

Formation of The Royal Wessex 3/5/51 to 5/64

The Royal Wessex was introduced in 1951, the inaugural train running on 3rd May. The train ran Mondays to Saturdays, the stock being spare at Bournemouth West on Sundays. Vehicles were in Crimson Lake and Cream but set numbers were not allocated. The train consisted of three portions formed of the initial tranche of BR Standard Mk 1 stock. These were:

	Description	No.	Diagram	Seats	
				1	2
Weymouth	1 BTK	34157	181	-	24
	1 TK	24169	146	-	48
	1 CK	15023	126	24	18
	1 CK	15021	126	24	18
	1 BTK	34158	181	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	126	24	18
	1 BTK	34155	181	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BTK	34159	181	-	24
	1 RTO	1006	56	-	48
	1 RC	80009	700	-	-
	1 RFO	9	36	42	
	1 FK	13003	116	42	-
	1 BTK	34156	181	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}				114	222

The workings for the stock, as at 10/9/51, were (departure times only):

Bournemouth West.	8. 20 a.m.
Waterloo.	11†8 a.m.
Clapham Yard.	3†53 p.m.
Waterloo.	4. 35 p.m.
Bournemouth West.	-

There were slight alterations to the ECS timings over the years but the workings essentially remained the same.

The first change to the formation occurred in January 1952 when the triplet diner set (S1006 + S80009 + S9) was replaced with Bullied Tavern Car set ‘The Green Man’ (S7898S) + S7840S.

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth	1 BTK	34157	-	24
	1 TK	24169	-	48
	1 CK	15023	24	18
	1 CK	15021	24	18
	1 BTK	34158	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	24	18
	1 BTK	34155	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BTK	34159	-	24
	1 RKB	7898	12*	-
	1 RC	7840	18	36
	1 FK	13003	42	-
	1 BTK	34156	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	222

During the winter of 1952/3 the Mark 1s were taken out of service for overhaul and repainting/revarnishing and it was reported, erroneously, in the January 1953 Railway Observer that the Royal Wessex stock had been allocated set numbers 884, 885 and 886. A letter, from a Mr. Willgoss, correcting the situation was published in the May 1953 issue: “There is no question of the original stock of this train being given set numbers. Sets 884-86 are B.R. 4-coach sets in the series 866-891. Certain parts of the three sets in question were, however, used in the “Royal Wessex” in the absence of

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the original stock, which was passing through works for overhaul. These three sets were not used complete, but the Weymouth Portion consisted of the whole of set 884 plus one CK of set 886; the Swanage portion of one BTK and one CK from set 885; and the Bournemouth portion of the two BTK's of set 886 plus one SR post-war FK and the TO, Restaurant and Tavern Cars (The Green Man) being retained.

On the return of the original stock of the train, most of which I observed working on the 16th Dec., 1952 sets 884-886 resumed their normal 4-coach formations. I might point out that the return of S34157 and S13003 from works was somewhat delayed (I did not observe these coaches running in the train until 24th Jan., 1953). From 16th Dec., 1952, until this time, the SR FK was retained in the Bournemouth portion and a green SR semi-open BTK (S4276) worked in the Swanage portion.”

Outside the ‘works visit’ working the January 1952 formation lasted until September 1955 when the Tavern Set was replaced by S7895S + S7839S which was, in turn, was replaced by S7896S + S7835 by 17/9/56. Also around this time SO S3914, which had been loose, following a period in set 880, was included in the formation:

17/9/56

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth	*1 BSK	34157	-	24
	*1 SK	24169	-	48
	*1 CK	15023	24	18
	1 CK	15021	24	18
	*1 BSK	34158	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	24	18
	1 BSK	34155	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BSK	34159	-	24
	1 RKB	7896	12*	-
	1 RC	7835	18	36
	1 FK	13003	42	-
	1 SO	3914	-	64
	1 BSK	34156	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	286

The note appertaining to the asterisk, against vehicle type, was shown, ‘(*During the Winter these vehicles will replaced by a 4-set, Nos. 877/891, with similar seating capacity.)’, indicating that vehicles would be taken out of service for overhaul and repainting.

This situation prevailed until around early summer 1957 when all the stock, including the Tavern Set, had been repainted green and S7898S + S7840S returned to the train:

16/9/57

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth	1 BSK	34157	-	24
	1 SK	24169	-	48
	1 CK	15023	24	18
	1 CK	15021	24	18
	1 BSK	34158	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	24	18
	1 BSK	34155	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BSK	34159	-	24
	1 RKB	7898	12*	-
	1 RC	7840	18	36
	1 FK	13003	42	-
	1 SO	3914	-	64
	1 BSK	34156	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	286

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From the personal observations of SEmG member Mike South, over a 10 year period, all the BR Standard vehicles carried the BR roundel from the time that they were repainted green. The ‘Tavern Sets’, being of SR origin did not.

