

**“3rd. SEPTEMBER 1939: ‘AMERIKA’ MOVES OFF. The first wartime journey of Hitler’s Train.** By Walter Haberling. In ‘Jahrbuch für Eisenbahngeschichte’ No. 41, 2009/2010. Published DGEG, Hövelhof. (Translation by Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild.)

This article has many footnotes, some giving sources, some adding more information, some even as personal comments. I have incorporated some of these into the text itself, and omitted others.) Reference is also made several times to an article by Bruno Rebbelmund on the Conference Saloons in ‘Jahrbuch’ No. 40 for 2008

“The Second World War was launched by the attack by Germany on its neighbour Poland on 1st. September 1939..... On the morning of 3rd. September 1939, shortly after 9am, the ‘Führer and Chancellor of the Deutschen Reich’ received a Memorandum from the British Government, according to which Great Britain now considered itself to be at war with the German Reich, should the military operations against Poland not be suspended by 11.00; As this was read aloud to him he sat silent and stunned, and after a while asked his Foreign Secretary Joachim von Ribbentrop (1893-1946 - executed in Nürnberg) “What now?” Ribbentrop stuttered that France would soon make a similar announcement. Hitler recovered gradually from his shock and, in the hope that England would not make a big war out of the matter when it saw how swiftly Poland was defeated, he quickly dictated a half-dozen Memoranda, Proclamations and Messages, and around 17.00 announced he would make a journey to the Front in his Special Train.

On the evening of 3rd. September the Führer’s special train left the Berlin Anhalter Bahnhof at 20.54 and next morning at 01.56 reached Bad Polzin, a small place some 40km. as the crow flies west of Neustettin in Pommern. The station was cordoned off over a wide area and protected by tanks and anti-aircraft guns that were stationed on the roads leading from the village. An inner ‘closed area’ of some 500m radius round the station could only be entered by local inhabitants and military personnel. A squadron of fighter planes (Messerschmidt 109’s) as well as 150 Military and local Police guaranteed further protection, and the 3rd.-Class Waiting Room of the station served the Commander of this first ‘Führerhauptquartier’ as his field headquarters.

On the morning of Sept. 4th. at 09.30 Hitler’s motor convoy set off for his first trip to the Front. This went through Neustettin, Preussisch Friedland, Tempelburg and Kamierowo, where Hitler allowed General von Kluge, the Commander of the 4th. Army, to explain the current situation to him; then on to Topolno on the Weichsel, which river was at that point being crossed by the German troops. All vehicles used by the entourage were three-axle Mercedes-Benz Type G4 cars, in beige with black wings highly-polished (by the time of the French campaign they were olive-green) and which travelled in two columns, whose sequence had been organised the previous evening in the special train by Oberst d.G. Schmidt (Rudolf Schmidt, 1896- Oct.1944 in Rastenburg, Chefadjutant der Wehrmacht for Hitler during the war). These were:-

Group 1.

1. Führer Car. Der Führer.

SS-Gruppenführer Schaub. (Julius Schaub, 1898-1967 - for many years Hitler’s personal Chief Adjutant.)

Oberst d.G. Schmundt

Hauptmann von Below (Georg Freiherr von Below, 1907-1983, from 1937 to 1945 personal Luftwaffe Adjutant to Hitler.)

Hauptmann Engel. (Gerhard Engel, 1906-1976, from May 1938 Adjutant of the Army and Liaison Officer (Verbindungsoffizier) between the Army and Hitler.

Servant Linge.

2. 1st. Escort Car. SA-Obergruppenführer Brückner. (Wilhelm Brückner, 1884-1954; for many years Hitler’s Chief Adjutant.)

3. 2nd. Escort Car.

