



Pullman Car Services

# Coupe News

Special Edition No.2

“The Quality of Service is Remembered Long After The Price is Forgotten”

## THE DEVON BELLE

**NEW!**

**The DEVON BELLE**

Special Services, Coaches and Wagons in each direction

12.0	Walsley	1.20
3.10	Stamouth Jct.	1.3
3.35	Exeter Ctl.	1.40
5.35	Hilfarnham	12.0
5.55	Plymouth Friary	13.0

**ALL-PULLMAN TRAIN TO THE WEST OF ENGLAND**  
with Observation Car

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY & PULLMAN CAR COMPANY**

# **Coupe News Special Edition No.2**

## **Celebrating 60 years since the introduction of**

# **"The Devon Belle"**

## **Friday June 20<sup>th</sup> 1947**

In September of 1946 the details of an all new Pullman train were made known with the destination of Barnstaple, Bideford and Ilfracombe.

Inaugural date then given for the all Pullman car train with the addition of two observation tavern cars being May 5<sup>th</sup> 1947.

In addition to the requirement placed on the P.C.Co., The Southern Railway advised CME O.V.S.Bulleid to equip four Merchant Navy Class locomotives with larger tenders for the service.

December 1946 saw further pressure from the SR on the P.C.Co., to have the cars required ready for May 1947.

The P.C.Co., identified the need for two cars to be converted to "Observation Cars and four others to include brake accommodation.

Structural modifications (as opposed to fitting out) would be undertaken at the SR Lancing shops. Cars No.27, 54, 55 and 56 arriving out of service from the LNER on January 20<sup>th</sup> 1947.

In February a meeting was held between the SR and P.C.Co., at which discussions included details on painting the observation cars, train title, roof boards and service commencement on May 6<sup>th</sup> 1947.

In April the SR traffic manager advised the service would commence on June 16<sup>th</sup>. In late May SR officers visited the P.C.Co., workshops at Preston Park, Brighton. During the visit it was agreed the roof board's supports be removed from the two observation cars, and matching barrier boards at Waterloo would be required.

Operationally the service would be non-stop from Waterloo to Exeter Central with an engine change being undertaken at Wilton Station (the first station west of Salisbury). At Exeter Central the train would split into two portions. One for Plymouth and the other for Ilfracombe. Overnight accommodation was supplied both at Plymouth and Ilfracombe for staff by the SR.

The Plymouth Portion would consist 3<sup>rd</sup> Brake Parlour (30), 3<sup>rd</sup> Kitchen (36), 1<sup>st</sup> Kitchen (22), 3<sup>rd</sup> Brake Parlour (36).

the Ilfracombe Portion would consist 1<sup>st</sup> Brake Parlour (24), 1<sup>st</sup> Kitchen (22), 1<sup>st</sup> Kitchen (22), 3<sup>rd</sup> Parlour (42), 3<sup>rd</sup> Kitchen (30), 3<sup>rd</sup> Kitchen (36), 3<sup>rd</sup> Brake Parlour (30) and Observation Car. Additional or substitute cars being made available from the Pullman pool as required.



Photograph - The Mike Morant collection

The "Devon Belle" climbing Honiton bank behind 35007 *Aberdeen Commonwealth* during July 1949. Although carrying her new British Railways number, 35007 still has SOUTHERN on her tender. Introduced on 20 June 1947, the all-Pullman "Devon Belle" set a new standard of comfort and luxury for the journey west to Ilfracombe and Plymouth and had a unique feature, a beaver-tailed observation car that was nick-named "The Glasshouse".

The "Devon Belle" was a rather short-lived train, but one that built up a good following during its early years of operation. Introduced by the Southern Railway, the inaugural train on 20 June 1947 ran behind Merchant Navy class 21C15 *Rotterdam Lloyd* from Waterloo to Wilton, with further Merchant Navy power to Exeter then light Pacific's for the final stages from Exeter Central to Ilfracombe and Plymouth. Patronage was not great, though, and from 1950 only the Ilfracombe section was run. Frequently consisting of twelve cars (though thirteen or fourteen were not unknown) with four for Plymouth and eight for Ilfracombe, one big attraction when it was first introduced was the availability of reserved seats, something that was not possible at that time on the "Atlantic Coast Express", nor on any of the competing services from Paddington.



Photograph - The Mike Morant collection

Back in Southern Railway days Merchant Navy class N<sup>o</sup>21C11 *General Steam Navigation* with a full load of coal in her tender and all prepared to work the "Devon Belle".

