study of the spatiality of the carriage interior, inferences are drawn about the production of the carriage space, representations of it, and the relationship between spatiality and luxury within the carriage.

Thirdly and finally, I consider the links between nationalism and transport interiors by asking whether the design of the carriage can be said to have contributed to changing conceptions of England in the interwar period.

This chapter focuses on the two main spheres of design innovation, the railway company, where men and women contributed to the design, fitting and decoration of the interior of each carriage, and the commissioned designer, or firm, brought in by the railway. Obtaining information about designers and design decisions both in the railway company and in the commissioned firm for this period has been problematic. Railway companies often did not record day-to-day decisions and drawings were often signed with only initials. New designs were normally created only when something different or unusual was considered for a carriage interior; as in the seating for the LNER ‘Tourist’ carriage otherwise, the business of design, fitting and decorating continued without remark making tracing the decision-making process difficult. The exception is in chapter seven where the design process is clearer due to the availability of archives. With these limiting factors in mind the first part of this chapter interrogates in turn how the design process, fitting out and decorative decisions were carried out in the different spheres of the railway company and the professionalised world of the design firm, concluding with a case study where the two spheres united in a common project.

3.2 Designing and making within the railway company

While chapter two outlined the various types of carriage produced during the research period, this chapter considers the many people and processes involved in their production. Lefebvre, building on the work of Karl Marx (1818-1883) emphasised the need to uphold the work of producers of such objects, to

---

4 An example of a new design can be found at Fig. 4.43, the ‘Tourist’ Stock seats for LNER, and an initialled LMS drawing for a tubular chair can be found at Fig. 5.29. Both are from the NRM Collection.
foreground their labour rather than get ‘lost in classifications, descriptions and segmentations’. This section of the chapter aims to pursue that objective by acknowledging the labour and relationships that produced the carriage object in its societal context. It also aims to examine the gendered nature of the spaces where the carriage was constructed. In a new approach to the design and building of carriages, I begin with an analysis of the carriage and wagon site of the LMS Carriage and Wagon works at Wolverton, Milton Keynes laid out as a schematic map in Fig.3.1. I then draw comparisons with the GWR works at Swindon.

Each of the Big Four operated its carriage and wagon building workshops in a highly structured way, and the process of production, designing, fitting and decorating followed one established in the nineteenth century. However, as Massey notes, space is not inert, but active and has a part to play in power relations, which are integral to the production of culture and design. Therefore, although the workshops were conveniently arranged for the direct transmission of the major building work from one shop to another, saving time and labour, they appeared to mark out perceptions of a community structured along gendered lines (Fig.3.1). The housing for workers’ families, while not labelled specifically, holds the centre ground, close to the domestic necessities of clothes washing at the laundry and the market for shopping. The key elements of carriage construction, associated with masculine work, were situated on the left hand side of the railway tracks between Stratford Road and the canal. Accessed via a bridge, on the other side of the tracks, hidden behind the paint shops, were the buildings housing the jobs, which were normally undertaken by women. Examples included making droplight leather straps, sewing, and trimming (upholstery). This is at first sight a ‘settled patriarchal order’ with men and women’s work clearly delineated. Young single women were important to the labour force in Britain, with 69 per cent active by 1931. This idea is linked with the sexual division of labour, which situates women as care givers responsible for the household, or where they venture out, usually because of poverty, it was to undertake the kind of jobs they would be

---

6 Massey: 4.
doing at home, such as sewing (Fig. 3.2).\textsuperscript{9} However, Long and Marland show that work was important to the identity of young women and married women often juggled work and home. GWR’s Swindon carriage workshops seem to mirror these arrangements. While middle-class women were enjoying increased social freedoms, the working class women of the railway company were contained by their home and work life based around the \textit{sui generis} organisation of the railway company. An example of how this translates into the carriage interior is the making of luggage rack netting. Established methods for making netting stemmed from the nineteenth century. Created using string, the technique is often confused with ‘knotless netting’, which the luggage rack is clearly not (Fig. 3.3.).\textsuperscript{10} Rather, the net in LMS third no. 8761 consists of 832 knots in a diamond pattern shape, which took an hour to make.\textsuperscript{11} Netting is allied with making fishing nets and women’s work, but, unlike knitting, the origins of netting seem more obscure.\textsuperscript{12} Such skills were also used to make domestic items such as shawls and string bags as evidenced at the GWR employees Arts and Crafts exhibition of 1928 where it was described as ‘a strong class’.\textsuperscript{13} Making netting was regarded as work for women in the railway workshops and an image of young women at the GWR workshops in Swindon shows them seated being watched at work by a visiting Queen Mary (Fig. 3.4). Once made, the nets were handed over to the men for fitting with the luggage racks into the carriages, in a clear demarcation of roles (Fig. 3.5). After 1930, the netting for third-class carriages was outsourced to women in the Royal National Institute for the Blind, who made it into bales and sent it to the Swindon works to be cut to the appropriate length (Fig. 3.6). The making of the netting, an ancient craft, is therefore not only applied to modern travel, but is also an example of gender being ‘socially constructed’, or fixed.\textsuperscript{14} However, this was not evident in the execution of all the skills involved in the construction and fitting of the carriage.

\textsuperscript{10} E. S. Thomas, ‘Notes on a Knitting Technique,’ \textit{Man}, 36 (1936), p. 72.
\textsuperscript{13} Anon, ‘GWR Employees Arts and Crafts Exhibition’, \textit{GWR Magazine}, May 1928, p. 181.
\textsuperscript{14} Judith Butler, \textit{Gender Trouble} (Oxford: Routledge, 1990), p. 172. Gender performed in other roles when the train was in motion is discussed in chapter four.
The job of polishing wood, regarded as a female skill in the home, shifted in the railway workshop. 'French polishing' was part of furniture making and while the image shows the work executed by a male employee, there were examples of 'lady polishers' in the GWR workshops (Fig. 3.7). On the map of the Wolverton site, this skill is executed in a space integral to a designated male area, the underframe shop. Other crafts were less clearly delineated. Men made the upholstery seats, cut the moquette, cushions, cut the carpet and lino floor coverings, assembled the sprung seats, back, and armrests for the carriage interior in the trimming shop at the Swindon works (Fig. 3.8). At Wolverton, this space was adjacent to the women's sewing room, hinting that it was regarded as work of the same kind. During WWI, women also took on male roles, for example the manual work of making ornament parts in the brass workshop and employing technical skills in the drawing office (Figs. 3.9 and 3.10). These observations confirm that modernity promoted instances of both flexibility and stasis for women's work. Thus, some of the disruption of the existing relations between men and women occurring in the early decades of the twentieth century was becoming evident by the 1920s at the carriage and wagon works, mainly in relation to the decoration and finishing of the interiors, but also in the producers of what Lefebvre has called 'representations of space'. During the research period, this was resisted, particularly as employment for men returning from WWI was perceived as a priority. However, the fluidity of roles reoccurred in WWII, when women once more stepped into jobs traditionally executed by men. Historian Rosa Matheson gives several examples, including women steam-hammer drivers in the blacksmith's shop around 1949.

Tasks that involved heavy machinery, such as blacksmithing and wheelwrighting, were conducted in predominantly male spaces, prior to WWII. From the research period until the 1980s and the closure of the Swindon workshops, the forge, and the blacksmith himself, were valorised in both literature and film. The smith contributed to carriage making by sketching the required object and melting down scrap metal to fashion iron components such as hinges and rivets (Fig. 3.11).

---


16 Lefebvre: 38.

17 Matheson: 22.

18 Ibid: 25.

19 Of Coppersmiths And Kings Swindon Works BBC 1985 - Bing video [accessed 15 January 2021]
worked closely with the pattern maker. The wooden, three dimensional designs were pressed into damp sand, and the resulting shape had metal poured into it to make the part for the engine or carriage. The image, undated and unlabelled, and not of an internal part, conveys the object shape and density (Fig. 3.12).20

Contemporary films, such as Corridor Third for LMS, 1934, portrayed the blacksmith’s repetitious performance of beating the iron into an object for the carriage, braving the elemental fire alongside his awed apprentices. This produces what Lefebvre has termed a ‘social space’ within the workshops, one where people and objects assemble around a focal point, the anvil.21 The communal, heavy work in the forge contrasted with the work of the carriage and wagon superintendent, Mr E. Pugson, depicted alone in his office, poring over paperwork and plans (Fig. 3.13).22 Some workers perceived the blacksmith as someone who embodied the heavy technology, an image established early in the century. Alfred Williams noted in 1915 that ‘our smith is a perfect giant […]. His head is massive and square […] he weighs more than eighteen stone’.23 The smith made the wheel sets, which in the past would have propelled the horse-drawn cart, but later formed part of the modern bogie. Forgemen, like smiths, had come from the village craft tradition, part of the pre-mechanical past, but their skill was intrinsic to the material conditions of the modern age.

The skills of the carpenter were also a key part of the carriage interior. Since the carriages were almost completely wooden in 1920, they made all the mouldings and rails, the hoopsticks and partitions, doors and window frames (Fig. 2.6). It was important to select panels for their shape and grain, in order to enhance their decorative effects.24 The foreman coachbuilder, who also interpreted the draughtsmen’s drawings, supervised the carpenters. At the GWR, Mr Johnson, the carriage and wagon workshop manager from 1948 onwards, stated ‘we like to have the drawings fifteen months before building starts. We have to order all the raw materials, alter our plans where materials are not available and prepare the jigs before the design can go down to the workshop’.25 The process from design to

20 Most patterns have been destroyed; there are none at the NRM.
21 Lefebvre: 101; Corridor Third (George Smith Enterprises for LMS, 1934), NRM -commissioned by LMS to document the Derby works.
22 Corridor Third.
execution was protracted and the ramifications of design decisions felt at all levels of the workshop.

The role of the draughtsman in interior design

Mr F. G. Sheldon was a draughtsman for GWR from his apprenticeship in 1915 to his retirement in 1956 (Fig. 3.14). Uncatalogued notebooks in the NRM collections have revealed the work of men like him and Misters Cotton, Davies, Guley, Jarvis, Jones, Morris and Craddock; heretofore merely initials on the GAs and plans for carriage interiors. Sheldon would have been paid monthly, and his office was near the main workshops which he frequently visited with a ‘drawing in hand or under his arm’. It is clear from the notebooks that the draughtsmen learnt to design the carriage interior and exterior via an apprenticeship, by copying or problem solving, and examples of their work appear at various points in the thesis.

Draughtsman R. S. Gray was sufficiently skilled to design a carpet for LMS to the standard required for manufacture (Fig. 3.15). Made for a semi-open carriage Lot no. 852 in 1935, the three tones of green, red, yellow, brown and black correspond with popular shades used in interiors of the 1930s, as seen in Fig. 3.16, which would also have concealed the dirt accumulated from heavy footfall. However, the striking effect of the carpet design in Fig. 3.17 contrasts with the textured moquette of the seating. The first impression is of a dense repeated elliptical or ‘eye’ shape down the entire length of the carriage while the chevrons at the edges point into the seating areas, giving a sense of width to a narrow space.

The carpet, with hair felt underlay and fastened with studs so that it could be taken out for cleaning, extended into the seating area, but not underneath the seats themselves. The under-seat areas were most likely to be covered in linoleum. On closer examination the interlocking aspects of the design bear a strong resemblance to machine parts, particularly those of rack railways and drawings of ratchet teeth that have been found in the GWR sketchbooks of draughtsman J. E. Davies (Fig. 3.18). During this period, according to Ghislaine Wood, ‘industrial technology preoccupied many artists and fed the search for a new repertory of symbols’ as exemplified in the film Modern Times (1936) where comedian Charlie

---

26 Elaine Arthurs, email to author, 28 August 2018.
27 Williams: 135.
28 Author’s conversation with Hugh Macquade: 2018, KWVR.
Chaplin was conveyed helplessly through the cogs of a giant machine.\textsuperscript{29} I assert that R. S. Gray was familiar with the design of LMS locomotive and carriage machine parts and copied this type of design, but equally he could have been inspired by a visit to the cinema (Fig. 3.18b).\textsuperscript{30}

Carpet Trades of Kidderminster, a well-known firm who advertised in the hotel and catering press, were selected to realize the design of this carpet.\textsuperscript{31} Its bold, abstract elliptical and lozenge pattern can be compared with that of a Wilton carpet in the restaurant at the Dorchester Hotel, London, photographed thirteen years later (Fig. 3.19). Also made by Carpet Trades, and designed by the artist Graham Sutherland (1903-1980), it had ‘the five basic colours included in the Hans Feibusch (1878-1998) mural depicting a scene from Ovid’s \textit{Metamorphoses}'.\textsuperscript{32} In Sutherland’s carpet the machine-derived aesthetic has been incorporated into furnishings intended for consumption by the overseas market. Similar abstract and geometric patterns had already been designed for Heal’s in 1927 (Fig. 3.20). Gradually they became part of the consumption of everyday domestic rugs; described as ‘a traditional Axminster or, in the late 1930s, a cubist pattern in fashionable oranges, browns and greens’.\textsuperscript{33} Less adventurous patterns were also available, and an Arding and Hobbs catalogue of the period evidences the range of traditional and contemporary rugs available for the dining room. From the evidence, I would argue that railway company draughtsmen copied designs from both machine parts and high street modernistic styles (Fig. 3.21).

### 3.3 Training carriage workshop staff

The \textit{Railway Gazette} commented in 1927, with a tone of frustration, on the inertia of the workshops produced by apprenticeship systems founded on a hierarchical structure, and worker suspicion towards new labour saving practices and tools.\textsuperscript{34} Rather than encouraging promising workmen, it was felt that men were kept in


\textsuperscript{30} MDA, Railway Terminology Working Group, \textit{Railway Object Name Thesaurus} (Cambridge: MDA, 2002), p. 205. A rack railway is a line which uses a mechanical system with an arrangement of metal teeth set continuously along the track to engage pinion wheels of cogs to enable trains to climb steep gradients.

\textsuperscript{31} Archives of Carpet Trades, held at the Carpet Museum in Kidderminster, have not revealed an order for this carpet from LMS [email correspondence with Jean Talbot June 2018].

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Furnishings From Britain}, 1948; taken from an advertisement in this national trade press magazine designed to promote products especially for the export market.


\textsuperscript{34} Anon, ‘Apprentices in Railway Workshops’, \textit{Railway Gazette}, 23 September 1927, p. 361.
their place, with little choice of trade or opportunity.\textsuperscript{35} In 1921 the Railways Act gave staff the ability to negotiate for wages commensurate with their skills, but it is clear that in this stultifying atmosphere new practices would take time to be accepted as the norms and modes of production would remain relatively fixed.\textsuperscript{36}

At the time of the grouping, training in the workshops was not standardised. The Institution of Civil Engineers listed schemes in existence in 1920, but in May 1927 the \textit{Railway Engineer} magazine published an article about the need for systematic training of apprentices. This debate, particularly with regard to training those working on locomotives, continued through its pages.\textsuperscript{37} The editor overlooked the City and Guilds of London Institute course in carriage building which had been initiated in 1927.\textsuperscript{38} Part of a wider vocational curriculum, this programme lasted four years and included carriage and wagon construction, drawing and design, strength of materials, mathematics, works organisation, administration and engineering science but not upholstery, for example, which was categorised under ‘women’s trades’.\textsuperscript{39} Held at Wolverton Technical College, students taking this course could qualify for a National Certificate in Carriage Building.\textsuperscript{40} However, while this was a move towards the standardisation of training, the graduates from such a course were few, rising to just fourteen in 1933, and thus the impact of training courses on the design of the carriage was limited.\textsuperscript{41}

Rather than following a prescribed training programme, GWR craftsmen usually followed in their father’s footsteps by entering the railway company on an apprenticeship model of training. One such was Royston Blackford, carriage finisher, who started at the railway company in 1944. He would have been apprenticed into traditional ways of working. He recalled that the trades were graded, with pattern making being the ‘top trade’, followed by fitting and turning, coach-body making and then the interior work, such as cabinet making.\textsuperscript{42} Blackford recalled using veneers he termed ‘satinee’ (sic) and ‘herringboning’ (sic):

\textsuperscript{37} Anon, ‘Progressive Training of Railway Apprentices,’ \textit{Railway Engineer}, March 1933, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{38} Anon, ‘Courses in Carriage Building,’ \textit{Railway Gazette}, 10 June 1927, p. 751.
\textsuperscript{39} TNA ED 98/2.
\textsuperscript{40} TNA ED 90/2.
\textsuperscript{41} TNA ED 98/2.
\textsuperscript{42} Royston Blackford, NAROH 2002-29, NRM.
‘these were the first veneers we used. Then maple, African Cherry, oak, and then plastics; the first we ever used’. Blackford’s descriptions imply a reflective, smooth shiny ‘satin’ surface and a herringbone, chevron shape to the way the veneers were laid, adding interest to the interior finish (Fig. 3.22). Clearly craftsmen adapted to using plastics for wall-finishing and in the Mark 1 carriage the veneers could equally be of ash, lacewood, mahogany, maple, oak or sapele on five millimetre plywood; an example of the synthesis of materials which constituted the British carriage interior. Guibourtia wood was used as well. At nationalisation, the BR standards committee ordered veneers from the Metropolitan Plywood Company. In May 1949, they requested African mahogany, chestnut, Australian walnut, figured mahogany and French walnut and it was noted that aluminum could be veneered with such constructional timbers subject to the necessary licenses. Also, the veneer could be applied to one or both sides of the ply, in a juxtaposition of modern and traditional materials.

Production of carriage interiors became standardised through training and mass production methods, but the skills of the workforce were fixed in past practices, both spatially and by gender, although the example of the French polishers and drawing office during WWI shows that some tasks were executed by either gender. Furthermore, the traditional materials used were combined with modern ones as they appeared, and craftsmen adapted by problem solving. Draughtsmen (and women) created new designs for the carriages, but these were often copied, either from other companies or from modernistic styles.

3.4 The rise of professional design

Between 1870 and 1970, the process of design became professionalised in almost a linear fashion, in some respects in parallel with the industrialisation of Britain. ‘Professionalization’, for Lees-Maffei, refers to the process of developing an activity into a generally recognised body, through the ‘setting up of professional organisations, the articulation and monitoring of standards and codes of conduct’ and in the interwar years and post-World War II, participation in official and
governmental bodies such as the Board of Trade (BoT). Lees-Maffei acknowledges that there also existed the sense of professionalisation as denoting paid work, the opposite of amateur, but that this did not indicate a professionalised field, since ‘To professionalise, interior design has needed to shift its emphasis from taste to skill’. The development of advice books and magazine articles was part of the drive to exert such an influence. Magazines, such as *Homes and Gardens* (in circulation from 1919), and *The Decorator* (which became known as *Interiors* in 1940), were aimed at women. Cinema, *Picture Post* magazine and the spread of public spaces such as department stores also promoted goods for the home, displaying them in such a way as to convey a modern lifestyle of comfort and convenience as part of a burgeoning consumerism. In the private home middle-class women became ‘agents of modernity’, creating interiors with a specifically feminine aesthetic, allowing the home to remain as a private space where women could explore their ideas, experiences and inner lives in individual ways.

**Designers of train interiors**

Despite the emphasis on industrial design through print media, exhibitions and broadcasting, as discussed in chapter one, the relationship between rail transport and the new conceptions of design was tentative. Opportunities to design for the railway companies were infrequent and often only achieved through contractual competition. One example was that of Prudence Maufe who was working for Heals in the early 1930s and became a Director of the firm. She designed the interior decoration for the first A. E. C. Ltd diesel railcar commissioned by GWR, built for third-class passengers in 1933. The interior colours of light green and gold-brown were of the Art Deco style, in keeping with the streamlined exterior. An amalgam of traditional and modern ideas and materials such as Rexine and

---

48 Ibid: 1.
49 Ibid.
leather, linoleum and walnut, chrome plate and the sepia prints of GWR beauty spots, completed the look.\(^{53}\)

Another woman designer of train interiors was Enid Marx. After art school and during the mid-1920s she worked with the innovative textile designers and hand block printers Phyllis Barron (1890-1964) and Dorothy Larcher (1882-1952) in their London studio.\(^{54}\) Their work was seen as ‘exemplifying modernism’.\(^{55}\) The three women shared an affluent middle-class background, their social networks enabling their designs to be seen by those with connections such as Christian Barman (1898-1980).\(^{56}\) He encouraged Frank Pick to commission Marx’s designs for moquette for the LTPB in the 1930s.\(^{57}\) Marx’s work could be regarded as contributing to shaping national identity, her moquettes having longevity on the Underground (and over-ground services), and having exhibited at the controversial Paris Expo of 1937.\(^{58}\) Other designs of Enid Marx were part of everyday national life, such as her postage stamps, celebrating landmark events like the 1953 Coronation of Elizabeth II. Although Marx’s work is allied to the craft movement, these observations place her more firmly into the era of modern designs, their commodification and appropriation for nationalistic purposes.

Also linked with train design, Marion Dorn was part of the elite circle of designers in this period. Her output included furniture design, graphics, textiles and wallpapers. By the 1920s Dorn was well established, with a clientele including architects Erich Mendelsohn (1887-1953) and Serge Chermayeff. She was also associated with transport through her designs for moquettes for the LTPB in 1937.
producing fabrics in linen in black and red colourway for the transport company.59
Dorn’s work was also known to the LMS. In 1933, the architect Oliver Hill (1887-
1968) was commissioned by the railway company to build a new, modern-style
hotel at Morecambe, Lancashire, and Dorn was contracted to design rugs for
some of the key public spaces.60

Dorn also worked with architect Brian O’Rorke (1901-1962) on the interiors of the
royal carriages nos.798 and 799, which I develop in chapter seven. O’Rorke’s
work had featured in The Times and a Country Life illustrated article of 1933,
which discussed his interior design work in the context of other well-regarded
designers such as Serge Chermayeff, who was associated initially with Art Deco
and then the Modernist aesthetic in Britain.61 O’Rorke was also associated with
Betty Joel (1896-1985), a British designer of furniture influenced by the Modern
Movement, as well as the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944), and Maxwell
Fry.62 O’Rorke had been commissioned by Colin Anderson to design the interior
arrangement and decoration of his new passenger ocean liner the RMS Orion
(1935) and the interior design of both first and tourist-class accommodation in
several more Orient Line ships including the Orcades (II), completed in 1937.63

Dorn worked too with Gordon Russell Ltd, a firm born out of the Arts and Crafts
style of woodwork and craftsmanship, the brothers Dick and Gordon being skilled
in cabinetmaking into the 1920s. They gained recognition by their presence in the
showrooms of a wide range of London retailers such as Heal’s, where their work
became linked to the Modern Movement, and then in 1942 associated with the
Utility Furniture Advisory Committee founded in 1941. In the post-war years,
Gordon Russell joined the Council of Industrial Design and was knighted in
1955.64 His company created the woodwork and radios in the royal carriages nos.
798 and 799, discussed in chapter seven.

59 Ibid: 288. These designs were named: Colindale, Chesham and Caledonian.
60 Ibid: 95. I discuss Dorn’s work further in chapter seven.
61 Chermayeff established an architectural practice with Erich Mendelson before migrating to the USA
before WWII.
(p. 451).
The establishment of professional design bodies and the influence of organisations such as the DIA and CAI exemplified the attempts to exert control over commercial design in this period with an aim to 'stimulate a higher level of public taste'. Specialist design and decorating firms were normally associated with home decor or architecture and building. Sir Nigel Gresley, CME of LNER was a personal friend of Sir Charles Allom and employed his firm White Allom Ltd, to design the interior of the *Flying Scotsman* in 1928. White Allom Ltd designed, manufactured and fitted interiors for the royal family and shipping lines such as Cunard. In the 1930s they produced hybrid interiors for the *Silver Jubilee* and the *Coronation* train (1937) combining traditional teak and maple woods with Rexine and a ‘jazz pattern moquette’ in the former. White Allom worked in tandem with other design firms on the *Silver Jubilee* such as Comyn Ching Ltd and Morris Singer Ltd for metalwork, or lighting by Dernier and Hamlyn Ltd. James P. Smith and Acton Surgey Ltd were designers who also worked on carriage interiors for LNER’s more prestigious trains.

In a *Daily Mail* report of their company meeting in 1925, another well-known interior design firm, Waring and Gillow, ‘looked forward to continuing work furnishing, equipping and decorating carriages’ as there was ‘a good demand for it’. This company, whose roots were in the eighteenth century, were renowned for both furniture-making and retailing. They were London based and produced furniture in a variety of historical styles, as well as commissioning contemporary pieces. In the twentieth century, the company catered for a wealthy clientele gradually assuming ‘a more progressive edge through its embrace of a more contemporary European aesthetic’. Serge Chermayeff, who had married into the family firm, instigated the company’s reputation for modern furniture design and interior decoration. The company closed in 1997.

---

68 Best: an interview by Mr A. G. Self with staff at Holloway, White Allom, (uncatalogued, 9 September 1977), NRM. I have not found any other information about the companies he mentions.
71 Ibid.
I have shown in this section that there were designers associated with the Modern Movement who created design for train interiors. These operated alongside traditional and longstanding firms, and both had an impact on the hybrid nature of the carriage space. The next section explores this by interrogating another design firm working at the same time as White Allom and Waring and Gillow, investigating why were such firms were chosen by the railway companies and examining the part space played in the promotion of a sense of luxury associated with them.

3.5 The commissioned decorator of the carriage: a case study of the GWR Super Saloons

This section explores why GWR, rather than employ the usual methods of finishing, fitting and decorating a new carriage in the Swindon workshops, agreed to partner with a well-known London design firm to build eight Super Saloons, two of which would be panelled and equipped with furnishings and fittings by Trollope and Sons. Daniel Miller has commented on how an object can not only express cultural differences and divisions within society, but also act as a bridge between them, connecting otherwise ‘diverse domains’, in this case the two domains of the external design firm and the railway workshop staff.72

In a unique step, the minute book of the overarching GWR Locomotive Committee, the Engineering Committee, the Finance Committee and the Store Committee of April 1931 shows that the company intended to have six carriages panelled by the Company but furnished and fitted by Trollope and Sons (also known at other times as Trollope and Colls).73 The wealthy clientele from the ocean liners undertaking the lengthy journey between London and Plymouth Docks expected luxury travelling and the GWR had started running Pullmans in 1929. But the contract with Pullman ended in 1931 as using them for the boat-trains alone was proving unprofitable. Therefore the Super Saloons were the GWR replacement of the Pullmans for this service; ‘more spacious, non-Americanised, and considerably more modern’.74 Known as ‘Pullmans’ or ‘Cunard’ stock, they were part of the Newbury Race trains and used for private hire as well. In this case study, through my own observations of the interior and archival material I consider ideas of

73 GWR Minute Book, no. 8, 1931: 208, STEAM. The total cost was estimated at £29,416, of which the firm received £9,316.
74 Michael Harris, *Great Western Coaches from 1890* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1985), p. 84.
space, the modern and the American in these new vehicles. I also probe the reasoning behind GWR selecting Trollope and Sons as the decorators for two carriages in their entirety, and assess the implications of the railway company sharing the interior finishing and decorating with a specialist firm in the remaining carriages in that combination of ‘diverse domains’.

A case for choosing Trollope and Sons

In this section, Trollope’s reputation for creating historicised domestic interiors for the elite is tested. Founded in 1778, by 1843 the firm had a reputation for building works, paper-hanging and furniture production and for being able to produce an interior in any decorative style. Trollope’s worked with prestigious architects and Meyer describes the firm as being ‘right at the forefront of the furniture business in London from around 1860 to 1880’, with their West Halkin Street, Belgravia, address becoming their furniture showroom. At international exhibitions, they demonstrated their expertise and skill in working with a range of woods, displaying cabinets carved from solid wood with inlaid marquetry, and metals such as bronze with enamels. The company specialised in a few named revivalist styles: ‘Cinquecento’, ‘Lombardo-Gothic’, ‘Italian Renaissance’ and ‘Modern Renaissance’. An example of Trollope’s work of this period is visible in the photograph of the newly-built ballroom in 1888 at Wimborne House (22 Arlington street, London) after industrialist Ivor Guest’s (1835-1914) elevation to the peerage as Baron Wimborne (Fig. 3.23). Originally a town mansion built in 1740-1755, the highly ornate and gilded interior is French Rococo in style, announcing the arrival of the mansion’s new owner into London society and Trollope’s account books name royalty and the upper classes as their satisfied customers. Their reputation as decorators to the elite would have been a factor in the GWR choosing Trollope’s to design a carriage to rival the prestigious Pullman Company and thereby maintain their customer base.

Similarly, a decorating firm who worked with well-known architects would have been an attractive proposition. Crathorne Hall in Yarm, Yorkshire, now a hotel,
was designed by Sir Ernest George (1839-1922) who was president of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1908 to 1910 (Fig. 3.24). Although the Hall is an Edwardian country house, the impression formed by the Trollope interior is of looking back to the Neo-Classical late-Georgian era. The boudoir, designed as a woman’s room, shows light plasterwork and moulded panels. Woodcarving was a speciality of Trollope.

I have demonstrated that one reason why the directors of GWR commissioned Trollope and Sons was because the firm was experienced in emulating the styles elite customers desired. For example, businessman Arnold Hills (1857-1927) bought a Trollope interior for his new acquisition in rural Essex, Monkhams at Woodford Green. Hills took the photograph in 1893 just a year after his purchase (Fig. 3.25).78 This photograph shows a hallway dominated by a lavishly ornamented staircase, lit from above with a balcony allowing views down the hallway. This interior was created just as a new technological age was beginning, yet Hills commissioned an interior which fundamentally looked backwards to historicist styles. As Stephen Calloway has pointed out:

> the great majority of households of the well-to-do, the comfortable established bourgeoisie or the *nouveaux riches* [who] were furnished in a dense dark [...] unappealing style based heavily on badly digested historical prototypes, which had been adapted to the mechanical manufacturing processes[...] disseminated through an unenlightened trade.79

The predominating dense and dark wood of the Super Saloon interior would seem to support this comment but there are features in the carriages which demonstrate the firm’s openness to contemporaneous styles. Hence, it may be that the CAI had had some impact in educating this ‘producer in aesthetic design’.80

Trollope as a firm needed to compete for business, and to be able to produce work that satisfied any taste would have been essential to attract customers. Calloway notes that, ‘Firms such as Trollope’s of Belgravia and Waring and Gillow in London or Alavoine in Paris and New York, prided themselves on their capacity to

---

78 The land was sold by Hills when he lost money in 1901, to become the suburbs of the twentieth century.
decorate in any style’. Trollope in 1925 which illustrates the kind of work available from the company at this time. That the fireplace was Trollope’s signature feature is indicated by the title ‘The Golden Mile Stone’. Longfellow’s poem of the same name written in 1858 is quoted on the introductory page:

Each man’s chimney is his Golden Mile Stone;

Is the central point, from which he measures

Every distance through the gateways of the world around him.

The very use of a poet who was writing decades earlier, and who was associated with the Gothic Revival sentiments produced by his associate Tennyson, contradicts the firm’s avowal in their catalogue to move away from named period styles and embrace a new ethos. For although the book’s author states that the ‘use of the term ‘period’ has been avoided [...] a deliberate omission’, instead the company describes the rooms available for commission as; ‘The French Room’, ‘The Hand Painted Room’, ‘The Gold Room’, ‘The Italian Room’ and, ‘The Elizabethan Room’, which hints strongly at period styles. Another indicator that Trollope’s were maintaining a reputation for historicist styles is that the book contains colour plates by British artist Guy Lipscombe R. A. (1881-1952) of each historic room in the firm’s gallery at West Halkin Street.

Part of the motivation to produce a catalogue of this nature was the rise of more firms undertaking similar work. Facing competition from White Allom, Keebles, and Lenygon & Morant ‘the leaders in this field’, Trollope’s were clearly motivated to acquire more business. The wealthy and well connected customer was their target market as illustrated by their catalogue:

Whatever you want done we can do ~ and do it superlatively well. For ours is a complete service and includes things such as plastering and painting; fitted carpets, fitted furniture, parquet flooring; panelling, electric lighting, heating and fittings; bathrooms and plumbing.

