HEAVY FREIGHT DUO BACK IN BLACK AT COTSWOLD GALA

ISSUE 326 November 22 – December 20, 2024

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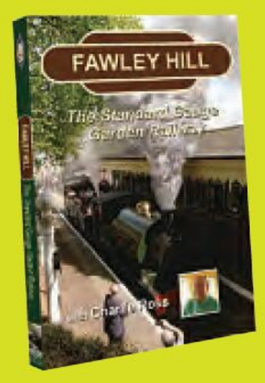
EXCLUSIVE

STEAM GALA HELD IN WAR-TORN UKRAINE

■ RAIL INTERCHANGE RETURNS TO TYWYN AFTER FOUR DECADES ■ RIBBLE STEAM RAILWAY LOSES MAIN LINE FREIGHT CONTRACT ■ MINIATURE RAILWAY REVIVAL AT 'FORGOTTEN' COASTAL RESORT ■ EPPING ONGAR'S JOB WITH A STATION HOUSE

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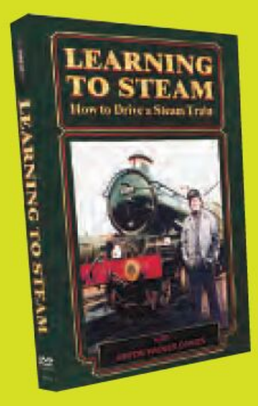
'Bargain Hunt's' Charlie Ross takes a fascinating in-depth look at Sir William McAlpine's standard gauge railway and comprehensive collection. DVD £15

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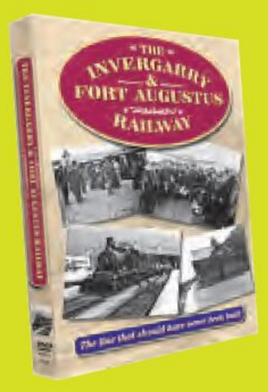
Preserved and non-preserved 21st century working steam trains in Southern Africa, filmed amidst spectacular scenery. DVD £20 Blu Ray £20

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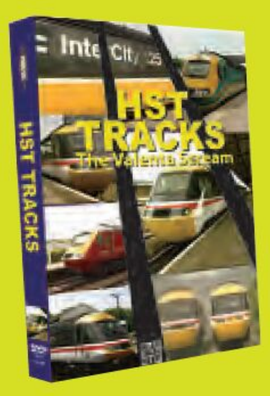
How to drive a steam train with Arfon Haines Davies, learning from trainee to driver on the iconic GWR locomotive *Clun Castle*.
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Fort Augustus



The line that should have never been built. The foolhardy story of a Scottish railway aimed at Inverness which closed after just 30 years.
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HST Tracks



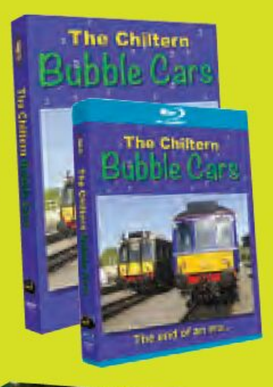
The Valenta Scream. The original engine HSTs recorded in both stereo sound and vision from dozens of locations over 20 years.
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Underground Tracks



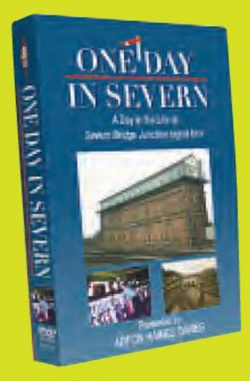
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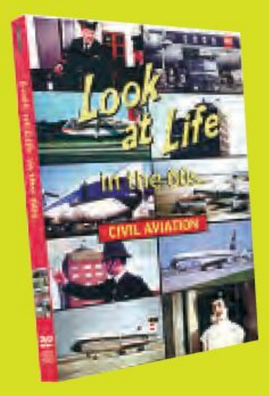
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Signal Box Archive



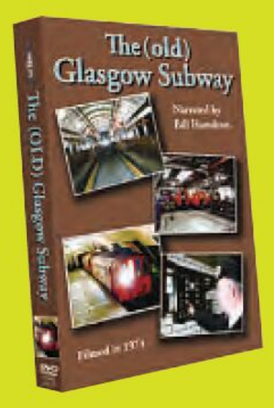
A privileged look inside over 70 signal boxes from mechanical to power (PSB) to computer IECCs and ROCs. DVD £25 Blu Ray £25

Look at Life Civil Aviation



Rob Curling presents a number of colourful Look at Life films exploring UK passenger flying and airports *(London Airport)* in the 1960s.
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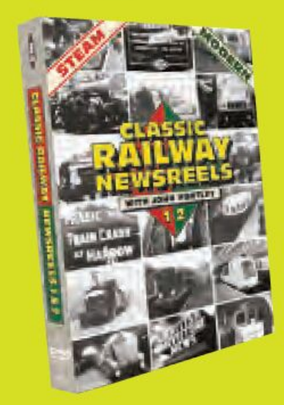
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On November 11, LMS 'Black 5' No. 44871 approaches Eynsford in Kent with the Railway Touring Company's 'Armistice Day Express' from London Victoria, a headboard befitting of both the trip and day itself. Late running resulted in a planned pause at Ashford International being brought back to extend a planned stop at Charing, where the two-minute Remembrance Day silence was observed prior to continuing onwards to Canterbury West. OWEN HAYWARD

Where steam defied oppression, renewed hope and united a community

AS exclusively featured in this issue, the concept of railway heritage has broken a scarcely believed massive acreage of new ground in the past month with the successful staging of an autumn steam gala – in the town of Haivoron, in war-torn Ukraine.

October's gala excelled in defying all odds in bringing together not just local transport enthusiasts, but also all of the corners of a community which remains unjustly under siege from its country's super-power neighbour.

The steam demonstrations and rides, together with the varied array of fundraising stalls and activities at the town's railway depot and station, offered the spirit of hope to families, many of whose lives have been ravaged by this utterly pointless war, but who are determined to show they will not be beaten into submission. Their resilience is to be universally praised, and is richly deserving of our respect and the total support of our country whose population was also once called upon to pull out all the stops to survive a blitz.

Yes, it is an extreme example, but once again, a country's railways have demonstrated that they have the power to instil pride.

On a different tack, here in the UK railway preservation has throughout once again proved that it is the art of the possible.

The year saw the debut of two fantastic standard gauge steam locomotives, GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* and Brighton Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head*, which will undoubtedly continue to entertain the festive season crowds. And add that we now have a replica of the landmark train which hauled the opening day service on the Stockton & Darlington Railway, which 200 years ago changed history with the debut of the world's first modern railway. The overhauled 50-year-old replica of *Locomotion No. 1* and the all-new *Experiment* carriage and chaldron wagon set are now waiting to be appreciated and enjoyed by all in the Hopetown Darlington museum, which is firmly set on a one-way course to becoming a pinnacle of cultural and educational excellence.

It is nearly 75 years since the Talyllyn Railway revival kick-started the volunteer-driven heritage movement. That is more than a third of the timespan both since the first steam-hauled passenger trains ran from Stockton to Darlington and the first public demonstration of a steam locomotive by Richard Trevithick in 1804.

The point here is that the heritage sector has now firmly become part of the story, and the imminent return of A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 61063 *Tornado* to the main line after becoming the first steam locomotive to be fitted with European Train Control System digital apparatus will open another chapter – bursting with pride at every turn of the page.

Robin Jones Editor

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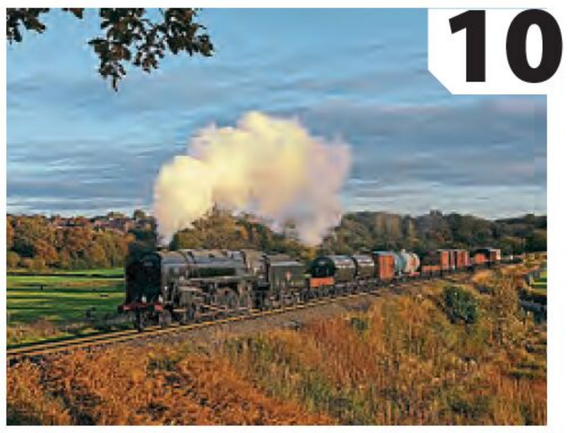
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COVER: Leaving Dover Priory and the nearby port behind, a wreath of poppies adorns the top lamp bracket of Merchant Navy pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* as it skirts the shoreline at Archcliffe near Samphire Hoe on November 7, with the return working of the penultimate Belmond Pullman 'Golden Age of Travel by Steam' circular. OWEN HAYWARD

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GWR 2-8-0s No. 3850 and No. 2807 pass by the Cotswolds village of Laverton on October 26. JOHN TITLOW


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The replica 1825 train including *Locomotion No.1*, carriage *Experiment* and one of the three new chaldron wagons, in place in the Hopetown Darlington Carriage Works after delivery on November 8. DARLINGTON BC

It's 1825 – all over again!

By Robin Jones

THE modern replica of the Stockton & Darlington Railway's opening day train of September 27, 1825, has been assembled at the Hopetown Darlington attraction as a key component of celebrations of the line's bicentenary as the world's first modern railway – and will form the centrepiece of a new Christmas event.

As reported last issue, Northern Heritage Engineering of Darlington was contracted by Darlington Borough Council to build replicas of *Experiment*, the pioneer train's passenger carriage, and three chaldron wagons.

The four were delivered to Hopetown on November 8, along with the 1975-built replica of George Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1*, which has been overhauled at Locomotive Maintenance Services Ltd in Loughborough. With the locomotive and vehicles equipped to modern main line running standards, the replica train will run over the S&DR route from Shildon via Darlington to Stockton-on-Tees on September 26, 27 and 28 as the climax of the bicentenary celebrations.

However, the newly-restored *Locomotion No. 1* replica and vehicles will go on public display at Hopetown from November 26 as part of a special family festive attraction.

Winter wonderland

With the train as a stunning centrepiece, the Grade II-listed Carriage Works will be transformed into a snow-covered fantastical forest of magical trees and woodland creatures.

The theme of the event is that Father Christmas has steamed into Hopetown on *No.1* to rest before he sets off round the world delivering presents – but his reindeer have escaped. Visitors are invited to walk through the Enchanted Forest Reindeer Trail to hunt for clues and find the reindeer so he can get on his way, although they cannot climb aboard the train.

The forest can be explored every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in the last week of November and throughout December. The trail is also available on the last weekend of November and between Christmas and the New Year. Tickets are £5 per child for the woodland trail and adults are free of charge (ticket required).

Starting on December 6, Santa will be at Hopetown every Friday, Saturday and Sunday – and on Monday, December 23 in the lead-up to Christmas

Separately from the trail, families can also visit Santa in his grotto in the Carriage Works as the highlight of a two-hour event including festive crafts and storytelling.

Christmas past

Children can create their own holly crown and join Padraig the Storyteller around a traditional Anglo-Saxon cart as he regales them with long-forgotten Christmas stories, Every child visiting Santa will receive a gift, with prices starting at £22.50 for one child and up to two accompanying adults. Additional adults are £5 each. Schools can also visit the forest and Santa on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from the last week of November until the end of the school term.

➜ Details of Christmas at the Carriage Works are available at www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk/whats-on/

Home of Stockton & Darlington main man set for restoration

A PLANNING application to revive the home of Edward Pease, who has been dubbed the 'Father of the Railways,' has been submitted by Darlington Borough Council.

The scheme for Edward Pease House at 142 Northgate, Darlington, currently occupied by shops, involves the restoration and repair of the Grade II-listed building and the conversion of a fast-food takeaway in the premises into a museum and heritage space, as part of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 200 celebrations next year.

The ground floor of the Georgian building will be reinstated as two separate rooms as an exhibition space and Pease's Parlour, a historical replica room. Several other alterations to the interior and exterior, such as new frontage, are included in the plans.

Pease was the main promoter of the S&DR, which opened in 1825 and is recognised as the world's first modern railway. He met George Stephenson in the kitchen on April 19, 1821, and was persuaded to use steam rather than horse traction.

A planning statement read: "The building is of particular interest due to the upcoming bicentenary of the opening of the S&DR. As part of plans to revitalise the railway heritage of Darlington, it is the aspiration that the works at 142 Northgate will contribute towards this celebration of the birth of the railways.

"The overarching aim is to bring back to life the ground floor as a heritage space, and the upper floors made watertight and safe, to bring these spaces into use at some point in the future as part of the longer-term goals."

As reported in issue 319, the council is attempting to buy all four properties which comprise the house. The plan is part of a multi-million regeneration project in the area,

Coun Chris McEwan, the cabinet member for economy, said that Edward Pease House comprises several different properties, one of which is now owned by the council. He said: "We are working with partner organisations, including the Friends of Stockton & Darlington Railway, to consider the development of the whole building, celebrate it, and drive economic growth in the area."

The council will decide on its planning application at a future meeting.



Part of the frontage of Edward Pease House in Darlington. GOOGLE STREET VIEW

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Joint double gala for Railway 200 at Great Centrals

THE UK's only double-track heritage main line, the Great Central Railway will be celebrating Railway 200 from March 2025 by reinventing and relaunching the story of the impact of railways on society, and their legacy and opportunity, alongside the story of its own line.

Together with its sister line the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre, a two-day Railway 200 celebration will be held on July 5/6, linking the two lines with a classic rail replacement bus service, as happened at the 2024 event to mark 125 years of the GCR's London Extension (as featured in issue 218).

Greatest Gathering guest

Before then, a similar reunification event, also featuring rail replacement buses, will be staged by both lines on April 5/6.

Merseyrail Class 507 EMU No. 507001 will begin its career in preservation by appearing at Alstom UK's The Greatest Gathering at its Litchurch Lane works in Derby on August 1-3, part of Railway 200 celebrations.

It will be the largest temporary public exhibition of rolling stock and railway-related exhibits in recent decades.

The Class 507 Preservation Society paid a nominal sum to fleet owner Angel Trains to take possession of No. 507001 in a bid to save the type from extinction, as reported in issue 320.

The society has agreed to house No. 507001 the Nant Mawr visitor centre at the Tanat Valley Light Railway, near Oswestry, but it will first attend the Alstom UK event.

A society statement said: "We are excited to announce that No. 507001 will be one of the attractions at this once-in-a-lifetime event, rubbing shoulders with some of the most iconic trains in British railway history.

Derby Works was where the Class 507 predecessors, the 502s, were built, making the presence of a Merseyrail unit even more appropriate.

More details about The Greatest Gathering will be announced in January.

Railway 200 will be the theme throughout the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's events and activities next year, beginning with a celebratory Whistle Up at midday on January 1, as reported.

The 200 Trail will feature walking trails from the train, while 200 'golden tickets' will be given to buyers of the line's annual pass and who will be entered into a prize draw to win a souvenir gold-plated Edmondson ticket.

Unique Edmondson ticket artwork displays will be staged at NYMR stations. Made from used traditional Edmondson tickets, these will celebrate the history of rail travel.

Tasty treat and more

In May 2025, one of the line's Pullman dining trains will be offering a new menu to celebrate 200 years of the modern railway.

Yeovil Railway Centre will hold an Easter weekend event on April 20/21 celebrating Railway 200. Passengers will be able travel in an accessible coach behind Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 1579 of 1921 *Pectin,* riding along the third-of-a-mile GWR Clifton Maybank branch.

On September 1-30, a Steaming Forth exhibition that includes artefacts and photographs will be staged by the North Queensferry Heritage Trust at North Queensferry station, celebrating the Forth Bridge, which brought the railway to the east and north of Scotland. A Ferry900 exhibition will highlight life during the ferry days before and after the Forth Bridge and Forth Road Bridge were built in 1890.

Whistle Up is a real winner

AS WE closed for press, nearly 50 venues had signed up for the Heritage Railway Association's New Year's Day Whistle Up event to mark the start of Railway 200.

The first international railway to get involved in the event, which will see locomotives sounding their whistles at noon, was Veluwsche Stoomtrein Maatschappij (Veluwe Steam Railway Company) in The Netherlands, and others were thought very likely to be joining in.

The event is not restricted to steam: one of the other organisations which signed up quickly was Crich Tramway Village.

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At short notice, the South Devon Railway held a hugely-successful one-day diesel gala on Saturday, November 9, the first such event on the line since 2019, with more than 500 people attending. The star of the show was visiting Class 60 No. 60029 Ben Nevis courtesy of DCRail and Cappagh Group, making its first-ever appearance at a heritage railway and hauling its first passenger train since 2003. The 60 is seen at Riverford Bridge departing the line on November 10, with the opportunity taken to move some wagons to Totnes en route, including newly-outshopped bogie bolste No. 944769, making its first journey after overhaul, along with two Grampus wagons and a BR Bauxite Toad brake van. Also in gala action were the home fleet's Class 04s D2271 and D2246, Class 25 D7535 and Class 33 No. 33002. ERNEST ELSWORTH-WILSON

Two RTC specials along Stockton & Darlington route

AS part of the Railway 200 celebrations, the Railway Touring Company will run two special trains that will travel over part of the original route from Shildon and Stockton to Darlington.

On Saturday, September 27, the Railway 200 Special will start at Carnforth and make its way eastwards diesel-hauled via Hellifield, picking up at Skipton, Keighley, Leeds and York.

There, the train will be joined by a steam locomotive for the journey north along the East Coast Main Line to Darlington, stopping for further passengers before taking the Tees Valley Line calling at Shildon, the world's first railway town. Passengers will have the opportunity to visit the Locomotion museum which houses the largest undercover collection of historic railway vehicles in Europe, including Robert Stephenson's *Locomotion No. 1* and Timothy Hackworth's *San Pareil*.

Continuing along the branch to Bishop Auckland, the special joins the 18-mile Weardale Railway for a run to Stanhope. On the return journey along the Weardale line, the train will be diesel-hauled to Bishop Auckland and onwards to Darlington, calling at Shildon to pick up passengers who alighted there.

At Darlington, the train will reverse its direction of travel and run steam-hauled again northwards along the ECML through Durham to Newcastle. There, it will turn via the Tyne bridges loop and head south again, passing through Durham to the Ferryhill Junction and taking the freight line towards Stockton to rejoin the route of the historic Stockton & Darlington line as far as Eaglescliffe, continuing southwards to Northallerton.

At York, the train will detach the steam locomotive, before returning to Carnforth via the pick-up points diesel-hauled.

On Saturday, October 4, the Railway 200 Special will depart from King's Cross and head onto the East Coast Main Line, picking up at Potters Bar, Stevenage and Peterborough, hauled by Class 86 No. 86259 *Les Ross* to York.

At York, the train will again be joined by a steam locomotive to travel north to Darlington, picking up further passengers, also taking the Tees Valley line and calling at Shildon before running on to Stanhope.

After revering at Darlington, the special will run steam-hauled once again northwards through Durham to Newcastle before running to Eaglescliffe and Norhallerton and back to York. There, it will leave the steam locomotive behind and return to King's Cross via the pick-up points by *Les Ross*.

➜ To book, visit www.railwaytouring.co.uk

257 Squadron set once more for residency at Swanage

By Owen Hayward

SOUTHERN Locomotives Ltd has confirmed that West Country light Pacific No. 34072 *257 Squadron* will be returning to take up residency on the Swanage Railway in March following the decision to fit out classmate No. 34028 *Eddystone* for main line running.

In 2022, SLL held discussions with the Spa Valley Railway that resulted in No. 34072 moving there that December, the relocation prompted by a planned decrease in timetabled services at its previous Swanage home for 2023.

With classmate *Eddystone* and Battle of Britain 4-6-2 No. 34070 *Manston* also residing in the Purbeck, as well as SR U class 2-6-0 No. 31806 and the approaching completion of LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 at that time, the reduction in demand for locomotives there saw SLL opt to move *257 Squadron* to Kent, where it then covered for No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park*, then in the early stages of an overhaul and had itself moved to Tunbridge Wells West in 2021.

Despite nominally being based on the SpVR, *257 Squadron* has subsequently spent much time away on hire, with an extended period at the Kent & East Sussex, East Lancashire and Mid-Hants railways, although it returned to Tunbridge Wells West to work the last two years of sold-out Polar Express trains there.

With *Eddystone* now due to take up main line duties (as reported in issue 324), No. 34072 will return to Swanage as a full-time resident to provide cover when its classmate is roaming the national network. Presently running on the MHR, *257 Squadron* will arrive in Dorset when the MHR's own home motive power fleet will be bolstered following the expected return to steam of Merchant Navy No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific,* also in March.

Straight to the works

Following its appearance at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's autumn steam gala, *Eddystone* is currently in Herston Works undergoing a piston and valve exam. The opportunity is being taken to begin other maintenance ahead of the installation of all the air-braking and electronic equipment needed to allow it to operate on the main line, which SLL is hoping will also be completed by early March.

"Extensive testing including a loaded test run will be needed, so there's a huge amount to do before then," a SLL statement said. "James Cox, of the Swanage Railway, who runs his Class 33 on the main line, will be undertaking much of the fitting of the electronics on *Eddystone,* along with Graham Froud – their experience with setting up No. 31806 for the network will be invaluable.

"Over the past couple of months we have been finalising our plans to work with the Railway Touring Company in association with West Coast Railways, and we are immensely grateful to the Merchant Navy Locomotive Preservation Society, the owner of No. 35028 *Clan Line*, in assisting us with this project. Owing to the dearth of suitable motive power in the south, the plan is for *Eddystone* to commit primarily to RTC charters, which will hopefully see it work all over the former Southern Region and maybe beyond."

While discussions have been taking place about what work *Eddystone* will likely see, SLL said that until there is confidence that it is ready to go, details of plans and itineraries will not be published.

The conversion to main line condition has been aided in part thanks to No. 35025 *Brocklebank Line*; in 2020, ownership of that Merchant Navy was transferred to SLL with a container full of spares and parts included. Within this, a Finnish air pump was found which has now been extracted from storage, ready to be overhauled and fitted to *Eddystone*. SLL has also ordered numerous other components required – including copper piping which has involved spending an "eye-watering amount of funds" to replace existing imperial measurement stocks with metric.

A previously launched £50,000 appeal to fund the work was reported to have reached 25% of the target, although that amount did not cater for the cost of overhauling a support coach that has come in the form of Mk.1 BSK No. 35011, which was donated by London Underground, having been stored out of use and under cover at Ruislip depot since the cessation of Steam on the Met. Described as being in structurally good condition, the interior requires a refit, while the external work required is largely cosmetic.

Jobs backlog

Elsewhere, the overhaul of BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80104 at Tyseley Locomotive Works has developed into a larger job than first envisioned. Due to the ever-pressing need to keep it in service, past overhauls have focused on the boiler, with other maintenance work being done only when necessary, culminating in a backlog of jobs that now must be undertaken. Work has commenced on fitting the boiler tubes; two new piston rods and a base for the bunker are still required.

➜ For details on how become a shareholder and support SLL's fleet of locomotives, visit www.southern-locomotives.co.uk



Above: Pictured during a gala on October 4 at Alreside, No. 34072 *257 Squadron* will return to the Swanage Railway full-time when its loan to the Mid-Hants Railway ends in March. OWEN HAYWARD



Right: *Eddystone's* main line conversion has been aided thanks to a Finnish air pump that was discovered in a stores container full of parts from *Brocklebank Line*. It will now be overhauled and fitted to No. 35028. SIMON TROY/SLL



No. 34028 *Eddystone* storms away from Grosmont on September 28 during the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's own steam gala, after which it was taken to Herston Works to be fitted for main line running. KENNY FELSTEAD

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With the last Vintage Trains 'Shakespeare Express' of the year, GWR 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl Mount Edgcumbe* carries a wreath of poppies as it rounds the curve passing Hatton North on Remembrance Sunday, November 10. JOHN TITLOW

Swanage Railway becomes pioneering testbed for rural areas wi-fi improvement initiative

A NEW innovation project is steaming ahead on the Swanage Railway to test if wi-fi can work on even the most rural and oldest railway networks.

Dorset Council has been awarded £163,000 of Government funding from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology to bring 21st century technology to the Purbeck line. As part of the national Rural Connectivity Accelerator programme, the railway will be a testbed on how innovative connectivity has the potential to boost the rural economy.

The council has teamed up with leading tech company Excelerate Technology UK to bring satellite-powered public wi-fi to Purbeck Park car park, Norden station, and on board the railway's popular steam service from early 2025.

Coun Richard Biggs, Dorset Council's deputy leader and cabinet member for property and assets and economic growth, said: "This is a groundbreaking project at the Swanage Railway which could help pave the way for better connectivity in the future. Not only will it enhance the visitor experience for people using the railway, but it will also explore how these technologies can improve services in remote areas.

"It is a fantastic example of how we are working towards a more connected and inclusive Dorset, ensuring that everyone benefits from digital innovation."

The project addresses the need for reliable connectivity in areas with challenging landscapes and limited service from traditional network operators. Using a combination of advanced connectivity solutions, including low earth orbit satellites, Excelerate Technology UK will create a reliable wi-fi connection for the line.

Swanage Railway Company chairman Gavin Johns said: "As we look forward to 2025, with Rail 200 celebrating the bicentenary of railways in the UK and the 140th anniversary of trains to Swanage, this is a great opportunity to show that old and new can work together for the benefit of rural communities and our customers and staff."



Connecting to the future are (left to right): volunteer Swanage Railway porter Ian Snell; the railway's Peter Milford; Verity Reardon, from Dorset Council's Digital Place team; Coun Richard Biggs, Dorset Council's deputy leader; and Matthew Khan, from Execelerate. DORSET COUNCIL



Brian Jackson (right) presents museum deputy curator Tony Hillman with the BR smokebox numberplate taken from *Beachy Head* following the original locomotive's withdrawal in 1958. MARION JOHNSON/BLUEBELL RAILWAY MUSEUM

Beachy Head numberplate comes home

THE Bluebell Railway's new-build H2 Atlantic No. 32424 *Beachy Head* may be a replica of the original locomotive built in 1911, but thanks to a supporter, another piece of the original has been brought back to it and now resides at Sheffield Park too.

In 2006 the regulator handle from LBSCR-built locomotive was donated to the new-build project, which was incorporated into the replica's construction. The Railway Correspondence & Travel Society owns one of the original nameplates, which can be found on display in the museum on Platform 2 at Sheffield Park.

On October 6, the RCTS and Bluebell Railway hosted a small ceremony at the station that welcomed Brian Jackson, who owned *Beachy Head*'s original smokebox numberplate, which his father Bill bought directly from BR when it was removed from the locomotive in 1958 prior to its scrapping the following month.

Following an opportunity to photograph the original artefacts against the replica locomotive, Brian passed ownership of the numberplate to the Bluebell Railway Trust, which will put it on display in the museum. Although built in 1911 as No. 2424, it did not gain its nameplates until being named in 1926, with the BR number being allocated at Nationalisation in 1948 (although BR livery was not applied until 1951). With the replica being completed earlier this year, the collection therefore covers three different eras of *Beachy Head*'s story. Furthermore, the occasion was the first time that the name and numberplates had been seen together in 66 years.

Bluebell Railway Museum deputy curator Tony Hillman said: "We are very grateful to Brian for letting us add this unique item to our collection."

The second of *Beachy Head*'s nameplates also survives in the care of Eastbourne Council.

‘Surprise’ Doon Valley extension is on its way

By Hugh Dougherty

JUST one year after the Doon Valley Railway faced possible closure caused by the sale of its buildings, chairman Archie Thom has exclusively revealed to *Heritage Railway* that an extension of Scotland’s only industrial heritage branch line is on its way.

Archie said: “Fraser Gibson, of Gibson’s Engineering, who is actively bringing the former Caledonian Railway St Rollox works back to life, has just let us know that the mothballed but intact railway from Dalrymple Junction, south of Ayr on the Stranraer line, to our base at Dunaskin is to be taken over by his company from Network Rail for use as a test track, and that the DVR is to be given a special interest in the section from Patna to Dunaskin, a distance of just over two miles.

“That will allow us to run heritage trains between Patna and Minnivey, our original base, once a licence to run beyond Laight Crossing has been received from Hargreaves, our landlord on that section, and, possibly, even Pennyvenie, giving us a run, end-to-end, of more than six miles.

“Although the takeover of the line and our special place within that scheme are confirmed, we clearly have a great deal of work to do operationally before we can start trains over the entire length of line, but we are already working on our plan for that.”

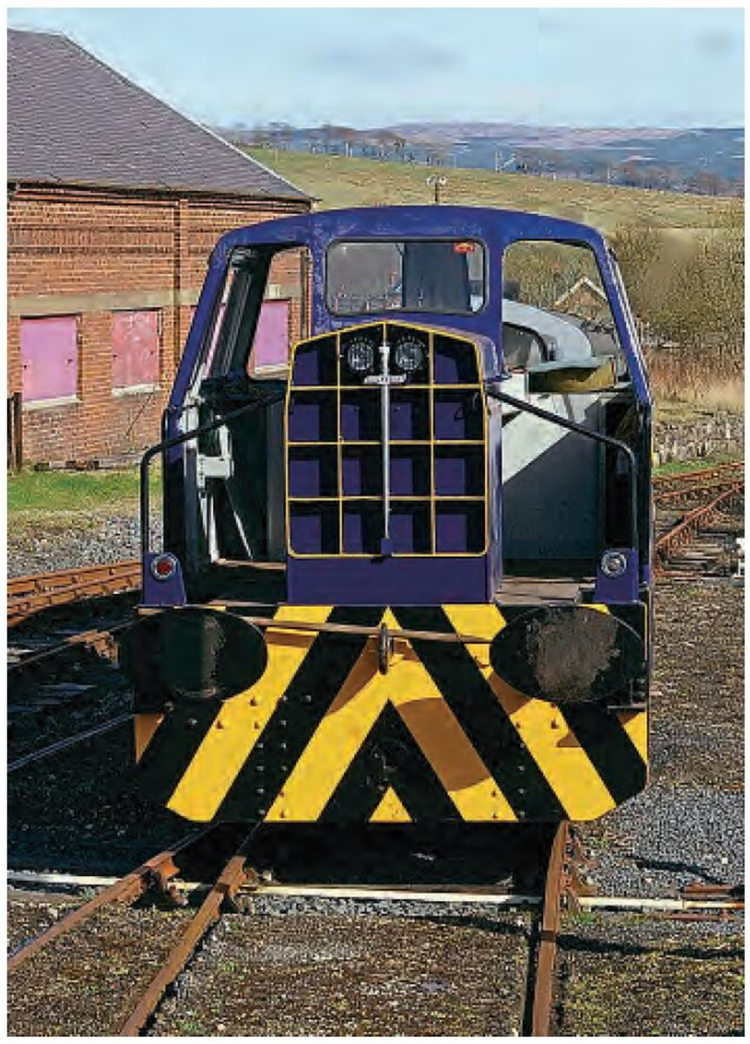
Fraser said: “We have always enjoyed a very positive relationship with the DVR and are very pleased that the railway will benefit from our takeover of the line from Dalrymple Junction to Dunaskin. At St Rollox we do have a main line rail connection but needed a test track for railway locomotives and stock that we repair and build, and the line in Ayrshire is ideal for our purposes.”

In another ‘first’ for the DVR and possibly for heritage railways, the line has loaned Fraser its ex-National Coal Board Sentinel 0-4-0DM No. 10012 of 1959 to act as works shunter for Gibson’s at St Rollox. The Sentinel, the only diesel to work on the NCB’s Waterside complex, has been at work at Springburn since October in return for Fraser personally overhauling the braking system on the DVR’s passenger saloon coach, charging for materials alone.

Main line link

Archie said: “I can’t think of any other heritage line which has loaned one of their locos for everyday use as a works shunter, and it’s an outward sign of our excellent relationship with Gibson’s which has developed over the last few years and which has now materialised into us benefitting from the firm’s acquisition of the line from Dalrymple Junction, which, of course, also gives us an active main line connection.”

In the meantime, two directors have stepped in to buy the café and shop at Dunaskin for the continuing use of the railway, while the Dalmellington Parish Development Trust has



The DVR’s Rolls-Royce-engined Sentinel diesel No. 10012 is now at St Rollox and used as Gibson’s Engineering works shunter. DVR

awarded the DVR £40,000 towards the cost of a new stock storage shed. The grant, added to funds already raised, means that building work can start immediately, with a target opening date of summer 2025.

“We’ve had such an amazing a reversal of fortunes in just a year,” said Archie. “Everyone at the DVR is delighted, and the way to the future is now clear for all to see, including the local community, with which we enjoy close bonds and support, and benefit from.”

Bluebell volunteers start restoring loco that built the line

By Owen Hayward

AFTER many years languishing in the sidings at Horsted Keynes, a Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST with an historic connection to the Bluebell Railway has embarked on a cosmetic restoration thanks to a group of locomotive department volunteers.

Built in 1877, No. 641 *Sharpthorn* was delivered to contracting firm Joseph Firbank at West Hoathly, where it was employed on the construction of the Lewes & East Grinstead Railway – part of which the Bluebell Railway operates over. The locomotive took its name from the nearby village of Sharpthorne. Although spelt without the final letter, places names are known to have changed spelling over time, with an 1874 map even identifying the village as Sharp Thorn.

From 1888, No. 641 was found at Dagenham Dock under the ownership of Samuel Williams & Sons, which employed the locomotive to shunt the company’s coal dock there until it withdrawn in 1958. After a spell on loan to Bressingham Steam Museum, it arrived on the Bluebell in 1981, taking part in the railway’s centenary celebrations the following year while still under ownership of Samuel Williams. When that firm went into liquidation, the Bluebell offered £1000 to acquire *Sharpthorn*, recognising its important place in the line’s history. A final offer of £1500 saw it pass into the railway’s ownership in November 1983.

As the railway’s needs changed, *Sharpthorn* became relegated to static display. A previous cosmetic restoration was undertaken during the 2010s, but it has remained outdoors since, resulting in that work deteriorating.

Now, steam department volunteers Dan Roberts and Hannah Thorpe have commenced a new cosmetic restoration project thanks to a small grant from the Bluebell Railway Trust, with the finished locomotive set to take pride of place in the Steamworks! building at Sheffield Park. There it will join North London Railway 0-6-0T dock tank No. 27505 on display, telling two parts of the railway’s history, No. 27505 having aided contractors lifting the line north of Horsted Keynes in 1964/5.

Restoration work will include the replacement of the wooden bufferbeams and dumb buffers (material for which has already been procured and was being prepared as



A locomotive with a notable place in Bluebell Railway history, No. 641 *Sharpthorn* is now undergoing cosmetic restoration and will move into the Sheffield Park locomotive shed on display. OWEN HAYWARD

this issue went to press), as well as welding in some new metal patches in areas that have corroded.

Work has already commenced with rubbing back and applying rust treatment on some of the smokebox and saddle tank. Following the fitment of these new components, the locomotive will then be towed to the railway’s main locomotive sheds, where the full cosmetic work can properly take place.

While a return to steam has not been completely ruled out in the longer term, the limited capabilities of *Sharpthorn* means that it is not at the top of the list for workshop space.

However, a source told *Heritage Railway* that if a meaningful business case could be devised and funding procured, it, like any locomotive restoration, could be considered in the future.

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GWR large prairie No. 5199 heads a freight working during a photographic charter at Shackerstone station on the Battlefield Line on October 5. MARTIN CREESE

Flour Mill takes loco pair for boiler assessments

TWO out-of-ticket locomotives have arrived at Bill Parker's Flour Mill workshop at Bream in the Forest of Dean for exploratory work pending overhauls.

GWR large prairie No. 5199, which had been running on a six-month extended boiler ticket, performed its last duties of its year-long loan to the Battlefield Line on October 13 and was taken by road to the Flour Mill for its 10-yearly overhaul on October 29, arriving there the next day.

LSWR T9 4-4-0 No. 120 has also arrived at the Flour Mill from the Swanage Railway. The project to overhaul the T9 will start with an assessment of the locomotive to confirm what work is necessary, that the restoration work is viable, and that there is the necessary financial support available before a commitment is made to the full overhaul, which, if it goes ahead, will be shared between the Flour Mill and the railway's Herston engineering works in Swanage.

The Flour Mill successfully returned the T9 to steam in 2010 and last year completed work on LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563.





Above: LSWR T9 4-4-0 No. 120 ready for its boiler lift to commence assessment of repair feasibility.

Left: Stripping the smokebox of GWR 2-6-2T No. 5199 in the Flour Mill workshop prior to lifting the boiler for assessment. BOTH: BILL PARKER

A full belly for the sleeping *Lion*

MID-HANTS Railway diesel volunteers were delighted when the main generator was returned to Class 50 No. 50027 *Lion* on November 9/10 after two years out of the locomotive.

On December 31, 2021, *Lion* suffered a main generator failure caused by a power to earth fault which necessitated its removal to allow for thorough inspection and specialist repairs to be undertaken. When it was lifted out of the 'Hoover' on October 16, 2022, it was the biggest job its owning group – and also possibly the MHR – had ever undertaken: the power unit and generator (which needed to come out together) and lifting beam, weighing in at a combined 32 tonnes. The generator was then despatched to a specialist contractor in Derby.

When dismantled it was found to need a new bearing, and the level of accumulated dirt led to some considering it to have been the dirtiest such generator to have been seen at the firm.

Following consultation with other owning groups and individuals of other Class 50s, it was decided to also send the electric train heating and auxiliary generators away to be cleaned, painted, and for some smaller banding repairs.

While the larger components have been absent from the engine room, volunteers have subsequently been able to perform a deep clean of the space.

With the repair work completed, the power unit and generators were lifted back into the belly of *Lion*, with assistance from the Severn Valley Railway-based Class 50 Alliance. Throughout the two days the main generator was bolted back onto the power unit, before it was carefully craned into place on November 10, swiftly followed by the ETH and auxiliary components. Once these were all in place, volunteers checked and verified the crankshaft deflection, which was found to be well within limits.



Steady as it goes: The power unit for Class 50 No. 50027 *Lion* is carefully lowered back into the engine bay at Ropley on November 10, just over two years after it was removed for repairs. JEREMY DESOUZA/WATERCRESS FILMS UNIT

While No. 50027 *Lion* is still some way off a return to traffic, the progress made during this part of the prohect was described as "a substantial step" forward.

Rail interchange returns to Tywyn – after 40 years

By Owen Hayward

ONCE a common sight at numerous transhipment yards, standard gauge wagons standing against narrow gauge counterparts has returned to Tywyn following a hiatus of four decades thanks to support from Network Rail.

On November 8, LMS five-plank wagon No. 696 was gently craned from its position in the yard, where it has been sitting since it arrived in December 2023, onto a panel of track adjacent to the Cambrian Coast Line, where once a siding would have been found to allow to easy transfer of slate brought down from the Bryn Eglwys quarry at the opposite end of the 2ft 3in gauge line. There, it will help the Talyllyn Railway better tell the story of the slate industry in which the original line played its part.



Above: A sight not seen at Tywyn Wharf for more than 40 years, narrow gauge and standard gauge wagons stand side by side for what will become a display on the story of slate transhipment. LUKE RYAN/TR



Right: On November 8, five-plank open No. 696 was lifted into position on a track panel between the wharf edge and adjacent Cambrian Coast Line, with Network Rail organising a temporary blockade of the route to allow the lift to take place. LUKE RYAN/TR

Slate history

The ideas for the display originated some years ago but were spurred on in in 2021 following the region's slate landscape becoming a UNESCO world heritage site.