4. Adjutant Car. Reichsleiter Bormann. (Martin Bormann, 1900- 2. May 1945 in Berlin, though body not found till 1972; leader of the Parteikanzlei of the NSDAP with the rank of a Reichsminister.)  
 Generalmajor Bodenschatz. (Karl-Heinrich Bodenschatz, 1890-1979; General der Luftwaffe and Adjutant of Herman Göring.)  
 1 Ordnance Officer. (Wünsche or Bahls.)  
 Obersturmbannführer Dr. Brandt. (Karl Brandt, 1904-2nd. June 1948, executed Landsberg a.d. Lech); Hitler's doctor.
5. Car of the Chef OKW (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht).  
 Generaloberst Keitel (Wilhelm Keitel, 1882-1846 - from 1938 to 1945 Chef of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht.)  
 1 Attendant.  
 Liaison Officer Army or Navy.  
 Liaison Officer Luftwaffe.

Five minutes later the second Column departed:

1. Minister Car 1. Reichsminister des Auswärtigen: Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.  
 1 or 2 attendants.
2. Minister Car 2. Reichminister Dr. Lammers. (Hans Lammers, 1879-1962, Head of the Reichskanzlei). & 1 attendant.
3. Car Reichsführer SS.
4. Car Reich Press Chief.
5. Car. For the Führer's party, names to be decided.
6. Reserve Car.
7. Luggage Van.
8. Field Kitchen. (With pea soup, ham and Kommisbread.)
9. Fuel Tank lorry.

Both columns were escorted by armoured scout cars and a multitude of motor bike couriers; all personnel were more than adequately armed with pistols, machine-pistols and machine guns.

Whilst Hitler visited the river crossing in Topolno and some unfinished Polish bunkers, the special train was moved to Plienitz, some twelve kilometres south-east of Bad Polzin, to await the arrival of the motorised convoy at around 19.00. This however occurred shortly after 18.00, for Polish bombers began to attack the columns some two to three kilometres from Topolno, so that everyone rushed back to their cars and set off in a rush. (If only the Polish pilots had been more accurate in their targeting, a lot of subsequent trouble could have been avoided...) Even in Plienitz however there was little chance to rest, for in the middle of the night the special train, originally named 'Einheit III', which should theoretically now have been called 'Führerhauptquartier' ('Headquarters') but was instead named 'Amerika', had to be hauled some 15 kilometres southward. Someone from the Foreign Office had informed foreign diplomats of the train's location, so now it had to be moved to avoid any attack.

On 5th. September 1939 the train moved to Gross-Born, some 30km. south-east of Bad Polzin. On 6th. September the next Front visit took place from here, this time to the Commander of the XIX Army Corps, General Guderian, who had his headquarters in Plevno, and to the Weichsel bridge near Graudenz.

This journey was relatively peaceful, as were also the trips on 10th., 11th, 13th. and 15th. September. On 10th. September an aeroplane was used for the first time; in a total of six Junkers Ju52 from the aerodrome near Neudorf to Bialaczow, where General von Reichenau commanded the 10th. Army. Hitler flew together with Schmudt, Bruckner, Engel, von Below, Dr. Brandt, his driver Kempka and his servant Linge in D-AVAU, whilst the SS Begleitkommando and the

Reichssicherheitsdienst (Reichs Security Services) flew in D-ARET and D-2600, the actual 'Führer' plane.

In Bialaczow a column of cars was already waiting to take the visitors on an excursion to Konskie and to Maslow, from where the return flight to Neudorf took off.

The Special Train itself travelled on 9th. September via Bad Polzin, Stargard, Küstrin, Guben, Liegnitz and Breslau to Illnau, around eleven kilometres north of Oppeln. The motorised column from Neudorf arrived in Illnau at 18.15.

On 11th. September the aeroplane was used again to reach Bogusklawicze (west of Tomaszew), then by car to Wola and back to Illnau.