---

81 Ibid: 27.
83 Ibid.
84 Calloway 1988: 142.
It is obvious that only by a service competent to interpret your plan as it should be interpreted — as a unity — can your ideals be achieved. Moreover, to take advantage of our technical and artistic skill costs no more — and frequently costs less — than to purchase the various elements of a decorative scheme from various sources and have the plastering done by the local decorator with his limited ideas and equipment.\textsuperscript{85}

These comments show Trollope’s potential attraction for GWR. They had the skills to completely refit and finish the interior of a home and therefore a carriage. Not only could they do the work, they could project manage it where necessary. However, Trollope and Sons dismissal of the local decorator could have implications for working jointly on carriages, since collaborative skills would have been essential when working alongside the Swindon workshop staff on six of the saloons. In fact, Trollope and Sons were used to working to the instructions of individual decorators. Female decorators, who designed but did not make furniture, were working with more established firms in obtaining historicised styles for their wealthy and well connected clients at the time the Super Saloons were being built. For example, Sibyl, Lady Colefax (1874–1950), who went on to found the Colefax and Fowler interior decorating firm in 1938, supervised Trollope’s work at 39, Green St., London, the home of prominent antique and art dealer Sir Joseph Duveen (1869–1939) in 1931.\textsuperscript{86} Trollope’s were clearly used to adhering to the instructions of clients and coordinating several trades and skilled artisans in creating bespoke interiors, which would have been key when working alongside the Swindon workshops whose repertoire would have been more limited. This, together with their long-standing reputation for creating historicised interiors for the wealthy elite, would have made Trollope and Sons a secure and reliable choice for GWR. They had that particular market in mind for the Super Saloon; for those carriages echo the traditional elite urban or country home furnished in a historicised style: the kind of work Trollope and Sons had been known for throughout the nineteenth century.

3.6 Representing England

\textsuperscript{85} Trollope 1925.
\textsuperscript{86} LMA B/ CWT/031. Families established long standing relationships with Trollope who did not simply build, decorate, design and fit their homes as a project management team, but also carried out basic tasks from repairs and restoration of furniture, antiques, rugs and sculptures to ‘cutting a hole in the birdbath’.
This section analyses whether the British national identity was mediated by the
design of the Super Saloons, and in what ways. In terms of social distinctions,
these carriages were set apart for a particular clientele as underscored by the
naming of each carriage after a royal figure. As previously described, the train
served intercontinental travellers at premium fares.87 Trollope was proud of the
company association with ocean liners and their collaboration with designer P. A.
Staynes on the SS Minnedosa, launched in 1917, featured in their publicity
materials (Fig. 3.26).88 The image shows a heavily panelled interior, lit by
suspended lanterns and small-paned windows.89 The imposing trademark
fireplace with an elaborate over-mantel is surrounded by tables and chairs whose
design details speak of the tradition of English oak vernacular furniture. The
overall impression is of the great halls of England’s historical past, a style with
which Trollope was comfortable.

The firm’s longstanding commercial relationship with ship builders continued with
Cunard, Trollope’s sending out materials such as blue silk velvet, brocades and
silks together with black sheepskin rugs to the SS Aquitania and SS Olympic in
1931. Samples of wallpapers were also shipped, some with a Chinese design,
while for the SS Mauretania, ‘paper panels’ were provided ‘to imitate Sienna
marble, blush rose and pine’.90 On board the Olympic, for instance, travellers
encountered rooms designed in styles including Louis XIV, Louis XV, Louis XVI,
Empire, Italian Renaissance, Queen Anne and ‘old Dutch’, trademarks of the
Trollope interior.91

The Super Saloons debuted in 1931 when numbers 9111/2 ‘were used by a party
of guests of the French line (CGT) travelling from Le Havre to London on the
maiden voyage of the Columbie’.92 A ship from the same line in that period,
France, ‘proved highly popular with affluent travellers because of her luxurious
interior designs [which] invoked France’s aristocratic past’.93 Thus it can be argued

---
87 Kevin Robertson, Great Western Coaches in Colour (Southampton: Noodle, 2011), p. 20. The fares were
higher than Pullman.
Publications, 1924). The ship was purchased by Canadian Pacific shortly afterwards.
89 Calloway: 40.
90 LMA CWT/031 and CWT/032.
91 Bernhard Rieger, ‘Floating Palaces: Victorian and Edwardian Ships’, in Ocean Liners, ed. by Daniel
92 Harris 1985: 85.
93 Rieger 2017: 108.
that the Super Saloon interior was designed to correspond with that of the liner the train was meeting at Plymouth, in order to create a seamless continuity of experience for the elite passenger.

Traditional ‘Empire Timbers’ were used for the wood panelling of the interior panels and partitions. By using these, I argue that the railway company managers were demonstrating their propensity for following post-war government campaigns to use timbers from the British Empire sources, as in the 1932 HMSO leaflet entitled ‘Empire Timbers from Home and Overseas for Building and Structural Purposes’.94 Talks and promotional events concerning Empire Timbers during the 1930s explained the value and variety of uses of the woods.95 Research by the Empire Timber Committee suggested ways of using the various woods, such as for railway sleepers as well as in private and government buildings.96 The Empire Timber Exhibition, held in London by the Overseas Board of Trade in 1920, published a reference booklet for architects concerning the many kinds of timber available in Britain as well as those which could be imported from part of the British Empire such as Canada, Africa and Australia.97 The British Empire Exhibition in London in 1924 with its overt nationalism and propagandist message of utilizing the colonies as ‘cultural and economic assets’ was followed up by the Empire Marketing Board’s promulgation of Empire and British goods (Fig.1.3).98 This reinforced the nationalistic message.

Empire Timbers were the default interior finish of choice for all railway companies, even after nationalisation. In the Super Saloons, I contend that their use was imperative and that, as the carriage would be for some foreign visitors their first experience of England, GWR’s aim was to display English craftsmanship. English power and authority was not only mediated through the use of Empire Timbers and the execution of fine woodwork, it was also represented in the images of the empty coves of Cornwall and cathedrals and castles displayed in the Super

94 J. R. Cosgrove, ‘Empire Timbers, with Special Reference to their uses for Furniture and Decoration’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 80 (1932), 379-86 (p. 380).
95 Ibid.
97 Anon, ‘Empire Timber Exhibition’, *Journal of the Society of Architects*, 13.8 (1920), 382-83 (p. 382).
Saloons, landscapes which Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw have argued, play their part in constructing an idealized national past. Landscapes, often in watercolour, had featured in all types of carriage interiors since 1830. They were placed under the luggage rack or on partitions below the crown mould (Fig. 2.2). At the grouping, there were photographs of all sizes on display, in black and white and sepia. GWR photographs were taken by their own staff and usually featured places in their own territory. The subjects of the large sepia photographs in the Super Saloons were situated between windows and on partitions for easy ‘mass consumption’. These images were as Augé has termed, ‘the presence of the past in a present that supercedes it but still lays claim to it’, and in that way ‘the essence of modernity’. The passengers, be they overseas visitors or local travellers would have brought their own narratives to these images, generating imaginary possibilities of ideal worlds. Holidays past and possible were evoked, a world away from what Alexander Medcalf has termed the ‘anxieties of modern living’.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the context of the carriage workshop showing how the carriages were made using traditional methods that originated in the artisanal, and how those skills were valued at the time. As new materials were introduced, the craftsmen incorporated them, alongside those whose use in carriage building was longstanding. The layout of the workshops also exposed ambiguities around gendered roles at the time of the grouping. Genders were separated, except during WWI and WWII, with a limited number of skills performed by both men and women, although this did not translate to working in the carriage space itself.

The designer/ draughtsman who worked for the railway company produced designs which were often copied either from other carriages or from commercial, modernistic sources. Such skills ran parallel to the wider milieu of the gradual

102 Miller 1987.
professionalisation of design in Britain from the 1920s onwards and the existence of the traditional specialist design firm associated with elite interiors from previous centuries. Comparison of these two domains, the public transport interior and the private interior, shows how these were bridged in the carriage interior.

By commissioning a traditional and established firm such as Trollope’s for carriages which would be mainly used by overseas travellers, GWR were promoting not only a sense of continuity and familiarity between modes of transport, but also a sense of national identity at a time of economic downturn. GWR managers were clearly hoping to both attract wealthy passengers and retain those they had transported when they had the Pullman contract. Trollope and Sons were able to supply the appropriate skill set which would enable the emulation of luxury imported brands such as Pullman, and provide for passengers an idea of England rooted in Empire, remote from the modern world. By applying the theoretical approaches of Lefebvre, Miller and Augé the spatiality and layout of the carriage interior as well as the finish and decoration has been shown to signal luxury to both these established and potential customers.
Chapter 4

Provision for Passengers: sitting

4.1 Introduction

In chapter two, I discussed the design and construction of the carriage, from the point of view of the railway industry and workshop practices. Now, I turn to examine the embodied passenger experience, the intentions of the railway companies, as far as they can be ascertained, and the input of a firm of designers, in the contexts of the traditional and modern style elements employed. The Big Four created networks for the mass movement of people for work and leisure purposes, but until LNER and SR undertook passenger surveys post WWII, there are few first-hand accounts of how passengers experienced sitting on a train. Therefore, deductions about passengers, seating and space show the inextricable links between the human subject and the material world. This chapter uses the work of Henri Lefebvre to pay close attention to the social relations of space within carriages designed for sitting, to explore the shift from compartment to open layouts.¹

Objects have a place in the mediation of social relationships and by applying the ideas of Daniel Miller, this chapter examines the way the materiality of everyday objects, such as carriage seats mediate culture and human relations.² The choice of layout, materials, fitting and decoration in the carriages were the medium by which cultural values and, for example, class and gender distinctions were rehearsed.³ In order to assess the materiality of the seating and its impact on the public behaviour of passengers, I apply the work of Erving Goffman, Wolfgang Shivelbusch and James Gibson while the approaches of Pierre Bourdieu enable an evaluation of whether and how open and compartment spaces created what Bourdieu has termed a ‘sense of distinction’ for passengers.⁴ This is augmented by the theoretical approaches of Victor Turner, Marc Augé and Henri Lefebvre in support of my discussion of the ways in which space and seating play their parts in constructing a habitus for the passenger, a place linked with cultural status and

³ Doreen Massey, *Space Place Gender* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1994)
social difference. Furthermore, by applying the insights of human geography such as those of David Bissell the carriage interior is foregrounded as a socially interactive, relational space. Finally, the discussion will demonstrate how the open and compartmentalised carriage interiors mediated social relationships and interactions. My application of more contemporary methodologies enables a move away from static histories to ephemera and portable objects with malleable meanings, as exemplified by John Urry’s notions of the interconnectivity between mobilities.

4.2 Spaces for seated passengers

The typology in chapter two at Fig. 2.12 showed the dominance of the compartment style of carriage. These were part of the long-distance train which was 'strong on amenity' in that it had a range of services for passengers, and its 'home to work counterpart', which was high in seating capacity. After WWII, railway companies were deciding whether to build more compartment carriages or to concentrate on the open style. This section looks at the experiences of passengers using both types, applying survey results where they are available, examining the impact of different kinds of spaces on passengers. The section begins with the compartment.

Compartment carriages

The LMS third class ‘Learning Coach’ no. 8761 and the LMS third class brake no. 5987 are typical examples of compartment carriages where the majority of passengers travelled facing each other in groups of four, six or eight seats, or more if people crammed in or stood. They either accessed the compartment direct from the platform or from the corridor, having boarded via the vestibule. This interior layout continued into the 1950s.

---

The dominant feature in the compartment was the provision of continuous seating (Fig. 4.1). The way it was subdivided contributed to the social nature of the space. Pertinent to a discussion of carriage seating is the idea of the ‘sofa’, a Turkish word for a built-in ottoman where ‘seating places are not prearranged and personal space is intuitively more permeable and overlapping’.9 Third-class carriage bench seats acted in a similar way to a sofa in that the seats were not individualised until armrests were introduced. In contrast, first-class carriages usually had movable armrests differentiating the seats, thereby creating a sense of personal space for each passenger. The compartment seating design created a space where passengers had to look directly at one another across the space with little legroom. Space that was more flexible was available in corridor carriages. Waiting for a seat or station in the corridor or vestibule provided opportunities for movement, for a chance to avoid the gazes of other travellers, to walk around, smoke, or talk privately.

Open carriages

Passengers approached the seating in open carriages, such as the Super Saloons, via a sequence of enclosed spaces. The step up from the station platform through the doors at each end of the carriage led into the vestibule, or lobby, where the lavatory was usually situated. The entrance to the saloon itself was often recessed, hidden from view (Fig. 4.2 and Fig. 4.3). There was no passenger access to the saloon through the brake part of the carriage. In order to access a free seat, passengers would have to take a linear walk down the centre aisle, exposed to the gaze of seated passengers unlike walking down a corridor to find the coveted empty compartment. Until settled in a seat, the passengers moved about the space. They placed luggage above the seat, taking off outerwear thus ‘making and breaking’ the interior space, in a way which mirrors external changes as the train moves through the landscape10 In her fieldwork, Laura Watts observed passengers with packed hand luggage, who waited in the vestibule for the next stop. She contrasted them with the unpacked passenger, who distributed their personal belongings about them on the table in the saloon (Fig. 4.4).11

10 Watts 2008 :718.
11 Ibid: 716.
4.3 The materiality of the seating

The impact of travelling in the carriage on the body and mind was the subject of Shivelbusch who explored the experiential aspects of travelling in a carriage, with particular reference to all the physical and psychological aspects of being a human being, encompassed by the train’s technology.\textsuperscript{12} For Schivelbusch, the design of the interior of the carriage was a material response to a psychological reaction to the machine, mitigating its effects of treating the passenger like a parcel, a commodity.\textsuperscript{13} The design response in the twentieth century is evaluated here by considering the materiality of the seating as represented in drawings, observed in carriages on fieldwork visits and described in archival sources.

Psychologist of the mid-twentieth century, James Gibson, has introduced the idea of affordance, that is, the interaction between a person’s physical movement and properties of an object or surface.\textsuperscript{14} He also describes the affordance as perceived visually. Thus, while a seat is recognised as such by the passenger, its actual properties are relative to the passenger body, thus it may not always be comfortable. This was because the physical properties of the seat were not designed to be unique to each person, as evidenced in the partial table at the foot of Fig. 4.5 where the calculations are laid out.\textsuperscript{15} Carriage seating only offered comfort for a person whose head exactly reached the headrest, but the adjustments made to the seating by the company were dependent on the size of the compartment. The seat structure in the compartment also fixed the passenger’s body into one position, creating, as De Certeau termed it, a sense of ‘travelling incarceration’ for the passenger.\textsuperscript{16} The sense evoked was of waiting, immobile, until the destination.\textsuperscript{17}

Editor of the \textit{Cabinet Maker}, H. P. Shapland acknowledged the limitations imposed on seating, in terms of ‘anthropological measurements’ and the ‘size of rooms’, but argued that the ‘maximum of comfort’ was necessary.\textsuperscript{18} In the third-class carriage interior of the nineteenth century a wooden bench had been deemed adequate

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid: 27.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid: 121.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Watts: 716.
\end{flushleft}
and Herbert Read observed that for sitting upright, a stool or bench is all that was ‘functionally necessary’. However, chairs made of wood, springs and cushions, upholstered in fabric, evolved to provide greater comfort.

By the 1920s, the methods of making seats in the carriage and wagon workshops would have not differed greatly from the nineteenth century. According to a workshop handbook of the 1930s, traditional methods of providing passenger comfort consisted of laced-coppered coil-spring mattresses and horsehair, covered with a material such as moquette, tapestry or ‘rep’ (Fig. 4.6). W.A. Gibson-Martin commented on the progress in carriage upholstery in the *Railway Engineer* in 1933, noting the advent of ‘spring sets’ supplied by manufacturers in various widths and depths and fixed directly to the seating framework. These techniques had their origins in the upholstery of chairs, particularly the comfortable sprung chair, the Victorian overstuffed ‘Turkish’ chair which ‘lacked elaborate woodwork’, emphasised ‘bodily comfort’ and incorporated horsehair and a reclined back.

A comparison of LNER sectional drawings for first and third class in 1937 and 1938 shows that in first class the head and backrests were both sprung, as was the seat, whereas in third class the two inch depth of headrest is simply horsehair covered in moquette (Figs 4.5 and 4.7). This would have felt unforgiving. These were traditional materials and railway designers were only intermittently exploring the possibilities afforded by new materials such as aluminium or Alpax, moved from consumption in domestic settings into the carriage. Although John Gloag advised that ‘Plastics, can simplify traditional problems of design […] and lead designers away from prototypes’, companies were only able to address this is in piecemeal fashion, struggling to combine traditional modes of seat design with new materials. Nor did they seem to experiment with the modern Moseley ‘Float

---

20 Jenkinson 1988: 53. The first volume has considerable detail on seat making.
23 Çevik: 368.
on Air’ pneumatic cushion, advertised at Fairs as a relief from ‘vibration and fatigue’ and used in both cars and the Imperial Airways Flying Boats (Fig. 4.8).26

In the carriage, some affordance was introduced in the form of armrests. These were found mainly in first class during the 1920s, but were later extended to third. The key element was that armrests could be raised or lowered by passengers. There was an expectation that passengers would sacrifice personal space in the rush hour to allow four to sit across a three-seat bench, although a correspondent noted that ‘some passengers sat tight and refused to ‘up arms”.27 Mr Hall, writing to the Railway Gazette about the Mark 1, suggested a return to the notices ‘of the old days’, which stated that seats were for four.28 Not surprisingly, the coveted places in the compartment were the end seats (Fig. 4.9). In first class, these were enhanced by horsehair and moquette padding extending from the seat to the wall by the window (Fig. 4.10). This allowed the head to be inclined, but the constraints of space remained, and the positioning and construction of the bench style seating, mass-produced for mass travel, therefore made passengers into objects for transportation.29

Upholstery

Upholstery material also played a part in mediating cultural divisions, and colour distinctions between carriage interiors were the norm in the Big Four over the time frame. Jenkinson notes that with regard to seating and interiors in general, ‘during the nineteenth century, railways had been somewhat unenterprising and employed relatively few finishes’, with blue, red or brown being used for plain velvet, plush (a variation of velvet) or ‘rep’ used to cover the seats.30 An example is a pre-grouping GNR corridor composite no. 2701 of 1922, currently based on the SVR and reconstructed to be a close representation of the original (Fig. 2.1). First class had the blue velvet upholstery with large armrests and wings, rather than headrests, in clearly defined cushioned seating (Fig. 4.11). Third-class compartments were characterised by the extensive use of crimson and black figured velvet (like a stylised fleur-de-lys but also based on the traditional damask pattern) covering

---

26 1939 Suppliers to the Aircraft Industry - Graces Guide [accessed 7 February 2021].
28 Ibid.
29 Gibson: 120.
bench seats which were not individualised (Fig. 4.12). This demonstrates the railway company’s conservative differentiation of their materials and designs for seating. Passengers were not consulted about a choice of upholstery until LNER’s survey of 1945, when they were given a choice of ‘gay colours and patterns’ or ‘restful colours’.

After signage, seat designs were the primary way to differentiate train classes. Winged seats, either built into the carriage or stand-alone, acted to confirm the designated class. The visual signal given by the wing functioned as what Bourdieu has termed ‘a sort of social orientation’ [...] ‘guiding occupants of a given place towards social positions’. The representations of the seats in the drawings in figs 4.5 and 4.7 illustrate how this was achieved. The winged nature of the chairs, also seen on the GWR Super Saloons, construct a particular milieu or habitus, a social world to which some passengers would have perceived themselves as belonging (Fig.4.4). Even when they are built into the compartment, bench style, the wings operate ‘below the level of consciousness’ defined by Bourdieu and signal the behaviours desired in the space. It was moveable chairs as in the GWR Super Saloons (discussed further below) which gave passengers a sense of individual space and control thereby over-riding the ‘passenger as object’ position.

4.4 Gender, seating and standing

The Big Four predominantly construed railing as a ‘masculine mobility’. Men designed the carriages, (as discussed in chapter two) and the seating dimensions in compartments suited them: ‘you can stretch out a bit without kicking the chap on the other side’ was a builder’s response to the SR survey. However, Massey has highlighted the ways in which women’s mobility is limited in terms of space.

---

33 Bourdieu: 469.
34 Ibid: 468.
37 Ibid.
38 Massey: 179.
While female passengers had been traditionally allocated a compartment of their own if travelling alone, according to Rule 161, this was only by request:38

When ladies are travelling alone, the staff must, if requested, endeavour to select a compartment for them (according to the class of their ticket) in which other ladies are travelling39

During the nineteenth century, letters to The Times showed that this practice had been unpopular amongst male passengers. Some women preferred not to be singled out, too, and in 1924 a member of the Women’s Freedom League wrote to The Times to suggest that ladies only compartments should be made compulsory to enable all ‘girls and young women travelling to and from classes or business’ to travel in like company.40 This remained a controversial issue even in the mid-twentieth century (Fig. 4.13).

In fact, the companies did not take the experience of female passengers formally into account until after WWII. Then, despite the two main types of carriage already being in operation, passengers were asked via a survey which one they preferred: namely the ‘Sixer’, which was a type of compartment, with ‘seats for six people on either side’, or the open.41

Women preferred the legroom in the open carriage: ‘you’re not so likely to be trodden on by people coming in and out’ observed a female teacher.42 Overall, the crucial issue was not seating, but standing. Referring to the luggage racks above the seats, women found standing for long periods the most difficult because the ‘only support for the standing passenger is too high for women who are normally shorter than men’.43 The survey noted that whether standing in compartments or in open carriages, passengers appropriated whatever object was available, often the luggage racks.44 The effect of the lack of straps and the use of the luggage racks would have subjected passengers to the motion of the train and a greater potential for being in physical contact with others, which all passengers were keen to avoid.

39 Ibid.
42 Ibid: 27.
43 Ibid: 11.
44 Miller: 160.
In an attempt to resist using the luggage racks provided, passengers requested straps as provided in London Underground carriages. These were not forthcoming and standing passengers continued to appropriate the luggage rack as a physical support. Design for an able-bodied adult male was the standard, despite the increased presence of female commuters in this period.

4.5 Space, sociability and control

In this section, by applying the work of David Bissell, I examine the way in which the materiality of the carriage interior ‘mediates the visual field’ and gives rise to feelings of both fear and freedom in passengers, arguing that these were not necessarily positive.

The compartment design enforced a social interaction between passengers that not everyone appreciated. Letters to newspapers in the 1920s often convey the fear of confinement with others. In a letter to the editor of the Daily Mail subtitled ‘Antiquated Carriages’, a ‘Traveller’ stated:

> To prevent outrages and murders in railway carriages, the railway companies should abolish compartments in their carriages. The whole of the carriage should be open from end to end, with a gangway down the centre and seats on either side as in France and the London District Railway.

The open carriage would reduce anxiety by enabling surveillance on the part of the passengers and thus, Bissell argues, promote self-regulating behaviour. Bissell notes how these preferences for the open carriage are arrived at by the adoption of a ‘visual attentiveness’, a state of awareness by the passenger structured by the ‘technology of transit’ which can be interpreted as the layout and design of the interior.

To maintain this sense of control over one’s travelling environment, in 1942 it was common practice for passengers to tip a porter to put up a ‘Not for Public Use’

---

45 The provision of straps has not been noted in any subsequent third class SR stock despite these carriages being open in the same way as the London Underground trains where straps were provided, and evidence in the survey that the open was more actively disliked the longer the distance travelled.
47 Bissell 2008: 42.
49 Bissell 2008: 51.
50 Ibid.
notice on a compartment window in order to reserve one for themselves.\textsuperscript{51} This could be as a reaction to wartime-overcrowded travel, or to avoid being subject to criminal activities in compartments and incidents such as that as described in another letter to the \textit{Daily Mail} where the unease caused by travelling with policemen who were handcuffed to prisoners in small spaces was highlighted.\textsuperscript{52} However, rather than privacy being desired \textit{per se}, sociologist Erving Goffman contended that individuals eschew the ‘embarrassment’ experienced when they wish to be alone and hidden from view, yet become unintentionally part of a gathering when other passengers enter the space.\textsuperscript{53} The negotiation of compartment seating, exacerbated by the lack of armrests to define seating spaces, created unwanted ‘unfocussed interaction’, which passengers sought to avoid.

The idealised vision of travelling alone in a compartment is imagined in a watercolour entitled \textit{Train Landscape} by Eric Ravilious (1903-1942). A seemingly empty third-class compartment, in an unidentified GWR carriage, speaks of the longed for solitary rural journey of ‘cosy privacy’ rather than the early morning crush to London (Fig. 4.14).\textsuperscript{54} Ravilious conflates this idea with English tradition, the sense of connection to the past as symbolized by the unimpeded view to the countryside and the White Horse at Westbury. In this depiction of a well-used carriage, fashioned in the Swindon workshops, Ravilious captures a moment in time where the passenger does not have to talk or be involved in any interactions or body idioms which open the possibility of communications with others within the compartment. Instead, he or she can gaze outwards, and literally backwards, unimpeded by other passengers, thus, according to Goffman, maintaining a sense of control over self and environment.\textsuperscript{55}

How the spatiality of the carriage mediates personal relationships and interactions is also conveyed by the visual culture employed by the railway company to attract leisure customers. A LNER poster by Tom Purvis (1888-1959) enables the spectator to look inside an open carriage, through the window frame to a family

\textsuperscript{52} Anon, ‘Constables Fight’, \textit{Daily Mail}, 20 December 1926, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{55} Goffman 1963: 33.
scene, an antithetical view to that of Ravilious’s empty compartment (Fig. 4.15). The man picks up the little girl. In this action, the carriage interior space facilitates opportunities for the freedom to express personal interactions and the renewal of traditional familial relationships. The poster also connects the design of the interior, the passenger, and the spectator.

This image of carefree leisure space and comfortable relationships is in contrast to the commuter carriage such as the GWR brake third ‘City’ stock no. 3755, designed by George Churchward before he retired as CME in 1922. At a mere forty-eight feet in length, it was designed mainly to take commuters into London. Building a new carriage soon after WWI for commuting purposes would have needed confidence, as a high percentage of working-class people were unemployed during this period. Middle-class managers and clerical grades would have been using this train. These workers were less affected by the slump. Harris notes the carriage has ‘antiquated’ style, by which he means that it featured only compartments, with no side corridor or even lavatories. The six compartments seating five-a-side were not only narrow at five feet ten inches wide, but also lower in height than usual. The three ceiling-lights consisted of bare bulbs inserted into ceramic bases (Fig. 4.16). When I visited this carriage, the hammered opaque glass above two of the windows gave me the impression of a lavatory with restricted light. The small armrests by the doors, with a coat and hat hook above each seat attached to the luggage rack, also spoke of minimal comfort and cramped conditions for commuters during peak travel times. GWR was catering for a burgeoning clientele who could afford to travel by train, yet the company’s design did not allow for any sense of control over personal space.

Personal space on crowded carriages of standing passengers was restricted because their vision up and down the carriage and thus their opportunities for surveillance of others and their luggage was impeded. Discomfort, says Bissell, is enhanced when there is nowhere to look. However, these visual practices were equally fraught in the compartment, as Schivelbusch notes:

---

56 This carriage is in use at DRC, Oxfordshire.
58 Harris 1972: 77.
59 Bissell 2008: 56.
Face to face arrangement... becomes unbearable because there is no longer a reason for communication. The seating in the railroad compartment forces the travellers into a relationship that is no longer based on living need but has become an embarrassment.\(^{60}\)

This sense of discomfort and avoidance of eye contact is palpable in the screenshot from the Sevenoaks Cine Society, film *Is This Your Life?* (Fig. 4.17). The still shows that newspapers provided a 'portable source of involvement' for commuters who felt they should be engaged in a social gathering, but did not wish to become involved.\(^{61}\)

In contrast, for those who had professional jobs at this time, the freedom to spread out and work could be experienced within the open carriage. Cecil J. Allen (1886-1958) a railway engineer and technical journalist who worked and travelled extensively for his work on the railways between 1909 and 1958, observed:

> Personally my preference is always for a seat in an open coach rather than in compartment [...] spaciousness and the use of a table are the twin attractions. The only disadvantages of the open coach are the draught [...] and the movement of passengers up and down the centre gangway.\(^{62}\)

Cecil’s comments imply that it was his desire for personal space, a need to avoid interactions with other passengers and the use of a table which made the open style preferable.

The design of the compartment was experienced as a confined space which forced undesired social interactions and made some passengers afraid. Personal space was desirable and visual culture, which mediated the social relationships passengers preferred to experience, promoted the potential for relaxed personal exchanges in the open carriage.

**4.6 The luxury of space: comparing the Super Saloons and the Pullman**

The previous sections examined the materiality of the seating and the visual elements of the carriage environment. In two case studies, I now move to consider the qualities of the Pullman saloon interior that GWR wished to emulate. Using the

---

\(^{60}\) Schivelbusch: 80.

\(^{61}\) Goffman 1963: 51.

theoretical work of Henri Lefebvre, David Bissell and Marc Augé, I examine the connections between space, social distinction and the way carriage layout affected the passenger. Furthermore, I investigate how the physical materiality of the carriage acted upon the way the passenger visually engaged with the railway journey and ideas of the carriage being a liminal space, linking such concepts to the upholstery as well as to the sense of space and time altering at speed. These ideas are applied to the interior of the Pullman carriage, which can be compared with the interior of the Super Saloon, an example of the hybridisation of styles.

The Super Saloons were numbered from 9111 to 9118 with numbers 9111 and 9112 titled ‘King George’ and ‘Queen Mary’ respectively; these were the only two carriages having interiors designed solely by Trollope’s to diagram G22 60 (Fig 4.2.). The other carriages constructed to diagram G22 61 were also named after members of the royal family, in an emulation of the Pullman model (Fig. 4.18). These diagrammatic ‘representations of space’ show two open saloon areas within the overall carriage structure of nine feet in width and sixty feet in length. Within this linear form are two regular forms, one large and the other smaller, separated by sliding doors, which create a spatial tension. Pullman saloons or ‘parlour’ carriages, each also with an individual name, tended to have the same open layout, that is, two saloons divided by a door including two small coupé compartments at either end of the vehicle (Fig. 4.19).

For Lefebvre, the visual nature of interior space is designed to conceal the manner in which it has been made, that is, a ‘repetitious space’, the outcome of the repeated actions of the workshop staff involved in its construction. I speculate that the spaces of the Super Saloon carriage were purposely ‘made with the visible in mind: the visibility of people and of things’, for while the carriage has been constructed in the same way as all GWR carriages, it is the interior decoration and finish which distracts the passenger from its utilitarian nature (Fig. 4.20). How is this achieved? The sliding doors between the two saloons have a

---

63 Schivelbusch: 83.
64 No. 9112 is currently static and undercover at DRC whilst no. 9111 is in use at SDR. The part Trollope and part Swindon workshop carriages are also at DRC and SDR. I visited both carriages.
65 I visited no. 9118 at DRC. All the Super Saloons were modified after nationalisation.
66 Lefebvre: 38.
67 Lefebvre: 75.
68 Ibid.
major part to play in the visual experience of the space. The presence of their vertical forms is instrumental in defining two distinct seating areas. When the doors are slid shut, together with the ceiling and floor, the four planes provide a sense of enclosure and privacy for those passengers in the smaller saloon. When closed, they also aid in controlling sound throughout the vehicle and, furthermore, the gaze of the passenger becomes limited to their immediate environs or the passing landscape.69 Conversely, when the internal doors are opened, the passenger gaze is drawn down the length of the carriage and a sense of space prevails. In the larger saloon, the gaze of some passengers is towards the coupé and the small corridor leading to the vestibule area.

Of particular relevance here are the links Bissell makes between the materiality of the interior of the carriage and ‘practices of vision’.70 He critiques Schivelbusch’s notion that the visual field is fixed, by demonstrating that the effects of daytime and night-time light, the numbers of passengers together with lines of sight within the carriage create an altogether more complex, fluid travel experience.

Acknowledging that railway travel affects all the senses, not just sight, Bissell highlights the ways in which the design and layout of the carriage facilitates changes in the gaze of passengers, affects their bodily movement, and creates sensations of boredom and fatigue. Everyday practices are observed; reading for example, as illustrated in the image, and Bissell remarks on the sense of surveillance, whether between passengers or of luggage (Fig. 4.4).71

In the Super Saloon, the gaze and movement of the passenger was affected by material changes during the journey. For example, while the table lamps, placed at elbow height, would be in situ throughout the journey, the tables ‘covered in a brown cabinet cloth’ are in two parts, with the larger section being removable thus creating more space for the passenger. This would be enhanced when the remaining part of the hinged table was dropped down.72 At night, the sense would be of an enclosed living space with gold silk damask curtains drawn and the doors closed.73 In the lamplight, the gaze would be towards the carriage interior and

---

69 This was also my experience on a visit to the Super Saloons at DRC in April 2018.
71 Bissell 2008: 52.
72 Harris 1985: 94.
other travellers rather than outward to the passing landscape. The carpets, which were in plain brown Wilton laid on underfelt, together with the upholstery and dense wood panelling, would all have the effect of muffling the sound of voices in the carriage and deadening the noise of the locomotive itself.⁷⁴

The Super Saloon carriage, as with the Pullman, offered a degree of autonomy, of control, for the traveller who did not have to gaze at the person opposite but had the freedom to set his or her chair at an angle where personal space was optimised. The atmosphere evoked by both the Pullman and the Super Saloon interiors is caught in the painting by John Hookham in the 1920s of William Heywood Haslam’s parlour at Great Hundridge Manor, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 4.21).⁷⁵ The wood panelling, winged armchair, lamplight and heavy golden drapes convey ease and security, luxury and wealth. There is a sense of individual, personal space for leisure activities such as reading. The oblique placement of the chairs facilitates the indirect gazes of the people which enhance their privacy.

