

KILLAMARSH CHRONICLE

Issue No 38 March 2017

Could this be our own Hunslet 1215?

**The very same one we have been working on for
5 years?**



The wartime Hunslets were painted a very drab matt black!

The object was to NOT attract the attention of the WW1 German gunners, yet here it is painted like a fairground attraction, and this is how it was found by Mike Swift on a stay in Oz back in 1983. But enough of this, let's let Mike take up the story -

We are deeply indebted to Mike for his help and articles past and present, he has filled in a lot of gaps in the history of Hunslet1215

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In Search of HUNSLET 1215, and other LEEDS locos

More than 60 years ago, when I first became interested in industrial locos, I discovered that their builders produced a great variety of locos for export around the world. Hunslet, Hudswell Clarke, John Fowler and T Green of Leeds were the dominant suppliers and produced many fine machines of a style never seen in Britain. Naturally, at that time there was no possibility of ever seeing these myself, so my information came from photographs and contact with other enthusiasts in the countries where they worked. Principal among these was Australia, especially the state of Queensland, where the sugar industry operated around 1800 miles of 2ft gauge track hauling cane to a series of mills along the east coast. Steam locos worked well into the 1960s, the most popular types being John



Fowler and Hudswell Clarke 0-4-2, 0-6-0 and 0-6-2 side tanks and Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 tender locos delivered over a period of almost 40 years.

The sugar industry expanded in the 1920s and the availability of war surplus equipment led to 15 Hunslet 4-6-0Ts being purchased by various mills. When steam locos were retired many were placed in parks by local service clubs and others were obtained by preservation groups or private individuals, including five of the War Department Hunslets. Their condition varied from operational to semi-derelict and those placed in local parks were therefore easily accessible, if not always protected from the weather and vandalism.

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This chunky Fowler 0-6-0 tender loco was built in 1912 for long distance cane haulage from the hills round Childers to Isis Central Mill, The backhead carried a prominent Fowler builder's plate.

My employer, W.C.Holmes of Huddersfield, joined an American group in 1973, and this led to my secondment to their office in Princeton, N.J. for three periods in 1973-77. Export markets offered

better prospects than Britain in the early 1980s and in August 1983 I returned from two weeks touring narrow gauge lines in East Germany to be informed that we had secured a £9million contract to supply dust collection equipment for two 350MW coal fired boilers at Callide B power station in Queensland, Australia. I was asked to spend a few months in Brisbane to support our joint venture partner, Allco Steel, and liaise with the Queensland Electricity Commission.

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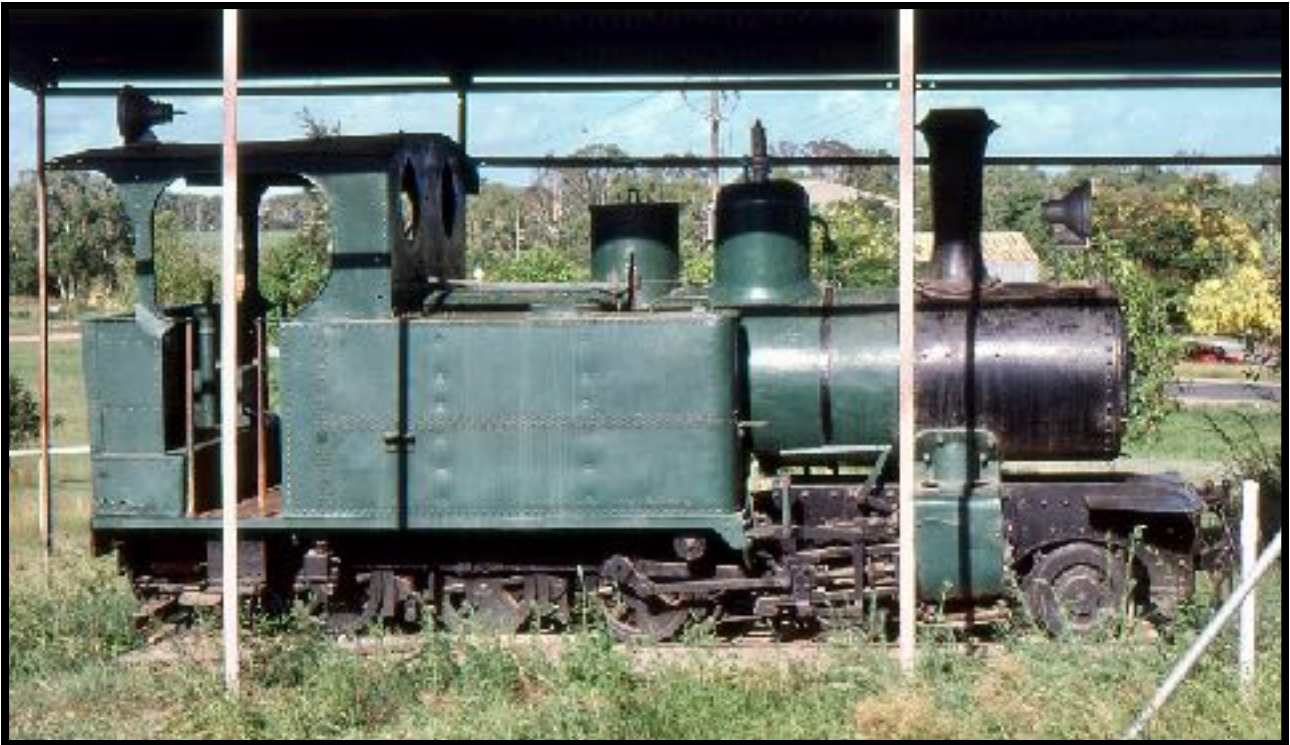
North Eton Mill's Hudswell Clarke of 1898 had a long wheelbase to avoid stressing light underline structures, and stood in the Port Curtis Lions Park in Rockhampton.

It was a wonderful opportunity, but required a lot of organisation, not least obtaining an Australian visa and writing to my Australian contacts to inform them of my impending arrival. When I arrived in Allco's Eagle St. office in Brisbane two weeks later I was handed a batch of letters inviting me for a beer, a meal and a request to speak to the Railway Historical Society, Brisbane branch. Fortunately I had taken the slides from my German trip so was able to oblige.

Despite the problems of communication – at that time mainly by letter and very expensive phone calls (we later obtained a fax machine but it was far from reliable) – it was an interesting and rewarding experience. My local contacts in the enthusiast fraternity were welcoming in the extreme and for the first few weeks I commuted into the city in elderly 3ft 6in gauge wooden semi-compartment “Evans cars” hauled by diesel locos.

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North Eton Mill operated Hunslet 1239 which, when retired, was placed under cover in the Langford Memorial Park.

At weekends there were special trains around Brisbane hauled by 1079, a handsome green "Pacific", or 974, a chocolate brown 4-8-0, even the opening of newly electrified suburban lines with special trains and free travel. A drive north to Nambour enabled me to see COOLUM, a preserved John Fowler 0-6-0T that had appeared in their 1920s catalogue with the caption "An engine to be proud of"; VALDORA, a diminutive Dick Kerr 0-4-0IST and a Lima two-truck Shay. How many small towns had such a rare collection, and an operational sugar mill served by a 2ft gauge line down the main street?

