

Models of the Armistice CIWL car by Fred van der Lubbe TCS 1297

In 1913/14 a series of 37 restaurant cars were built by the CIWL ("Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits et des Grands Express Européens" or shorter "Wagon-Lits") in Saint Denis, France in their CGC (Compagnie Generale de Construction) shops. Each CIWL car has a unique number assigned and this was series 2403-2439. Like many cars made for and by the CIWL in those years these cars had a metal frame and a wooden body. They looked luxurious with their teak appearance and copper lettering and the CIWL emblem with the 2 lions. One of these cars, i.e. the car with number 2419 was used on 11 november 1918 as the location of the armistice that ended the first world war. Fig 1 shows a drawing of this car.

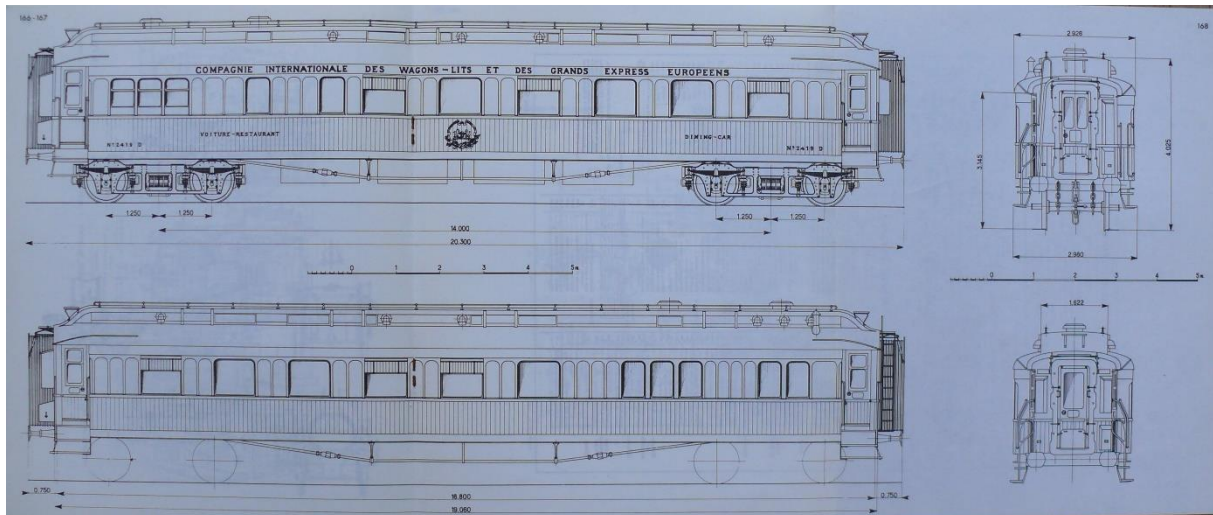


Fig 1

Note that there are many different versions of teak CIWL restaurant and sleeper cars, which look similar but are, e.g. on window arrangement, different.

A short history of 2419 (optional paragraph)

In September 1918 wagon 2419 was, in the context of the war, transferred to the railway workshop of Saint-Denis, where it was converted into a salon and meeting carriage. The kitchen was transformed into separate offices. The car was then donated to the French Marshal Foch.

The wagon was part of a train that arrived on November 7, 1918 in the Compiègne forest. On November 11, 1918, at five o'clock in the morning, the ceasefire was finally signed in car 2419 by all parties which put an end to the First World War. After the signing the car went back in the hands of the CIWL, who once again turned it into a dining car and used it.

Later the wagon was added to the French presidential train of Alexandre Millerand and in 1921 it was exhibited in the court of Les Invalides in Paris. In 1927, it was decided to restore the car and transfer it to Rethondes, where it would serve as a fully-fledged war memorial. The car was placed in a specially constructed building.

On June 22, 1940, another truce was signed in carriage 2419, this time after the Battle of France, between France and Nazi Germany. The car was then brought to Berlin where she was exhibited at various locations where the German people could see the it. It was set on fire and destroyed in 1945 by German troops, because of the approaching of the Allied troops.