On 12th. September the train was moved to Gogolin, some 30km. south of Oppeln, and the next Front visits took place next morning, this time to General Johannes von Blaskowitz (1883-suicide 1948) - Oberbefehlshaber in Poland 1939/40) and Wilhelm Ulix (1880-1959 - Commander of X. Army Corps - in March 1940 he protested against the maltreatment of Jews and was demoted) - These were situated respectively south-west and north of Lodz; and also to General Maximilian von Weichs (1881-1954) near Bratoszewicze.

At 10.00 on 15th. September Hitler arrived by air at Pawlosiow, but the motorised column that had been sent ahead had not managed to get there in time and arrived only at 11, so that an improvised column of vehicles had to be requisitioned to bring the Führer to the San, which had been crossed by German troops. Since however the regular column then arrived, this improvised one was not in the end used. On the afternoon of this day the column was ordered on to Krakow, to be available the following day for a trip to the Front. At the last moment however this trip was cancelled (something which happened quite frequently with Hitler - one never knew what to expect next) and postponed till the 11th. [sic. 17th.?)

On 18th. September around midnight the special train left Gogolin, to travel via Oppeln, Breslau, Liegnitz, Guben, Frankfurt/Oder, Küstrin, Stargard, Köslin and Stolp to Lauenburg. Here it was resupplied and directed further on to Goddentow-Lanz, a small station some ten minutes away by rail.

On 19th. September, depending on the situation at the Front and the weather, either a Front trip or a trip to Danzig was planned. Hitler decided on the latter. The Wehrmacht units allocated to the Führerhauptquartier accompanied him as far as Zoppot, the border location, where he was greeted by Gauleiter Albert Forster (1902-executed 1952 in Warsaw), but the triumphal ride further into Danzig was secured only by the Police. The tour included visits, receptions and speeches; a trip to the Westerplatte on a minesweeper was pushed back to 21st. September, and a trip to the demolished Weichsel bridges by Dirschau postponed from 20th. to 22nd. September. On this day Hitler observed from a church tower the artillery shots falling on the Warsaw suburb of Praga. Then he went by car to Wyskow, from whence he flew back to Danzig, to overnight in the 'Casino Hotel' in Zoppot.

On 26th. September 1939 he travelled with the special train from Goddentow-Lanz back to Berlin, following the schedule:-Goddentow-Lanz dep. 09.30. Lauenburg 09.40-41; Stolp 10.30-32; Wulkow 13.36, dep. 13.56 (water and coal); Berlin Stettiner Bhf. arr. 17.05.

The special train of the Reichsführer SS 'Heinrich' followed thirty minutes later, whilst Ribbentrop's special train 'Westfalen' followed a different timetable.

### **THE TRAIN AND ITS OCCUPANTS.**

A document, of which only two copies were made, prepared by the 'Adjutantur der Wehrmacht beim Führer und Reichskanzler', under Diary No. 42/39g.Kdos.Mob, of 22nd. February 1939, addressed to the 'Personal Adjutant of the Führer and Reichskanzler', recommends restricting the number of persons accompanying the Führer, as only by this means could the two compartments that were promised be kept free for the use of the Foreign Office. It was further recommended that the Adjutant of Reichsleiter Bormann share a sleeping compartment with one of the Ordnance

officers in the first sleeping car, and the second Ordnance officer should be made to share with the Personal Adjutant of the motorised column of the Führerhauptquartier - this person would therefore become the Liaison Officer to the Commandant of the Führerhauptquartier, which would make the required second compartment for the Foreign Office free. In a two-page memorandum the ordering and the allocation of the train "Im Mob. Fall" (i.e. when mobile) was clarified:-.

Führerzug / Geheime Kommandosache! (i.e. Top Secret).