The cane-cutting season begins in June-July and David Mewes suggested we spend a two-day trip visiting five sugar mills at Bundaberg. This was a fantastic experience: trains headed out empty and returned full day and night. In the pub a loco driver offered us a cab ride at Millaquin Mill, which was gratefully accepted and we arrived at the crew mess at midnight, then at 01:00 boarded a 24 ton E M Baldwin BBDH, headed into the empty yard to pick up two rakes of cane "bins" to be delivered to loading sidings along a 22 mile route. A reflective marker was clipped onto the last of the 178 bins but when we reached the main line it was not visible.

A call on the radio to the yard crew on a Clyde 0-6-0DH confirmed a coupling had parted and we had dropped 24 empty bins, but were guided by radio to recouple them to the train, finally leaving at 01:30.

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CSR Hambleton Mill's 1925 Hudswell Clarke is another fine example of careful preservation.

Well out of town we caught up with E M Baldwin BBDH 3 that had left earlier and was waiting for us, so we could follow it at a distance until it took the branch to Elliott Heads. We dropped half the bins in a loop, then continued along the edge of the bush, startling two or three kangaroos in our headlight, before dropping the final load at 02:50 and returned light to the Elliott Heads junction. Here we transferred to loco 3 for a short run down the branch to Dr Mays, picked up 24 loaded cane bins and returned to the mill at 04:15, completing a unique experience.

I had arranged that Carol and Adam would join me for Christmas, giving us the opportunity to visit John and Anne Browning in Mackay, 600 miles north. It seemed logical to see as many preserved locos as possible, the most distant being a Fowler 0-6-0T at Port Douglas -1,150 miles away. The Bruce Highway was now fully paved so the trip seemed practical and, in the company Holden Commodore, cost-free.

So in mid-December I collected the jet-lagged pair from Brisbane airport and said we would leave on holiday early in the morning to drive 240 miles to Bundaberg. Near Wallaville we encountered a train of 80 cane bins headed by an E M Baldwin BBDH, with a second radio controlled BBDH in the centre, rattling along an undulating line at speed to give a fine impression of exactly what was possible on 2ft gauge.

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In the TAFE workshop in Bundaberg we found FELIN HEN, the former Penrhyn Quarry Baldwin 2-6-2T, now converted to an 0-6-2T and dismantled for restoration, before joining the local preservation group for a barbecue to which an “Esky” full of meat was delivered by fork-lift truck! The following day a 330 mile drive was interrupted to examine a Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST in Rockhampton Lions Club Park, before we reached Mackay and a warm welcome from the Browning family. An easy 240 mile drive the next day included a call at Proserpine Rotary Park to view 4-6-0T Hunslet 1317/1918 resting under a canopy.



DIGGER, Hunslet 1317, worked at Proserpine Mill until 1962 and was then placed here in the Rotary Park.

We spent the weekend in Townsville, where our first priority was to visit Hunslet 1215 at Rowes Bay Children’s Home. The Royal Queensland Bush Children’s Health Scheme was set up in 1935 to provide health care not readily available to families in sparsely populated inland areas, who suffered a variety of ailments often due to malnutrition. Children were brought here for treatment including trachoma, surgery and dental care and could stay for several weeks, often at no cost to their parents. The home was established by the Rotary Club in 1946 at a former army camp by the sea but closed in 1994 when rural health facilities were much improved.

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The 4-6-0T stood on track laid in a concrete slab in front of the home, somewhat changed from its original condition by the addition of a diamond spark arrestor, extended smokebox and modified dome cover. Painted bright green, yellow and red, with black frames, it seemed in fair condition despite being unprotected and just 60 yards from the beach. A plaque on the side tank stated "INVICTA Donated to Bush Children's Health Scheme Townsville by Haughton Sugar Co. Ltd., Giru. A Lions Club Project, Mt. Stuart Club, Townsville. 20-4-68".

This was one of the first projects undertaken by the club, founded just a year earlier, who erroneously claimed the loco had been used on building the Suez canal, perhaps suggested by an ex-service man who had seen similar locos in Egypt during the war. Any thought that one day it would be returned to Britain and restored to working order seemed fanciful.



HOME BUSH, Hudswell Clarke 1067, cooling down under its canopy at CSR's Victoria Mill, Ingham, following one of its rare operating days.

It was now time to be back on the road for a 220 mile drive to Cairns, calling at CSR's Victoria Mill at Ingham, where 22 diesel locos clustered in and around the shed. Parked by the mill was HOME BUSH, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 1067/1914, restored in 1978 and still warm from one of its rare steamings two days earlier. The Australian Sugar Industry Museum at Mourilyan housed another Victoria Mill 0-6-0, TOWNSVILLE, Hudswell Clarke 1099/1915, looking very shabby with several parts missing.

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However the unique indirect drive Fowler 0-4-2T 4668/1883 (the replica builder's plate states 4667), was a delight, richly restored in lined maroon livery.



This Fowler "Patent" indirect drive 0-4-2T was introduced two years before 4668 was delivered to Mourilyan Mill in 1883, where it worked for 30 years before being sold and amazingly survived until being preserved in 1977.

On the approach to Cairns we stopped at Gordonvale to see Fowler 0-4-2T NELSON, and Hambledon Mill where their smartly painted Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 sat under a canopy. In Cairns we called on Rod Leonard, who owned Hudswell Clarke 1653/1934, another 0-6-0 from Macknade Mill, which he hoped to restore. A short 50 mile drive took us to Mossman, where permission to see IVY, their 1922 Fowler 0-4-2T stored for proposed restoration to working order was brusquely refused. At Port Douglas an Irish named 0-6-0T FAUGH-A-BALLAGH, Fowler 8733/1901, sits in a fenced canopy close to a spectacular white sand beach fringed by palm trees. Adam found a coconut, but despite our best efforts with a screwdriver and wheel brace we failed to release its contents! Clearly our survival on a desert island would be doubtful. Having now achieved our objective, it was time to head south to Mackay. But first I had been recommended to visit Ravenswood, a mining town 26 miles down a dirt road off the Flinders Highway. Gold was discovered here in 1868 and a branch railway opened in 1884.

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After 1910 mining declined, many of the wooden buildings were removed in the 1920s and the railway closed in 1930. Though the town declined, it retains vestiges of its former glory, notably the Railway Hotel and Imperial Hotel, ornate brick buildings dating from 1901 and still in business. The town cemetery is protected by fancy iron gates and fences by Francis Morton, Liverpool, and full of elaborate marble headstones of those who prospered and simple cast iron markers of those who didn't.



DIGGER again

We spent four days with the Browning family in Mackay, giving Anne the opportunity to prepare a full Christmas dinner, despite the temperature being over 100°, and John to take me on a tour of seven local sugar mills with more than 60 diesel locos. Preserved locos seen in the area were an Avonside 0-4-0T of 1922; a Dick Kerr 0-4-2T of 1910; a Fowler 0-4-2T of 1926; a Fowler 0-6-2T of 1935; a Hunslet 0-4-2T of 1910 and finally, under a canopy in Langford Memorial Park at North Eton, Hunslet 4-6-0T 1239/1916. Mackay was remarkable by being surrounded by this large collection of narrow gauge equipment – with most of the steam locos originating from Leeds! But more was to come - a 90 minute ferry trip from Shute Harbour to Hayman Island, then by train propelled by a 20 h.p. Ruston diesel over the short 2ft gauge line from the pier head to the resort, for a day of relaxation.