One of the more popular features was the provision of an observation car for Ilfracombe passengers at the rear of the train, an unusual but not unknown provision on a British train. There were two, numbered 13 and 14, and they were not a new-build but had started life as other vehicles. One, N<sup>o</sup>14, was originally built in 1918 as a LNWR Ambulance car which was converted into a Pullman car in 1921, rebuilt as a Bar car in 1937 and finally remodelled as an Observation Car for the Devon Belle in 1948. With the decline in passenger numbers first the number of operating days was reduced, then came withdrawal with the final service of this well-loved but short-lived train operated in September 1954. Both these observation cars survive, but away from Southern territory, today. N<sup>o</sup>13 works on the Paignton and Dartmouth Railway. Whilst N<sup>o</sup>14 has recently returned from San Francisco and will eventually be located at the Swanage Railway.



Photograph - The Mike Morant collection

Nº21C14 *Nederland Line* at Waterloo with the down "Devon Belle". This photograph, show off to good effect the distinctive nameplates of this train. The background colour was red, which was a departure from the normal green background used on Southern nameplates.



Photograph - The Mike Morant collection

An unidentified Merchant Navy with the "Devon Belle".



**Photograph – The Mike Morant collection**

**An unidentified Merchant Navy class locomotive speeds the "Devon Belle" along with a full load of 14 coaches behind her tender.**



**Photograph - The Mike Morant collection**

**This photograph of another 14 coach train descending Honiton Bank behind an unidentified Merchant Navy class locomotive shows one of the observation cars that were at the rear of each train.**





Photograph - The Mike Morant collection

An unidentified light pacific locomotive heads the "Devon Belle" up the steep bank out of Ilfracombe, with the assistance of a bank engine in the rear of the train. Banking of heavy trains out of Ilfracombe was a regular and necessary feature of the line!

## COUPE NEWS

The only Pullman related newsletter published electronically monthly



For your free copy just e-mail [pullmancarservices@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pullmancarservices@yahoo.co.uk)

The following text is taken from Pullman Car Company Ltd Special Notice dated June 4<sup>th</sup> 1947.

**THE PULLMAN CAR COMPANY LIMITED**

**4<sup>th</sup> June 1947**

**DEVON BELLE**

Commencing on Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup> 1947, and every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday until further notice, an entirely new All Pullman Car train (first and third class) together with an Observation Car will run as shown hereunder: -

**No.1 Train**

Down Fridays  
Up Saturdays  
Down Sundays  
UP Mondays

**No.2 Train**

Up Fridays  
Down Saturdays  
Up Sundays  
Down Mondays

Formation of Nos.1 and 2 Trains from Waterloo: -

Engine End

<u>No.1</u>		<u>No.2</u>		<u>Seats</u>		
				<u>1<sup>st</sup></u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup></u>	
O	T.C.54	O	T.C.55	Brake	-	30 To Plymouth
N	T.C.33	N	T.C.61	Kitchen leading	-	36
M	ARGUS	M	IOLANTHE	Kitchen Trailing	22	-
L	T.C.208	L	T.C.36	Brake	-	36
<hr/>						
K	Princess Elizabeth	K	MINERVA	Brake	24	- To Ilfracombe
J	Rosamund	J	Cynthia	Kitchen leading	22	-
H	Geraldine	H	Fingall	Kitchen trailing	22	-
E	T.C.34	E	T.C.35	Parlour	-	42
D	T.C.249	D	T.C.169	Kitchen leading	-	30
C	T.C.32	C	T.C.60	Kitchen leading	-	36
B	T.C.27	B	T.C.65	Brake	-	30
A	Observation Car 13	A	Observation Car 14		-	

**NOTES**

Train will divide at Exeter Central for Plymouth and Ilfracombe respectively. Observation Car will be turned at Ilfracombe ready for the next working from Ilfracombe.

Total number of seats: -

Plymouth Portion 22 first and 102 third

Ilfracombe Portion 68 first and 138 third

Car Minerva has 2 extra seats and T.C.36 has 6 extra seats.