With the tables fully removed, the passenger would have a greater ability to move about, to stretch the legs, to sprawl even and adjust a freestanding chair in order to suit their own comfort. With tables fully in situ, food and drink could be present and the concentration of the gaze turned to a meal. The space in the Super Saloon is therefore more flexible than the standard carriage; passengers can read, talk and eat with the ability to be ‘spatially active’ rather than losing their agency and becoming themselves a commodity. Their bodies interact with the materiality of the carriage, which ‘kicks back’ by dint of its own density, movability and tactility.⁷⁶ A competitor for luxury travel, the Empire Flying Boats, afforded bodily movement, flexibility and sociability.⁷⁷ Aeroplane seating as in the Imperial Airways ‘portable adjustable chair’ allowed the passenger to experience the interior in many ways, through reclining the chair, extending the footrest and allowing the body to lie down by adjusting levers (Fig.4.22). The occupier of this seat would be able to resist fixity, not only by adjusting the chair, but also by reversing and rotating it to join passengers behind. The person and object in

---

⁷⁴ General Arrangements of Super Saloon, DRC.
⁷⁵ No information has been found regarding John Hookham only that he was active in the 1920s and 1930s.
dynamic relation speak not only of modernity, but also of the social distinction of the group of wealthy tourists or business travellers able to afford to fly. Thus, the design of the carriage and aeroplane seating are material responses to machine technology, mitigating its effects and thereby creating a sense of luxury, protection and insulation from the passing world.

Another space set apart from the others within the Super Saloon was the coupé for four, situated away from the saloons near the toilet, luggage area and vestibule (Fig. 4.3). Passengers would have paid a premium for this space, which, although finished to the same standard as the saloon, also offered privacy. Victor Turner, drawing on the work of anthropologist Arnold van Gannep, discusses the liminal state that characterises ‘status elevation’, the movement from a lower to a higher position in a hierarchical structure. A feature of this process is a separation from the community. The coupé offered passengers a chance to withdraw from their own milieu. The sense of a third space, or even a ‘non-place’, is a term coined by Marc Augé where the traveller is not fully present but finds him or herself in a place that cannot be defined by identity, inter-relationships and history. This idea applies to the coupé in particular, since, in parallel to the cabin on a liner and the coupé on the Pullman, it is a private enclosed space free from the usual associations of travel, namely the extended social relations, and the sense of surveillance.

The Super Saloon interior: a stylistic hybrid

In her discussion of a different transport interior, Cunard’s new ocean liner Queen Mary completed in 1936, Ghislaine Wood identified ‘Britain’s […] ambivalent and problematic relationship with modern style’. Commissioning the ship’s interior had been an exercise in balancing the conservative and the modern while promoting a ‘vision of Britain that was rooted in Empire’. As in the Super Saloon, it used unique timbers from the colonies combined with Art Deco references to create a luxurious interior. Another example of how modern styles were employed for exclusive leisure purposes could be found in some cinema interiors,

80 I broaden ideas of liminality in chapter six.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid: 144.
contemporaneous with the Super Saloons (Fig. 4.23). The small, exclusive Curzon in Mayfair, built in 1930, was an example of the consistent application of Art Deco style. The auditorium had ‘Pullman type seats’, indicating once more that Pullman was regarded as the luxury standard, with a sumptuous ceiling created by subtle recessed lighting designed by Sir John Burnet of Burnet, Tait and Lorne, an architectural partnership known for their innovations in modern design.84

Sometimes modern chrome and glass combined with rounded forms.85 The rich, subtle quality of the cinema surface finishes contrasts with the Super Saloon where the modern elements of chrome and clean lines are absent, in favour of a traditional interior. When built, the Super Saloon interiors were made of ‘highly polished natural light French walnut veneer with dark burr walnut pilasters on panels between the windows and a French walnut coving above window level running into a stippled vellum ceiling’ (Fig. 4.20).86 The dark walnut panels were edged with gold lines in those Super Saloons that were designed by Trollope’s and the Swindon workshops together (Fig. 4.24).87 This latter type of panelling evoked a ‘bygone’ era of traditional house interiors associated with the history of England, which, with the scenic photographs of Cornish coves and English cathedrals on the partitions, constructed an interior cultural milieu designed to appeal to passengers seeking an older, romantic England (Figs. 4.24 and 4.25).

Trollope’s were perceived as traditional in their production of interiors, but they were also open to the new ideas, techniques and styles.88 An example can be seen in the Morning Room at 17 Upper Grosvenor St, Westminster, refurbished in 1927 (Fig. 4.26).89 Designed for Ronald Hambro, Chairman of the Hambro Bank, the decoration can be compared to a luxury liner or cinema interior, with ‘walls of veneered wood, sharp angular mouldings and other jazzy features’.90 The decorative burr-wood veneer of the flush door shows a strong resemblance to the sliding or pocket doors which are evident in the Super Saloon built just four years

86 Lewis 1998: 207.
87 Ibid.
later (Fig. 4.27). Other photographs of the Morning Room indicate that Trollope has restrained the pediments and ceiling decoration, although the fireplace remains a key feature (Fig. 4.28). The concealed ceiling-lights are rectangular and their satin faced glass panels in bronzed frames are set flush into the ceiling.91 Other ceiling-lights were globes in obscure cut-glass. Harris notes that the Super Saloon table lamps were ‘Pullman-type’, but the images show their differences (Figs. 4.29 and 4.30.).92 In the Super Saloon, the bronze standard had a geometrically shaped ‘cream and white Celastoid shade, laced with leather, the base being recessed to take two smokers ashtrays’.93 This synthesis of functions, a kind of ‘metamorphic Modernism’ in lighting and ashtrays was a novelty characteristic of the interwar period and was also becoming prevalent in the domestic interior.94 The stepped base of the Super Saloon light was echoed in the wall light, another feature of Art Deco (Fig.4.31). Sheldon’s sketchbooks at the NRM reveal that he designed a light for the coupé space in the Super Saloon in a stylised, angular ‘sunburst’ effect, a design which featured on domestic items such as a Shelley tea and coffee set, demonstrating that he was aware of trends in modern design (Figs. 4.32 and 4.33).95 Sheldon’s initials appear on both the sectional elevations and plans for the Super Saloon, indicating that he had a key role in the overall design and decoration of the jointly finished vehicles.96

In conclusion, a brief comparison of these interiors with those of the liner Queen Mary suggests that the railways preferred tradition rather than modernity.97 A number of companies, with the Morris Furniture Company undertaking the first-class cabins, furnished the liner’s interior.98 Many of the ship’s artworks were by contemporary artists and modern designs also featured in the public rooms carpeted by Templeton’s of Glasgow including the Main Lounge, Long Gallery,
Drawing room and Library, along with the Tourist Class Smoking room. The striking modern design of curves and angles, characteristic of Art Deco and made for the Long Gallery, was the work of Agnes Pinder Davis, a Templeton’s employee (Fig. 4.34). Empire Timbers were again used to create a comfortable and restful atmosphere associated with the British country home. A postcard of the Tourist Lounge on ‘A’ deck of the Queen Mary illustrates the ‘restrained modernism’ on the ship, in contrast to the Super Saloon (Fig. 4.35). This has been achieved by limiting the use of wood and combining textiles, for example on the chairs’ upholstery. Plain walls also balanced the dominant pattern for the chairs, juxtaposing a palette of stripes and squares on the rugs, carpets and upholstery. Compared to the plain traditional blue ‘rep’ moquette, unpatterned brown carpets and heavily wood panelled interior of the Super Saloon, the ship’s interior appears innovative, considered and contemporaneous. For example, the subtle lighting used in the ship’s lounge is reminiscent of department stores or cinema lighting in the way in which it follows the edges of the ceiling; no individual pedestal lamps were used, a feature of both the Pullman, traditional first-class carriages and the Super Saloons. The chairs are loose, without wings, and in three different shapes offering the potential for a variety of seating options for the lone traveller or a group. The effect of the polished surfaces and marbled pillars creates an even light across the open space, in contrast to the dark Super Saloon interior. The liner, however, represented a ‘total environment’ for the sea passenger, for a duration and variety of experiences that the temporarily mobile passenger in the carriage did not expect. It is therefore less surprising that the provision of carriages for seated rail travellers was not used as an opportunity for innovative interior design.

4.7 The open ‘excursion’ carriage

Moving away from the open carriage for elite passengers in the 1930s, in the next part of this chapter I investigate the open carriage and the role played by seating design in the companies’ intentions to transport tourists to leisure destinations en
masse during the same period. Sociologist John Urry has identified the way visual practices like photography and illustrated guidebooks determined how the landscape was consumed: the significance of looking.\textsuperscript{102} He argued that the mass movement of people for leisure purposes across the railway network, shaped a ‘major new component of modernity’.\textsuperscript{103} This chimes with the high volume of leisure passengers in excursion carriages during the 1930s and the companies’ corresponding building of new carriages. My intention is to use three out of Urry’s five paradigmatic ‘modes of mobilities’: the corporeal, the imagination, and the movement of objects to consumers, as methods for investigating the seating in two excursion carriages.\textsuperscript{104} These are GWR’s no. 1295 (1937), and LNER’s tourist third open no. 56856 (1938); excursion carriages that moved passengers to the cities and resorts of the south-west of England and Wales, and to the far north into Scotland respectively.

The GWR open third carriage which the company began building from 1935 onwards was called ‘excursion stock’, a name coined by the company and which allied it with leisure and thus also with pleasure.\textsuperscript{105} Harris calls these ‘the first modern GWR coaches’ since LMS, LNER and SR had already built similar ones of this open type, but what is meant by this in terms of design, fitting and decoration of the seating?\textsuperscript{106} Was its interior an example of ‘pre-war modernity’ as Harris suggests?\textsuperscript{107}

Entering the carriage was via doors at either end of the carriage into a small vestibule area with a lavatory. There were also doors halfway down the carriage allowing quick access from the platform into the two third-class saloons. The saloons were divided by a partition, but without internal doors. In terms of the potential mass-movement of a carriage full of passengers en route to a football match, this would have eased congestion both on the platform and in the interior. The interior has streamlined features as Atterbury notes; ‘The eight bays were divided by partitions and all surfaces above seat-level panelled in light birch wood.

\textsuperscript{105} Michael Harris, \textit{Great Western Coaches from 1890} (Devon: David and Charles, 1985), p. 93.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
with mahogany trim and inlays. All other woodwork was polished mahogany.108 These were traditional materials for interiors. The seating was also traditional in that it was fitted into the bay, bench-style, without individual cushions to divide bodies, seated two-a-side, one from another. However, the low backs enabled passengers to look easily down the carriage to find a vacant seat. When I travelled on this carriage with my family, I experienced the affordances produced by the seating for myself. While they looked comfortable, they felt highly sprung and bouncy, seating four (or more with children) around a table. The corporeal experience evoked was one of bodies spilled closely across the seats. Everyday bodily practices were affected by the construction of the seats. The seat backs curved gently backwards with no headrest, thrusting the head and shoulders forward to engage with passengers opposite, to lean over the table or look out of the window in a gesture of anticipation, rather than lean back and relax. On the seats themselves, the armrests normally found on the aisle side were missing.109 Legroom was limited, pushing knees together under the table. The open carriage space with external views to the landscape mitigated the effect of jazzy patterned seating on me as passenger. The modern approach to textile design is seen in the brown and cream abstract design of the moquette upholstery (Fig. 4.36). The seemingly rapidly drawn vertical lines moving across the seat in bands was reminiscent of static radio waves or the electronic signals of the, by then, more common television. In this pattern the excitement and energy of modern life and the advent of media technology and faster travel is visually and imaginatively captured, appropriate for a new carriage of the 1930s.110 Yet its use runs counter to the instructions given to Enid Marx to avoid ‘dazzle’ and ‘restless’ patterns when she was designing moquette for London Underground.111

The seat-ends are architectural and complex in their design, suggestive of skyscraper towers or the facades of Odeon cinemas (Fig. 4.37). Woods abut one another forming geometrical, three-dimensional shapes with differing grains running in various directions. These are contained within a wide stepped-form by the seat proper, emerging into a tall, narrowing shape by the seat back, topped by

108 Harris 1985: 93.
109 Vintage Carriages Trust database GWR 1295 [accessed 1 July 2018].
a rectangle. The main piece of wood is cross-banded which contrasts with the thinner, darker, vertical bands. There are visual reminders here of Paul T. Frankl’s (1887-1958) stepped ‘skyscraper’ furniture exhibited in the USA (Fig. 4.38). Modern city-living with all its connotations of speed and technology was epitomised by New York in the 1930s, and this dynamism was captured in the designs of ceramics, home-wares and fabrics. These objects, essentially ‘refining European-originated modern design’ were emulated in British department stores, homes, and here in the interior of a carriage. The stepped angular-shape with geometric inlay is an effect mirrored in the banding of the woodwork around the doors between the carriages, giving a consistent and unified interior design (Fig. 4.36).

In both Britain and USA, the tensions between machine production and handicrafts continued and these tensions are manifest in the design of elements of GWR no.1295. The workmen at Swindon were accomplished craftsmen in marquetry and woodwork as demonstrated in the image of the 1930s marquetry sample by Percy Loveday (Fig. 4.39). It is these skills which are employed in the wood-finish of no.1295. Modern references are continued in the motif of three parallel lines evident in the woodwork and the cubed lighting above the seat (Fig. 4.40). The cube shape of the light was popular at this time. Cube teapots were common in cafes and their association with eating and drinking would have been very appropriate in this carriage, also used for consuming food and drink (Fig. 4.41). The cube teapot’s geometric volume looked back to the visual language of Cubism and the early twentieth-century work of Fernand Léger (1881-1955) whose paintings emphasised smooth surfaces and manufactured forms. The visual references to these modern objects in the carriage form part of the dominant ideologies which surround travel and tourism, by echoing the new architectural styles and interiors to be found at seaside excursion destinations in interwar Britain (Fig. 4.42).

---

113 Anne Anderson, The Cube Teapot (Somerset: Richard Dennis, 1999). The first cube teapot design was patented in 1917 and became widely used on the Cunard ocean liners as well as the boats run by SR from the ports of the south coast of Britain. It was already associated with travel because its regular angular shape made it easy to store.
LNER tackled their open carriage design and decoration for leisure or ‘tourist’ stock in a similar way to GWR but with some differences. LNER intended to compete with the motor coach for day-trip traffic and to replace old GNR stock.  

The carriages were in a set with the buffet car, examined in chapter five. The entrance and exit doors were at either end of the carriage only, where the lavatories were situated. When I visited the carriage, on entering the saloon, the view down the carriage was uninterrupted as there are no partitions. To compensate for their absence, a steel rib was inserted on each side of the centre arc. The image illustrates the distinct visual nature of the interior, created by the open space and the low, concave backs of the seats (Fig. 4.43). The drawings for these were created by LNER, but a memo addressed to Messrs Shephard, Stanley and Taylor implies that their construction was outsourced, perhaps because the design was outside the company’s traditional method of seat making. The drawings show that while the seats were designed as one entity, a ‘centre former’ differentiated them, tapering to be narrow at hip height. This design replaced the traditional armrest (Fig. 4.44). Visually, this makes the seats resemble the competitor motor coach or bus seats in a physical movement of the object from motor coach to carriage (Fig. 4.45). The seats were constructed from a mix of traditional and modern materials. The plywood back was covered with a thin layer of wadding under Rexine. The Railway Gazette noted that the seats had no springs, although this varied between units, and springs and rubber were used elsewhere (Fig. 4.46). Alpax, a new form of aluminium alloy, used for legs, mirrors the curves of the seat-side nearest the aisles, and the shape of motor coach seats. Traditional upholstery materials such as calico and leather were utilised alongside the Rexine, the leather piping resembling the coach seats’ trim. By differentiating the two ‘semi-bucket’ seats, each seat could be numbered and reserved by passengers, as in the motor coach. This would have obviated the need to control passenger flow on and off the train. However, when I travelled in

115 Harris 2011: 95.
117 Memo from Mr Edge to Messrs Shepherd, Stanley, Taylor, 25 April 1935. This company cannot be traced. ALS3/62/E/6. NRM.
118 ‘Former’ could be a derivation of ‘formeret’, in architecture, an arch rib, which the structure between the seats resembles.
119 Urry: 47.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
the carriage the lack of the headrest and the hard, un-sprung back and seat afforded an uncomfortable journey. The zigzagging waves or bands, of the moquette pattern, were similar to that of GWR no.1295, and used in motor coaches (Fig. 4.47). Frequently termed a 'jazz' pattern in the railway literature, parallels can be drawn between the intricate patterns of jazz music and the abstract, geometric, non-representational elements of the Modern Movement, while the moquettes of both the carriages and coaches conveyed something of the imagination and movement associated with a day-trip.

This section has shown how the materiality of the carriage seat affected the physical, bodily experience of the journey and how the imagination was stimulated by use of patterned textiles and references to modern objects. This created a modern experience in a traditionally constructed carriage. To compete with short motor coach trips, LNER in particular emulated the coach seat design in order to attract passengers. However, that construction eschewed both headrests and armrests in the LNER carriage. The resulting discomfort meant that the corporeal experience became a secondary factor to the visual nature of the interior.

4.8 Post WWII change

The debate concerning preferences for open and compartmented carriages was ongoing. SR’s adherence to a traditional outlook was symbolised by the watercolours of English Cinque Ports and cathedrals still on display inside their carriages, under the luggage rack, in 1948 (Fig. 2.2). However, after WWII the need for modernisation of those non-electrified train services became more pressing. The replacement of Maunsell with Oliver Bulleid as CME at SR in 1937 brought new design ideas for both locomotives and carriages, although many could not be realised until after the post-war restrictions on supplies of materials were lifted. The SR, having more commuters on its lines, had held on to the design of the compartment more readily than LNER, GWR and LMS, probably because the number of doors made for rapid movements of passengers. In order to resolve the conflicting views within the railway company as to whether SR passengers preferred the compartment or the open style of carriage, in 1945 the

---

SR had made a prototype composite carriage available to the public at Charing Cross Station to ascertain their preference.125

The survey results favoured the compartments, and passengers’ subsidiary comments resulted in the installation of individual light- brackets above all seats as well as improved heating, ventilation and access to the communication cord. However, the argument within the SR remained. Bulleid preferred the open type of layout so that in the rush hour people could move about more freely to equalize the total weight across the carriage. The traffic department preferred compartments, as they did not want the carriage to be ‘confused with a tube train’.126 Missenden therefore had some of each type built and took another survey, which resulted in a strong preference for the open style carriage.

Most people encountered overcrowding on the trains, whatever the style of carriage, and thus preferred the open so that they could obtain some sense of personal space by moving about as suggested by the SR survey results. It is this control of one’s space that is allied with modernity. Bissell, writing in 2008, commented on how contemporary passengers ‘visually assess’ one another in order to make judgements on their modes of being and their personal effects.127 This assessment, ostensibly made to get the most comfortable journey for oneself, was not always possible when many were standing, but was enabled by the design of the open carriage: it was this style and layout that persisted into the mid-twentieth century with the advent of the Mark 1 at nationalisation.

**SR no.1469**

Cuthbert Graseman, SR publicity officer between 1930 and 1950, stated in a 1951 talk that ‘an endeavour must be made to appeal to every class of the population’.128 This section therefore examines the ways in which this was achieved for third-class passengers in SR’s open carriage no. 1469, built up until 1950 when it became part of BR stock (Fig. 4.48). These carriages were designed to be pulled by steam, contrary to the electrification strategy of SR. They were intended for use on tourist trips to Bournemouth as well as being part of Ocean

---

126 Ibid.
127 Bissell 2008: 51.
Liner boat sets to Southampton Docks as confirmed in Mr Stark’s letter to KWVR. While SR prided itself on ‘conveying a very large number of breadwinners every day from their dwelling places to their offices, shops or pitches’, it was also keen to promote its international credentials in guides aimed at the first-class traveller. SR was anxious to compete with the newly formed BOAC, whose aim was to design a modern plane that would encourage tourists to fly abroad. SR’s publicity strategy, seen in its posters, publications such as _Party Outings_, and advertisements for continental travel as part of the skiing or cruising season, built on its long history of providing Boat Trains and day excursions. The placing of a third-class carriage in the train-set, points to SR’s stated aim that cruising holidays should no longer be ‘the privilege of the wealthy’ and become part of what Urry has termed a larger ‘mobility system’, seamlessly connecting England with Europe.

Although passengers were not consulted on the comfort of no.1469, they also provided feedback on their experience of travelling in the open and compartment carriages. This was expressed in domestic terms. In her response to the 1945 SR survey one ‘housewife,’ aged fifty-five, described her relationship with the carriage compartment as finding it more ‘homely’ than the open: ‘you are sort of shut in and its warmer’. If passengers perceived the open style as more ‘modern’ than ‘homely’, what were the material qualities of SR no.1469, which could lead to that conclusion? The carriage was entered from either end into a vestibule with lavatory, or via doors on either side of the centre of the carriage facilitating easy access into a transverse vestibule, in turn enabling entry into two saloons of four bays each, seating thirty-two people per saloon. The sliding doors dividing the two saloons provided a clear separation of spaces when I visited. In no.1469, the electric lights were positioned down either side of the ceiling of the carriage. The simple bulbs in ceramic holders with hidden screws gave a streamlined and austere impression; suggestive of the well-lit environment of

---

129 Peter Starks, letter to KWVR, 2004. Used with permission from Mr Starks. KWVR.
133 SR, _Southampton Docks Centenary Booklet_, 1938, p. 29, NRM; Urry 2007: 12.
135 Ibid: 17.
factory canteens (Fig. 4.49). The windows were larger, in comparison with LMS carriages for example, letting in more light with blinds rather than curtains, which created a streamlined effect rather than a ‘homely’ one. The deeper sliding vents also allowed for increased ventilation, an important factor when travelling over a potentially stormy English Channel. While the wall panelling was of hardwood oak or sapele, easily replaceable plywood was used below waist height, where the wear would be greatest. These features also gave a modern look to this carriage. The seat-ends, rather than being finished in wood, as in the GWR open carriage no.1295, were covered in an easily replaceable combination of moquette and Rexine, the latter on the lower part of the seat-end where wear and the accumulation of dirt were most likely to occur (Fig. 4.50). The floor was covered in linoleum, an easy to clean, easily replicable material which had been used on carriage floors since the 1920s. The overall effect when I visited this carriage was one of utility and austerity, with no attempt on the part of the railway company to use visual decorative effects to alleviate what Lefebvre has called the ‘repetitious’ nature of the space. The streamlined carriage interior with minimal decoration is recognisably modern. The seats themselves were functional, designed for quick cleaning and easy maintenance, signalling that this is the domain of the third-class overseas passenger.

A national carriage: British Railways Mark 1 open carriage

Many of the features found on no. 1469 were translated into the open version of the Mark 1 carriage in the nationalised era of British Railways. These carriages were designed to run on any route for both work and leisure purposes; as a result, ‘the Mark 1 coaches were given functional interiors with no real attempt at any sort of ‘style’’. In fact, a design team, led by the Railway Executive (RE) architect Dr Curtis, came together to specifically consider the design, fitting and decoration of the Mark 1 which would be used initially alongside the stock inherited from the Big Four. The intention was to combine what worked best and apply them to the new Mark 1. Compare this ad hoc approach with the corporate, unified design policy of BOAC, whose aim was to promote them as a national airline.

---

136 Author’s conversation with Wendy Anderson, KWVR, May 2018.
137 Lefebvre: 75.
138 Parkin 2006: 76.
139 Jackson: 170. BOAC commissioned a design firm called Rumbolds to create a brand based on the principles of CoiD.
vision of attracting more passengers and competing with first-class railways was also achieved by combining traditional and modern elements in their cabin interiors. In order to ascertain the extent to which British Railways lived up to its name by employing an amalgam of styles and a nationalistic brand, this section focusses on design in upholstery in three Mark 1 carriages.¹⁴⁰

British Railways intended to introduce the new Mark 1s to coincide with the opening of the Festival of Britain in 1951. The Festival seemed well placed to represent aspects of national life by looking back and forward into the future. Raphael Samuel has summed it up as ‘determinedly modernist in bias, substituting, for the moth eaten and the traditional, vistas of progressive advance’ and a ‘great looking forward after years of rationing and greyness’.¹⁴¹ BR responded by using a combination of elements in the seating areas of their traditionally named trains, such as The Merchant Venturer and The William Shakespeare, used for the mass-movement of passengers to the festival sites all over Britain.¹⁴² By doing this, BR were buying into a time of national celebration, led by a Labour government, which aimed to encompass the arts and sciences. BR produced ‘full mock ups’ of proposed compartments, rather than the open carriage, for the Festival, with different designs of moquette, Vynide roller blinds, plastic and chrome fittings and small plaques on the wall finishes which denoted the English or colonial origins of the wood veneers (Fig. 4.51).¹⁴³ But while the compartment seats appeared to look back to those of the Big Four, the pattern of the moquettes spoke of the future.

Modern designs of moquette were introduced into the carriage in uneasy juxtaposition to the traditional ones that continued to be used. Later designs of uncut, rougher textured, upholstery moquette in red on British Railways Mark 1 carriages moved away from plain and naturalistic designs to more geometric forms, for example, interlocking curved shapes in a repeat pattern of a modern design not unlike machine chain-links, hence its current nomenclature, ‘Chain-link’ (Fig. 4.48). These interconnected shapes offered an imaginative link to a journey:

¹⁴⁰ Parkin: 2006. Parkin’s supplement details the design decisions of the Carriage Standards Committee inaugurated in 1948. The extensive archives of the Carriage Standards Committee are held by the NRM.
¹⁴² Parkin: 9.
¹⁴³ Ibid: 76.
for example, ‘Boomerang’ was possibly a representation of the aeroplane, the transport symbol of the modern age (Fig. 4.52).

Another moquette design, colloquially named ‘Crow’s-feet’, was evident on no. 48011, a BR second open built in 1955, also seen in compartment style carriages (Fig. 4.53). The dynamic spoke structures within organic forms of this uncut moquette referenced the Festival of Britain Exhibition of Science, where the physical and chemical nature of matter and contemporary research into electrical pulses within the body and cosmic-rays across the universe were graphically illustrated (Fig. 4.54). Scholars have debated whether the Festival was as forward looking as its imagery suggests; noting that, in fact, there was plenty of nostalgia evident.144 Certainly, the Mark 1 encapsulates both a nostalgic and a modern approach. While the abstract designs of the moquettes in second and third class capture the fascination with modern technology and science as upheld at the Festival of Britain, those in first class continued to be traditional naturalistic leaf designs on a blue background, just as third class was normally in red.

While these new moquettes captured an element of modernity, the Carriage Standards Committee in the Festival year continued to commission in bulk the usual upholstery from their longstanding suppliers as follows:

1st class: cut and uncut mocquette [sic] pile in blue, maroon and grey (Holdsworth, Halifax). 3rd class: cut and uncut pile mocquette [sic] in brown pink and grey (Holdsworth) and cut pile mocquette [sic] in red and olive green (T Firth, Heckmondwike).145

Even in the period after WWII, with the nationalisation of the railways and the increased numbers of open style carriages, any moves away from the past to embrace new designs in upholstery and wall finishes as associated with the Festival of Britain were piecemeal, remaining in tension with traditional fabrics and colours. The Festival encompassed scientific and technological advancement as well as memory and nostalgia and the Mark 1, with its looking back to the best of

145 Parkin 2006: 7. Minutes from the BR Standards Committee dated 7 November 1951. Holdsworth is no longer in existence having been taken over by Camira who provide rail fabrics. They claim not to have any archives from Holdsworth.
the Big Four interiors and adoption of modern decorative patterns, captured a certain ambiguity characteristic of the mid-century.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated, as Miller asserts, that everyday objects like carriage seats mediated culture and human relations. It has done this by showing how the compartment seating, for example, made people into objects for transportation as railway companies struggled to reconcile their traditional workshop methods of both creating the space for seats and making the seats themselves, with modern materials, to produce a more comfortable environment for passengers. Choices of upholstery indicated cultural divisions, as did winged seats. The spatiality of the carriage also mediated human relations. Women for example found constraints engendered by the design of the carriage, when forced to stand, and seats continued to be principally designed and made by men for men, despite the input of women in workshops and in textile design.

Highly desirable was the ability to be alone or with friends and family in a carriage space, and to have control over human interactions by dint of being able to move one’s chair and to maintain a clear vision up and down the open carriage. Railway companies used images that reflected these desires to sell the benefits of the open carriage space for leisure purposes. Space was a luxury, especially if private and away from forced social interaction. The open carriage offered the railway company sufficient spatial opportunity for the visual impact of modern designs to ameliorate the effects of sometimes uncomfortable seating arrangements and bring the imagination to bear on what was a utilitarian form of transport.

The Super Saloon was shown to be an example of the British amalgam of styles, also expressed in exhibitions, architecture, and other forms of transport as well as in ideas of home and the wider political sphere concerning the rebuilding of Britain. Whereas, in third-class leisure travel of the 1930s, the low-back un-sprung bucket seats spoke of the motor coach and day-trip. Both, however, used a combination of traditional and modern elements of making and decoration.

When, after WWII, passengers were explicit about their material need for comfort and individual personal space, the rail companies did not respond in a design-led or coherent way, in contrast with the new national airline. Despite their use of

---

146 Miller: 130.
visual representations of interiors as a means of competing with the motor coach and aeroplane and deployment of new materials and patterns at nationalisation, modernity and tradition continued to live in tension in the committee designed Mark 1 of the 1950s.
Chapter 5

Provision for passengers: dining

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine carriages from the National Collection, alongside others, in order to uncover how cultural values were mediated in the dining spaces that served both first and third-class passengers. I assess choices of interior finishes, including window design, floor coverings, seating and the implements used for eating. These everyday objects have been highlighted as falling under Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, in a modern context, for their part in creating an ‘underlying unconscious order’.¹ This idea stimulates questions regarding the place of managerial control over design decisions and their relevance to nationalism and railway company branding. Miller’s interest in the material culture of everyday life informs my analysis of the ways in which the materiality of the dining carriage both created norms and shaped human behaviours. Similar work has been done in relation to other spaces such as domestic homes and department stores in the twentieth century, but this approach has not been applied to an object designed to move at speed whilst catering for hundreds of passengers per day on trains criss-crossing Britain.²

It was James Allport, General Manager of the Midland Railway 1854-1857, who, inspired by a visit to America, brought the Pullman concept of luxury in on-board dining, sleeping and lavatory facilities back to Britain. Pullman dining cars were the primary first-class dining facilities available to the passenger and these were normally leased to the Big Four until those companies began building their own catering vehicles.

The class of the carriage was very important to the Big Four, determining choices of materials, objects, finishing and decor. Using Lefebvre’s notion of ‘abstract space’ I discuss whether passenger desires and needs were manipulated in an ideological space where ‘the middle class have taken up residence’.³ I also apply

² Neil Wooler, Dinner in the Diner (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1987), p. 48. The author notes that in 1907, pre the grouping, 831,324 meals were served by L&NWR in one year.
Bourdieu’s concept of ‘symbolic capital’, which might include art, educational attainment, social networks and the consumption of goods which indicate a person’s taste and distinguish that person from the commonplace providing them with a ‘sense of distinction’. Additionally, Augé’s concepts of space are applied for their part in creating a transitional milieux for passengers, providing them with a ‘sense of distinction’, and in considering the role that commissioned designers and workshop staff played in creating these spaces through a combination of traditional and modern elements up until 1955.4

5.2 The history of the dining car

The overarching typology discussed in chapter two, Fig. 2.12, illustrates the importance of provision of spaces for eating within the carriage. Up until the twentieth century, the Pullman Company had dominated this provision. Once the Big Four began to build their own dining cars, they were used as part of long-distance trains where several meals were served over the day, and on the shorter journeys where a small meal or snack could be obtained. At nationalisation, and up until 1955, the railway companies no longer considered the building of catering vehicles a high priority, continuing to use old stock.5 Only eleven first-class carriages for dining purposes were built.6 These were run in a set with one of the ten new kitchen cars. Fourteen third-class vehicles were also built, and five that had seating for first-class passengers as well as a kitchen on board. The typology at Fig. 2.12 reveals that dining provision was mainly, but not exclusively in saloon carriages.

