

The Night Ferry sleeper modelled by Fred van der Lubbe TCS 1297

In October 1936, i.e. 80 years ago, the Night Ferry had its first run between London and Paris; its last run was in October 1980. The history of the Night Ferry and the rolling stock used in this train is subject of the book Night Ferry by George Behrend and Gary Buchanan (ISBN 0 901845 13 2).



This article is about the Toy and Models of the Night Ferry sleeping cars made by the various manufacturers in different scales and gauges.

The 25 Night Ferry sleeping cars were specially built for the Night Ferry in two batches and owned and operated by the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits et Grands Express Européens or CIWL, they had the numbers 3788 to 3805 and 3983 to 3989. Correct models of these cars, which were assigned the CIWL Type F, should of course wear one of these numbers. Further these cars were much smaller than other CIWL cars since they were made to the English clearance gauge. So to model these cars this had to be taken into account. Of course models of these cars could be sold in Britain as well as the continent, however the scale difference, especially 00 versus H0, makes this again difficult.

As far as I know no manufacturer made a Type F in gauge 1 (other CIWL types are or were made in this gauge).

In gauge 0 I know of 2 models of the Type F. The English kit manufacturer Westdale made a kit of a car with number 3794. The body is made of aluminum. The car has interior and has a length of 45 cm and a scale of 1:43.5. It is reasonably detailed and matches quite well with Elettren CIWL cars. The lettering of the car indicating first and second class shows that this models a pre-war car. I bought this as a made-up model and I do not know who build it; it might be made available build up by Westdale.



Later I found 3 other made-up models which were not as good, but still presentable to make up a 4 car train.

<https://youtu.be/C4hWQe6XwoU>

The Westdale kit was released more than 30 years ago and I do not know the catalogue number it had; at some time Westdale announced a new version of this kit which now should have a brass body but as far as I know it will not be made.

Another gauge 0 Type F sleeping car was made in 1990 by Elettren for Fulgurex with catalogue number 2624. Even if it has a catalogue number this car does not appear in any Fulgurex or Elettren catalogue, but I came across it at an auction (and did not buy it).



Inquiry with Fulgurex taught me that this car was produced in a very small series of 5 or 6 coaches. I assume this was, as all Elettren coaches are, a metal model with interior to a scale of 1:43.5.

Both mentioned gauge 0 Type F sleeping cars are difficult to obtain. I assume there would be a market in England as well as on the continent for a coarse or fine scale model. Both ACE and Darstaed have mentioned that they might make the Type F sleeping car in coarse scale and later Darstaed also mentioned a fine-scale version. Also the French 0 gauge company Chrezo announced a type F sleeping car; I am quietly waiting.



It would be difficult to recognize any of the toy train sleeping cars, made by various makers like JEP, LR and Hornby, as a Type F car; however, JEP made a series of carriages after the second world war that included a CIWL sleeping car in 0 gauge. The number used for this car is 3790, which is a number used for the Type F sleepers. The car does not look like an Type F car, it has however the marking for first and second class. This was a typical Type F marking. The length is 29 cm, the coach is all metal/tinplate and has catalogue number 4761.S.



For H0/00 I know of 4 Type F cars (the picture shows three of these).



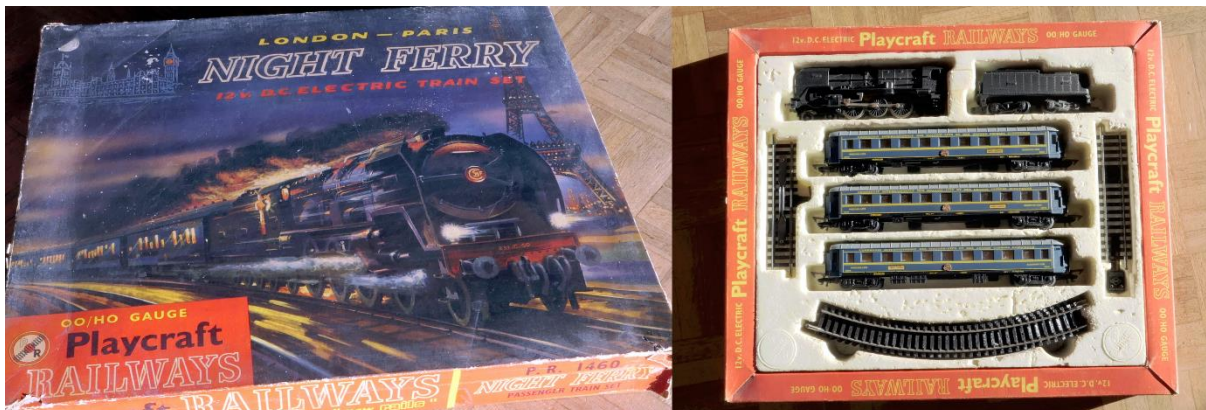
First to mention is the reasonably well-known version by Jouef, which was made available in Britain by Playcraft.