Tywyn Wharf itself is believed to be the first inter-rail transhipment yard in the world, with the slate carried down from Bryneglwys in narrow gauge wagons that were emptied into their standard gauge counterparts to be taken to port at Aberdyfi for export or carried further by rail around the UK.

The last slate export from Tywyn Wharf occurred in the early 1950s, but various goods such as coal were still delivered by rail and unloaded there. In the early 1980s, the line adjacent to the wharf edge was lifted, leaving this important part of the TR's slate story unrepresented.

The wagon was donated to the TR by the Bristol Harbour Railway, where it had become surplus to requirements. From there it was taken to Stanegate Restorations for a cosmetic overhaul which saw it adopt the livery of Cambrian Railways; while not authentically correct for this specific wagon, the TR hopes it will become a talking point about an important – yet so often overlooked – Welsh railway company that served the local area, and one that is seldom represented in preservation.

The track panel on which the wagon sits was donated by Network Rail, being reclaimed from remnants of recent track relaying works on the Cambrian and was put into place on September 23. It was hoped to move the wagon at the same time; however, complications delayed this. Network Rail supported the TR by putting a temporary blockade on the adjacent main line while the track panel was lifted into place, something which was repeated once more two months later to allow the wagon to be safely lowered into position.

Main line support

"We are so grateful that Network Rail has helped to further tell the story of slate and how it was carried in the local area," said TR media creator Luke Ryan.

"It is the intention to display the standard gauge wagon alongside TR slate waggons on the wharf edge, with the side door open onto the wharf to convey the idea of transhipment.

"With the wagon now in place, the surrounding area will be tidied, and suitable interpretation is being worked on and will be displayed when ready – but for now we are very happy to welcome back a lost bit of TR and Cambrian Line history!"

The TR is gearing up for two years of notable celebrations: 2025 commemorates 200 years of rail travel and also marks the 160th anniversary of the inception of the Talyllyn Railway, the Act of Parliament allowing for its construction having been given Royal Ascent on July 5, 1865, although it was not until the following year that it opened for passenger services. October 2025 will also mark 75 years since the first meeting of enthusiasts in Birmingham, led by Tom Rolt, that set the foundations for the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society, which took over the running of the line the following year. Thus, 2026 will mark the 75th anniversary of such services and of the railway heritage sector as we know it. The same year will also see the nearby Corris Railway celebrate six decades since its own revival commenced.

Final piece of Wisbech & Upwell Tramway memorial trail unveiled

THE sixth memento in a project to commemorate the legendary Wisbech & Upwell Tramway was unveiled on November 9.

The Mayor of Wisbech, Coun Sidney Imafidon, unveiled the final memento at the point where the tramway crossed Elm Road en route to the point where the tram crossed on its way to Wisbech East station.

The project to remember the standard gauge tramway, famous for the character of Toby the Tram Engine in the Rev Wilbert Awdry's Thomas the Tank Engine books, was devised by resident Bill Smith, a long-serving member of the local Well Creek Trust, who said he is "extremely grateful" for the support he has received.

The other five mementoes along the route are at the former goods yard in Outwell (the first to be unveiled, in July 2016), Upwell goods yard, the Lance Hunter-Rowe Boat Haven, Birds Corner (Boyce's Bridge), and next to the B&Q store in Wisbech.

Wisbech Town Council, Upwell, Outwell and Emneth parish councils, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, Wisbech Museum, the Well Creek Trust, several local businesses and numerous private individuals contributed to the project.

The Wisbech to Outwell Tramway was built by the GER and opened as an experiment in 1883 to carry agricultural produce. It was extended to Upwell in 1884. At its peak, six trams a day in each direction provided passenger and freight services for local produce to Wisbech and then via the main railway link to larger towns and cities. Falling victim to the Beeching era closures, the final tram journey took place on May 20, 1966.



Wisbech Mayor Coun Sidney Imafidon with the tramway memento in Elm Road. PATRICIA PLEASANTS

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Ivatt overhaul makes progress at Bury

THE long-running rebuild of the Bury Standard 4 Group's ex-Barry scrapyard Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 No. 46428 in the East Lancashire Railway workshop has taken several steps forward.

Built at Crewe in 1948, withdrawn in December 1966, bought from Dai Woodham's Crewe, 1948 scrapyard in October 1979, and yet to steam in the heritage era, recent efforts to restore the locomotive have seen a new dragbox fabricated thanks to a supporter who has funded the work on this job throughout.

A heavy fabrication, it must be geometrically accurate to ensure the correct alignment of the frames. On completion, the dragbox was taken for stress relieving, as the welding process causes the component parts to act against each other in a twisting-type action.

New cab bodywork panels have been laser-cut in steel sheeting, assembled, and finished off externally with paint and numbering. This has now been wrapped up to protect it from damage and the cold weather; it will be fitted once the dragbox is installed.

The locomotive's chimney was found to be life-expired, and an investigation was carried out to find a pattern to cast a replacement. Such a pattern has been found, with estimates for the casting currently being about £3000.

The boiler, which has been sitting outside the workshop since being removed, has been inspected and its condition was found to be better than initially thought. A subsequent insurance engineering inspection undertook a second assessment that has allowed for a plan on the work required to be formulated. The main areas of concern are the front tube plate and the outer wings of the outer firebox wrapper where there are upper and lower washout doors. All four have cracks running outwards in two directions. In addition to metalwork in these areas, four new washout doors will be required. The outer wrapper skirt, about 30cm up from the base, will have to be replaced all around. A start has already been made on removing the front tubeplate.

One welcome development was the discovery that the cylinders are considered machinable and currently not requiring sleeving. A contract for machining is due to be awarded soon; after this has been dealt with, attention can turn to manufacturing new pistons.

Estimates for the remetalling and machining of the six driving-wheel axleboxes has seen prices worked out at roughly £1000 per box.

The locomotive's smokebox has also been completed and coated in green primer.

Meanwhile, repairs to the group's BR Standard 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80097 have commenced following the failure of large and small flue tubes. New boiler tubes have now been fitted and the boiler hydraulically tested to 300psi. Permission has been given to progress towards the coal-fired and safety valve tests, with hopes that the locomotive would be able to return to service in time for the ELR's Santa specials.

For more information on progress and to support the work on both locomotives, visit www.burystandard4group.org.uk



The restoration of Ivatt Class 2 No. 46428 on the East Lancashire has recently seen a new smokebox and door completed.
BURY STANDARD 4 GROUP

Second guest set for Battlefield winter gala

THE Battlefield Line has added GWR outside-cylinder pannier tank No. 1369 to its Winter Warmer Gala on January 11/12.

The 1934-built veteran of the Weymouth Quay and Wenfordbridge clay branches will be visiting from the South Devon Railway.

It will run alongside new-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880, which is on loan to the Norfolk Railway until November 17, and will be moved to the Battlefield Line to haul its festive season services which will start at the end of the month. For details, visit www.battlefieldline.co.uk

Details of other visiting locomotives for the gala were still to be announced.



One-time Swindon Works shunter 0-6-0PT No. 1369 at Buckfastleigh on the South Devon Railway.
JHRAILPHOTOGRAPHY/CREATIVE COMMONS



New-build GWR 4-6-0 No. 6880 *Betton Grange* is seen hauling the North Norfolk Railway's first Christmas dining train on November 3.
ANDREW ROTHE/NNR

Joem to return in green again

A VOTE held by members of the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group has determined that sole-surviving LNER J72 (NER E1) 0-6-0T No. 69023 *Joem* will return from overhaul adorning the popular BR station pilot livery featuring both BR and NER crests, a scheme it has worn for the majority of its heritage era career.

Having scored 91% of the votes, it saw off options such as BR black variants – including its departmental identity as No. 59 – and the green North Eastern livery it carried when first preserved.

Currently under overhaul, reassembly has commenced at Darlington Locomotive Works, with new sections having been welded into the lower backplate. A new rear tubeplate was also due to be pressed and further formed.

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Ribble Steam Railway loses commercial traffic after 20 years

By Sally Clifford

THE Ribble Steam Railway has lost its commercial bitumen traffic after 20 years.

The contract was unique for a heritage line and it was the railway's relocation from the former Steamport at Southport, where it was originally set up in the seventies, to its Chain Caul Road site in Preston that led to the approach to discuss the possibility of returning regular freight traffic back to the docks to support the Tar Refinery which has been part of the Preston Docks since the 1920s.

The partnership with the company, now owned by TotalEnergies, led to the diversion of more than 1000 tons of bitumen from roads to rail from Haverton Hill in Teeside to Preston.

However, the contract ended at the end of November.

Mike Bailey, director and company secretary of Ribble Steam Railway Ltd, said regarding the railway going forward that it would retain the main line connection to the Ribble branch and would always look for using that for new opportunities of any traffic.

He said that that RSR was also looking at other possible avenues ahead and that staff and volunteers are being briefed as things move on.

He added that that the railway was also planning to produce a history of the services, it having been in a relatively unusual position for a heritage line to operate regular freight trains.

A spokesman for TotalEnergies said: "We have taken the decision to transport inbound bitumen by road tanker as opposed to by rail, as it is today. This is as a result of a reduction in the volumes of bitumen being processed at the site which has determined that the most appropriate mode of transport is now by road. We expect rail movements to end by the end of the year."

The RSR includes the former collections from Steamport and the closed Fleetwood Locomotive Centre. In addition, in 2009 the Furness Railway Trust relocated its collection of locomotives and rolling stock from Haverthwaite to Preston and now has its own purpose-built facility for restoration.

The railway also boasts an impressive museum collection, an exploration centre visitor space for meetings, groups, activities and events, and runs a calendar of popular special events throughout the year, including cream tea services.

The line also has the distinction of being the only heritage railway in the UK whose three-mile return trip into Preston town centre and along the bank of the River Ribble includes crossing a swing bridge.

Currently, the railway is preparing for one of its most popular events of the year – the Santa Special Steam experience, which runs from November 30 to December 22.

Following the festive period, the railway reopens for the season with steam trains running on the Wednesday and Saturday of February half-term. Trains will then be running every Saturday from the beginning of April to the end of September.

To find out more about the railway and the calendar of special events, visit https://ribblesteam.org.uk



Sentinel 4wDHs Nos. 10226 of 1965 *Energy*, which previously worked at the Manchester Ship Canal, and No. 10283 of 1968 *Progress*, which have been assisting with the freight service at the Ribble Steam Railway. RSR

NRM may lose funding of £15m through new Government's budget review

THE National Railway Museum in York could lose £15 million in Government funding from its masterplan project following the October budget, which included the reassessment of Levelling Up commitments. In the previous Government's spring budget, £52.6 million was provisionally earmarked for six 'nationally significant cultural investments,' the NRM being the largest recipient.

The £15 million grant had previously been expected to fund about 16% of the NRM's £95 million masterplan to extend and improve the York museum and its sister site Locomotion in Shildon.

Features of the museum's masterplan include a new central building at its York venue, which will act as an entrance and new gallery space.

A statement from NRM parent body the Science Museum Group said: "The Government is consulting with a number of public bodies that were the recipients of the Levelling Up Culture and Capital Projects funds.

"We recognise the difficult settlement faced by all departments.

"We are working constructively with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and our sponsor, the Department for Culture Media and Sport, to outline the enormous value of this investment in boosting the local economy and creating new jobs as part of one of the largest brownfield regeneration projects in the UK, York Central."

The other grant aid packages included £10 million for National Museums Liverpool, £5 million for the National Poetry Centre in Leeds, £10 million for the British Library North in Leeds, £2.6 million for the Victoria and Albert Museum in Dundee and £10 million for Venue Cymru in Conwy.

However, the autumn budget revealed that "to ensure investment is focussed on the growth mission, the Government is minded to cancel" funding for these projects, but "will consult with potential funding recipients before making a final decision".

A statement from the Campaign for the Arts, a UK-wide alliance, said: "It is very disappointing to see such a large investment put at risk.

"The Campaign for the Arts believes that local cultural access can and should play an important role in delivering the Government's growth mission."

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Talyllyn dragons spread their wings to nearby lines as television show is picked up for third series

By Owen Hayward



Filming for a third series of Driegiau Cadi has already started at the Talyllyn Railway, in which Bledd and Cef will continue with their antics while introducing a new generation to the joys of railways. YELLOW BARRELLS LTD



In May 2023, production for series two of Driegiau Cadi saw a film unit take over the Fairbourne Railway for a day with 12 1/4in gauge 2-6-2T Russell the starring locomotive. YELLOW BARRELLS LTD

A PAIR of dragons delighted viewers young and old when they landed on Welsh channel S4C last October in a new children's television series that was filmed exclusively at the Talyllyn Railway.

A year on, the cheeky puppets hit screens for a second series that saw them branch out to visit the nearby 12¼in gauge Fairbourne Railway, and producer Phil Higginson has hinted that with a third series being commissioned, more Welsh lines may be set to appear.

Dreigiau Cadi follows the adventures of engine driver Cadi, whose day-to-day life on the railway is often chaotic thanks to the antics of Bledd and Cef, two dragons who turn up one day in the carriages of her train. Throughout the series, storywriters mix fun and adventure with railway settings and practices to great effect (with some creative liberties, of course) in ways that educate youngsters about railway workings without dumbing things down.

Personal connection

Because of its niche setting and rolling stock, the Talyllyn has mostly seen filming take place for documentaries such as Michael Portillo's Great Railway Journeys.

The decision by Phil Higginson to use the TR as the setting for this children's series was aided in part by his past involvement as a volunteer on the footplate there, as well as the reputation of the place for its warm and welcoming nature. However, his connections spread further afield, and filming for the recently released second series saw one episode visit the Fairbourne Railway.

The episode saw Cadi and the dragons hear that filming for their favourite TV show was taking place at the nearby line and so they visit, only to discover that the characters are portrayed on screen by actors and puppets (in what is a delightfully self-aware move by showrunners).

"Like the staff and volunteers at the Talyllyn, Murray Dods and his team at the Fairbourne were incredibly helpful and allowed us to take over for a day last May, just before the line's gala weekend," Phil said. "I've known Murray for years as we both volunteered on the Talyllyn, and he rather foolishly trusted our dragons with the railway! The other stories are Talyllyn-based and feature tales of missing bees, firework displays, giant vegetables, a flower train, and even No.1's special 160th birthday.

"The team making the show are always thrilled to be coming back to this special part of Wales and a recent week has seen the first block of filming for series three, with the remaining filming to be completed in the spring.

Free reign

"One of the beauties of filming in November is that we can do so without having the additional pressures of working around the passenger services. The filming week came just ahead of the TR's outdoor working fortnight, so there's greater flexibility with using locations you could never access during the spring or summer. The Talyllyn is a special place, and the staff and volunteers are always so incredibly helpful. It's fantastic that so many in the heritage railway community have taken this series to heart. What's best of all is that we have the pleasure of introducing a new generation to our preserved railways and in a way that reflects the reality of operating them."

He also hinted that filming for the new series may take in other familiar Welsh railways, adding: "I'd like to get to a few more – I've got plenty of ideas, so it's down to the commissioning team."

While many filming jobs will rebrand stock and stations, the Talyllyn and Fairbourne have been left untouched in what will no doubt be considered as precious advertising.

The 12-episode Welsh language series started broadcasting on S4C on October 12 and includes an episode that will air on Christmas Eve. It is also available to stream with English subtitles on BBC iPlayer.

Loughborough station staff at the beginning and now!

TO celebrate this year's 125th anniversary of the opening of the original Great Central Railway, a photograph of its Loughborough station staff was taken on October 18.

The picture recreated an archive image taken in 1900 from the same spot on the platform shortly after the station opened.

Organised by David Barnett and taken by Paul Mayo, the image features 18 staff members, including some of the line's welcome hosts and the station restoration team.



Loughborough Central station staff in 1900. GCR ARCHIVES



The staff in front of the Loughborough running-in board are(left to right) back row: Ewan Thomas, Cameron Grant, Matthew Hale, Debbie Gillott, Brian Parish, Phil Akrill, Eric Cockerill, Ryan Linthwaite, Gordon Walker, Richard Colton and Grahame Killey; and front row: Bob Hinge, Michael Thomas, Mark Hill, John Fearn, Jonathan Cooper, Dave Broomfield and David Barnett. GCR

Kent & East Sussex's first returns home

By Owen Hayward

A UNIQUE locomotive has arrived back at Tenterden and is set to play a role in events being planned at the Kent & East Sussex Railway in 2025.

Sentinel 0-4-0VBGT No. 6807 *Gervase* was originally built as a Manning Wardle H class saddle tank in 1900, when it was delivered to a lime works near Croydon. Following years of heavy use, Sentinel undertook a conversion in 1928 that saw it fitted with a vertical boiler but retain the four coupled wheels; most sentinel conversions were chain-driven.

On June 14, 1962, it arrived on the KESR which was establishing itself to reopen the closed line between Tenterden and Bodiam. *Gervase* became the first locomotive to be steamed there by revivalists and played a pivotal role in working engineering trains and shunting during the rest of that decade. By the time the KESR opened in 1974, it had fallen out of use, with the railway selling it on in 1979, although it remained stored on the line but slowly deteriorated. Restoration was hampered when components became lost or stolen.

However, boiler work was undertaken at Tenterden before *Gervase* moved to the now-defunct Elsecar Heritage Railway, near Barnsley, in 2008, where restoration continued. In January 2011, the first fire for 45 years was lit in the firebox; completion would not come until March 2013, with running-in taking place on the Great Central Railway.

Following this, it briefly returned to the KESR before heading to Elsecar to operate until its boiler ticket expired, with intermitent forays elsewhere during that period. In 2021, *Gervase* was moved by owner Mike Hart to the workshops of JM Engineering at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre for a contract overhaul to be carried out.



Homecoming: Although still missing its boiler, 0-4-0VBGT *Gervase* arrives back on the Kent & East Sussex Railway on November 7, ready to appear at events on the line in 2025. CHARLIE MASTERSON/KESR

Home at last

On November 7, the majority of this unique survivor arrived back at the KESR – 62 years after it was first delivered there. As this issue went to press, the boiler was still being overhauled, but it was estimated to be just a month away from completion, after which it would be returned to the frames.

KESR general manager Robin Coombes said: "*Gervase* is a very important part of KESR history and was the first locomotive to be steamed by the fledgling preservation society in the early 1960s, prior to the line's reopening. It has been away from the railway for some time, so it is a great joy to see it here again.

"It is back here on the railway for events we are planning to hold in 2025. We will release details once plans and dates are firmed up."

Can you help 'No. 29' steam again after 50 years?

THE Shed 47 Railway Restoration Group at Lathalmond Railway Museum, Dunfermline, has launched a £10,000 appeal as the final phase of a project to bring a 116-year-old steam locomotive back to life.

Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 1142 of 1908, affectionately known as 'No. 29,' was built for the Fife Coal Company in 1908 for service at the Mary Colliery, in Lochore, and afterwards ran at several collieries for the National Coal Board. Withdrawn and sold for scrap in 1975, it was bought for display in a play park in Danderhall, Edinburgh, where it stayed for 14 years, later being moved to the Prestonpans Mining Museum in the 1980s.

In October 2017 it moved to the Shed 47 group, based in the former Royal Navy Stores Depot at Lathalmond, which aims to restore it to steam for use at the site.

The boiler was recently pressure-tested by an inspector and, subject to minor repairs, should see a 10-yearly boiler certificate issued early next year. The boiler will be transported to experts in Lincoln for work to be carried out over the winter, before a fire is lit in the boiler for the first time in more than 50 years. The locomotive will be painted in NCB leaf green.

• To donate to the appeal, visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/loco29

Tornado prepares for main line tests

NEW-BUILD A1 Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* was completing its preparations for a return to the main line after successfully hauling Nene Valley Railway public services in October and undertaking driver experience course sessions.

As this issue closed for press, *Tornado* was still at Wansford as arrangements were being made for it to leave by rail, along with its support coach, for Tyseley Locomotive Works, from where it will undergo main line test runs.

A spokesman for The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust said: "At present, *Tornado* is completing final brake test certification following the extensive overhaul and European Train Control System fitment. This is all but complete, with only one document now in its final stages.

"We are currently assessing the plan that will follow the completion of the paperwork for main line operations. This requires us to align with testing requirements for the loco and for ETCS. This will mean circa two days of testing for the loco but about four to five days of testing for ETCS.

"Work at the NVR has been around general running maintenance, the finalisation of the repaired regulator, fitting of the permanent water valve handles on the tender and so forth. This followed the necessary works required after the road move to reassemble the locomotive."



A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* heads a service train over the River Nene after departing Wansford on October 20. ROBIN JONES

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Poppy Line chairman is appointed local tourism chief

NORTH Norfolk Railway general manager Graham Hukins has landed another top post in tourism.

He has been appointed as chairman of Norfolk & Suffolk Tourist Attractions, an association of about 45 venues across the two counties, from stately homes like Holkham and boat tours on the Broads, family fun such as Roarr! and Pleasurewood Hills, to wildlife parks including Jimmy's Farm and Watatunga Reserve.

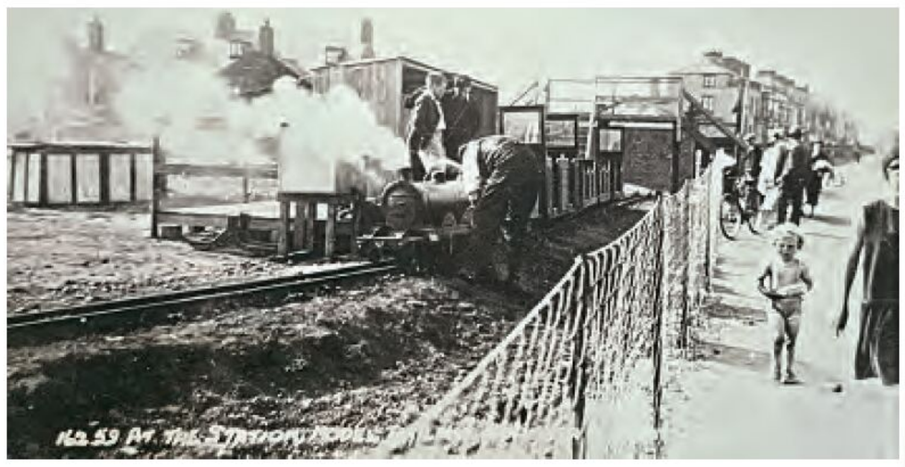
The NNR is one of three heritage lines among the membership, alongside Bressingham Steam Museum and Gardens and the Bure Valley Railway.

The association publishes the popular booklet Great Days Out in Norfolk & Suffolk, a guide to the best places to visit in the area, which is professionally distributed to hotels, B&B accommodation, hotels, holiday parks and other leisure and tourist outlets throughout the season. For 2025, Graham expects marketing activities to expand to include a revamped consumer website and supporting digital media campaign.

Working together

In addition, the association represents members to Visit East of England, local destination management organisations and other industry bodies, as well as leveraging the collective buying power of members to achieve meaningful discounts from a range of suppliers.

Graham has more than 35 years of experience in the tourism industry, having previously worked at Didcot Railway Centre, the Royal Engineers Museum and the Shepherd Neame Brewery Visitor Centre. He was previously chairman of the Association of Tourist Attractions in Kent and is a non-executive director of Tourism South East. He said: "It is vital that businesses with similar challenges collaborate, and I am looking forward to steering NSTA into 2025 and beyond as we look to deliver even better value and generate increased awareness and footfall for members."



Above: The Hornsea miniature railway before its relocation to Severn Beach. JOE NEMETH COLLECTION



Right: A local newspaper cutting from 1936 showing entrepreneur Robert Stride driving the locomotive on his new miniature railway at Severn Beach. JOE NEMETH COLLECTION

Miniature railway revival at 'forgotten' resort

By Robin Jones

A SCHEME to return a miniature railway to the 'lost' riverside resort of Severn Beach after nearly half a century aims to having it running by next summer.

The blueprint has been devised by local resident and railwayana dealer Joe Nemeth, of Joe Nemeth Engineering Ltd, which has been designing, building, installing and operating miniature railways for more than 20 years.

Before the GWR arrived in 1900, the Severn Beach area on the Severn Estuary in Gloucestershire was farmland, leading to a gravel-like foreshore of sand and fronted by extensive marshes. However, in 1922 it became a seaside resort with a swimming pool called the Blue Lagoon, a boating lake, dozens of funfair stalls, and donkey rides on grass, mostly through the initiative of local entrepreneur and builder Robert Stride.

With the opening of the rail link from Avonmouth in 1924, Robert Stride moved his operations from his house in Station Road, Shirehampton, to Severn Beach and built a restaurant, six shops, houses, a boating lake and putting green, laid on an electricity supply – and a miniature railway – after purchasing the Lakelands grounds.

Entrepreneurial spirit

He saw a magazine advertisement for a miniature railway outfit for sale in Hornsea comprising a 4-4-2 tender locomotive based on a NER Atlantic, three sit-in carriages and a large oval of 10¼in gauge track. He bought it and opened it in the summer of 1936. It was an immediate success and ran for three years until the outbreak of the Second World War, which marked the end of the line. Nothing of it survives.

In early 1955, schoolteacher Les Anderson – with a passion for railways and electric railway systems – acquired the site and began building a 15in gauge line. He aimed to test a light rail transit system which could easily be replicated around the UK, with the intention of moving people in and out of towns and to shopping centres.

His line operated a Bo-Bo diesel electric named The Cub, along with an all-electric locomotive which collected its power from overhead catenary and was named Amber Arrow – a radical development for a miniature line.

The line survived until 1964, when Les relocated the entire system to Longleat Safari Park where it still exists today. There were two more lines in Severn Beach which were located at the southern end, the first being a 10¼in gauge line which opened in about1969 and operated for one season and was subsequently sold to Ernie Golding and used on his Lakelands line, this short line operated a petrol electric Bo-Bo and two open toast rack-type coaches. This line was a short out-and-back line of about 100 yards and operated by JSN Amusements, Joe's parents.

A second line of 7¼in gauge was installed at the same location, which was again 100 yards long and operated with a Hunslet Quarry-type



The Severn Beach miniature railway in operation in 1936, its first year. JOE NEMETH COLLECTION

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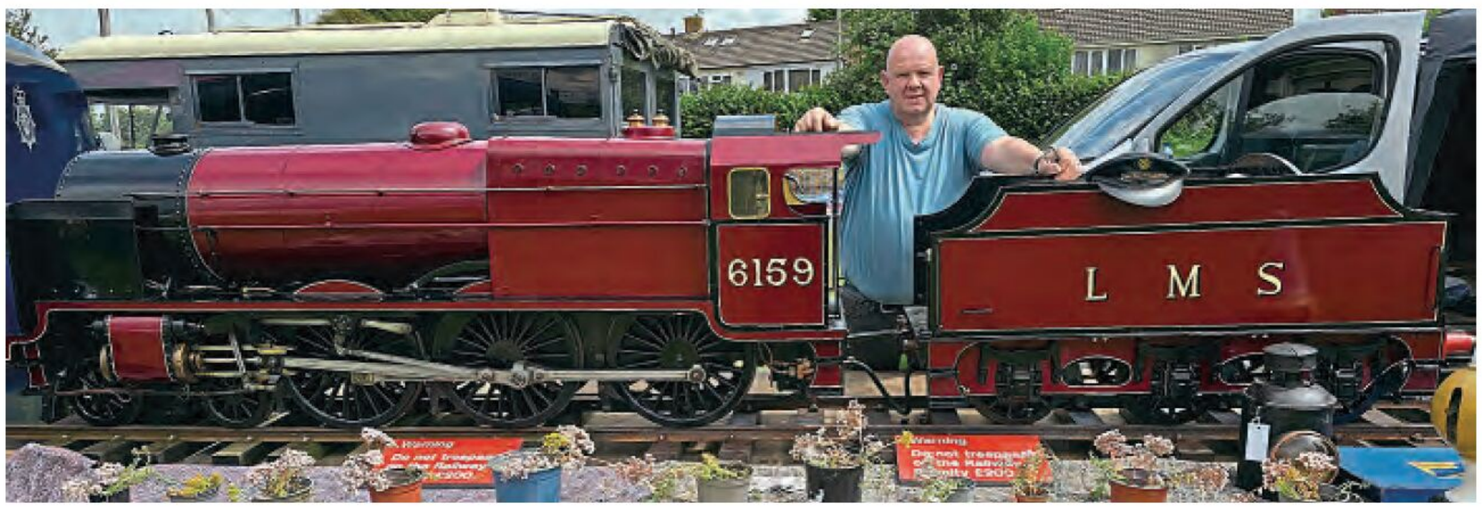


Above: The plan for the new miniature railway showing its position next to the promenade and Severn Estuary waterfront. JOE EMNETH



Left: The site for the new miniature railway. JOE EMNETH

In July, Joe Nemeth set up a display at the Severnfest event on the Severn Beach promenade gardens where the new miniature line will be built, with LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 6159 taking pride of place. JOE NEMETH



0-4-0ST named *Victoria* and one open carriage. This line was all built by Joe and opened in 2001, and operated for one season before being relocated by Joe to Oldown Country Park eight miles away.

With the era of Severn Beach as a holiday and pleasure resort ending in the mid-1970s, many of the shops closed, and the large Severn Salmon Hotel/pub formerly Severn Beach Hotel – which was also built by Robert Stride's firm and which catered for the hundreds of day trippers who came from Bristol when the village was a popular resort in the 1940s and 1950s – was demolished to make way for houses in the late 1990s.

Family ties

In the 1980s, the Blue Lagoon was demolished to create more open space, and the station buildings at the end of the Severn Beach branch were removed to make way for more housing – leaving only an unmanned platform with a ticket machine. The boating lake was filled in and landscaped and now forms part of the sea defence known as Promenade Gardens.

Joe Nemeth first became involved in miniature railways back in 1969 when his father built a 10¼in gauge petrol electric American diesel outline locomotive, two carriages and 100 yards of track as part of the fairground attractions at Severn Beach.

The Severn Beach miniature line which ran around the boating lake at the end of the promenade gardens was severely damaged in the floods of 1976 and subsequently removed, bringing 40 years of history to an end.

Serving Severn Beach today, a new seafront Tea Cottage opened in 2018 on the site of the old Bert's burger bar and its associated children's fun rides, while Shirley's Café and Down's bakery serve residents and visitors today.

Joe now hopes to have his new miniature line, part of which will be laid on the route of the original one, opened at Easter after being given the green light to build it. He has been purchasing track materials in readiness, while it is hoped that a 10¼in gauge locomotive built in the 1940s by Thurston is currently undergoing restoration and hopes to be running sometime next year. Other locomotives are being drafted in for when the line opens. Several volunteers have come forward wanting to get involved; in time, Joe expects other like-minded enthusiasts will join the team.

"This is a very exciting project for me and is about 330 feet from our home," said Joe. "This will be a commercial line, open to the public, and ultimately will be end-to-end about at third of a mile."The line is to be built in three phases, with phase one being about 560ft long. It is hoped to start phase two in summer 2025, funds permitting.

More details of Joe's plans can be found on the new Facebook page for Severn Beach Miniature Railway, and the one for Junction Railwayana. A website is also in preparation.



Locomotive power on the Lizard Light Railway is a Scamp built from a kit supplied by CMD Engineering and designed by Colin Edmondson. It is named *Ruby* as chairman Paul Green, seen driving the train, bought it around the time of the 40th (ruby) anniversary of his marriage to his wife Denise. The passenger is their grandson Alfie. LLR

New southernmost miniature line build gets underway

BRITAIN'S new most southerly miniature railway is now taking shape on the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall.

Local volunteers have laid temporary track for the 7¼in gauge Lizard Light Railway at Trerise Farm campsite, near Ruan Minor, after running it as a portable line at local fetes and village fun days in the Helston area.

The current aim of the project, which was launched in June 2023, is to raise between £10,000 and £15,000 to buy permanent steel track and lay a double-track line that circles the camping field and offers rides.

At the moment, it comprises a temporary track using 16mm aluminium rails to give visitors an idea of what the railway wants to achieve. The intention is to expand in one direction, out further into the campsite, and in the other to the reception/café.

The Lizard Light Railway will run during events at the site on November 30 and December 21. It will then close for the winter and reopen during the Easter holidays.

The railway has set up its own Facebook page. Donations to the track appeal can be made via a QR code on the page, at the farm's cafe or shop, or by emailing lizardlightrailway@gmail.com

LLR chairman and engineer Paul Green said: "As we operate with a few volunteers and donations, this is a difficult task, and we would welcome any assistance in the form of either."

The railway plans to start building its own wagons and carriages and may produce some to be sold on to other lines.

The GWR Helston branch, which closed to passengers in 1962 and freight two years later and is now being revived in part as a heritage railway (as featured in issue 320) was the UK's most southerly full-sized branch line. Opened in 1887, Helston station had been laid out as a through station for the possible extension to the Lizard, but the GWR experimented with a more cost-effective option. On August 17, 1903, Britain's first railway-operated bus service was launched, meeting trains at the Helston terminus to carry passengers on towards the Lizard.

Work from a home with steam trains right on your doorstep!

By Owen Hayward

RESIDING in an old station house – let alone one with steam trains on the doorstep – is a dream for many, but one seldom achieved. However, that dream could become reality as the Epping Ongar Railway is advertising to fill two job vacancies on its payroll, with one successful applicant being offered the opportunity to move into the station house at North Weald, in the heart of the line's activities.

Following the retirement of the previous holder of the position, the EOR is seeking a new operations manager. The position will further be responsible for ensuring maintaining safety and compliance, while fostering a strong culture around these pivotal areas. Depending on the level of experience, the successful applicant will benefit from an annual salary of between £30,000 and £45,000.

Furthermore, they will also be offered first refusal of taking up residence in the 1865 stationmaster's house which overlooks the platforms and surrounding farmland, where deer can regularly be found grazing and which is passed over by vintage aircraft from the nearby aerodrome.

Should the operations manager decline this offer, residency will then be offered to whoever successfully is appointed to the new business secretary position. With duties including managing the essential processes and supporting the senior management and managing director, this role will also involve enhancing engagement with the EOR's volunteer workforce and maintaining communications between the various departments.

The successful candidate will additionally have a variety of business responsibilities ranging from event planning to developing the already successful film and advertising contract work. The position is advertised with a salary of between £25,000 and £35,000 per annum, once again commensurate with experience.

Both positions will benefit from an annual holiday allowance of 28 days.

While the ideal candidates would come with a background of working in the sector, experience related to the relevant positions will also be considered.

An EOR statement said: "Working at EOR offers more than a career. Our line, once part of the London Underground, provides a direct connection to the past while being close to modern life, with a vintage bus service linking the railway to the London Underground. You will enjoy both the tranquility of the countryside and the convenience of being near the city.



Residency at North Weald station house could be within your reach, with the Epping Ongar Railway set to offer tenancy of the 1865 building to whoever is successfully appointed as the new operations manager. On May 5, visiting GWR 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* passes the station house by. OWEN HAYWARD

"With only 12 years of public operations behind us, we have a strong foundation for future growth. We are committed to expanding our public offerings, especially in education and outreach, and both the operations manager and business decretary roles will play key parts in shaping that future."

Applications must be submitted by November 30.

For full job descriptions and application forms, see tinyurl.com/55jzx3sb

Steam Dreams plans four-day Lakeland trip

STEAM Dreams has announced a four-day 'Lakes Express' holiday on September 9-12, 2025.

Staring at Euston, steam will take over upon arrival at Crewe, from where the journey will run over the Settle to Carlisle line to Oxenholme. Here, coaches will transfer passengers to hotels.

A two-day stay in the Lake District National Park offers optional excursions to attractions including the Lakeside & Haverthwaite and Ravenglass and Eskdale railways, Beatrix Potter's House, Holker Hall, Wordsworth House or Brantwood House.

On the fourth day, the tour train will run from Workington via the Cumbrian Coast Line and Furness Line to Chester, where passengers will have time to explore the city.

For details and to book, telephone 01483 209888 or visit www.steamdreams.co.uk

Old signalling equipment from Northumberland Line given new homes after three-way rescue

HISTORIC main line equipment destined for the scrapyard has been saved by three groups of enthusiasts in Northumberland, including the Woodhorn Narrow Gauge Railway.

As part of the multi-million upgrade of the Northumberland Line – which will see passenger services restored to the line for the first time in more than 60 years between Ashington and Newcastle – signalling will no longer be controlled from lineside signalboxes but instead from a state-of-the-art centre in Newcastle.

While kit that could be used for spares in other locations was sent safely into Network Rail storage, many other old pieces of equipment were destined to be lost. Thanks to a close partnership working with Northumberland County Council, the Woodhorn Railway, Northumberland Line Heritage Community Group and Choppington Parish Council all jumped at the chance to grab a piece of history, with each rescuing various items from the old 'boxes at Marcheys House and North Seaton.

Coun Richard Wearmouth, deputy leader of Northumberland County Council, said: "While the Northumberland Line is very much looking to the future, it's important to remember the proud history and heritage of the railway both in our county and the wider North-East.



The diagram from North Seaton signalbox donated to the Woodhorn Narrow Gauge Railway. NETWORK RAIL

"We are pleased to have been able to help these three local groups secure items from the old signalbox as we look ahead to passenger trains running along the line once again in the very near future."

Donated were two diagrams from Marcheys House and North Seaton 'boxes to Woodhorn Narrow Gauge Railway and the Northumberland Line Heritage Community Group and a sign from Marcheys House 'box to Choppington Parish Council.

The 2ft gauge Woodhorn Railway runs for a third of a mile from Woodhorn to Lakeside Halt in the Queen Elizabeth II Country Park.

It dates back to 1991, when an ex-mining locomotive and three man-riding cars were donated by the National Coal Board.

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Isle of Wight's *Ajax* gets new Northampton & Lamport home

By Robin Jones

THE Isle of Wight Steam Railway's Barclay 0-6-0T *Ajax* is to have a new home on the Northampton & Lamport Railway, where it will be returned to steam.

No. 1605 of 1918 has been on the island for more than 50 years and although it was once used as part of the fleet, it has been a mainstay of the Train Story Rail Discovery Centre.

The IoWSR owns 13 steam locomotives, of which eight are in its operational fleet. Of the others, two are already on loan to other heritage organisations, while the remaining three are available for display. The 13th, Stephenson 0-6-0T No. 2309 of 1979 *Haydock*, donated by the National Trust from its collection at Penrhyn Castle Industrial Railway Museum, is a recent arrival, leaving *Ajax* surplus to requirements and facing being placed into storage.

Agreement reached

The trustees decided to look for a new home for *Ajax*, where it would be returned to operational use. Following a visit by NLR officials to the island and inspection of the locomotive, an agreement was reached for a transfer for a nominal sum.

Ajax will now join the home fleet and be used on the two-mile line between Pitsford & Brampton and Boughton stations. The line was not only a frequent route for ironstone trains passing through Northamptonshire, but also had several ironstone quarries along its route, including Pitsford Quarry, where the exchange sidings are preserved as part of the heritage line..