After the Second World War it was decided to convert another dining car of the same type, CIWL number 2439, into an identical example of the original carriage. The reconstructed interior was supplemented with preserved souvenirs from Marshal Foch. The whole was placed in a reconstructed building and officially inaugurated on 11 November 1954.

Models of the Armistice car

A number of commercial models of car 2419 were made, but nothing contemporary. Märklin and Bing made “teak” CIWL restaurant cars in that period but these were not based on reality, Fig 2 shows a Märklin Gauge 1 example from circa 1920. The cars made by makers like Märklin and Bing had the same body for sleeper and restaurant cars, only the printing was different. For understandable reasons none of the German train makers have ever made a model of car 2419.



Fig 2

The Italian model train maker Pocher was the first making a model of car no 2419. They introduced a plastic H0 gauge car in 1957 with catalogue number 205; with catalogue number 205/SM there was a model with full interior. The model was a masterpiece, still considered one of the most successful works by Arnaldo Pocher. The example shown in Fig 3 and Fig 4 is a later Pocher model; RivaRossi took over Pocher in 1974, the bogies of this model are marked RivaRossi while the body is marked Pocher.



Fig 3



Fig 4

Pocher used the tooling of this model to also make a model of a Swiss restaurant car, but further did not add any other teak CIWL cars to their range.

Another H0 gauge model was made by the Austrian company Liliput around 1970. Liliput has made two series of teak CIWL cars, the later series also including baggage cars; the earlier less detailed series included 2419 in blue and in teak color. Fig 5 and Fig 6 show the blue car with CIWL number 2419. Whether the real car ever had a blue livery I do not know; many teak cars received a blue livery to match them with the later blue steel cars. The car is reasonably detailed and has interior; it is 24 cm long.



Fig 5



Fig 6

In 0 gauge a detailed model of 2419 was made by the Italian modelmaker Dottori for Fulgurex, see Fig 7 and Fig 8 . It is a high end well detailed model made of metal but with the outside made of teak/wood, which of course gives a good impression of the real thing. It is made to a scale of 1:43.5 and is 46 cm long and has interior lights. The Fulgurex catalogue number is 2557.

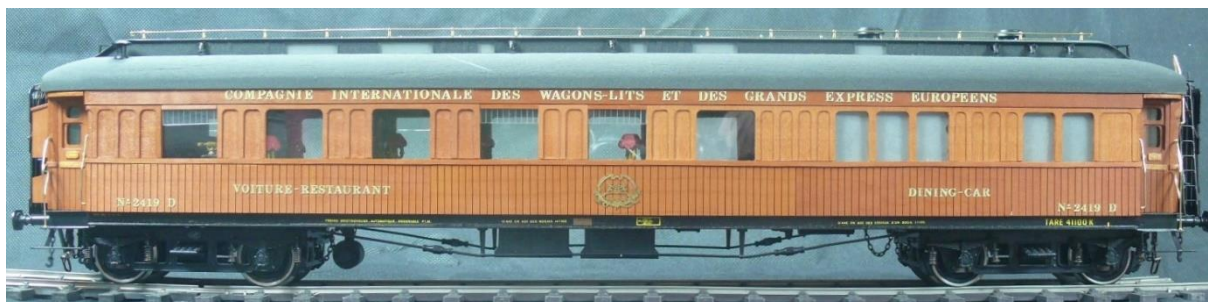


Fig 7



Fig 8

Dottori made between 1981 and 1985 a range of teak CIWL cars, including sleeping cars, salon and baggage cars, all with detailed interior. The interior of this model of 2419 does not show the normal restaurant setting, but interior of the Armistice car with a large table and desks in the kitchen area as can be seen in Fig 9 and Fig 10 .