1. Locomotive.
2. Locomotive.
3. 2cm. Flak car with 26-men crew.
4. Baggage Van.
5. Command Car:-
  - 1. Army Intelligence Officer.
  - 2. Clerical unit.
6. Führerwagen
  - Der Führer.
  - Oberstleutnant d.G. Schmudt.
  - Obergruppenführer Brückner.
  - Servant Linge.
7. Escort Command Car with 22 men of the Escort and Kriminalpolizei.
8. Restaurant Car No.1.
9. 1st. Guest Coach. Occupants:-

Cabin 1	Führer of the Flakzug.
Cabin 2	Hauptmann von Below.
Cabin 3	Hauptmann Engel
Cabin 4	Korvettenkapitän Albrecht
Cabin 5	Generaloberst Keitel
Cabin 6	Adjutant Chef OKW
Cabin 7	Generalstabsoffizier OKW
Cabin 8	Generalstabsoffizier Heer
Cabin 9	Generalstabsoffizier Luft
Cabin 10	Luftwaffe Liaison Officer.
10. 2nd. Guest Coach. Occupants:-

Cabin 1	Brigadeführer Bormann
Cabin 2	Gruppenführer Schaub
Cabin 3	Prof. Dr. Morell
Cabin 4	Legationsrat Hewel (Auswärtige Amt - i.e. Foreign Office.)
Cabin 5	Reichsminister der Auswärtigen
Cabin 6	Reichsleiter Bormann
Cabin 7	Reichsführer SS, H. Himmler.
Cabin 8	Gruppenführer Wolf
Cabin 9	Sturmbannführer Dr. Brandt.
Cabin 10	Prof. Hoffmann.
11. Restaurant Car No. 2.
12. Sleeping Car No. 1. Obersturmführer Bahls  
Obersturmführer Darges  
2 Secretaries of the Führer. (2 compartments.)  
Unterstab und Nachrichtenstaffel (Communications crew) - 14 men.
13. Sleeping Car No. 2. Rest of Nachrichtenstaffel. (4 men.)  
MITROPA staff. (14 men.)  
1 Compartment for Doctor.
14. Press Coach. Reichspressechef Dr. Jacob Dietrich (1897 - 1952).  
Oberbannführer Lorenz.

2 Radio Operators  
2 Teleprinter Operators. (Fernschreiber).

15. Baggage Van.

16. 2cm. Flakwagen with 26-man crew.

In a letter of 7th. March 1939 (B. Nr. 42/39 g.dos.Mob.) SS Obersturmführer Max Wünsche informed the Adjutantur der Wehrmacht that Cabin 1 in the first Guest Car should be used as the Doctor's compartment, for practical reasons, and the head of the Flakzug should be moved instead to the Doctor's compartment in the second Sleeping Car. The Reichspresse Sprecher required two more compartments for two more staff members whom he could not do without, and finally the occupants of Cabins 2 and 4 in Guest Car 2 should be exchanged, "since Gruppenführer Schaub does not wish to sleep over the axles."

On 6th. May 1939 the head of the Travel Dept. at the Reichsverkehrsministerium informed Hitler's Adjutant, that the technical Chief Inspector had communicated the sequence of the train that had been prepared by Obergruppenführer Brückner. "Accordingly it has been instructed that the carriages in the special train will under normal circumstances run in the following order:-

1. Locomotive.
2. Baggage Van
3. Führer's Saloon Coach (the main room at the Baggage Van end.)
4. Conference Saloon. (Main room at the Führer's Saloon end.)
5. Escort Command Car.
6. Restarant Car. (Kitchen end to the Sleeping Cars.)
7. Guest Sleeping Car 1
8. Guest Sleeping Car 2
9. Saloon Car (Main room at Sleeping Car end.)
10. Personnel Coach.
11. Baggage Van.

Coach Nos. 3 (i.e. 4 - the Conference coach) and 8 (Saloon) will only be marshalled in the train, when the Adjutant issues a specific order for this.

When the Special Train is run via stations in which the direction of travel will be changed (termius stations), the coaches will run in the reverse order. It has been instructed that the above sequence of coaches may only be altered at the express command of Obergruppenführer Brückner."