The NLR's dream is to recreate the scene of mineral wagons being shunted in Pitsford Sidings, as would have been a daily occurrence between 1925 and 1965, and *Ajax* has been pencilled in for a central role in this. The project also includes the creation of supporting educational and interpretive information to help enrich public understanding and appreciation of the area's history of ironstone quarrying.

Ajax was built for the Sulphide Corporation of London but was requisitioned on completion by the Ministry of Munitions and sent to Persia, where it remained for many years, latterly in the service of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

The locomotive returned to the UK, working at Llandarcy Refinery, near Swansea, and later at the Stanton Iron Works, Sheffield. It finished its industrial service at Harlaxton Ironstone Quarries, near Grantham, and was withdrawn in 1968.

Ajax was bought by Henry Frampton-Jones, who placed it on loan to the IoWSR in 1972. No major restoration work was carried out for more than 20 years, until a full overhaul was completed. *Ajax* hauled its first public passenger train during 2005 and was in service until the end of 2014, when it was withdrawn for overhaul.



***Ajax* pictured on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.** IOWSR

In service once more

By then the IoWSR had a fleet of more suitable locomotives to haul its ever more frequent and busier trains, and *Ajax* was placed on display in Train Story.

Visitors have been able to climb onto the footplate to see how a steam locomotive is controlled.

IoWSR chairman Peter Taylor said: "We are delighted to have found a new home for *Ajax,* where it will be returned to steam and will operate in service again for people's enjoyment.

"We are looking forward to seeing the NLR overhaul *Ajax* and are pleased to be able to support another growing heritage railway by transferring Ajax into its care."

His NLR counterpart, Adam Giles, said: "We are very grateful to the IoWSR trustees for giving us the opportunity to overhaul *Ajax* so that it can be returned to operational condition and form a central part of the ironstone train project."

Ajax was being prepared by the IoWSR to depart for the mainland at the end of November.

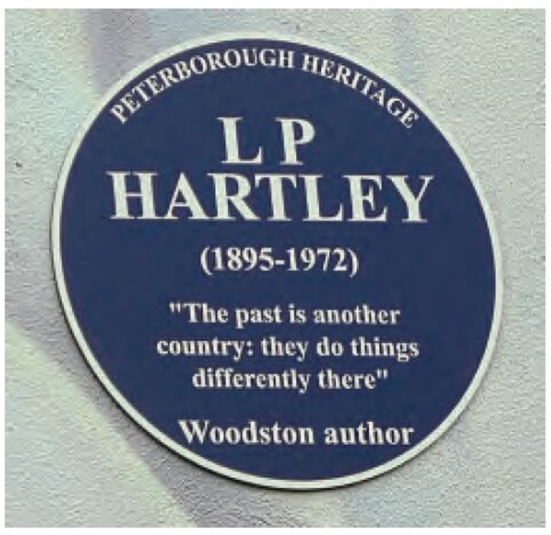
Nene Valley depicted in new mural celebrating city's literary giant

A STEAM train on the Nene Valley Railway has been given prominence in a new mural paying tribute to novelist LP Hartley who once lived in Peterborough.

Prolific local street artist Nathan Murdoch, aided by Jonnie Kak, of Street Arts Hire Ltd, painted the mural along the Bread Street wall of the Happy Valley Chinese takeaway in the city's Oundle Road.

Leslie Poles Hartley (December 30, 1895-December 13, 1972), who was born in Whittlesey, later moved to Fletton Towers, a Grade II-listed Victorian mansion in Peterborough. The Hartley family gave land to the city to create Woodston Library.

Hartley's literary career, which spanned more than three decades, peaked with the 1952 publication of his novel The Go-Between, which took a critical look at society as he remembered from his schooldays. He won the Heinemann Foundation Prize of the Royal Society of Literature in 1954 and two years later was awarded a CBE.



Above: A blue plaque above the mural in Bread Street. BOTH: ROBIN JONES

Right: Peterborough street artist Nathan Murdoch created this mural honouring city novelist LP Hartley and featuring a Nene Valley train.



Julie Christie, Alan Bates, Margaret Leighton and Edward Fox starred in the 1971 film adaptation of the novel. The mural is based on the film and includes a scene from 1900, the railway bridge over Oundle Road and the Nene Valley train.

Above the mural, a Peterborough Heritage blue plaque has been mounted, carrying a quote from the book: "The past is another country: they do things differently there."

The mural was officially unveiled on October 25 by local ward councillor Alan Dowson, who commissioned it.

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Battery 'Gronk' gets a passing grade in recent tests

By Owen Hayward

THE conversion of a Class 08 'Gronk' to battery power has shown promising results following a period of testing at a main line freight yard – and could very well be a sign of things to come.

With railways all too aware of the challenges of running heritage traction while striving to be environmentally-friendly, the subject of converting locomotives to run on cleaner fuels and battery power is not new to many, although such conversions will not come cheap. On October 19, 2023, Positive Traction unveiled a heavily modified 08 (now classed 08e) at Barrow Hill as part of a project involving rail industry experts and renewable energy expertise to meet the challenge of lower carbon emissions.



Testing carried out by prototype Class 08e 0-6-0 No. 80308 during October has seen the modified 'Gronk' successfully move loads in excess of 1000 tonnes around one of the most challenging internal rail yards in the UK. The success of this project could very well pave the way for future green conversions as heritage lines seek to improve their environmental impact. POSITIVE TRACTION

Old 'Gronk,' new tricks

The locomotive was been constructed on the frames of No. 08308 which, built in 1957, latterly ended up at Inverness on 'Caledonian Sleeper' shunting duties. However, following issues necessitating the need for new pistons and crankshaft, it lay dormant at Wolsingham until it was identified by Positive Traction as a prime candidate for re-engineering that has converted it into a battery-powered locomotive.

While above the solebar the bodywork is vastly different to a conventional 'Gronk,' the rolling chassis beneath remains much the same. However, with no diesel engine creating emissions or particulates – something that comes under close scrutiny at main line depots and heritage lines around the nation as neighbouring land is becoming increasingly developed – the success of this project could pave the way for similar conversions.

Since being unveiled last year, it has undergone further development works and testing at Barrow Hill which has included visits from potential customers that may be using the locomotive. The driving controls have been left much the same as their original configuration to facilitate easier driver conversion and the cab body has been fitted with additional windows to improve visibility.

In mid-October, No. 08308 moved to Mendip Rail's Heidelberg Materials Whatley Quarry in Somerset for further testing to be carried out, the yard being described by Positive Traction as "one of the most brutal and punishing locations in the UK for internal rail movements." There, the 'Gronk' has been successfully trialled both pulling and pushing trains over more than 1000 tonnes, from the bottom of the yard up through reverse curves, crossovers, harsh gradients and quarry sidings in exercises that are instrumental in collecting useful data regarding battery life, revised uprated tractive effort, hill start capability and fast charging through regenerative braking.

Customer feedback

"We've been getting feedback from drivers and shunters to ensure the 08e is improving their overall experience and safety," a Positive Traction statement said. "It has now returned back to PT HQ in preparation for a schedule of testing with train operating companies."

On November 5, Positive Traction announced it was shortlisted for the Spotlight Rail Awards 2025's innovative rolling stock category. The ceremony, which recognises the accomplishments of the rail sector and outstanding contributions that drive the industry forward, will take place on March 20, 2025.

Despite some enthusiasts voicing their displeasure at seeing a locomotive modified as heavily as this particular example, the promising success of the 08e may become a vital landmark in rail history.

Vale of Rheidol unveils ballast wagon innovation system

THE Vale of Rheidol Railway has successfully refurbished its ballast wagon No. 33, originally acquired from the South African Railway.

This significant upgrade, carried out in-house at the railway's workshops, included a comprehensive overhaul and the installation of an unloading mechanism designed to enhance operational efficiency. The updated system now allows ballast to be discharged both along the rails and outside the track, providing greater versatility and precision.

Capable of transporting 17 tons of ballast, No. 33 is set to play a critical role in the railway's track maintenance efforts, particularly during the winter season when essential infrastructure work is undertaken. The new unloading system will facilitate faster and more efficient ballast distribution, contributing to the continued upkeep of the railway's track and ensuring a smooth, safe journey for passengers throughout the year.

A VoR statement said: "The refurbishment is part of the VoR's ongoing commitment to enhancing its infrastructure, maintaining the highest standards of safety and service for all visitors."

Preceding this project, the railway also built a brand-new ballast wagon for the Talyllyn Railway using similar mechanical workings and delivered earlier this year.



Refurbished ballast wagon No.33, which has a new unloading mechanism. VOR

The VoR has now invited enquiries from other narrow gauge lines interested in new-builds or refurbishment projects for their rolling stock. For more information, contact managing director Llyr Ap Iolo at info@rheidolrailway.co.uk or telephone 01970 625819.



Above: The Lord Mayor of Bradford, Coun Beverley Mullaney, and the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Coun Abigail Marshall Katung, with Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0DM D577 of 1938 *Mary* after it transported the reception party to Middleton Park following the handover of Hawarden.



Right: Guests gather for the official handover of *Hawarden* from the National Trust to the Middleton Railway.

Hawarden comes home to Leeds

Words and pictures by Sally Clifford

DIGNITARIES and guests gathered at the Middleton Railway to welcome home a Leeds-built locomotive as it was formally handed over by the National Trust on October 26.

Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST *Hawarden* is one several locomotives which are part of the line's impressive collection located in its Moor Road museum close to the firm's works in Hunslet where it was built in 1899.

Hawarden's journey to the world's oldest continuously running railway began earlier this year when it arrived after being transferred from the National Trust Railway Museum at Penrhyn Castle and Garden into the care of the Bahamas Locomotive Society (BLS), which operates a workshop and museum at Ingrow on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

After spending most of its working life at John Summers' Globe Iron Works, *Hawarden* was saved from the scrapyard by the intervention of the Summers family. Following cosmetic restoration it was donated to the National Trust and sent to Penrhyn Castle in North Wales where it had been ever since.

However, plans for a new experience in the stable block to share stories of Penrhyn's industrial history, and showcasing items in the collection that have not previously been displayed, led to some locomotives not connected to the property's story being returned or rehomed.

Special handover

Penrhyn general manager Ceri Williams, who joined other invited guests including her colleague Richard Pennington, senior collections and house manager, the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Coun Abigail Marshall Katung, the Lord Mayor of Bradford, Coun Beverley Mullaney, local councillors Paul Wray, Rob Chesterfield and Emma Pogson-Golden, Keith Whitmore, chairman of the Bahamas Locomotive Society and Vintage Carriages Trust chairman Trevor England at the special handover event, said that it was an honour to be part of the process to return *Hawarden* home. Ceri added that rehoming the locomotives would enable them to tell their story in a more connected way to their locality.

"It looks as though it has always been here. I am really pleased to see it here and know it is going to be well cared for and part of an important story – it is a huge honour."

Keith said that *Hawarden* was a "little gem" and he was delighted that it was now at Middleton, "its spiritual home".

He also praised the partnership between the Bahamas Locomotive Society and the National Trust which dates back to the early 1970s when the group, then based at Dinting Railway Centre Museum in Derbyshire, took on the ownership of LNWR 'Coal Tank' No 1054 from the trust.

Another Hudswell Clarke locomotive, 1916-built 0-6-0T *Vesta* which was operational at Shotton Steelworks, has also been rehomed from the trust and is now at Bury Transport Museum.

"Our intention was always to make sure these locos have a secure future which is why we wanted to work with the trust to find appropriate homes for them."

Middleton Railway Trust chairman Charles Milner said: "In 1812 it became the first railway in the world to successfully employ steam locomotives in commercial service."

He referenced the pioneer locomotives designed by John Blenkinsop and Matthew Murray and built in Matthew Murray's works in Leeds – the famous Round Foundry.

"The development of steam locomotives in Leeds led directly to Leeds becoming one of the major centres of locomotive construction in the British Isles, and this in turn led to Leeds and the surrounding areas becoming important centres for other industries based on skilled tradesman and advanced engineering techniques," said Charles, referring to the manufacture of agricultural machinery, cranes, pumps and diesel engines.

Yorkshire pride

"The very broad customer base of the Leeds-based engineering industries and their willingness to innovate and change helped underpin the development of the modern city of Leeds. The Leeds of the now owes a great debt to what happened on this site 212 years ago.

"The Middleton Railway of today continues to serve the community of South Leeds as it has done for the last 266 years. The railway is run entirely by volunteers and is operated by the Middleton Railway Trust. This exists to preserve artefacts, including locomotives, which are used to tell the story of the Leeds locomotive building industry and to preserve as a working railway the remaining parts of the historic Middleton Railway for the education and enjoyment of future generations.

"Today's event marks additions to the trust's collection which will better help us discharge our ambitions to tell the intertwined stories of the Middleton Railway and the Leeds locomotive building industry."

Middleton vice president Ian Smith said: "*Hawarden* allows Middleton to show how Hudswell Clarke developed its 0-4-0ST through the years.

"Alongside *Henry De Lacy II* built in 1917 and *Mirvale* built in 1955, we can show how the company developed its designs both aesthetically and ergonomically over the years, and we are very grateful to the National Trust and BLS for entrusting us with *Hawarden*."



The inner workings of *Hawarden* on view at Moor Road and (inset) its works plate.

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Our 2025 'Footplate' calendar and a VERY SPECIAL OFFER from paintings by Philip D. Hawkins FGRA



'Snow Hill – Sunlight & Steam'



'Southern Pacifics'



'Battle At Brickyard Crossing'



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'Express Freight – East Coast Style'



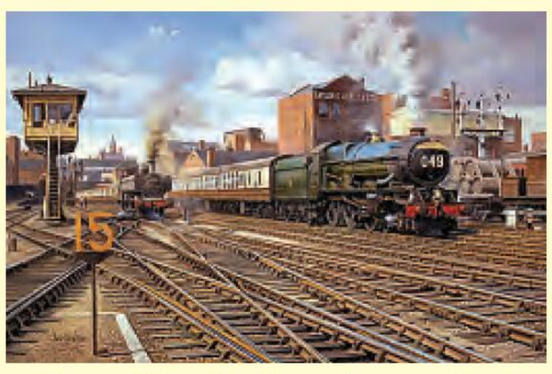
'Night Scot At New Street'



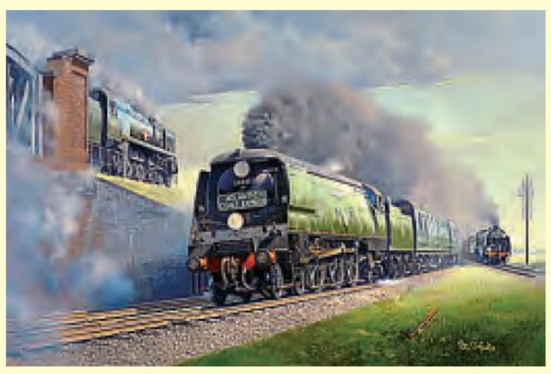
'Crewes' Finest'



'Thornbury Castle'



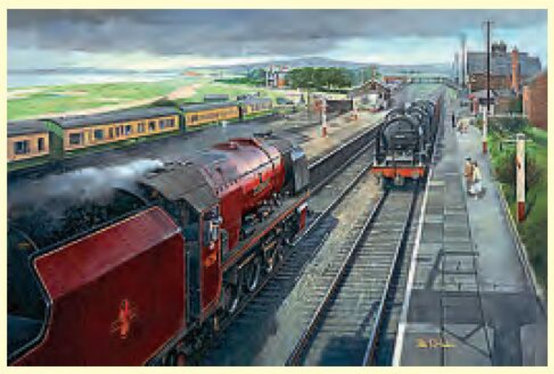
'Snow Hill – Northern Approaches"



'The ACE At Battledown'



'Lysander At Dawlish'



'Hest Bank, Whitsun 1961'



'The White Rose'



'Lady In Waiting'



'Summer Saturday At Snow Hill'

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To learn more about the artist, his paintings, books and how to go about commissioning work visit
www.philipdhawkins.co.uk

2025 'Footplate' Calendar



'Stranger At Snow Hill'



'Summer In St Ives'

Another year and another mouth-watering selection from the original paintings by Philip D. Hawkins FGRA. Titles included are:- 'Night Call', 'Stranger At Snow Hill', 'Summer In St Ives', 'Coton Crossing', 'Snow Hill – Sunlight & Steam' & 'West Coast Postal'.

Overall size 19.5in x 13.5in. Image size 15in x 10.5in. Price £25 inc p&p

Artist's award winner inspired by steam shed visits six decades ago

By Geoff Courtney

A LIFELONG steam enthusiast who last month won the country's premier accolade for railway artists has revealed that his winning painting was inspired by a visit to Carlisle Upperby and Kingmoor sheds more than 60 years ago.

As reported last issue, Stephen Warnes won the prestigious Lawrence Hammonds Award at the Guild of Railway Artists' annual Railart exhibition that ended on September 29 after his painting titled 'Almost ready for the off' was voted visitors' favourite work of art on display. In doing so he became the first artist who is not a fellow of the guild to win the award's engraved silver bowl in 27 years, and only the second ever.

The painting featured D30 4-4-0 No. 62428 *The Talisman* waiting to access an unidentified shed's turntable, and speaking from his home in Brampton, north Cumbria, he told *Heritage Railway* the depot was Carlisle Canal in a scene set in about 1953.

A keen trainspotter from the age of eight, 73-year-old Stephen, who joined the guild in 1987 and was elected a full member seven years later, said: "In 1963, when I was 12, I had a two-day stay in Carlisle and visited Upperby and Kingmoor depots, but never made it to Canal, which was a shame as having North Eastern and Scottish Region engines would have felt very exotic."

Six decades later Stephen set about remedying that omission by deciding to depict a scene in the shed for Railart 2024. "I used information from several photographic sources, and the memories of the mixture of ash and oil underfoot in depots, stray lumps of coal, and reflections in puddles from leaking roofs, also fed into the mix.

"There is also a bit of human narrative woven into the painting, such as two figures manoeuvring the hand-operated turntable and the fireman stoking the boiler up to pressure.

"An historical artist's aim is to recreate a scene – we are a bit like resurrectionists trying to bring the past back to life!"

Early memories

Stephen's early memories include watching trains from the age of eight to 15, when he lived in Accrington.

"On my way to school I passed Accrington shed (24A), and I went trainspotting whenever I could. The time coincided with the end of steam, and freight trains on our east Lancashire line were the last in the country to be steam-hauled, and now when I paint it isn't just for nostalgia, but an attempt to record those times my generation experienced.

"I first painted when at infant school, but a working lad from Lancashire was never going to get the kind of prices necessary to make a good living, so I have always worked full-time as well, and have been a Civil Service executive officer, teacher of art and design at a large school, and a director in the family firm selling musical instruments and equipment to schools. For more than 40 years I worked 40 hours a week and painted for 15 hours. Now, in retirement, I usually do even more."

Since the mid-1970s he has exhibited at various locations including Redditch, the National Railway Museum, Blackburn and Accrington, and was also commissioned in 1997 to produce a painting to celebrate the centenary of the Glasgow Underground, and in 2019 by Cumbria's Museum of Military Life in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment.



Riding high: A Standard 4MT 4-6-0 crosses Belah viaduct near Barras between Barnard Castle and Kirkby Stephen in a painting by Stephen Warnes, who has been awarded a top accolade by the Guild of Railway Artists. The impressive 16-span structure was designed by Thomas Bouch and was a major engineering feature of the South Durham & Lancashire Union Railway's Stainmore line that opened in August 1861 and was closed by BR in 1962.The twin-track viaduct, which was 1070 feet long with a maximum height of 196 feet, was demolished in 1963, but stone abutments on either side of the valley it crossed survive. Of his painting, which he titled 'Spanning the void,' Stephen said: "I liked the idea of the locomotive and carriages, which you usually think of as huge and heavy, being suspended on this slender latticework."



Picture perfect: Award-winning artist and railway enthusiast Stephen Warnes during a visit to his local heritage line, the South Tynedale Railway, on October 20. Stephen, who won a recent Guild of Railway Artists' award for a painting of LNER D30 No. 62428 *The Talisman* on Carlisle Canal shed, is photographed at the five-mile 2ft gauge railway with ex-Harrogate Gas Works' *Barber*, an 0-6-2ST built by Thomas Green & Son of Leeds in 1908 and a resident at the railway since 2004. MATT WARNES

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Explore the depths on a tour of 'hidden' Dover Street and Moorgate tube stations

By Robin Jones



The latest Hidden London tour allows visitors to step inside the large ventilation tunnels behind the platforms of Green Park to provide essential air cooling to the Victoria and Jubilee lines. LTM

LONDON Transport Museum has unveiled a new Hidden London tour, Dover Street: Alight here for Green Park, which will begin on January 22, giving visitors the chance to explore a station which hides within a station.

The tour will take visitors to secret parts of Green Park Tube station and into the expansive ventilation system which overlooks the Jubilee and Victoria line platforms.

Named after Dover Street – the name for the station which was built to serve the Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway (the Piccadilly line as we know it today) before it was retitled in 1933 – the tour will take visitors deep underground to explore the former passageways and lift landings of the original 1906 station, complete with vintage signs and tiles that were last seen by the travelling public in the 1930s.

They will also hear how Dover Street played a pivotal role during the Second World War as a meeting place for the London Transport Executive Board during air raids and helping ensure that the Underground's operations continued to run, and they will discover where Lord Ashfield, then chairman of the London Passenger Transport Board, had his bedroom secretly fitted at the heart of the station.

They will also learn about the evolution of the London Underground network as Green Park expanded to accommodate two postwar lines, the Victoria and Jubilee lines, before enjoying the unique opportunity to peer down on tube trains through secret ventilation shafts and corridors.

Prices for the 80-minute tour start from £42. Tickets are available at www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/hidden-london/dover-street-alight-here-green-park

Also, the popular Moorgate: Metropolitan Maze tour which last ran over a year ago will restart on January 8. For the first time, it will take visitors into the station's 'catacombs' section, to walk alongside the disused tracks located directly underneath the Barbican Estate

They will walk alongside parts of the disused railway tracks of the City Widened Line, and hear about the redevelopments that took place in the area during the second half of the 20th century.

Prices for Moorgate: Metropolitan Maze start from £42. To book, visit www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/hidden-london/moorgate

Furthermore, all in-person Hidden London tours are now available to children aged 10 and over, changing from a previous age restriction of 14 plus.

Hidden London tours take guests to numerous secret areas of the Underground network, and run all year round, Wednesdays to Sundays.

Exhibition of iconic Harry Beck tube map opens

A NEW exhibition charting the development global influence of London's tube map has opened

The Mapping The Tube: 1863-2023 exhibition at The Map House displays and sells rare tube maps and posters, including a one-of-a-kind annotated manuscript of Harry Beck's 1933 version, which has a price tag of £75,000.

Technical draughtsman Beck's 1933 pocket map influenced the design of transport maps worldwide and is an instantly recognisable design icon.

The exhibition includes the most significant collection of Beck manuscripts ever offered for sale, some gifted by Beck to his friend and biographer Ken Garland, and a unique unfinished sketch from 1950 drawn in coloured pencil showing a proposed new layout for the District line branch to Richmond.

Based on an electrical circuit, Beck's concept was to transform a diagram of squiggly lines overlaid on geographical maps into straight lines that allowed passengers to work out quickly how to get from station to station.

The free exhibition at the Map House, 54 Beauchamp Place, London SW3 1NY, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of Beck's death, is open from 10.30am to 6pm on Mondays to Fridays and 10.30am to 5pm on Saturday and runs until November 30.

Swanage volunteers donate wood to local community carpentry group

VOLUNTEERS who maintain the Swanage Railway's award-winning Harman's Cross station – which has been built from nothing since the late 1980s – are donating surplus wood off-cuts to a community group for use in its carpentry classes.

The National Lottery-funded Durlston Pleasure Grounds project in Swanage supports The Shed, located at the Victorian Durlston Castle, an accessible centre for the local community enabling people of all ages and abilities to socialise, learn new skills and volunteer in supporting the Durlston Country Park and its acclaimed National Nature Reserve.

Bob Bunyar, the railway's volunteer manager at Harman's Cross station, said: "Throughout the year, we work hard to maintain the wooden heritage buildings at Harman's Cross, as well as wooden fencing, so there are always off-cuts of wood that previously would have been burnt.

"We are delighted that our off-cuts are not being wasted and are instead being donated to The Shed to help with its community carpentry classes and activities, which is a very worthwhile, positive and practical cause. It's very pleasing to know that we are able to help another voluntary group in the Isle of Purbeck. The suggestion to donate our surplus off-cuts came from my wife Suzanne, when I told her we had to clear out a timber store at Harman's Cross station."

Richard, the son of Harman's Cross station volunteers Terry and Judy Tovey, is a regular user of The Shed. He uses his wood working skills to make items such as bird feeders, bug houses, key tags and other wooden gifts for sale in the Durlston Castle shop and at various fairs, including the Swanage Christmas Market in December. He also occasionally helps his parents maintain the gardens at Harman's Cross.



Harman's Cross station volunteers with their wood off-cuts going to a local good cause.

Swanage Railway Trust chairman Frank Roberts said: "These are difficult times for many people and organisations, so the Swanage Railway will continue to support recycling moves to help other local groups."

Bob added: "Maintaining Harman's Cross station is like the Forth Bridge in Scotland – there is always painting and maintenance work to do. It's a continual effort by our dedicated and good-humoured team of volunteers to keep the station looking good.

"The station gardens are also a big asset, and last year we were awarded a Silver Gilt in the Community Rail Gardens Competition which covers railway stations in the south west of England – from Cornwall through to Hampshire – and we were also awarded a Royal Horticultural Society award for the management of our gardens.

"We have projects to do now the main peak heritage train operating season is over and new signage is being made for the station booking office, waiting room and platform numbers."

Wensleydale aims for Redmire reopening in September 2025

By Robin Jones

FOLLOWING the completion of essential track repairs, the Wensleydale Railway is aiming to reopen its 5½-mile section from Leyburn to Redmire by next September – to coincide with the Stockton & Darlington Railway bicentenary celebrations.

The section has been closed to public services since 2020 due to the deteriorating condition of the permanent way and infrastructure; some of the track was laid during the First World War and is life-expired

Work began in mid-September on a three-quarters-of-a-mile section of track at Wensley, close to the site of the former Wensley station, halfway between Leyburn and Redmire.

The earthworks which carried the railway along the foot of the cliffs below Leyburn Shawl had eroded and material fell into the adjacent fields. Some sleeper ends were left exposed and unsupported. The railway hired specialist contractor Lampitt Rail Services to undertake the repair work, with support from its operations staff and infrastructure volunteers.

The work, which was completed within five weeks, included rebuilding and widening sections of eroded embankment and slewing some of the track into a more stable position.

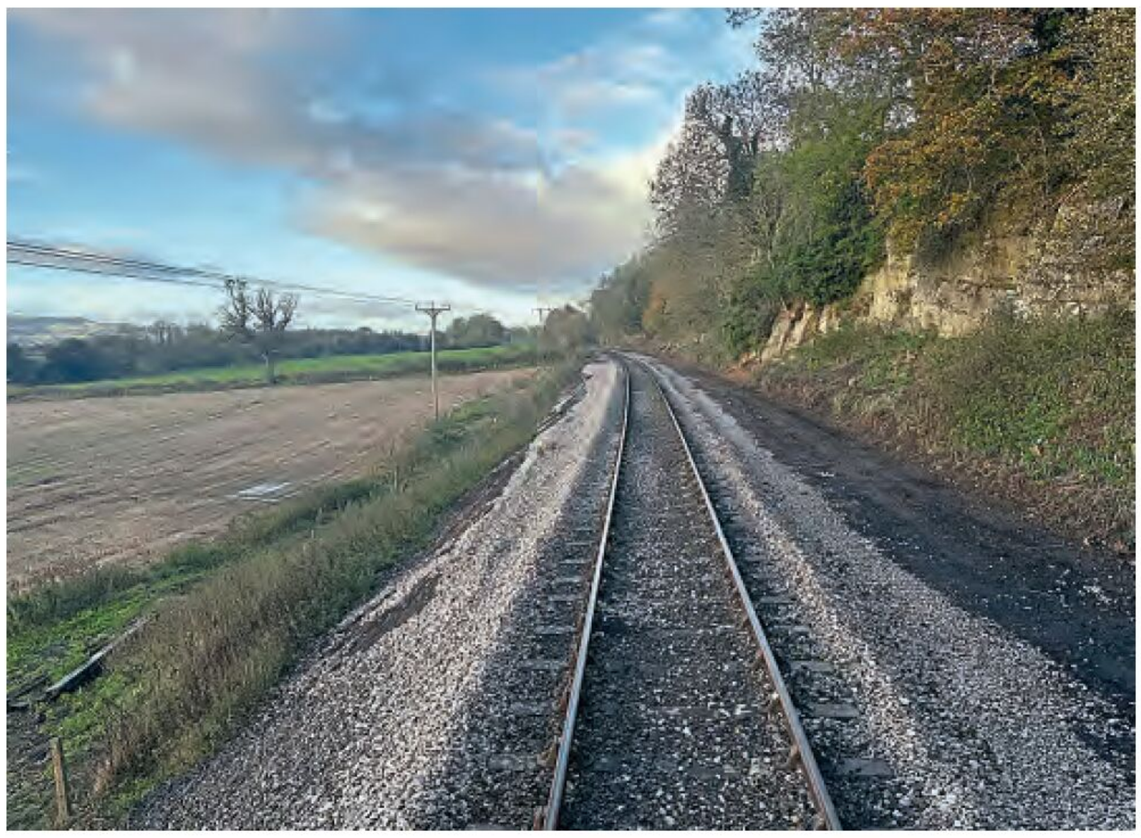
In support of the September 2025 target for reopening, the Wensleydale Railway Association (Trust) launched a fundraising appeal for the Wensley repairs in July that has raised about £37,000 to date.

Wensleydale Railway plc director of infrastructure Russell Lord said: "Completing this project is a major step forward in our plan to restore passenger services to Redmire.

"Our goal to return to Redmire in 2025 is an ambitious one and we face a few challenges ahead. However, we are determined to succeed and will shortly be focusing our attention on the section of track west of Wensley station towards Redmire station."

WR fundraising and marketing manager Nick Keegan added: "The response to our latest fundraising appeal has been excellent.

"It demonstrates not only the incredible generosity of people, but also their genuine desire to see this beautiful and scenic section of our railway once again carrying passengers."



A section of the newly-slewed track at Wensley on the Wensleydale Railway. WR

➜ Donations to facilitate further track repairs can be made at https://wensleydale-railway.co.uk/return_to_redmire-appeal-2024/



Autumnal shades in the Banwy valley: Throughout most of October and half term week up to November 3, the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway ran a two-train service on the full length of the line from Llanfair Caereinion to Welshpool Raven Square. The rostered locomotive during the October weekends was Franco-Belge 0-8-0T No. 10 *Sir Drefaldwyn* on a mixed rake of continental carriages; from October 28 until November 3, Beyer Peacock 0-6-0T No. 822 *The Earl* was rostered. *Sir Drefaldwyn* is pictured running alongside the Banwy between Heniarth and Llanfair Caereinion on an October 19 service, when timings slipped a little due to a fallen tree between Sylfaen and Welshpool. The first train left Sylfaen on time, but it was a long wait for the train to arrive at Welshpool. Santa specials run on December 7/8, 14-16 and 21-23, comprising a four-train service departing Llanfair Caereinion at 10.30am, 12pm, 1.30pm and 3pm, running to Castle Caereinion and back. On December 28-30, mince pie trains will depart Llanfair Caereinion at 10am, 12.45pm and 2.30pm to Castle Caereinion and back. JOHN TITLOW

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Class 04 D2246 double-heading with sister D2271 and Class 09 D3721 on the rear in the fading sunshine at Bishops Bridge loop with the 5pm to Buckfastleigh.



Working the 'SDR Explorer,' Class 25 No. 25262, with Class 33 No. 33002 on the rear, approaches Totnes Riverside with the 11.15am from Buckfastleigh to Totnes Riverside headshunt stop block via Totnes Riverside on October 26.

'Rare tracks' tour runs over South Devon lines

Words and pictured by David Hunt

THE South Devon Railway ran the 'SDR Explorer' on October 26, using four of its diesel fleet, visiting sidings and loops not normally traversed by the normal passenger services and involving four return trips from Buckfastleigh to Totnes. These extra services were run to fit in with the regular steam-hauled passenger trains.

The first service was hauled by Class 33 No. 33002 and departed at 8.30am for a straight run from Buckfastleigh to Totnes Riverside to pick up the passengers from the three public stations, also including Staverton. No provision was made for anybody to board or leave the train at any other points.

The first return service with No. 33002 on the front ran to Staverton, where Class 04 D2271 was attached to the rear the tow the train to the stop block at the end of the dock siding. The train then reversed through Staverton station to Bishops Bridge. Again, the train reversed and D2271 hauled the train in to Staverton No. 1 siding.

At this point, D2271 was detached and No. 33002 hauled the train to Buckfastleigh where the train was routed through the loop line and right to the end of the line at the headshunt stop block. Then, Class 25 No. 25262 was attached to the rear to draw the train back into Buckfastleigh station platform.

The second departure at 11.15am from Buckfastleigh had Class 25 No. 25262 on the front and No. 33002 on the rear and proceeded non-stop to Totnes, where it was routed via the loop to the stop block at the end of the line. The train then returned with No. 33002 on the front and No. 25262 on the rear to Buckfastleigh but this time ran straight into the station platform.

The third departure from Bukfastleigh at 12.55pm had No. 25262 on the front and No. 33002 on the rear and ran non-stop to Totnes, where it was routed on to the connecting track to Network Rail to stop at an agreed appropriate distance before signal No. E296, before reversing and returning to Buckfastleigh, where it was routed into yard No. 1 road which



Class 04 D2271, with Class 33 No. 33002 on the rear, on the Staverton-to-Staverton dock siding buffer stop.

is adjacent to the locomotive depot, being the line beside the old disused Up platform. On the return trip, No. 25262 was moved to the front of 33002 at Bishops Bridge for the remainder of the journey to Buckfastleigh.

Having removed Nos. 33002 and 25262, the fourth and last departure from Buckfastleigh at 2.55pm set off with Class 04 D2246 leading Class 09 D3721 and stopped at Staverton to attach D2271 on the front to make a three-locomotive arrival at Totnes Riverside. D2246 and D2271 ran around the train at Totnes Riverside for the return to Staverton, where the train stopped to set down passengers who could then catch the following steam service for an earlier arrival at Buckfastleigh. The train was taken forward to Bishops Bridge loop to allow the following steam service to overtake on Bishops Bridge main.

Bishops Bridge loop is normally used only to accommodate trains from Buckfastleigh to Staverton, to be passed by trains in the opposite direction, so the departure from the loop in the Buckfastleigh direction was most unusual.

To accommodate the passengers who had joined at Totnes Riverside and wanted to complete the full tour, a special steam service left Buckfastleigh at 5.45pm with a return from Totnes Riverside at 6.30pm.

Bachmann narrow gauge models help keep Ffestiniog's heritage on track

MODEL railway manufacturer Bachmann Europle plc has delighted modellers in recent years with a plethora of locomotives, rolling stock, and even buildings inspired by the Ffestiniog Railway. Thanks to the success of those products, a £2000 donation was presented to the FR at the start of its October 4-6 Bygones weekend.

The railway has provided inspiration for a growing number of Bachmann Scenecraft models, with the line's headquarters, Porthmadog's harbour station, the first to be replicated in 4mm scale at the end of 2022. More recently, models of the harbour station goods shed, Boston Lodge blacksmiths and wagon workshop, Boston Lodge engine shed and Minffordd waiting room have each been released, and it is from the sales of these latter four models that Bachmann has been able to raise £2000 to help support the continued operation of the FR.

Cast in resin using moulds created from hand-sculpted masters, each building is then decorated by hand and adorned with separately fitted detail parts such as etched metal window frames, etched lattice work and printed poster boards where appropriate.

Each of the four models mentioned form part of the current Scenecraft buildings range and can be purchased from Bachmann stockists (including the FR's own shop). Recent additions to the 009 scale range have included buildings as found at the line's primary intermediate station at Tan-y-Bwlch.

A £1500 cheque was presented at the start of the 2023 Bygones event following the launch of the Porthmadog station buildings.



Richard Proudman, rail brand manager for Bachmann Europe plc, presents Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways' marking manager Osian Hughes (right) with a cheque for £2000 in front of the former Porthmadog Harbour station goods shed, which now houses Spooner's Café and Bar. FF&WHR

In what is becoming a tradition, having announced models of Hunslet 2-4-0STTs *Linda* and *Blanche* during last year's presentation, Bachmann unveiled two further rolling stock projects focusing on some of the carriages that have operated on the FR – see Model News, page 80 for further details.

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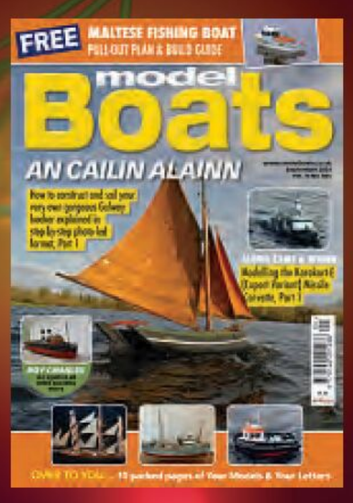
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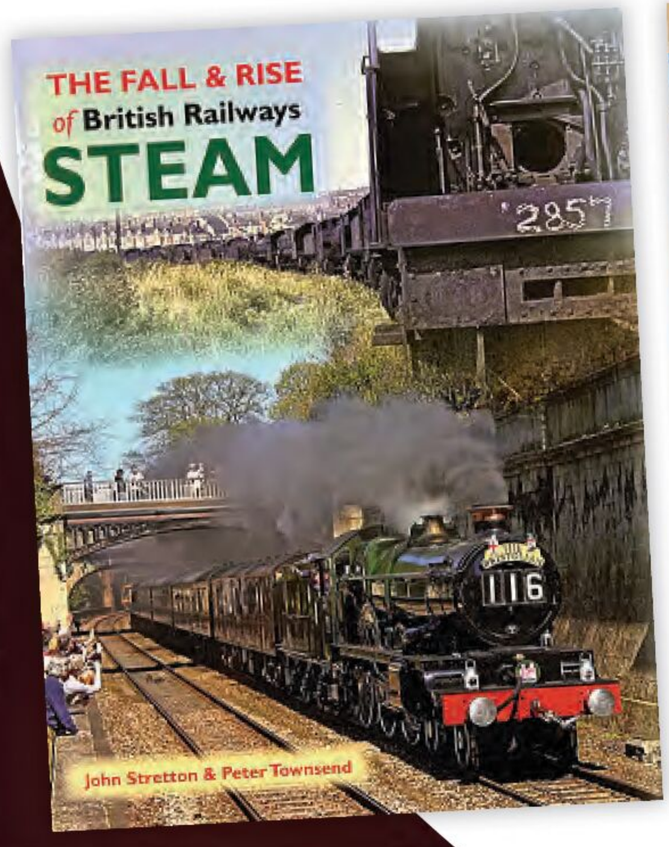


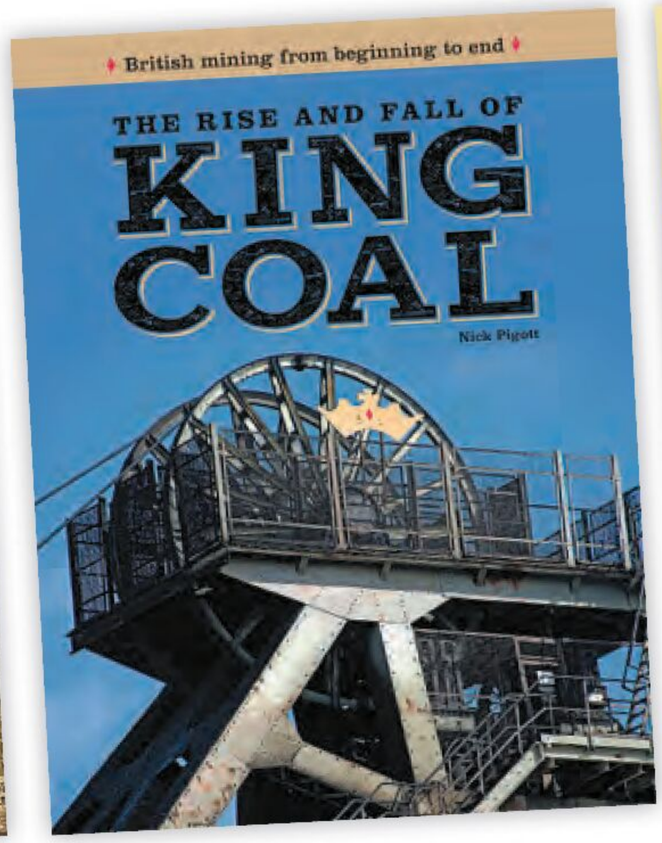
The personalities, bikes and track heroes who mattered then... and still matter now.