This expedition took two weeks, covered around 2700 miles, and was a fantastic experience, the highlight of my stay in Queensland. It also emphasised the significance of World War 1 Hunslet locos in Australia's history, as the country's commitment to this conflict was considerable – almost 40% of the eligible male population enlisted, of whom 14% were killed and 28% wounded. This tragedy had a huge effect on the entire country and it's no surprise that Anzac Day remains one of Australia's most significant national annual events.

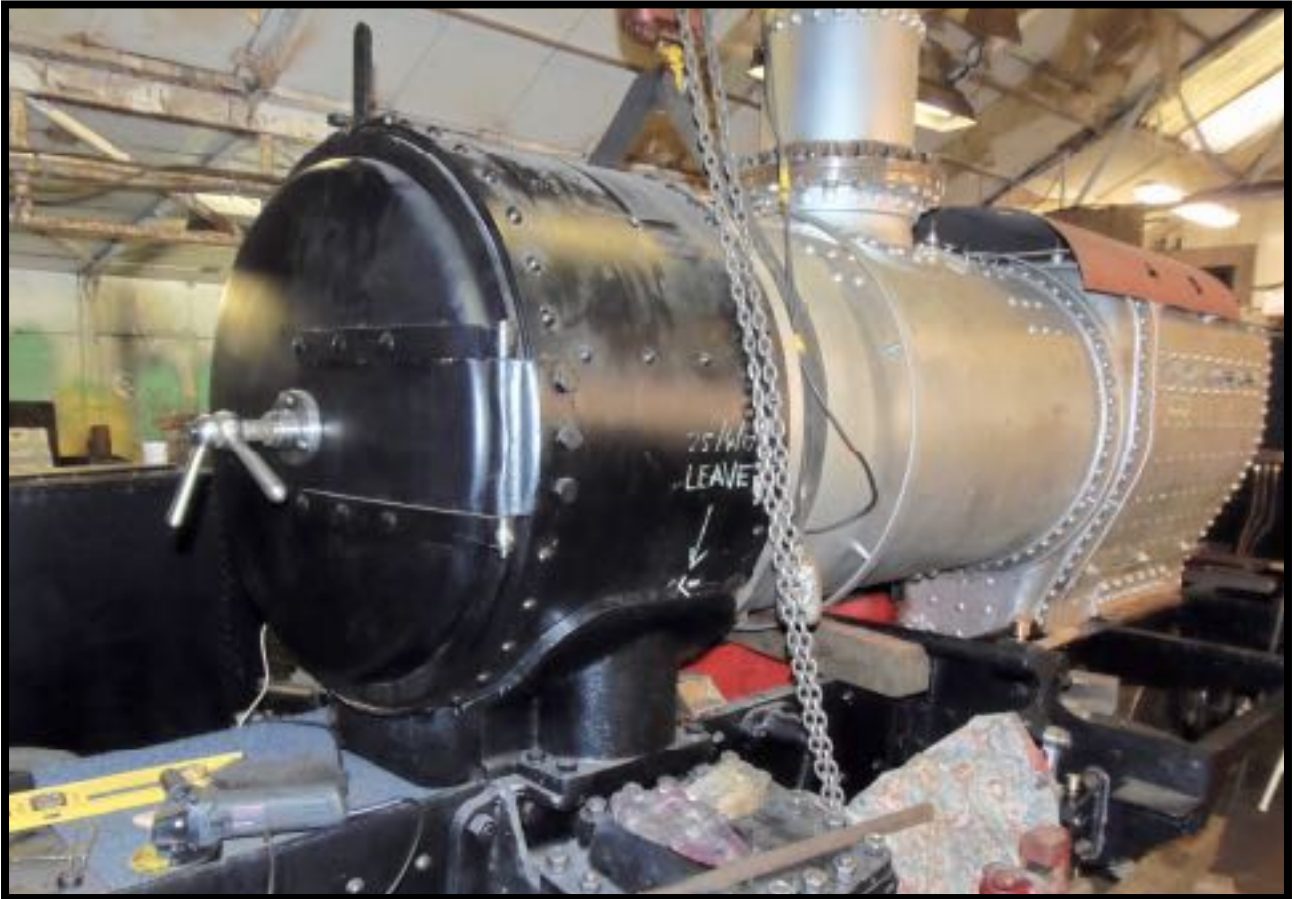
In the last 15 years three of the five surviving 4-6-0Ts have been fully restored: WDLR 306, Hunslet 1218/1916 is at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, an appropriate location as Australia sent three Light Railway companies to France; WDLR 327, Hunslet 1239/1916 is being restored for display at The Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich; and of course our own WDLR 303 Hunslet 1215 is being returned to full operation.

Photos and story by **Mike Swift**

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The Boiler is in again!



Once again it is a temporary affair, the boiler has been in and out like a lodging house cat, it is currently in but has to come out again for the steam test. However it's time in the frames is not being wasted, there are all manner of tweaks and fine tunings to be done and the job has fallen to the dynamic duo of Dave Gregory and Paul Ingham.

Basically with the boiler back in the frames work on the cladding has been held up so Dave and Paul turned their hand to the boiler fitting. When we had the smoke box saddle repaired, (you may remember it got shipped all the way to Poland for skilled cast metal repairs), they left plenty of extra metal on so it could be ground off to a perfect fit. Yes, good engineering practice, but a lot of hard work for us, fortunately Dave and Paul stepped up to the mark and took the job on.

First, the tanks had to come off, we needed to be able to get closer and actually see the "fit" and the tanks were in the way. then the old crane was started up and the boiler lifted into the frames. First the bolt holes were checked for alignment at the firebox end, they are slots rather than holes because the boiler expands as it gets hot so there has to be room for it to move. Calculations were done (expansion and contraction etc) and the slots opened up to suit so that should now be OK,

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Then came the front end, the smokebox saddle has to be ground down to fit, if it is a poor uneven fit and the bolts are tightened down to bolt the smokebox to the saddle then it puts undue stress and strain on the saddle casting and with the vibration of the loco in travel it can break lumps off the casting - which is exactly the state we found it in 4 years back.

The Procedure now is to lower the smokebox onto the saddle and measure the gaps, lift the smokebox again and grind. this means that the smokebox end of the boiler has to be raised and lowered repeatedly during the measure and grind sequence. This in itself is a problem, the boiler weighs about 5 tons, most of this is at the firebox end, and the overhead crane only has a safe working load of 1 ton. The answer to this came in the form of two 5 ton jacks that Dave spotted in the "not wanted" pile in the Barrow Hill Roundhouse, words were exchanged between us and Barrow Hill and Mike Hawley and myself set off in my little van to go and "acquire" the jacks, and they work a treat even if they are a lot slower that the overhead crane would have been.

Now the problem is that once the boiler has been lowered so that the smokebox sits on the saddle - you can only see the fit round the edges, you cannot see the middle of the casting. This led to the usual all heads together site meeting. Various options were tried, a hand-lamp was a big help, when strategically placed inside the smokebox light shines through the gaps between saddle and smokebox and high spots can be seen. Eventually, as the gap closes it is increasingly hard to get a measure on what needs grinding off and where. That's when Ed suggested plasticine, - see the story "Plasticine".

Move on 1 week - work started again, this time when the boiler was lowered it landed on a whole bunch of small pyramids of plasticine strategically placed by Ed. When raised again a quite accurate measurement of the hidden gaps can be taken and from that they can

work out the various points that need to be ground down to fit. It is tedious work but it must be done to the best of our ability and Dave and Paul along with Ed are doing a good painstaking job on it.