Up until WWI, first-class railway passengers would have been more familiar with the notion of dining formally in public, at speed. In contrast, for third-class passengers, unless they had voyaged on an ocean liner or taken an annual holiday excursion by train, the experience would have been more unusual with snack boxes and luncheon baskets being the norm (Figs. 5.1 and 5.2). By the 1920s, dining carriages that catered exclusively for certain classes of travel were commonplace. There were also composite carriages that had a small number of first-class seats and a larger number of third-class seats for diners in the same

---

vehicle. This latter type, serving a smaller number of passengers, was ideal for short journeys, but for the longer routes, flexibility was key and open carriages that could also be used for dining were employed.

Between 1933 and 1946, the carriages transitioned from being called ‘dining’ cars, to ‘restaurant’ and ‘buffet’ cars. This change of nomenclature was deliberate. In early twentieth-century Britain, restaurants were usually part of grand hotels such as the Ritz or the Savoy in London, while cafes provided a small range of quick meals, often obtained at a counter rather than the table. By renaming their vehicles the railway companies signalled to the customer not only what kind of environment and service might be found inside, but what kind of atmosphere and cultural behaviours would be expected on board. As the 1930s progressed more buffet cars serving snacks and drinks were in evidence. At nationalisation BR built or converted these from other stock as the full kitchen cars were heavy and ‘to approach viability had to serve two full sittings: over 150 people. Very few services justified this provision’. Thus, a range of dining experiences emerged.

5.3 The dining carriage interior

One key prerequisite for passengers to be able to consume a meal was a gangway and vestibule connection between the dining car and the rest of the train. The diagram highlights how, in the LMS vestibule first-class dining carriage, the entrance and exit doors were at either end of the carriage, accessing a transverse lobby which also gave access to adjoining carriages, lavatories and storage for luggage (Fig. 5.3). One of the adjacent carriages would have been a kitchen car. Once inside the carriage proper, the two saloons were divided between smoking and non-smoking. On one side of the centre aisle was seating for four, two-a-side with a table, and on the other side of the aisle seating for two, facing one another across a table.

The railway company’s choice of panelling and interior finishing of the dining carriage created a distinct habitus for passengers, determining their expectations from the outset. The Carriage and Wagon Handbook for railway staff recommended that the interior of the coach is ‘usually ‘finished’ with wood panels,

8 Parkin: 127.
9 This refurbished carriage is based at SVR.
even when the body is of steel’, a practice that continued up until nationalisation. Steel, a cold clinical metal, was not considered suitable to convey a sense of warmth and comfort, nor did it evoke the desired responses from passengers.10 Wood made a statement about Britishness and Empire. The promotion film Corridor Third, made for LMS in 1934, majored on the woods that were used in carriage building and panelling. In a shot of massive woodpiles being processed at the sawmill into manageable slices, the caption read: ‘Used from Empire Sources’.11 Thus, LMS publicly asserted how they were supporting the government policy of promulgating Empire and British-made goods, in order to reassert British colonial power following WWI, as discussed in chapter three.

Whenever possible the railway companies made use of Empire timbers over the research period. The Midland Railway, no. 3463, third-class dining car built in 1914 has French polished moulded mahogany panels and ornate brass luggage racks, which emulated the competitor Pullman standard and adhered to an historicised appearance (Fig. 5.4). Used until 1954, this vehicle would have had projected a sense of stability to passengers after the social and cultural upheaval associated with two world wars. Run into the mid-twentieth century, this carriage was contemporaneous with those with simpler designs with a ‘flush finish’ that was easier to keep clean.12 The New Look interiors of the 1930s dispensed with the wood-effect wipe-clean Lincrusta paper, chosen for its durability and easy replacement, which was used to cover walls to dado height ‘where more than average wear takes place’ (Fig. 5.5).13 Instead, a streamlined modern interior was achieved with plywood faced by lighter wood veneers.14 Plywood had been mass-produced since 1890, and, despite debates in Britain and the USA regarding ‘solid versus veneer’, by the 1930s it was employed architecturally, attracting attention, for example, when incorporated into buildings and furniture by designers such as Jack Pritchard and Wells Coates.15 For the carriage interior, the practical advantages were manifold. As well as allowing decorative veneers to be overlaid, 

11 Corridor Third (George Smith Enterprises, 1934).
12 Sanders: 35.
14 Christopher Wilk, Plywood (London: Thames and Hudson, 2017), p. 7. Plywood is made by gluing together thin sheets (plies) of wood, the grains running at right angles to each other, layer upon layer, thereby creating strength and stability when moulded.
plywood did not shrink in the same way as solid timbers; it reduced the weight of the carriage, and it could be applied in larger sheets needing fewer joins.

In summary, the railway companies intended to convey the economic and political power of the ‘commonwealth’ of nations over which Britain ruled and the raw materials associated with them, even while some nations were striving for independence in the face of inequalities and challenges to human rights. Therefore, small labels of ivorine (white plastic) in dining carriages such as LMS no. 7511, drew the attention of passengers to the origins of the veneers (Fig. 3.22). These labels reminded passengers that they had what Lefebvre has termed ‘a specially labelled, guaranteed place’ in the ideology of Empire. The use and labelling of Empire Woods continued after nationalisation on the Mark 1.

It was not just changes in wall finish that was used to signal modernity. The window, and its representation in railway company publicity, also determined the expectations of passengers. Windows increased in size, seen, for example, in those inserted into the bodywork of the Cornish Riviera Express Centenary stock in 1929. The introduction of aluminum instead of wood for the frames also allowed an air gap between double panes, reduced sound transmission. Increasingly, during the 1920s and into the 1930s, the window was seen as a means of health, introducing the sun’s rays into domestic and commercial spaces of all kinds. The first ultraviolet-ray glass had been devised in the 1920s, invented at a time when people were concerned about disease, health and the environment. Its trade name, ‘Vita Glass’, was derived from ideas of ‘vital’, in terms of health and ‘vitamins’ a new word coined in the 1930s. Its installation on the Cornish Riviera route formed part of the marketing tool for GWR’s holiday trains to the South-West perpetuating the inference of the GWR branding slogan, ‘The Holiday Line’, coined before the grouping, with all the associations of well-being.

---

17 Lefebvre: 309.
18 Conversation with Pete Eastham at KWVR: 2018.
19 Miller 2010: 50.
21 Harris 2011. Harris claims that double panes were first used for general service from 1935 yet the GA of the 1930 LNER kitchen car has ‘double glass’ marked for fitting. Harris also notes that in 1938 some new LNER carriages had double-glazing except the restaurant and kitchen cars, which shows the lack of consistency and standardization in planning for passenger comfort.
and sunshine hoped for on holiday in the Westcountry. However, not every GWR passenger of the 1930s appreciated the benefits of the larger windows:

One lady shareholder was not impressed: she was adamant that the large windows, LNER style, allowed such a wide view of the countryside rushing past and so much sun to enter the compartment that train sickness was inevitable! [sic]  

This passenger was experiencing a nervous reaction associated with rapid travel through the landscape; what De Certeau has called a ‘chiasm produced by the window pane and the rail’. For the railway company, the view ‘through the window’ was an important selling point. GWR produced three guidebooks between 1924 and 1926, which pointed out key landmarks, visible from the train window on the route from Paddington to Penzance (reproduced in 1994). Their publication, Holiday Haunts, targeted the middle-class holidaymaker who could afford to travel before the inception of the Holidays with Pay Act of 1938. In the inset image, the viewer, on the outside, looks in through the window at men and women pictured at ease, relaxed in a way which signals that this is a comfortable and convivial dining experience, suggesting, as Lefebvre has argued, that this is ‘their’ ‘guaranteed’ place, which creates a desire or envy in the viewer (Fig. 5.6).

Similarly, in the 1937 film Pathways of Perfection, a passenger at a table consults ‘interesting notes for passengers’ a booklet published in the context of anxieties about the changing English landscape, which points out the historic landmarks and destinations seen on the route of LNER’s Flying Scotsman (Fig. 5.7). This time it is women with means to travel who are targeted by the railway company publicity. According to Augé, guidebooks added to the sense of dislocation, contributing to a ‘fictional relationship between gaze and landscape’. He further relates this fiction to a reversal of the gaze, as seen in another film-shot which highlights the way carriage windows frame, what the film caption terms, the ‘Pageantry of the British

27 Lefebvre: 309.
28 Pathways of Perfection, Travelogue, (BFI, 1937). The film focusses on four prestigious trains representing each of the Big Four across the longer routes in Britain.
29 Augé: 69.
Countryside’. These examples illustrate how the film viewer watches others watching the landscape, with sumptuous dining, either anticipated by the empty table, on a tray in one’s compartment or in the restaurant, portrayed as being an intrinsic part of an emotional experience. The film describes the Big Four as ‘upholders of a great tradition’, with the historical English landscape viewed through the modern windows bringing the past into the present in a way that is the ‘essence of modernity’. Representations of looking through windows, in films and guides, thus created an imaginary journey for the aspirational passenger, evoking what Miller has called mixed feelings of dislocation and desire. Health, well-being, and companionship were associated with traditional English landmarks and therefore national identity. In these ways, the dining carriage is located as a place which mediated a ‘certain lifestyle’.

It was not only the use of the window and wood that created a cultural milieu for passengers. Carpets and other flooring materials also played their parts, arguably creating an ‘ordering of the unconscious world’ within the dining carriage. Carpet factories contained separate departments, and designers, for different ‘classes’ of work. Wilton and Axminster were regarded as the best quality and it was these brands that were chosen to carpet the first-class dining areas on trains. However, keeping costs down by installing durable floor coverings which were easy to maintain was also important to the railway companies and hence linoleum was used throughout all classes of carriage to a greater or lesser extent (Fig. 5.4). Like Lincrusta, linoleum’s durability, ease of installation and cleaning made it popular from the 1870s up until the 1960s. On the train, it was used principally in the lesser-seen spaces, under the seats, in the lavatory and in working spaces such as the kitchen. The architect Charles Holden commented in the catalogue to the Everyday Things exhibition, held in London in 1936, that linoleum was consistent in quality, only varying in thickness, with an expected lifespan of ten to

---

30 Ibid: 70.
31 Augé: 61.
33 Bourdieu: 257.
34 Miller: 99.
36 Simpson 1997. Linoleum was invented by Englishman Frederick Walton, who set up his factory in 1864. Like Lincrusta, also invented by Walton and seen mainly on railway dining car walls into the twentieth century, linoleum was a product of oxidised linseed oil mixed with ground cork dust, gums and pigments pressed between heavy rollers onto a canvas backing.
fifteen years except in places of exceptional wear. The notes from the BR standards committee of 1949 show that this was not the case, for the ‘considerable variation in quality and price’ meant that the less expensive material was used under the seats, juxtaposing with the carpet along the aisle, and in some cases not at all, leaving bare wood or ply exposed. In the first-class dining car of the 1930s, linoleum’s relegation to unseen areas signaled that the material had no place in this setting.

For Lefebvre, the visual nature of interior space is designed to conceal the manner in which it has been made; that is, it is an ‘abstract’ space, which manipulates its users by its signs and symbols. I speculate that the company deliberately structured a habitus for elite dining passengers by the use of symbolic design and seating, and attempted to imitate this in other first-class dining spaces. This is demonstrated by LNER’s restaurant cars, which were a ‘key component of their express trains’, in particular the Flying Scotsman service from London to Scotland.

There was a high level of managerial control behind design decisions on these prestigious trains. In a memo of 1938 to his assistants, the then CME of LNER, Nigel Gresley, stipulated that ‘before trimming new restaurant cars or retrimming existing restaurant cars, the question of the material to be used to be submitted to me for decisions’.

I established in chapter four that individual seating signaled an elite environment to train passengers. Aboard the Flying Scotsman individual chairs which mimicked historical styles were also commissioned. Chairs in the Louis XVI style were designed by ‘A.R.S’ for LNER and upholstered by White Allom Ltd (Fig. 5.8). As noted in contemporary accounts in the railway press; ‘the designs have all the refinement of the best French work of the eighteenth century’. Made of velvet Genoa cotton, in blue or rose, the illustration shows the chairs in situ in the first-class dining saloon of Flying Scotsman’s triplet sets (Fig. 5.9). The highly worked tapestry is mirrored in the richly patterned curtain pelmets, ceiling-mouldings and plasterwork. The impression is of a unified design, but the caption reveals the

38 ALS/3/67/F/4. NRM.
39 Lefebvre: 51.
41 ALS 3/62. Gresley minute 21 December 1938. NRM.
42 Railway Engineer, Sept 1928, p. 341.
main interest, movable armchairs. The Railway Engineer commented that the appearance of the interior gave the passenger the feeling of ‘being in a private dining room rather than a railway train’. This would have contributed to passengers’ experience, what Bourdieu has termed a ‘sense of distinction’ or singularity.

While this dining room is an open carriage, with the traditional configuration of four seats on one side of the aisle and two on the other, the treatment of the doorway in the partition wall seeks to visually conceal that this is what Lefebvre has called a ‘repetitious space’, the outcome of the traditional making of carriages in the workshop. Normally, the threshold from one part of the carriage to another is not central, but offset in order to line up with the aisle. In chapter four I showed how, in the elite interior space of the Super Saloon, entrance doors between saloons impacted on the passenger gaze and the sense of space. In the Flying Scotsman dining room, the double doors gave the impression that both opened into the dining area, in the manner of a grand dining room in a large country house, when in reality only one door opened since the diner blocked the other (Fig. 5.10). The articulation of the carriage doorway by ornamentation and embellishment above it, with pillars resembling columns to each side, makes this entrance seem more imposing. Within this ‘imaginary’ interior, there are, however, indicators that this is a modern carriage. The presence of a clock above the door shows that the meal cannot be lingered over, that time here is not, as Lefebvre has argued, ‘inscribed in natural space’ where having eaten one’s fill would mark the close of the time period. Rather, time is ‘murdered’ here by the clock’s visibility; the glass apertures within the door allowing staff to check on diner’s progress. This dining room is therefore both an abstract space, containing ‘imaginary elements’ and ‘fantasy’ signs and symbols of a sumptuous past to manipulate its users and

---

43 A Triplet dining set consisted of a kitchen car and two other carriages, one being first class and the other third. Normally the kitchen car was in the middle.

44 Railway Engineer, Sept 1928, p. 341.

45 Bourdieu 1984: 257. While these train sets were built in 1928, according to the drawing the chairs were designed in 1933. If this is accurate, it indicates that, even with a refurbishment of the interior by a prestigious interior design company, traditional appearances privileging personal space and individuality were maintained in the dining car.

46 Lefebvre: 75.

47 McLean: 65. This is illustrated by a photograph in the book.

48 Lefebvre: 311.

49 Lefebvre: 95.

50 Ibid: 96.
conceal its utilitarian nature, and an economic space which has dispensed with natural time in a ‘hallmark of modernity’.\textsuperscript{51}

Passengers prized having individual, personal space, or at least an indication of it. Separate, movable, dining carriage chairs as in the GWR Super Saloons discussed in chapter four were the epitome of status. Others, as in LMS first-class dining carriage no. 7511, were simply bench-style seats, the allocation of one antimacassar per seat and separate cushions making them appear individual (Fig. 5.11). Compared with the \textit{Flying Scotsman} dining room, the overall sense of the dining space is one of stasis.\textsuperscript{52} Because the moquette extends from the seat-end up to head-height and to the edge of the window, matched by the gangway seat-end with a corresponding wing, the impression given is of a ‘booth’ within which to dine. When the table is laid with a cloth and the crockery and cutlery is \textit{in situ}, the overall impression is of confinement.

Because railway companies used the same cutlery, china, glassware and table linen in their hotels as in the carriages, it could be assumed that the following observation made in the 1930s was accurate: ‘interiors have been made attractive to such an extent that dining cars are taking on the appearance of restaurants of expensive hotels’.\textsuperscript{53} But the dining arrangement of no. 7511 was not replicated in railway hotel dining rooms. The photograph of the restaurant at the Great Northern Hotel at Kings Cross in London in 1935 shows how the large formal dining space was arranged (Fig. 5.12). In some photographs of hotel dining spaces, circular tables with lightweight, open loose chairs are in evidence but in this image, the square tables are arranged in narrow rows with gangways between them. Either layout was usual for railway hotel dining rooms. The volume and height of the hotel dining room and windows creates spaciousness suitable for mass dining which contrasts with the cramped carriage dining ‘booth’. While each table has a white cloth, no lamps are in evidence. Thus, it was unlikely that the anonymous author above was referring to a dining carriage such as no. 7511.

The LMS semi-open lot no.852, discussed in chapter three, combines the traditional symbols of first-class dining with Art Deco features. The winged chairs,

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{51} Ibid: 311.
\item\textsuperscript{52} SVR used this image for the restoration of 7511, although it is probably of LMS Lot 852 open dining carriage of 1935, which also had three compartments named after the distinctively grained woods. The carpet design was discussed in chapter three.
\item\textsuperscript{53} Sanders: 4.
\end{itemize}
highly upholstered with armrests, speak of the comfort of the elite middle-class
drawing room but the abstract design of the moquette is modern. However, the
decorative veneers for the walls, doors and the side of the seats are characteristic
of Art Deco, and the overall scheme is full of movement and busy pattern (Fig.
3.17).

Creating a dining car interior with a ‘sense of distinction’ meant that decor could
not be left to the choices of workshop staff and so, for prestigious trains, railway
managers took control.54 By using their personal and cultural networks, they
created the effect of private rather than railway hotel dining, of individual rather
than mass consumption. This was accomplished by manipulating the visual
elements to create an abstract space, conjuring either the historical imaginary or
the contemporary luxe.

The juxtaposition of the traditional and modern was also manifested through styles
of tableware. These formed an important part of the dining habitus. By the
nineteenth century, the appearance of matching sets of knives, forks and spoons
suggested high standards of table etiquette and I argue that these standards
persisted into the twentieth century in the railway dining car.55 A photograph of a
first-class LNER dining table, taken at the time of the grouping, shows it laid with a
full set of cutlery, glasses, styled napkins, wine and a menu (Fig. 5.13). Quality
silverplate was purchased from well-known manufacturers such as Walker and
Hall, Elkington’s and Mappin and Webb. The illustrations show the typical
silverplate used in the dining car. The silverplated (EPNS) milk jug of 1926 made
by Walker and Hall is part of a range which would have been branded for the
railway company (Fig. 5.14). 56 The ornate handle of the milk jug contrasts with the
flat, plain, handles of the Walker and Hall sugar bowl of 1931 (Fig. 5.15).

Modern design ideas appeared in the everyday objects of the railway dining
carriage. Changes in the styles and materials over time of three LMS knives
illustrate this shift (Fig. 5.16). The Butler Company of Sheffield made the solid,
heavy, fish-knife with a ribbed handle at the top of the image. With weight linked
with money spent on the object, this knife denotes quality and a sense of genteel

54 Bourdieu 1984: 257.
55 Linda Young, ‘Gentility: A Historical Context for the Material Culture of the Table in the ‘Long 19th
Century’, 1780-1915’, in Table Settings: The Material Culture and Social Context of Dining, AD 1700-1900,
56 Email correspondence with Emma Paragreen on 16 August 2019.
dining. The shape of the central knife was known as the ‘scimitar’ and the introduction of this design, to replace the blunt-ended knife, is attributed to Heal’s. The plain letters of the LMS monogram within a rectangle, show that this was the last design before nationalisation. Put together, this information dates it to the 1930s and this, combined with the geometric shapes of the monogram, would have indicated to diners that they were participating in a modern milieu. The bottom knife in the image, also made by the Butler Company, has a plastic handle placing it in common use from the 1930s. Its presence in the dining car speaks of the more informal canteen and café. By the late 1930s, LNER had moved away from the heavier traditional cutlery towards a lighter, flatter look (Fig. 5.17). According to Blaker, this ‘Coronation Ware’ was flatter ‘to prevent rattling on the tables’. Made specifically for the streamlined Coronation train, the cutlery illustrates many of the motifs associated with Art Deco and the modern style, namely the three lines and the stepped-effect at the end of the handle. The presence in the dining car of these lighter items was intrinsic to the construction of an environment of modernity.

The use of china in the dining car persisted throughout the period from 1920 to 1955 although electro-plated (EPNS) teapots were preferred by GWR, the ceramic versions only being used when requested by passengers. All the railway companies bought their china from a range of different suppliers. No reason for this has been uncovered from the archival material thus far, although some suppliers were better known. Ceramics investigated in the NRM include a plate and saucer purchased from Wedgwood (purportedly used in a GWR dining carriage) in a pattern called ‘Summer Sky’, a light blue colour in a single glaze apt for the holiday routes into the Westcountry. Both plate and saucer are stamped on the reverse as made in 1938 (Fig. 5.18). However, Wedgwood curators surmised that the GWR order was placed around 1954 or 1955, since ‘Summer Sky’ as a pattern was not introduced until 1954 on this Barlaston shape, while the backstamps read ‘Etruria England’, a factory Wedgwood had vacated by 1950.

---

60 Milne 1936: 10.
They concluded that Wedgwood might have used old stock since wartime restrictions were still in place.\footnote{Email correspondence with Lucy Lead, curator at Wedgwood June 2018. Summer Sky was a range designed by Norman Wilson (1902-1985) at Wedgwood.} GWR thus obtained a modern colour but on old shapes.

The crockery used on the first-class dining train of LMS no. 7511 is not known, but an indication of the type of crockery used in first-class dining carriages can be seen in the illustration of a teapot, coffee pot, cup and saucer as manufactured by Wedgwood at their Etruria Factory for LNER (Fig. 5.19). The Wedgwood archives reveal that this was a Queen’s Ware gilt pattern decorated with underglaze print and on-glaze enamel decoration. The decoration is described as ‘vintage bead printed on powder blue, liq [sic] burnished [sic] gold edge sanded’.\footnote{Wedgwood records have no reference to the LNER.} This implies that the dining set was selected from a standard pattern list of Wedgwood’s china, which was later stamped with the LNER mark. Wedgwood introduced and registered this pattern between 1932 and 1934. The recessed lids would have made spillage less likely on the train and the angular handles of the tea and coffee pot are a modern reference. The railway companies commissioned dining sets as well. For example, a set of ‘Keswick’ ware made by Alfred Meakin, utilised on the LNER \textit{Flying Scotsman} train, as well as in the buffet car, indicates that the railway company was not loyal to one manufacturer and commissioned decorative china which suited their concept of the train and the route rather than the passenger (Fig. 5.20). As Cheryl Buckley notes:

> The majority of manufacturers, including the volume producers Enoch Wedgwood, Carton Johnson Bros and J.G. Meakin were content to produce a variety of styles to appeal to all potential markets and were largely uninterested in pioneering the introduction of Modernist designs.\footnote{Cheryl Buckley, \textit{Potters and Paintresses: Women Designers in the Pottery Industry 1870-1955} (London: The Women’s Press Ltd, 1990), p. 99.} Hence, this ‘Keswick’ pattern of intertwined roses and thistles, traditional emblems of England and Scotland respectively, symbolized the route of the long-distance line. By commissioning such a design, LNER were holding to nationalist concepts and appealing to passengers travelling to and from both countries.
The purchase and design of some china and matching cutlery by well-known names with their connotations of quality conveyed to passengers that the dining carriage was a place of distinction and taste, where attention to detail was paramount. The limited introduction of plastics, modern shapes and new colours sat in implied tension alongside these traditional wares.

5.4 An alternative cultural milieu: the buffet car

In this section of this chapter, I analyse two buffet cars of the 1930s. Each covered long-distance routes, for leisure and business purposes. Buffet cars were built by each of the Big Four during the 1930s. These offered a different type of dining experience and were often innovative in their interior design. I evaluate whether they hold to the notion of the British amalgam of styles, and the ways the design of the interiors acted as the medium for values, ideas and social distinction, evident in what Miller has called ‘artefactual symbolism’.65 Were the railway companies introducing a new mode of democratic dining to contrast with their first-class interiors? Featuring on London-bound trains operated by the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company in 1899, the buffet car’s resemblance to a small pub meant it had received a cool reception from the middle and upper-class travelling public who were used to being clear about the class of seating they would occupy.66 Similarly, LNER’s predecessor, the Great Central Railway, had targeted them at third-class passengers, and operated them on a variety of services. However, they were not a commercial success and were converted into restaurant cars.67 It was not until the 1930s that this specialist mode of delivering food and drink to passengers became the norm. With only a small kitchen and pantry, buffet cars produced a limited selection of ‘snack’ cold food and drinks on those services where passengers had joined ‘too late for one main meal and too early for the next one’.68

LNER buffet car no. 9135, built at their Doncaster workshops in 1937 and in service until 1977, is currently on display at the NRM. From the outset, its provision was related to the third-class passenger, as up until 1933 most buffet

65 Miller: 106.
66 Wooler 1987: 42.
68 Chris de Winter Hebron, Dining at Speed: A Celebration of 125 years of Railway Catering (Kettering, Northants: Silver Link, 2004), p. 57.
cars had been rebuilt from third-class carriages, some of which had been through WWI. In the 1930s, a new programme of building was begun by LNER, one of the first of the Big Four to advocate this style of delivering meals, and who, by 1939, had built more buffet cars than the other three companies combined. At the time LNER made two kinds of buffet cars, to two different diagrams, which were designated ‘Tourist Stock’ implying that these were used to serve the holiday coastal resorts. As general-service trains, they were deployed where there was competition from road services. The interior layout consisted of a kitchen, a bar counter and a saloon with seating for twenty-four passengers (Fig. 5.21). The car was designed to be entered from the adjacent car or through external doors from one end only. The first impression was of an open space, dominated by windows and free from wood panelling or veneers, streamlined by the use of Rexine on plywood (Fig. 5.22). A partition screening the kitchen and staff areas was installed at the far end of the carriage. The space was dominated by the traditional layout of seating, fours on one side of the aisle and pairs of seats on the other. The curved buffet counter, topped with stainless steel boiler and display units for snacks, was immediately apparent. The passenger would have to negotiate the seating via the aisle before being able to order at the counter. The space evokes the culture of the American Soda Fountain, seen in Britain in films such as *Men O’ War*, a Laurel and Hardy comedy of 1929, or *The Heartbreaker*, a romance of 1930. In these films, the Soda Fountain was portrayed as a meeting place for all ages, where soda (carbonated water) was dispensed from mechanisms made of modern materials such as stainless steel, acrylics, vinyl and Plexiglas (Fig. 5.23). Situated on High streets and in department stores, and marketed towards women as alcohol free, safe spaces, their design was streamlined, wipe clean, modern.

Cinema loving passengers, using the buffet car en route to leisure resorts, would have recognized shapes and artifacts which referenced those interiors, as Harris noted:

---

69 Carter 1995: 14. LNER introduced buffet cars to Diagram 167, which ‘were principally used in the North Eastern area of the LNER’, and no. 9135 is one of these.
70 Harris 2011: 80.
71 Harris 1973: 81.
73 Andrew Smith, ed. *Savouring Gotham: A Food Lover’s Companion to New York City* (Oxford: OUP, 2015) ebook. Soda water, often combined with ice cream, was popular in the USA over the entire nineteenth century. By the mid-twentieth century, supermarket takeaways and fast-food restaurants were replacing them.
Interior décor was calculated to match contemporary commercial styles such as cinema foyers by adopting striking colour schemes in rexine. The buffet cars were either in a blue/silver grey or blue/gold scheme with a shaded effect.74

For example, the LNER buffet car’s distinctive chrome door handle, elliptical shapes on the floor and in the counters, together with the use of chrome, speaks of the foyer of cinemas such as the Bolton Odeon (1937) by the architect Harry Weedon (1887-1970) Figs. 5.24 and 5.25).75

Inside the LNER buffet car, while the tables were fixed the chairs were loose, their chromium plated Rexine upholstered tubular design being distinctively different from the wood and moquette constructions (Fig. 5.26). Designer Marcel Breuer (1902-1981) regarded chairs of this kind as exemplars of ‘clear and logical forms’ in the face of the arbitrary nature of the fluctuating tastes of the past, extolling the clinical appearance of his chair and its quotidian qualities (Fig. 5.27).76 Its tubular construction was lighter than wood and more stress resistant because of its design; ‘many times handier and more hygienic and therefore many times more practical in use’.77 It is also easier to store and stack. Breuer’s observations are consistent with the principles of Modernism. As Christopher Wilk has observed, most Modernist designers and many artists were consciously engaged in an effort to change the world for the better. The aim was to create living environments that were more egalitarian and easy to inhabit.78 The use of this style of chair in this buffet car interior demonstrates those democratic ideals.

However, designers argued publicly about the use of metal and wood in furniture making and the Studio magazine of 1929 carried their differing opinions. John Gloag argued that metal had been used in furniture for centuries including the early twentieth century.79 His view was that metal was ‘as efficient and about as interesting as modern sanitary fittings, lacking in any humanity, fit only for office

74 Harris 1973: 82.
75 The image is of the same handle as on the Tourist open third class carriage no. 56856 at the NYMR.
77 Ibid.
equipment’ and not ‘harmonious’ enough to be used in the domestic setting. Designer Charlotte Perriand, on the other hand, extolled the revolutionary creative potential of metal and the combinations possible with other materials. She outlined the key areas where metal could be employed for technical, aesthetic and hygiene reasons, listing forms of transport and the home among them. Le Corbusier similarly espoused a change to the kind of design in chairs that met the needs of the person. Some chairs are suitable for relaxing in, he claimed; others will be necessary to help the worker stay alert.

In a distinct move away from the historicised interiors of its prestigious train the *Flying Scotsman*, the chairs in the LNER buffet carriage exhibited aspects of modernist design (Fig. 5.26). Streamlined in character, they met the needs of passengers eating at the table, and the chrome and Rexine combination made them easier to clean than traditionally upholstered chairs. A difference between the Breuer chair and the buffet car chair is the latter’s provision of armrests and the slight slope of the back, two features normally associated with first-class seating. This design points at a less utilitarian approach allowing the passenger to rest on the seat arms and lean back. Yet the chairs are not so comfortable as to encourage the passenger to stay at the table for longer than is necessary. I suggest they were chosen by the railway company as they kept diners alert, thus moving them quickly back to their seats elsewhere on the train, in a similar way to the cinema cafe, a transitory space between the screen and the street (Fig. 5.28). Yet, when the train is moving, the chairs are heavy enough to remain in place, but still can be slid in and out from the table. These attributes of flexibility and control over one’s environment were heretofore mainly afforded to first-class passengers, another indicator of an increasing democratisation of dining provision.

The chairs in the LNER buffet car do not carry a maker’s name. In order to test the motivation of railway company management in purchasing tubular-steel chairs from the trade I researched orders from companies such as Cox’s and PEL (Practical Equipment Ltd), the firm who normally supplied railway companies, but without success. Rather than purchase the tubular-steel chairs from a supplier, it is

---

80 Ibid.
possible that LNER designed them in-house, although no evidence has been found to corroborate this. In 1936, ‘P.C.’ designed a tubular-steel chair for LMS which was enhanced for comfort (Figs. 5.29 and 5.30). The addition of a headrest gave support to the neck and head while the back is a combination of traditional and modern materials like horsehair and rubber. The passenger is further protected from the shocks of travel by the plywood and cushioning and the chair is designed to be bolted to the floor and thus moveability is constrained, as in the traditional model of dining car seating (Fig. 5.31).  

Modernist critic Anthony Bertram approved of the changes in the interior of buffet cars:

Their decoration is still often vulgar and jazzy, but the introduction of loose chairs so that the passenger has easy access to the tables instead of the old and appalling squeeze, and of plain leather upholstery instead of the stuffy, ornate and doubtfully clean materials of the past, illustrate that the problems are being approached in a fresh spirit and that the old rigid and meaningless tradition of the single coach with fixed seats is being broken down.  

