

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!

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## *Some Notes on Dover Marine Station*

BILL BREEZE

**I**n 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