Eventually the job got done and the smokebox has now been bolted to the saddle.

Next stage fit the blast-pipe and the steam pipes.



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Martyn's notes.

The whole pace of the restoration of 1215 continues to rapidly accelerate as we head in to the last phase of the project – it has ended up being a five year plus project as our first working day on her was held on the 1st of May 2012 so our fifth anniversary has now passed and on March 23rd 2017 we passed the 300 working days milestone. In fairness we did lose about six months during this period while we focused on completion of the restoration (rebuild?) of HC 1238 but this is the reality of restoring a worn out steam engine working just one and latterly two days a week on it. But the end is now in sight. It is worth pointing out that we are now at working day 310 which means that we are still within a one year project had we worked on it full time.



All set for the open day! Sweeping brush in evidence, all clean and tidy - till Stuart walked into shot with a gas axe in hand and a very determined look on his face that said "I want to destroy something"!!!

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We had fitted the new boiler to the frames in time for the WOLT open day held at the workshop on Sunday November 27th 2016 – the principle aim of this was to see if the boiler would go on with the tanks in situ and also to see how the smoke box fitted in the new saddle and how the boiler lines up generally, and we proved conclusively that more work would be required and the tanks would definitely have to come off – again, well, it was worth a try, so the water tanks were duly removed again. Also the frame cross members had to come out for some modifications. These were made to drawing but everything is a really tight fit on this class of loco with the boiler sitting between the frames and even subtle changes in the washout plug pad sizes have meant that the cross members are now too tight a fit. Rectification of these is already well underway.

On the face of it these are steps backwards but the reality is that the final assembly of the loco will go much quicker and better now that we have this information and we can plan things accordingly. The boiler is still due a steam test and it was taken back out of the frames again two weeks later to be prepared for the steam test as well as having the last two pieces of boiler cladding made (which also happen to be the hardest ones to make)!

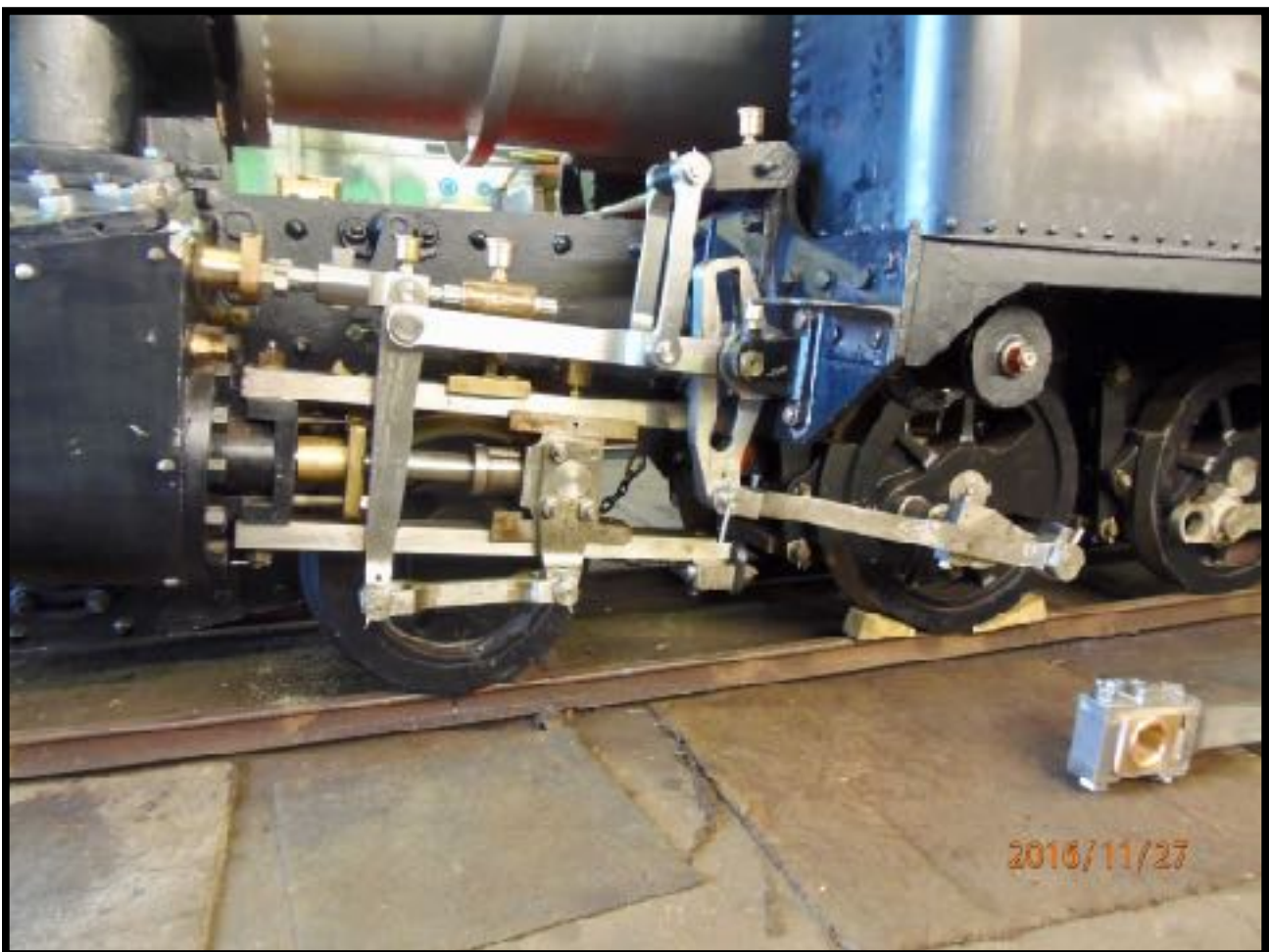


Smoke box lifted to allow the grinding of the saddle

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Moving on, the boiler is back in the frames and we have also now completed the process of grinding down the high spots on the repaired smokebox saddle to make the boiler a snug fit at the front end. This proved to be quite a task and the boiler has been up and down several times at the front end while the smokebox saddle was ground to a suitable profile – please see the notes on a new use for Plasticine elsewhere in this newsletter! The cladding team of Dave and Paul assisted by Ed dropped on to this task which took some four working days to complete and it tested their tenacity but they won in the end and the fit is superb now. Following this success Richard Smith, Dave Clegg and myself drilled the holding down bolt holes in the smoke box and saddle (fourteen of them!) and these bolts are now in situ.



The motion and valve gear is now all but finished – the newly machined connecting rods duly arrived and these are now ready to fit to the loco. The side rods are on and the eccentric rods are also now a good fit – thanks to Stuart Fletcher - New oil pots have been fitted to all the motion and new oil caps were made and are now fitted to the new side and con rods and the eccentric rods so we are nearly there with this aspect of the project.

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The air brake piping and the vacuum brake piping are now finished as far as they can be; in the case of the air brake pipes we await the final fitting of the boiler so the various pipes and gauges can be fitted in the cab and joined up to the now tested system. A new RE6 relay valve has now arrived for the air brake system and this awaits installation under the cab floor, Richard has made a bracket for this. The vacuum system is complete as far as the ejector and again we await the final fitting of the boiler before the steam exhaust side can be fitted from the ejector in to the smokebox – the radiused flanges for which have already been made.