The snack food and drink visibly on offer at the counter, rather than being concealed in the on-train kitchen and pantry, and the blurring of demarcation lines between train staff and diners, as they were all in the buffet car together, indicated a more democratised space. Added to this, the movement of the passenger body, facilitated by moveable seats within a space which encouraged quick meals, echoes Augé’s ‘elementary’ social spaces, like market places, where lives intersect for reasons of exchange and move on. According to Miller, crossroads and thresholds ‘represent movement and relations with others’ and the lack of fixed seating in buffet cars would also create transitional spaces for a social group familiar with the cinema and department store cafe.

---

83 Jenkinson and Essery 1977: 82. These chairs are illustrated in a photograph of the interior of the prototype LMS buffet car no.131 of 1936 built to D1948 which probably operated in the Manchester-York-Sheffield-Birmingham area.


85 Augé: 46.

86 Miller 2010: 53.
The second buffet car for analysis is GWR no. 9631 built at the Swindon works in 1934 (Fig. 5.32). Sometimes called the ‘quick-lunch’ car in the 1930s, the photograph shows the original interior. Refreshments such as tea, coffee, Bovril, fruit, mineral waters, sandwiches, sausage-rolls, biscuits and cheese, cake and confectionery, were served alongside alcohol and cigarettes. The precursor to this buffet car was to test the demand for light refreshments on trains where the journey had started too late for one meal and the arrival was too early for the next one, a test that was clearly passed.

From my observations, the GWR buffet car design resembled an American diner or British Milk Bar. Quick, inexpensive lunches were the hallmark of the American diner in the 1930s. Diners had their roots in male working-class culture and the mobile horse-drawn lunch-wagon which, before WWII, sometimes bore an external resemblance to the railway dining car. Their spatial layout varied, sometimes there were longitudinal seats at a bar, at others, seats were round a table, as in the LNER buffet car. In other diners, both kinds of seating were available (Fig. 5.33). The GWR buffet car has a small vestibule with lavatory which leads into a space where the seats and counter are arranged longitudinally rather than transversely. The kitchen and pantry elements are hidden behind the counter and in small spaces at either end of the carriage, with only the two display-stands for cakes and sandwiches and a chrome Stills Boiler for the supply of hot drinks on the countertop. Behind the counter, there would also have been optic spirit-measures, a showcase for cigarettes and chocolates, and shelves for bottles. Also behind the counter and below waist height, out of sight of the passengers, are cash-drawers and an electric fridge from the ‘Frigidaire’ company. A sink accompanied by versatile storage options gave me the impression of a streamlined approach to design.

When I observed this carriage, the floorcovering of the buffet car was red linoleum. However, a c.1934 photograph of the original interior shows a checkered design, of black and white linoleum, while the countertop was inlaid with composition of a marble-green shade with ebonized hardwood margins, ‘the whole being finished

---

87 This carriage, built to D H41 is part of the National Collection and is currently on long term loan to the GWR museum at STEAM in Swindon where it is on display undercover and in near original condition.
88 Jenkinson 1990: 105.
89 de Winter Hebron: 57.
with a non-stain surface’ (Fig. 5.34). The metalwork was stainless-steel. On the passenger side of the counter, which runs the length of the carriage, twelve high stools enabled the customers to sit up to the counter, as in the diner or Milk Bar. On the diagram, these are called ‘stand up rest seats’. Each seat is of green Rexine with a metal base which is bolted to the floor. The seat can spin round. The front of the counter has a shelf underneath, potentially for handbags, gloves and hats, but also caps and papers. The material lining the front of the counter is possibly of red (or coraline) Rexine with another material, again probably Rexine in green, acting as a scuff-board to protect the counter from the passenger’s feet. A chrome foot-rail is also still in situ. The GWR Staff Magazine described the various tones of green which constituted the original decorative scheme.

The contrast between the greens and the black and white checkered-floor of the original carriage would have been striking and was found in other commercial settings such as the diner and Milk Bar. Rexine produced a variety of contemporary decorative effects as illustrated by the work of Raymond McGrath (Fig. 5.35). In Fry’s design for a Milk Bar the counter with the coraline-topped stools echoes the buffet car and other cafeteria spaces which were emerging as places for public consumption of snacks and drinks in the 1930s.

‘Black and White’ Milk Bars and National Milk Bars Ltd, the latter started by Welsh dairy farmer Willie Griffiths, were the first to introduce these alternative eating spaces into Britain in about 1933, at the same time as the GWR quick-lunch buffet car of the case study. They were rapidly adopted across the country, in department stores, cafes and cinemas with a small number of mobile units. By 1938, railway companies were adopting Milk Bars at stations; the first permanent one run by LNER was at Paragon Station, Hull. The intention was to open others

---

92 Ibid: 318. ‘The sides were panelling which shades from dark green at the bottom to duckegg green at the top, the shading being continued over the ceiling and finishing in a pale shade of green at the centre. The borders of the panelling are dark green with a dark lined edge and below the side panels a strip of dark green Rexine extends all-round the saloon’.
in 1938, but while buffet cars remained in service, the headline ‘First Milk Bar Firm in Liquidation’ was appearing in hospitality trade journals.97

The design of the Milk Bar with its ‘signature black and white checkered floors, bar stools, jukeboxes and gleaming chrome’ was marketed at young people in particular.98 The buffet car attracted younger customers. In fact, a mix of clientele was evident as George Behrend, a frequent GWR passenger, recalled when travelling in what he termed the GWR ‘new-fangled Quick Luncheon Car’ in the 1930s:

Phil Metcalfe would dispense sausages on sticks to schoolboys on holiday, and to the regulars, more scotch whisky than I have ever seen drunk on any other British train. Most of these imbibers were business directors returning from a hard day’s work in Town, who got out at Newbury, but on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in the winter there were always some Channel Islanders on the train.99

In terms of the age and occupation of the passengers Behrend’s snapshot of the use of the buffet car hints at its design as transcending class seating arrangements with interactions indicating what Augé has termed ‘intersections of relations with others’.100

I conclude that by the 1930s, public dining spaces acted as a medium for the cultural values and expected behaviours of varying social groups. While the railway companies intentionally used an amalgam of styles to create an environment for first-class diners, the design of buffet car interiors echoed the more democratic eating spaces of the British Milk Bar and American diner.

5.5 Gendered spaces and practices in dining

The first-class dining spaces and the buffet car were part of a suite of spaces that related to dining on the train. This section turns to evaluate the working spaces of the kitchen and pantry, in particular how they were gendered.101 I examine this

---

97 Caterer and Hotel Keeper, ‘First Milk Bar Firm in Liquidation’, Caterer and Hotel Keeper, 4 November 1938, p. 77.
98 ibid: Wales online, 2013 [accessed 19 June 2018].
100 Augé: 47.
through dining carriage staffing practices and make comparisons with similar roles on other forms of transport which were competing with the railways.

Although most photographs from the research period show women serving refreshments from the platform, on the train itself passengers received waiting-services in the dining carriage from male staff (Fig. 5.36). This parallels the roles of male dining staff and chefs on the ocean liner or in the hotel dining room and indicates that the new cultural freedoms for women noted by Alison Light did not extend to working in the kitchen and pantry areas of the train. The exception was during WWII when there was a shortage of men to fulfil these functions.

Serving wealthy passengers to a standard commensurate with a hotel dining room meant that long-standing gendered practices translated from the static to the mobile pantry. The experiences and observations of Michael Charman, a British Rail ‘pantry boy’ for the GWR section in the early 1950s, give an insight into these practices on board. Charman was expected to prepare the fresh grapefruits and make up the mustard in the pantry, as well as attending to the beverages of first-class passengers. He made small balls of butter using wooden pats, an enduring practice from the era pre-refrigeration when pats were used to avoid handling the butter and thereby warming it, and which continued even when refrigerators were introduced on the train.

The pantry crossed public and private divides as the pantry ‘boy’ moved in and out of the space. On long journeys, some passengers came to the pantry to request refreshments. In his memoir, which emphasises the traditional aspects of on-train service, A. E. Rogers comments that for a considerable time up until nationalisation ‘pantry boys’ were designated ‘pages’ on at least two railways, but later they became known as attendants (Fig. 5.37). They served wine and snacks in elite settings of the nineteenth century, but were equally at work in the

---

104 Anon, ‘Improvement in Making Butter’, *Chamber’s Edinburgh Journal*, February 1832-December 1853, 546 (1842), p. 207. A pair of butter pats is mentioned in the plant list of 1935 on the GWR Super Saloon no. 9118. The list was on the wall of said carriage at DRC and seen by the author on 27 April 2018.
105 Charman: 67.
hotels of the 1920s to the 1950s, running errands and messages. Charman started straight from school at the age of fifteen and wore a uniform similar to that of the hotel bellboy or 'page'. He was the youngest of the kitchen crew made up of an all-male staff: a chef and his assistant dressed in their 'whites', a kitchen boy and kitchen porter in jumper and apron. The conductor was in overall charge and Charman recalled cleaning his buttons and shoes in the mode of a bellboy.

In the elite domestic settings of previous centuries, ‘cooking and cleaning as well as waiting were done by men’, and this practice was reproduced in the railway dining carriage. Unlike the domestic kitchen, or the quasi-public area of the train pantry, the carriage kitchen was exclusive to the chefs. It did not 'belong' to one chef, rather it was used by different chefs at various times. No evidence has been found that kitchen chefs either passively, by appropration, or by rejecting the kitchen items, completely transformed or personalised the space through redesign or decoration. They operated under the paternalistic control of the railway company, following the rule books and guidance issued, including wearing the company branded chef-whites as in (Fig. 5.38).

Rogers asserted that the 'best adult recruits came from private service and the training they received in the large houses was evident' and he regretted their lack of availability once the 'private servant position in the country house came to an end'. No supporting evidence from the railway company has been found to corroborate this statement; rather, prestigious London hotels introduced modern training schemes provided at establishments such as the Westminster Technical College and the Hotel and Restaurants Association of Great Britain, founded in 1926. Therefore, staff could equally have come from this background as well as country house service.

---

108 Charman: 18.
109 James Milne, _Instructions for the Guidance of Restaurant Car Staff_ (London: Great Western Railway, 1936), p. 20. The uniform consisted of rough serge material, a pill box hat with black tassel, ‘brown trousers with a thin black stripe down the seam of the leg, cream waistcoat with gold buttons and cream jackets with one gold button and chocolate brown lapels’, the GWR colours.
112 Rogers 1979: 20.
114 Training for service on transport is an area which would warrant further research.
Even in the more modern dining environment, including the buffet car, the attendants continued to be male. This contrasted with American domestic airlines, which like railway companies, promoted their service in the manner of a first-class hotel dining room. By 1940, they employed a large number of women stewards, primarily to comfort and reassure those who were afraid of flying.\textsuperscript{115} This role was replicated on the California Zephyr train in post WWII America, but not on Britain’s trains during the research period, thus potentially undermining any railway company publicity to attract women passengers.\textsuperscript{116}

Men occupied the roles and spaces related to serving diners on the train. As modern technologies and materials entered their world, these coexisted with traditional practices in a ‘conservative modernity’, which characterised the interwar period.\textsuperscript{117}

5.6 Nationalism and dining democratically after WWII

I have established that the buffet car in the 1930s was emerging as a democratic mode of dining which had commercial parallels as a transitional space. After WWII, British Railways launched the similar, but themed, ‘Tavern’ car, mentioned in a number of studies in terms of its controversial design.\textsuperscript{118} This section examines BR’s Mark 1 dining provision in the post-war period, drawing parallels with American diners.

On the cusp of a new era of nationalisation, Tavern cars, part of train sets that had restaurant carriages, looked back to public houses of bygone days with their oak beams, leaded windows and settle seats (Fig. 5.39).\textsuperscript{119} In a similar way to those American diners, named to reference their history, such as \textit{The Mayflower} and \textit{The Pilgrim}, CME Oliver Bulleid named the British Tavern cars after wayside inns; \textit{The White Horse}, \textit{The Green Man}, \textit{The George and Dragon}, as part of a ‘daily immersion in history’.\textsuperscript{120} However, while the post-war diner (and its counterpart,

\textsuperscript{115} Peter Lyth, ‘Think of Her as Your Mother’, \textit{Journal of Transport History}, 30 (2009), 1-21 (p. 5).
\textsuperscript{117} Light: 11.
\textsuperscript{120} Augé: 56.
the English roadside tea room) literally marked locations for refreshment on long car journeys, the Tavern Car was mobile.

BR introduced these carriages on summer express trains to the coast. The layout was very similar to that of the LNER buffet car, but with limited seating since there was a larger kitchen available (Fig. 5.40). The effect was to encourage passengers to stand, as in a public house, at the bar. The internal decor exemplified the tensions between modern and traditional design in that behind the bar all was in a modern style but the windows were latticed, resulting in what was described in a Parliamentary debate as ‘a shoddy Tudoresque monstrosity’.\textsuperscript{121} By calling it a tavern, it was clear that BR intended to produce a historical interior, creating a ‘place of memory’, the antithesis to Augé’s modern ‘non-place’ of transit.\textsuperscript{122}

During the 1940s, there was a spectrum of pubs, and class and gender differentiated these spaces in terms of decor and clientele.\textsuperscript{123} The taproom was for men, the lounge area, or parlour for women and a similar configuration of the space is seen in later BR buffet cars (Fig. 5.41).\textsuperscript{124} BR’s publicity indicated their intention that the Tavern Cars would be modern democratic spaces where men and women could relax together. However, the emphasis on historical design undermined their intentions and attracted the opprobrium of the DIA, the CoID, Gordon Russell and Herbert Read who made comparisons with the ‘silliest roadhouse standards’ in their joint letter to the \textit{Times}.\textsuperscript{125} ‘Shamness’ was also condemned by CPRE members such as Peach and Carrington.\textsuperscript{126} They advocated that the truly traditional should be ‘true to its own age’, while the modern was associated with fitness for purpose, not jazzy, Moderne styles or historical imitations.\textsuperscript{127}

The hope was, according to Tom Driberg MP, that nationalisation would bring about a consistent design policy for public transport. His support was for the

\textsuperscript{122} Augé: 63.
\textsuperscript{125} Gordon Russell and others, ‘Taverns on Wheels’, \textit{The Times}, 27 May 1949, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid: 80.
unified, coherent, modern design work led by the LTPB. According to D. S. M. Barrie, publicity officer for the newly formed BR Railway Executive (RE), at the same time as launching the Tavern Cars, BR was planning other ‘comfortable and attractive facilities’, simultaneously gauging public reactions. Seemingly, BR intended to appeal to a variety of passengers during this period and there was a sense of experimentation up until 1957, rather than a coherent design policy. The BR standards committee meeting in 1948 discussed first-class restaurant carriages early on, but interiors were not their first concern; rather the focus was on heating, fluorescent lighting, couplings and bogies, as the latter would affect the ride. The RE architect suggested that lights should be made from alloy, rather than chrome or plastic and that a simply designed shade was fixed above the cant rail which directed the light from two separate bulbs over the table (Fig. 5.42). Traditional dining lamps still prevailed, however, now made from modern materials such as perspex for the pink-tinted shades.

At the outset, BR produced only a limited number of new dining vehicles. In contrast to the Tavern Cars, they introduced dining areas that began to move away from historicized styles. By 1947, chairs were made of lighter woods such as ash or beech with legs of Nigerian walnut (Fig. 5.43). In the first-class dining carriage of the Mark 1 of the early 1950s, this lighter, easily moveable chair by use of a recessed handhold had the addition of a shelf under the seat presumably for bags or umbrellas. The chair’s simple open structure with exposed, pale wood arms, was more associated with the upmarket domestic home of the 1940s and 1950s than the heavy winged chairs in the GWR 1930s Super Saloons. Moveable chairs, heretofore associated only with first class, had become available to third-class diners.

The British amalgam of styles persisted. The photographs of the restaurant second of 1951, laid up for dining after being decommissioned, illustrates an interior visually recognisable from the 1930s in terms of the restricted space for eating and the formally laid tables (Fig. 5.44). Yet underneath this are Formica-
clad tables with metal legs, rather than the crafted wooden tables of a decade earlier (Figs. 5.45 and 5.46).

**Conclusion**

This investigation of the material and spatial cultures of dining within the carriage has drawn on insights into the production of space and the relationship between material culture and the embodied passenger. It has challenged existing descriptive railway histories to insert the passenger experience, as something produced by the material conditions and visual perceptions of their journey, by paying close attention to objects and interiors. Railway company publicity conveyed a message that on-train dining was more flexible and open to a wider demographic, like the family orientated and informal American diner for travellers. In fact, British on-train dining in the early 1950s held to cultural distinctions through the railway company’s use of space, objects, and seating.

Railway company managers designed or commissioned dining spaces with specific intentions. By choosing prestigious design firms, or creating historicised interiors of their own, they wished to disguise the repetitious space of transit, in the hope of creating dining spaces of sociability that out competed road and air transport. However, their publicity, designed to attract women passengers, was undermined by their replication of gendered spaces and staff roles.

In these dining interiors, the juxtaposition of modern and traditional design continued up until and after nationalisation. While the railway companies used an amalgam of styles and an appeal to nationalism to create spaces for first-class diners, the design of buffet car interiors referenced the British Milk Bar and American democratic eating spaces, upward mobility and mass leisure.
6.1 Introduction

From 1928 onwards, third-class sleeping carriages were introduced by LNER, LMS, and GWR. Using objects from the National Collection, this chapter examines the ways in which the materiality and spatiality of the sleeping arrangements for passengers was the medium for conveying cultural values and reinforcing class and gender differences. Similar work has been done in relation to other transport spaces such as ship’s cabins in the twentieth century, but this approach has not been applied to an object designed to move at speed at night. How a ‘sense of distinction’ was created for passengers through the combination of traditional and modern design elements, of objects and design frameworks, within the sleeping carriage is analysed using the theoretical approaches of both Bourdieu and Lefebvre. This serves to highlight how the organisation of space and sleeping provision played their parts in constructing a habitus for the passenger. The ways in which the carriage interior was a relational and imaginary liminal space is also analysed by applying the theoretical work of Augé and Turner.

For the first part of the twentieth century, only first-class passengers had been able to sleep lying down in a purpose-designed berth in a carriage. Normally third-class passengers would have to sleep sitting-up or find an empty compartment and stretch out across the seats. It was under pressure from Parliament that third-class sleeping arrangements became the norm on Britain’s railways. Citing the case for business passengers to London from Scotland Mr G. Middleton (1876-1938), Labour MP for Carlisle, pursued this proposal, resulting in an Act of

---

1 Doreen Massey, *Space Place Gender*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).
5 Anon, ‘Third Class Sleeping Cars’, *The Railway Gazette*, 17 July 1914, p. 73; UK Parliament, *Hansard*, 2018, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/sir-alpheus-morton/index.html [accessed 12 November 2018]. According to the *Railway Gazette* of 1914, for the previous two or three years Mr A. C. Morton (1840-1923), Member of Parliament for Peterborough, and later Sutherland, had been campaigning for the instigation of third-class sleeping carriages on long-distance trains.
Parliament in March 1928. In response, by late 1928 LMS had designed new vehicles based on third-class corridor carriages with seven compartments. Sleeping cars were purpose built. The Big Four all ran some sleeping carriages up until the grouping, but during the research period, new stock constituted 171 first-class, forty composite, and 203 third-class sleeping carriages. LMS and LNER were the principal builders as they competed for passengers for the long-distance routes between England and Scotland, but within Britain, the number of routes that necessitated overnight travel was limited. GWR introduced their third-class sleeping carriage in 1929, building a limited number, while SR, rather than building their own vehicles, used the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits service which ran from the continent to London.

In this chapter I focus on two objects from the National Collection for my analysis, namely, the 1928 LMS sleeping carriage no.14241, and the sleeping car no 3792, Compagnie Internationale de Wagon-Lits, built in 1933. To aid the evaluation of ideas concerning design, space and gender, I make comparisons between these and other sleeping carriages, as well as other travel compartments designed for sleeping such as the ocean liner cabin.

6.2 Spaces for sleeping passengers

The typology at Fig.2.12 shows the limited kinds of spaces for sleeping passengers. Up until 1900, railway companies had modelled their sleeping vehicles on Pullman carriages with the first British car introduced by North British Railways in 1873. Some carriages had sleeping sections and passengers paid a premium to be able to lie down. Otherwise, some carriages had a seated section, based on the American model, where seats positioned opposite one another could be drawn together to form a bed, and a second ‘bunk’ lowered from a folded position against the partition. This arrangement offered little privacy. The aim was therefore to provide compartments accessed by a side corridor, which acted as bedrooms, either by temporary or permanent conversion. Attempts were made to make the compartments (six feet six inches long by four feet six inches wide) as

---

self-contained as possible. The royal trains were exceptions, containing seating and sleeping accommodation in a mix of compartmented and saloon areas; these are discussed in the next chapter.

6.3 Analysing the interior

The LMS sleeping carriage no. 14241 built in 1928 is currently on display at the NRM (Fig. 6.1). It was one of the first vehicles to provide overnight accommodation for third-class passengers. These new vehicles received a lot of press attention and *The Daily Telegraph* of 1928 compared them to the French *Wagon Lits* company’s couchettes, claiming that LMS was ‘providing precisely similar comfort to that which the French companies only offer to first-class fares’, a claim that is investigated in this chapter.9 The sixty-foot long LMS vehicle was set out as seven compartments seating fifty-six, converting into twenty-eight sleeping berths, implying that not every passenger would get the opportunity to utilise a berth, which had to be pre-booked.

First-class LMS sleeping compartments of this period were luxurious with ‘hot and cold water, towel rails,[and] clothes hangers’ provided in a single, private berth and some would have had hinged lavatory fixtures within the compartment for added privacy.10 First-class carriages run by the same company from London to Scotland had just twelve berths, with India rubber blocks to reduce vibration, sprung mattresses and ‘interior decor in Honduras mahogany’.11 Some of the single berths had interconnecting doors into other compartments. These carriages were aimed at a business and leisure travellers, as press advertising for the Scottish grouse-shooting season demonstrated.12 No. 14241 worked the long-distance routes between London Euston and Holyhead, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, principally for leisure with some business traffic.13

The materiality of the sleeping space

On entering LMS third class no.14241, the passenger is immediately within a transverse vestibule, which contained a lavatory and separate washroom labelled

---

8 Ibid. Some compartments sleeping two persons were six feet six inches square.
12 Ibid.
‘toilet’, an arrangement that was mirrored at the other end of the carriage.  

Seven compartments, four of which were allocated to smokers, were accessed from the side corridor (Fig. 6.2). Seats upholstered in fawn-velvet with coppered steel-springs in the Vito spring-seat converted to berths, while the mattress for the upper berth was placed on the seat during the daytime. The upper berth was hinged to the compartment partition, supported on brackets, and fitted with two rope-straps. The straps, covered with a type of cotton-cloth, had spring-hooks at each end (Fig. 6.1 and 6.3). A coat hook was accessible from the top bunk as were the passenger communications. A table converted to a ladder, enabling access to the upper berth (Fig. 6.4). The underside of the upper berth displayed mahogany panels with the usual pictures and mirrors thus hiding its function. A centrally placed electric light-bowl contained four bright bulbs and one blue, which acted as a night light. Blinds provided privacy from both the outside and the corridor.

What then was the impact on the passenger sleeping in this carriage, amongst what Schivelbusch has called the ‘machine ensemble’? Each bunk measured five feet ten and a half inches long and two feet four inches wide (the lower bunk was just two feet two and a half inches wide). This would not have afforded sufficient space for a tall person. The berth, perceived visually, would have looked inviting to the tired passenger anticipating a night’s sleep; but the size and properties of the mattress, and provision of only a single rug and pillow, was met with varying responses. The Times special correspondent called it ‘lying down’ accommodation, a term derived from railwaymen needing to sleep away from home. He claimed this new third-class provision fell ‘far short of that provided in first class’ with ‘no pretence to the softness or standard provided at more expensive rates’. The drawing indicates that the lower berth’s mattress was sprung, affording more comfort, but the upper mattress was not. Therefore, despite the fare being the same, some passengers would have had a less

14 General Arrangements.
15 Drawing no. 12/110. NRM.
17 James J. Gibson, The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception (New York and London, Psychology Press 2015), ebook, p. 119. While the image in Fig. 6.1 shows the bed having a sheet, I am not certain whether this was provided. In LMS Coaches, p. 67. Jenkinson states that only the rug and pillow were available. The term rug was used in the Press.
18 Special Correspondent, ‘The Third Class Sleeper’, The Times, 26 September 1928, p. 11.
19 Ibid.
comfortable night’s sleep (Fig. 6.3). However, the noise and movement of the vehicle itself did not interfere with the correspondent’s sleep and he considered the accommodation suitable for business travellers and tourists alike.  

H. Langford Lewis took an alternative view of the sleeping compartment design in a letter to *The Times*. He commented that, for the best night’s sleep, the berths should lie in the direction of travel, that is, longitudinally rather than transverse in the compartment, citing American trains as the paradigm (Fig. 6.5). This was the arrangement of the beds for the King and Queen in the royal carriage, discussed in chapter seven, seen too in the first-class cabins of ships such as the SS *Lusitania*, launched in 1906 (Fig. 6.6). Longitudinal beds were therefore associated with quality accommodation, but even in first-class sleeping compartments, the railway companies continued to build transversely against the compartment partition in the same way as for daytime seating.

Comparing the LMS third-class provision with two images of first-class East Coast Joint Stock accommodation, built just before the grouping but which would have continued to be used during the 1920s, sheds further light on design choices (Figs 6.7 and 6.8). To appeal to first-class tastes, certain objects, decorations and finishes were employed. The main feature was a purpose built single bed, made up with sheets and two pillows. The blanket was monogrammed with the initials of the railway company, and decorated with a Greek-key motif, referencing classical designs. Another feature was an integral washing facility, built from the same hardwood panelling as the partition, rather than situated along the corridor. The lavatory was separate, but easily accessible. Finally, in the centre of the partition a drop-down shelf with a mirror above and hooks to either side resembled the arrangement of a domestic mantelpiece or dressing table, offering a focal point. Carafes of water and glasses were fitted above the bed and sink. In LMS no. 14241, the washroom provision consisted of a liquid-soap dispenser and a Dixie-

---

22 RMS Lusitania - The Lusitania Resource [accessed 25 March 2021].
23 James Stevens Curl and Susan Wilson, *Dictionary of Architecture*, (Oxford: OUP, 2016), p.328. This was a geometrical ornament consisting of horizontal and vertical fillets joining at angles, a variety of fret called grecque or labyrinthine, like a series of key-like shapes on bands (usually friezes and string-courses).
drinking-cup dispenser with filter (Fig. 6.9). Common drinking-cups were available in public areas beside water coolers on American railroads, but the individual, paper, Dixie-drinking-cup was introduced to counter associated health and hygiene problems. It is a mass produced symbol of modernity on trains for sleeping. By availing themselves of these single cups in private washrooms, third-class passengers would have been emulating the individualised provision of the glass and carafe of water found in first class and is an example of the way an ephemeral object can mediate cultural identity.

In the first-class accommodation the attention to the single bed preparations, water carafe and dressing table conveyed that this was a place set apart for those with what Bourdieu has termed a 'certain life style'. The space is traditional in both its structure and decoration. In comparison, third-class sleeping provision, converted from seating functions, spoke of modernity in its use of objects such as the drinking cup, yet held to other longstanding objects such as compartment prints.

First class, third class- knowing your place

This section of the chapter continues to compare the spaces of third and first-class sleeping accommodation in the interwar period, but with a focus on an analysis of the spatial features and passenger experience, drawing comparisons with other transport interiors by applying the theoretical work of Lefebvre, Massey and Goffman.

In chapter four, I identified that passengers experienced compartment design as a confined space that could result in forced social interactions, offset by the value of privacy when it could be obtained. Furthermore, an ability to adjust one’s environment, suggested modernity. Can these ideas be applied to the sleeping compartment? Lefebvre has noted the division of space into specialisations and social group; subdivided into daytime and night-time usage. The third-class sleeping carriage offered these ‘two properties’ in tension in third-class, forcing passengers to conform to the strictures of the railway company design ideology of

26 Bourdieu: 257.
27 Lefebvre :320.
space as seen in table 1.\textsuperscript{28} Once the bunks were \textit{in situ} for the night, the space between them was one foot one inch and \textit{The Times} noted that this would leave no room for passengers to undress.\textsuperscript{29} The potential for ‘embarrassment’ experienced by passengers when they wished to be alone and hidden from view, noted in chapter four, would have been exacerbated in the sleeping compartment with all the concomitant ‘unfocussed interaction’ and negotiation of four people accessing beds and availing themselves of the lavatory at night.\textsuperscript{30} By 1935, however, \textit{The Times} noted that male passengers ‘changed into pyjamas without a trace of self-consciousness’ and that on the sleeping train, ‘women […] are now as self-possessed as men’.\textsuperscript{31} This greater ease indicates a movement towards more democratic sleeping spaces, such as those found in the shared dormitories of the Youth Hostels Association.\textsuperscript{32}

In order to create more privacy, LMS experimented with different kinds of layouts for third class. In one scheme, the washbasins were in the compartment, while in another there were double berths rather than four (Fig. 6.12).\textsuperscript{33} The press drew comparisons between these and the \textit{Wagon Lits} service which was introduced in 1936 as a Night Ferry service hauled by SR within Britain (Fig. 6.10).\textsuperscript{34} Both carriages convert from daytime into night use, but the \textit{Wagon Lits} beds appear more secure and substantial. The ladder, for example, is set firmly on the floor rather than being suspended from the top bunk; nor is it transformed from a table. All passengers have to leave the compartment to access the lavatory. LMS usually had twenty-two or twenty-eight berths, while \textit{Wagon Lits} had eighteen in a shorter length of carriage, nevertheless, this would have put less pressure on the facilities.

Privacy was minimal in all LMS sleeping arrangements bar first class. In third-class accommodation, there was not only a window to the outside but also two facing into the corridor (with blinds), as in daytime this functioned as seating. Because

\textsuperscript{28} Lefebvre : 321. Table 1 can be found on page 86.
\textsuperscript{29} Anon, ‘Railway Companies’ Experiment’, \textit{The Times}, 10 March 1928, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{31} Anon, ‘Corner Seats and Open Windows’, \textit{The Times}, 31 August 1935, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{32} https://www.yha.org.uk/about-yha/history [accessed 29 March 2021]. Youth Hostels were established in Britain in 1931.
\textsuperscript{33} Drawing no. 12/110 corresponds with LMS no.14241, NRM.
\textsuperscript{34} Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits | Science Museum Group Collection [accessed 29 March 2021]. Founded in 1872 in Belgium by Georges Nagelmackers; inspired by Pullman, he introduced the Orient-Express, Nord Express, and Sud Express; leading provider and operator of European railway sleepers and dining cars during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. After WWII, the company concentrated more on being a travel agency and management business. The Night Ferry - IRPS Night Mail (irps-wl.org.uk)
first class was purpose built, the only window was to the exterior of the carriage. *Wagon Lits* were similar to the LMS first-class compartments as they had only an exterior window for enhanced privacy, and the interconnecting door to the next compartment was lockable. A comparison of figs 6.11 and 6.12 shows how *Wagon Lits* have partitioned their compartment in such a way as to enhance privacy for passengers by integrating washing facilities per two bunks and effectively partitioning a compartment down the centre.\(^{35}\) During this period, LMS lacked flexibility and persisted in building in a compartment style layout, showing how they were not wholly comparable to the *Wagon Lits* in terms of privacy and hence luxury.

**Designing luxury sleeping accommodation**

It was observed in *The Times* that LNER’s new first-class sleeping compartments, introduced in 1930, equally did ‘not mark so great a departure from the traditional or standard design’.\(^{36}\) The press credited LNER’s CME Nigel Gresley with the design of these four, ten-berth carriages. But while he had oversight, Waring and Gillow executed the fitting and interior decoration of two carriages, with another two by White Allom.\(^{37}\) The reasons for this choice of prestigious firms, valorised for their interiors of royal carriages and Cunard ocean liners as well as domestic interiors, are unknown. The carriage body shell remained on the railway company premises, while the designers moved in with their own staff, commissioning other firms for specialised aspects such as lighting.\(^{38}\) This contrasts with the GWR Super Saloons, where the railway company craftsmen and designers were involved with the interior alongside Trollope’s. From the National Collection of photographs I have deduced that figs 6.13 and 6.14 illustrate the Waring and Gillow designs, and figs 6.15 and 6.16 the White Allom interiors.\(^{39}\)

This section of the chapter examines the ways in which Waring and Gillow and White Allom created distinctive interiors, bearing in mind that Waring and Gillow

\(^{35}\) Lefebvre: 38.


