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Opposite page - The Up Queen of Scots crossing the River Ure at Ripon with D9011 'The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers' in charge. Brake Parlour No.78 is leading. 11 June 1964.

# INTRODUCTION

## THE ALL-STEEL 'K-TYPE' CARS

*'Time is a sort of river of passing events and strong is its current'*  
(Marcus Aurelius Antoninus)

Profile 3 is an illustrated guide, and an up-to-date reference source with respect to the first generation of British all-steel Pullman cars, built between 1928 and 1931, and described here as the *'all-steel K-type'*.

This book incorporates research largely based on information from some of the leading railway authorities and collectors. In addition, I have also drawn on numerous primary sources from the 1920s and 30's particularly, together with a multifarious collection of photographs, including official views. It is a record in words and pictures.

In one book, you have access to all this material, and some of the research is published here for the first time. There are instances where the resources are not readily available to the general public because some of the information and photographic material comes from private collections.

In recent years there have been a handful of published books on Pullman trains and services which espouse viewpoints of the author. This book is objective where possible, and does not promote any one theory or viewpoint particularly, but presents all the known data in an objective way forming part of a series of Pullman car profiles spanning a period from 1908 to 1966.

The all-steel Pullman car made its debut in 1928, at a time when virtually all British railway companies were utilising a predominance of wooden-framed rolling stock, much of which embraced traditional design parameters - including, for example, full panel beading and angle-trussing.

Though not considered as widespread by their numbers constructed (amounting to only 33 in total), compared with the volumes of carriages built by the railway companies, these cars nevertheless ushered in an adventurous new age of coach building practice and manufacturing processes, being some of the first to benefit from sophisticated modern methods of construction. Many of their components, for instance, were first assembled into separate units on special jigs. These jigs made it possible to interchange where necessary and also support, a much accelerated speed of manufacture (in railway terms known as 'unit assembly'), ensuring also that the erected car with its steel panel sheeting, was strictly accurate in size. This allowed the various sections of interior finish to be quickly fixed into position without the need of any hand fitting. As one commentator later put it, the all-steel 'K-type' cars were 'a symbol of a sleek new world...the synthesis of Art and Industry'.

To the passenger or line-side observer, these majestic and lofty Pullmans probably represented, more than anything else, the last word in that almost indefinable term 'style',

possessing not only the familiar slab-sided profile and striking livery, but featured improved big picture windows, the latest tastes of interior design and the symbol often associated with luxury travel, the table lamp. Of course, between the two World Wars there had been other classic or innovative railway carriages that at one time or another captured the public imagination - and emulated Pullman travel, including the spectacular streamliners: The 'Coronation' and the 'Silver Jubilee'. Notwithstanding, the Pullmans were seen by many as unrivalled; both as a high calibre group of luxury vehicles owned by a single company, and for the opulence and grandeur of their appointments - more so, as this batch also included notable advances in its third-class accommodation.

It was during August 1929, a year after their introduction, that the Pullman Car Company published a promotional brochure, emblazoned in colours of blue, gold and red depicting an impressive list of its latest cars and a selection of interior schemes. To illustrate these, there were a number of artists' impressions including a group of ten identical steam trains of eight or more Pullmans running side-by-side, an unlikely scenario, but an impressive visual mechanism for portraying the increasing size of its rolling stock, then totalling just over 200 vehicles. The pictures acted as a powerful reinforcement of Pullman's competing presence, at a time when, albeit briefly, their cars could be seen running on all the 'Big Four' railway company main lines. Certainly, no rival private concern in Great Britain had anything like this number of vehicles at its disposal, nor arguably of a comparable quality at virtually every level.

Proudly heading this listing were twenty cars built for, and allocated to the London & North Eastern Railway's (LNER) crack 'Queen of Scots' service from July 1928; whose origins date back just five years previously, when the first complete Pullman car train started on its Northward journey from London King's Cross and was known as the 'Harrogate Pullman'.

As far as the Pullman management were concerned, the public acceptance of this service was apparently 'a most encouraging and immediate success', and the palatial train of umber and cream cars established itself quickly and became a familiar sight. Shortly after this the working of the train was extended to Newcastle and, two years later, an alteration was made by which the 'Harrogate Pullman' was accelerated to run non-stop over the 198 ¾ miles between King's Cross and Harrogate, at that time the longest non-stop journey on the LNER. An extension of the journey at the Northward end was arranged simultaneously, the Pullman train for the first time crossing the Border and ending its journey in the capital city of Edinburgh - and to celebrate this change the name was altered to the 'Harrogate and Edinburgh Pullman'. At the time of these changes the 'West Riding Pullman' was also inaugurated, providing a service to Wakefield, Bradford, Halifax and Leeds, and an additional service to Harrogate.