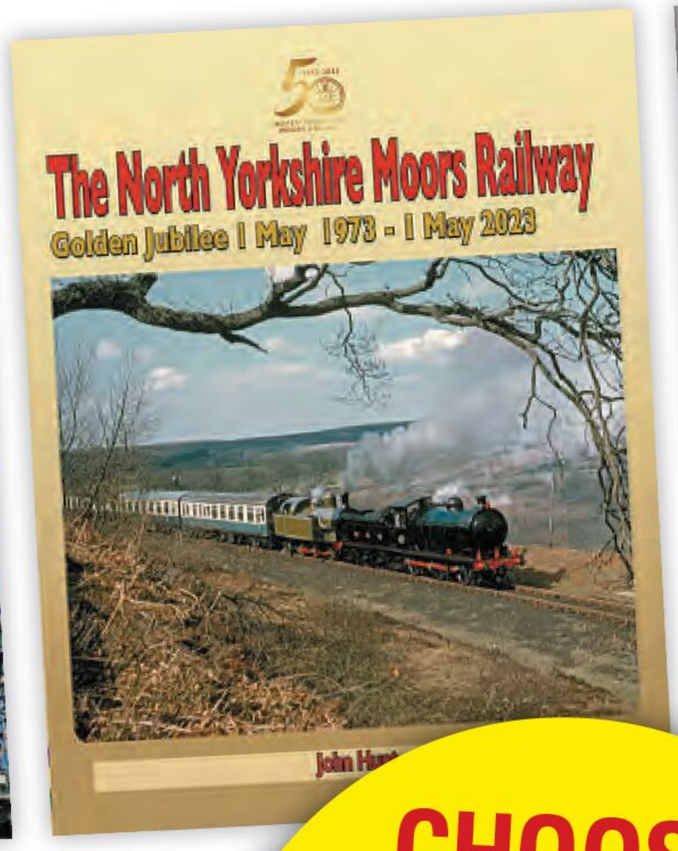
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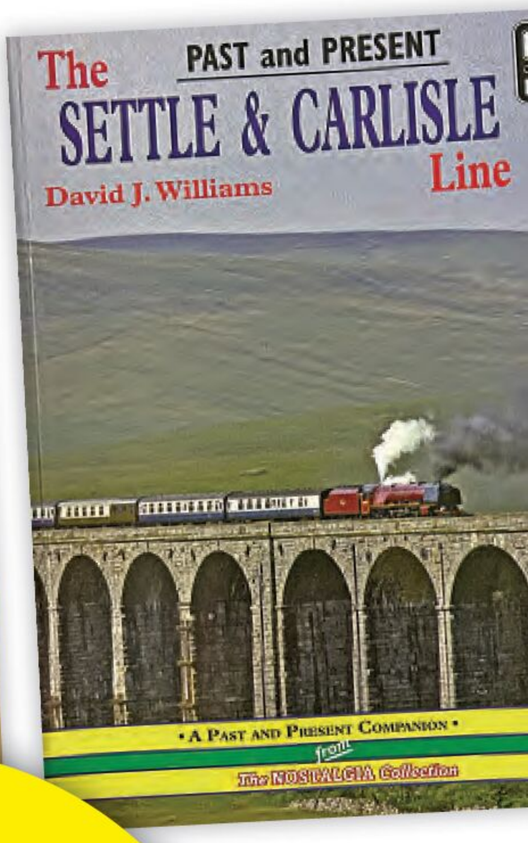
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Golden year but challenges ahead, warns outgoing KESR chairman

By Geoff Courtney

WHILE lauding what he described as a memorable golden 2024 for the Kent & East Sussex Railway, retiring chairman Simon Marsh told members at the heritage line's annual general meeting on November 2 that there would be considerable challenges to face in the future if it was to thrive.

The railway's 50th anniversary celebrations earlier in the year delivered increased revenue and the highest passenger numbers for some time, he said, and praised what he described as the "tireless hard work and dedication" of staff and volunteers, many of whom were unseen behind the scenes.

Successes included two galas, a collaboration with international artist Mr Doodle (as reported in issue 323), and fundraising efforts for a range of projects, but he warned that challenges to be faced by the KESR and other heritage railways, due to rising costs and recruitment, were considerable. "Also, as visitor habits change, thriving into the future means embracing new solutions and innovations which go beyond celebrating the past," he told the audience.

In particular, he pointed to what he described as the "significant role" of the relationship with the Rother Valley Railway, which was cemented by the signing of an agreement in May this year that will see the two railways, currently two miles apart, linked to form a 14-mile line between Tenterden and Robertsbridge. "The future of the railway lies in this relationship and the way in which we are going to work together, deeply, in pursuit of our common aim of a thriving and sustainable heritage railway," said Simon. The latest provisional completion date for this project anticipates passenger services starting in 2028, although with so many factors to be taken into account, this date may change.

Simon, a retired civil servant, ended his speech with the announcement that he was standing down as chairman, after six years in the role.

It was, he said, for health reasons and also to make way for the railway to be "steered by fresh hands and eyes at the top." A new chairman is expected to be named shortly.

After the announcement, the railway's general manager, Robin Coombes, praised Simon's tenure, and highlighted his achievements in his leadership through many challenges.



Line of thought: KESR chairman Simon Marsh at Junction Road, the current western terminus of the line, looking over fields that will be bridged by the railway's link to the Rother Valley Railway, two miles away. Simon has announced his retirement from the role to make way for "fresh hands and eyes." ALISON MILES



Double delight: A1X 0-6-0T 'Terrier' No. 2678 *Knowle* heads Hunslet 0-6-0ST No.15 *Hastings* during the Kent & East Sussex Railway's 50th anniversary gala on June 1, an event highlighted by chairman Simon Marsh at the railway's AGM on November 2. The two locomotives total 280 years of age between them, the A1X having been built in 1880 and Hastings in 1888. OWEN HAYWARD

Norfolk Hero needs additional funding for new boiler fitment

A NEW boiler has been delivered to the Wells & Walsingham Light Railway for its Garratt 2-6-0+0-6-2 No. 3 *Norfolk Hero* – but an appeal for more donations to complete its fitting is ongoing.

The locomotive, built by Neil Simkins in 1986 and named after Lord Horatio Nelson, has been out of action since 2023 when the boiler was deemed to have reached the end of its service life.

An appeal was then launched to build a replacement. It was hoped to have *Norfolk Hero* back in service of the 10¼in gauge line, Britain's smallest public railway, this summer, but delays meant that was not possible and so its 2010-built sister *Norfolk Heroine* had to shoulder a greater share of the traffic.

W&WLR managing director Nick Champion said: "After months of waiting, delays, changes in ownership of the engineering company, waiting for certification and more, we have finally received our new boiler! It's amazing to see it ready for our team to get to work, checking and installing it.

"Our engineer and his helpers have stripped, maintained and repaired *Hero*'s frame to welcome the new boiler.

"We'd like to say a big thank-you to all who have contributed to this marvellous milestone at the W&WLR! Without your help, we would not be this far along to putting a new heart back in one of our most iconic locos."

The appeal for the new boiler has raised more than £11,000 towards its £25,000 target, which includes fitting. To donate, visit www.gofundme.com/f/Heroboilerappeal

"The delays have incurred additional and increased costs, so every little helps. If you could spare anything towards the rebuild of the loco now the boiler is back, we would be most grateful," added Nick.

"The W&WLR is a not-for-profit company, which means all monies raised go back into the railway towards the running costs.

"Our passionate team is dedicated to ensuring that steam remains on this stretch of the old line for many years to come, offering much joy to generations of locals."



Above: The new boiler for *Norfolk Hero*. W&WLR



Right: Wells & Walsingham Light Railway flagship No. 3 *Norfolk Hero*. W&WLR

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GWR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* at Hay Bridge on the Severn Valley on April 20. OWEN HAYWARD

A Manor for the Severn Valley and another for Minehead

By Robin Jones

THE Erlestoke Manor Fund has announced that its GWR 4-6-0 No. 7802 *Bradley Manor*, nearing completion of its major overhaul, will become its resident locomotive on the Severn Valley Railway on its return to service in early 2025. Meanwhile, its other serviceable locomotive, sister No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor*, will resume regular operation on the West Somerset Railway from next May until the end of 2027.

An EMF statement said: "Following extensive discussions with both the SVR and the WSR, the trustees of the EMF believe that this offers the best prospect of ensuring that supporters can see both Manors in regular operation over the next few years and ensuring that sufficient income is accrued to support the overhaul of prairie No. 5164 and the next overhauls of both 7802 and 7812.

"With the main season hires of *Erlestoke Manor* to the WSR over the last two years having worked well for all parties – with the SVR not requiring to fully utilise both Manors – and a good working relationship in place, the EMF is delighted to see *Erlestoke Manor* go back to the WSR.

"The trustees are of the unanimous view that basing one Manor on each railway for the next few years represents the best 'deal' available to the charity.

Double the fun

Before then, No. 7812, which returned to the SVR as planned at the start of November for festive services, will remain on the line until after the April 18-21 Spring Gala, before heading back to the WSR. Before then, supporters can expect the 2025 season to begin with both Manors on the SVR.

Fund chairman Adrian Hassall said: "We are very much looking forward to the return of *Bradley Manor* to the SVR in the coming months and our thanks go to both the SVR and WSR for their co-operation in supporting this arrangement for *Erlestoke Manor* in tandem.



***Bradley Manor* inside Tyseley Locomotive Works on October 14, displaying its incomplete first coat of BR green.** A HASSELL

"This is an excellent way to ensure that both *Bradley Manor* and *Erlestoke Manor* can be seen in regular operation over the next few years, while also accruing sufficient income to support the overhaul of 5164 and the next overhauls of both 7802 and 7812."

WSR general manager Kerry Noble said: "After two successful seasons with 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* being a visitor to our fleet, we are pleased to have the locomotive joining the home fleet on a longer-term basis."

New chairman and deputy are elected to serve at Amberley heritage venue

AMBERLEY Museum and Heritage Centre has elected a new chairman and vice chairman.

Trustee Surrie Everett-Pascoe was elected as the annual meeting of the charity on October 29.

She thanked former chairman Richard Vernon and his deputy Graham Duxbury for their long-standing commitment to the museum and also paid tribute to their significant contributions in bringing it through difficult years, including the Covid-19 pandemic. The pair were then each presented with a vase hand-made by the museum's onsite pottery and a framed photo of the Amberley volunteer and staff team.

Surrie said: "We believe there are still untapped opportunities to enable the museum to thrive and continue to provide the good day out for our visitors that also helps them leave informed and enriched about our working history, and I am honoured to play a part in that."

New vice chairman Adrian Butcher, who has been associated with the venue for 40 years, volunteering at the then Chalk Pits Museum as a teenager and helping out with the railway and pottery. "It's not the collections or the rural idyll that make it so – though they help! – but the hundreds of devoted volunteers that have worked tirelessly over the past 45 years sharing their knowledge, skills and, above all, passion," he said.

The museum offers more than 20 exhibition areas covering everything from vintage vehicles to communications to electrical goods to crafts and nature trails to rides on a 2ft gauge railway and historic buses.



Surrie Everett-Pascoe. AM&HC

IN BRIEF

➜ **THE West Huntspill Miniature Railway, near Burnham-on-Sea, in Somerset, is working on a £20,000 expansion of the attraction's facilities next year.**

A new ground-level 7¼in gauge track which will facilitate bigger sit-in trains to run alongside the existing 5in and 3½in tracks is about two-thirds complete. There will be a new station with a ticket office and platform, plus a crossing and a new rolling stock shed. The railway is run by the West Huntspill Model Engineering Society and more than 60 volunteers.

➜ THE overhaul of K1 2-6-0 No. 62005 at Carnforth has made progress, the boiler having been successfully trial-fitted to the frames on October 19, with installation of the tubes due to have commenced shortly afterwards.

➜ **FOLLOWING completion of the main running season, Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway volunteers have removed the life-expired wooden platform at Sittingbourne Viaduct station, ready for the replacement to be constructed. It was on target to be completed by December.**

➜ WELSH Highland Heritage Railway Hunslet 2-6-2T No. 901 *Russell* returned to steam on September 15 following the fitment of a new connecting rod. The locomotive was temporarily withdrawn from service in August 2023 when a crack was discovered in the driver's side rod, necessitating a replacement to be manufactured. With its last 10-yearly overhaul completed in 2014, *Russell* is expected to be withdrawn for overhaul soon.

➜ **NORTH Norfolk District Council has again approved plans for the North Norfolk Railway to build a replica of the original building on Platform 2 at Sheringham, restoring the station to its original appearance, and to include a space to hold events. The project was previously approved by the council in 2008 and 2019, but work was never carried out due to funding issues and still remains a long-term objective.**

➜ PLANS to lay two sidings on scrubland at the Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust's Midsomer Norton South station in Silver Street have been given the green light by Bath and North East Somerset Council. The sidings will used for the safe storage of rolling stock.

➜ **THE damaged road access bridge between Grosmont station on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and Egton village reopened to all traffic in mid-October.**



***Anne* returns to New Romney with one of the shuttle runs on October 26.** ALL: JAMES KINDRED

Visiting trio shine in Romney's latest gala

By Robin Jones

THREE visiting locomotives helped boost the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway's Autumn Gala.

The October 26/27 steam and diesel gala welcomed Exmoor Steam railway-built pair 0-4-0ST+T *St Edwin*, from the Valley Adventure Railway (formerly the Evesham Vale Light Railway), and 0-6-2T *Anne*, from the Perrygrove Railway, which also sent quarter-sized replica Baldwin US Switcher 0-4-0, which was constructed by Joe Nemeth Engineering Ltd.

Soony, which is owned by friends of Perrygrove, is too small to handle the Forest of Dean line's passenger trains but occasionally makes appearances at weddings and other events. At the RHDR, *Soony* proved popular with its station limit rides, and among the many other highlights of the gala was the well-filled 28-mile non-stop journey on the Saturday afternoon, after dark for much of the route, and the seven-header finale train on the Sunday.

'Worthwhile'

Davey Paxman 4-6-2 No. 3 *Southern Maid* failed late on the Saturday, with a cylinder repair needed, keeping it out of traffic on Sunday too. That, combined with some greasy weather causing some slipping, made for some late running on both days, but this was not excessive.

RHDR director and general manager Danny Martin said that revenue exceeded last year's event "by a modest but rewarding amount," adding: "Passenger numbers would have been very similar to 2023, but the spread between the two days was more even.

"We combined this popular event with a mini beer festival based around the New Romney Heywood Buffet and the takings were very worthwhile, with a broader range of beers available, along with our local brew from Romney Ales.

"Our supporters' association also had a great day on its stand, with extra interest in people wishing to become members and people buying the much enhanced range of bespoke clothing and other merchandise.

"All in all, a great occasion and a great credit to all of our team who organised it and ran it, and the indications are that our many loyal customers appreciated it."



An added attraction was visiting US switcher replica *Soony*, providing rides in New Romney shunt limits, seen at the end of the platform waiting its next turn of duty.



***St Egwin* enters St Mary's Bay with a freight working.**

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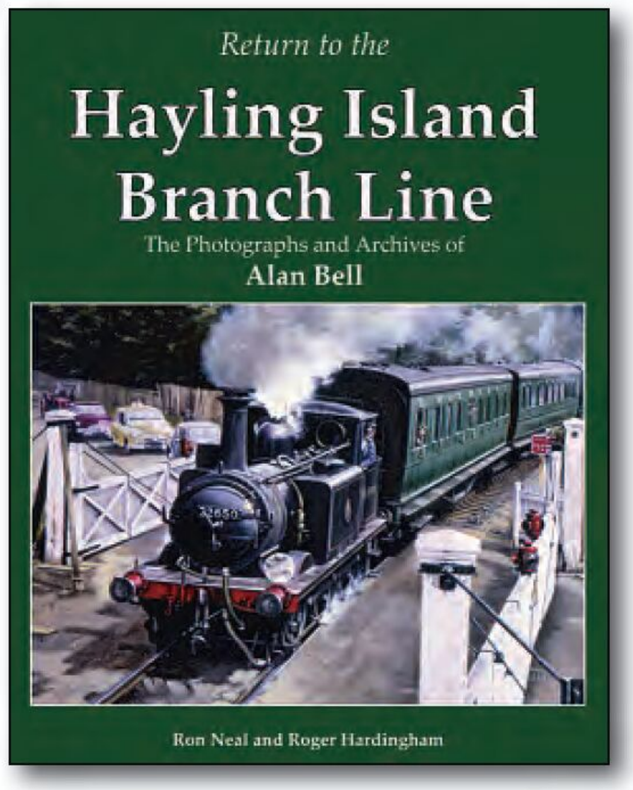
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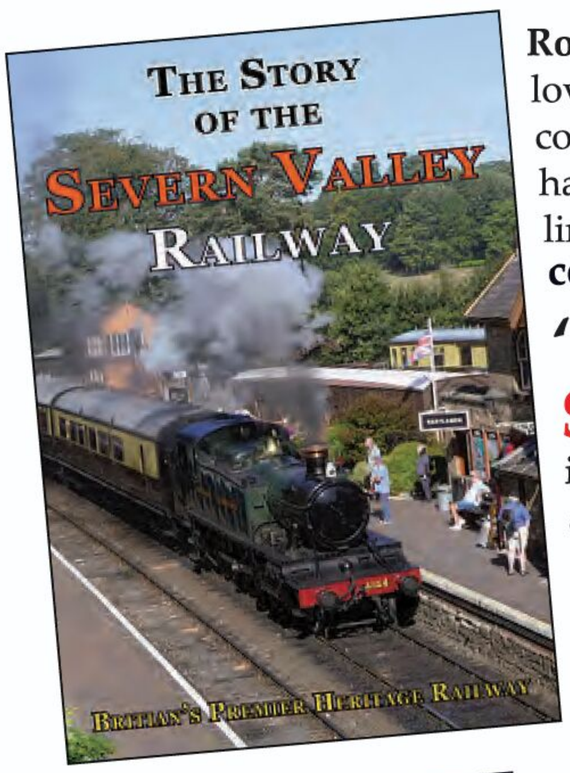
'Hampshire Railway Calendar - 2025'

New 2025 calendar with 12 superb black and white archive images of Hampshire railway locations such as Southampton, Hayling, Fratton, Winchester, Horsebridge and Eastleigh. **A3 size with full page photographs and separate calendar pages. £8.95**



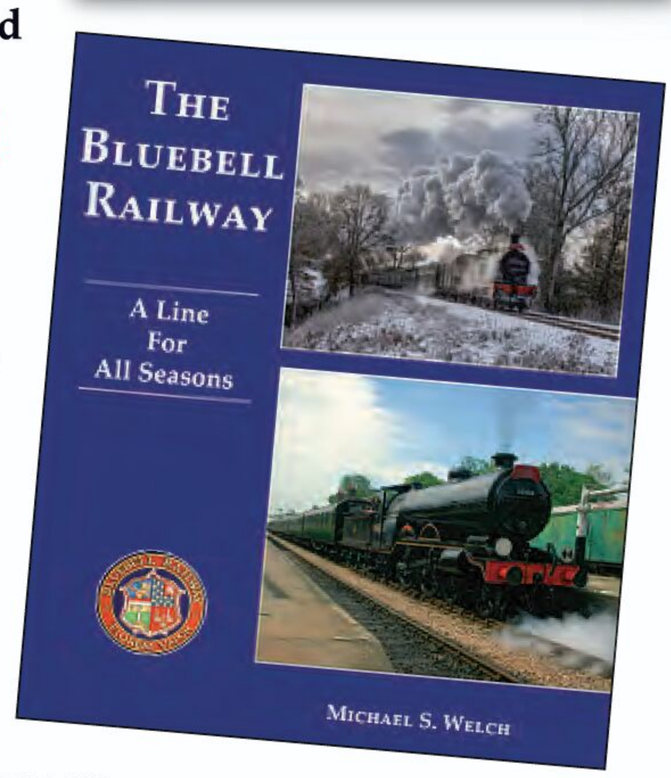
'Return to the Hayling Island Branch line'

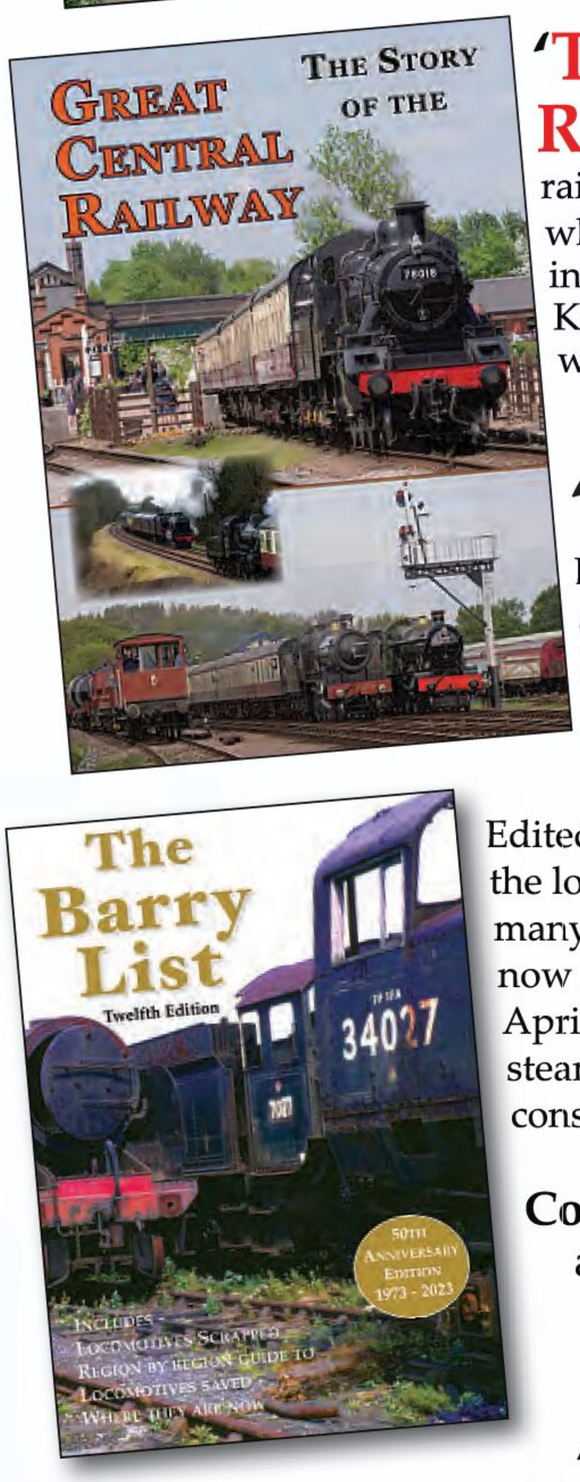
by Ron Neal and Roger Hardingham A new hardback volume devoted to the much-loved Hayling Island branch which closed in 1963. The amazing collection of 320 photographs from Alan Bell's library with plans of the harbour bridge and stations and of engine crews and staff along the line. **144 pages, large format hardback, 320 black & white and colour photographs £30.**



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90 minutes duration £14.95 - digital version £12.95

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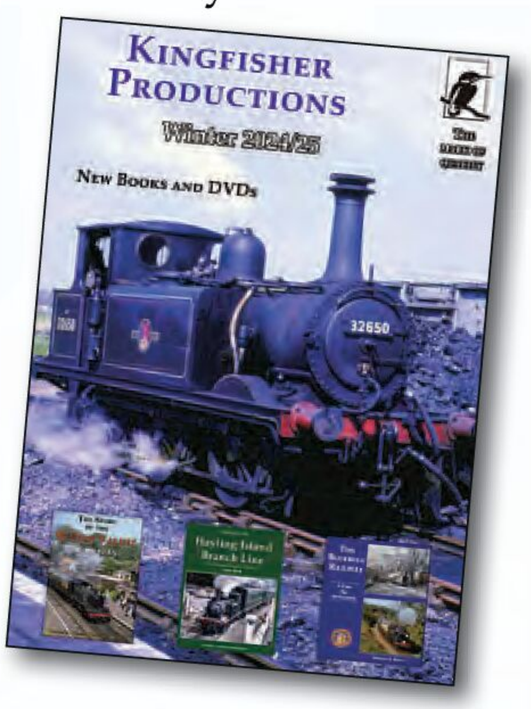
The latest in our series, this DVD programme traces the history of the preserved section of the GCR with pre-end of BR operation archive films by Richard Willis and Mike Clemens. We look at how the line from Loughborough Central to Leicester North was secured for preservation in the late 1960s and follow the heritage railway right up to 2023 with its operations to 'Recreate the Experience'. **60 minutes £14.95 - digital version £12.95**

'The Barry List No. 12' - 50th Anniversary Edition

Edited by Roger Hardingham. Since the last edition, the eleventh edition, there have been many changes to the locomotives that escaped from Dai Woodhams' yard at Barry. More have steamed into further service; many have changed locations; some have been scrapped to make way for new-build projects and dozens have now been withdrawn for overhauls. 'The Barry List – Twelfth Edition' details all of the changes up to date in April 2023; full list of locomotives saved from Woodham Brothers at Barry; those of the 213 saved which have steamed so far; where they are all located; those which will never steam again and those which have helped construct new-builds. **48 pages A5 paperback colour and B&W photographs – £4.95**

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Old Kiln Light Railway home saved after £150k is raised

By Robin Jones

THE Rural Life Living Museum – home of the Old Kiln Light Railway – has been saved from closure after raising £150,000 in three months.

The museum in Tilford, near Farnham, began in 1968 as the unique collection of discarded buildings, implements and objects of everyday life built up Madge and Henry Cole, who opened their back garden to the public in 1973.

The Old Kiln Museum Trust, a registered charity, was formed in 1984 to protect and continue their legacy.

Formerly known as the Old Kiln Agricultural Museum and the Rural Life Centre, it now totals 20 buildings, including a wartime bomb shelter and a schoolhouse, and houses 40,000 objects from farming and rural life – and the 2ft gauge railway.

The museum receives no external funding for operational costs and has survived hand-to-mouth through ticket sales and donations for 50 years. The rising cost of operating the museum meant that expenditure began to outstrip the income generated through ticket sales and donations.

A museum statement said: "On August 5, we launched a campaign to raise £150,000 by the end of October or there was a very strong chance the museum that Madge and Henry built in their garden, with the help of hundreds of volunteers, would have been forced to close. The legacy that Madge and Henry entrusted us all with would have been lost.

"We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received. More than 2500 individual donors answered our call for help and prevented the closure of the museum by donating to the campaign."

Financially resilient

The money raised will solve an immediate cash flow crisis in order to sustain the museum through the winter months when income is at its lowest, allow money borrowed from its reserves to be returned in the event of another crisis, and hire professional help to grow visitor numbers and diversify income streams to make the museum more financially resilient into the future.

Museum director Ed Fagan said: "I am extremely proud of what my staff team of three have achieved since I became museum director in April 2021. This fundraising campaign is a current high point, from the lowest ebb, and I can't wait to move forward from here.

"Being the custodian of Madge and Henry's legacy was never going to be easy, but we have proven that the museum has a future, that it is well-loved, and that it deserves to be here, for all, forever."



Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0WT No. 9998 of 1922 *Elouise*, which was supplied new to an industrial line in Portugal, calls at Mills Wood on the Old Kiln Light Railway. TIM SHEERMAN-CHASE/CREATIVE COMMONS

The Old Kiln Light Railway was founded in the early 1970s as the Wey Valley Light Railway and was first located around a disused pumping station in Farnham. In 1982 the land was sold for housing and the track and equipment were moved to the Old Kiln Museum. The line has since lengthened around the centre and a small stretch of track serves the museum's heritage timber yard demonstration area. It has a collection of locomotives and rolling stock and four stations, Reeds Road, Old Kiln Halt, Oatlands and Mills Wood. It functions as a separate charity.

Santa specials will run on December 14/15 and 20/21.

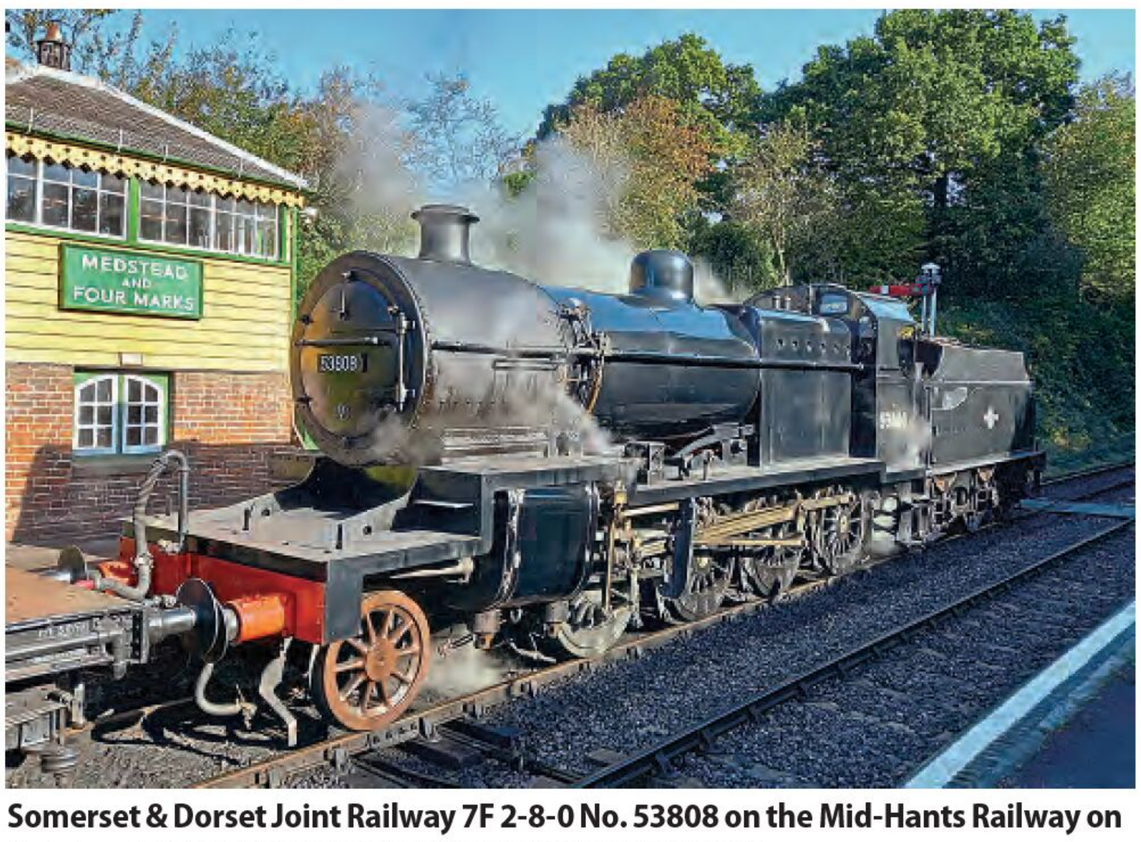
The museum's Village at War event will return on May 10/11 and Steam at Work on September 6/7, while the first Tilford Garden Show will take place on June 21/22.

West Somerset 'clear of liabilities' after 7F contract paid off

THE West Somerset Railway has paid off £210,000 to clear itself from the hire contract for Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway 7F 2-8-0 No. 53808.

The locomotive is owned by the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust, the former long-term tenant of Washford station, and for six years was regular performer on the WSR, which had entered into an obligation to maintain it without paying hire fees.

WSR plc's accounts for the financial year showed losses of £422,690, rising from £216,300 the previous year and reducing cash reserves by £77,413, with the £210,000 payout being for an exceptional item. However, chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said that since 2018, the management team has been cleansing all the risk in the business, and freeing the railway from the 7F contract was the last part of the debt reduction jigsaw.



Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway 7F 2-8-0 No. 53808 on the Mid-Hants Railway on October 8, 2022. HUGH LLEWELYN/CREATIVE COMMONS

He said that the railway is now running without any loans, debts or other adverse liabilities and is probably in its strongest financial position since 2013.

General manager Kerry Noble said that the figures showed operating profit as £14,000, with turnover at £3,090,962, compared with £2,726,000 the previous year – a significant increase in turnover. Capital expenditure was £121,730, compared with £29,306 the year before, and included the £45,500 purchase of a car park and toilet block near Bishops Lydeard station.

Built at the Darlington Works of Robert Stephenson & Co in 1925, No. 53808 arrived at Washford in December 1977 and was restored by WSR plc under contract before returning to steam in August 1987.

Following the suspension of the operating agreement with the WSR, it was announced in August 2020 that the 7F was being moved to the Mid-Hants Railway.

Following the expiration of its 10-yearly boiler certificate, the locomotive was taken out of MHR service in November 2023 and its overhaul began earlier this year.

Jonathan added that the final value number of the 7F hire was negotiated and an attractive settlement in favour of the WSR was reached.

"We have agreed a sensible repayment term to keep cash in the WSR business but also work with the S&D Trust," he added.

"We are very thankful to the trust, with which we are working well together. No. 53808 will be welcome to return one day, but it will be under a proper locomotive hire arrangement.

"The WSR will offer support through advice when needed to help the overhaul as required."

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Autumn colours to the fore as BR Standard 9F heavy freight 2-10-0 passes Burrs Country Park with the East Lancashire Railway's superbly restored goods consist during the late afternoon of October 22. STEVE SIENKIEWICZ

Returning 9F stars in stunning East Lancashire photographic charter

THE East Lancashire Railway-based 3P20 Parcels Group staged a photographic charter with returning BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92134, its visit from its North Yorkshire Moors Railway home having been extended for a few weeks after the Autumn Steam Gala, as featured last issue.

The sole-surviving single-chimneyed 9F was coupled to a rake of 17 mixed wagons from the ELR collection. Starting out from Burrs Country Park, run-pasts were staged at locations between Bury Bolt Street and Rawtenstall

Built at Crewe in June 1957 and withdrawn on New Year's Eve 1966, it became the 116th locomotive to leave Woodham Brothers' Barry scrapyard in December 1980, bound for the NYMR

In 1999 it was bought by the Churnet Valley Railway director Howard Self and his wife Heather. Its restoration was mostly carried out by LNWR Crewe, but in February 2016 it moved to the ELR before returning to the Moorsline in early 2018.

In September 2019, a fire was lit in the firebox for the first time in 53 years and the restoration was completed in time for that year's Annual Steam Gala.



BR Standard 9F No. 92134 and its freight consist mirrored in a pool as they catch the setting sun. CHRIS PATON

Tributes paid to two long-term friends of Manx transport

SUPPORTERS of the Douglas Bay Horse Tramway and Isle of Man Steam Railway have been mourning the loss of two long-time friends.

Michael Crellin joined the DBHT in 1973 as a blacksmith apprentice, working his way up to stable foreman in the 1980s when he managed more than 60 horses. He became tramway superintendent in 1992, and was an advocate for and continued the long tradition of horses participating in vintage ploughing competitions on the island. As well as being chair of the IOM's heavy horse society for many years, he attend numerous agricultural shows, during which he won numerous prizes.

A DBHT statement said: "Our deepest condolences to his family and close friends. He was known by so many, much respected, and will be sorely missed."

The news of his death came in the wake of the announcement that steam railway volunteer Mike Buttel had died on October 15. As well as being a regular volunteer on the railway – in particular helping run tours during the annual transport festival, Mike also spent 25 years as a broadcaster with Manx Radio, during which time he also spoke about the island's railways in several programmes.

An IOM transport statement said: "He was a dedicated member of the Heritage Railway Volunteer team. We will greatly miss his energy, passion and love for the railways. Our deepest sympathies go out to Mike's family and friends at this difficult time."



Right: Heritage railway volunteer Mike Buttell died on October 15. IOMT



Michael Crellin, who had been involved with the horse tramway since 1973. DBHT

Last-minute steam and diesel gala draws the crowds at Mangapps

By Geoff Courtney

A STEAM locomotive in passenger operation for the first time in 20 years, a roster of busy diesels and clear blue skies brought a smile to John Jolly's face as the last of thousands of visitors, some from as afield as Glasgow and Liverpool, left his Mangapps Railway Museum in Essex after a last-minute end-of-season finale on the October 26-27 weekend.

Living up to his name, a beaming John reflected on an event at his working museum near Burnham-on-Crouch that wasn't even in the planning stage a month before.

The trigger was Mangapps' Bank Holiday gala at the end of August that drew huge crowds, partly attracted by the appearance of Drewry 0-6-0DM No. 11103 (later Class 04 D2203) in its original 1950s Wisbech & Upwell Tramway guise, complete with sideskirts and cowcatcher.

Following this three-day event, John received so many enquiries about No. 11103, when another of his fleet, Class 31 No. 31233 (D5660) would run again and when 0-6-0PT *Brookfield* would return to steam that he was emboldened to organise the end-of-season finale.

"It was intended to be a last-minute add-on for those who missed out on the whole or part of the August gala, but the daily attendance numbers were actually better than the August event, with visitors from Glasgow, Liverpool and Swindon, and numerous shunter enthusiasts from the South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire area," he said.