The timings of the Down Train from Waterloo will be: -

X	Clap.	Waterloo				
	Dep.	Waterloo	12. 0 nn			
"A"	Arr.	Wilton	1.47 pm			
"A"	Dep.	Wilton	1.53 pm			
	Arr.	Sidmouth Jc.	3.16 pm			
	Dep.	Sidmouth Jc.	3.18 pm			
	Arr.	Exeter Central	3.36 pm			
	Dep.	Exeter Central	3.39 pm	Dep. Exeter Central		3.48 pm
	Arr.	Exeter St.Davids	3.44 pm	Arr. Exeter St.Davids		3.51 pm
	Dep.	Exeter St.Davids	3.45 pm	Dep. Exeter St.Davids		3.52 pm
	Arr.	Oakhampton	4.25 pm	Arr. Barnstaple Jc.		4.49 pm
	Dep.	Oakhampton	4.27 pm	Dep. Barnstaple Jc.		4.51 pm
	Arr.	Devonport	5.16 pm	Arr. Barnstaple Town		4.55 pm
	Dep.	Devonport	5.22 pm	Dep. Barnstaple Town		4.56 pm
	Arr.	Plymouth N.Rd.	5.25 pm	Arr. Braunton		5. 4 pm
	Dep.	Plymouth N.Rd.	5.28 pm	Dep. Braunton		5. 5pm
	Arr.	Plymouth Friary	5.36 pm	Arr. Morthoe		5.23 pm
				Dep. Morthoe		5.24 pm
				Arr. Ilfracombe		5.32 pm

"A" Stops to change engines only.

Formation of Trains Nos.1 and 2 Trains from Exeter Central to Waterloo: -

Engine End

<u>No.1</u>		<u>No.2</u>		<u>Seats</u>	
				<u>1<sup>st</sup></u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup></u>
L	T.C.208	L	T.C.36	Brake	- 36
M	ARGUS	M	IOLANTHE	Kitchen Leading	22 -
N	T.C.33	N	T.C.61	Kitchen Trailing	- 36
O	T.C.54	O	T.C.55	Brake	- 30 To Plymouth
<hr/>					
B	T.C.27	B	T.C.65	Brake	- 30
C	T.C.32	C	T.C.60	Kitchen Trailing	- 36
D	T.C.249	D	T.C.169	Kitchen Leading	- 30
E	T.C.34	E	T.C.35	Parlour	- 42
H	Geraldine	H	Fingall	Kitchen Leading	22 -
J	Rosamund	J	Cynthia	Kitchen Trailing	22 -
K	Princess Elizabeth	K	MINERVA	Brake	24 - To Ilfracombe
A	Observation Car 13	A	Observation Car 14		-

**NOTES**

Plymouth portion will be attached to the Ilfracombe portion at Exeter Central for Waterloo.  
 Upon arriving Clapham the train will be reformed and the Observation Car turned ready for the next working from Waterloo.

The timings of the Up Trains to Waterloo will be: -

Dep.	Plymouth Friary	11.30 am	Dep	Ilfracombe	12. 0 nn
Arr.	Plymouth N.Rd.	11.38 am	Arr.	Morthoe	12.11 pm
Dep.	Plymouth N.Rd.	11.40 am	Dep.	Morthoe	12.12 pm
Arr.	Devonport	11.45 am	Arr.	Braunton	12.22 pm
Dep.	Devonport	11.47 am	Dep.	Braunton	12.23 pm
Arr.	Oakhampton	12.43 pm	Arr.	Barnstaple Town	12.31 pm
Dep.	Oakhampton	12.45 pm	Dep.	Barnstaple Town	12.32 pm
Arr.	Exeter St.Davids	1.21 pm	Arr.	Barnstaple Jc.	12.36 pm
Dep.	Exeter St.Davids	1.23 pm	Dep.	Barnstaple Jc.	12.37 pm
Arr.	Exeter Central	1.27 pm	Arr.	Exeter St.Davids	1.31 pm
			Dep.	Exeter St.Davids	1.33 pm
			Arr.	Exeter Central	1.38 pm
			Dep.	Exeter Central	1.40 pm
			Arr.	Sidmouth Jc.	2. 2 pm
			Dep.	Sidmouth Jc.	2. 3 pm
			"A"	Arr. Wilton	3.33 pm
			"A"	Dep. Wilton	3.39 pm
			Arr.	Waterloo	5.20 pm
			X	Waterloo - Clapham	

"A" Stops to change engines only.

#### Staff

No.1 Train in Leaving Waterloo.

#### Ilfracombe Portion

Cond.	L.Richardson	22
Att.	H.Chatfield	150
Att.	A.Nash	370 (Observation Car)
K.P.	B.Paine	495 (Observation Car)
Att.	G.Pearman	143
Att.	A.Anderson	374
Att.	J.Ainsley	609
Att.	E.Nicholson	358
Att.	F.Foster	165
Att.	A.Hunter	394
Att.	W.Cox	341
Att.	J.Pilkington	233 (Toilets & Asst)
Chef.	J.Needham	459
Chef.	S.Busby	407
Chef.	H.Millest	478

#### Plymouth Portion

Att.	J.Peate	63 I/C
Att.	R.Askham	384
Att.	M.Sheaham	182
Att.	F.Labrum	164
Att.	W.Buckley	607
Chef.	J.Hemingway	475
Chef.	A.Orsborn	408