Having now finished work on the smokebox saddle we will focus on the frame cross stretchers and the side expansion brackets and shim pieces before the boiler can be finally secured down to the frames after the steam test. The ashpan is now made and David Smith has been working his way through making all the components for the damper door operating linkages, these too are now complete and ready to be fitted to the loco. The firebars and carriers are in stock and they are also ready to attach to the boiler and ashpan in readiness for the steam test.

The cladding team of Paul Ingham and Dave Gregory have made great progress and now only the final cut outs in the main barrel sections and the last two complex front pieces remain to be made and all of this work is already under way. The valve chest covers are now finished and are being painted.



The smokebox end of the boiler is also making good progress and all the holes are now cut out ready for the chimney to be fitted and for the main steam pipes to go

through. New conical washers (lens rings) have been made for the main steam pipes and the two machined olives for these have now been made, as have two of the flat versions for the bottom end of the steam pipes. The large diameter copper pipe has been annealed ready for bending to shape.

The new “investment casting” cylinder drain taps have now been fully machined and are fitted to the cylinders. Once we have lagged the cylinders and finalised the lengths of the adaptors these can be finally secured in situ with their operating linkages attached. New nuts and olives were made and these duly arrived at the workshop on May 2nd as did some ½” copper pipe for the drain taps and the ROSCO oilers so we can then make and fit all the necessary copper pipe work.

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The workshop.



The workshop has had something of a transformation recently and we have now taken over the old mess room and converted it in to an office which means that all the drawings etc are now safely stored in filing cabinets in there with the drawing board nearby and we now have a quiet bit of the workshop in which to discuss things away from the sounds of grinders and machine tools.

We are still looking to acquire more tools and equipment for the workshop as and when they come along – bridge reamers or expanding reamers and lathe parting off tools seem to be the main requirements right now – any offers?

Pete continues to keep the workshop tidy and Stewart and Pete recently tidied up the steel rack area so now we really can find things. A portable pipe vice and two 5 ton jacks have arrived from Barrow Hill – thanks to Richard Prestige and the CLAG group and Dave Gregory respectively. More hand tools etc keep arriving as well as some benches, cupboards and chairs thanks to Richard Smith and his impressive network of contacts. Mike Lynskey brought a large box of spanners, taps, file handles and other useful tools which will be cleaned up and added to our stock.

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The team.

Working days continue as normal and we continue to meet every Tuesday without fail and most Thursdays. We are considering holding another three day working week to be held some time in early Summer time and I am sure that the project will see many extra days put in as we near the finishing line. As of May 9th 2017 we have put in a staggering 14,729 man hours so far on a total of 310 working days. The team continues to average 10 - 11 members in attendance every Tuesday and 4 - 5 every Thursday (subject to fluctuations due to holidays, health issues, work and family commitments) so this continues to be a tremendous and much appreciated effort by all concerned.

We continue to fill in the time sheets each week and the total of man hours worked rises steadily and is now approaching the 15,000 mark, who knows what the final figure will be? I have given up trying to guess - only time will tell.

Working week.

Another working week is currently being planned but the dates are yet to be confirmed - it will happen once the steam test has taken place. The idea is to give the project another major push forward as the previous ones did. This one will be even better because the final reassembly will then be fully underway.

Money!

As reported here we are continuing to make increasingly rapid progress with 1215 and we now have all the major components for the loco in stock at last. I know I am repeating myself yet again here but if you are considering helping WOLT out financially now really is the time to do so, Ian and I keep a close eye on the costings and we are nearly there now but there is still work to do and more small parts, paint, fasteners, copper pipe and other materials are still required so please have a look at the WOLT web page where there are details of how to help the project – thank you.

Painting.

The painting team of Messrs Padget, Watmuff and Hawley continue to do a great job of the paintwork on 1215 and she will appear in her 1916 livery with 303 on the front buffer beam. The team spend a lot of time carefully flattening down surfaces in order to get a really good smooth surface ready for the final top coats to go on. We are now at the stage where we have to try to separate painters and



engineers as fitters do not like getting covered in wet paint and the painters do not like scratches and hand prints on their newly applied paintwork. This is where Tuesday and Thursday working is paying off as John and Stewart generally now attend on a Thursday when it is quieter and they can get on with the painting relatively dust free.

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Water tanks.

April 25th was a historic day as another 1215 milestone was reached. Following a great deal of preparatory work we finally filled the two side tanks with water and I am pleased to report that they were sound with no leaks other than a slight dribble from the old flanges on the vertical faces at the cab end. The blanking flanges were duly removed and re-packed and that cured the problem. Another important stage reached in the restoration.

Wanted.

We can always make use of anything Whitworth, i.e. taps, dies, reamers, spanners, drills and most importantly fasteners of any size including nuts, bolts, studs, split pins and washers. Whitworth stuff is getting increasingly harder to find now so if anyone is having a clear out please bear us in mind – collections can be arranged.

Sad news. John Tomlinson. 01/02/2003-26/03/2017.

One of the most unenviable tasks I have to undertake is to write the occasional obituary for our newsletter, early 2016 was a terrible time and I seemed to be writing more than the usual number of them back then but this one is by far and away the saddest one I have ever had to write and probably ever will have to write. It is with the deepest sadness that I have to report the passing of John Tomlinson, son of Stuart and Hazel Tomlinson and brother to Ellie. John was only 14 years old and suffered from a short but ultimately fatal viral infection which got into his brain. John was a very decent young man and he was a keen steam and transport enthusiast and an excellent budding traction engine driver. He could often be seen at the SBR or out on the rally field with members of the Goodall and Tomlinson families and their engines. He will be sorely missed by his family, all of his friends, all of us at the SBR and all of the wider traction engine community. All of our thoughts are with Stuart, Hazel and Ellie at this extremely sad time as they come to terms with their loss. **Rest In Peace young man.**

Neil McMurdy.

Since our last newsletter our good friend Neil McMurdy of the West Lancs Light railway suffered from a serious stroke in January and at the time of writing these notes he had just returned home (24th April) having been released from the hospital in Ormskirk where he has received the very best of care. I am pleased to report that he is responding very well to this and he is now making really good progress. We all wish Neil all the very best and we look forward to seeing him make a full recovery and back at the WLLR again. Neil's colleagues at Hesketh Bank have set him a target of recovery in time to attend their 50th anniversary celebrations this Summer. Get well soon Neil from all of us.

Reflections on the SBR open day - March 25th 2017.

Once again the Statfold Barn Railway put on a mega show with a staggering TWENTY locos in steam – this has to be a record for a UK heritage railway surely? Several team members were present whether on duty or as visitors and all agreed that it was a fabulous day made even better by it being the first public running day of the Burton and Ashby tram operating on its own dedicated tramway and clearly hugely popular with the visitors.

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In the Roundhouse there were the out of use locos on display, including our next project "Ogwen", plus two new additions! One is described in more detail elsewhere in this newsletter but suffice to say here that the visiting enthusiasts were shocked and delighted in equal measure to see the last of the ex Penrhyn quarry Hunlset "large quarry" class loco's "Gertrude" returned to the UK after 50 years in Canada and on display in the roundhouse with its motors running, just as it had been displayed in the Museum in Ontario, Canada until late last year. Ed's photos illustrate the tasteful way in which this loco was sectioned 50 years ago. It has had its paintwork refreshed since arrival at the SBR.