But alterations were made nevertheless; instead of Saloon 8 Hitler's personal and beloved six-axle Bath Car was delivered for the Führer's 50th. birthday, and a second Personnel Coach ran in front of the Press Coach. It is unclear whether both Flak coaches were conveyed; according to standing instructions they must have done, yet some photos of the Führersonderzug during the Polish campaign show the Baggage Van but not the Flak car. However, this could have been uncoupled for the sake of propaganda pictures....

### **THE VEHICLES OF THE TRAIN.**

Preferred Locomotives were the 4-6-2 Pacifics of Class 01.10 with streamlined cladding, used double-headed - before these, specially chosen 01 Pacifics, hand-picked and smooth-running.

The Flakwagen used from 1940 were 26m long and had broaded platforms at each end, onto which four 2-cm. guns were mounted. In the middle of the wagon was a section built like a house with space for a Volkswagen Kurbelwagen and a 3.7cm. anti-tank gun as well as six sleeping cabins for the crew, a toilet and a compartment for two NCO's. There were in total six of these vehicles, which were approximately one metre lower than normal coaches.

The vehicles used before the 'longer' Flakwagen were shorter versions built on C4ü-38

frames, Nos. 919110 P and 919112P, but it has not been confirmed whether they were used in the Poland campaign.

The Führer's Saloon Coach (10 206 Bln) weighed 63.5 tons, was 23.5m long and had a reception compartment, a saloon, a side corridor, two guest compartments, an attendant's compartment and a switchroom in the second entrance vestibule. This coach was fitted with luxurious wood and materials, and according to a report by the Director of the 'Vereinigten Werkstätten für Kunst in Handwerk' this coach could 'not be beaten for beauty and elegance'. This was actually Hitler's third Saloon Coach; his second had the largest sleeping compartment and the biggest window of any Reichsbahn coach (1600mm wide!).

The Conference Car (10 252 Bln) was 24.3m long, with a Saloon, a reception area saloon, a side corridor, the adjutant compartment, a toilet, two sleeping compartments, and several rooms for the radio, teleprinter, the telephone exchange and the secretaries. After the war it was used first as a saloon and later as a Test Car.

The Escort Command Car (10 221 Bln) was also 24.3m long and had eleven two-bed compartments in differing layouts and furnishings, as well as an Attendant's Room and two toilets.

The two Personnel Sleeping Cars (10 222 Bln and 20 223 Bln) were identical with this vehicle, though on occasion they were substituted by normal MITROPA Sleeping Cars of the WLAB 4ü-39 type when necessary (e.g. during overhauls).

The two Restaurant Cars (10 242 Bln and 10 244 Bln) had variable furnishings (Car 1 had a long table, Car 2 the well-known 2 + 1 layout) and a slightly different ordering of the windows at the Kitchen end. These were later replaced by a six-axle car (10 245 Bln as WR 1) and a normal MITROPA WR car (as WR 2).

The Guest Cars (10 231 Bln and 10 232 Bln) were similar to the Escort and Personnel Cars, except that they had only ten compartments with the absolute best in furnishings, plus two toilets and an Attendant's Compartment. They were 23.5m long, weighed around 63 tons and were painted like all other vehicles in green with beige stripes, the cast Reichsadler and a beige, later a grey roof. After the war both carriages were used for another twenty years or so as 1st. Class Sleeping Cars.

The Bath Car (Sal Bad 6ü-39) was constructed by the Waggonfabrik Gebrüder Credé in Kassel. It had six axles, was 23.5m long and fitted with a boiler room, an Attendant's Compartment a total of five Bathrooms of different sizes, three Shower Cabins, a Barber's Compartment and a toilet. Weighing a total of 72 tons it was the third-most heavy passenger carriage of the Reichsbahn. After the war it was rebuilt to WG 6üe-39/51, was later used in the 'Queen's Train' in 1965 and currently stands, heavily altered, at Koblenz-Lützel.