### No.2 Train Leaving Ilfracombe

Cond.	C.de Lemes	21
Att.	O'Neill	391
Att.	R.Clarkson	367 (Observation Car)
K.P.	G.Green	493 (Observation Car)
Att.	P.Clancy	186
Att.	J.Boyle	189
Att.	T.McMahon	171
Att.	J.Stephenson	287
Att.	J.Rose	334
Att.	F.Samphire	372
Att.	B.Evans	272
Att.	E.Messenger	169 (Toilets & Asst)
Chef.	S.Bull	457
Chef.	M.Christianson	439
Chef.	A.Collins	477

### Leaving Plymouth

Att.	S.Scott	142 I/C
Att.	D.Kinnear	315
Att.	A.Hall	155
Att.	S.Crockford	608
Att.	J. Hultquist	191
Chef.	G.Wallace	466
Chef.	W.Curley	403

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### SEAT RESERVATIONS

ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO MY CIRCULAR 86.

The Southern railway intend if necessary to reserve 12 seats in the Observation Cars at weekends. It is hoped that this might not be necessary but it will entirely depend on the volume of bookings.

Conductors in charge of these two trains will have to give special attention to these Observation Cars and ensure that passengers do not monopolise the Cars to the annoyance or inconvenience of other passengers who wish to visit them.

this can best be guarded against by making careful observation for the first few days, and Conductors Richardson and de Lemos will report to me in this respect.

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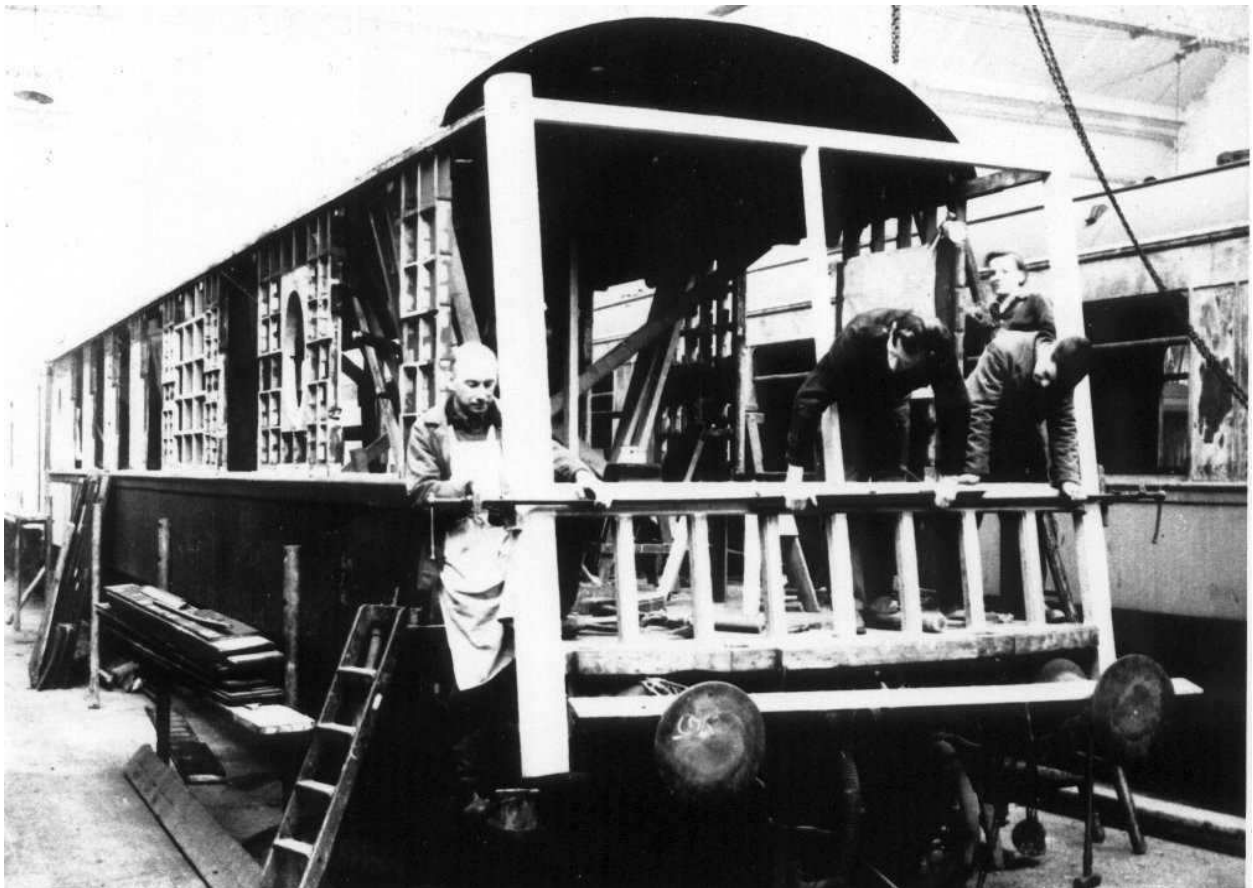
**Special Note for Conductors in Charge and other staff**