\(^{37}\) Michael Harris, *LNER carriages* (Southampton: Noodle Books, 2011), p. 91 states that Waring and Gillow decorated two compartments while White Allom decorated the two others. *The Times* does not refer to White Allom.


\(^{39}\) In chapter three I outlined the background to both firms.
were perceived as more ‘progressive’, which I have interpreted as modern.\(^{40}\) Both interiors would have been recognisable to first-class passengers. The ‘blending of the traditional and modern’ was the modus operandi of decorators of elite British homes in the 1930s as described in Decoration magazine.\(^{41}\) I compare the carriages with ocean liner cabins to understand how their materiality played what Miller terms a ‘central role in social reproduction’.\(^ {42}\)

White Allom was associated with LNER’s prestige trains, such as the Flying Scotsman, and I discussed their Louis XVI dining room in the previous chapter. Bedrooms designed by both firms were described as ‘light and bright’ in 1934 by modernist Anthony Bertram.\(^ {43}\) However, the White Allom bedroom (with adjoining sitting room with two chairs and a table) rehearses references to historicised styles used in elite spaces, as demonstrated by the mouldings around the window and the fluted edge of the porcelain sink (Fig. 6.15). The absence of a window on the corridor partition created greater privacy, while the quilted-satin bed-counterpane gave an impression of luxury, in contrast to a plain blanket. However, in the Waring and Gillow bedroom the blankets seem austere; the LNER monogram is plain and the lack of ornamentation in the room gives a more modern look (Fig. 6.14). The room’s paintwork, described in 1930 as of ‘stippled blue paint shaded from a deep blue at the bottom to white in the centre of the ceiling’ (complemented by the blue blanket), would have created a coherent look.\(^ {44}\) The use of English walnut for the head and foot of the bed, white porcelain sink, together with the simply ornamented panels, created what Calloway has termed ‘simplicity combined with efficiency’, in an interior largely devoid of ornamentation.\(^ {45}\)

These first-class carriages can also be compared to the sleeping accommodation on ocean liners, such as the luxurious French ship the SS Normandie, launched in 1932. Figure 6.17 shows beds arranged as in a domestic bedroom, rather than train carriage. Added to this, the sumptuous upholstery of the armchair and bedheads, combined with the Art Deco style polished veneers and marquetry,


\(^{42}\) Miller: 108.

\(^{43}\) Anthony Bertram, Design (London: Pelican, 1938), p. 76.


\(^{45}\) Bertram pl 45.
echo the vocabulary of the contemporary hotel bedroom at Claridge’s in London (Fig. 6.18). While the third-class cabin on the Normandie had the benefit of a full-length mirror, upholstered chairs and decorative elements (usually found in first-class railway accommodation), the arrangement of the four bunks, together with their tucked-in blankets and chromed bedframes, references seaman’s accommodation (Figs. 6.19 and 6.20). The ocean liner first-class cabin is an example of design which concealed the ship’s architecture, in response to the needs of passengers for space and privacy. In contrast, the railway companies did little to conceal the repetitive nature of the carriage either in layout or decoration, even when commissioning specialist firms for first class.46

**Constraint and control**

I discussed the fact that the compartment was a place of anxiety for some passengers in chapter four, and as has been shown in this chapter, the layout of the sleeping areas retained this structure. Did the railway companies use objects and space to alleviate passenger concerns? One newspaper correspondent noted how in the new LMS sleeping carriages:

> the attendant took charge of all the tickets, and with the knowledge that they would be free from disturbance the passengers locked their doors, which could then be opened from the outside only by the attendant’s master key.47

All trains that carried sleeping passengers had attendants. Some attendants had their own small compartment on the carriage, or within another carriage. Their role was to ensure that, for example, women passengers were able to share accommodation, to make-up the beds, and in first class provide tea in the morning. Enabled by the design of the sleeping carriage, the attendant exercised control over the space; by holding the tickets, plus the master key. While passengers could unlock doors from the inside, the effect was arguably to create what De Certeau has characterised as a ‘closed system’, a mobile ‘rationalized cell’.48 By collecting in and holding the tickets the attendant also effectively conducted identity checks, and being ‘relieved of his usual determinants’, the passenger

---

46 Lefebvre: 75.
47 Special Correspondent, ‘The Third Class Sleeper’, The Times, 26 September 1928, p. 11.
forfeited his agency, becoming once more what Augé has called a parcel in a non-place.\textsuperscript{49} The design of the bunks exercised other forms of control in third class. While the beds in first class, both on the railway and on-board ship, were designed to resemble domestic beds, the \textit{Wagon Lits} bunks, both lower and upper, had short partitions of wood next to the head and shoulder of the recumbent passenger, similar to the chrome fittings in third-class cabins( Figs. 6.10 and 6.20). These barriers acted ambiguously. They kept the body safe, from falling onto the floor during the motion of the train, and they inhibited the movement of the body, for example when turning over or getting easily from the bed. The bed design effectively controlled the personal and private territory of the body in this public space.\textsuperscript{50} The bed-guards divided sleeping passengers from one another, whilst they remained connected within the compartment.\textsuperscript{51}

In summary, third-class sleeping accommodation did not afford bodily comfort for passengers. The placement of washing facilities down the corridor and the window looking into the compartment from the corridor also meant a loss of privacy unless the blind was down. Although there was a movement in leisure time towards sharing accommodation away from home, nevertheless passengers suffered embarrassment at having to be in such close proximity.

First-class accommodation placed the washing facility in the compartment and the single bed and other objects made the compartment feel set apart, especially when elite design firms were brought in to apply historicised or modern styles of decoration. However, despite this, the railway companies persisted in their use of traditional layouts, unlike the luxury cabins on ocean liners.

\textbf{6.4 Post-war stasis}

While sleeping car design changed very little before WWII, after the war LNER made some experiments with layout, with the idea that ‘lying down’ accommodation was no longer appropriate to the post-war era.\textsuperscript{52} Passengers were demanding better facilities, and LNER believed that they would pay for ‘full bedding, washing facilities in the compartments and the elimination of tiered

\textsuperscript{49} Augé: 83.  
\textsuperscript{50} Augé: 49.  
\textsuperscript{51} De Certeau: 113.  
\textsuperscript{52} Harris 2011: 108.
berths’. The side corridor remained the access point to the accommodation, but inside LNER’s third-class sleeping carriage of 1947, no. 1348, the concept of interlocking berths showed that LNER were developing a new model of sleeping accommodation (Fig. 6.21). Within one carriage a combination of sleeping rooms was created, some of which had bunks underneath another, accessed from a separate room. The image portrays the double room as spacious, with the ladder replaced by carpeted steps. However, accessed from the adjoining room, the bunk underneath must have felt claustrophobic and, despite the views of designers such as Christian Barman that ‘well-proportioned interiors are no more impossible in a train than in a house’; experiments such as LNER’s were not continued.

As the railway companies entered nationalisation between 1948 and 1952, LNER, GWR and LMS all built a limited number of sleeping carriages to traditional models, only moving away from four-berth accommodation. British Railways adopted these as sleeping carriages, with attendant publicity photographs, until they built their own Mark 1 version in 1957. It is these publicity photographs and associated passenger accounts which inform the rest of this chapter.

The sleeping compartment as liminal space

Applying the theoretical work of Augé, I now turn to explore how the liminal space of the sleeping car could create a different kind of experience for the passenger, leading to what Turner has called an ‘elevation’ in cultural status.

Correspondence in The Times post WWII, discussed how some passengers, usually called ‘officials’, were given preference in reserving a sleeping berth. The anonymous authors of letters to The Times in the 1940s concerning the reservation system conveyed something of the nature of a place that cannot be defined by identity, inter-relationships or history; that is, Augé’s non-place. One passenger compared the everyday compartment where he had ‘no time to spread himself, to enjoy the sensation’ to the sleeping carriage where he was ‘blissfully

---

53 Ibid.
55 Parkin p. 157. LMS built twenty five firsts and the same number of thirds; LNER built five firsts and sixteen thirds, GWR built four firsts.
56 Ibid.
57 Turner: 167.
58 The officials were probably government workers, travelling on business.
59 Augé: 63.
cut off and isolated from the rest of the workaday world'.60 This passenger has differentiated himself from others by being away from the ‘prosaic parts of the train’, and crowded carriages where travellers are ‘exiled from paradise’.61 Accentuated by the closure of blinds at night, and thus the lack of awareness of the passing landscape, this sense of withdrawal isolated this passenger. Turner asserts that such isolation changes the status of an individual and brings about a feeling of superiority.62 He further claims that such experiences have the effect of emphasizing social differences, rather than bringing about any permanent alteration in, for example, class structures.63

The account of travel in a sleeping carriage by another passenger, recorded in The Times, underscores these observations.64 He says, ‘Certain places exist only through the words that evoke them’, and, for this passenger, it is the fictional and the imaginary that makes the carriage into a non-place.65 The sleeping compartment evoked storybook dramatic encounters of the past, such as that between diamond thief Reverend Simon Rolles and diamond hunter John Vandaleur.66 According to The Times, in this place of ‘luxury’, where ‘the clock strikes nothing’, the passenger regarded himself as elevated above the hardened traveller who can only focus on the irritation of the ‘groaning’ basin cover or ‘rattling’ door knob.67

Hence the sleeping car is also more than a material response to a psychological reaction to the machine technology, mitigating its effects.68 It is a non-place, which can provide the passenger with a transcendent experience of liminality, where he is elevated above other travellers and away from mid-century, post-war Britain. The sleeping carriage holds all these experiences in tension.

**Sleeping spaces for women**

---

60 Anonymous, ‘Sleeping Cars’, The Times, 28 July 1945, p. 5.
61 Ibid.
63 Turner: 172.
64 Anonymous, ‘In the Sleeping Car’, The Times, 30 May 1947, p. 5.
65 Augé: 77.
68 Schivelbusch 1977.
A first look at the publicity images for the new post-war sleeping carriages shows that the railway companies chose to show women using these spaces (Figs. 6.23 and 6.24 and 6.25). This section examines the ways in which the new post-war sleeping carriages operated as spaces intrinsic to personal behaviours and rituals, and integral to daily life.69 Divall has argued that, up until 1939, men were ‘the primary consumers of civilised mobility’ and, while women were represented in marketing and publicity materials, it was speed and comfort that were associated with masculine travel (Fig.6.26).70 By portraying women in their publicity photographs, BR were part of a movement in both railways and aviation to reassure women passengers. The first image illustrates the starkness of the interior of a sleeping carriage (Fig. 6.22). Although comfortable mattresses, pillows and blankets are present, the surfaces are of wipe-clean Formica, and aluminium fixtures such as the luggage racks have replaced the wood panelling and netting of the sleeping carriage of the late 1920s. The overall impression is of utility and functionality, indeed this space has similar features to the one inhabited by the seamen (Fig. 6.19). As Lefebvre states, because we ‘buy on the basis of images’ the women brought into the space via the photographs can be seen as objects of visual consumption used to sell the accommodation Fig. 6.24.71 However, the actions of the women passengers and the inclusion of personal objects transform it from a ‘rationalised cell’ to an everyday space.72 For example, in fig 6.23, the first-class carriage, the mirror and flap-table become a dressing table. In her essay on dressing tables, Judy Attfield notes that men and women used these for their cosmetics, perfumes, brushes, and combs. Over centuries, these became the centrepiece of the bedroom for women. While their design changed over time, their fundamental role did not, despite the vagaries of fashion and the societal shifts influencing women’s lives.73 Such an object is therefore capable of holding together the idea of past forms with modernity.

I showed in chapter three that the ideology of men and women having separate spaces within the railway company was nuanced. By the 1950s, cultural shifts including the availability of contraception, the decline of religiosity, and the growth

69 Lefebvre: 33.
71 Lefebvre: 76.
72 De Certeau: 111.
of the popular press and television meant that women’s social standing and an awareness of personal moral conduct in terms of respectability as a precursor to marriage, was a live issue. Together with their increase in disposable income, the importance of peer relationships and the desire to ‘fit in’ has also been identified as central to the lives of young women during this period. In contrast to the behaviours exhibited in the seating carriage, where eye contact was actively avoided (as shown in chapter four), in the sleeping carriage the direct gaze between two women was foregrounded (Fig.6.25). This signals a space where women could unpack personal possessions, such as toiletries, and enjoy social interaction in a context, which speaks of the intimacy of the domestic environment. While the image was constructed to attract women passengers, it also highlights the importance of close female relationships during a period of cultural change.

Conclusion

Over the period 1920-1955 the railway companies held to their traditional model of producing sleeping accommodation based on the compartment style, accessed from a side corridor. The companies were also keen to maintain class distinctions through the design, fitting and decoration of these sleeping areas. In first class, prestigious firms were commissioned to introduce both historicised and modern designs and privacy was retained with integrated washing and dressing facilities and the personal attention of an attendant. However, it was not until after WWII that the communal element of four berths in third class was dispensed with and a move away from simple ‘lying down’ accommodation achieved. In terms of passenger comfort, individual needs were not taken into account except in first class, and even then the fixed model of accommodation meant that modernity was only referenced in regard to small objects and decoration, rather than in the organisation of space.

Passengers’ experience of the space has also been extrapolated from their views on the compartment. Being close together with little personal space, and sometimes guard-rails on the beds, meant that anxieties about travel at night were

75 Ibid: 1034.
76 Laura Watts, 'The art and craft of train travel', Social and Cultural Geography, 9. 7 (2008), 711-26 (p. 711).
exacerbated. On the other hand, unlike the dining and general seating areas, this enclosure could evoke the imaginary, creating a sense of superiority in the passenger to those travelling in less comfort.

This chapter has traced the historical rise of the sleeping carriage, showing how the railway company intentions, input of designers and passenger experience has shaped the design and space of the interior.
Chapter 7
Designing for the royal family: the bespoke interior

7.1 Introduction
In the previous chapters, I have shown how carriages built for sitting, dining and sleeping represented intersections between styles and nationalist ideologies, and also raised issues around the gendering of spaces. This chapter continues with those themes, to ascertain whether they apply to carriages built specifically for the use of a single group of passengers, the British royal family.

Most carriages were built without named passengers in mind. In contrast, LMS numbers 798 and 799 exhibit interiors designed for George VI (r.1939-52) and his wife, Queen Elizabeth. Their daughter Elizabeth II then used these carriages. This chapter, by focussing closely on these two carriages, which have direct links with two generations of public figures, aims to ascertain how far their design, fitting and decoration created and mediated their public roles and identities during a period of national upheaval.¹ Some objects within the carriage were an integral part of their design. I examine these objects for the way they mediated the personal tastes of the King and Queen in conjunction with royal archives and archives of the National Collection. Furthermore, I consider whether new carriages with distinctive interiors were a means of reasserting the sovereign’s identity in a time of uncertainty, following the abdication of Edward VIII and the turmoil of WWII, and by applying the work of Victor Turner, consider how their layout accommodated ceremonial functions. ²

Museums have singled out particular mass-produced commodities for preservation, such as royal carriages, long before any collecting strategy for them is in place. Large objects, such as carriage numbers 798 and 799, are singular in that there is only one example of each extant, but this can be said equally for other royal carriages which are either privately owned or run on heritage railways.³ The two carriages, which form this case study, have been preserved in different ways. No. 799, built for the Queen Elizabeth’s own use, is in the National Collection and only the exterior can be viewed by the public, while its counterpart, no. 798, known

³ The King George V Royal Saloon built in 1912 by Midland Railway is in occasional use at the Midland Railway Centre.
as the ‘King’s carriage’, is based at the SVR at their Engine House education
centre in Shropshire. I have visited both as part of my fieldwork.

Travelling around their kingdom would have been part of the life of the royal
household over the centuries. Whether to be visible to the populace, or to take
part in festivals or ceremonies, the need for mobility decreased in subsequent
reigns as the household became more focussed on a circuit nearer the capital,
London. The advent of the railway afforded new opportunities for travel, embraced
during the reign of Victoria (r.1837-1902). Her purchase of a number of properties
around Britain, including Balmoral Castle in Scotland and Sandringham House in
Norfolk, maintained the necessity for travelling around the realm and stimulated
the building of several royal carriages and stations by the different railway
companies who competed for royal patronage. Up until the reign of Victoria, who
took her first train journey in 1842, rail journeys taken by the royal family were few
in number and used first-class compartments as part of ordinary train services.

The first carriage built specifically with a member of the royal family in mind was by
the London and Birmingham Railway in 1842 for dowager Queen Adelaide, the
widow of William IV (r.1830-37). Resembling the stagecoach, her small four-
wheeled carriage was built after his death and the accession of Victoria. It was the
paradigm for future royal carriages.

Subsequently, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, some of these
royal carriages were adapted as first-class saloons, sold, or allowed to decay.
Queen Adelaide’s saloon is one of a number of royal carriages preserved in the
collection at the NRM. A few were stored due to lack of space or transferred to
other display venues. The current group of royal carriages at the NRM includes
Queen Victoria’s saloon, built in 1865, and carriages numbers 800 and 801 built at
Wolverton for Edward VII and his wife Queen Alexandra between 1901 and 1910.
His successor George V (r.1910-1936) and his wife Queen Mary also used these
carriages. Another pair of carriages, numbers 395 and 396, were converted at
Doncaster for Edward VII and Queen Alexandra and are described as being used
by Queen Mary, while in its ‘final years of service, 395 was used almost

---

4 Fiona Kisby, ‘Kingship and the Royal Itinerary: A Study of the Peripatetic Household of the Early Tudor
7 Ibid.
exclusively by HM Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother’.® Thus, although the early part of the twentieth century saw a rapid increase in new royal vehicles operated and owned by different companies, no saloons specifically for the royal family were built from 1913 until the construction of the two objects discussed in this chapter.® When no. 799 and no. 798 were ordered from LMS in 1938, the royal family already had their carriages for their sole use, which incorporated spaces for a personal attendant. On other occasions, Pullman Company carriages were used, or carriages were rented from other companies. Therefore, new carriages and their distinctive interiors were a way in which the new King and Queen could assert their ritual and symbolic public identities of sovereignty at a time of national uncertainty instilled by the abdication of King Edward VIII at the end of 1936.

7.2 Analysing the interior

Thus far, I have shown how the carriage as mobile architecture can be classified by function. The royal carriage typology at Fig.2.12 shows how the royal carriages combine two of these functions, sitting and sleeping, with dining taking place in a separate vehicle. Furthermore, the royal carriage has a compartment (a saloon area), sleeping and bathing facilities accessed via a side corridor (Fig. 7.1). The entrances to both carriages from the platform are open, wide spaces, which in turn lead into ‘day compartments’. Unlike the compartment for everyday passengers, the royal day compartment is designed to maximise the width of the train. When I visited, the windows on both sides of the carriage added to the sense of space. As there is no side corridor, royal passengers have to pass through the saloon to the side corridor to access the sleeping compartment and en suite bathroom. The bathroom is accessible from the corridor. Next to the royal sleeping compartment is the attendant’s room and separate lavatory. At the end of the carriage, the sergeant-footman’s room is part of the vestibule.®

The diagram shows how the King and Queen’s spaces, in the context of the whole train (which took different formations according to purpose), were placed at the centre and next to one another (Fig.7.2). The Queen’s personal staff were accommodated in the adjacent carriage to hers, while the King’s saloon adjoined

---


® A personal attendant: a twentieth century security role.
the dining car and his staff. The train staff were placed furthest away from the monarchs. The names on the diagram indicate that the interior was arranged hierarchically, according to status, and that everyone knew their place.

**The carriage vestibule as liminal space**

In chapter four, I showed how the separate space of the coupé, situated within an elite carriage, gave passengers a sense of elevation in status and removal from the everyday interactions of the open carriage.11 Passengers also experienced this sense of liminality in the sleeping carriage, a place of the imaginary, set apart from the everyday world. The term 'liminal' refers to the way ritual operates to ensure the continued separation of one human group from another. This intermediate state, a position created in this case by being in a train between place of origin and destination (a temporary state of being), can be applied to King and Queen (or ‘passengers’ to use Turner’s term), who move between these states, which hold few of the characteristics of what was before, or is to come.12 While sleeping, eating and seating spaces all form part of the royal train, in this section I examine how the vestibule area can be read as a liminal space in relation to passengers George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

Travel was an essential part of the royal image from the Tudor period onwards. The public display of the monarch during the progression of the Court throughout Britain was part of a ceremonial practice, which aroused public interest and invited loyalty. Using a train to travel around the country by land was established during the reign of Queen Victoria and by the reign of George VI was the norm, despite the popularity and availability of the car and aeroplane. For the royals, train travel had the additional benefit of being able to move about Britain easily as a household. However, any convenience experienced in the nineteenth century was curtailed in the twentieth after WWI, when the importance of security tended to conceal the movements of the royal train and accentuate the distance of its passengers from the populace. This sense of transition applies to all passengers but there are differences marked by rites and processes, which I now examine.

The vestibule of the royal carriages no 798 and 799 was designed differently from the everyday carriage (Fig.7.1). Just as in royal carriages of previous generations,

---

12 Turner: 94.
it has two external ceremonial-style doors opening inwards which become the threshold, the doorway between the two worlds of royal domestic life on the train and the outside world awaiting them on the station platform. The vestibule is a place where the royal couple performed rites of embarking and disembarking, as identified by van Gannep in other contexts. In the image of Elizabeth II disembarking from no. 799 in 1952 at Newton Abbot Station in order to attend the Royal Show, she has a formal uniformed reception (Fig. 7.3). This ritual, together with her literally elevated position and her framing in the doorway is reminiscent of Roy Strong’s discussion regarding the visual culture of Elizabeth I, the propaganda that surrounded her procession throughout the country and the way she is often portrayed as lifted above the crowd on a wheeled vehicle reminiscent of ‘monarchical triumphs’ all over Europe. Promoted through painting and literature, such an image of the Queen, showed the moment of her status elevation. The royal individual is shown to be isolated and maintained in an intermediate state, ‘held between heaven and earth’. In the documents relating to the royal carriages, the vestibule has another name; the ‘balcony’, that external part of the royal house where the sovereign is on display, but untouchable, elevated above the populace.

Part of these embarking and disembarking rites involved selected clothing or insignia. As will be shown later in this chapter, the special planning and attention to the appearance of the royal couple before and during the train journey formed part of the passage from their domestic experience on board the train to the public performance of their public role and duties. One insignia was a royal monogram engraved on the door fittings, to give that ‘slight royal touch which is needed’ (Fig. 7.4). The monarch crossed the threshold of the private rooms through the walnut, monogramed, internal door, into the plain vestibule or balcony, visible to the public through the many three-quarter length windows. Traversing the spaces thus marks the progress, the movement of the royals from the private into

---

16 RA PS/PSO/GVI/PS/MAIN/2738. Letter from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alex Hardinge, 22 February 1938.
17 RA PS/PSO/GVI/PS/MAIN/2738. Letter from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alex Hardinge, 19 August 1939. Designer Brian O’Rorke made the suggestion. The monogram GR was subsequently changed to ER.
18 Memo from CME Stanier to Mr F. Merrett at Wolverton, 1 May 1937, NRM.
the liminal space, a ‘realm which has few attributes of either the past modes of being or the future’, and from there, out into the public sphere.\textsuperscript{19}

7.3 War service

Travelling by train around the country during WWII was a means by which the King and Queen reinforced their relationship with the nation. The Coronation of George VI in 1938, an event of high ritual and ceremony, had initiated this closer relationship. It was the first television broadcast of a Coronation, using just three cameras and reaching a limited audience, but was also transmitted by radio both internationally and within Britain.\textsuperscript{20} The conveyance to the broad public of consecration rituals enhanced by the intense drama of the Coronation would have aided projections of power onto the King by a listening public, further legitimizing the monarch’s role and privilege, inducing a sense of what David Cannadine has characterised as ‘stability, security and permanence’ extending across Britain and the Empire.\textsuperscript{21}

German forces were already bombing Britain when carriage numbers 798 and 799 came into operation in 1941. The King and Queen had experienced a direct aerial attack on Buckingham Palace. The royal couple travelled 36,000 miles in no. 799 and no. 798 in this period with the intention of inspecting the men and women in the services and visiting key wartime industries and communities affected by the Blitz.\textsuperscript{22} Both carriages and the sovereign ‘played their parts as symbols of national resistance’ with the human subjects and the material world of carriage and warzone perceived by the British public as inextricably linked.\textsuperscript{23} Drawing on contemporaneous letters from the public, historian Frank Mort argues that the abdication crisis which saw George VI ascend the throne was not a ‘temporary interruption to the progressive evolution of the Windsor monarchy, but rather a

\textsuperscript{19} Turner 1969: 94.
\textsuperscript{22} Jenkinson 1981: 59.
time which saw the transference of significant anxieties onto the sovereign and royal family’ by all classes of people.24

Therefore, these two carriages, travelling through Britain with the monarchs on board, can be seen as large objects which, in Miller’s terms, ‘mediate between the subjective and objective worlds’.25 They also expressed both difference and unity at a time of national crisis.26

7.4 The layouts of 799 and 798: expressing royal identities during wartime

Up until WWII, a rigid class system was in place in Britain. As Ross McKibbin has pointed out, although the upper class and the monarchy was small in number, its wealth and network of social connections, or habitus, was very influential ideologically and culturally.27 However, working-class families made up over seventy per cent of the population at the time of the building of no. 799 and no. 798 and although women’s work in the textile industry had declined, new opportunities involved work in shops, offices, and military service. Nevertheless, the assumptions were that work was for the men while women remained in their traditionally set-down spheres; as McKibben has argued, ‘the working class had a very fragmented, gender-determined social experience’.28 Paradoxically, royalty were historically more flexible over role-gender alliances.

Role-gender demarcations became more fluid during WWII as illustrated by a watercolour by Helen McKie (1889-1957) where two young working women in uniform are presented as meeting at the station (Fig. 7.5).29 McKie produced a number of drawings and paintings of wartime activity at Waterloo Station in London, a hub for troops travelling to and from the front line in Europe.30 This could apply to the young woman depicted. She is wearing the uniform of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, her cap denoting that she was part of the Field

25 Miller: 103.
26 Miller: 130.
28 Ibid: 204.
29 Helen McKie was an artist and illustrator. Her sketches paintings and murals during WWII were of military personnel and warships. A collection of her work is in the archive at the V&A and at the NRM. She illustrated brochures for SR.
Service division. The war saw a dramatic increase in female employees. Working in signal boxes, as porters and guards, they were also involved in engine-overhaul and the maintenance of tracks (Figs. 3.9 and 3.10).

In this context, how far can the layout and decoration of carriages no. 799 and no. 798 be read as an expression of social values at a time of flux such as WWII? Decades previously, Queen Victoria had shared her immediate sleeping quarters with family, while similar accommodation for the ladies-in-waiting and male attendants were segregated by the monarch’s rooms. By the time of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, despite the new sovereign having two children, no provision for them was made in the layout, rather the children have separate carriages with staff of their own in a vein that echoed arrangements in the palace. Carriage numbers 799 and 798, identical in their diagrams were, from the outside, only distinct by virtue of no. 799 being allocated to the Queen and no. 798 to the King, each with ‘drawing room, dining car, sleeping cabins and accommodation for maid and valet’. Separate suites for the King and Queen continued to be integral to the design of other royal transport interiors into the 1950s. Architect Hugh Casson (1910-1999), commissioned to refurbish the interior of the royal yacht for Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh in 1953, echoed the interiors of no. 799 and no. 798 since the suites were described as restrained and unornamented, ‘simple, almost austere’.

7.5 Design decisions: the collaborative designer

In chapter three, I outlined the work of architect and designer Brian O’Rorke, highlighting his association with Colin Anderson on the interior design of both first and tourist class accommodation in Orient Line ships including the Orcades (II), 1937, and where O’Rorke had, apparently, successfully avoided ‘Georgian, Jacobean or jazzy modern styles’. In fact, O’Rorke had his own views on what he perceived to be good design. In an article of 1937, he addressed the issue of ‘period’ and ‘modern’ interior decoration. He was conscious of the binary position

---

35 Jose Manser, Hugh Casson, A Biography (London: Viking, 2000), p. 291. Casson became a public figure in London in 1951 when he was named the director of architecture of the Festival of Britain.
created where ‘modern’ was associated with younger people, while the ‘period’ style was approved by the older generation. Rather than take sides in the argument, his approach was to distinguish between modern decoration, or ‘doodling’ as he termed it, exemplified by ‘meaningless pattern, the riot of inlaid cross-banded and quartered veneers and distorted metalwork’ and ‘modern design’ which incorporated ‘all the beautiful materials that are available’, to be utilised for their ‘intrinsic worth’. The choice of O’Rorke as designer of carriages for a new King and Queen may have been because he was able to strike a balance between traditional and modern modes.

The commissioning of two new carriages was a re-statement of royal authority and the sense of a new start for the monarchy following the uncertainties around the abdication of Edward VIII and then the outbreak of war. The choice of O’Rorke for the interior by LMS was because he had demonstrated an ability to produce transport interiors of a high quality, which were both functional and contemporary in feel. O’Rorke would also have been an acceptable choice to both the royals and the railway company for a number of reasons, not least because of the elite modern design circles in which he moved.

The royal couple, aged forty-three and thirty-eight respectively, wished to convey the notion that they represented stability and tradition in an age of uncertainty whilst ‘moving with the times’. Yet how far they subscribed to a ‘modern’ approach is debateable. ‘Moving with the times’ was a phrase more associated with Edward VIII, according to Philip Zeigler. Edward VIII actively sought out new ideas related to social reform, drawing criticism that he was too accessible to the public, eschewing the mystique that surrounded monarchy. When his brother George VI was crowned, the latter was perceived as reverting to the traditional type of monarch people understood. O’Rorke would have been cognisant of these changes.

Illustrative of O’Rorke’s approach to design is part of the first-class lounge on the Orion, which bears comparison with no. 799 (Fig. 7.6). In the Orion, the lines of the furniture, mirrored in the rug, are straight and simple without ornamentation. The

---

37 Brian O’Rorke, ‘Modern Ship Decoration: Things the Designer Can Do and Things He Can Avoid’, Lloyds List and Shipping Gazette, 31 December 1937. OrB/1 RIBA.
38 Philip Zeigler, ‘Edward VIII: the Modern Monarch?’ The Court Historian, 8 (2003), 73-83 (p. 73).
39 Ibid.
textiles are also plain, while the mirror and chrome tabletop reflect the light from the window. The linear lines of the wooden floor and rug and the arrangement of the chairs and sofa give a sense of conviviality, enhanced by the easily movable upright chair, small table, and lamp. By including the writing-blotted, book, magazine, and beaker in his design, O’Rorke has demonstrated his control over design detail and, in so doing, has indicated that this is a flexible space intended for both individual and communal pursuits, where the ship’s timetable does not apply.

In his sectional drawing of the proposed lounge of no. 799, O’Rorke was working with limitations on his design in vehicle length and the necessity of the doors at each end of the carriage (Fig. 7.7). The creation of an intimate yet flexible space, as on the Orion, is harder to fashion since the carriage is also a thoroughfare, thus offering few options as to the placing of writing desk, sofa and chairs. The wall panels were designed to be removable, and O’Rorke refers to ‘a method of secret fixing of panelling and details of joints’ and ‘removable partitions’ which indicate that a smooth finish and the potential for flexibility was the aim. These modern notions contrast with the inflexibility of design and finishes established by the railway company. To disguise the repetitious nature of the space in the saloon, I observed the position of the rug had the optical effect of reducing the rectangular nature of the area (Fig. 7.24).

Comparing Figs. 7.6 and 7.7, the Orion lounge shows that while the ship had curtains held back with sleek, curved-metal shapes, the sectional proposal for the Queen’s carriage lounge had voluminous curtains with conventional tiebacks. The only reference to contemporary styles in the carriage was the rectangular glass-topped coffee table; grey elm for the Queen’s lounge, English walnut for the King’s. At this point there is a not a cabinet or focus for the room. The flap-table, so often a space-saving feature of any carriage, is redundant with the flower arrangement almost as a decorative afterthought. However, in O’Rorke’s drawings of no. 799 reference is made to a ‘side cabinet’. In fact, the layout of the interior changed as the cabinet replaced the flap-table and became a focus from the easy

---

40 Drawing no.329/72 6 November 1939, NRM. Drawing no.2471/9 16 November 1938, NRM.
41 Order books of Gordon Russell Ltd. Gordon Russell Trust.
42 Drawing no.2471/9 16 November 1938, NRM.
chairs. O’Rorke’s watercolour of the saloon spaces on no. 799 and no. 798 shows how he finally executed the design of these spaces (Figs. 7.8 and 7.9).