The Press Coach (Sal Presse 4ü-37 10 251 Bln) was the only carriage of the Reichsbahn to be 24.0m long and had two Telephone Cabins, two Radio and Teleprinter rooms, two toilets, a total of four differently-arranged sleeping compartments and an Attendant's compartment. After the war it was initially used by the American High Commissioner in Train A 100 as No. 101. in 1953 it was rebuilt as a 1st.-Class passenger coach and was thereafter in use as 11 701 Sbr (type A4üe-38/53), later renumbered 51 80 17-43 030-8 type Aü3 309. It was withdrawn from AW Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt on 21st. June 1987.

The two Baggage Vans (105 063 Bln and 105 065 Bln) were also each 23.5m long, with three compartments, a Baggage compartment, a room for the 80kW Diesel Generator, a Kitchen, a Guard's Compartment and a toilet, and a side corridor. There were in total six of these vans, and

later two further Baggage Vans of 24.3m length. All eight cars had different fates, some were rebuilt already in 1938/39.

The order of the 'Führerzug' remained on the whole identical until the end of the war, though from time to time individual coaches were exchanged temporarily with others. Now and again other cars (e.g. those of Rudolf Hess or Martin Bormann) would be marshalled within it, and the Bath Car was later included in the First Train. The sequence for this journey can be given in tabular form as follows:-

Locomotive 01 1060

Locomotive 01 1062

Maschinengepäckwagen: Sal Masch Pw 4üK-37 105 065 Bln Train Guard compartment at rear.

SalonwagenSalon 4ü-37a10 206 Bln Führer's Coach

Salon-BeratungswagenSal Ber 4ü-38a10 252 Bln. Large saloon at front.

BegleitkommandowagenSal Bgl 4ü-3710 221 Bln

1st. SpeisewagenSalon R 4ü-3710 242 Bln. With long table?

1st. Guest CarSalon L 4ü-3710 231 Bln

2nd. Guest CarSalon L 4ü-3710 232 Bln

2nd. SpeisewagenSalon R 4ü-3710 244 Bln. Normal Mitropa layout.

(Only on shorter journeys.)

(Often Badwagen Sal Bad 6ü-3910 281 Bln was also included.)

1st. PersonalwagenSal Bgl 4ü-3710 222 Bln

2nd. PersonalwagenSal Bgl 4ü-3710 223 Bln

PressewagenSalon Presse 4ü-3710 251 Bln

MaschinengepäckwagenSal Masch Pw 4ük-37105 052 Bln.

Without the two Flakwagen there is a total train length of 285.7m ( 4 x 24.3m + 24.0m + 7 x 23.5m) with twelve cars, with two operational locomotives (2 x 24.13m) a length of 333.96m., so roughly equivalent to a modern train of thirteen 26.4m carriages or eleven such without the two locos.

None of the carriages from the 'Führerzug' operate any more; a few can be found, rebuilt, at the DB Museum in Koblenz-Lützel, a few are as private departmental stock and the majority have been withdrawn and scrapped."

#### "Notes to the Diagrams:

##### Salon 4ü-35b (10 203 Bln).

This shows Hitler's second coach after it was rebuilt in the third quarter of 1939. The carriage received streamlined ends, side skirting and new bogies (the so-called Government type.) Noticeable is the 16000mm-wide window in the first Sleeping compartment, the largest in all of the three cars. Nevertheless this vehicle was retained mainly as a Reserve Car. After the War it became 'Messwagen 729 018 Mü', later '5005 München' and '51 80 99-43 002-8 Dienst üg(e) 318'. It had its last overhaul on 21st. Sept. 1977 at AW Limburg, and was withdrawn in 1983. Its later fate is unknown.

##### Sal L 4ü-37 (10 231 Bln.)

This is one of two carriages with ten 1st. Class compartments, each with only one bed and decorated in different colours. Both were built by the Vereinigten Westdeutschen Waggonfabriken (Westwaggon/VWW) in Köln-Deutz. After the war they were marshalled in US Army (High Commissioner) Train A 100, at the end of 1951 were rented to the DSG and in 1955 purchased by the DSG. 10 231 was then in service as a normal Sleeping Car as No. 20 991 WLA 4üe 37/52, was withdrawn in May 1968 and scrapped some months later.