Jouef made this plastic car from 1962 till 1966 with catalogue number 863 (P863 for Playcraft) . This is a scale model fitting for the period it was made. It has interior and has a correct length of 23 cm. This coach was similar to other Jouef CIWL coaches of that period, which were a bit small. Since the Type F is smaller than other CIWL coaches this was actually better to scale. The roof has a correct lower profile than the ones fitted to the other Jouef CIWL cars. It has CIWL number 3933 which is unfortunately not correct for a Type F sleeping car. The destination board mentions "Paris – London" so the train goes to London.



Playcraft issued sets with 3 Type F sleepers and a French 4-6-2 pacific as “The London-Paris Night Ferry” with Paris-London destination boards.



LS Models is a Belgian model-train company. They make very detailed and realistic plastic models, with special attention to correct livery and lettering, in H0 and N gauge, of rolling stock from the continent with emphasis on French, Belgian, Luxemburg and Dutch railways. The production is in China, but the design is done in Europe. Some years ago they started to make a range of CIWL cars, the first being the Type F sleeper. Due to problems with their Chinese factory the range is build up slower than expected. The Type F sleepers were delivered from 2010 till 2013 in 4 different sets of 3 sleepers with different numbers; the 4 sets are correctly lettered and painted for the different era's these cars have been used (1937, 1956, 1968 and 1974). Also single sleepers for the different era's were available. I have a set with catalogue number 49122 with car numbers 3801, 3805 and 3988.

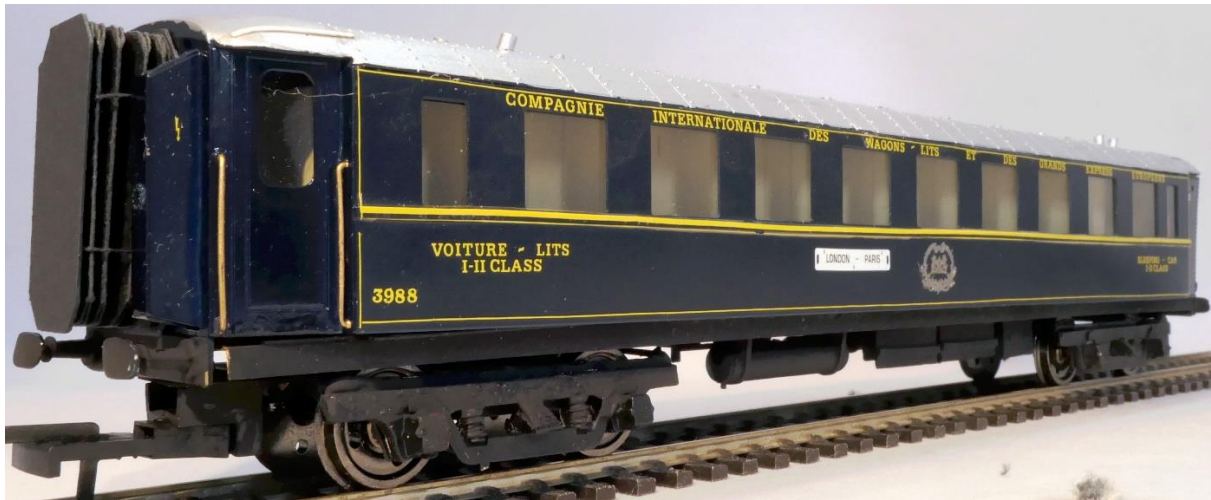




They have the post-war 1956 livery, which did not mention I-II CLASSE; these are very detailed 1:87 scale models with a length of 22 cm. These cars have interior including curtains which are applied differently for the 3 cars. LS Models has planned to issue these cars also in N gauge, however until now they have not appeared.

The next model of a Type F sleeper is to be made out of a 4mm/OO scale kit from MARC (Manufactured Authentic Railway Coach) Models in collaboration with the magazine Model Rail. The kit was available in 2004; a set of waterslide transfers is still available for this kit from MARC Models, the kit itself seems not to be available anymore. Recently I found a complete made-up set of 5 cars and 3 vans. The painted brass sleeping car models have the CIWL numbers 3794, 3802, 3983, 3985 and 3988 and are each 25 cm long.





The last one to mention is the Triang continental sleeping car in 00/H0 gauge. It is a British Pullman car model, but in CIWL livery and inscriptions for a sleeping car with no number.



It has the Triang or Hornby type of couplers so I assume it is made to run in an English train. So I assume it is supposed to be a CIWL Type F although this is not mentioned in the catalogue. The Triang catalogue number is R625, it was made in 1965. It has interior, however the compartments do not line up with the windows, so the windows were frosted. Length is 23 cm.

I will not elaborate further here on the remainder of the consist of the Night Ferry, but for the special Southern Railway/British Railway Night Ferry vans, of which a model was made by MARC Models.



The locomotive and rolling stock were normal Pullman/Southern Railway/British Railway and CIWL/Nord/SNCF equipment.

If you know of any other model in Any make, Any gauge, Any age of the CIWL Type F sleeping car I would be pleased if you let me know: fred.van.der.lubbe@planet.nl.