Three of the star attractions were privately-owned Bagnall 1940-built *Brookfield*, back in operation after 20 years, which ran with ex-GNR Gresley carriages on the museum's three-quarters-of-a-mile standard gauge 'main' line that has two stations, No. 11003, which also operated on the line, and a giant ex-Canadian Pacific caboose that ran trains in tandem with Class 03 diesel No. 03158 (D2158) in a popular 'little and large' formation.

Supporting this trio were Class 31 Nos. 31105 (D5523) and 31233 top-and-tailed with a Class 302 EMU set, while Class 03 D2081 and classmate No. 03089 (D2089) were last-minute additions to the roster to work with a Class 117 DMU.

"Some of the runs were so full they resembled the 5pm departure from Fenchurch Street," said a delighted John.

"The signalman (me) and the shunter (son James) were kept pretty busy. There were up to five trains per hour on the 'main' line and an all-day shuttle service on our Southminster Road 'branch' line, and our small band of volunteers turned up trumps as usual ensuring the event ran very smoothly.

"It was a most satisfactory end to our season, with numerous suggestions that we should repeat it next year."



Above right: Bagnall 0-6-0PT *Brookfield* celebrated its return to traffic after 20 years with a fine display at Mangapps Railway Museum's October 26-27 end-of-season finale. During this run, the 1940-built locomotive ejected the ashes of the late Dennis Saville, veteran Stratford driver and Mangapps' volunteer. The carriage behind *Brookfield* is a Gresley-designed 1912 GNR coach bought in 2019. STUART CHAPMAN



Right: Small wonder: Class 03 No. 03158 (D2158) sets off with Mangapps Railway Museum's ex-Canadian Pacific caboose on October 27 in a 'little and large' scene that delighted visitors to the museum's 2024 season finale. STUART CHAPMAN

Trackwork relaid for Strathspey sheds

THE Strathspey Railway's permanent way team have begun laying a spur to the site of the proposed new running shed at Aviemore, as well as reinstating a line into the far east side of the Category B main shed which will allow BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92219 to be moved to a more convenient position prior to the lifting of its boiler.

The pit for the shed's No. 2 road has also been completely rebuilt and is serviceable again, part of the reinstatement of the two-road trackwork after No. 1 road was disconnected for several years.

The new shed to the east of the original one at Aviemore will be in the style of modern industrial buildings but with pits and proper ventilation. The railway had been ready to install the steelwork before the incident on September 29, 2023, when visiting A3 Pacific No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* reversed into stock used on GB Railfreight's 'Royal Scotsman' charter services, as reported in issues 312 and 324.

Last year, the Strathspey Railway Company gained planning permission to build a foundry and wheel lathe shed at Aviemore to allow its engineers to carry out more running repairs and cut costs.

No. 92219, the penultimate steam locomotive built by BR before No. 92220 *Evening Star*, emerged from Swindon in January 1960 and spent its working life based at Cardiff before withdrawal in August 1965,

It was bought from Barry scrapyard in 1985 as a source of spares for sister No. 92214 and cosmetically restored by the Peak Railway Society at Buxton. It was later moved to the Midland Railway – Butterley, the Stainmore Railway Company at Kirkby Stephen East, the Wensleydale Railway, a private site at Tebay and finally to Boat of Garten the Strathspey in May 2023. It was moved into the main workshops at Aviemore in February 2024.



The recently-rebuilt second servicing pit at Aviemore. SR

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New Ruddington carriage shed now ready

THE long-awaited carriage shed at the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) has been commissioned, with operational passenger vehicles moved inside.

The shed has been built at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre in Ruddington, which will one day be the northern terminus of the GCR when the two sections of the line are reunified.

The project took many years to complete, with money drying up through the Covid-19 pandemic, only to be reactivated by a grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocated by Rushcliffe Borough Council and a fundraising appeal.

The shed will ultimately house four carriages, although currently only one of its two sidings is connected. A mezzanine floor is planned to provide extra storage space.

The polished concrete floor has been laid level with the top of the rails, meaning the building can also be used as an undercover events arena.

Meanwhile, another grant from Rushcliffe Borough Council and funds from East Midlands Airport Community Fund, East Midland Railways and Friends of the Great Central Main Line means work has now begun on an accessible toilet block at Ruddington, complete with family facilities. "We are so grateful to all our funders for putting their faith in the renaissance of the northern end of the line," said Andy Fillingham of the GCR(N). "The carriage shed is already proving its worth as events space, and it's great to get vehicles undercover too.



Coaches inside the newly commissioned carriage shed at the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) in October.
LARRY GREENWELL/GCR(N)

"The ground has been broken for the toilet block and, all being well, visitors to our Christmas event, the Jingle Bells Express, will be able to use the new toilets. We need to raise a final few thousand pounds though, so we are making a last appeal to raise some pennies so we can all spend a penny in future! Thank you to everyone who can help."

About £10,000 is still required to finish the toilet block, which is expected to cost more than £80,000. It will be the first ever purpose-built modern facilities at Ruddington and replaces life-expired temporary facilities which have now been demolished.

Donations to finish the project can be made at lnergctrust.org

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Loughborough's Brush sign caught in planning wrangle

By Robin Jones

A BID to demolish much of the historic Brush locomotive factory in Loughborough has been deferred by Charnwood Borough Council over fears that the proposed new buildings might detract from the site's significance to heritage.

Falcon UK MLI Property Unit Trust, the owner of the Falcon Works industrial estate in Nottingham Road, once a major employer where trains and other heavy engineering products were built, is seeking consent to flatten several of the buildings and erect replacements for general industrial, storage and distribution, and research and development use.

Parts of the plant have been closed or sold off in recent years, along with the loss of hundreds of jobs.

Important local asset

The iconic yellow Brush sign at the front of the Turbine Hall, a prominent landmark which can be seen from Loughborough's main line station – and would be viewed from a reunified Great Central Railway – would not be affected by the plans, according to the application.

The 1920s structure known as the Brush Building, Falcon Building or 24 Shop, became locally listed as an important historical asset, although the category does not carry the same degree of protection as that granted to a nationally-listed building.

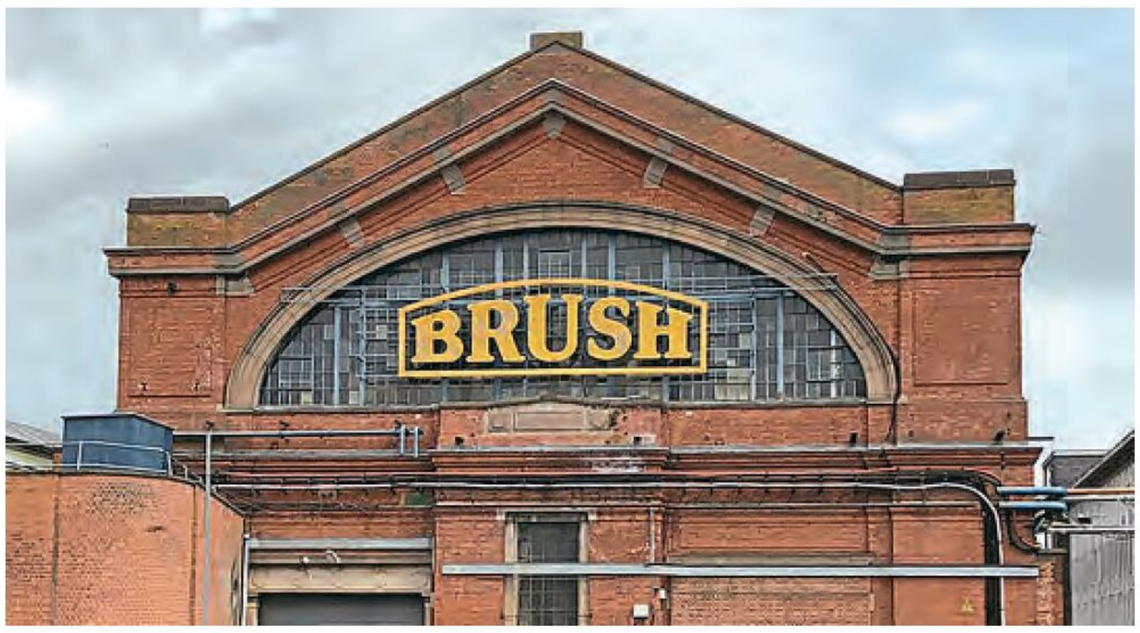
Loughborough MP Jeeven Sadnher, who was elected in July, has backed the proposal to demolish other buildings on the site – a move which, the application said, will lead to 700 new full-time jobs and an annual investment of about £50 million. Mr Sadnher said: "The beautiful Brush logo and building will remain and the rest of the site put back into full use."

The council's economic and regeneration department was reported as being "strongly supportive," however, a planning officer's report said the siting of the planned new buildings, which would partially obscure the decorative north elevation of the Turbine Hall, "is considered to cause significant harm to the significance of the retained building" and recommended that permission be refused.

At the October 24 planning committee meeting, nine of its 12 councillors agreed to defer the application to a future date after receiving late submissions from the developer and agreed for the more detailed plan to be considered by officers. They agreed to allow officers to determine the application if, following consultation on the revised proposal, they recommended approval.

Without officer approval, the application will return to the committee.

Falcon Works dates back to the 1850s, when Henry Hughes



The future visibility of the prominent Loughborough landmark Brush sign, listed as being of local heritage importance, at the former locomotive works is at the heart of council discussions over a plan to demolish and replace many of the other buildings on site. DAVID ROBINSON/CREATIVE COMMONS

manufactured items such as brass and iron-cast parts for portable engines and thrashing machines. In March 1863, Hughes announced that the firm was making an 0-4-0ST for contractors and mineral railways, and in 1878 it supplied three 2ft 3in gauge locomotives to the Corris Railway.

Rich history

Falcon Works was taken over by Anglo-American company Brush Electrical Engineering in 1889. As well as about 250 steam locomotives, plus trams, it built carriages that were used on the Central London Railway and City and South London Railway, the forerunners of London Underground's Central and Northern lines.

Bought by Heenan & Froude in 1947, the firm was merged with WG Bagnall to produce diesel locomotives and Brush Bagnall Traction Limited was formed in 1951. For BR it manufactured classes 31, 47, 48, 60 and 92 and also the Class 53 prototype Falcon and No. HS4000 *Kestrel*, which was later sold to the Soviet Union, and the Eurotunnel Class 9 electrics.

Brush Traction was bought from Brush UK by Wabtec, an American company, in 2011. Ten years later, Wabtec announced the Loughborough factory would close, with reduced work volumes making the site unsustainable. However, Brush Transformers, which is part of Brush UK, is still on site.

Unique personnel trolley in two new trust collection additions

THE Rail Trolley Trust has welcomed two further examples into its extensive fleet of vehicles used by permanent way workers and signalling technicians.

Built in 2010, Lesmac works No. LMA001 is a four-wheeled two-seater personnel carrier fitted with a Hone GX200 RHQ4 engine and has been resident at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway for some years. However, with a review of the stored rolling stock having been initiated, EVR officials decided that this particular vehicle would be better off elsewhere.

A call was made to Rail Trolley Trust trustees, who negotiated a deal for it to join the trust's collection.

Following the end of the EVR's main operating season and a busy events calendar, No. LMA001 is due to be moved by Andrew Briddon to his Darley Dale base at nearby Peak Rail, where a full survey will be undertaken to ascertain the work required to



A unique Lesmac personnel carrier, which has entered the Rail Trolley Trust's extensive collection. PAUL MOSELEY/RTT

return it to operational condition. Furthermore, the vehicle's original builder was contacted by the trust, which has subsequently received a quantity of related documentation and video clips of this unique variant being tested.

Similar personnel carriers have been built but with capacity for up to four people thanks to back-to-back seating.



Bance Alumicart two-seater trolley No. 080 of 1999. SB RAIL PHOTOGRAPHY/RTT

RTT chairman Jonathon Flood said: "The trust is interested in any other photos and videos of the trolley. If anyone has any, please get in touch."

The second addition to the collection is Bance Alumicart No. 080 of 1999. Supplied to a company called Laser Rail, it was a non-standard vehicle made for a customer to fit its own instrumentation and originally paired with a Geismar geometry measuring trailer. Initial efforts to find a home for the vehicle failed, but recent conversations with the Anglesey Central Railway, a new-start heritage venture, has seen the trust purchase No. 080 and transport it to a private securing site pending an onward move to the ACR's LLangwyllog station.

"The trust continues to appeal for funds towards the £10,000 target we set ourselves last year and hopes that as we are able to share more positive news, more donations will be forthcoming to enable us to move more of our collection to our secure locations, provide further suitable storage accommodation for some of our older and more historic vehicles, and make some significant progress on several restoration projects," Jonathon added.

→ To donate, visit railtrolleytrust.co.uk/help-us-donate.html or email jonathon.flood72@gmail.com

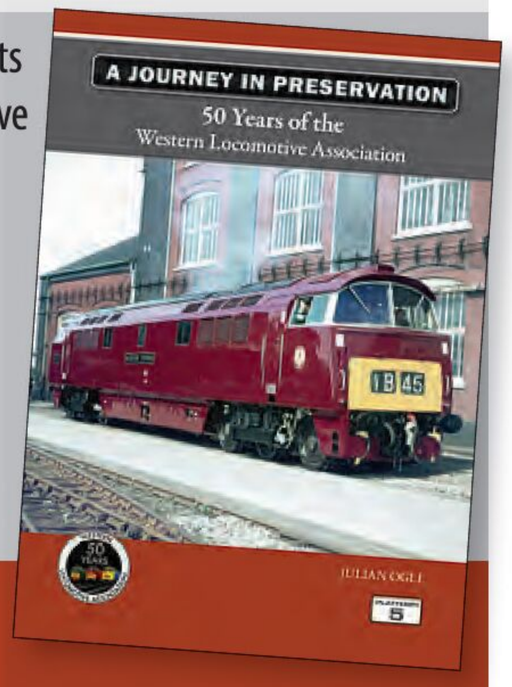
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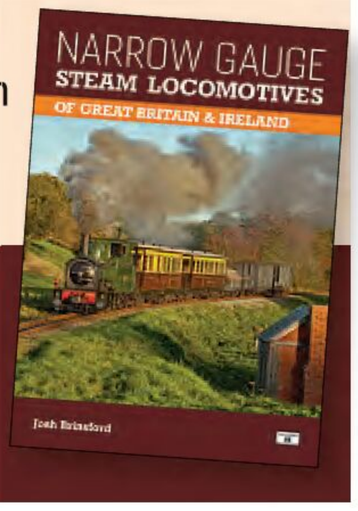
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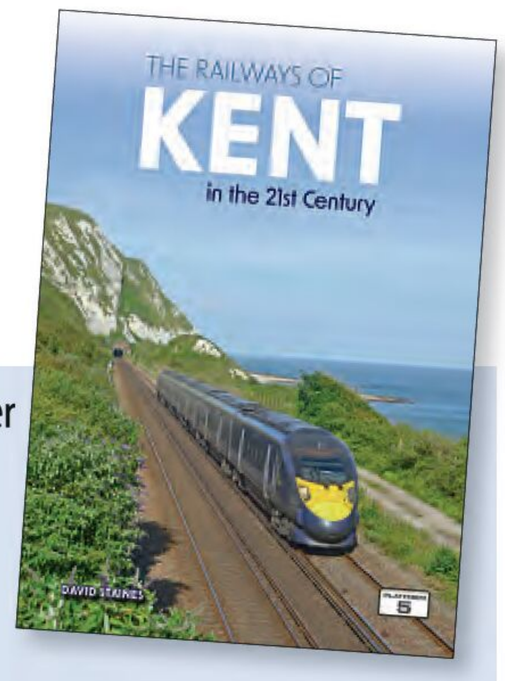


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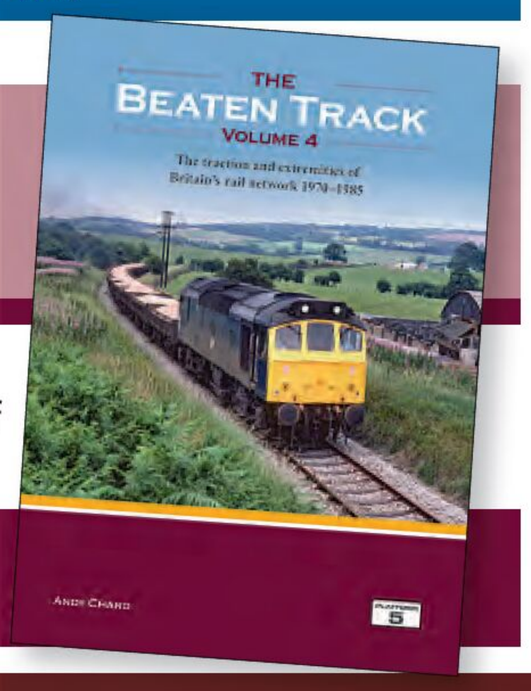
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Reunited at last – 'lost' plates back on Hunslet *Newstead*

By Owen Hayward

THE image of railwayana collecting is that the high-profile locomotives usually prove the most alluring, yet it was an industrial 0-6-0ST whose nameplates caught one auction house's attention during the cataloguing of one collection – resulting in them being returned to the engine from which they came after more than half a century apart.

At the beginning of October, Keith Butler, marketing manager of Nottingham-based Arthur Johnson Auctioneers, was tasked with cataloguing a late collector's railwayana trove ahead of it going under the hammer on November 8. As he sorted through the various station totems, tail lamps and other paraphernalia, he came across a pair of cast plates bearing the name *Newstead* – something which stood out from the majority of the other items present.

Researching the name, he instantly discovered that the locomotive from which they came was still in existence. He subsequently reached out to the volunteers restoring it, in a move that resulted in the plates and locomotive being reunited at the Spa Valley Railway.

Hunslet Fitzwilliam 16in cylinder No. 1589 of 1929 *Newstead* spent the majority of its working life at Featherstone & Hemsworth colliery in South Kirby, later transferring to Woolley colliery at Darton, West Yorkshire. Although it was fitted with the cast plates when delivered new, they were known to have been removed from the locomotive by the end of 1957, with hand-painted examples replacing them.

Withdrawn in 1971 when the colliery closed, *Newstead* was rescued from scrapping in 1972 by vintage vehicles enthusiast Malcom Saul, who restored it to working order at Suffolk Steam Ltd. Shortly afterwards, it vanished from the public eye and by the 1990s the consensus was that it had been scrapped.

However, as reported in *Heritage Railway* issue 215, *Newstead* shot into the spotlight when it was discovered hidden in a shed near a Hertfordshire convent in 2015 after its owner died.

Purchased by Alex Alder, *Newstead* moved to the Nene Valley Railway at Wansford the following April, when assessment for overhaul commenced, before it was relocated to Tunbridge Wells West on the SpVR, where the volunteer-run project got fully under way.

Reunited at last

Following the discovery of the nameplates, Keith contacted Alex to facilitate a sale that returned them to the locomotive almost seven decades after they were last seen fitted to it. On October 16, Arthur Johnson strategy director Mike Brownsword and company director Jean Brownsword travelled to see the locomotive and hand the plates over.

"You never know what is going to come up in these collections, so you have to be on the ball and spot things that are as special as these when they come through," Keith said.

"I was certain the nameplates would have come from an industrial locomotive but being near Newstead Abbey I had to be 100% sure they weren't some obscure plates from something else. When I searched on the internet, the locomotive was the first result to come up, so I knew they had to have come from there.

"Seeing that it still survived and was actively being restored, I thought about how great it would be to reunite them, so I got in touch and Alex was understandably thrilled with the news.



On October 16, Arthur Johnson Auctioneers' director Jean Brownsword (left) presents Alex Alder and some of the volunteers restoring Hunslet No. 1589 *Newstead* at the Spa Valley Railway with the locomotive's nameplates following their discovery amid a railwayana collection that was being catalogued for auction. ALEX ALDER

"I approached the vendor with the proposal and she was very happy to facilitate a sale before the plates went to auction."

"When Keith told us about the discovery and what he was hoping to facilitate, I instantly knew it needed to happen," added Mike. "The story of reuniting a previously 'lost' locomotive with its believed to be 'lost' nameplates had a great ring to it, so we were delighted to be able to make it happen."

Furthermore, the value of the plates was matched by the auction house in a donation to The Railway Children charity, which helps keep vulnerable children safe in the UK and internationally. "We are maintaining something of a theme with this lost engine story, helping prevent children from becoming 'lost' themselves," Mike said. "We felt it made sense to support a railway-related charity, so this worked out really well.

"The vender has also said that her dad would have been delighted that the nameplates were going back to the locomotive."

The discovery is the second made relating to *Newstead* this year. One of its worksplates appeared at GW Railwayana auction, with volunteer Reuben Pearce placing the winning bid and hence saw it return to its rightful home.

"I was astounded when I heard from Keith that the locomotive's nameplates had appeared in a collection that was due to be sold," Alex said. "The only photograph we have seen of them fitted is from 1955, with the painted steel plate replacements first seen in 1958.

"Other locomotives at the colliery from the same time appeared to have had the same treatment, and it was assumed that the plates were scrapped.

True survivors

"To hear these particular ones survived and have shown up after nearly 70 years is amazing. I and all the volunteers working on the overhaul of *Newstead* are incredibly grateful to Arthur Johnson Auctioneers for making this reunion happen."

Newstead's overhaul has recently made rapid progress. With the frames rewheeled last October, subsequent valve gear work saw the internal motion almost fully reassembled and connecting rods fitted by September 21. The boiler has had a new smokebox tubeplate and connecting angle ring fabricated and fitted, along with new longitudinal and crown stays made. By mid-October it had been hydraulically tested to 90psi – the first time it has held pressure since the 1990s.

It is estimated that it will be ready to return to Kent to be fitted to the rolling chassis by February, with hopes for a debut sometime in 2025.



The boiler for *Newstead* is currently at Road Steam UK, where it has recently been hydraulically tested to 90psi. Following work to seal up some leaks discovered, it is hoped that it will be returned to Kent in early 2025. ALEX ALDER



No. 1589, pictured at Frinkley colliery in 1955. This is the only known photograph in which the original brass nameplates are seen fitted, later replaced by hand-painted steel nameplates. NEWSTEAD COLLECTION

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



Bagnall 0-4-0ST *Woto* has joined the Apedale Valley Railway's fleet following its sale by previous owner Patrick Keef. AVLR

New home for narrow gauge Bagnall

THE Apedale Valley Railway-based Moseley Railway Trust has confirmed that Bagnall 0-4-0ST No. 2133 of 1924 *Woto* has joined the line's resident fleet following its acquisition from Patrick Keef in October.

Built by WG Bagnall to 3ft 6in gauge at Stafford Works in July 1924, *Woto* worked at British Calendar Cables in Kent. In 1988, the locomotive was purchased by Patrick Keef, managing director of Alan Keef Ltd, who regauged it to 2ft gauge and earlier this year decided to pass on its ownership to others.

"After 36 years of ownership, and with *Woto* reaching 100 years old, I felt the time was right for it to have a new lease of life," Patrick said. "With the ever-increasing cost challenges for visiting engines, it felt only right that it should be resident on a railway where it would be used regularly, seen by many and enjoyed by all.

"I have several projects lined up to take its place, including starting on the restoration of the Motor Rail & Tramcar Ltd locomotive *Dalmunzie* that will haul the now completely restored set of carriages and wagons from the Dalmunzie Railway. I wish *Woto* well and enjoyment to all those involved in running it in the future."

Trust co-chairman Dr John Rowlands said: "We are delighted to welcome *Woto* to the Apedale Valley Light Railway.

"Apedale, in north Staffordshire, is a particularly fitting new home for *Woto* since it left the county a century ago.

"We don't have a Bagnall loco in the Apedale fleet, so *Woto* will close that gap in the collection, and it promises to be a locomotive ideally suited to operate services at Apedale.

"We would like to express our gratitude to Patrick Keef for allowing us to take this opportunity.".

Following its arrival at the AVLR, testing and crew familiarisation training commenced, with the intention of seeing *Woto* debut at the railway's December 28 Winter Warmer gala, subject to all the usual caveats. Up to four steam locomotives are expected to be in service on the day, with full details to be published at avlr.org,uk

Historic west Wales station up for hire

THE last-surviving Manchester & Milford Railway station building is available for holiday lettings.

Derry Ormond station, on the Pencader to Aberystwyth line, which opened on August 12, 1867, and was taken over by the GWR in 1906, served the Ceredigion hamlet of Betws Bledrws, near Llangybi, and the mansion and estate of Derry Ormond.

The line was closed to passengers in February 1965 and remained open for milk traffic until 1970.

The corrugated-iron station building, which served as the waiting room and ticket office, have been little altered since GWR days and carries the company's colours.

Described as "a unique blend of heritage and tranquillity," it is a "one-bedroom gem" which "beautifully preserves its historical essence while providing a cosy modern retreat."

It has a quarter-acre of land attached, which has become sanctuary for wildlife, and also a herb garden.



GWR-liveried Derry Ormond station in Ceredigion. ORIGINAL COTTAGES

"The open-plan living area, with its exposed brick and period windows, bathes in natural light, while the kitchen marries vintage charm with contemporary amenities," added the description. "The spacious bedroom, a serene escape, features original wooden floors and restored details, echoing the station's storied past."

For more details, visit https://tinyurl.com/mt45vafb or telephone 03332 020899.

Signalbox at Telford to be reconstructed

THE Telford Steam Railway has been given planning permission to rebuild an historic signalbox which stood on the platform at their Horsehay & Dawlish station headquarters.

The original 'box was built in 1883 and served the Much Wenlock branch that ran from Wellington to Buildwas, replacing a ground frame operated by porters. The line was closed by BR to passenger trains in 1962 and the station buildings were demolished.

The heritage line aims to restore the station site as it was. The foundations of the 'box are still in place, and with about 7ft of the lower section of the walls, and many of the original bricks have been reclaimed and cleaned ready for reuse.

Approval for the scheme has been given by Telford and Wrekin Council.

Swindon Carriage Works aims for high-tech refit

SWINDON Borough Council has set aside up to £3 million for the next phase of the town's Grade II-listed GWR Carriage Works conversion into a modern setting for a high-technology businesses or organisations after standing empty for years.

The proposal is to convert four units at the furthest western and northern corner of the building, which currently houses The Work Shed, offices used by creative and digital start-up and expanding businesses, and the Royal Agricultural University's new Cultural Heritage Institute.

The conversion is set to take up to 15 months, with a further planning application required for the completion of the entire project.

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Sir Berkeley stars in Middleton gala after steam leak is cured

By Sally Clifford and Robin Jones



Locally-built Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST *Sir Berkeley* all set to head the first trip of the gala on October 5, carrying the livery it would have worn while helping to build the Great Central Railway's London Extension which opened 125 years ago. SALLY CLIFFORD

THE Middleton Railway's October 5/6 autumn gala saw four locomotives, two steam and a pair of diesels, in action on the Leeds premier industrial heritage line.

Crowds gathered on the station platform in Moor Road, Hunslet, for the first journey to Middleton Park on the Saturday, headed by Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST No. 1210 of 1891 *Sir Berkeley*.

Built at Boyne Engine Works, Leeds, *Sir Berkeley* was built for contractor Logan & Hemingway and helped with the building of the Great Central Railway's London Extension which opened 125 years ago.

One of only two Class Ls in the country – the other being No. 1601 of 1903 *Matthew Murray*, which is also based at Middleton – *Sir Berkeley* later worked for the Cranford Ironstone Co at Kettering and transferred to the associated Byfield Quarries in 1959 before being bought by enthusiast Roger Crombleholme in 1965.

Sir Berkeley starred in the 1960s black-and-white BBC TV serialisation of Edith A Nesbit's classic novel The Railway Children, owned by the Vintage Carriages Trust at Ingrow West on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and loaned to the Middleton due to its historically important Leeds links. It returned to steam last year following a two-year overhaul, having been repainted into its original Logan & Hemingway livery.

However, problems arose during the loan visit of *Sir Berkeley* to Beamish Museum earlier this year.

A significant steam leak in the smokebox was discovered at Beamish and so it was withdrawn from operations. Through lengthy discussions between Beamish, the trust and Middleton, it was decided it would be best to investigate and undertake any repairs at Middleton. The hire period was therefore brought to a premature end and *Sir Berkeley* returned home on May 8.

However, to the great relief of everyone, an examination established that there was not an issue with the cylinder block as had been first feared. Instead, it was discovered that the gasket between the cylinder block and main steam pipe had failed, allowing steam to leak where the flange joined.

As a precautionary measure the main steam pipe was removed and hydraulically tested to 210psi, one-and-a-half times its working pressure, and showed that the main steam pipe was not cracked at all, and was in a suitable condition to be put back in place.

New gaskets were made, the flange faces cleaned up and the main steam pipe assembly reassembled. A steam test on June 2 showed that the new gaskets had resolved the steam leak, and *Sir Berkeley* was once again declared fit for service.

At the gala, *Sir Berkeley* was joined by the popular unique surviving Sentinel Y1 0-4-0VBGT No. 68153, which was outshopped in 1932 as LNER No. 59 and later No. 8153, and delivered new to Geneva permanent way yard in Darlington, and bought by the Middleton following its withdrawal in 1961.

Last withdrawn for overhaul in 1997, and making its first moves for 22 years in 2019 following the fitting of a new boiler and replacement cylinders and a new blastpipe and blower, No. 68153 re-entered service in September 2021.

Leeds-built Hunslet No. 1697 of 1932 *John Alcock*, which made history by heading the first standard gauge train run by volunteers on June 20, 1955, was also in service.

Also running was Peckett 0-4-0DM No. 5003 of 1961 *Austin No. 1*, built in 1961 and which worked at Austin & Sons Ltd in Dewsbury. It arrived in the Middleton Railway collection from KWVR in 2001.

More than 200 visitors attended over the weekend, which gave them the chance to ride in the brake van on freight trains.

Forthcoming special events include the Santa specials which run from Sunday December 1 until Christmas Eve 202 and the mince pie special on New Year's Day.

For more details visit www.middletonrailway.org.uk



LNER Class Y1 4wVBGT No. 68153 in gala action on October 5, hauling a freight working with the line's Middleton Colliery wagon immediately behind. MR



Diesel duo lined up for gala: Peckett No. 5003 *Austin No. 1* and Hunslet No. 1697 *John Alcock* at Middleton Railway. SALLY CLIFFORD

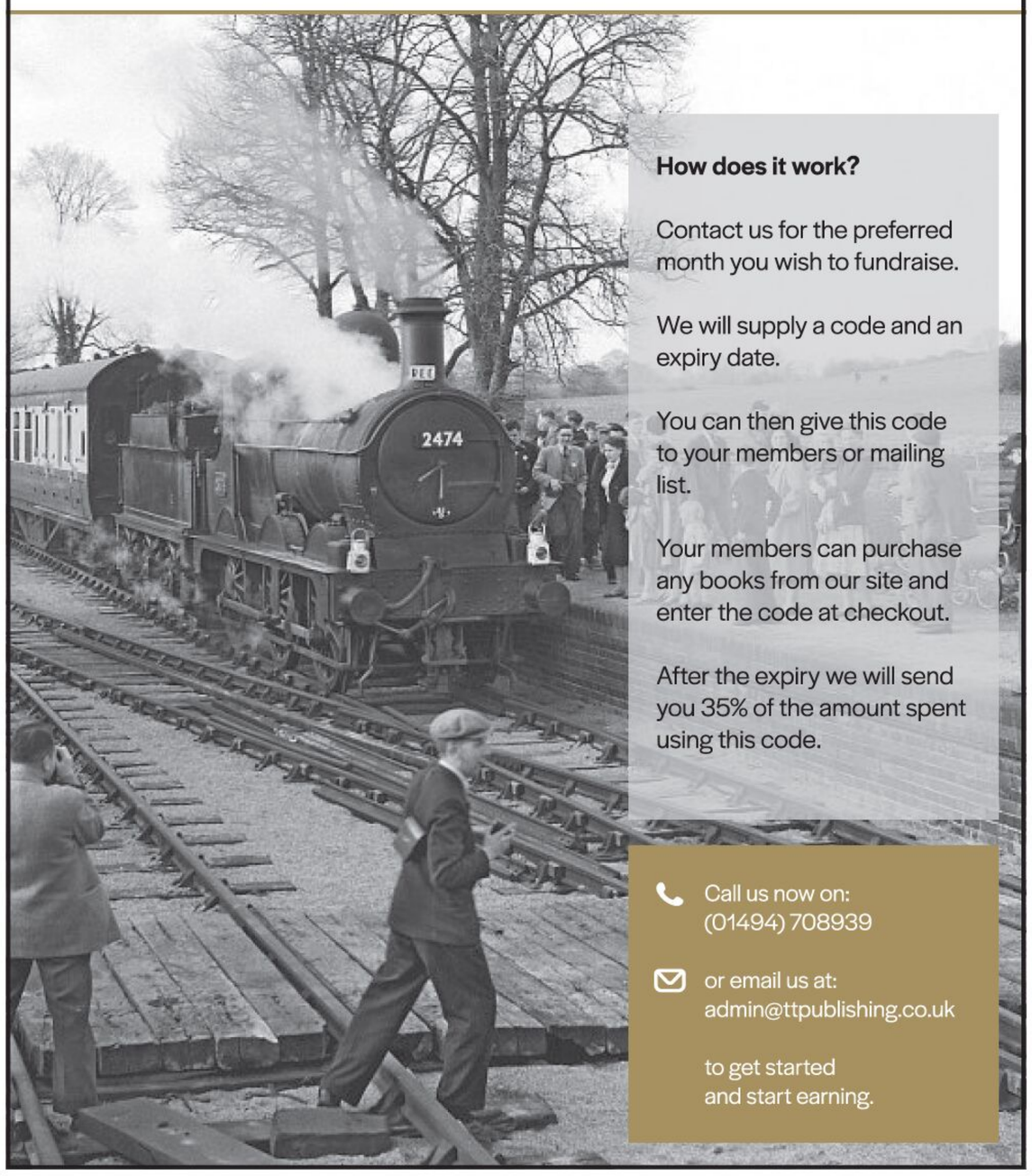
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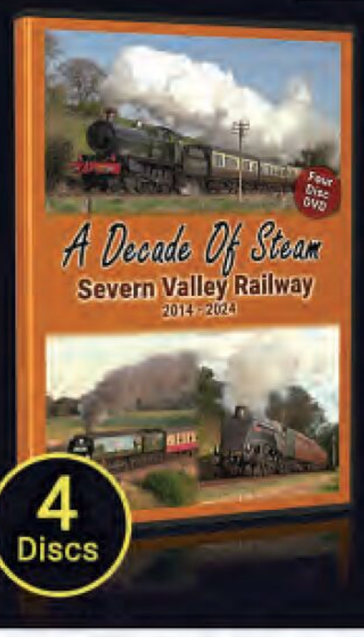
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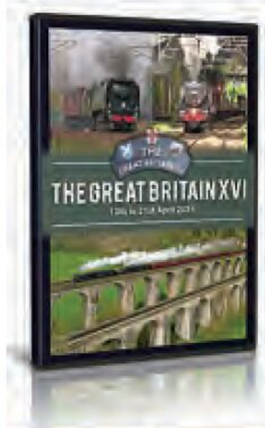


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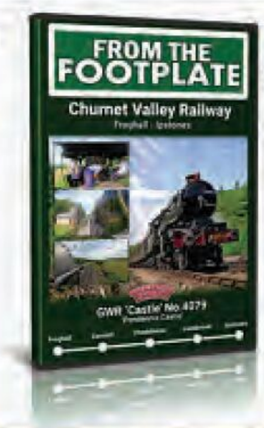
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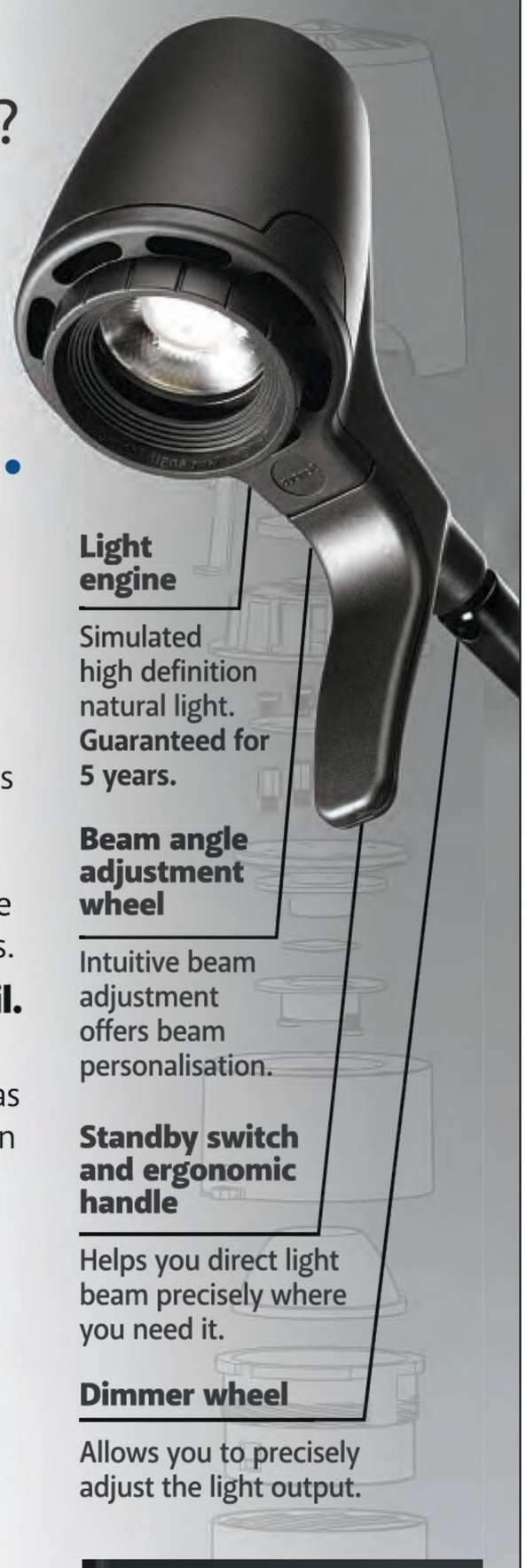
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VISITING AN AUTUMN STEAM GALA…
IN A COUNTRY AT WAR!

EXCLUSIVE

Bill Parker, founder and owner of the Flour Mill locomotive workshops at Bream in the Forest of Dean, tells how he visited Ukraine in late October to attend a public steam gala – which went ahead despite the country being locked in its war with Russia and under threat of regular bombardment.

A weekend steam gala in Ukraine on October 26/27 with two broad (Russian)-gauge and two narrow-gauge steam locomotives was too good an opportunity to miss, and I had several weeks to arrange my visit.

I flew east to Chisinau in Moldova on October 24, well aware of the rarity of a national railway system anywhere in the world running public steam galas, let alone in the middle of a war, and anxious to show support to my friend Dmitry Babarika, who works closely with Ukrainian Railways (UZ) to make sure that such events run smoothly.

Moldova was in the midst of a contested election, but there was no evidence of that on arrival, and indeed, unlike in February last year, the bus to Odesa was waiting for me outside the terminal.

