

# SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

## AMBULANCE TRAINS: STAFF

A FORGOTTEN FIRST  
WORLD WAR STORY

TALKING



Ages

**11-14**  
**14-16**

Topics

**WORLD WAR ONE • HISTORY**

Skills used

**OBSERVATION • DISCUSSION**

**STAFF  
AND BUILD**

# About Ambulance Trains

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Explore the realm of First World War ambulance trains with our image bank for Key Stage 3 pupils. Discover the significance of the railway industry and ambulance trains during the 1914-1918 conflict, and learn about the life-changing journeys of wounded soldiers.

# Using images in your classroom

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Our galleries in the Science Museum Group are full of amazing objects which are all examples of how science and technology has changed and improved our everyday lives.

## **You can use images:**

- To hook students' interest at the start of a lesson or to introduce a new topic.
- As part of a discussion to explore the stories of the people who have shaped the world we live in through their passion and creativity.
- As mystery objects and get your students using their science and history skills such as observation, using prior knowledge and asking questions.
- To create a display of applications of science in your classroom, connecting past, present and future examples of technology.
- In a pre-visit activity to familiarise students with some of the objects and themes they will find in any of our museums.



# Staff and Build: Background information

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The railways were the main source of transport for troops, munitions and goods during the First World War. Ambulance trains were specifically designed to bring the injured back home for treatment.

Designing and building these trains took place before the war began and they were exhibited to the public to show how well the wounded soldiers would be looked after.

The aim of this selection of resources is to help your students to learn about the different types of staff working on ambulance trains during the First World War and how the ambulance trains were designed and built.

# Teachers' notes

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Use them as discussion points for learning about different types of staff that worked on board ambulance trains

Encourage your students to explore and interpret the resources

Compare modern modes of transport and building techniques

## **Talking points:**

What's happening in these images?

Who do you think might have taken these photographs?

How would you feel being a staff member?

What do these resources tell you about the staff that worked on ambulance trains?

What element would you have most liked to be part of?

What do these tell you about the way ambulance trains were designed and built?

Does anything in these resources surprise you?

What do these resources not tell us?

What questions do you need to ask about these resources?

What other types of sources of information do you think you need to look at to find out the answers to these questions?

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## **An unusual sight**

People queuing to see an ambulance train at Huddersfield station, West Yorkshire, 17 November 1917. This ambulance train was on display at several stations in Lancashire and Yorkshire before being used in France.

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Image: Courtesy  
of Imperial War Museum

## **Soldiers inside an ambulance train**

When wards were busy it was hard for the nursing staff to see to every patient, orderlies would dress and treat mild wounds.



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# 3



Image: Courtesy of  
Imperial War Museum

## Increase in demand

At the start of the war ambulance trains had two levels of bunks. As the war went on the carriages contained three levels to meet demand of transporting the wounded. This carriage is not yet at its full capacity.



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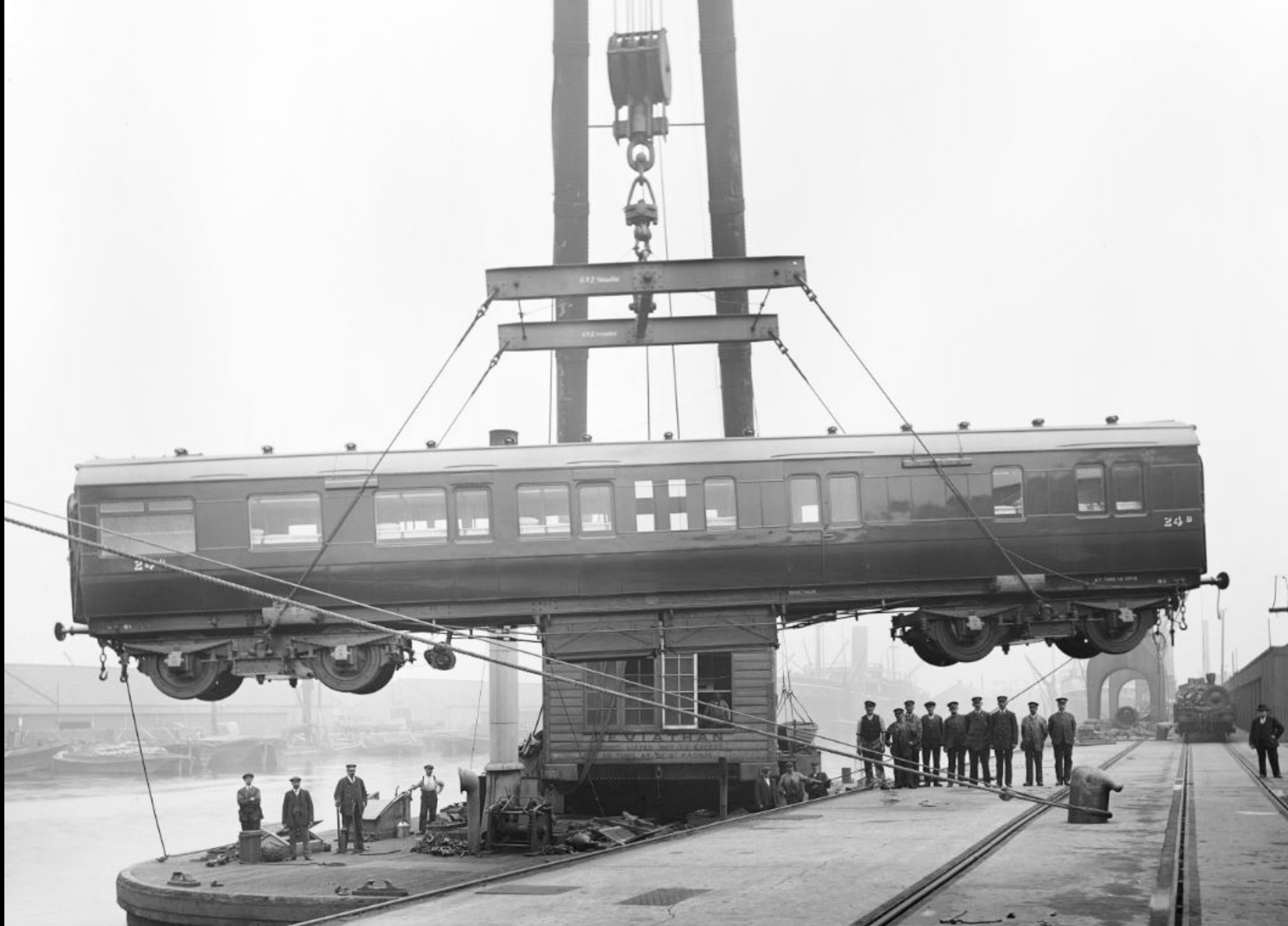
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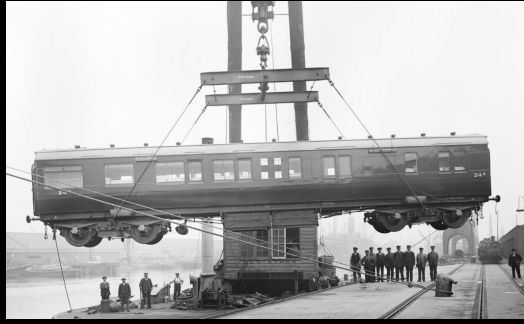


Image: Courtesy of  
Imperial War Museum

## Feeding staff and patients

Nursing and kitchen staff prepared food and gathered fresh water during travel.





## Moving a heavy load

An ambulance carriage being loaded for shipment to the Western Front, at Tilbury Dock, Essex, 1916. This Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway carriage was loaded onto a ship and taken to France.