

The Marine Station was opened for military traffic in January 1915 and used to the full throughout the war years. In 1919 the Admiralty gave up using Dover as a naval port. Some service was resumed between Dover and Ostend in January 1919 and a daily service by June. A service to Boulogne opened the same year and one to Calais in 1920. By 1922 the continental traffic was back to prewar level. Gradually the Marine Station came into its own as a passenger terminal, needing much renovation and restoration after four years of war with no maintenance. A 1914-18 War Memorial of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway was placed in the Marine Station.

The station's heyday was the period between the wars when it was probably the most famous railway terminal outside London, synonymous with the adventure of foreign travel and a style of travelling epitomised by the Golden Arrow Pullman, which began service in 1936 and carried first-class passengers in opulent comfort from Victoria to Dover. As John Hendy, the historian, wrote, "Anyone who was anyone used the service". Kings and queens, potentates and politicians, the rich and the famous, all passed this way, because it was the only way before the advent of air travel.

In the second World War the station once again became a clearing house for homecoming troops, notably during the Dunkirk evacuation. When it re-opened after the war the Golden Arrow service was restarted, but already had to compete with the growing popularity of air travel.

The Golden Arrow was taken out of service in 1972, though boat trains continued to run until 1980. The station, by this time re-named Dover Western Docks, gradually declined until finally it was closed on 25th September, 1994.

While Doverians must agree that the occasion is a sad one, perhaps the station is destined for a yet more splendid future as a magnificent Cruise Liner Terminal, which will bring as many visitors to Dover as passed this way at the height of the station's eminence.

MERRIL LILLEY

Three of our members and Bob Ratcliffe have contributed their memories of the Marine Station and Dover Harbour.



THE GOLDEN ARROW

ALAN ASHMAN

IN THE EARLY post-war years the Marine Station came to life when the Golden Arrow train from Victoria arrived.

Porters lined Platform 3, baggage barrows at the ready, jostling for the privilege of carrying the luggage of the wealthy passengers to the ships.

The clever ones would have already positioned themselves exactly opposite the pre-ordained position of the Pullman carriage doors and the more experienced porters could pile suitcases and trunks so high on the barrows that their visibility forwards was severely restricted, much against the orders so often repeated by the Stationmaster.



Photo]

[A. R. Carpenter

The "Golden Arrow", headed by a 'Merchant Navy' class engine, leaving Dover Marine in 1954

The down "Golden Arrow" approaching Dover Marine in 1960, headed by a modified 'Battle of Britain' Pacific locomotive. (Citadel Barracks and Western outworks at top of picture)



Photo]

[J. Head

144 Once the passengers and porters had left the platform and disappeared into the Passport and Customs Halls a small army of cleaners appeared from behind the central buildings to take up their allotted tasks.

A gang of ladies, led by a redoubtable female chargehand, entered the train with assorted brooms, brushes, pails, dustpans and cleaning and polishing cloths and would not emerge again until the interior of the coaches were shining as new.

Another gang, mostly men, went to work on the exterior brass handles and brass step edges, whilst others cleaned and polished the windows and sides of the carriages.

The locomotive was moved to the Loco sheds for the special attention of a select band of cleaners, firemen, etc., who proceeded to return the engine to a pristine state.

Later in the afternoon the loco was run back to the Marine Station to head up the sparkling train of Pullman coaches.

The arrival of the s.s. *Canterbury* or *Invicta* with the inwards service from Calais once again set the station alight with activity.

For many years a Pullman Car Inspector travelled on the ship from France and during the voyage contacted the most important passengers, whose identity was well-known to the ship's officers, and this inspector took details of special arrangements for their reception at Victoria Station.

Details were passed to the resident Pullman Car Inspector who then proceeded to the BR switchboard and relayed the relevant information to Victoria.

This detailed the location of VIP's on the train, the coach name etc. so that the Rolls Royce or Bentley could be parked alongside the arrival platform in the nearest position to enable these special passengers to walk only a short distance.

Truly a first-class service!

Some Notes on Dover Marine Station

BILL BREEZE

In my opinion the heyday of Dover Marine Station, latterly known as Western Docks Station, was between the two world wars.

This was before the development of air travel on an appreciable scale and when practically all travellers to the Continent crossed by sea by what was known as the "Classic" style of service, that is train-ship-train.

The station was used by large numbers of boat trains and in the summer the ships carrying most passengers were those of the Belgian Marine, Dover to Ostend, and it was often necessary to provide three trains to cope with one ship from Belgium.

Dover Marine experienced a period of prominence during the Dunkerque evacuation in May 1940. Thousands of British and Allied troops arriving at the Admiralty Pier in ships of all types and sizes left the port by a continuous service of trains very efficiently handled by the experienced station staff. At the end of this operation the station was closed and large concrete blocks were placed on the rails as an obstruction to the Germans in the event of an invasion