The Appendices for 9/6/58 &15/9/58 show that the tavern set had once again changed. S7892S + S7838S being the booked vehicles used during this period.

Commencing 9/6/58 the Tavern Set was S7892S + S7838S.

9/6/58

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth	1 BSK	34157	-	24
	1 SK	24169	-	48
	1 CK	15023	24	18
	1 CK	15021	24	18
	1 BSK	34158	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	24	18
	1 BSK	34155	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BSK	34159	-	24
	1 RKB	7892	12*	-
	1 RC	7838	18	36
	1 FK	13003	42	-
	1 SO	3914	-	64
	1 BSK	34156	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	286

In 1959 the separate appendices for the South Western were discontinued and a regional appendix was issued. Although the ‘Royal Wessex’ formation was given in full, including the ‘Tavern Set’ the Restaurant and Buffet Car workings were no longer included, these were contained in a separate supplement.

15/6/59 & 2/11/59

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth	1 BSK	34157	-	24
	1 SK	24169	-	48
	1 CK	15023	24	18
	1 CK	15021	24	18
	1 BSK	34158	-	24
Swanage	1 CK	15022	24	18
	1 BSK	34155	-	24
Bournemouth West	1 BSK	34159	-	24
	1 RKB	7898	12*	-
	1 RC	7840	18	36
	1 FK	13003	42	-
	1 SO	3914	-	64
	1 BSK	34156	-	24
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	286

From 1960 the allocated dining pair was not shown in the appendices, however the same dining pair was noted running in the train in the summer by the SC&WS. During the winter timetable, commencing 12th September 1960, again 7898 + 7840 were shown as the ‘booked pair’ within the restaurant and buffet car supplement. The formation remained the same in 1961 and the catering pair

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were noted as 7892 +7833 on July 3rd 1961. In March 1962 Mark 1 RB 1764 was noted on the service.

Due to overcrowding on the up trip (no doubt caused by the three-a-side seating in the second class) from 2/4/62 the Royal Wessex stock was replaced by SR stock, 291 (Bournemouth West), 864 (Swanage) – two vehicles only, and 858 (Weymouth) as a means of increasing seating capacity. (Railway Observer, 1962, page 151).

Following the displacement of this original Mk 1 stock from the Royal Wessex the BSK’s and CK’s (with the addition of BSK 34246) were formed into three 3-sets. Seating was modified so as to conform to the standard S.R. layout giving 24 first and 88 seconds.

Formations were:

Set No.	572	573	574
BSK	34156	34158	34155
CK	15023	15022	15021
BSK	34157	34159	34246

All other vehicles became Loose.

As from 1/4/62 the workings of the Royal Wessex were taken over by Bulleid stock the formation being:

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth (set 858)	1 BSK	2517	-	48
	1 SK	100	-	64
	1 CK	5916	24	24
	1 CK	5895	24	24
	1 BSK	2518	-	48
Swanage (set 864)	1 CK	5922	24	24
	1 BSK	2530	-	48
Bournemouth West (set 291)	1 BSK	4351	-	48
	1 CK	5741	24	24
	1 RFO	7678	42*	-
	1 RB	1762	-	23
	1 SO	1452	-	64
	1 BSK	4352	-	48
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	464

* 24 seats for dining

All the Bulleid vehicles were specially shopped and the BR roundel applied, note the Mark 1 RB did not have the roundel.

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From June 1963 the train did not carry a Swanage portion. The Weymouth portion was increased to six vehicles as partial compensation:

	Description	No.	Seats	
			1	2
Weymouth (set 858)	1 BSK	2517	-	48
	1 SK	100	-	64
	1 CK	5916	24	24
	1 CK	5922	24	24
	1 CK	5895	24	24
	1 BSK	2518	-	48
Bournemouth West (set 291)	1 BSK	4351	-	48
	1 CK	5741	24	24
	1 RFO	7678	42*	-
	1 RB	1762	-	23
	1 SO	1452	-	64
	1 BSK	4352	-	48
Total {excluding dining accommodation}			114	416

* 24 seats for dining

The booked diner for the winter timetable was S1723.

From June 1964 the “Royal Wessex” ceased to have any dedicated stock and the 08:20 ex Bournemouth West and the 16:35 ex Waterloo were covered by two different sets of vehicles.

Glen Woods
Brighton
6/6/02