O’Rorke was at the hub of commissioning the interior but he had to ask the permission of LMS to execute his ideas. The notes from his meetings with the LMS describe him as visiting firms to select suitable veneers from the bundles, electing to obtain and supply furniture, chairs, and bed-ends. He wished to engage Gordon Russell Ltd about the interior furnishings, because the firm had carried out the fitting of the royal rooms on *HMS Repulse*. He requested quotations from Marion Dorn Ltd as well so that there were ‘alternatives’. What is clear is that decision making around this time was dynamic, with LMS, O’Rorke and the King and Queen involved in making changes. During the design process, for example, decisions regarding the lighting were changed. Originally seven wall-lights and ten ‘striplites’ (sic) were allocated to the Queen’s saloon. The strip-lights, associated with modernity, are then crossed out on the drawing and the ‘other scheme’ referred to. The wall-lights, still *in situ* today, are much as drawn, with silk-fluted shades in a muted Nile green complemented by silver-effect brackets (Fig. 7.8). The changes and cross-referencing between schemes makes the process and timing of amendments to drawings sometimes unclear. By May, 1939, O’Rorke intended to submit colour sketches to their Majesties. In August, when O’Rorke had one of his regular progress meetings with LMS at Wolverton, for which he had produced a model (no longer extant), it was decided that ‘both day saloons should be finished in paint, involving modifications to the method of construction and thus new drawings’.

Amendments to the design were at the request of the royal couple, but other constraints were also involved. O’Rorke’s struggle to reconcile notions of the modern with the traditional and to retain his principles of modern design would have played a part in alterations. His own views on would also have had to be congruent with the limitations imposed by the standard LMS carriage body.

---

43 Notes of meeting at Euston, LMS CME Dept with Brian O’Rorke on 12 April 1939. NRM.
44 *HMS Repulse* was selected to convey the King and Queen during their May 1939 Canadian Tour and was refitted between October 1938 and March 1939 for this role.
45 Notes of meeting at Euston, LMS CME Dept with Brian O’Rorke on 12 April 1939. NRM.
46 Drawing no.3297/72 6 November 1939. NRM.
47 Ibid. NRM. Presentation drawings or watercolours are not known.
48 Notes from meeting between Brian O’Rorke and LMS on 29 August 1939, NRM.
Equally, design modifications and availability of materials were subject to the encroaching issue of wartime.

7.6 How did representations of the interiors of 799 and 798 convey the personal tastes and public image of the King and Queen?

This part of the chapter examines two watercolour sketches and two finished watercolours in the art collection of the NRM in order to consider how O'Rorke took the personal requirements of the monarchs into account in his designs of the bedrooms of nos. 799 and 798. The two watercolours convey their bedrooms in contrasting ways (Figs. 7.10 and 7.11). Outside the King’s bedroom it is night and the overall effect of the scheme is also dark, with drab shades of grainy, veneered, walls combining with light-brown furnishing giving an overall streamlined, uniform effect which is mirrored in the smooth lines of the train’s exterior. A striped eiderdown on the bed matches the curtain material, the latter held back with plain metal clips as on the Orion. The lights are neat, constructed of metal with glass, while one chair has a cane back; the other is larger and upholstered for comfort. The brown rug has a checked pattern. Taken as a whole, the simplicity of this room is in contrast with the Queen’s bedroom.

Looking through the windows of no. 799, the gaze is drawn to potentially a Scottish landscape, which would have been familiar to the Queen, with hills, mist and light blue indicating sea and sky (Fig. 7.10). Inside the bedroom, the scene is a domestic one. A picture is on the wall and large books in the bedside cabinet, while flowers are positioned on the dressing table. The light-grey walls have a silver-gilded detail reflected in the dressing table mirror. O’Rorke has indicated in pencil (in the top left of the design) that the ‘railing’ detail should be white, the panels in ‘duck egg blue’. The mirror and picture frame as well as the handles on the dressing table and the toiletry set are all silver or another reflective metal which gives a sense of movement and energy to the space.

This streamlined effect is also evidenced in the shape of the bed footboard, the parallel lines and silvered curve denoting a sense of speed (Fig. 7.12). The silvered effect is continued in the fabrics of the quilted eiderdown and the curtain pattern, which has splashes of pink, the predominant colour of the fitted flooring, and armchairs, which are unpatterned. A fluffy cream rug is shown near the bed.
The official biography of Queen Elizabeth conveys King George as a man ‘overshadowed’ by his more glamourous elder brother. In the eyes of her friend Helen Cecil, Elizabeth on the other hand is a ‘perfect angel as usual’ and the early life of the Scottish aristocrat is portrayed as one characterised by carefree activities. Once married to George as Duke of York, and a mother of two, the life of the Queen changed rapidly as a result of the abdication, accession and outbreak of war but she remained a mother, as the photograph of her children on the dressing table signifies. William Shawcross, using diaries and letters of the Queen and her family and friends, shows how her main aim was to support the King and rebuild the institution of monarchy. While fulfilling this role as consort, the Queen’s humour, smile and capacity for personal warmth are promoted along with a love of books, shopping, interior decorating and art. Sir Owen Morshead, the Royal Librarian, is quoted in 1940 as saying that the Queen was ‘noticeably modern in her tastes, whether in books or pictures, or in her outlook on life; and this makes it easy for her to establish contacts in circles new to court life’. As Sir Roy Strong has suggested, all royal relationships must be ‘super perfect’ for they are the ‘ideal’ family as illustrated by James Gunn’s (1863-1964) later portrait of the royal family gathered at the table at home, where the King is the focus and his wife serves him tea (Fig 7.13). Photographic portraits of Queen Elizabeth after 1937 underscore her perceived infallibility. Her 1939 official portrait was by the royal photographer and theatrical designer Sir Cecil Beaton (1904-1980), who, through the clever use of lighting and backgrounds, ‘transformed the symbolic meaning of the monarchy after the trauma of Edward VIII, inflecting it strongly towards a sweet nostalgia for the Edwardian and Georgian periods’ (Fig. 7.14). Furthermore, Beaton’s own caption on the portrait’s reverse captures her perceived qualities: ‘the serenity of this beautiful photograph portrays the sweetness and dignity of HM the Queen’. He reflected that his work had captured her ‘radiance […] that elusive quality of light and fairy book charm.

50 Ibid: 118.
51 Ibid: 411.
52 Strong 1997: 110.
54 Ibid.
surrounding her’. These perceptions, interests and tastes are confirmed in O’Rorke’s watercolour of the Queen’s bedroom. His image of femininity corresponds with her public image, yet simultaneously moves it away from the historicised to the modern by his choice of uncluttered lines and painted surfaces. O’Rorke also differentiated the spaces in the choice of colour, with pink, cream, and silver characterising the Queen’s room and the King’s room in darker shades of ‘cinnamon’.

The final execution of the bedroom designs was described in *The Locomotive Magazine* of 1946, and an indication of how O’Rorke’s designs were implemented is also evident in the black and white photographs of the finished bedrooms (Figs. 7.15 and 7.16). The saloon interiors were described as ‘finished in multi-ply panelling’ while the ceilings are ‘of three-ply faced with ivory white leather, arranged in rows of square panels, bordered by half round beadings which are leather faced and flush with the ceiling face’. However, the author does not distinguish clearly between the King and Queen’s bedroom decor implying that the ‘Worcester blue egg-shell lacriete enamel’ of the panelling, the ‘mulberry’ carpet and tapestry curtains of ‘pale blue’ applied equally to both rooms; from O’Rorke’s paintings this is unlikely.

The Queen’s bedroom was photographed without the biographical references O’Rorke had introduced into his watercolours (Fig. 7.10). There are no books by the bed, flowers, or pictures. However, a clock has been introduced, inset into the panelling above the bed and a drop-down, flap-shelf is shown in operation in the King’s bedroom, closed in the Queen’s. No rug is evident the Queen’s bedroom, the fitted carpet being plain while the silvery, quilted eiderdown and the patterned upholstery of the chair, stool and curtains enliven an otherwise restrained space. The swirling, organic patterns of the fabrics are also suggestive of shells and ribbons and reminiscent of the style of Marion Dorn (Fig. 7.17).

The Queen’s accommodation was lit by pleated drum-shaped lights, annotated as ‘silk shades on clear Celestoid drums’, as in the original watercolours, while

---

55 Ibid: 40.
56 Memo from CME Stanier to C and W superintendent, 24 August 1939. NRM.
57 Anon, ‘New Saloons for Royal Trains’, *The Locomotive Magazine*, 14 September 1946, p. 147. No information has been found to identify lacriete enamel.
58 Ibid.
59 The carpet commissioned from Dorn for the lounge is discussed later in this chapter.
additional lights over the dressing table mirror indicate the importance of good lighting regardless of the time of day (Fig. 7.18). In the King’s bedroom, the lights are of an ovoid shape while the walls are veneered in a dark wood: ‘part paint finish, part walnut’ according to O’Rorke (Fig. 7.19). The chairs, of weathered sycamore, although upholstered on the back and seat have cane sides while the dense, dark, woven curtains give an overall sombre effect.

Despite the bedrooms having fundamental similarities in terms of shape and items of furniture, the designer has differentiated them in terms of gender and personality. The rooms are designed in line with contemporaneous perceptions of the personal qualities of the Queen, rather than for the King, since in his watercolours O’Rorke has accentuated her personal, biographical objects. No evidence has been found to suggest that the King and Queen selected the objects for their interiors; their choices mainly concerned the decor.

Study of items of furniture can enable us to see the design process at work in moveable objects, too. O’Rorke’s design gave the King and the Queen a dressing table each (Figs. 7.10 and 7.11). The 1930s were becoming a media age with the increasing role of photography, magazines and newsreels, radio and nascent television, enhancing people’s sensitivity to personal appearance. For the royal family, being in the public gaze was part of their role.

O’Rorke differentiated the dressing tables in his original watercolours, but the working out of these ideas in practice, as shown in the black and white photographs, raises other issues. In the watercolours, the dressing tables are each given a triple-aspect mirror in anticipation of the royals’ need to check all aspects of personal appearance before meeting the public. This references the influence of Hollywood glamour, where films had ‘scenes set at elaborate dressing tables made of exotic woods, chrome and mirror glass with elaborate drapes or fringing forming a skirt’. The presence of the elegant padded-stool, the table’s white curves, glass shelf and articulated, retractable drawer to conceal personal objects, gestures towards glamour and the moment when the Queen will take part in her own public performance with ‘an emphasis on smartness and modernity’ (Fig. 7.10).

60 Drawing no. 12665 19 July 1939. NRM.
61 Order books of Gordon Russell Ltd.
A comparison can be made with the dressing table of the theatre heiress and actress, Miss Bridget D’Oyly-Carte, in her penthouse suite at Claridges Hotel in London in 1936 (Fig. 7.20). The triple-mirror and side-lighting emphasise the need to prepare for the public gaze from every angle. This is in contrast to the domestic Utility furniture of the 1940s bedroom designed for the middle and working-class home, which often featured a simple chest of drawers with a single large mirror fixed on top and no stool to sit upon, more like the dressing table in the King’s bedroom (Fig. 7.21).

While both objects have a very large tilting single mirror in the photographs, the King’s traditional chest of drawers of ‘weathered sycamore’ is plain and rectangular with a kneehole, closer to what was found in a domestic environment. In his role as Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Great Britain and the Empire, the King would frequently need to appear in military uniform, yet despite its size, his dressing table is restrained and functional, especially in comparison with the one illustrated in O’Rorke’s painting. As Miller notes of artefacts, the dressing table has a ‘bridging role’. It is not directly symbolic of the King’s status for the object is plain and simple (Fig. 7.11). The dressing table thus evokes a variety of responses, for a banal object such as a box, for a watch and cufflinks, has been decorated with monograms, while the folder implies the presence of important papers. There are what appear to be three clothes brushes of different sizes, indicative of the significance of the appearance of the King’s uniform or other clothing. Yet these items are not personalized and even the photograph frame is empty. In his depiction of the King’s and Queen’s dressing tables and their associated objects, O’Rorke can therefore be seen as complying with the idea that ‘people buy goods to help another individual better conform to their general sense of what people in that category are supposed to be like, rather than fostering individual creativity or difference’. However, O’Rorke’s illustration of the Queen’s dressing table provided a more nuanced and complex picture of the woman, interweaving aspects of her personal life with her public image.

---

64 Order books of Gordon Russell Ltd.
66 Miller 1987: 106.
Due to the limited space in the carriages only a few objects are situated in the living areas namely, a sofa and chairs, a coffee table, a writing table with telephone and a ‘cabinet’ (Fig. 7.22). The cabinet was not part of the original design process but it became integral to the scheme, a focus for the room in the absence of a fireplace. Christopher Cook has argued that during this period, ‘traditional ideas about what constituted British domestic space were challenged by developing entertainment technologies’. In most British homes in 1940, entertainment came by way of the radio designed in the form of a box with a transmitter and loudspeaker. In the 1930s, these boxes had taken on different shapes and styles, some being in Bakelite, others in wood. The popular set was from Murphy’s, Ted Murphy having collaborated with the firm of Gordon Russell Ltd to create a set with ‘clean lines and purist forms with no adornment or unnecessary detail’ (Fig. 7.23).

Gordon Russell Ltd, discussed in chapter three, was commissioned by O’Rorke to make the radios in no. 799 and no. 798; the company sent a tracing of a full-size section to Mr Bond at LMS. It was unlikely that Gordon Russell himself made the item, since ‘he did not design a single piece between 1930 and 1977’. The selection of this object, with its combination of modern media and traditional methods of making, embodies the tensions at the heart of design during this period. By disguising the radio as a piece of furniture, traditionalists who would have eschewed the Bakelite versions, were appeased. While the cabinets on carriage numbers 798 and 799 look identical, the order books at Gordon Russell Ltd show that the one destined for the King’s lounge was intended to be in English walnut while the one for the Queen’s lounge was grey elm. Both resembled a ‘radiogram’, a combined entertainment object which could contain a record player. The radios are incorporated into large, solid, pieces of wood cabinet furniture, not unlike a low sideboard (Fig. 7.22). Each piece is symmetrical, with a drawer and cupboard and an open shelf arrangement flanking each side of the tuner and volume control, hidden by an articulated roller-door.

---

70 15 July 1940, Roll no.68. NRM.
72 Order books of Gordon Russell Ltd.
So, was the presence of these objects merely to be a focus for the sofa and chairs? Speculatively, the presence of these objects was also linked to the identity of the King and Queen in a dialectical way. Publicity material for both radio and television in the 1930s showed family members together in their living rooms, their attention drawn to the wooden objects emitting sound and vision or just sound; media images which reiterate the notion of the ‘ideal’ family. But, since there was a cabinet featured in the lounges of both the King and Queen the implication is that they could choose to listen separately, perhaps according to their different tastes.73

During this decade the power of the radio played a key part in the life of the sovereign. It was a media-vehicle which they used to exert their authority and influence and for earning both the respect and opprobrium of the British public. When Edward VIII broadcast his intention to abdicate the British throne in 1936, the ramifications and commentary from the public was intense. But, unlike most of Britain, the radio was also an object the royal couple could more than use, they could also consume its news and light-programming hidden from the public, media gaze and depredations of war under the armour-plating of the carriages’ exterior. As a domestic home on the rails, the interiors of the royal carriages raised some of the same issues as those of the populace: the need for a ‘focus’ for the living room, the familial enjoyment of entertainment via radio programming.

In his watercolour of the Queen’s lounge, Brian O’Rorke also showed a plain yellow rug (Fig. 7.8). A comment recorded from the Queen indicates that this was not the depiction of the space she saw, as her desire was to have: ‘an all over grey carpet with a yellow rug in front of the sofa with pattern as shown in the drawing, but smaller. The rug should be sunk flush with the carpet so that there should be no risk of tripping over it’.74 In the bedroom, it was stipulated that there should not be a loose rug and the colour scheme be more blue than mauve.

However, on entering the lounge of no. 799, I observed that the light-green colour of the rug is striking, enlivening the room, even in the reduced lighting of the interior of the NRM (Fig. 7.22). Two grey, naturalistic blocks of colour, overlaid with

---

73 I have not found any photographs of the royal family in these carriages in this period.
74 RA PS/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738 Letter from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alexander Hardinge on 28 July 1938.
sections of parallel lines in white, cross the carpet. The eye is drawn to this pattern, as if to make sense of it, as it is neither representational nor symmetrical. By looking to the pattern, the observer is brought to the focus of the room, the chairs, and radio cabinet, a centre of interest that detracts from the traditional functional features of a carriage such as the doors, ceiling, and windows. The effect of the shape of the rug is to make the room squarer, reducing the sense of the length of the carriage. The name of the designer ‘Dorn’ is woven visibly into the corner of the wool yet in his drawings and sketches O’Rorke does not allude to the name of the designer.

Why was Marion Dorn’s rug selected for this space? I argue that it was unlikely that the Queen chose it personally. One biography of Queen Elizabeth gives an insight into her personal artistic tastes. Guided by Sir Kenneth Clark, the surveyor of the King’s pictures, she developed a taste for the work of contemporary artists such as Rex Whistler (1905-1944), Augustus John (1898-1961) and Edward Seago (1910-1974). These artists produced largely conventional works, which were in the genres of portraiture and landscape, very unlike the non-representational ‘calligraphic swirls’ which characterised many of Dorn’s rug designs in the 1930s. O’Rorke and Dorn had worked together on a number of projects such as the RMS Orion’s first-class spaces, domestic interiors and the ocean liner Orcades (II), launched in 1938. For this ship, Dorn produced her modern ‘aircraft’ furnishing fabric. Dorn’s commissions from Modernist designers, Christine Boydell posits, was because ‘she designed in sympathy with their work’ indicating that her work was firmly in the architectural Modernist context. By the time of her production for no. 799, Dorn was designing for the carpet company Wilton Royal and had exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, thus negotiating the boundaries between traditional and modern styles.
In fact, Boydell’s thesis on Dorn shows that the rug was not made with either the Queen or the space in mind, being one of two made by Wilton for 64, Old Church Street, Chelsea.80 ‘Machine woven in wool’ this record lists a ‘Length of carpet in green 1936’ also mentioning ‘width’ but not ‘rug’ as with other entries. This implies that this may have been an ‘off cut’ of a larger piece. The architects Mendelsohn and Chermayeff had originally built 64, Old Church Street, a Modernist villa in London SW3, between 1934 and 1936 for the publisher and MI6 agent Dennis Cohen (1891-1970).81 It was a house designed as a dramatic, flexible backdrop to the display of the owner’s Chinese art.82

During WWII, carpet manufacturers were commissioned for the war effort and much production halted, including any for Dorn after 1940. This would have frustrated the effort to make a bespoke carpet or rug for no. 799. Whether the carpet in no. 799 was not required at the Chelsea house, rejected by the owner, or was simply a remnant is unknown. However in 1942 the Queen, via Sir Alan Lascelles (at that time the King’s Assistant Private Secretary), asked Sir Harold Hartley (Vice-President of LMS) for its removal. Hartley’s response was prompt; ‘the yellow and grey rug has been removed and will be stored in case Her Majesty would like it back at any time’.83 Its presence and subsequent removal from the carriage speaks of the ambiguities around choices of traditional and modern elements in this monarch’s mobile home.

7.9 A ‘move to simplicity’84

The President of the LMS, Sir Josiah Stamp (1880-1941), was an economist and Chairman of the railway company from 1926.85 It has been mooted that he exercised stricter financial controls on the trains and thus the simplicity of the saloons was due to the rise of accountancy and his influence.86 While no evidence for this has been found, Stamp was keen to create a channel of communication between the railway company and the royal family once it had been agreed at the

---

80 Boydell 1992: 376. An entry alongside this one points to another carpet of yellow and blue at the NRM which has not been identified.
82 Ibid: 8.
83 RA PS/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738 Letter exchange between Sir Alan Lascelles and Sir Harold Hartley 30 June 1942 and 13 July 1942.
84 Jenkinson 1981: 47.
85 Michael Bonavia, The Organisation of British Railways (London: Ian Allan Ltd, 1971), p. 29. Stamp was both Chairman and President from 1927-1941.
86 Kingston 1985: 147.
end of 1936 that a new train for a new king was necessary. Connections were duly made between LMS staff, Sir Harold Hartley, Mr Byrom (Chief Operating Officer for the LMS), Mr Purves (technical expert for the LMS), and the Private Secretary to the sovereign, Sir Alexander Hardinge.87

This group met with the royal couple on 17 February 1938 to look at the full plans in the Picture Gallery at Buckingham Palace.88 A corridor in the carriage had been added to the plans as suggested by LMS ‘for convenience’, and the consequence of this initial meeting was that the plans for the Queen’s saloon were approved but the King had particular stipulations about the placement of the furniture in his rooms. However, it was agreed at the request of their Majesties that the decoration would be ‘simple, without elaborate mouldings or inlay’ and that further ‘coloured drawings, patterns of fabrics, paints, and panelling of Empire Woods’ would be submitted so that the interior decoration could be settled.89 O’Rorke would have created these. On 27 July 1938 O’Rorke’s schemes for the carriage interiors had been resubmitted, and were approved subject to some alterations. King George asked for the loose rug to be omitted from his bedroom, that in order to tone with the furnishings a pale-coloured stippled-paint should be used for the wall finish rather than wood panels, and that the carpet should be of a lighter colour.90 An article in The Locomotive Magazine explained that this was an ‘enamelled fawn’ eggshell finish, with ‘skirtings’ of English walnut’.91 Changes to the Queen’s saloon in 1938 included pale-grey paint instead of wood panels and in drawing number 2471/9, and from the crossings out and additional wording, clearly such design changes were made to the interior decoration of the Queen’s lounge. This was originally stated as being in ‘London Bridge Elm veneer with marquetry lines in holly and solids in London Bridge Elm’.92 This is reiterated in Jenkinson.93 However, on the drawing, the London Bridge Elm is crossed out and replaced by Silver Birch, which is also crossed out and replaced with Silver Elm.94 Finally, the whole scheme is crossed out and ‘paint finish’ added underneath in pencil (Fig. 7.19). This change of scheme indicates a personal preference for a painted finish,

87 RA PS/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738.
88 RA PS/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738 Letter from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alex Hardinge on 22 February 1938.
89 Ibid. Empire woods were discussed in chapter three and five.
90 Ibid.
92 Drawing no. 2471/9 Roll no. 68. NRM.
and may reflect choices made at Buckingham Palace, too, as in March 1937 the King and Queen had moved in and remodelled some of the private rooms with ‘painted pine’ to replace dark walnut panelling.95

The economic downturn after WWI brought financial ramifications for the railways, and prompted the King to request that the carriages be delayed by a year, a request which was duly implemented.96 However, by the close of 1939, war was upon Britain. The effects on design were seen particularly in furniture, as Reimer and Pinch have argued, which became influenced by the wartime availability of raw materials, manufacturers and ‘commodity chains’ which formed part of the government’s promotion of the use of British timbers such as beech, oak and elm.97 These restrictions became bound up with the promulgation of ‘good modern design’ and its associations with lack of ornamentation and simple, clean lines. Similarly, the choice of simple modern interior paintwork in no. 799 and no. 798 can be attributed as much to an awareness of the shortage of materials as to aesthetics. A letter dated 19 August 1939 from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alexander Hardinge, reconfirmed that their Majesties would prefer paint to wood panelling for the walls of the bedrooms, while wood panelling of Canadian Rock Elm and Australian Maple was suitable for the corridor and vestibule areas.98

There is evidence that O’Rorke went to some lengths to get detail right in the carriages which indicates that he was in dialogue with the monarchs wish to exercise some control over the spaces they inhabited whilst on the train. Certainly, the designer was in close contact with the railway company. In a memo to CME Mr Stanier of August 1939, Mr Coleman raised a question from the Derby works regarding the dimmer switch on the bedside lamp.99 At this point, this feature was only available to the King but should it be also made available to the Queen? This is recorded as a decision to be taken by O’Rorke. The lighting was an ongoing issue between O’Rorke and the designers at Messrs Troughton and Young Ltd of

96 RA PS/PSO/GVI/M Ain/2738 Letter from Sir Alexander Hardinge to Sir Josiah Stamp on 10 November 1938.
98 RA PS/PSO/GVI/M Ain/2738 Letter 19 August 1939.
99 Memo to Stanier from T. F. Coleman 23 August 1939, ALSS 37/C/1-3, Wolverton Correspondence Files Royal Trains LMS saloons 798 and 799. NRM.
Knightsbridge London SW1. As has already been mentioned, the style of light was fairly uniform in numbers 799 and 798. The wall lights as in Fig. 7.8 and Fig. 7.9 were the main source, the 'striplites' (sic) having been rejected for the living space but installed in the bathroom. In the bedroom, O’Rorke had sketched a ceiling-light over the head of the bed, but none of the lights supplied by Troughton and Young were fit for the purpose. Coleman notes that the ‘glass globe fitting and shades needed to be changed to prevent jarring due to the vibration of the train’ and thus risking the danger of the glass light falling onto a sleeping sovereign.  

1/60-watt lamp bulbs were to be used in the carriage but O’Rorke avoided central lights in numbers 799 and 798, which would be the norm for open carriages. Wall lights would also have had the effect of domesticating the environment and detracting from the elongated shape of the carriage.

In a temporary home, especially a small one, efficient use of the space is paramount as packing up and moving on is always a possibility. Not shown in his original artworks yet evident on the diagram of no. 798 only is a ‘flap table’ (Fig. 7.25). Where space was at a premium, such as in the design of carriage kitchens for example, the flap-table was the mainstay of the interior. Two flap-tables of wood are in the lounge of no. 798 and there is also one in both the King and the Queen’s bedrooms, shown in use over the bed and another of a thinner, lighter material over the bed in the Sergeant Footman or Lady-in-Waiting’s sleeping space (Fig. 7.26). Brian O’Rorke also made adjustments to his drawings for the bespoke wardrobes, taking into account that the ‘carcass was to be removable to give access to the removable partition behind’.  

When consulted, the King felt that the ‘drawing of the cupboard seems a bit complicated, but it looks alright’, a comment on how O’Rorke was making the maximum use of the space whilst being aesthetically pleasing. O’Rorke also settled on a full-length hanging-space and another for shorter items. Drawers of different depths were provided as were open shelves for hats and sliding trays, with mirrors in situ. These were built, as were the flap-tables, by LMS.

100 Ibid
101 Drawing no. 3297/72. 1939. NRM.
102 RA PS/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738. Handwritten note of George VI, 2 March 1940.
103 Memo to Carriage and Wagon superintendent from CME Stanier 28 July 1939. NRM.
Designing clothes for a media age, Sir Norman Hartnell (1901-1979) was the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother’s dress designer from the 1930s until his death. He was very aware of the need for planning the clothing of the monarchs, so their storage, ordering and presentation was critical. Hartnell explained in his autobiography that the ‘personal maid is required to pack only those which are necessary to be worn in or on leaving the train, while all the other dress luggage is sent on ahead’. The relevant royal household staff were asked for their comments on the wardrobes and no doubt the compact and accessible design of the wardrobe design reflected the need for speedy packing and unpacking of items. The move to simplicity was further exercised in the choice of clothing. While the King had his uniforms for public duty, according to Shawcross, the Queen’s gowns were a ‘constant source of worry’; therefore Sir Hartnell ‘retinted and rearranged’ dresses from the pre-war years in order to fit in with the wartime austerity restrictions. This economy of reuse has resonances with the limitations on costs for the carriage interiors.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, using original sources, I have unified the interior design and decoration history of two royal carriages, which played their part in national history. I have brought together the sitting, dining and sleeping functions of carriages explored in earlier chapters, to show how they intersect on one train built for specific people as demonstrated by the layout, the use of ritual and insignia, and the purposeful collaboration between designer, railway company and prospective users, and their entourage, rather than the everyday passenger.

This chapter also aimed to deduce whether the interior design, fitting, and decoration of royal carriages conformed to the British amalgam of styles established in previous chapters. The move away from the longstanding designers associated with railway vehicles to O’Rorke was due to his design networks, his collaborative work on other forms of transportation and his modern sensibility in terms of flexible spaces and choice of decor. The large, well-lit vestibule area, for example, was designed to allow for the movement of the royals into a liminal space, from the private world of the carriage, into the public realm. I have also

105 RA 5\P5/PSO/GVI/MAIN/2738 Handwritten note by Sir Alan Lascelles to HM King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. n.d.
106 Hartnell: 102.
argued that O’Rorke, through his choice of furniture and furnishings, was able to mediate the personal qualities and public roles of the King and Queen, being cognisant of public perceptions in a media age. I have shown that the simple, flexible design and modern decor of the royal carriages was not solely part of a design ideology, but also because the royals made their own interventions on style and due to wartime shortages of materials. In contrast to everyday carriages, the royal vehicles were a nuanced ‘home on the rails’, as they carried domestic objects, and the occupants collaborated over the space. While the designer could do little to disguise the traditionally utilitarian nature of the mobile architecture, the interior speaks of modernity.
Conclusion

This thesis has examined how the British amalgam of traditional and modern concepts and styles, intrinsic to the period 1920 to 1955, was manifested in the mobile interior of a carriage. This furthers the scholarship of Sparke by the application of theoretical approaches relating to space, gender and material culture. The inauguration of four main British railway companies, and a single, nationalised one was cited in the political, economic, and cultural upheaval of the first half of the twentieth century. It was a period of radical change in terms of gender and nationhood for the population and these themes have been analysed in relation to mobile interiors. Two World Wars created a sense of reflection on what it meant to be English in the face of a diminishing Empire on a global stage reduced by speed, travel and technological innovation. This turn towards home raised questions, expressed in the arts and literature, of whether technology meant a loss of English rural traditions.1 The impact of legislations affecting women, urbanisation, transport and leisure options, the importation of domestic goods and ideas created new expectations for travellers and home makers alike. Designers and artists queried publicly how industry and design could combine, not only to aid England economically and socially, but also to move the country on, into a modern future. This was worked out through architecture, art, objects and exhibitions, but the tension remained within inflexible industries and craft cultures.

My fieldwork visits to the large objects themselves, at different locations across England, informed the research questions for this thesis. Conversations with onsite conservators produced other objects and insights unavailable in texts and drew attention to heretofore overlooked aspects of the carriages. I could then apply these to photographs, texts, artworks and drawings of both extant and non-extant carriages for a greater understanding of the passenger experience, design decisions made and by whom, for example. My experience of being a passenger was important in terms of bodily negotiation of open and compartment spaces. I was surprised how few carriages remained in their original condition as I knew there were so many heritage railways in operation. If the latter could research and retain photographic records of their carriages before refurbishment, then object biographies would be easier to obtain. Smaller objects observed on carriages

---

provided visual references to the cultural context of their period and stimulated the rich range of visual materials to support this design history.

In chapter two, I established social relations of space and the expression of national identity as key questions for understanding the carriage interiors. It is possible to analyse carriages as ‘moving architecture’ because their physical properties map well on to the Western architectural tradition of understanding architecture through three properties: structural soundness, function, and aesthetic quality of carriages. Their functions and the presence of variation across the types was shown to be compatible with theoretical approaches described in the introduction. I established the notion of a British style of carriage, one, which was created by the CME’s, steeped in English elite culture and traditional ways of working in the railway industry but also affected by the international exchange of ideas and the introduction of modern fuels, heating and ventilation systems.

Although the production of carriage interiors became standardised through training and mass production methods, the skills of the workforce were fixed in past practices, spatially and by gender, while some tasks were performed by both genders, but in separate spaces. This demarcation of production was not coterminous with wider societal changes for women. Traditional materials used were combined with modern ones as they appeared, and craftsmen adapted by problem solving. Draughtsmen and women, created new designs for the carriages, but these were often copied, either from other companies or from modernistic styles. I have shown that there were designers associated with the Modern Movement who created design for train interiors. These operated alongside traditional and longstanding firms, and both had an impact on the hybrid nature of the carriage space.

In the case study of the GWR Super Saloons, I was able to nuance the contributions of the specialist design firm and the railway workshop staff to the creation of a specific hybrid interior. By commissioning such a traditional and long standing firm as Trollope’s for carriages mainly used by travellers arriving in Britain on ocean liners, GWR were promoting not only a sense of continuity and familiarity between modes of transport, but also a sense of national identity at a time of economic downturn. GWR managers were clearly hoping to both attract wealthy passengers and retain those they had transported when they had the Pullman
contract. Trollope's were able to supply the appropriate skill-set which would enable the emulation of luxury imported brands such as Pullman, and provide for passengers a nationalistic idea of England, remote from the modern world. By applying the theoretical approaches of Lefebvre, Bissell, Augé and Schivelbusch, the spatiality and layout of the carriage interior as well as the finish and decoration was shown to signal luxury to both established and potential customers.