Five hours later I was well and truly inside a war zone, but it was still daylight, and the walk past the railway station up to Odesa's five-star Hotel Bristol could have been in any western city – except for the tank traps piled up at street corners and the generators outside many of the buildings.

The follow morning, spoiled by the comfort of the Bristol, and for the second time since my visit in 1967 aged just 19, I walked to the Potemkin steps, overlooking the harbour, with everything looking perfectly normal – which indeed was characteristic of my whole visit... apart from the nightly air-raid sirens.

Then another bus journey – three hours northbound – took me to where Dmitry picked me up and drove us to the depot in Haivoron, a town with a population of around 14,000, and situated about 150 miles to the south of the capital Kyiv.

Dmitry has played a role in railway preservation in Ukraine for decades. In 2008, together with Austrian enthusiast Wolfram Wendelin, he founded a railway museum in Korostiv, a village in the Western Carpathians, on an old forestry railway right of way. Their aim is to preserve, restore and operate historical equipment from the narrow gauge railways of Ukraine in one location since so many such railways have disappeared. Dmitri is head of the organisation and I met him when I came to Ukraine after the war started to offer the Flour Mill's assistance.

Heritage Railway previously reported this in issue 306, and again on Korostiv saving a tiny 0-4-0 from a steelworks in Dnipro, with our intention being to bring it back to England to overhaul it for them, a project so far forestalled by customs issues in Ukraine.

Dmitry, who is involved in an oil distribution business, had previously organised railtours to Ukraine from the West, and in 2021 proposed to the management of UZ that they preserve and promote their surviving narrow gauge events such as this one. It is exciting to see how members of the local community in Haivoron, from the mayor downwards, have taken these events to their hearts.

At the Haivoron depot four steam engines were simmering away after a day of testing, and a broad-gauge diesel (a Czech-built ChME3 Co-Co) was fussing about disposing of an incoming train with empties for the local quarry.

It was a scene reminiscent of the end of steam in Britain in the Sixties, when you could sneak into a shed in the evening, hearing and smelling as much as seeing locomotives cooling down, perhaps for the last time ever.



Autumn colours to the fore as this narrow-gauge train weaves its way through the countryside, as photographed from a drone.



Above: CHme3 Co-Co 5890 arrives in Haivoron.



Right: Locomotives Er 799-18, Gr 336 and 159 4-95 at Haivoron depot.



Women at a station stall selling produce to raise money to buy drones, as in the picture on the table, for the war effort.



Families in the narrow-gauge carriage.



Interior of a vintage broad-gauge carriage.

Adding to the international flavour were the two broad-gauge 0-10-0s, Er 798-71 and Er 799-18, built by MAVAG in Budapest, Hungary in 1953 and 1954 respectively and the two narrow gauge 0-8-0s built in Podolsk, Russia (159 4-95 in 1938) and Berlin, Germany (Gr 336 in 1951). Haivoron's narrow-gauge TU2 diesels were all built in Kaluga, Russia, too.

Haivoron was once the centre of the largest narrow-gauge network in the world, moving farm produce and sugar beet, and towards the end of the Soviet era it was being replaced by broad gauge, but this conversion soon stopped after independence.

The result is that there are three active lines serving Haivoron, one both broad- and narrow-gauge and two just narrow. Interestingly where the two lines run together they do not share one of the rails, as with the Sibiu-Agnita railway in Romania, but instead two interlaced pairs of rails share the same sleepers.

Saturday morning found the station full of activity: Not just the usual range of activities, like the ZIM car converted to rails, and an old wagon into a museum, but a dozen or so stalls offering all kinds of food, drink and trinkets. The chance to get some mulled wine, or the Ukrainian equivalent, was too good to miss – especially when I realised that the proceeds were going to buy drones for the Ukrainian army – just as how communities in Britain banded together to raise money to buy Spitfires. In truth the war is not very far away.

Indeed it turned out that the drones in question were made in Haivoron.

All over Ukraine in all kinds of places a little cottage industry making drones has sprung up, and here they assemble 'little' drones capable of carrying a payload of up to 3kg, all funded by the local community.

I took the first train of the day, pulled by visiting narrow-gauge 0-8-0 Gr 336, as the line's resident Gr 280 is away being repaired, and with little 159 4-95 on the rear.

The train was full of happy children – one argument for the railway to hold this event for the benefit of soldiers' and veterans' children – the carriages individually heated by coal stoves.

This service went only the short distance west to the bridge over the River Bug, and after everyone had got off to sample the delights on offer on the platform, the train returned across the bridge at some speed with 159 4-95 leading, before we all climbed back in for the return.

No sooner were we back in Haivoron than we hurried to board a vintage carriage, again with plenty of children, behind broad gauge Er



Gr 336 halts at the River Bug bridge so that passengers can browse the various stalls alongside.



Er 799-18 running round at Dzhulynka.





Above: The draisine giving rides at Haivoron.

Right: Bill Parker with Dmitry Babarika and the mayor of Haivoron, Roman Voluyko, in front of Er 799-18.

799-18 for a run north-west across the steppe to Dzhulynka.

When the Soviets replaced the narrow gauge with broad gauge they raised the right of way several metres, with the result that the station now has a track-level top storey on top of the old stone building at the ground level.

We returned to Haivoron for a prolonged lunch, witnessing all kinds of entertainment, from riding in the ZIM draisine to some high-quality dancing on the platform in front of the trains – indeed at one point I was included.

Suitably refreshed in mind and body, next we set out in the opposite direction, eastwards, behind Er 799-18 towards Khashchuvate for more entertainment, food and a tour of the station's rather antiquated equipment, before photographs and the return to Haivoron.

However, the day was far from over. Little Gr 336 was in trouble, with a hole in the steam pipe leading to the right-hand cylinder.

Staff set to, working all evening to weld a patch so it could be ready for the morning.

Sunday was something different. I was anxious to see all of Haivoron, not just the railway, so after breakfast went first to the Soviet era hydro-electric power station in a dam near the centre of town, with beautiful views downstream as the trees were turning yellow, and then to a hillside overlooking what is now the railway's leading generator of freight – the town's big quartzite quarry, producing railway ballast.

Then we walked out to the cemetery to see the grave of the fallen soldier Evgen Volidymyrovych Zahorodnyuk, whose body had been brought home when I was there in February 2023, driven through the streets lined with residents holding candles.

Lest we forget.

There was plenty of action again when we got to the station, this time with Er 798-71 showing its paces.

We went outside the town to witness the spirited return of Gr 336 from Khashchuvate, tailed by the willing little 159 4-95.

Narrow-gauge diesel TU7A-3108 in bright red livery replaced Gr 336 in Haivoron and the narrow-gauge train carried on westwards, photographed crossing over the broad-gauge just outside the city limits in perfect weather

Then it was back for a final walk through the depot, with its selection of TU2 diesels, including the superbly-painted TU2-263.

The way home was a 13-hour overnight journey from Kyiv to near the Hungarian border in a 'soft' four-berth compartment, which I shared with three women, but not before taking a ride on Kyiv's funicular railway, which was opened in 1905.

The good news was that I was able to add a splendid dinner of fried pork, beef, salami, boiled (very free-range) egg and fresh bread to my bananas and beer. The bad news is that I caught a cold that night that was with me for many days afterwards.

Thank you, Ukrainian Railways, and thank you, everyone in Ukraine. HR



Girls in traditional Ukrainian costumes dancing in front of Er 799-18.



The cemetery in Haivoron.



Hole in the steam pipe of Gr 336 inside the smokebox.



The repair seen from outside the smokebox.



Gr 336 returning from Khaschuvate showing the four-rail dual gauge line.



Narrow-gauge diesel crossing a broad-gauge spur.



TU2-263 with Bill and Dmitry Babarika.



The funicular railway in Ukraine's capital Kyiv, A 240 metre 3ft 11/¼in gauge line linking the city centre high above the Dnieper River with the historic district of Podil below. The line has only two stations and is operated by the city community enterprise Kyivpastrans.



Bill Parker (centre) in a sleeping compartment on the train which took him to the Hungarian border after his trip to Ukraine for the autumn gala.

THE COTSWOLDS
SHOWCASED IN THEIR AUTUMN FINEST!

A Swindon-built black-liveried 2-8-0 duo stole the show at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Autumn Showcase as the season's changing colours opened up a multitude of unmissable vistas for eager photographers and passengers, reports **John Titlow** in words and pictures.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway's October 26-27 Autumn Showcase did exactly what it said on the tin – by presenting a mixture of its home fleet motive power, steam and diesel, in an intensive timetable.

Nothing ever goes easy at times with steam locomotives, but it is how situations are handled when things do go wrong that counts. For example, on October 12, the week before the Autumn Showcase, GWR 2-8-0 No. 3850 suffered an axlebox problem and entered Toddington's works the same day. Remedial attention immediately began by detaching the tender and removing the rods in preparation for lifting the locomotive off the problematic axle. A valiant effort was put in by staff, with the work completed in time for the showcase.

Four steam locomotives were in action during the weekend, performing faultlessly, three having been built in Swindon Works and the fourth in Eastleigh.

The Swindon trio comprised 2-8-0s No. 2807 built in 1905 and No. 3850 in 1942 and WR 4-6-0 No.7820 *Dinmore Manor* built in 1950. The Southern Railway Bulleid Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co* was built at Eastleigh in 1941: originally appearing as No. 21C6, this has the longest name for a preserved locomotive. All four faced south.

The event saw the last appearance of No. 7820 in an Autumn Showcase for the coming years as its boiler ticket is expiring early in 2025, it having been extended by 14 months in 2023.

Social media discussion was prolific the week before the event regarding No. 2807 entering works for a repaint, the grapevine citing it was to be repainted in black – but would it be BR or Great Western? It finally emerged in GWR wartime black livery; keeping it under wraps proved difficult!

No. 2807 debuted at the event resplendent in its new livery. The highlight of the show had to be the double-heading of the two matching 2-8-0s, Nos. 2807 and 3850, on the Saturday.

Dinmore Manor had been the regular locomotive hired to the South Devon Railway for its Christmas Polar Express season, but this year it will be No. 2807 instead. It will no doubt look quite 'interesting' with a snow plough and headlight fitted.

On the diesel front, Class 20 No. 20137 (D8137), built by English Electric in 1966,

Two black Swindon-built 2-8-0s burst out of Greet Tunnel, with No. 3850 piloting No. 2807 on October 26.







With the sun about to dip below the horizon, No. 3850 departs Broadway with the last goods working of the Autumn Showcase on October 27.

Above: In stunning autumnal colours, No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co* climbs towards Greet Tunnel with a mixed rake of carriages after departing Winchcombe on October 27.



Above: *Chakas Kraal No. 6* is prepared for the day's service on the Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway on October 26.

Right: GWR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* pilots 2-8-0 No. 3850 as they depart Winchcombe on October 27.





No. 2807 climbs towards Greet Tunnel with a freight working after departing Winchcombe on the Sunday.



A busy scene at Toddington as WR No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* runs through non-stop on October 26.



No. 3850 runs through Hayles Abbey Halt on September 26.



Looking at home on the goods, No. 3850 departs Gotherington on October 27.

and Class 37 D6948 (37248), built by English Electric in 1967, were rostered for the Saturday. D6948 did not make an appearance as planned, its place taken instead by Class 45 No. 45149 (built by BR in 1961) on the Saturday. For the Sunday, it was the turn of Class 47 No. 47105, built by Brush in 1963.

Built in 1958 by Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. Ltd, three-car Class 117 DMU No. L425 operated over both days. The event saw its last appearance on the railway after being sold by the Cotswold Diesel Railcar Group, its owning group, to the Scottish Railway Preservation Society for use on Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway. The set comprises a Driving Motor Brake Standard No. 51363, Trailer Composite Lavatory No. 59510 and Driving Motor Standard No. 51405. At Bo'ness it will be joined by spare vehicle DMBS No. 51372.

A SRPS statement said: "The DMU represents an excellent opportunity for the B&KR. It features a well-maintained interior including both standard and first class seating, great forward and rear panoramic views, working toilets, heating, accessible space, and a small bar for selling snacks and beverages."

Workings

Both days started with three steam-hauled southbound departures from Toddington. The first was an empty stock movement at 8.20am in preparation for the first train off Cheltenham Racecourse at 9.23am.

On Saturday, early linesiders were caught out because No. 45149 was piloting No. 2807 on the empty coaching stock, but on Sunday it was No. 7820 by itself. The empty coaching stock was followed by a non-stop goods train behind 3850, leaving at 8.35am, then a passenger train 36 minutes later at 9.11am behind No.35006, all heading to Cheltenham Racecourse.

Northbound, the DMU left Toddington at 8.55am to Broadway, departing southbound at 9.25am. After this, the motive power varied over the two days.

There was one non-stop train on both days southbound from Broadway at 2pm. On the Saturday, it was hauled by No. 7820 and on the Sunday by No. 45149.

Several double-headers and banked trains ran in various combinations, though for many it was of course Nos. 2807 and 3850 which had to be the best combination.

Brake van runs were available on both days for a supplement of £10. Footplate trips were also available costing £120, including entry to the event for the day. These were extremely popular and sold out.

Trains crossed at Cheltenham Racecourse, the loop outside Gotherington, Winchcombe and Toddington stations. Presently, trains are unable to cross at Broadway until the second platform and signalling is completed; the new building on Platform 2 is currently under construction.

The locomotive shed at Toddington and carriage shed at Winchcombe were open for inspection. An area was cordoned off at Toddington alongside the running lines, enabling southbound departures to be photographed.

Occasionally, timekeeping slipped slightly, but generally all ran very well.

The Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway was in operation using Hunslet 0-4-2T No. 2075 of 1940 *Chaka's Kraal No.6*. With journey times of about 25 minutes, a trip on the 2ft gauge line could be fitted in between the standard gauge services.

Logistics and pricing

There was a special bus link from Cheltenham Spa station and Royal Well bus station to Cheltenham Racecourse station in the morning, returning passengers in the afternoon over both days. The bus used was a double-decker decorated with a steam train crossing Stanway Viaduct, so impossible to miss.

One-day tickets for the event were a bargain price of £29, £11 for a child, and a family consisting of two adults and up to three children £65. For the two days it was £49, £18 and £100 respectively. It paid to book in advance because prices on the day were adult £38, child £19 and family £95. There was also a late-entry price of £25, £10 and £55 after 2.30pm.



WR No. 7820 pilots GWR No. 3850 in its wartime black livery past Laverton on October 27.



WR 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* hauls the empty coaching stock for the Autumn Showcase past Bishops Cleeve while heading for Cheltenham Racecourse on October 27.



The weather on both days was extremely kind, with Sunday experiencing much sunshine. The clocks changed on the Sunday morning, opening up different locations.

Railway spokesman Ian Crowder said: "Overall, the event ran like clockwork, blessed as it was with sunshine and the autumnal hues of the Cotswolds – it made for a lot of wonderful photographs.

"Events like this don't just happen, of course. The G/WR relies heavily on volunteers and as a member of the small voluntary organising committee, I can say that we are humbled by the way that our 900 or so volunteers go all-out to make events such as this a success – and a good example is the way that repairs to No. 3850 were carried out during the week before the event.

"The Autumn Showcase is great fun for volunteers, given that it is a last opportunity in the year to run as many locomotives as possible and operate them to an interesting timetable, with both steam and heritage diesel.

"The reward is seeing the trains full of happy visitors, contributing to the financial success of what is an expensive event to stage.

"In a way, the event is also a reflection of the changeover years from steam to diesel (but with much cleaner locomotives!). Some members of our diesel fleet were built in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when production of BR steam locomotives was coming to an end at Swindon Works with 9F 2-10-0 *Evening Star*."

Passenger numbers over the two days were buoyant, with Ian advising that more than 1500 people visited the railway for this now regular annual event.

Next year's event will be at the similar date of October 27/28. It is now a highlight in the enthusiasts' calendar. The line's Santa Express trains run during November and December, with mince pie specials running daily from December 27 to January 1.Details of 2025 events are available at www.gwsr.com HR

Above: Bulleid Pacific No. 35006 *Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co* with Class 45 No. 45149 on the rear passes Laverton as the sun sets on October 26.



Above: Class 47 No. 47105 exits Greet Tunnel on the approach to Winchcombe on October 27.

Below: With the sun about to set, 2-8-0 No. 3850 departs Broadway with the last goods of the gala on October 27.



Class 117 three-car DMU set No. L425 made its final appearance on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway at the Autumn Showcase, having been sold for use on the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway. It is seen departing Toddington on October 26.



HERITAGE RAILWAY

THE COMPLETE PRESERVATION NEWS MAGAZINE

The rich splendour of the autumnal colours complements those of the Cotswold stone village of Laverton as black-liveried GWR 2-8-0s No. 3850 pilots No. 2807 on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway on October 26. JOHN TITLOW



Triumphant return for Scottish Railway Preservation Society tours

By Tim Hobman

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society has announced its return to offering main line railtours with a trip across southern Scotland and northern England on Monday, December 30 –and has confirmed an itinerary for tours throughout 2025.

The SRPS has a long history of main line operations, with 2025 marking its 55th anniversary of doing so. However, its fleet of Mk.1 coaches has been undergoing a major overhaul and modifications to futureproof it for main line running and has subsequently been out of action for the past 18 months.

In June, the SRPS announced a new long-term partnership with the Royal Scot Locomotive and General Trust (RSLGT) for running heritage trains in Scotland. RSLGT, which owns six main line locomotives, is part of Crewe-based Locomotive Services Limited. LSL operates luxury railtours throughout the UK and so that announcement will see a long-term and mutually beneficial partnership offering traditional-style railway carriage accommodation, and which will ensure the long-term deployment of the SRPS's main line-capable fleet of carriages.

The arrangement is also expected to see LSL stable locomotives and rolling stock on the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, with visiting locomotives involved with the heritage line's services too.

The December 30 tour will take advantage of the new partnership as LSL will be making its rake of ScotRail-liveried coaches available. The motive power is expected to be provided by the SRPS's own Class 37 No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* and Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, courtesy of Crewe Diesel Preservation Group.

Starting from Bo'ness with No. 37403 leading the train, a reversal at Manuel will see No. 47712 take charge for the run into Edinburgh, with an additional pick-up at Linlithgow. The two diesel locomotives will alternate in providing power, with reversals scheduled on the route taking in Edinburgh Waveley, Glasgow Queen Street, Perth and Crewe.

With the work on its carriage fleet due to be completed in early 2025, the SRPS has confirmed six tours in the first half of 2025, beginning with 'The Capital Highlander' from Carlisle to Inverness on February 8 and featuring Class 37 duo Nos. 37401 and 37403. A month later the 'Seven Counties Rambler' will offer a chance to enjoy haulage behind a Class 20, 37 and 50 on a circular trip from Edinburgh, travelling via Carlisle and Preston.



Locomotive Services Limited's Class 47 No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* passing Leyland with the Wolverhampton to Appleby leg of Statesman Rail's 'Settle & Carlisle Luncheon Circular' on October 10. HAMISH RAILWAYS

On May 10 the firm has the honour of operating the first tour out of the new Leven station. The 'Oban Explorer' sets off from there for the west coast town behind Class 50 No. 50050 and Class 37 No. 37403.

To celebrate its 55th anniversary, the 'Tyne Clyde Coaster' on May 24 from Newcastle to Wemyss Bay will again feature the 'Hoover' and 'Tractor' combination, while the three-day 'Lochalsh Chopper' excursion will see *Isle of Mull* supported by Class 20 locomotives. On June 28, the 40th anniversary of the Class 37/4's allocation to Scotland will be marked with a tour behind Nos. 37401, 37403 and 37409 from Crewe to Glasgow Central.

Full details and booking for the 2025 tours will be available soon; see www.srpsrailtours.co.uk

Clan Line and Christmas carols at Sherborne Abbey

MERCHANT Navy Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* is set to haul 'The Sherborne Christmas Carol' tour on Wednesday, December 4 for the Railway Touring Company.

Starting from London Victoria, No. 35028 is scheduled to take the route via Clapham Junction and cross the River Thames at Barnes Bridge, before picking up the Reading Line for the first passenger collection at Staines.

Taking the South Western Main Line at Byfleet Junction, there is planned to be further passenger pick-ups at Woking and Basingstoke.

From there, *Clan Line* will take the West of England Main Line at Worting Junction, passing through Andover and Salisbury, then skirting the edge of Salisbury Plain to pass through Tisbury and Gillingham.

Crossing Gillingham Viaduct and passing through Buckhorn Weston Tunnel, the train is planned to pass through Templecombe before arrival at Sherbourne.

Passengers have the option of alighting at Sherborne for a break of about three-and-a-half hours. This includes the opportunity to explore the historic market town and visit the abbey for a Christmas carol service specially arranged for the tour.



Merchant Navy 4-6-2 No. 35028 *Clan Line* approaches Paddock Wood at speed with the return 1Y94 British Pullman working from Dover Priory to London Victoria on October 24. FINBARR O'NEILL

Those who decide to stay on board will be taken to Yeovil Junction, where the locomotive will be serviced at the Yeovil Railway Centre.

Passengers will have the chance to observe the locomotive being turned, visit the shop, and view the exhibits at the centre.

The return journey to London is planned to take the same route, picking up passengers at Sherbourne and then setting down at joining stations.

Tickets are available in premier dining, First Class and standard class, with a discount for junior travellers. For more details and to book, visit www.railwaytouring.net

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.



LNER Peppercorn A2 No. 60532 *Blue Peter* and its support coach depart Derby on October 17, working 5Z32 from Toton Traction Maintenance Depot to Crewe. No. 60532, which, as reported in issue 322, returned for the main line after nearly 23 years with a formal dedication at King's Cross on July 13, spent three weeks at Toton for tyre turning. STEVE DONALD

January tour to link two capitals

INTERCITY Tours is offering 'The Capital's Scot' behind Class 87 No. 87002 *Royal Sovereign* over both the West Coast and East Coast main lines on Friday, January10.

Starting from Euston, the train is scheduled to run to Watford Junction, Milton Keynes Central, Nuneaton and Crewe to pick up additional passengers at each. From Crewe, the tour is expected to continue north on the WCML, passing through Preston, Oxenholme and Carlisle.

After crossing the border into Scotland, the route is planned to be via Carstairs South Junction and Haymarket, before arriving at the destination of Edinburgh Waverley.

After a break of just over two hours in the city, the return journey is scheduled to be via the ECML, crossing the Royal Border Bridge at Berwick-upon-Tweed and then through Newcastle, Durham, Darlington and York. There is an opportunity for passengers to alight at York to make their own way back cross-country to Crewe.

From York, the train is booked to continue south, passing through Doncaster, Retford, Newark Northgate and Grantham for another passenger stop at Peterborough, which will allow passengers from Nuneaton to make their own way home along the Birmingham-Peterborough Line, via Melton Mowbray and Leicester.

After leaving Peterborough, the tour will pass through Hitchin, over the Digswell Viaduct at Welwyn North, and then through the London suburbs to end at King's Cross.

Passengers who joined the train at Euston, Watford Junction or Milton Keynes Central will have to make their own way home from either London or one of the other stops of York or Peterborough.

Tickets are available in First Class non-dining only for this tour. For more details and to book, visit inter-city.co.uk



GWR Castle 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* departs Didcot on the line towards Oxford with a private charter to Stratford-upon-Avon on October 21, organised by Vintage Trains. FRANK DUMBLETON

PRE-ORDER ISSUE 327

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SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA!

Explore off-limit tracks on 'The Thames Valley Christmas Cracker' tour

By Tim Hobman

ON Saturday, December 21, Pathfinder Tours will stage from the Midlands a circular tour of branches, loops and curves in the Thames Valley.

Starting from Burton-on-Trent with two Class 57s in top-and-tail formation, 'The Thames Valley Christmas Cracker' is scheduled to pick up passengers at Tamworth, Birmingham New Street, Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham Spa, Stroud and Swindon.

The requested route will then hopefully see the train take the Foxhall curve and into the Appleford sidings for a reverse move.

Tour line-up

Passing Foxhall curve for the second time, the tour is planned to enter Milton sidings for another reversal, before heading to Didcot Up and Down goods loop, Reading Up passenger loop, Reading, Maidenhead loop, Slough Up goods loop, Langley siding loop, Iver Up loop, and West Drayton loop for another reversal.

The next destination is expected to be the Colnbrook branch to the oil terminal, where a reverse move will see the train return to West Drayton, then Dawley Up goods loop, Hayes Up goods loop, Hanwell goods loop, Down west loop, Greenford East curve, and then into Park Royal sidings.

After another reversal, the train is scheduled to head to West Ealing, then Acton West Junction via Up Poplar, Acton Wells Junction, Willesden south west sidings, Kensington Olympia, and into London Victoria via Latchmere and Battersea.

Victoria break

At London Victoria, there is a planned break of about one hour, before the train returns to Acton Wells Junction, then via Old Kew Junction to Hounslow, Feltham Up and Down arrival loop, Wokingham, Reading and Didcot Parkway to set down passengers.

From Didcot, the tour is expected to follow the outward journey north, setting down passengers on route back to Burton-on-Trent.

Tickets are available in First Class and standard class for this tour, with a reduced fares for juniors and parties of four.

For more details and to book, visit www.pathfindertours.co.uk

HRA hopes to break Northern Ireland steam impasse

By Robin Morton

THE Heritage Railway Association is monitoring the situation which has seen Railway Preservation Society of Ireland main line steam in Northern Ireland at a standstill since the start of 2023.

HRA president Lord Faulkner of Worcester told guests at the society's diamond anniversary luncheon in Belfast that he was aware that the RPSI was going through "a rough patch" at present.

He said: "The HRA is aware that the RPSI is at present unable to operate steam trains on the main line in the north.

"I wish I could wave a magic wand and conjure up a posse of qualified drivers for you. I cannot do that, I'm afraid, but I have taken this issue up with our CEO, Steve Oates, and he has undertaken to look at whether HRA can help you find a solution in time for the next steam season.

"I can assure you that the situation is being monitored by HRA and the enthusiast community in Britain – and I know that Translink wants to help.



The ceremonial cake is cut by Lord Faulkner of Worcester (left), Lord O'Neill, and Dr Joan Smyth, the RPSI president.



Founder members of the RPSI who attended the 60th anniversary luncheon on October 19. RPSI

No qualified drivers

"What happens to main line steam in Northern Ireland matters to all of us who want to see a vibrant and successful rail sector."

The problem for the RPSI stemmed from the sudden death on January 16, 2023, of the sole NIR steam driver Noel Playfair, widely regarded as 'Mr Steam' throughout Ireland, as reported in issue 303.

The 62-year-old father and grandfather was taken ill while on duty on a light diesel engine movement at Portadown station and despite the efforts of fellow railway staff and paramedics, he died in Craigavon General Hospital.

Afterwards, there were no qualified NIR steam drivers available to operate the RPSI trains.

The all-island society is still operating main line steam in the Republic using an Irish Rail crew and said it is exploring ways of resolving the problem on NIR both as "a short-term fix and in the long term."

An RPSI spokesman said: "This inability to operate on NIR is a huge blow for the RPSI, but we are still able to operate in the Republic and also run steam train rides at our base in Whitehead."

The 60th anniversary function was held at the Ulster Reform Club on October 19, with more than 90 members and guests in attendance.

Founding team

Fifteen founder members attended, including Lord O'Neill, the founding patron/president of the society, and John Harcourt, who was elected chairman at the inaugural meeting in Belfast on September 30, 1964.

They were presented with commemorative certificates by Lord Faulkner and Lord O'Neill, and a commemorative cake was cut by the two Lords and Dr Joan Smyth, the RPSI President.

Lord Faulkner, who is also vice-chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail at Westminster, expressed the hope that the HRA Irish committee might soon be revived.

He said it was important to the HRA that it covered the entire heritage railway sector in the UK and the Republic, given the shared history of the networks and the common interest north and south of the border.

Two young volunteers also addressed the function in Belfast – Damon Brunkard, from Dublin, and Nathan Lawrence, from Whitehead – about the enjoyment they got from their involvement in the society.

Duke of Gloucester testing to move to Severn Valley

BR Standard Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 Duke of Gloucester is expected to move to the Severn Valley Railway in the coming weeks for testing and initial running-in by late November or early December, as the unique locomotive's return to the main line moves one step closer.

The overhaul for main line operation continues to progress at Tyseley Locomotive Works, and it is expected that No. 71000 will move to the SVR by road.

A 10-year partnership agreement was announced earlier this year between the Royal Scot Locomotive & General Trust and the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust for the operation of No. 71000.

By the time it arrives at the SVR, it is expected to have become part of Locomotive Services Ltd's steam pool, hauling Saphos Trains' railtours, interspersed with periods of operation on heritage railways. *Duke of Gloucester* is expected to remain on the SVR for about a month and then move by rail to LSL at Crewe. There will then follow two or three loaded main line test runs, with it expected to be hauling trains over the national network at the end of the first quarter of 2025.



BR Standard Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* undergoing a steam test on the Tyseley Locomotive Works turntable in December 2023. BRC8SLT

This year marks locomotive's 70th birthday and 50 years since it was moved from Barry scrapyard for restoration. To commemorate these events, a drinks tumbler has been produced and can be ordered from the BRC8SLT online shop at www.theduke.uk.com, as highlighted in our special Christmas gifts guide.

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

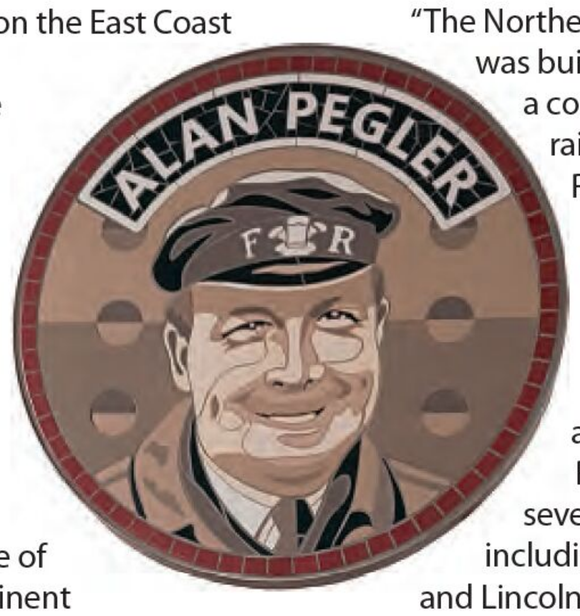


With Loch Nan Uahm in the background, LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 45407 approaches Beasdale No. 2 tunnel on October 24, the penultimate day of the West Coast Railways 'The Jacobite' season. DAVID COLLIER

Station's brand-new mosaic celebrates *Flying Scotsman* and a saviour of Ffestiniog

A NEW mosaic dedicated to the memory of preservation powerhouse Alan Pegler OBE FRSA – the man who saved the Ffestiniog Railway and then bought A3 Pacific *Flying Scotsman* from BR – has been unveiled at Retford station, on the East Coast Main Line.

Installed in the booking office, the mosaic was formally revealed by town major Coun David Naylor on September 14 – Retford Heritage Day.



Honouring one of the town's prominent former residents, it was commissioned by the Friends of Retford Station. Chairman Jim Anderson said: "I am delighted that we have been able to celebrate Mr Pegler. He was man dear to Retford, who played a leading role is preserving two remarkable pieces of British railway history."

"In 1946, Alan joined his family firm, the Northern Rubber Company, on the site now occupied by Icon Aerospace.

"The Northern Rubber Company was built on that site as a consequence of the railway arriving in Retford in 1849."

The artwork was conceived and produced by Retford Civic Society and fitted thanks to LNER at Retford.

Representatives of several other groups including the North Notts and Lincolnshire Community Railway Partnership, local councillors, Bassetlaw Railway Society and the civic society attended, along with members of Alan's family, including his daughter Penny Vaudoyer, who travelled from her home in Portugal especially for the event and was welcomed by Coun Naylor. She thanked the groups and LNER for their generosity in recognising the achievements of her father.

Alan died in 2012 aged 92.

The Friends group has plans to celebrate Railway 200 next year.



Above: Retford town mayor Coun David Naylor with Penny Vaudoyer at the plaque unveiling. FORS
Inset left: The new mosaic honouring Alan Pegler OBE FRSA. FORS



Above: Family members and representatives of local societies beneath the new Alan Pegler mosaic at Retford station. FORS

Right: Guests were also invited to see the mosaic commemorating *Flying Scotsman* on Platform 1. FORS



Date set for rescheduled sell-out East Anglia tour

By Tim Hobman

UK Railtours has announced the date for its rescheduled tour of East Anglia, originally planned for October 26. 'The East Anglian Freighter', the tour, featuring classic heritage diesel traction, is now booked for Saturday, January 18.

Starting from Liverpool Street behind a Class 20, the tour is scheduled to head north-east on the Great Eastern Main Line to pick up additional passengers at Shenfield and Chelmsford, before taking the Colchester Down goods loop. Continuing north, the final passenger pick-up is planned to be Ipswich, followed by a run through the Ipswich Down and Up goods loop.

Rare chance

Taking the East Suffolk Line after Ipswich, the tour is planned to run through Westerfield, Woodbridge, Melton and Wickham Market to reach Saxmundham and the start of the Aldeburgh branch, which once ran to Aldeburgh, serving Leiston and Thorpeness, and now remains open only for nuclear flask trains to Sizewell Power Station.

This tour is expected to be given the rare opportunity to travel the branch to the Network Rail boundary just prior to the power station.

Following a reversal, the Class 37 from the rear of the train is planned to take charge and return it to Ipswich, before the tour immediately reverses again toward Felixstowe and Creek Sidings. There will then be a chance for customers to photograph the Class 20 on the blocks at Felixstowe Town station, before once again returning to Ipswich for a leg-stretch.

Sell-out already

After a break at Ipswich, and with the Class 37 leading, the tour is scheduled to head south to Manningtree Junction and the Mayflower Line to Harwich.

Following another reversal, the route south is expected to take in the Colchester Up goods loop, then once again pass through Chelmsford and Shenfield on the way back to the capital. However, at Shenfield the train is planned to take one final deviation on to the Southend Line via Billericay and Rayleigh, to Southend Victoria. Here, passengers will be afforded brief leisure time before the return trip to Liverpool Street.

As this issue closed for press, the tour was sold out.

‘Winter West Highland Pullman’ for January winter break in Mallaig

By Tim Hobman

MIDLAND Pullman has begun to advertise the tours for its 2025 season, with the first three being a winter take on its three-day ‘West Highland Pullman’ from earlier in 2024.

Under the title of the ‘Winter West Highland Pullman,’ this first excursion runs from Friday, January 24 until Sunday, January 26.

Starting from St Albans, the luxury High Speed Train set in the familiar livery of the Midland Pullman is scheduled to pick up additional passengers at Luton, Bedford, Wellingborough, Kettering, Leicester, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Belper and Chesterfield, before heading north to Scotland.

Once over the border, the train is planned to head through the Scottish Lowlands to Glasgow and along the banks of the River Clyde to pick up the West Highland Line. Heading for Fort William, the train will pass Loch Long and Loch Lomond, and then cross Rannoch Moor before arriving in Fort William for the evening and an overnight stay.

The next day of the trip is planned to take customers over the West Highland Extension Mallaig. Passengers will pass by Ben Nevis, along the shore of Loch Eil, and over Glenfinnan Viaduct. There will be a short break in Mallaig before the return journey to Fort William, where guests will have the late afternoon and evening at leisure. Departing from Fort William on the final day of the tour, the train is scheduled to once again take the West Highland Line and retrace the outward journey home, setting down passengers en route.

The next date for this tour is Friday, February 21 to Sunday, February 23. This time, the tour will start from Watford Junction and take the West Coast Main Line, picking up passengers at Hemel Hempstead, Leighton Buzzard, Milton Keynes Central, Northampton, Long Buckby, Rugby, Nuneaton, Tamworth and Lichfield Trent Valley. Once in Scotland, the excursion follows the same programme as the previous tour.

The final tour for the ‘Winter West Highland Pullman’ is planned to start from Swansea on Friday, March 21. This is, once again, a three-day tour until Sunday, March 23 and is scheduled to collect passengers at Neath, Port Talbot, Bridgend and Cardiff Central, before taking the Welsh Marches Line north. The next passenger pick-ups are planned to be Cwmbran, Abergavenny, Hereford, Leominster, Ludlow, Church Stretton and Shrewsbury. The train is then expected to take the West Coast Main Line at Crewe to head north into Scotland and follow the same itinerary as the previous tours.

Overnight accommodation is not included as part of any tour, giving passengers the freedom to make their own provisions. Tickets are available in Pullman dining and First Class non-dining. For more details and to book, visit midlandpullman.com



‘The West Highland Pullman’ concludes its first visit to the south west as it heads north at Whiteball, running as the 5Z47 2.45pm Exeter Riverside New Yard to Crewe High Level sidings empty coaching stock on October 28. The three-day tour from Exeter to Fort William also included an additional working to Mallaig. Leading the five-coach Highland set is No. M43050 *Loch Morar,* with No. M43047 working the rear, the latter having replaced No. M43049 *Neville Hill* at Crewe on the outbound run north to Fort William. STEPHEN GINN



LMS ‘Black Five’ No. 44871 passes Lazonby with the Railway Touring Company’s ‘The Hadrian,’ which ran from Derby with Long Eaton, Beeston, Ilkeston, Alfreton and Chesterfield to Carlisle on October 12. BARRY MARTIN

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Lined up for the successful Northern Diesel Photo Charters charity evening at Crewe are (left to right) Nos. 89001, 90001, 90002, 86101, 87002 and 47828. CHRIS GEE

Celebrating 50 years of West Coast Main Line electrics

NORTHERN Diesel Photo Charters held another railway industry charity photographic shoot in aid of Martin House Hospice, Halton Hospice, the Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club and the RSPCA at Nantwich.

The October 25 event, which raised £5000 and was attended by 65 photographers, was hosted by Locomotive Services Limited at its Crewe depot and featured its Inter City electric fleet, including the unique prototype Class 89 No. 89001 *Avocet,* Inter City-liveried Class 47 No. 47828 and Nos. 86101, 87002, 90001 and 90002 as a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the completion of London to Glasgow West Coast Main Line electrification in 1974. It recreated scenes from the late 1980s and early 1990s.



Unique Class 89 No. 89001 *Avocet* and Class 90 No.90001 *Royal Scot* at the LSL Crewe depot. CHRIS GEE

NDPC's Chris Gee said: "It's another shining example of how the railway industry can pull together to create great events in aid of a good cause.

"On a personal level, having started my railway career in August 1990 among these locomotives at Longsight Electric Traction Depot and completed my guard's training with Inter City at Crewe's bungalow, it was great to relive some memories.

"A huge thanks to the team at Locomotive Services for their support, with a particular shout-out to John Humphries and his team. A big thanks to the AC Locomotive Group for allowing us to include the Class 89, and a massive thanks to Oliver, Vincent and Tom for helping with the lighting and stewarding."

Built by British Rail Engineering Ltd's Crewe Works in 1986, No. 89001 was used on test trains on both the East and West Coast main lines. The locomotive was fitted with advanced power control systems and developed more than 6000bhp.