On completion of the day's working and before the staff leave the train: -

- (1) Chair covers will be placed on all chairs.
- (2) Carpet runners must be laid down in all cars.
- (3) Blinds will be drawn in all cars.
- (4) GANGWAY CURTAINS BETWEEN ALL CARS MUST BE PARTED TO AVOID DAMAGE IF CARS ARE TAKEN OFF.
- (5) ALL GAS AND WATER TAPS IN KITCHENS AND PANTRIES MUST BE TURNED OFF.
- (6) All lights must be switched off.
- (7) All vestibule doors must be securely locked.
- (8) Platform entrance doors will be shut.

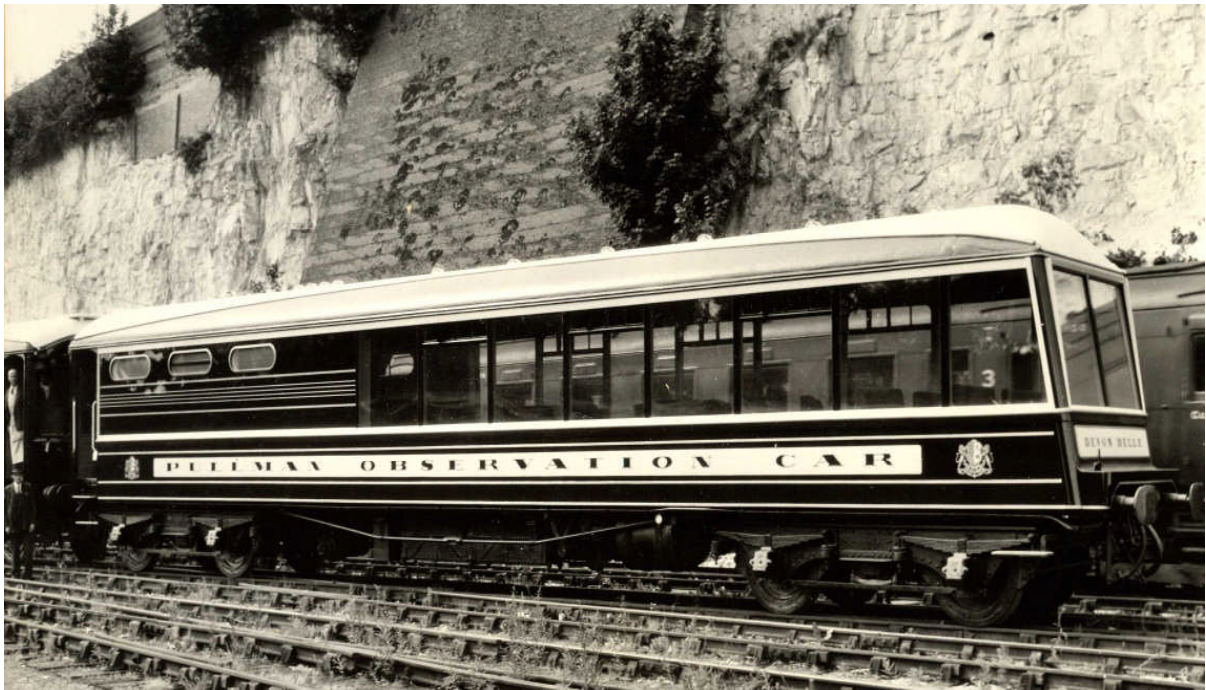
the Conductor in charge will ensure that those points are attended to without fail.

F.D.Harding General Manager.



Photograph - PCS Archive Collection

The Pullman Car Company Workshops at Preston Park, Brighton in 1947. Ongoing work on one of the two Observation Cars.



Photograph - PCS Archive Collection

One of the two Observation Cars now ready for operational service stands outside The Pullman Car Company Workshops at Preston Park, Brighton in 1947.



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My sincere thanks to Roger Holliday for making me aware of a number of errors I made with Regard to the content of the “Pullman Notice of June 4<sup>th</sup> 1947” now corrected.