The design of the compartment was experienced as a confined space, which forced undesired social interactions and made some passengers afraid. Design for an able-bodied adult male was the standard, despite the increased presence of female commuters in this period. Personal space, associated with modernity, was desirable and visual culture, which mediated the social relationships passengers preferred to experience, promoted the potential for relaxed personal exchanges in the open carriage.

The materiality of the carriage seat affected the physical, bodily experience of the journey and the visual imagination was stimulated by use of patterned textiles and references to modern objects. This created a modern experience in a traditionally constructed carriage. To compete with short motor coach trips, LNER in particular emulated the differentiated coach seat design in order to attract passengers, but by eschewing headrests and armrests, the corporeal experience was a secondary factor to the visual nature of the interior. Despite their use of visual representations of interiors as a means of competing with the motor coach and aeroplane and deployment of new materials and patterns at nationalisation, modernity and tradition continued to live in tension in the committee designed Mark 1 of the 1950s.

I concluded that by the 1930s, public dining spaces acted as a medium for the cultural values and expected behaviours of varying social groups. While the railway companies intentionally used an amalgam of styles to create an environment for first-class diners, the design of buffet car interiors echoed the more democratic eating spaces of the British Milk Bar and American Soda fountain. The railway company publicity conveyed a message that on-train dining was more flexible and open to a wider demographic, like the family orientated and informal American diner for travellers. In fact, British on-train dining into the early 1950s held to cultural distinctions through the railway company’s use of space,
objects, and seating. Men occupied the roles and spaces related to serving diners on the train. As modern technologies and materials entered their world, these coexisted with traditional practices in a ‘conservative modernity’, which characterised the interwar period. As with the seating spaces, dining interiors continued to juxtapose modern and traditional design up until and after nationalisation.

Sleeping accommodation on the train was modelled on the traditional compartment layout, accessed from a side corridor. The railway companies, in order to maintain class distinctions, ensured that prestigious firms were commissioned to design both historicised and modern interiors. However, it was not until the 1940s that the communal sharing of sleeping space was dispensed with. First-class passengers had their individual needs catered for, but the railway company held to fixed modes of organising space. The sense of confinement for passengers, often feared in the compartment, paradoxically alleviated anxieties in the sleeping carriage. Restraint in the sleeping compartment also stimulated the imaginary and contributed to feelings of status elevation in first-class passengers.

Chapter seven interrogated whether the interior design, fitting, and decoration of royal carriages conformed to the British amalgam of styles established in previous chapters. Royal carriages were different from the everyday vehicles as they were built with specific persons in mind, as demonstrated by the layout, the use of insignia, and the purposeful collaboration between designer, railway company and prospective users. The choice of a designer, Brian O’Rorke, associated with modern interiors was a move away from the use of traditional longstanding specialist design firms. I have argued that O’Rorke was able to mediate the personal qualities and national public roles of the King and Queen in a number of ways, being cognisant of public perceptions in a media age. I demonstrated that the simple design of the royal carriages was not only due to a modern approach to décor but also because, unlike the building of the everyday carriage, the royals made their own interventions on style and there were wartime shortages of materials. The designer was shown to actively work with the traditionally utilitarian nature of the royal mobile home on the rails, introducing flexible spaces and

---

domestic items and allow personal control over space; these factors contributed to a modern interior.

I have shown how a close study of one design firm, Trollope’s, contributes to design history by revealing how they worked with the railway workshop staff. Archival evidence indicated that such well-known professional design firms of the period, associated with transport interiors, were not listed among the exemplars of good design, yet they continued to be used by the railway companies until the 1950s. These firms, namely Waring and Gillow, and White Allom, are potential areas for further research.

Other transport interiors were touched upon but excluded from my research. For example, more than one original interior of railcars survive and the names of some designers have been uncovered. The relationship between these interiors and the design of tramcars and motor coaches would complement this work and add to the history of transport and mobilities studies.

The conclusions above help realise the strategic aim of the NRM to 'explore the huge impact of railways on Britain and the wider world'. They relate specifically to twentieth-century Britain in terms of culture and design. It was clear from my public presentation on the democratisation of eating spaces on the train as seen through objects and spatiality, that the relationship between objects in the museum’s collection and the wider cultural field could be more fully realised. I suggest that carriages presented in their cultural contexts in Exhibitions can free their narratives from the static museum environment where they are presented as part of British heritage, to having wider interpretations concerning nationalism and gender. The proposed juxtaposition of relevant art historical works and drawings alongside the display of the royal carriage no. 799 at the NRM may assist in this. Also, contemporary scholarship from other disciplines with design history has the potential to not only enlarge the history of objects but to inform the museum collecting strategies.

4 Author presentation at the Institute of Railway Studies seminar was held at the NRM on 26 February 2020.
Some scholars have held to the view that ‘to understand the cultural impact of railways’ is to move out of disciplinary silos and also to see the railway as ‘central to understanding modern everyday life’. Design history is well placed to create a fresh synergy between and with a number of disciplines, as writing about design allows for close looking at objects, materials, space, production, and the way objects mediate cultural values. Its practice can also take the overview, embracing both local and global contexts. Application of these facets of design history would enable a creative synchronicity and a reassertion of its value and contribution to research in both historical and contemporary fields.

The National Archives

BT/57/12 ‘Industrial Art and British Manufacture: A survey’, 1927

BT/57/16 list of leading designers [1937]

BT/57/21 National Register of Industrial Art designers [1937]

BT/57/20 Minute 320, 11 November 1937

BT/57/20 Letter from Mr Marchetti to Frank Pick, September 1937

BT/57/20 Letter from McKnight Kauffer to Watkinson, [?1937]

RAIL 527/1863 NER Correspondence and Papers, [n.d]

RAIL 418/80 LMS Traffic Committee Minute no. 6 minute no 3220, 1932-1933

RAIL 418/83 LMS Traffic Committee Minute no. 9, 1937-1938

RAIL 390/32 LNER Locomotive Committee Minute book no.3, 1933

ED 90/2, 1922-1934

ED 98/2, 1925-1934

Royal Archives

PS/PSO/GVI/PS/MAIN/2738

Letter from Sir Harold Hartley to Sir Alex Hardinge, 22 February 1938
Letter exchange between Sir Alan Lascelles and Sir Harold Hartley, 30 June 1942 and 13 July 1942
Letter from Sir Alexander Hardinge to Sir Josiah Stamp, 10 November 1938
Handwritten note of George VI, 2 March 1940
Handwritten note by Sir Alan Lascelles to HM George VI and Queen Elizabeth, n.d
National Railway Museum

LMS

Drawing no. 5751, Box no.237, LMS Section of third-class compartment, no.8761 [?1922]

Part of plan for sleeping carriage 14/1229

Drawing no. 12/110, Box 388/15, Roll no.465, third-class sleeping car, Interior
Finishing Sections, 1928

Drawing no. 12/104, 1928, sleeping carriage

Drawing no. 12/107, Box 388/15, GA third-class sleeping carriage, 1928

Drawing, no. 12/110, third-class sleeping carriage, 1928

Drawing no. 14/1301, Box 388/15, Folding steps and table, third-class sleeping car, 1928

ALS 5 37/C/1-3 Wolverton Correspondence files Royal Trains LMS saloons 798 and 799, 1939

Drawing no. 3297/72, 1939

Drawing no. 2471/9 Roll no.68, 1938/9

Memo 23 August in Roll no.68, 1939

Tracing in Roll no. 68 15 July, 1940

Memo to C and W superintendent from CME Stanier, 28 July, 1939

Memo to C and W superintendent from CME Stanier, 24 August 1939

Notes of Meeting at Euston between CME Stanier and Brian O'Rorke, 12 April 1939
Memo from CME Stanier to Mr F. Merrett at Wolverton, 1 May 1937
Drawing no. D14/2489 Box 85 Roll 133, carpet design by R. S. Grey, 29 November 1934

Drawing no. D/14/2679, tubular-steel chair design by P.C., 6 January 1936
Formation of royal train, ink on paper, Royal Journeys 1940– 41, NRM 6/41
Diagram registers
Tables, AO58 Box 49

GWR
Sketchbooks of Mr Sheldon; (uncatalogued)
Sketchbooks of draughtsmen Mr Jones, Mr Davies, (uncatalogued)
ALS6/14/C/8 Swindon Works C&W Roll 294, Diagram of Super Saloon, 1931

LNER
Sectional drawing, 1938, no.13117N
Sectional drawing, 1938, no. 13116N
ALS3/62/E/6, CME’s Instructions, C& W/LNER/2*, 1923-1947
ALS 3/62 Gresley minute, 21 December 1938
ALS3/62 Memo from Mr Edge to Messrs Shepherd, Stanley, Taylor, 25 April 1935
ALS3/62/E/6 Memo from Mr Edge, 27 July 1934
Drawing no.9223N, chairs, 1933
Diagram 167 buffet car, 1933
E12/79P ‘Design for Comfort’ Survey 1945
Tourist stock seats, drawing no. 9817N
Third-class sleeper Neg. no. DON 47/210

SR

Box 49 AO 58 Roll5 E38881, dining chair, 1947

BR

ALS/3/67/F/4 BR Carriage Standards Committee January, 1950


Book of carriage diagrams

Mark 1 photographs ALS5/33/A/4/Box 5

Oral history and unpublished memoir

Mr Best, Interview by Mr A.G. Self with staff at Holloway White Allom, 9 September 1977, (uncatalogued)

Blackford, Royston NAROH 2002-29, 1944-c.1962

Rogers, A. E., A Century of Meals on Railway Wheels, AL5/37/A/4, (unpublished, 1979)

Graseman, Cuthbert, ‘Transport Publicity’, Talk to Ulster Section of the Institute of Transport, 20 November 1951. GRASE5 NRM ALS3/41/B/3,

Other

AL5/37/A/4 On train catering, Hotels and Catering Box 5, various, n.d

Diagram sleeping car no. 3792, 1933, Wagon Lits

Photo Albums

PH/ALB 144, c1924

PH/ALB 337, c1933

PH/ALB 373, c1949
PH/ALB 10a 99

Photo file 315, c1951

Photo file 99, c1924

Photo file 359, c1933

Female labour File 469

Negative HORF 2216

The ‘Ambulance Trains’ exhibition, 2016-present

**Gordon Russell Museum**

Order books of Gordon Russell: Gordon Russell Trust, 1940

**Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture**

T Whatley and Sons catalogue BADDA 655
Arding and Hobbs catalogue BADDA 267

**Historic England**

Bedford Lemere photographic Collection

**London Metropolitan Archive**

LMA B/CWT/030, 1930-1931

LMA B/CWT/031, 1931-1932

**Mass Observation Archive**

‘Southern Railway Carriages’, Sx MOA1/1/12/2/4 no. 2461,[www.thekeep.info/collections](http://www.thekeep.info/collections), University of Sussex Library, c 1947
[accessed 25 November 2019]

**RIBA**

OrB/1 Collection of press-cuttings of the works of Brian O’Rorke, 1935-1962
OrB/1 O’Rorke, Brian, ‘Modern Ship Decoration: Things the Designer can do and the things he can Avoid,’ *Lloyds List and Shipping Gazette*, 31 December 1937
Photographic collection

**Science Museum**

Model of LMS first-class kitchen and dining car, Bassett-Lowke, Object no. 1958-227, 1932

Textile sample, hydragillite, Festival of Britain Pattern Group, Object no. 1976-644/52, 1951

**Keighley and Worth Valley Railway**

Pete Eastham, *Mark 1 materials*, 1980s

Peter Starks, letter to KWVR, 2004

**Didcot Railway Museum**

General Arrangements Super Saloon [1931]

Milne, James, *Instructions for the Guidance of Restaurant Car Staff*, (London: Great Western Railway, 1936)

**STEAM Museum of the Great Western Railway**

GWR, Locomotive Committee, 30.4.1931. ‘Minute Book no. 8.’ (GWR, 1931), p. 208

Photo Album File H1

Photo Album File C23

Photo Album File C21

Photo Album HWORKS 19

Photo Album HWORKS 22

**Newton Abbot Library**

BA Speedbird Heritage Centre

Unpublished patent drawings

Film

*Partners in Crime*, dir. By Edward Hall, (BBC, 2015) [on DVD]

[Of Coppersmiths And Kings Swindon Works BBC 1985 - Bing video][accessed 15 January 2021]

*Corridor Third*, (George Smith Enterprises for LMS, 1934) NRM

*Pathways of Perfection*, (BFI, 1937)

Brown, Susanna, Open Arts Object: Beaton’s portrait of Queen Elizabeth II on her Coronation Day (Open University, n. d.)


*The Night Ferry - IRPS Night Mail* (irps-wl.org.uk)

Pre-1960s Publications

Akers, J. B., *From the Cradle to the Sea: A Biographical Study of the Queen Mary* (Glasgow: Progressive Advertising Service, 1936)

‘Announcement’, *Caterer and Hotel Keeper Magazine*, 19 August 1938, p. 21

‘Apprentices in Railway Workshops’, *The Railway Gazette*, 23 September 1927, p. 361


Bowman’s Ltd, ‘Catalogue’, (London, 1933)


Carrington, Noel, *Design in the Home*, (London: Country Life, 1933)

--- *Design and Decoration in the Home*, (London: Country Life Ltd, 1938)

--- *The Shape of Things*, (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1945)

‘Company Meeting Report’, *Daily Mail*, 19 June 1925, p. 3

‘Constables Fight’, *Daily Mail*, 20 December 1926, p. 5

‘Corner Seats and Open Windows’, *The Times*, 31 August 1935, p. 41

Cosgrove, J. R., ‘Empire Timbers, with Special Reference to their uses for Furniture and Decoration’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 80 (1932), 379-86

‘Courses in Carriage Building,’ *Railway Gazette*, 10 June 1927, p. 751

Cox and Co., Ltd, ‘Steel Furniture’, (London, 1933)

‘Decorative Materials for Bus Seating’, *Passenger Transport Journal*, February 1937, p. 82
Design Industries Association, Yearbook, (London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1926-7)

Easton, R. ‘Tips can't Buy a Seat’, Daily Mail, 15 December 1942, p. 3

‘Empire Timber Exhibition’, The Journal of The Society of Architects, 13 (1920) 382-83

‘First Milk Bar Firm in Liquidation’, Caterer and Hotel Keeper, 4 November 1938, p. 77


‘Furnishings from Britain’, (London, 1948)

Gibson-Martin, W. A., ‘Furnishing and Decoration of Passenger Coaches,’ Railway Engineer, March 1933, p. 90

Gifford, Michael, ‘Design for Travelling’, Over the Points, April 1938, p. 11

Gloag, John, Industrial Art Explained (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1946)

‘GWR Employees Arts and Crafts Exhibition’, GWR magazine, May 1928, p. 181

Great Western Railway, Holiday Haunts (Swindon, Great Western Railway, 1939)

Haighton, Allan, ‘Gresley Buffet Cars’ (York: National Railway Museum. n. d)


‘In the Sleeping Car’, The Times, 30 May 1947, p. 5

Lock, C. S., ‘Experimental Streamlined Heavy Oil Rail Car’, GWR Magazine, December 1933, p. 505

‘LMS Sleeping Saloons’, The Sunday Times, 27 July 1924, p. 15

Mais, S. P. B., Glorious Devon, (Swindon: Great Western Railway, 1928)


Martin, Raymond, ‘Rooms at Speed’, Decoration, January/March 1935, p. 32-34

McGrath, Raymond, ‘Mural "Rexine" in modern decoration and technical facts about the use of the material’, (ICI: Rexine Ltd., 1937)

‘New Buffet Cars’, Great Western Railway Staff Magazine, August 1934, p. 318

‘New buffet cars’, The Railway Magazine, August 1934, p. 23

‘New First-Class Sleeping Cars, LMSR’, The Locomotive, 14 September 1935, 278-280


‘New Saloons for Royal Trains’, The Locomotive Magazine, 14 September 1946, 47-50, 130-132, 147-150

‘New Tourist Trains’, The Railway Gazette, 28 July 1933, p. 140

Nock, C. S., ‘Some little known GWR facts and figures’, GWR magazine, August 1936, p. 397


‘Progressive Training of Railway Apprentices’, *Railway Engineer*, March 1933, p. 90

‘Railway Companies’ Experiment’, *The Times*, 10 March 1928, p. 9

‘Railway Exhibits at the British Empire Exhibition’, *Railway Magazine*, 1924, pp. 468-474

*Picture Post*, vol 43, issue 6, 7 May 1949, London


Read, Herbert, *Art and Industry*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1934)


‘Sleeping Cars’ *The Times*, 28 July 1945, p. 5

‘Sleeping Cars’, *The Locomotive*, 15 November 1928, p. 354


‘Snack Bar Leads Patron to Restaurant’, *Caterer and Hotel Keeper*, 9 December 1938, p. 47


--- *Southampton Docks Centenary Booklet*, 1938, p. 29

Special Correspondent, ‘The Third Class Sleeper’, *The Times*, 26 September 1928, p. 11

Stone, J. Harris, ‘Caravan Notes and News’, *The English Illustrated Magazine*, September 1909

*Studio*, vol. 90, 1925, p. 19

*Studio*, vol. 94, 1927, p. 338

Supplementary, *Railway Gazette*, 30 December 1932, p. 55

Sybil, Lady, ‘Dim Railway Carriages’, *Daily Mail*, 20 October 1927, p. 10

‘Third Class Sleepers’, *Daily Telegraph*, 20 September 1928, p. 10

‘Third Class Sleeping Cars’, *The Railway Gazette*, 17 July 1914, p. 73

‘Third Class Sleeping Cars’, *The Railway Gazette*, 16 March 1928, p. 354


Thomas, E. S., ‘Notes on a Knitting Technique,’ *Man*, 36 (1936), p. 72


UK Parliament, ‘Railway buffet Cars (Design)’, *Hansard*, 27 June 1949 vol.466

https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1949-06-27/debates/292548d1-8c1c-492f-b734-
UK Parliament, ‘Regulation of Railways, HC Deb 27 March 1928, vol 162 cc271-3’

UK Parliament, ‘Sir Alpheus Morton’, *Hansard*, 1803-2005,

Underwood, Miss F. A., ‘Carriages Reserved for Women’, *The Times*, 5 July 1924, p.10


**Secondary Sources**


Anderson, Anne, *The Cube Teapot* (Somerset: Richard Dennis, 1999)


Bahamas Locomotive Society, Learning Coach (Keighley, West Yorkshire: Bahamas Locomotive Society, 2018)

Banham, Mary and Bevis Hillier, eds., A Tonic to the Nation, the Festival of Britain 1951 (London: Thames and Hudson 1976)

Bassett-Lowke, Janet, Wenman Joseph Bassett-Lowke (Chester: Rail Romances, 1999)


Beaven, Brad, Leisure, citizenship and working class men in Britain, 1850-1945 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005)

Behrend, George, Gone with Regret: Recollections of the Great Western Railway 1922-1947 (Kent: Lambarde Press, 1964)


---The Four Great Railways (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1980)

---The History of the Southern Railway (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1987)


--- *Railway Workshops* (Oxford: Shire, 2012)


--- *The Elements of Style* (London: Octopus Publishing Group, 2005)


Carroll, Robert, ‘BR Mk1 Catering Vehicles: A Brief History’, *Model Rail*, February 2007, no. 100, pp. 60-65

Carter, Ian, *Railways and Culture in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001)


---*British Railway Enthusiasm* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008)


Champaneri, Maya, ‘Rethinking the Orient Express’ (unpublished master’s thesis, University of York, 2014)


Darling, Elizabeth, Re-Forming Britain: Narratives of Modernity before Reconstruction (London: Routledge, 2007)

de Winter Hebron, Chris, *Dining at Speed: A Celebration of 125 years of Railway Catering* (Kettering, Northants: Silver Link, 2004)


Elliot, B. 'Art deco hybridity, interior design, and sexuality between the wars, two double acts: Phyllis Barron and Dorothy Larcher/Eyre de Lanux and Evelyn Wyld.' in L. Doan and J. Garrity (eds.), *Sapphic modernities: sexuality, women and national culture* (Palgrave, Macmillan: New York, 2008)


Fenton, Mike, *Camp Coach Holidays on the GWR* (Didcot: Wild Swan Publications, 1999)

Ferry, Kathryn, *The Nation’s Host* (London: Viking, 2016)


---Railway Art (London: Ash and Grant Ltd, 1977)


Haresnape, Brian, *Design for Steam 1830-1960* (Surrey: Ian Allan, 1968)


---British Rail 1948-83: A Journey by Design (Surrey: Ian Allan, 1983)


Harris, Michael, *Great Western Coaches from 1890* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1985)

---Great Western Coaches 1890-1954 (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1972)


---Gresley’s Coaches (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1973)

---Preserved Railway Coaches (Surrey: Ian Allan Ltd, 1976)

---LNER Carriages (Southampton: Noodle Books, 2011)

Harrod, Tanya, *The Crafts in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (USA: Yale, 1999)


Heidegger, Martin, ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’ in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings* ed. by David Farrell Krell (Routledge 1978)


Historic England, ‘17, Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1’,
https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1066190,
[accessed 2 December 2019].

Holt, S., ‘The Phenomenon of Formica’ in Formica and Design, ed.by S. Lewin,


Hooper, Glenn, 'English Modern: John Gloag and the Challenge of Design',
Journal of Design History, 28 (2015) 368-84

Hopkin, Dieter, 'Railway Preservation: Railways, Museums and Enthusiasts',

Hughes, Geoffrey, Sir Nigel Gresley (Catrine: the Oakwood Press, 2001)

Hurley, Andrew, Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks (USA: Basic Books, 2001)

Irwin, Francina, and Mike Davidson, Brush to Paper: Three Centuries of British
Watercolours Aberdeen Art Gallery (Aberdeen: Aberdeen City Arts Dept., 1991)


Jackson, Frank, 'The New Air Age: BOAC and Design Policy 1945-60', Journal Of
Design History, 4 (1991), 167-185

Jackson, Lesley, From Atoms to Patterns: Crystal Structure Designs from the 1951
Festival of Britain (Welcome Collection, London: Richard Dennis in association
with the Welcome Collection, 2008)

Jackson, Ashley, The British Empire (Oxford: OUP, 2013)

Jenkins, Colin, ‘The Super Saloons’, Great Western Railway Journal, no. 32
Autumn (1999) 473-477

Jenkins, Terry, Sir Ernest Lemon (UK: Railway and Canal Historical Society, 2014)


Jeremiah, David, 'Motoring and the British Countryside,' *Rural History*, 21.9 (2010), 233-250


--- *The Restaurant Car* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Ltd, 1979)


--- *British Railway Coaches* (London: Ian Allan Ltd 1962)


Lawrence, David, *British Rail: Designed 1948-97* (Manchester, UK: Crecy Publishing Ltd, 2016)


Lees-Maffei, Grace, ‘Professionalization as a Focus in Interior Design History’, *Journal of Design History*, 21 (2008), 1-18


Lyth, Peter, ‘Think of her as your mother Airline advertising and the stewardess in America 1930-1980’, *Journal of Transport History* 30/1 (2009)


Massey, Doreen, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1994)


--- *The Fair Sex: Women and the Great Western Railway* (Gloucester: The History Press, 2010)

--- *Railway Voices. 'Inside' Swindon Works* (Gloucester: The History Press, 2011)


Medcalf, Alexander, "We are Always Learning": Marketing the Great Western Railway ,1921-3’, *Journal of Transport History* ,33 2 (2012), 186-211


---*Stuff* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010)

---*Consumption and its Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012)


Mom, Gijs, 'What kind of transport history did we get? Half a century of JTH and the future of the field', *Journal of Transport History*, 23 (2003), 121-38


Moraglio, Massimo, 'Seeking a (new) ontology for transport history', *Journal of Transport History*, 38 (2017), 3-10


Mort, Frank, “Love in a Cold Climate': Letters, Public Opinion and Monarchy in the 1936 Abdication Crisis', *Twentieth Century British History*, 25 (2013), 30-
Mullay, A., *Streamlined Steam: Britain’s 1930s Luxury Expresses* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1994)


Pirie, Gordon, 'Incidental tourism: British Imperial air travel in the 1930s', *Journal of Tourism History online*, 1. 1 (2009) 49-66


Rendell, Jane, 'Gender, Space,' in The sphinx in the city: urban life, the control of disorder, and women, ed. by Elizabeth Wilson (Berkeley, California, Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 101-111

---'Introduction' in Gender Space Architecture, ed by Rendell, Penner and Borden, 2000, ebook

Revill George, Railway (London: Reaktion, 2012)


Robertson, Kevin, Great Western Coaches in Colour (Southampton: Noodle, 2011)


--- *An Introduction to Design and Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004a)

---'Mobility History from a Design Historian's Perspective', *Journal of Transport History*, 29 (2007), 131-35

---*The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion, 2008)

Strangleman, Tim, 'Constructing the Past: Railway History from below or a study in nostalgia?' *Journal of Transport History*, 23 (2002), 147-58


---*The Cult of Elizabeth* (London: Pimlico, 1999)


Sykes, Andrew, Alastair Austin, Mark Fuller, Taki Kinoshita, and Andrew Shrimpton, 'Steam attraction: Railways in Britain's national heritage', *Journal of Transport History*, 18 (1997), 156-73


Todd, Selina, ‘Domestic Service and Class Relations in Britain 1900-1950’, *Past and Present*, 203 (2009), 181-204


van Gennep, Arnold, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge, 1960)


Walsh, Margaret, ‘Gendering Transport History,’ *Journal of Transport History*, 23 (2002), 1-8


Watts, Laura, 'The art and craft of train travel', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 9.7 (2008), 11-26


---*Twentieth Century Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)


Worden, Suzette and Jill Seddon, ‘Women Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s: Defining the Professional and Redefining Design’, *Journal of Design History* 8:3 (1995), 177-193


**Web based sources**

*A history of the UK passport - Home Office in the media (blog.gov.uk)* [accessed online 24 November 2020]

Applied Mobilities,  *https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rapm20/current* [accessed 8 April 2020]

British History online, ‘Survey of London’, *https://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/survey-london* [accessed 2 December 2019]


International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility, T2M,*https://t2m.org/*[accessed 3 January 2020]


*Transport Museum (ltmuseum.co.uk)* [accessed 7 February 2021].

Morris Furniture Group, [www.morrisfurniture.co.uk/about_us](http://www.morrisfurniture.co.uk/about_us) [accessed 7 March 2020]


*RMS Lusitania - The Lusitania Resource* [accessed 25 March 2021]

Royal College of Art, *Domestic Interiors Database*,


T2M, Annual Conference Website, [https://t2mparis2019.sciencesconf.org/](https://t2mparis2019.sciencesconf.org/) [accessed 1 October 2019]


Youth Hostels Association [https://www.yha.org.uk/about-yha/history](https://www.yha.org.uk/about-yha/history) [accessed 29 March 2021]
## Appendix One  List of carriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of build</th>
<th>Company &amp; workshop</th>
<th>Name of carriage</th>
<th>Description /notes</th>
<th>Current location</th>
<th>Number diagram, Lot no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939-1941</td>
<td>LMS Wolverton</td>
<td>Queen Mothers /Elizabeth</td>
<td>Royal carriage</td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 799 Diagram 2054 Lot.no. 1168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939/ 1941</td>
<td>LMS Wolverton</td>
<td>King George VI</td>
<td>Royal carriage</td>
<td>SVR</td>
<td>Number 798 Diagram 2054 Lot.no. 1168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>LMS Wolverton</td>
<td>Buffet car</td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td>Diagram 1948</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>LMS York (actually Derby?)</td>
<td>3rd brake corridor</td>
<td>static</td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 5987 Diagram 1968 Lot no. 1035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>LMS Wolverton</td>
<td>1st class open vestibule</td>
<td>restaurant 1st (no kitchen)</td>
<td>SVR</td>
<td>Number 7511 Diagram 1902 Lot no. 734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>LMS Derby</td>
<td>3rd class</td>
<td>sleeper</td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 14241 Diagram 1709 Lot no. 418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>LMS Wolverton</td>
<td>Learning coach</td>
<td>Composite Corridor</td>
<td>KWVR</td>
<td>Number 8761 Diagram 1694 Lot no. 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>LMS</td>
<td></td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td>Lot 852</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>LNWR/LMS</td>
<td>Electric train</td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>LNER York</td>
<td>Buffet car</td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 9135 Diagram 167 Lot no.761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>LNER (GNR) Doncaster</td>
<td>Composite</td>
<td>Long-distance express</td>
<td>SVR</td>
<td>Number 4)2701 (post 1925 no) Diagram164K No Lot no. given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>LNER York</td>
<td>3rd class sleeper</td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td>Number 1348</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>LNER Metro-Cammell</td>
<td>Open 3rd class</td>
<td>Tourist stock Replacement interior</td>
<td>NYMR</td>
<td>Number 56856 Diagram D186 Lot no. n/k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>LNER</td>
<td>1st class sleeper</td>
<td></td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>East Coast Joint Stock/ LNER</td>
<td>'1st class sleeper</td>
<td></td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>LNER Doncaster</td>
<td>Flying Scotsman 1st class Dining Triplet</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>LNER Doncaster</td>
<td>1st class Restaurant Car</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>GWR Swindon</td>
<td>Buffet Car</td>
<td></td>
<td>STEAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>GWR</td>
<td>Non corridor Brake 3rd Churchward 'City'stock</td>
<td></td>
<td>Didcot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>GWR</td>
<td>Prince of Wales Ocean super saloon Trolley and Swindon interior</td>
<td></td>
<td>Didcot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>GWR</td>
<td>Queen Mary Ocean super saloon Trolley Only Interior</td>
<td></td>
<td>Didcot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>GWR</td>
<td>3rd class Open Art deco interior</td>
<td></td>
<td>SDR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>SR Eastleigh</td>
<td>Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bluebell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- LNER: London and North Eastern Railway
- GWR: Great Western Railway
- SR: South Eastern and Chatham Railway
- STEAM: Steam
- SDR: South Devon Railway
- No. n/k: Lot number not known
- Diagram: Design diagram number
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>SR Eastleigh</td>
<td>Composite</td>
<td>Bullied</td>
<td>Bluebell</td>
<td>Number 5761 Diagram 2318 Lot no. 3235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>SR Eastleigh (by BR)</td>
<td>Open 3rd</td>
<td>Bullied</td>
<td>KVWR And Bluebell</td>
<td>Number 1469 Diagram 2017 (same diagram and Lot no.) Lot no. 3581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>SR Eastleigh</td>
<td>Tavern car</td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>BR York</td>
<td>Mark 1</td>
<td>Restaurant 2nd Open</td>
<td>KVWR</td>
<td>Number 1013 Diagram 56 Lot no. 30014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>BR Doncaster</td>
<td>Mark 1</td>
<td>2nd Lav. Open SLO</td>
<td>KVWR</td>
<td>Number 48011 Diagram 300 Lot no. 30092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>BR Doncaster</td>
<td>Mark 1</td>
<td>sleeping car first class, second class</td>
<td>not extant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>MR/LMS</td>
<td>3rd class diner</td>
<td></td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 3463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Wagon Lits</td>
<td>Sleeping car</td>
<td></td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Number 3792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Stockton and Darlington</td>
<td>Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix Two  Fieldwork questionnaire

Date of visit

Location of carriage in use? Y/N

Built for specific purpose?

Or route? Did this change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUILDER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKSHOP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR BUILT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurb dates &amp; by whom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style: ‘modern’? historicist’?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Panelling description.

contd
| Lighting, where? Design?  
| Gas or electric? Lamps? |
|---|---|
| Toilet? Description. |
| Seating :Upholstery, colour. Original?  
| Description of pattern. Lay out... 4s? 2s?  
| Chairs, freestanding or built in? |
| Tables Y/N.... Fold away or not? What is the  
<p>| top made of? Pattern? Position. Size? |
| Framed? Position? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Windows</th>
<th>Curtains? Blinds? Description. Pelmet?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flooring throughout or just in specific places? Made of?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any decoration on grilles or lights/ handles Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luggage rack: original?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITCHEN. What is built in and what is free standing?</td>
<td>Brand Names of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diagram of layout. | particular items
---|---
Any specific dining equipment, pottery or cutlery made for this carriage? Where are they? | Brand names and dates?

OBSERVATIONS re class and gender (ladies compartment?)

Photos media fiction oral history