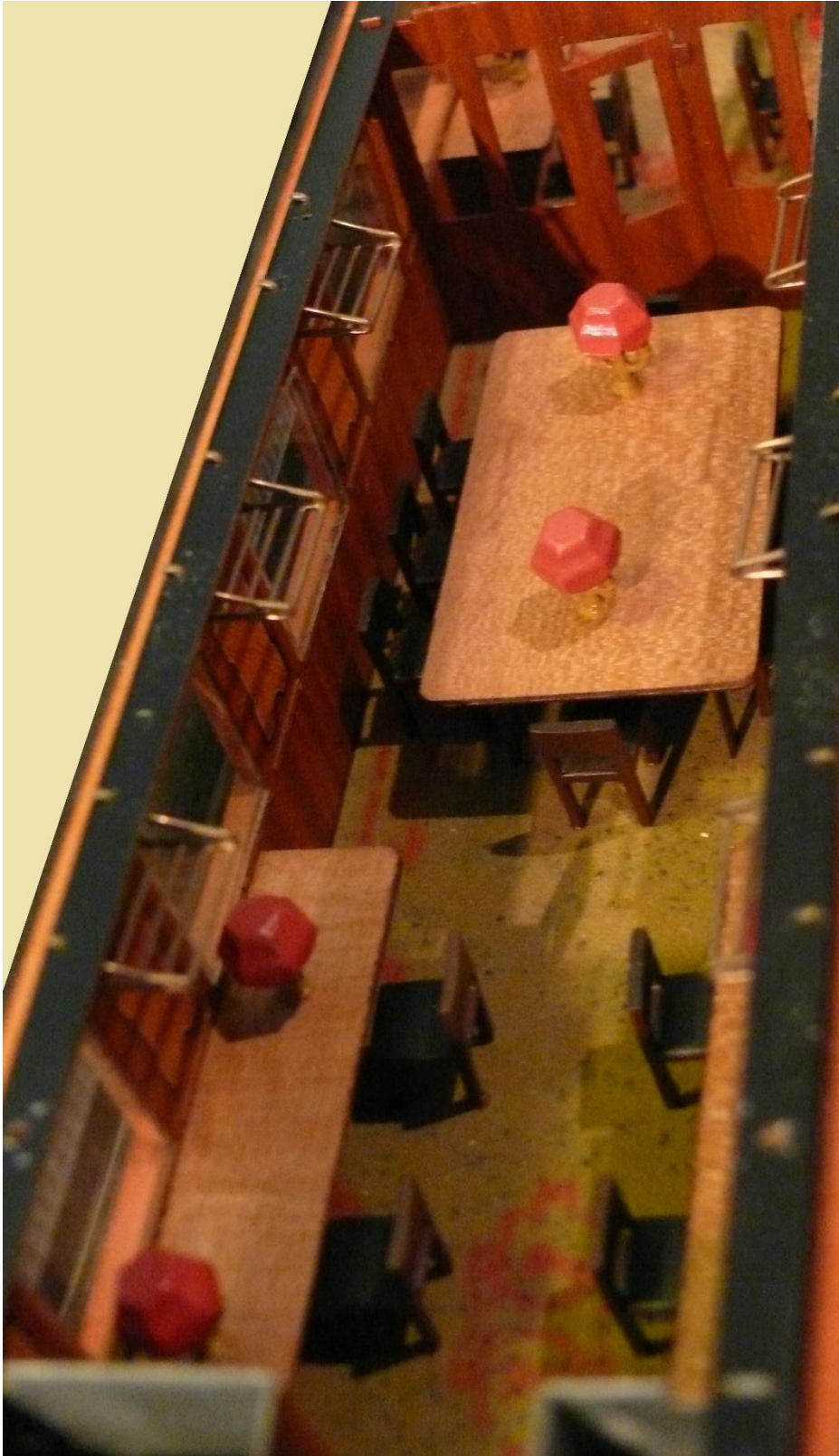


Fig 9



Fig 10

Dottori made the same car also in 1 gauge in a series of only 10 pieces; that is the only model of 2419 that I do not have in my collection.

In 1984 a tinplate model of 2419 in 0 gauge was made in a series of tinplate style teak CIWL Orient Express cars by the French company AS. The car, see Fig 11 and Fig 12, is metal overall (lithographed tinplate for the body), has no interior and has a length of 37 cm. AS used the catalogue references 302800 for this car. Although simplified the car has the correct looks for car 2419.



Fig 11



Fig 12

All pictures taken by me from items in my collection.