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Also on display was another very recent arrival – Hunslet / Kerr Stuart “Tamar” class 0-4-2T loco number 3756 of 1937. Until very recently this relatively modern steam loco was on the Cameroon Islands but it has also returned to the UK and it will now be returned to steam at the SBR where it will complement “Trangkil” and “Howard” very well once it is back in service.

Over 1200 visitors came to the open day, a record attendance for the March event and we all now look forward to the next open days in June and September - the dates are enclosed above. From our point of view as operators the day went very well indeed and it was good to see Phil Mason there driving his own loco “Diana”, the ex Pen yr Orsedd Kerr Stuart “Sirdar” class loco which will be operating at the MRT annual gala at Apedale in May, and which recently starred at Beamish Museum’s mega annual great north steam fair.

The SBR story continues to evolve in an ever exciting way and it is good to be a part of it – we are all looking forward to launching 1215 there later this year.

Some 2017 dates for your diary.

Statfold Barn Railway open days

Sat June 10th, Sat Sept 9th.
Sat July 1st – Friends and family day.

Moseley Railway Trust, Apedale.
“Kerr Stuart” themed gala weekend

Sat / Sun May 13th and 14th.

Threlkeld Quarry railway. 50 years since the end of steam at Dinorwic quarry themed gala.

Sat / Sun July 29th and 30th.

Martyn Ashworth

Finally, on a lighter note - motorcycle parking in down town Mumbai



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Plasticine - Or - Ed strikes again

Ed Hollis, our CAD expert (that's Cardboard Aided Design to you and me) has branched out into a new field, PLASTICINE!! yes plasticine. It all started when the lads were sizing up how much they could or should grind off the smokebox saddle to get a good fit. So, where does the plasticine come in - - have patience, I'm coming to that shortly.

The fitting work started out OK, they would grind a bit off, then lower the smokebox onto the saddle, have a good measure round then, up with the smokebox and grind a bit more. This is not a quick operation, don't forget, the smokebox is part of the boiler so the whole lot was going up and down like a WW1 howitzer barrel. there was the usual load of shouted instructions (most of it not printable) to the two lads who were manning the jacks, one at each side of the loco and not in sight of each other so that they kept the jacks level as they went up and down. To deviate again, we had considered using the overhead crane, but that only has a safe working load of 1 ton and the boiler (we know) weighs about 5 tons, we know that Sam tested the Crane to 2 tons when he installed it and given that we were only lifting the "light end" i.e. the smoke box we still reckoned that it would be touch and go as to whether we were overloading the crane or not. So we acquired a matching pair of 5 ton mechanical Jacks which were "located" at Barrow Hill by Dave Gregory and "liberated" via the back door by Mike Hawley and myself using my little van; our thanks must go to the Barrow Hill Roundhouse for their kind donation of a pair of lifting jacks!!! (we may tell them later).

Anyway, work progressed, Dave Gregory and Paul Ingham were grinding away like madmen, the smokebox was going up and down like a brides nightie and we had to open the big doors to let out the dust and smoke. Then they came to the stage where they couldn't see enough to make a judgement of how much to grind off because the gap between smokebox and saddle was getting very close. It was at this point that Ed stated

"we need plasticine"!! yes, remember the plasticine, this is the nub of the story! apparently you plaster the plasticine over the areas to be ground away (pardon the pun) lower the smokebox onto the plasticine covered saddle, and when you lift it up you can "read" the clearances and see what needs to be ground off. it is a very clever trick and yet so simple.



Plasticine in place

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Ed was busy saying to Martyn "shall I get some plasticine", Martyn in turn was looking at me with that "this is a nice little job for you" look in his eye, and I knew what was coming next - I would get lumbered with the job so I accepted defeat with good grace and volunteered to get some, after all I am treasurer as well as tea brewer.

After some trawling around the internet I discovered that most shops only sell the piddling little strips of coloured stuff that you give to kids at Christmas and they often come complete with little bunny rabbit moulds and kid safe cutters, Ed is not going to thank me for that! I trawled some more and finally found the company that supplies the shops with



Plasticine, and they sell the 500g lumps that we were looking for. I spoke to the lady in sales, she asked, probably trying to be helpful, "what are you using it for", I said we are building a steam loco! "my goodness, a steam locomotive?" "yes, but it's only a narrow gauge loco, it will be about 12 tons when finished", "and you're making that out of plasticine????"

As seen from inside the lowered smokebox

At this point she must have seen a huge order pass before her eyes for 12 tons of plasticine

and if she was on sales commission she must have been seeing enough commission to take her and the hubby to the Bahamas for a fortnight - I had to let her down slowly and explain. I explained, I described the saddle - boiler - apply the plasticine - drop the boiler - lift and measure etc and just for good measure I explained that when finished it will be Britains first and only mobile WW1 war memorial.

I said, " we will need about three of your 500g blocks", "Ok" she said, "I will send you them", "thank you very much" says I, "how much will it be", "no charge, I will just send them". What a result, I thanked her most profusely and rang off, three days later a heavy bag dropped through the letterbox and landed on my foot. The bag containing the three blocks of plasticine, one deep red, one purple and one pink, and I was nursing a very sore ingrowing toenail for two days.

So, our heartfelt thanks go to Flair Leisure Products of Cheam for their kind donation, Perhaps I ought to ring back and get her name, she was very kind.

Mike

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Going through the motion

In the last issue we were happy to report that the valve gear and motion was coming together nicely and we were only waiting for the main drive rods to comeback after machining, all was going well - we spoke too soon!

Martyn has commented before, "this loco has fought us every inch of the way all through restoration", it is truly amazing the number of unforeseen problems that have cropped up, now here's the latest, the drive rods are out of line.

Let's go back a step or two, Stuart Fletcher has been beavering away for some time on the motion (dividing his time between that and fitting the cab, you will recall that the cab also caused us problems when it didn't fit). Anyway all was going well, coupling rods were fitted and checked and declared OK, the valve gear was working fine and all in the right place, all it needed now was to fit the drive rods and the job was done.

When the drive rods went away we also sent the cross heads with them so the holes could be machined out and nice new pins made to fit. this was done, and a very nice job they made of them, a superb bit of engineering. Stuart set about the fitting and discovered that when the crossheads were back in place and the rods attached, the left hand side rod stuck out sideways by about 3/4". This should not be! the rod was out of line! I did



suggest that we got a blow torch on it, warm it up and put a slight bend in the rod to "bend it straight" so to speak - Stuart's answer is not printable here!

**The motion,
dis-assembled
and bits sent
away**

Stuart set about measuring and calculating and

finally came to realise that the hole in the crosshead was a mere 10 thousandths of an inch out of line. The crosshead is part of the original loco so it must have been "out" before we started, anyway the whole lot had to be sent away again so the hole could be "opened out" back into line and a new oversized pin made to fit. like I stated earlier this loco has fought us every inch of the way.

We have now (once again) reached the state where we think we have "cracked it" and nothing else could go wrong - this time I am keeping my gob shut.

Mike

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More tales from the Western Front - 100 years ago.



A classic WW1 narrow gauge railway view with a Baldwin 4-6-0T and a train of Pershing and D class wagons loaded with munitions for the front line in 1917.