In December 2006, GNER sold No. 89001 to the AC Locomotive Group, which since then has been carrying out an extensive overhaul to return it to the main line, something which is hoped to happen soon.

In December 2021, the AC Locomotive Group announced it had formed a new partnership with LSL that would see the remaining tasks in the overhaul completed, after which it will operate with LSL for five years.

Blooming great successes for stations along scenic Settle and Carlisle route

STATIONS on the scenic Settle and Carlisle route have been celebrating following several wins in both the Yorkshire in Bloom and Cumbria in Bloom awards this autumn.

On October 16, the Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company's operations manager, Susie Payne, and Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line member Anna Payne received four certificates for the Royal Horticultural Society's It's Your Neighbourhood entries, as well as the Chairman's Special Award for Appleby station's art project which in November 2023 saw students from the local primary school, led by local artist Karen Babayan, create a piece of artwork celebrating the line's history.

Further recognition in the RHS's scheme saw certificates awarded to Horton-in-Ribble, Settle and Armathwaite stations for their own gardens' successes.

At the awards ceremony in Carlisle, chair of Cumbria in Bloom Ronnie Auld said: "We were delighted to have so many railway stations enter the It's Your Neighbourhood category, and we enjoyed visiting Ribblehead, Dent, Kirkby Stephen and Appleby to assess the stations there.

"There was so much to see at Appleby station, and the series of art boards made by the children at the local primary school is well worth a visit."

Susie Payne said: "We are grateful to all the volunteers who make our stations look so beautiful. Many people travel on our line to enjoy the scenery and love our original station buildings. We are also grateful to CrossCountry Community Engagement Fund for its grant support to provide new plants and planters for our stations."



Chair of Cumbria in Bloom Ronnie Auld (left) with Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company's operations manager Susie Payne (centre) and Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line member Anne Payne, who received the Chairman's Special Award for Appleby atation's art project. SCRDC

The Settle Carlisle line has been named the top scenic railway journey in Europe by travel publisher Lonely Planet.

Peter Myers, chair of Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company, said: "We are all delighted about the success of our stations in both the Cumbria in Bloom and Yorkshire in Bloom awards and look forward to growing on this achievement in 2025.

"We are working to encourage biodiversity and improve the environment for wildlife and people along the line. Our planters and gardens at the stations are a key part of this plan. We have feeders for birds, bug hotels, and even red squirrel boxes at our stations to encourage wildlife.

"This would not have been possible without our volunteers. We would like to thank all members of the Friends of Settle Carlisle and hope others will be inspired to join them to make 2025 another blooming success."



The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Saturday 1st, 22nd February, 29th March 2025

This trip provides a wonderful opportunity to get out and about during the winter months, with the added bonus of steam haulage over the Northern Fells, including the spectacular Settle & Carlisle Railway. We have a high speed journey down the West Coast Main Line to Carnforth, hauled by a blue Class 86 electric locomotive. We then enjoy a circular steam tour outwards via Shap to Carlisle and back via the Settle and Carlisle line.

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe and Preston to visit Carlisle.

There are three classes available:

Premier Dining includes a full English breakfast and a four course dinner freshly prepared on board and silver served at your seat.

First Class includes morning tea or coffee with a breakfast roll and a muffin and an afternoon service of tea or coffee with a savoury of the day followed by a scone with butter and jam.

Standard Class includes a reserved seat usually at a table for four.

Fares	Adult	Junior	Family
Premier	£325	£230	£995
First	£225	£160	£690
Standard	£115	£85	£358

The Railway Touring Company Steam Rail Day Trips 2025

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express
Saturday 8th February
Join us from Manchester Piccadilly, Wigan North Western and Preston to visit Carlisle.

The Valentines White Rose
Saturday 15th February
Join us from London Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon and Peterborough to visit York.

The Mancunian
Saturday 1st March
Join us from Manchester Piccadilly and Stockport to visit Llandudno Junction or Holyhead.

The Stratford Flyer
Saturday 8th March
Join us from Manchester, Stockport and Macclesfield to visit Stratford-upon-Avon.

The Cheshireman
Saturday 15th March
Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby and Nuneaton to visit Chester.

The Whitby Flyer
Wednesday 19th March
Join us from London Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon, Peterborough and York to visit Whitby.

The Blackpool Steam Express
Saturday 22nd March
Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton and Crewe to visit Blackpool.

The Edinburgh Flyer
Saturday 29th March
Join us from York, Durham and Newcastle to visit Edinburgh.

The Worcester Steam Express
Saturday 5th April
Join us from Norwich, Thetford, March and Peterborough to visit Worcester.

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For more information please visit railwaytouring.net or phone 01553 661 500

The Railway Touring Company
The Old Stables, Estuary Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 2HL

Refreshments available to purchase on board. Tables for two can be guaranteed in First/Premier for a £30pp supplement subject to availability. Organised by The Railway Touring Company. The Railway Touring Company's standard conditions of booking and travel apply – see website for details. Image shown for illustration purposes only.

November

23 'Edinburgh Festive Explorer'
Gloucester, Edinburgh Waverley and return. Diesel hauled between Gloucester and Crewe.
Loco: 86259 *Les Ross*, 86401 PT

23 'The Cheshireman'
Euston, Chester and return.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

23 'Edinburgh Christmas Market'
York, Edinburgh and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

23 'The White Rose'
Barrow-in-Furness, York and return. Diesel hauled between Barrow and Warrington.
Loco: TBA. ST

27 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Hull, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

27 'Cardiff Christmas Express'
London Victoria, Cardiff and return.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

27 'The White Rose'
Coleshill Parkway, York and return.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle* or 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

28 'York Christmas Market'
Kings Cross, York and return.
Loco: 70000 Britannia. SD

30 'Chester Christmas Whistler'
Dorridge, Chester and return.
Loco: D345. PT

30 'Chester Christmas Express'
Scarborough, Chester and return. Diesel hauled between York and Scarborough (return only).
Loco: TBA. RTC

30 'Bath & Bristol Christmas Express'
Paddington, Bristol Temple Meads and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

30 'Bath Christmas Market'
London Victoria, Bath Spa and return. Diesel hauled between Salisbury and London (return only).
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

December

2 'Bath Christmas Market'
Northampton, Bath Spa and return. Diesel hauled between Northampton and London.
Loco: TBA. ST

3 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Swindon, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

4 'Sherbourne Christmas Carol'
London Victoria, Yeovil Junction and return.
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. RTC

4 'Bath Christmas Market'
Dorridge, Bath Spa and return. Diesel hauled between Dorridge and London.
Loco: TBA. ST

4 'The White Rose'
Coleshill Parkway, York and return.
Loco: 7029 *Clun Castle* or 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

5 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Cardiff Central, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

6 'Bath Christmas Market'
Southend Central, Bath Spa and return. Diesel hauled between Southend and London.
Loco: 34046 *Braunton*. SD

7 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Oxford, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

7 'Mancunian Christmas Marketeer'
Salisbury, Manchester Victoria and return.
Loco: D1015 *Western Champion*. PT

7 'Lincoln Christmas Express'
King's Cross, Lincoln and return.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC.

9 'Bath Christmas Market'
Three Bridges, Bath Spa and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. ST

10 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Holyhead, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

11 'York Yuletide Express'
Norwich, York and return. Diesel hauled between Peterborough and Norwich (return only).
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. RTC

11 'Bath Christmas Market'
Staines, Bath Spa and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. ST

12 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Stafford, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

13 'Chester Christmas Market'
Colchester, Chester and return. Diesel hauled between Colchester and Peterborough.
Loco: 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. SD

14 'The Christmas Cracker'
Wolverhampton, Blaenau Ffestiniog and return.
Locos: 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, D123 *Andania*. IC

14 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Watford Junction, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

14 'Edinburgh Christmas Market'
York, Edinburgh Waverley and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

14 'Bath & Bristol Christmas Express'
Three Bridges, Bath Spa and return. Diesel hauled between Bath Spa and Salisbury (return only).
Loco: 35028 *Clan Line*. RTC

14 Carols at Norwich Cathedral
Kings Cross, Norwich and return; option for rare tracks tour circular from Norwich.
Loco: Class 37 TBA. UKRT

15 'The White Rose'
Cambridge, York and return. Steam hauled outward only.
Loco: 'Black 5' TBC. RTC

17 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Bedford, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

20 'Edinburgh Christmas Pullman'
Potters Bar, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Locos: Midland Pullman HST. MP

20 'Santa Steam Express'
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 70000 *Britannia*. SD

21 'Thames Valley Christmas Cracker'
Rare freight lines tour departing Burton-on-Trent.
Locos: 2x Class 57s TBA. PT

21 'Edinburgh Christmas Market'
York, Edinburgh Waverley and return. Steam hauled throughout.
Loco: TBA. RTC

21 'Santa Steam Express'
Circular tour from London Victoria.
Loco: 34046 *Braunton*. SD

30 'Bo'ness Christmas Explorer'
Bo'ness, Edinburgh Waverley and return.
Loco: 37403 *Isle of Mull*, 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*. SRPS

January

10 'The Capital's Scot'
Euston, Edinburgh, Kings Cross.
Loco: 87002 *Royal Sovereign*. IC

17 'Emperor of the North'
Crewe, Carlisle and return.
Locos: 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, 50050 *Fearless*. IC

The information in this list was correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise you confirm details of a particular trip with the promoter concerned.



On October 27, LMS Black 5 No. 45212 climbs Danesmoor Bank at Clay Cross with a colourful autumnal backdrop. It was working Railway Touring Company's 'Peaks Express' which ran between Preston and Derby. ROBERT FALCONER

Regular Tours

'The Polar Express'
W/Es until December 22 + Dec 16, 20, 23
Out and back trip from Birmingham Moor Street.
Loco: 4079 *Clun Castle* or 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. VT

'The Polar Express'
Fris-Suns December 6-22 + Dec 23
Out and back trip from Euston. Steam hauled.
Loco: 'Black Five' TBC. PNP Events

Tour promoters

A1SLT	A1 Steam Locomotive Trust 01325 488215
BEL	Belmond Pullman 0845 0772 222
BLS	Branch Line Society branchline.uk
HD	Hastings Diesels hastingsdiesels.co.uk
IC	Intercity 0800 038 5364
MP	Midland Pullman midlandpullman.com
NB	Northern Belle northernbelle.co.uk
PT	Pathfinder Tours 01453 835414
RTC	Railway Touring Company 01553 661500
SD	Steam Dreams 01483 209888
SRPS	Scottish Railway Preservation Society 0131 202 1033
SR	Statesman Rail 0345 310 2458
ST	Saphos Trains 0800 038 5320
UKRT	UK Railtours 01438 715050
VT	Vintage Trains 0121 708 4960
WCR	West Coast Railways 0333 996 6720

TABLE ONE: TIVERTON LOOP TO PLYMOUTH

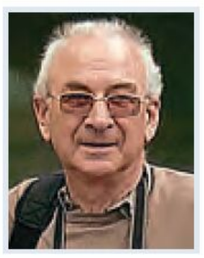
Date	Friday, September 27, 2024
Train	6.32am Birmingham New Street to Plymouth
Lead Loco	GWR 7P 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle*
Train Loco	GWR 7P 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mont Edgcumbe*
Lead Loco Driver	Andy Taylor
Lead Loco Fireman	Simon Horobin
Train Loco Driver	Alastair Meanley
Train Loco Fireman	Sam Perry
Load	12 coaches, 424 tons tare, 455 tons gross
Weather	Fine
Recorder	Alan Rawlings, ninth coach

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Tiverton Loop	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
MP 180	0.55		02	47	48
Cullompton	1.89		04	06	68
MP 183	3.55		05	31	76/77
Hele	6.06		07	30	76
Silverton	7.31		08	29	76
Stoke Canon LC	10.75		11	12	77
Strafford's Bridge	12.13		12	19	73
Cowley Bridge Jct	13.20	15.30	13	15	55
Exeter St David's	14.45	18.00	15	17	28*
Exeter St Thomas	15.38		16	42	49
City Basin Jct	15.80		17	06	56
Marsh Barton	16.58		17	55	64
Exminster	19.24		20	19	69
Powderham FB	21.16		22	04	61
Starcross	23.00		24	22	30* sigs
Dawlish Warren	25.05	35.00	27	05	54
Dawlish	26.70	37.00	29	30	31* sigs
MP 207	27.55		30	45	46
Teignmouth	29.46	42.00	33	01	53
Bishopsteignton	31.55		37	02	13* sigs
MP 212	32.55		40	09	24* sigs
Newton Abbot	34.60	47.00	44	42	31*
West Jct	35.05	49.30	45	37	42
Aller Jct	35.55		46	26	51
MP 216	38.55		47	16	54
MP 216½	37.05		47	51	49
Stoneycombe SB	37.48		48	26	42
MP 217¼	37.80		48	52	37
MP 217½	38.05		49	17	33
Dainton Summit	38.55	53.30	50	12	31
MP 221	41.55		53	36	55
Totnes	43.40	59.00	55	34	60
MP 224	44.55		56	47	51
MP 224½	45.05		57	26	44
MP 225	45.55		58	08	40
Tigley	46.05		58	56	35
MP 226	46.55		59	44	38
Rattery	48.05	67.00	62	02	43
Marley Tunnel	48.33		62	33	42
Brent	50.20		64	52	51
Aish Crossovers	51.05	70.30	65	46	51
Wrangaton	52.55		67	36	56
Bittaford Viaduct	53.60		68	37	62/66
Ivybridge	54.88	75.30	69	52	48*/40*
Cornwood	58.19		73	59	60
Hemerdon Sidings	59.80	82.00	75	40	54
MP 241	61.55		77	42	55
Plympton	62.55		78	54	46
Tavistock Jct	63.55	86.30	80	18	29*
Laira Jct	64.60		81	57	41
Lipson Jct	64.99	89.30	82	34	37
Mutley Tunnel	65.95		84	22	29
Plymouth	66.53	92.30	86	15	6 early

* brakes or speed restriction

WITH FULL REGULATOR

LOCOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE THEN AND NOW



In his latest column, **Don Benn** concludes his appreciation of Vintage Trains' 'Mayflower' trip from Birmingham New Street to Plymouth hauled by GWR 7P 4-6-0s Nos. 7029 *Clun Castle* and 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and compares it with the 'Cornishman' on April 28, 2012, D1007 in 1968, and offers a critique of Welsh coal.

IN my column in the last issue, I began the story of the 'Mayflower' on Friday, September 27, and in the second and concluding part of the tale, Alan Rawlings writes: "After the Bristol false starts, we were in and out of our water stop at Tavistock Loop more or less to time and Table One shows our onward progress to Plymouth.

"After the usual dash down to Exeter we were surprised to be given a non-stop pass of St David's even though we were early, and so we hurried along the sea wall at Dawlish before being checked behind the Exmouth to Paignton stopper.

The assaults of Dainton and Rattery banks speak for themselves; noisy, even from the back half of the train and helped, of course, by the slightly ajar opening lights in the rolling stock. That said, the Castles seemed to be driven nicely within themselves and the minimum at Tigley of 35mph after a fast pass of Totnes was a highlight. All that remained was to cruise across to Hemerdon and drift down to Plymouth, arriving seven early after a thoroughly enjoyable journey handled very professionally by the Vintage crews and West Coast driver/pilotman on what had turned into a pleasant autumn day.

"Table Two covers the return to Exeter where the interest would again focus on climbing, this time of Hemerdon and Dainton. Once again, both Castles demonstrated their command of the task. Speed had risen to the low sixties by Tavistock Junction and the climb was despatched in what appeared to be an effortless performance dropping to 24mph and passing the summit in a little over 11-and-a-quarter minutes. There are not too many double-headed climbs of Hemerdon to compare this with, but it is worth noting that with a 30 ton lighter load, SR West Country 4-6-2 No. 34052 *Braunton* and LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* took 'The Great Britain X' over the top in half a minute less, with a minimum of 33mph after taking the same time to milepost 241. (See Table Four with No. 5043 and Table Five with D1007).

"The final challenge of Dainton started with a clear pass of Totnes at 55mph, rising to 57 by milepost 220, after which the wickedly steep final mile took away 21mph as we crested the summit at 31 before dropping down to Newton Abbot. By comparison, on 'The Great Britain X' the final mile saw a drop of 17mph to 36½. Onward progress was handled comfortably with the charter regaining three minutes on the schedule and halving the late start. The final leg back to Bristol was handled as professionally as the rest of the day. The Castles powered up Whiteball, touching 70 before Tiverton Parkway and topping the summit at 57mph in 21½ minutes recovering the few minutes late start. Thereafter the journey was timed nicely with speed in the low seventies across the Somerset Levels until we ran up behind a late running Severn Beach service behind which we trundled, reaching Bristol



"The safety valves were lifting as we approached Aller Junction and with a huge roar *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* accelerated to 65mph into the dip..."

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September 27, 2024, and WR Castle duo Nos. 7029 and 5043 sit at Plymouth with 'The Mayflower'. ALAN RAWLINGS



No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* passes Ashchurch at speed with 'The Whistling Ghost' to Minehead on May 25, 2013. DON BENN

just five minutes late. This was a well planned and executed trip throughout which the Castles and their crews worked flawlessly.

"Care had been taken to minimise any risk of running such distances with steam on its own and through the day there were glimpses of the Class 20s shadowing us 'in case'. No help was needed, but on a busy network it pays to be cautious."

5043 Excels

By comparison I have included more detail of the work of Bill Warriner on No. 5043 on 'The Cornishman' on Saturday, April 28, 2012. Table Three shows the Exeter to Plymouth section and can be compared to No. 7029 and 5043 in Table One. With nine coaches for 340 tons, it was one of the finest runs ever recorded over this section

TABLE TWO: PLYMOUTH TO EXETER

Date	Friday, September 27, 2024
Train	4.32pm Plymouth to Bristol TM
Lead Loco	GWR 7P 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle*
Train Loco	GWR 7P 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mont Edgcumbe*
Lead Loco Driver	Andy Taylor
Lead Loco Fireman	Simon Scott
Train Loco Driver	Kevin Cronin
Train Loco Fireman	Sam Perry
Load	12 coaches, 424 tons tare, 455 tons gross
Weather	Fine
Recorder	Alan Rawlings, fifth coach

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Plymouth	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
Mutley Tunnel	0.40		02	28	12
Lipson Jct	1.54	3.00	04	30	56
Laira Jct	1.92		05	00	57
Tavistock Jct	2.97	5.00	06	00	63/64
Plympton	3.97		06	57	62
MP 241	4.97		08	00	45
MP 240	5.97		09	35	28
MP 239¾	6.22		10	10	24
MP 239½	6.47		10	47	26
Hemerdon Sidings	6.72	17.00	11	22	26
Cornwood	8.34		13	37	46
Ivybidge Station	10.68		16	17	49
Ivybridge	11.65	22.00	17	54	33*
Bittaford Viaduct	12.94		19	57	40
Wrangaton	13.98		21	24	45
Aish Crossovers	15.48	26.00	23	15	49
Brent	16.33		24	18	47
Marley Tunnel	17.70		25	56	49
Rattery	18.48	29.30	26	53	57*
Tigley	20.48		28	59	58*/60
Totnes	23.13	34.00	31	47	55
MP 221	24.98		33	45	57
MP 220	25.98		34	49	57
MP 219	26.98		35	56	52
Dainton Summit	27.98	40.00	37	24	31
Stoneycombe SB	29.05		38	45	56*
Aller Jct	30.91		40	46	48
Newton Abbot	31.93	45.00	42	03	52
Bishopsteignton	34.98		45	16	62
Teignmouth	37.05	50.30	47	18	54
Dawlish	39.85	53.30	50	21	57/58
Dawlish Warren	41.48	55.00	51	59	62
Starcross	43.53		53	54	63
Powderham FB	45.36		55	37	65
Exminster	47.29		57	26	64
Marsh Barton	49.95		60	01	59
City Basin Jct	50.73		60	56	41
St Thomas	51.15		61	32	31
Exeter St David's	52.08	67.00	64	29	2½ early

* brakes or speed restriction



Nos. 7029 Clun Castle and 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* attract the crowds after arrival back at Bristol with Vintage Trains' September 27 'Mayflower'. ALAN RAWLINGS

TABLE THREE: EXETER TO PLYMOUTH

Date	Saturday, April 28, 2012
Train	6.45am Tyseley to Plymouth
Loco	7P class 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*
Load	Nine coaches, 315½ tons tare, 340 tons gross
Driver	Bill Warriner
Fireman	Alastair Meanley
Timed by	Don Benn GPS
Position	Second coach
Weather	Drizzle, NE wind, cold

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Exeter St Davids	0.00	0.00	00	00	28½ late
				sigs	22*
Exeter St Thomas	0.92		03	31	25
Exminster	4.79		08	00	66
Powderham	6.72		09	44	65
Starcross	8.55		11	26	66½
				sigs	41*
Dawlish Warren	10.60	21.00	13	49	53
Dawlish	12.25	24.00	15	30	61
Teignmouth	15.01	28.00	15	51	63
Bishopsteignton	17.10		20	15	61/64
Newton Abbot	20.15	33.00	23	08	59*
Aller Junction	21.19		24	13	60½
MP 215½	21.60		24	38	65
MP 216 ½	22.60		25	39	55½
MP 217½	23.60		26	47	41½
Dainton Tunnel In	23.89		27	16	36
Dainton Summit	24.10	40.00	27	36	41½
MP 219 ½	25.60		29	19	62/50½*
Totnes	28.91	47.00	32	59	59
MP 223 ½	29.60		33	45	52
MP 224 ½	30.60		34	55	42½
Tigley	31.60		36	30	36/34
MP 226 ½	32.60		38	10	40½/39
Rattery	33.60		39	38	41
Brent	35.85		42	33	52
Wrangaton	38.10		45	11	49½
Ivybridge	40.43	65.00	47	40	58½/48*
Cornwood	43.74		51	28	56½/51*
Hemerdon	45.39	70.00	53	13	54/51
MP 240	46.10		54	03	62
				sigs	51*
Plympton	48.10		56	06	51
Laira Junction	50.15		58	20	52
				sigs	*
Plymouth	52.04	82.00	63	25	10 late

*brakes or speed restriction
net time 60 minutes

but prompted by a 28 minute late start due to the tardy appearance of the water tanker at Tavistock Loop. The start was slightly delayed by adverse signals and after fairly easy running to Starcross we were checked again, so maybe we were close behind a service train though we now had a clear road to Plympton. Bill held speed close to the limit along the seaside section through Dawlish and Teignmouth and we were able to pass Newton Abbot in 23 minutes 8 seconds, nearly 10 minutes inside the schedule but still 18 minutes late.

The safety valves were lifting as we approached Aller Junction and with a huge roar *Earl of Mount Edgumbe* accelerated to 65mph into the dip at milepost 215½ the foot of the climb to Dainton summit, with gradients as steep as 1-in-57 and 1-in-36 at the top. Speed fell steadily to 51mph at Stoneycombe signalbox and then to 41½ at milepost 217½ and finally to 36 at the tunnel entrance which is the end of the climb. Here the engine, incredibly, was blowing off steam, but then slipped on the damp rails in the tunnel before recovering to 41½ mph at milepost 218 which is taken to be the summit. The time of 2 minutes 38 seconds for the 2.29 miles from milepost 215½ to the tunnel entrance is believed to be a record for any single engine steam hauled train, although SR Merchant Navy No. 35028 *Clan Line,* on a run on June 17, 2012, came close.

Though Dainton is very steep it is relatively short and Rattery is considered by many engineman as being worse as it is far longer at over four-and-a-half miles. On the 1-in-46/52 to Tigley with 5043 speed fell to 34mph but then recovered well to reach 39-41mph on the subsequent 1-in-90/65 to the top at Rattery – just as good as the climb to Dainton, No. 5043 being worked just as hard if not harder. The climbing continued to Wrangaton but the really hard work was over and we drifted down to Plymouth arriving just 10 late after checks in from Plympton in an actual time of 63 minutes 25 seconds and a net time of 60 minutes, one of the fastest recorded with a single steam engine.

Table Four shows the return journey as far as



Right: *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* awaits the signal at Plymouth on April 28, 2012. DON BENN

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Exeter and even without the incentive of a late start Bill showed his mastery of No. 5043, once again recording a very fast time, this time with a clear road.

To complete the work on this section, Table Five shows cCass 42 D1007 *Western Talisman* on 15 coaches for 565 tons on the 10.30am from Plymouth on June 22, 1968. The Western took the longest time to Hemerdon of the three runs and very nearly slipped to a stand with a minimum of 12½mph, albeit with a mammoth load. This was during the era of heavy loads and poor timekeeping, so nothing regarding timekeeping has changed today. We recovered from being 24 late off Westbury to just 10 late at Paddington with a very fine 31 minutes 24 seconds for the 35.83 miles unchecked up from Reading, maximum 86½mph

Welsh Coal

There has been quite a big debate on preservation forums about Welsh coal, so I asked retired engineman Ray Churchill for his views:

"Good Welsh steam coal was very bituminous and had few volatiles, which meant it was virtually smokeless. Great Western engines were built to burn this so they had a deeper grate than other locos. They also had four dampers, whereas other company's locos had two – and some only one.

"The flap on GWR locomotives covered most of the fire hole when raised; this was because it needed more primary air through the ashpan rather than secondary through the fire hole. In steam days the fireman was allowed an hour to prepare his fire, this was because it didn't 'catch-on' very easily and there was much use of the blower. Once hot though, it burned with a short whiteish flame. There was a definite knack to firing it: You fired when the fire was at its hottest (as with all coals really) so the fireman would load his shovel, pull down the flap and direct the coal then raise the flap: This continued in an unhurried fashion until the round was finished. There would be a little puff of smoke at every shovelful as the dust burnt off. The fire would be in the haycock fashion, heaped up just forward of the fire hole tapering off towards the front.

"What of the coal itself? Back in steam days I've seen some mighty big lumps on the tenders of GWR locomotives. Big lumps of hard coal can be split down the grain and cracked into manageable pieces but Welsh coal has no grain. It wants some hefty thwacks to make any impact, each blow sending dusty fragments all over the shop. Some of the dust was so fine that one day after my fireman had put a round on I looked round to see the whole area around the tender was wreathed in microscopic particles of black diamonds hanging in the air. Normally these wouldn't be seen – it was just the way the sun was shining through it. It also had a habit of caking and needed a good rake through with the pricker, and would also swell up into florets like cauliflowers. Over the years the quality deteriorated, leading to Swindon fitting double chimneys to some Castles and Kings which did help improve matters."

I am very grateful to Ray for his views. In the image of No. 5043 at Ashchurch on pages 64/65, you can see the puff of smoke alluded to by Ray. Sandy Smeaton has also sent me details of 'The Mayflower' including the work of the two Class 20s and I hope to include details in a future column. Thanks to Alan, Sandy and Ray for all their thoughts and contributions which help me to keep this column going. HR

Right: No. 5043 reverses through Plymouth during a 'Cornishman' excursion on April 28, 2012. DON BENN

TABLE FOUR: PLYMOUTH TO EXETER

Date	Saturday, April 28, 2012
Train	4.40pm Plymouth to Tyseley
Loco	GWR 7P class 4-6-0 No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*
Load	**Nine coaches, 315½ tons tare, 340 tons gross**
Driver	Bill Warriner
Firemen	Tom Allen and Alastair Meanley
Timed by	Don Benn GPS
Position	Eighth coach
Weather	Cloudy, NE wind, cold

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Plymouth	0.00	0.00	00	00	R/T
Mutley Tunnel	0.40		02	39	17
Lipson Jct	1.54		04	29	57
Laira Junction	1.89		04	56	61½
Tavistock Jct	2.97		06	00	59½/60½
Plympton	3.94		06	59	59
MP 241	4.94		08	09	42½
MP 240 ½	5.44		08	56	33½
MP 240	5.94		10	00	23½/17
MP 239 ½	6.44		11	33	22½
Hemerdon	6.65	11.00	12	06	31
Cornwood	8.30		14	21	47
Ivybridge	11.61	18.00	18	06	54½/52
Wrangaton	13.94		20	47	55/60
Brent	16.29		23	07	51*
Rattery	18.44		25	38	54/56
Tigley	20.44		27	50	50*/60½
Totnes	23.13	33.00	30	33	55½*
MP 222	23.94		31	26	60
MP 221	24.94		32	28	54/52½
MP 220	25.94		33	35	58
MP 219	26.94		34	41	48
MP 218 ½	27.44		35	21	40½
Dainton Summit	27.94	42.00	36	12	30½
Stoneycombe Box	29.01		37	34	65
Aller Junction	30.85		39	22	54*
Newton Abbot	31.89	47.00	40	28	59/63
Teignmouth	37.03	53.00	45	33	55/59½
Dawlish	39.79	57.00	48	28	57
Dawlish Warren	41.44	59.00	50	06	63½
Starcross	43.49		51	55	69
Powderham	45.32		53	26	68
Exminster	47.25		55	16	69½
MP 197	48.94		56	43	66
Exeter St Thomas	51.11		59	06	40*
Exeter St Davids	52.04	70.00	61	28	8½ early

* brakes or speed restriction



***Clun Castle* sits patiently in the sun at Plymouth on September 27.** ALAN RAWLINGS

TABLE FIVE:PLYMOUTH TO NEWTON ABBOT

Date	June 22, 1968
Train	10.30am Plymouth to Paddington
Engine	Western Co-Co Diesel Hydraulic D1007 *Western Talisman*
Load	15 coaches, 523 tons tare, 565 tons gross
Weather	Damp with drizzle
Recorder	Don Benn

	miles	sched	mins	secs	speed
Plymouth	0.00	0.00	00	00	10 late
Lipson Jct	1.50		04	03	44
Laira Jct	1.95		04	43	41*
Tavistock Jct	2.85		06	02	50½
Plympton	4.05		07	16	53
Hemerdon SB	6.70		13	55	12½
Cornwood	8.35		16	30	44
Ivybridge	10.80		19	17	51½
Bittaford	13.00		22	01	53
Wrangaton	14.10		23	08	54½/51*
Brent	16.30		25	52	53½
			sigs stop		
Rattery SB	18.60		29	57	0*
			30	27	
Tigley SB	20.45		34	37	45/*
Totnes	23.15	39.00	39	37	
	0.00	0.00	00	00	
MP 220					44
Dainton SB	4.80		08	12	16
Stonecombe SB	5.90		10	21	47/50
Aller Jct	7.60		12	21	48*
Newton Abbot	8.70	16.00	15	19	

* brakes or speed restriction



GWR joins LNER in Talisman steam nameplate selection

WITH *Dante* and *Milton* already in the bag, as reported in last month's column, Talisman Railwayana's nameplate selection at its November 30 auction has been extended by *Newton Hall* and cabside numberplate from GWR No. 5909, built at Swindon in June 1931 and withdrawn from Cardiff Canton (88A) in July 1962. In the same category, but from a more modern era, comes *Titan Star* from January 1965 Crewe-built Class 47 Co-Co D1652/47848.

Returning to the steam main line, a late addition was smokebox numberplate 60157 from Peppercorn-designed, BR-built A1 Pacific *Great Eastern*, and again leaping the divide to later technology, there's an E3045 cabside numberplate from a Class 84 electric Bo-Bo that was built by North British of Glasgow in March 1961 for operating on the WCML.

A brass worksplate engraved 'No. 1871 Doncaster 1938' but lacking LNER or any other identification will also be going under the hammer. Talisman boss Roger Phipps has turned to every reference book he can think of to unearth more information, as that is the works number of No. 4469 *Gadwall*, but his research has proved unsuccessful.

No. 4469 was a member of Gresley's iconic A4 class that was



renamed *Sir Ralph Wedgwood* in March 1939 after the LNER chief officer, but which was severely damaged in an air raid on York on April 29, 1942, and subsequently scrapped, with its name being transferred to classmate No. 4466.

Roger said No. 4469 was built at Doncaster in 1938 as works No. 1871, which aligns with the enigmatic plate, but he cannot explain the absence of LNER identification, which he would expect to be included. "The plate, which is not a replica and was definitely carried, is from the estate of a late and long-established railwayana collector who was highly regarded and would never purchase anything that was a replica or of dubious provenance. It is an anomaly that I cannot explain, and my catalogue description will make that clear," he said.

Talisman is the last major railwayana specialist to hold saleroom auctions, and these take place at Newark Showground starting at 10am.



A4 is a chart-topper at Vectis auction

GRESLEY live steam was the winner in a Vectis model trains auction on October 24, when a 5in gauge A4 No. 60023 *Golden Eagle* sold for £8500. The locomotive on which the 6ft 5in long model was based was built at Doncaster in December 1936 and withdrawn from Aberdeen Ferryhill (61B) in October 1964 after a swansong on the three-hour Glasgow-Aberdeen expresses.

Runner-up with a realisation of £1500 – nearly 12 times its middle estimate of £130 – was a Marklin of Germany gauge one LNWR sleeping car, and third at £1200 came an unfinished 5in gauge live steam GWR 2-6-2T. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).

Wartime excursions have timely appeal

A MIDLAND Railway wartime 800-page leather-bound volume of excursion trains' working timetables covering the period between July and December 1914 sold for £410 at the Paperchase quarterly email and postal sale held on October 14-29.

Two other lots also went for £410, the first comprising 100 black-and-white negatives of former GWR locomotives at various South Wales locations in 1957-59 and the second covering the same subject during 1957-60. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 12½%.

Who will win the four nations head-to-head?

RAILWAYS from all four home nations feature in a six-day online auction being held by photographs, slides, negatives and paperwork specialist JustaClickAgo, ending on November 24.

Among the photograph selection are just over 100 black-and-white prints in a single lot taken from 1958 to 1961 by an unknown photographer of mainly Scottish railtours over closed branches, but also at a variety of sheds including Haymarket, St. Margaret's, Bathgate, Parkhead and St Boswells.

A collection of 41 large-format glass negatives taken by Henry Casserley in the 1930s of Kent & East Sussex Railway locomotives and stations are also in the auction, as are seven reels of cine film of such locations as York, Chester, Shap, Perth, the Isle of Wight, Clapham Junction and Ireland in 1968-70.

Three colour slides being sold as a single lot depict one-off BR electric E2001, which was built for BR's Western Region by Metropolitan-Vickers in December 1951 as a gas turbine Co-Co locomotive numbered 18100 but in 1958 was converted to electric propulsion as an A1A-A1A and renumbered E1000 and later E2001. In this guise it was used for testing the 25kv AC electrification of the WCML, but was placed in store at the end of 1961, officially withdrawn in April 1968, and cut up in 1972.

Paperwork is another sector in the auction, among which is a collection dating from the 1870s onwards of 28 letters, goods notes, parcel waybills, and passenger traffic receipts from a number of Welsh railway companies, and also a selection of 20 original Railway Clearing House junction diagrams from 1902 and later.

A register covering the period 1959 to 1967 from Ashton-in-Makerfield signalbox, which is a former St. Helens & Wigan Junction Railway 'box four miles south of Wigan, is also in the sale.



BR Western Region gas turbine No. 18100 heads a 12-coach train on the 1-in-42 Hemerdon Bank between Exeter and Plymouth on March 4, 1952. The Co-Co locomotive was converted to electric propulsion in 1958 and renumbered E2001, and three colour slides of the locomotive in that guise are being sold in a JustaClickAgo auction that ends on November 24. TRANSPORT TREASURY/ALAN LATHEY

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Architectural and geography lessons from GCRA



A CASTLE and two Halls will bring an architectural touch to Great Central's quarterly flagship sale on December 7, when nameplates *Kingswear Castle*, *Walton Hall* and *Grantley Hall*, from Nos. 5015, 5918 and 6924, will seek new homes.

No. 5015 was built in July 1932 and taken out of service in April 1963 when a resident of Cardiff East Dock (88L). The Castle after which it was named was an artillery fort constructed between 1491 and 1502 to protect Dartmouth harbour.

It was one of the country's first such forts, and is now Grade I-listed and run as a holiday let by the Landmark Trust.

Nos. 5918 and 6924 were built respectively at Swindon in July 1931 and August 1941, and withdrawn in September 1962 and October 1965, both from Oxford (81F).

Moving down the corridor from the history department to the geography classroom is *Solomon Islands* from LMS Jubilee No. 45603, built by North British of Glasgow in May 1935 and withdrawn from Nuneaton (2B) in December 1962.

It was named after a country of six major and more than 900 smaller Pacific islands north-east of Australia that was a British protectorate that gained self-governance in 1976, although King Charles III remains the monarch and head of state.

From the Southern Railway comes *Vivien* from King Arthur No. 30748, an August 1922 Eastleigh product that was withdrawn from Basingstoke (70D) in September 1957. Great Central auctioneer Mike Soden has a story about this plate which he understands to be true and so is worth repeating.

A husband and wife were standing on a Southern Region station, and as the wife was expecting, they were debating what to name their unborn child. At that point, No. 30748 came into view, and the decision was made there and then to name the baby Vivien, whether boy or girl.

He was a son, who is now deceased, and many years later he purchased the plate from BR on the 4-6-0's withdrawal and so became its first owner.

Within the GWR cabside numberplate selection is 6003 from *King George IV*, and lower down the numerical order, 60 from an ex-Rhymney Railway 0-6-2T, 2176 from a former Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway 0-6-0ST, and 3015 from a ROD 2-8-0.

Standard selection

Onward to smokebox numberplates, and to 7019 from *Fowey Castle* and 7819 from *Hinton Manor*, and from Standard locomotives Nos. 75008 and 77001, and there is also 84014, one of a class of 2MT 2-6-2T engines that was due to be sent to the Isle of Wight to replace the island's ageing Class O2 locomotives but never made it across the Solent.

Among the worksplates is an LNER 1927 Darlington example from D49 class 4-4-0 No. 62701 *Derbyshire*, and from the same railway company come four shedplates that were fixed to the roofs of cab interiors – Liverpool, Kings Lynn, Nev. Hill (Neville Hill) and Tweedm'th (Tweedmouth).