### Sal Masch Pw 4ük-37 (105 065 Bln.)

This Machinery/Luggage Car ran at the front of the Hitler train, and was rebuilt in 1940, with an 80kVA Diesel Generator as well as three Attendants' cabins. The vehicle was confiscated by the US Army after the war. It was later in use with the DB as a Dienstwagen (Departmental service) as '8516 Han Sdr Masch 4üe-37'; in 1967 it was renumbered '51 80 99-60 001-8 Maschinenwagen 658', and was withdrawn at AW Kassel on 9th. May 1983 after a total of twelve rebuildings; it was scrapped under No. 040 at the end of June that year. Interesting is that one of the rebuilds took place at RAW Potsdam from 2nd. Jan. to 6th. Feb. 1945!

### Salon R 4ü-37 (10 242 Bln.)

Saloon Restaurant Car with variable internal fittings, delivered in 1937 by Credé in Kassel, rebuilt 1942, 1943 and 1946. It was then used by the British Army of the Rhine. From 1956 it was Escort Car for the Saloon of the Bundeskanzler. Extensive radio equipment was built into it, involving substantial rebuilding on and inside the vehicle. It ran last as '51 80 89-40 342-3 WGS üg(e) 801.5'. Withdrawn on 29th. Jan. 1988.

### Salon Bad 6ü-39 (10 281 Bln.)

Saloon-Bath Car with Barber's Compartment, bathtubs for lying in, showers, toilets, water preparation equipment (water heating) and Attendant's compartment. This was delivered by Credé of Kassel on 14th. April 1939 as a 'Present' to the Führer for his 50th. Birthday, together with the Observation Car from the German Carriage Industry - i.e. paid for by the taxpayer! After the war it was rebuilt several times, running initially as '10 832 WG 6ü Ffm', from 1967 six-axle but from the end of February 1969 on four-axle Minden-Deutz bogies, green with a black waistband. The carriage was rebuilt several other times before being withdrawn in the early 1990's."

**Numbering Notes (by Translator):** For those not yet fully in the picture, the DRG carriage numbering/classification system was logical and thorough. The abbreviations or equivalents are mostly clear: Salon is Saloon, Pw Packwagen / Baggage Van; Bgl is Begleitwagen; Bad is a Bath. R for Restaurant, L for Lits / Bed / Sleeping. Masch. for Maschinen / Machinery car. 4 or 6 is the number of axles, ü means Übergang (vestibule to next vehicle), the number 37 or 39 after a hyphen means the year of design or construction; if they were later reconstructed a designation such as 39/51 indicates it was rebuilt in 1951 from a vehicle, most of whose materials date from 1939. k is a Kitchen. The different Direktionen had their own abbreviations used as a suffix - Bln for Berlin, Mü for München, Han for Hannover, Sbr for Saarbrücken, Ffm for Frankfurt/Main, and so forth. I suppose it is a little similar to BR coaches being numbered with a 'M' or 'E' pr 'Sc' prefix and then where appropriate an 'M' or 'W' or 'S' suffix to indicate pre-nationalisation origin.

Later the DB went over to a unified and UIC-compatible system, retaining letters A, B, D, WL, WR for 1st., 2nd., Luggage, Sleeping and Restaurant vehicles, G for 'Gesellschaft' - i.e. saloons for special purposes (also Post or Dienst and so forth as required). 'Sdr' will be 'Sonder' or 'Special'. The system now incorporates further specific letters for braking or heating systems and driving cabs, and a number sequence as suffix designates specific type variations.

What is quite remarkable is how so few of these Saloons, built of course for different specific purposes, were in structural ways 'standardised' - they had different lengths, different window sizes, and this must have made overhauls more complex than necessary.

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