During August 1916 the War Department 4-6-0 tank locos started to arrive from Hunslet of Leeds. Of these, our loco, number 303, builders number 1215 of 1916, was the third one to be built. No dates for their arrival in France are known but we do know that they were put straight in to service in mid August 1916 as the Somme campaign was by then fully underway.

If 1916 is remembered for the Battle of the Somme, 1917 must surely be remembered for the battles of Arras and then the hell of the third battle of Ypres - Passchendaele. On November 18th 1916 bad weather had finally brought to an end the great Somme campaign and both sides dug in for another winter of fighting and deprivations. Before the winter set in though there were further major battles at Thiepval, then Ancre Heights and finally at Beaumont-Hamel where the Germans lost some 45,000 men whilst allied losses were about 23,000.

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Rail transport for Arras casualties. April 9th 1917.

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As the year 1917 got underway world politics began to play an ever increasing part in the shape and ultimately the outcome of World War One. Russia was in turmoil as the communist revolutions began to take hold across the nation and the USA were becoming ever more alarmed about "The European war", as they saw it, and the actions of Germany in particular. On the 31st of January 1917 the Germans began "unrestricted" submarine warfare and they even threatened to sink hospital ships. Over the next month close to a million tons of allied shipping was lost. Lloyd George then ordered the Royal Navy to protect convoys of merchant ships destined for Britain but the sinking off the Irish coast of the Cunard passenger liner SS Laconia by a German U boat whilst it was sailing from New York to Liverpool further inflamed America.

On the 3rd of February 1917 America cut diplomatic ties with Germany and on April the 6th they formally declared war on Germany. The final straw was the Zimmerman telegram from the Germans which encouraged Mexico to rise up against America on the side of Germany. It was actually June 26th 1917 before US troops arrived in France but when they did General Pershing brought with him an army of one million men who were fresh and not exhausted as the remaining allied troops were by this stage of the war. In March 1917 the Russian revolution led to the abdication of Zsar Nicholas 2nd and by April, Lenin was in Moscow. Developments here were to have a profound effect on the course of WW1 and as 1917 progressed there was open rebellion in the Russian army and navy.

On April 9th the fateful French Nivelle Offensive got underway as did the Battle of Arras followed by the battle of Vimy Ridge on April 13th. This pivotal attack was led by the Canadian Corps against the German defences and in it they employed miles of tunnels and used aerial reconnaissance in this famous offensive. Casualties were high – 10,602 Canadians and an estimated 20,000 Germans. The French Nivelle campaign sometimes known as the second battle of the Aisne did not go well and led to widespread mutiny amongst the exhausted French troops. Over 187,000 French soldiers died in this campaign while some 168,000 Germans also perished.

Nivelle had replaced Joffre in December 1916 as Commander in Chief of the French forces. The Germans were at this time withdrawing to the Hindenburg line and the British army were carrying out attacks on them at Arras and Soissons. In fact the Battle of Arras consisted of no less than eight separate battle phases including Vimy Ridge, three battles of the Scarpe, two battles for Bullecourt, the battle of Lagincourt and the battle of Arleux. These battles had only limited success but for the French it was a disaster and the Government in Paris, who had supported Nivelle, fell. Petain was recalled and he took over again as Commander in Chief of the French army.

On June 7th 1917 the British Flanders offensive began - better known as the battle of Ypres. It was in this hellish environment that loco 1215 and her sisters had commenced work in August 1916. It is at this time that the series of photographs now held by the Imperial war Museum were taken depicting loco 1215 – 303 – at Boisieux-Aux-Mont (South of Arras) in September 1917 surrounded by newly arrived American troops.

Martyn.

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The "Edward Sholto" and "Gertrude" story.



The stories of Hunslet "large quarry" class locos 995 "Gertrude" and 996 "Edward Sholto" are very closely interlinked and have been for over a hundred years;

The Penrhyn Quarry Company ordered Hunslet "Large quarry" class locomotive number 996 "Edward Sholto" in 1908 along with number 995 "Gertrude" and 994 "George Sholto". This was Hunslet order number 31610. 996 was the very last new locomotive to be ordered by the Penrhyn Quarry Co and later 996 and 995 had the distinction of being the first of their loco's to be sold abroad. After 1909 the quarry company had purchased second hand locomotives only.

995 and 996 arrived at the quarry at the end of May 1909, 994 having arrived earlier that month. The locos were set to work immediately, although this period also coincided with the aftermath of a long and bitter strike by the quarry workers, one of the longest industrial disputes in English history.

There were six "Large quarry" class locos built by Hunslet all between 1904 and 1909. These were named "Hugh Napier", "Pamela", "Sybil Mary", "George Sholto", "Gertrude" and "Edward Sholto". With 140psi boilers and 7 1/2" x 10" cylinders they were larger locos than the "Port", "Alice" and "small quarry" classes.

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“Edward Sholto” and “Gertrude” worked on the various levels at Penrhyn Quarry but principally on the Red Lion level, until they were withdrawn in 1956 and 1955 respectively. By 1960, 996 was on the famous scrap line at Coed y Parc but in June 1961 the loco was sold to C.H.Lambe and son who subsequently sold the two locos on and they were duly exported to Canada initially as part of the Matthews Collection but “Sholto” and “Gertrude” were later sold on again with “Gertrude” going to the Ontario Science Museum in Canada in 1965 and “Edward Sholto” going to a Mr Douglas Wright in Athens, Ontario. He did quite a lot of work on 996 and painted it in a none-authentic light green livery. In 1979 he steamed the loco and offered it for sale by auction where it reputedly fetched \$5,000 and was also sold to the Science Museum in Ontario.

996 was then sold on again and moved to Garden Prairie, Illinois, in the USA and was now owned by a Mr James Johnson. Here the loco came to the attention of the late Bob Johnson (no relation) and he kept an eye on it for Andrew Neale knowing how keen he was to buy one of the Penrhyn locos and return it the UK. Years passed and in 2005 Andrew Neale’s wish was fulfilled and he became the owner of “Edward Sholto”. Bob looked after the loco for him for a year or so at his home but his declining health meant that by 2006 the time had come to return the loco back to the UK. 996 was duly shipped back to England and he arrived at our south Derbyshire workshop in May 2006. The workshop referred to is the one that the team still occupy today.

Restoration work began here almost immediately and over a three year period a team of nine people came together to carry out all the restoration work required on the loco and in December 2009 came the proud moment when “Edward Sholto” was lit up, raised steam and moved again under his own steam for the first time in 30 years - this took place at the Statfold Barn Farm railway, near Tamworth, Staffs.

The restoration work was extensive – the loco was stripped right down to the basics and rebuilt from the bottom upwards. The wheels were sent away for specialist attention at Alan Keef Ltd, including new tyres being fitted and the quartering sorting out plus journals and crank pins turned. The boiler went off to Newtons for repair work including a new front tube plate – the Penrhyn repair here was legendary and involved fitting a square doubler plate in front of the existing tube plate – we can only assume that it must have worked and kept the loco going for a while but it was a most irregular repair and not one a present day boiler inspector would approve of!

We restored the loco itself and as parts were restored he gradually took shape again – one of our associates, Peter Clarke, was able to salvage the original Penrhyn saddle tank which most people had written off. This was a work of art and it meant that the originality which was so important to the owner was retained. We did change the running plates and the boiler cladding sheets but otherwise “Sholto” is structurally “as original”. The boiler was repaired and re-tubed and a new copper patch was fitted in the firebox by Severn Valley Rly engineers in order to satisfy the boiler inspector and allow a ticket to be issued once more – the first one since 1955!

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“Edward Sholto” was duly launched back in to service at a private gathering at the Statfold Barn Farm railway in March 2010 and then at a public gala event at the MRT premises at Apedale, Staffs. The loco was now fully serviceable again and in its first year it made many public appearances – after the 16mm event at Stoneleigh he moved on to the Moseley Railway trust at Apedale, Staffs, then to the May 1st, 2nd, 3rd gala at the Ffestiniog Railway and then on to a gala event at Hollycombe, near Liphook, Hants. Later in the year he took in the Threlkeld Quarry railway and the West Lancs railway and a further brief visit to Apedale before a return to the SBR for the Winter - a stay which eventually lasted nearly two years.

“Edward Sholto” is now approaching year eight of his first ten yearly boiler cycle and is based at Beamish Museum where he is steamed once a month and at gala events for demonstration purposes. Because the loco is “as original” he has no train braking capability and so can not be used on passenger trains. Leaking tubes caused the loco to be withdrawn from service in late 2016 and he is currently stripped down and receiving a re-tube before another stint of operations at Beamish beckons.

995 “Gertrude” had a much more sedentary life after she was sold to the Ontario museum – they had the loco sectioned and placed on display in the Museum in 1967 and here it remained for some 49 years. In late 2016 Charles Matthews passed away but on a visit by Dave Lee and others from Statfold Barn to the funeral in Ontario a chance visit to the Museum led to a deal being struck and “Gertrude” being purchased. She duly returned to the UK for display in the Roundhouse at the SBR and arrived there on January 17th 2017 and was first seen by an unsuspecting and surprised public at the SBR’s first open day of 2017 on March 25th.



So it is ironic that the first Penrhyn loco to go abroad was also the last one to be repatriated. Dinorwic Avonside “Elidir” was the first of the exported locos to return home in 2006, quickly followed by “Edward Sholto” and then all the others followed so we now have them all home again – a major achievement and a process which took us ten years from start to finish.

Ogwen

The team that restored “Edward Sholto” grew in size as the project progressed and in 2010 the Hudswell Clarke project got underway for the MRT following completion of work on “Sholto”. The team continued to grow and to thrive and in August 2014 1238 was also returned to service. The enlarged and dedicated team are now working hard on the restoration of 1916 built Hunslet 4-6-0T number 1215 for the WOLT which is due for completion in Summer 2017 – the team will hopefully then descend on Martyn’s ex Penrhyn Avonside loco “Ogwen” and return her to steam again. “Ogwen” returned home from the USA in 2012. It is entirely possible that other projects may well follow.

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It's all happening down under

Finally, just in case you are wondering what is happening to our counterpart in Australia, we are kept up to date in a series of emails from Dave Rollinson. If we “top and tail” these emails and string them together, they make a good article in their own right. So here we go with all the latest from Dave in Oz.

Hi All,

Progress to date – the boiler was re-united with the frames using one of the overhead cranes. It was a bit of a tricky one to fit as the side tanks had been welded to the frames. The usual method is to put the boiler in first, then fit the tanks. Also a new rear frame stretcher had been fitted, it is believed that the original was removed at North Eaton when the current boiler was fitted replacing the original one. The four bolts on the stretcher had to be removed to allow the rear of the boiler to sit correctly. It was also necessary to enlarge the oval hole for the blowdown valve in it.

We also had to remove 4 of the wash out plugs and fit shorter ones together with removal of the front damper control.



To refit everything between the frames, in the absence of a pit, we placed the whole assembly on to 4 stands using both overhead cranes in a double lift.

Bolted the steam brake back onto the tank today, steam pipe from the boiler no problem, however the one to the brake cylinder did not want to line up, mainly due to the new lagging. After annealing and a bit of persuasion with a hammer etc it decided we were in charge and it fitted.

A start was made on those from the injectors and also the two brackets that are required. Copper pipe both second hand and new was sorted.

The bolts holding the boiler down on the expansion plate were given a coat of Grey primer, below the frame, the heads of those in the cab have still to be done.

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I tackled the blast-pipe and spark arrester by first sandblasting it all, then painting it with Grey primer followed by matt Black. 4 spacers were made to bolt the tray correctly together, then I looked at the top drum like piece and decided that this required a method of fastening to the tray to stop it moving while the loco was being transported. I was not present any of this was removed from the smokebox as this was done by QR staff when they removed the boiler. I decided to make 3 right angle brackets and fasten these inside of the drum so that they would be out of sight. When trying to fit the entire assembly it would not do so, it was 2" too long to go into the smokebox!. A discussion with those present agreed that it all had to come apart and be put in separately. The first task was to fit the round drum over the petticoat pipe, then put in the blast pipe in followed by the tray. It all fitted - even the blower pipe! Hopefully none of it will move now.

The next task tackled was to repaint the rear frame stretcher and fit the blowdown valve, then, with help from Fuzzy, fitting the rear damper control (this required reaming out to fit over the clevis pin), then the short floor plate was bolted into position. We now have two working dampers.

Meanwhile TC started work on the leading sand-pipes.

There are still a few tasks to complete; bolts in the expansion plates, various cab fittings, 4 sand-pipes, blast pipe, the cab to attach and finally a bit of touch up to the paintwork.

All the best, David Rollins

And the last word goes to Stewart Watmuff who submitted this -

Wonderful English seen on signs from around the World ..

In a Bangkok temple :

It is forbidden to enter a woman, even a foreigner, if dressed as a man.

Cocktail lounge, Norway:

Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar.

Doctor's office, Rome :

Specialist in women and other diseases.

Dry cleaners, Bangkok :

Drop your trousers here for the best results.

A Nairobi restaurant:

Customers, who find our waitresses rude, ought to see the manager.

On the main road to Mombasa, leaving Nairobi :

Take notice: when this sign is under water, this road is impassable.

On a poster at Kencom:

Are you an adult that cannot read? if so, we can help.

In a city restaurant:

Open seven days a week and weekends.

In a cemetery:

Persons are prohibited from picking flowers, from any but their own graves.

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Tokyo hotel's rules and regulations:

Guests are requested not to smoke, or do other disgusting behaviours, in bed.

On the menu of a Swiss restaurant:

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for.

In a Tokyo bar:

Special cocktails for the ladies with nuts.

Hotel, Yugoslavia:

The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid.

Hotel, Japan:

You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid.

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel, across from a Russian orthodox monastery:

You are welcome to visit the cemetery, where famous Russian and Soviet composers, artists, and writers are buried daily, except Thursday.

A sign posted in Germany 's Black Forest :

It is strictly forbidden on our black forest camping site, that people of different sex, for instance, men and women, live together in one tent, unless they are married with each other for this purpose.

Hotel, Zurich :

Because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose.

Advertisement for donkey rides, Thailand :

Would you like to ride on your own ass?

Airline ticket office, Copenhagen :

We take your bags and send them in all directions.

A laundry in Rome :

Ladies, leave your clothes here and then spend the afternoon having a good time.

And finally, the all-time classic, seen in an Abu Dhabi souk shop window:

If the front is closed, please enter through my backside.

Sorry for the long gap since the last newsletter, I had another urgent project to get going.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this latest offering.

Mike Lynskey

Oh go on then, one more -

Instruction from Marin Gascoigne,

Don't force it, use a bigger hammer!