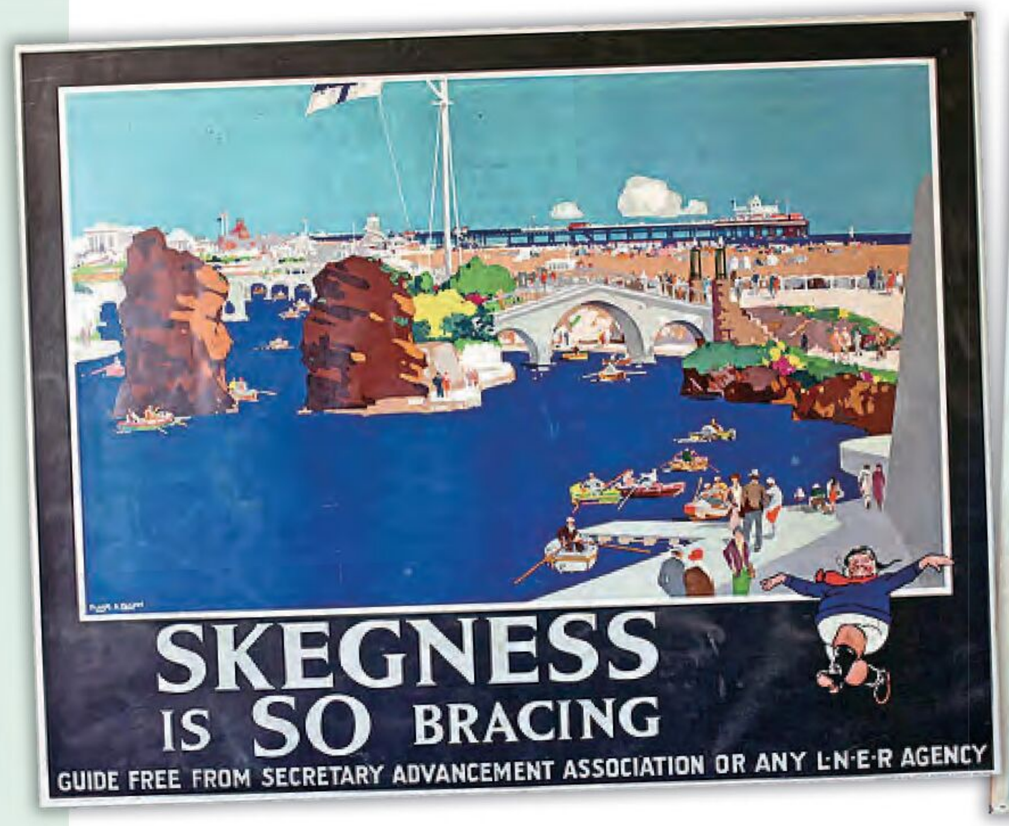
Totem platform signs are currently on a roll, and GCRA weighs in with, among others, BR(M) Horton-in-Ribblesdale on the Settle and Carlisle Line, BR(S) Bere Alston, and BR(W) representatives Aberdare High Level, Weston-Super-Mare General and Westbourne Park, the last being assigned to the auction by a railwayana collector living in New Zealand.

The auction starts at 10am and will be live online.

Railwayana Auction Calendar

- **Ends November 24**
  JustaClickAgo
  (photographs, slides and negatives)
- **November 22**
  Great Central Railwayana
  ('ephemera' sale)
- **November 28**
  Vectis
  (model trains)
- **November 29**
  Onslows
  (posters)
- **November 30**
  Talisman Railwayana
- **December 7**
  Great Central Railwayana
- **December 10/11**
  Special Auction Services
  (model trains)
- **December 13**
  Lacy Scott & Knight
  (railwayana and model trains)
- **December 21**
  Thirsk Railwayana

➜ An unnumbered Class 4 Stanier 2-6-4T built in 3½in gauge live steam was the top-selling railway model in a railwayana, toys and collectors' models sale held by Lacy Scott & Knight at Bury St Edmunds on October 25, when it went under the hammer for £1500, excluding buyer's premium of 22½% (+ VAT).







Onslows to recall the glory days of railway posters

THE glory days of British railway posters will be brought into sharp focus in a live online auction being held by Onslows on November 29 which will include works by artists who were at the top of their game in the interwar years as the 'Big Four' railway companies used their artistic skills to entice travellers throughout the country.

From the GWR comes an Exeter Cathedral poster by Fred Taylor (1875-1963) issued in 1930, and a joint GWR/LMS example from 1935 by Leonard Richmond (1889-1965) promoting Wales, while two posters by Leslie Carr (1891-1965) issued by the SR in 1929 and 1931 feature Canterbury and Southampton Docks.

In addition to the poster issued jointly with the GWR, others from the LMS include Holyhead by Norman Wilkinson (1878-1971) issued in 1930 and another by the same artist that was released in 1927 in conjunction with White Star Line that illustrated Royal Scot No. 6152 *The King's Dragoon Guardsman* dockside with an ocean liner.

The LMS also commissioned Sep E Scott (1879-1965) for poster work during the same period, two of which will be in the auction, a 1930 'Holidays are happy days at Lytham St Annes' and a Morecambe and Heysham promotion that was launched in 1935.

From the LNER there is a 'Skegness is so bracing' poster by Frank Mason (1875-1965) dating from 1930 that is estimated to sell for up to £5000, while Fred Taylor was still active in the post-Nationalisation era, and one such work by him promoting Wells in Somerset that will be going under the hammer was issued by BR's Western Region in 1950. The auction, which also includes the sale of an OO-gauge model train collection, is live online and starts at 1pm.

Bidders have it all mapped out

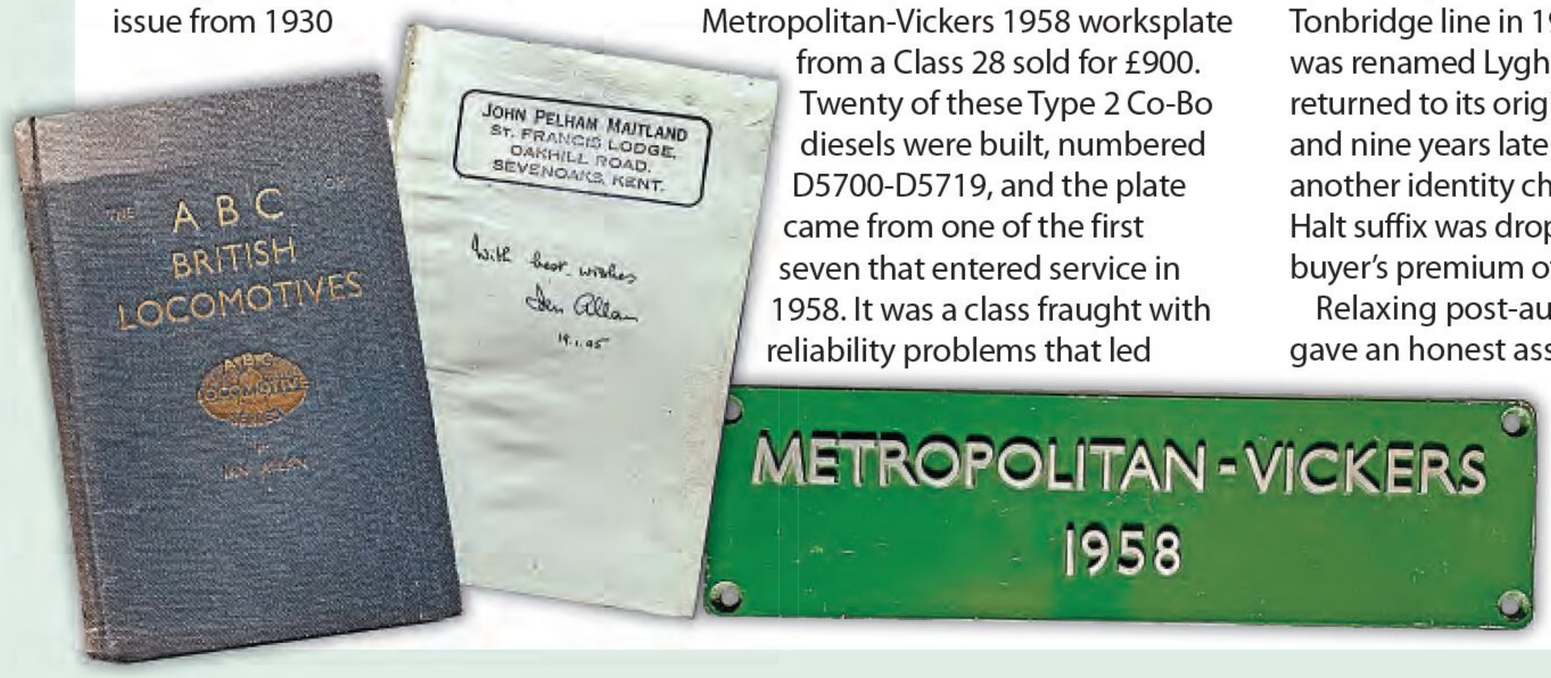
UNDERGROUND poster maps dominated the headlines in a Transport Auctions of London live online sale on October 26, with the undisputed star being a 1941 wartime edition that went under the hammer for £4000.

In his catalogue notes, TAL boss Michael Wickham said Harry Beck, the creator of the ground-breaking diagrammatic map that was featured on the poster, was required to duplicate or triplicate the names of interchange stations, and also to use the same colour for the District and Metropolitan lines, both of which were against his better judgement.

Runner-up was another London Underground poster map, a pre-Beck issue from 1930 that went for £1700, behind which at £1100 was a 1933 first edition Beck pocket map and a poster map, one of the last pre-Beck issues dating from 1932, that sold for £750.

The LU map bonanza was joined at £1100 by an original second edition Ian Allan ABC of British Locomotives Combined Volume published in 1944, which included the attraction on the first inside page of being signed by Ian Allan himself beneath the stamp of John Pelham Maitland, assumed to be the Maitland who was running shed superintendent at Nine Elms depot in Battersea.

Main line heritage modern traction then had a say in the auction, when a Metropolitan-Vickers 1958 worksplate from a Class 28 sold for £900. Twenty of these Type 2 Co-Bo diesels were built, numbered D5700-D5719, and the plate came from one of the first seven that entered service in 1958. It was a class fraught with reliability problems that led to them often being used in pairs to cover failures, and all had been withdrawn by 1968.



Staying with BR in the 1950s, a collection of 280 publicity brochures and leaflets for UK and continental travel, many featuring cover illustrations by some of the leading poster artists of the time, went for £650, and a Southern Region Leigh Halt totem for £550. This station was opened by the SECR on the Redhill-Tonbridge line in 1911 as Leigh Halt, was renamed Lyghe Halt in 1917, returned to its original name in 1960, and nine years later went through another identity change when the Halt suffix was dropped. Prices exclude buyer's premium of 15% (+ VAT).



Relaxing post-auction, Michael gave an honest assessment of events and the current market: "There is clear evidence of buyers' concerns about the economic prospects. While registrations by potential bidders were at normal levels, fingers were hovering over the 'bid' button, with people obviously thinking hard before committing. Fortunately, the former at least matched the latter, so our overall result was still at normal levels, and thus most pleasing in the circumstances."

Of the £4000 realisation for the 1941 London Underground poster map, he said: "It was a fair result, but I might have expected a wartime Beck poster map to do a bit better in more normal times."

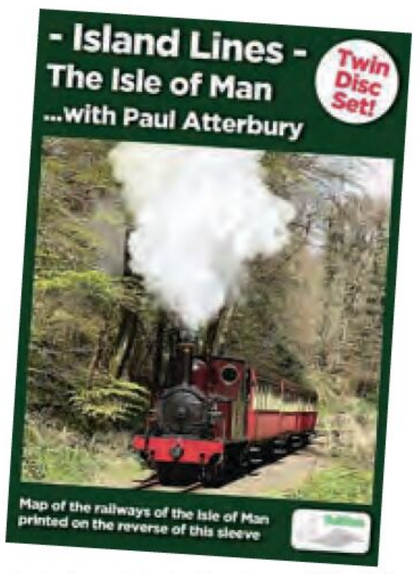


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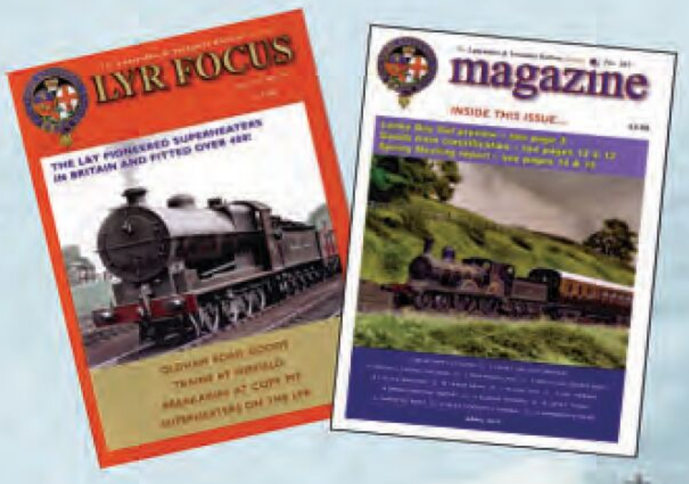
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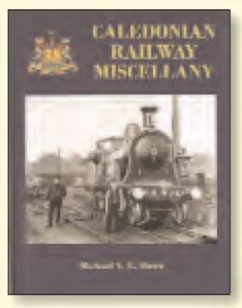
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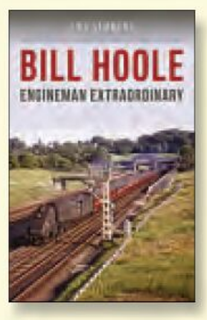
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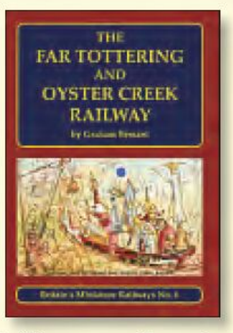
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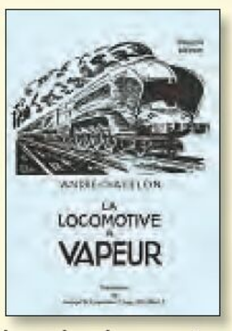
The biography by PWB Semmens of Bill Hoole, the Eastern Region engine man who became the best known "runner" on British Railways; Hoole set a post war British record of 112mph on the 23rd May 1959 on A4 Class No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. Like many top link drivers he was very involved in teaching new enginemen both on the mechanics of the steam locomotive, and how to get the best out of it. On retirement he moved to North Wales, and took up driving on the Festiniog Railway, 206 pages and 80 B&W photos. Paperback. A REALLY good read - this has just been reprinted after many years unavailable.

The Far Tottering and Oyster Creek Railway • Bessant • £14.98



In the UK, 1951 was the year of the Festival of Britain, held on the South Bank of the Thames close to Waterloo Station. Upstream in Battersea was to be found the 'Festival Gardens', in essence a gigantic fairground. This was populated by weird and wonderful contraptions invented by Rowland Emett, the very popular cartoonist of the day. Of these, none was weirder and more wonderful than "The Far Tottering and Oyster Creek Railway which featured in many of Emett's cartoons, and was recreated in 15" gauge in the Festival Gardens, and transported 1000s of passengers during the Garden's two year life. Contained in this 56 page A4 format book is the whole story of this wonderous railway, the men involved in its creation, with maps, drawings of infrastructure and the 3 diesel-electric powered, steam outline, locomotives - "Nellie", "Neptune" and "Wild Goose". The latter operated the airborne service! There are also a reasonable number of B&W and colour photographs. A memorably innocent time and event recalled!

La Locomotive a Vapeur • Chapelon trans Carpenter • £75.45



Written by the great French engineer André Chapelon, the man responsible for what were the world's most efficient and, on a pound for pound basis, most powerful steam locomotives ever built. The French edition was published in 1952, and in it Chapelon reviews in detail developments in the design and construction of all the steam locomotive's major parts, and compares the merits of simple and compound expansion. He then looks, again in detail, at the major standard gauge locomotive designs worldwide of the 20th Century, including his own. Translated from the French by George Carpenter, this edition includes various addenda updating Chapelon's work to the end of commercial steam, looks at Chapelon's unbuilt designs, and reviews the work of those who have continued to develop advanced steam locomotives. A book nobody interested in the history of the steam locomotive in the 20th century should be without. 659 A4 format pages, over 450 B &W photos, drawings, diagrams and charts, plus 41 colour illustrations. Card Binding.
NB. Our English edition of this book was published in 2000, and we have taken the opportunity of correcting some typos etc., in this new printing. In other respects it differs in having a card cover (as did the 1953 French original) and the 6 fold-out drawings at the back of the book are now loose rather than tipped in. These two changes mean the price in 2024 is only slightly greater than it was in 2000.

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FROM FORESTS TO VALLEYS:
JOINT GLOUCESTERSHIRE GALAS PULL THE CROWDS

Over the weekend of November 2/3, two heritage lines in Gloucestershire each ran an end-of-season gala, with a joint ticket offering discounted travel at each. It was a move that shows what our heritage lines are all about – cooperation between one another. With both events featuring a locomotive fresh from overhaul, **Owen Hayward** started this journey at the Dean Forest Railway…

With September and October having been prime gala time for enthusiasts, November has in the past tended to be a month with little else happening for those looking for a steam fix. In recent years that has changed with some lines planning events to avoid clashing with some of the hefty competition from around the UK.

On the north side of the river Severn at Lydney, the Dean Forest Railway's own gala was poised to be a celebration of Great Western steam, with residents 5700 0-6-0PT No. 9681 and 4575 2-6-2T small prairie No. 5541 being joined by one of this year's roaming gala regulars – 5600 0-6-2T No. 6695, which in 2024 has been seen away from its Swindon & Cricklade home at both the West Somerset Railway (May 3-6) and the Mid Hants Railway (October 4-6).

First for the Forest

Outshopped from Armstrong Whitworth's Newcastle works in October 1928, No. 6695 was originally deployed to Tyseley until the following April when it moved to Leamington for outer suburban passenger services.

It racked up eight different shed allocations, with the final one – Radyr, Cardiff from October 1963 – ultimately being where it was withdrawn in July 1964, with more than 620,000 miles under its belt.

Saved by the 56XX Tank Group (which later became the 6695 Locomotive Group) in May 1979, it was taken to Swanage where it was dismantled and restoration commenced; it was not until 2006, however, that No. 6695 would finally return to steam.

In 2015, it was the focus of rather unwanted attention when, during transit from Swanage to Williton on the WSR for overhaul, the lorry trailer on which it was being conveyed collapsed beneath it. In 2017, the locomotive's owning



A pair of firsts: Visiting 5600 0-6-2T No. 6695 climbs towards Norchard's high level platform on November 2, while Peckett No. 2147 *Uskmouth No. 1* tries to match its pace with a brake van on the low level line. The visit of No. 6695 marked the first-known time an example of this class has run through the Forest of Dean, while the Peckett (which ran the DFR's first ever trains in 1971) had returned to steam for the first time since 1993. OWEN HAYWARD



The signalman takes his position ready to receive the token from the driver of No. 9681 as it brings its branch line set into Norchard low level. OWEN HAYWARD



No. 6695 weaves its way through the Royal Forest of Dean with a service bound for Parkend. OWEN HAYWARD

group reached an agreement with the WSR that would have seen No. 6695 become resident in Somerset for 25 years.

However, circumstances changed and two years later it was announced that the S&CR would be its new home. The locomotive moved there later that year for the overhaul to be completed which saw it return to steam in September 2022, before it debuted on service trains at the start of the following year.

Its appearance at the event is believed to have been the first time that an example of this class has run on the former Cinderford branch not just in preservation, but any point in time under the line's ownership by both the GWR and BR.

The DFR had additionally been due to welcome WR 9400 0-6-0PT No. 9466 from the WSR as a gala guest, however, during inspection in the weeks beforehand an undisclosed issue was discovered that meant it could no longer attend. A substitute was sought but unfortunately nothing could be confirmed as a replacement in sufficient time.

Despite this, the event still boasted four locomotives in steam, with the three Western Region tank engines being supplemented by newly overhaul Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 2147 *Uskmouth No. 1*. Built in 1952 for the Central Electricity Generating Board's Uskmouth power station, it arrived on the DFR in 1971 and had the honour of operating the then-fledgling heritage line's brake van rides at its first Parkend open day. Last operational in 1993, it was deemed too small for services along the 4¼miles between Lydney Junction and Parkend and was put aside awaiting its turn in the overhaul queue.

Keen to see the locomotive play its part in celebrating the railway's half centenary in 2021, *Uskmouth No. 1* was stripped for overhaul in 2019, with the working benefiting from a total of £15,000 from two different grants.

Passing the test

While the Covid-19 pandemic put paid to that dream, work nevertheless continued. It passed its final steam test on October 24, with a test run to Parkend a week later. During this run a fault materialised which risked No. 2147 also having to miss the event, however, shed volunteers pulled out all the stops to effect repairs the following day, enabling it to run as planned.

While Nos. 5541, 6695 and 9681 ran full line services, interspersed with Lydney-Norchard shuttles, the Peckett gave brake van rides within station limits at Norchard Low Level; it had previously been booked to undertake these duties at Parkend, though with a repair having only just been completed, combined with the unavailability of GWR district inspector's saloon No. 80943 which was undergoing bogie repairs and a repaint, it was understandably deployed closer to shed. This did, to the delight of many, open up opportunities for parallel running, with the Peckett and its Queen Mary brake van regularly galloping along the low-level branch alongside service trains climbing towards the upper station platform.

The weekend marked the last gala appearance of No. 5541, which will be withdrawn after the Christmas services for overhaul having seen out an extension to its ticket that was granted at the end of 2023.

A railway spokesman advised that it would be unlikely to see the small prairie enter the workshops until work to return Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST Works No. 3163 *Sapper* to service had been completed.

In the meantime, No. 9681 will continue to ply its trade while it awaits the DFR's second resident pannier tank, classmate No. 9682, to return to traffic, the overhaul of which has been taking place at Lydney with new bunker and cab platework being drilled and bolted together pending future riveting. The acquisition and manufacturing of some of the missing components, many of which were stolen during a raid at Southall when stored there under ownership of the GWR Preservation Group, has also been ongoing.



No. 5541 storms away from Norchard high level on November 2 while *Uskmouth No. 1* awaits its next run at the low level platform below. OWEN HAYWARD



Making its final gala appearance before withdrawal for overhaul at the end of the year, small prairie No. 5541 approaches Parkend with its demonstration ballast train. ANDREW SIMMONDS

…the Heritage Railway man then crossed the river to visit the Avon Valley Railway, where an iconic WR tank engine was to be found stealing the show.

For its first end-of-season event since before the pandemic, the Avon Valley Railway line-up for its End of Season Gala looked a pretty-enticing affair for those seeking to make a weekend of things in the South West.

With a locomotive per mile rostered to be in service, the inclusion of a fresh-out-the-box 1400 0-4-2T was undoubtedly the highlight, particularly with an autotrailer being brought in specifically to run with it.

The overhaul of No. 1450 has been an incredibly swift job when you consider it was withdrawn only in December 2020, being moved to the Flour Mill workshops in Bream for work to be carried out there. The boiler test was carried out in August and by late October it had not only been reassembled but transported to Bitton for running-in on the AVR.

Built in 1935, No. 1450 spent much of its working life allocated to Oxford shed from where it worked services on the branch to Abingdon. After a time moving around the Western Region, it was briefly to be found on the Southern Region's steeply-graded Lyme Regis branch.

Withdrawal came at Exmouth in 1965, after which it was purchased by the Dart Valley (later South Devon) Railway and moved to Buckfastleigh. A mainstay of services in the 1970s and 80s, it's now normally on the Severn Valley Railway under ownership of Push Pull Ltd.



Newly overhauled WR 0-4-2T No. 1450 gathers speed as it departs from Bitton on November 3 with autocoach No. 232 in tow. OWEN HAYWARD

Hawksworth autotrailer third No. 232 was built in 1951. After entering preservation at the Paignton & Dartmouth railway, the non-driving end was fitted with a corridor connection gangway to enable it to be used as an observation vehicle with access from the adjoining vehicle.

Looking for a home

Eventually ending up as surplus to requirements there, it moved to the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in 2010 where the modified end reverted to its as-built configuration.

Having been in regular service there since, with the sale of push-pull fitted 6400 0-6-0PT No. 6435 earlier this year (which saw it move to the West Somerset Railway), it is once again surplus to requirements and has been recently advertised for sale. Interested parties should contact managing director David Nelson-Brown by emailing david.nelson@bodminrailway.co.uk for further information.

While No. 1450 shuttled back and forth along the three miles between Oldland Common and



The autotrain climbs past Field Grove Farm shortly after departure from Avon Riverside. ADAM ASHFORD





Austerity No. 3839 *Wimblebury* brings the goods up through Barrow Hill as it climbs the gradient away from Avon Riverside on November 2.
ADAM ASHFORD

Right: No. 1450 bursts out from Cherry Gardens bridge as it heads for Oldland Common.
OWEN HAYWARD

Below: Polish TKH 0-6-0T *Karel* simmers at Bitton during the evening of November 2.
JOSEPH DEAN / AVR



Avon Riverside in autotrain mode, Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST No. 3839 *Wimblebury* (on long term loan from the Foxfield Railway) and AVR resident Polish TKH49 0-6-0T No. 4015 *Karel* were rostered to support on a second passenger rake of Mk. 1 carriages as well as a mixed goods train.

Unfortunately, a spanner was thrown into the works at the 11th hour when a defective point blade was discovered at Oldland Common; while the point was passed to allow locomotives into the loop from the platform line, movements the other way were not possible. A late revision to the timetable was required the night before to facilitate a required shunt release for incoming freight trains when a passenger service was already occupying the platform there.

This was, unfortunately, not to be the only setback that volunteers would be faced with; on the morning of November 3 an issue with the supply to the water tower at Bitton meant that the tank was not refilling adequately enough in time to provide for three steam locomotives. Very quickly *Karel* was put to bed in the yard, and while organisers tried to plan a new timetable with hopes of keeping both *Wimblebury* and No. 1450 in service and still allowing sufficient time to take water, very quickly plans were revised again that saw the austerity also withdrawn.

With the 0-4-2T continuing to shuttle up and down, class 31 No. 31101 was called upon to work the Mk. 1 rake while a planned afternoon outing of the freight was binned.

Pleasing numbers

Despite fate's efforts to thwart matters, AVR trustee Joseph Dean said: "Around 400 tickets were sold across both days, with far more being sold on the door than we had anticipated. Obviously there was much appetite for the autotrain."

He added that the joint ticket between the AVR and DFR had proven successful too. "We share a number of volunteers with them, so with their gala at the same time as our event, the idea of doing a ticket offer was born. It was great to come together and put this on showing unison and encourage the public to visit both railways over the weekend.

"It was fantastic to see an incredible turnout across the event, particularly to help us round off our 50th anniversary year. To bring 1450 in alongside autocoach No. 232 allowed us to bring a preservation first to the AVR, allowing our passengers to ride in a different style of coach and enjoy a quintessential Great Western tank engine."

No. 1450 departed Bitton shortly after the event to head for the SVR where it would continue running-in ahead of its first booked public outing there at the January 4/5 winter steam gala that kicks off the line's 60th anniversary year.

The event will see up to five locomotives in action; No. 1450 is due to be paired with some of the restored GWR toplight carriages each day. On the Saturday evening it will double head with 0-6-0PT No. 7714.

The SVR will also be hosting the largest gathering of representatives from the UK's heritage railways on January 5 to kickstart a year of Rail200 celebrations; for details log on to svr.co.uk HR

TAKE A TRIP THROUGH THE TREASURES OF CHRISTIE COUNTRY

The Cholsey & Wallingford Railway is short compared to many of the UK's standard gauge former BR heritage lines, but it offers a gem of a journey for visitors, especially for fans of the best-selling novelist and longtime local resident Agatha Christie, as **Nicola Fox** discovered.

Halfway between Oxford and Reading and comprising a former GWR branch line lies the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway, running for a mere 2½ miles through the South Oxfordshire countryside, you might be forgiven for thinking that this was a line of little consequence, with very few tales to tell. Delve a little deeper and there is much more to this gem of a line than first meets the eye.

Originally just over three miles long, the C&WR is all that was ever built of a line that was proposed to link Wallingford to Watlington.

The original plan in 1864 aimed to build a branch from Moulsford (originally somewhat confusingly named Wallingford Road) to Wallingford, with the intention to build a further railway from Wallingford on to Watlington. Moulsford station was closed in 1892 in favour of the newly constructed Cholsey & Moulsford station on the main line, which was closer to the current junction with the Wallingford branch. Throughout its life, Cholsey & Moulsford station was commonly referred to as simply Cholsey, eventually being formally renamed as such.

Initially operating as the Wallingford & Watlington Railway, the railway was the first GWR branch to be built in standard gauge (other existing GWR standard gauge branches having previously been converted from broad gauge). With unfortunate timing, the line opened in 1866 in the midst of a financial crash. Combined with low passenger numbers, this meant that the costs of building the required bridge over the River Thames at Benson were too prohibitive and the planned extension beyond Wallingford to Watlington (six or more miles) was never realised.

Early years

Sometimes referred to as the Wallingford branch, during its years of service the C&WR became known locally by a different name, that of the Wallingford Bunk or Bunk line. According to legend, this name arises from an incident in the early 20th century, when the locomotive departed Cholsey & Moulsford station leaving its carriages behind, effectively 'doing a bunk.' This action was supposedly no act of forgetfulness or laziness by the crew in failing to do the coupling, but rather the result of two local pranksters, Harold and Len Gale. The story has it that the two brothers returned 'rather merry from watching the football in Reading and – unnoticed by driver or footplate crew – sneakily uncoupled the locomotive while it waited in the bay platform.

The engine chuffed off, getting as far as the bridge next to St Mary's Church, (a considerable distance!) before the error was noticed. Had the gradient not fallen away at this point and the driver not realised he wasn't having to break as much as usual to halt the train, there is no telling how far they would have got.

Another earlier, more dramatic (and verifiable!) story of the line took place on January 24, 1899, when a series of failures by the train crew and a porter at Cholsey led to the emergency vacuum braking system not being connected on the 11.02am departure.

Travelling at above accepted speeds, the handbrake was not enough to arrest the progress of the train on greasy rails and the train demolished the wooden buffer stops at Wallingford, resulting in injuries to 10 passengers and the guard.



GWR pannier No. 4612 visiting from the Bodmin & Wenford Railway with St Mary's Church, the resting place of Agatha Christie, in the background on September 7, 2021. PHILIP WARRINGTON



The first steam train from Wallingford in 1988. PHILIP WARRINGTON



Laying the tracks into Cholsey on March 28, 1993. PHILIP WARRINGTON



Above: The last BR freight train over the branch takes wagons from Pauls Malts on March 31, 1981. PHILIP WARRINGTON

Right: Paul's Malt, which was demolished in 2001. C&WR



The tracks into Cholsey station on October 10, 1994, PHILIP WARRINGTON





A very rural trespasser in the early days of the heritage era. PHILIP WARRINGTON

Freight services

The Wallingford branch was vital to the commerce of the area for many years. Coal merchant HW Snow was the most prominent user of the line and, for the first part of the 20th century, the CWS creamery sat adjacent to the station at Wallingford. This prosperous concern had a private siding and two company-owned six-wheeled tank wagons, one of which (two when demand dictated) would be attached to the rear of the 11.35am passenger train from Wallingford to run to Cholsey and from there shunted on to a train towards Woolwich.

With a thriving agricultural scene nearby, the trains often carried livestock to market and slaughterhouses, and horses on race days. Crops from farms were moved by rail and sometimes perishable products like eggs, butter and fruit were brought into Wallingford on a wagon attached to an early-morning passenger train.

The guard's van sometimes carried bees and honey from the Chiltern honey farm, as well as flowers from the local nursery. If nothing else, the van would have had a pleasant aroma!

Closure and preservation

Like so many branch lines, the railway survived until BR days, open to passengers until dwindling numbers brought about its closure to such traffic in 1959. However, thanks to the commercial requirements of Paul's Malt, which sat adjacent to the current terminus, the majority of the line survived to serve the maltings, closing in 1981 after

The home fleet

Services on the C&WR are largely diesel-hauled, with steam locomotives making guest appearances for special events and photographic charters.

- Class 08s D3030 *Lion* and D3074 *Unicorn*, formerly of the Guinness brewery and which arrived in 1998.
- Class 08 D3190 *George Mason*, the first locomotive to arrive on the C&WR in 1985 and named after the man whose legacy funded its restoration.
- Hibberd Planet 0-4-0DM No. 3270 of 1949 *Carpenter*, which is in late stages of restoration.
- Sentinel 0-4-0VBT No. 6515 of 1926 *Isebrook* is the only steam locomotive on site. Privately owned, it is currently out of traffic.



This Cambrian Railways coach body spent 57 years as a family home. It was originally restored as a visitor cafe but more recently to house the railway's museum. The C&WR houses many other rescued items, including a waiting room constructed from a former toilet block saved from vandals at Didcot. NICOLA FOX



Wallingford recently provided a home for another artefact rescue by adding a covered picnic area to the site using reclaimed GWR columns. The columns are brightly painted up in what the heritage line admits might not be an entirely authentic GWR style, but they are certainly attractive and eye-catching. SIMON FARNDON



The Cholsey station building used by the heritage line as its western terminus. SIMON FARNDON



The restored Grundon wagon. SIMON FARNDON



The kiosk at the superbly-presented Wallingford station. NICOLA FOX

115 years of service. The final train was 'The Wallingford Wake,' run by the Branch Line Society on May 31, 1981, and the Cholsey & Wallingford Preservation Society was formed soon after with the intention of maintaining the line to provide heritage services.

The first heritage era passenger train ran in 1985 from Wallingford to Bradford Brook, effectively the end of the yard, and a journey of less than half a mile. These small beginnings were expanded upon and by 1994 the full 2½ miles of track had been reinstated to a standard that allowed for the running of scheduled services to Cholsey. By 1997, a run-round loop had been added at Cholsey, completing the line as we know it today.

The original station was demolished to make way for housing, but the replacement Wallingford station is built only a short way along the original line and is strongly GWR in character. The volunteer staff are smart and uniformed, and the buildings are neatly kept, and an original wooden GWR broad gauge canopy was rescued from Maidenhead after Network Rail demolished it to make way for overhead electrification. Moved to Wallingford and erected during 2020 as a Covid-19 era project, it has been the recipient of several awards.

The station also includes another rescued item – a waiting room constructed from a former toilet block rescued from being the target of vandals at Didcot, and a Cambrian Railways coach body that spent 57 years as a family home. The latter was restored first as a visitor cafe and more recently to house the C&WR museum.

The car park, while not interesting in itself, is built on the site of the former Maltings sidings; the remains of these and a weighbridge can be found in the car park by the curious visitor.

For those wishing to see what the original Wallingford station looked like, an on-loan working N gauge layout can currently be found in the shop. Depicting the station, the sidings and the creamery, it covers a section of line as far as an overbridge, the site of which stops just short of the current Wallingford station.

The siding at Wallingford also houses a collection of wagons that have been used for photographic charters, including a smartly finished Grundon ballast wagon. Grundon Sand and Gravel is a local business acknowledged as a generous neighbour by the C&WR, which worked with the heritage line on the restoration of this wagon. Chairman Michael Palfrey hopes this will lead the way in what may become more commercial connections, where companies sponsor a refurb painted in their colours and branding. While these vehicles may not be authentic to the line, they provide interest to the site and welcome funds to keep the vehicles in a good and usable condition.

Easter marked the beginning of the C&WR's 2024 season, which followed on from a very successful Santa season. In previous years, the railway had operated the Polar Express, but for 2023 it returned to Santa experiences and was rewarded with sell-out trains. Michael said: "It was our most successful in-house Santa season we've ever run."

The journey

Wallingford lacks a run-round loop, so two locomotives are required to allow the two-carriage train to arrive and depart at Wallingford station without the need for extensive shunting. On most days these are diesel locomotives.

The train leaves Wallingford and passes through the yard, over Bradford Brook into hedges alive with blossom. Indeed, like many railways, the wildlife corridor around the C&WR is populated by many species of flora and fauna, from geraniums attracting white marble butterflies to pyramidal orchids, walnut trees, sloes, blackberries and crab-apples. The once rare but now numerous red kites swoop over the line as trains pass by and, varying throughout the year, visitors may also catch sight of muntjac deer, barn owls, foxes, rabbits by the million and shoveller ducks on the gravel pits.

But first the line must cross over the A4130, aka the Wallingford bypass. Here the railway is protected from the traffic of the dual carriageway by barriers and an alarm, but the train is quickly across and the journey into the countryside can begin in earnest. As the route is only short, the train takes its time, trundling along at roughly 9mph to allow the visitors to take in the tranquility around them.

Passing over two foot crossings, the first major feature on this route is known locally as Lake Grundon. Grundon Sand & Gravel extracts gravel from nearby pits, which are then allowed to fill with water, creating something that strongly resembles a reservoir and is fast becoming home to aquatic life.



Class 08 shunter D3030 *Lion* in newly-applied black livery at Wallingford station with the Maidenhead canopy in the background. The locomotive is also carrying a number as part of the Easter egg hunt taking place at the time. NICOLA FOX



Class 08 D3190 *George Mason* at the head of a train at Wallingford. SIMON FARNDON



Visiting GWR 0-6-0PT No. 4612 recreates a freight working on the Cholsey & Wallingford. PHILIP WARRINGTON



The Cholsey & Wallingford crew with visiting pannier No. 4612 on September 7, 2021. PHILIP WARRINGTON

A sign proudly proclaims Grundon's support for the C&WR as the train rumbles past.

The leisurely journey then continues through fields. During an Easter-time run, crops of rapeseed can be seen blooming in a bright and cheerful yellow, while greener fields nearby display some seasonally acquired water features! However, on this day, the clouds had thankfully scurried away and under a pleasant blue sky the railway shows at its best.

To maintain a relatively flat gradient, the line curves through the countryside through fields bounded by hedges and trees. There are several permanent way huts along the line and, during the 1950s, it can only be presumed that several of the p-way staff found themselves with time upon their hands, as they appear to have indulged in topiary! Photographs from the time include a horse and jockey depicted in leafy form.

Sadly, these horticultural works of art have long since been cut down, but the many p-way huts remain intact. A glance down at the cess also reveals items accumulated over the years for future use hiding in the undergrowth, including a plentiful collection of axles.

After passing under the only overbridge on the line, St Mary's Church, the final resting place of famous former local resident Agatha Christie, comes into full view. Here the gradient rises and the train leaves the church behind, climbing the only bank on the route to pass through some trees before drawing level with the main line from Paddington to Didcot, comparing old and new as high-speed trains occupy overhead electrified lines mere feet away from the C&WR's historic branch.

With the urban conurbation of Cholsey on the left, the train pulls forward into the station, which it shares with the Great Western main line. The C&WR platform at Cholsey station has a small building that the heritage line uses as a ticket office. This and the platform are maintained by GWR, while C&WR is responsible for the track.

Despite such close proximity, there is no main line link here for the C&WR, and all of its visiting locomotives have to arrive on the back of a low-loader.

That said, with the exception of a notable visit of GWR 4-4-0 No. 3440 *City of Truro*, the size of the C&WR generally attracts smaller, non-main line certified locomotives.

A short loop allows the locomotive to run around the train, which halts here for about 20 minutes. If arriving earlier in the day, Agatha Christie fans can take the chance to leave the station and enjoy a 20-minute walk through Cholsey to the aforementioned St Mary's Church.

Although the majority of the walk passes through the relatively uninspiring leafy suburban scenery of Cholsey itself, the latter part takes the adventurer over the sole overbridge where, if a good pace was set, walkers can watch the train returning to Wallingford, before entering the picturesque churchyard to pay their respects to the best-selling fiction author of all time.

A small but ancient building, founded as an abbey church in about 989, parts of the tower proclaim it to be of Saxon build, likely all that remains of the last great Anglo-Saxon monastery to be built in England. Mentioned in the Domesday Book and commissioned by William the Conqueror in 1086, the interior also includes Norman features and architecture from the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 19th centuries.

Christie attended the church while she and her husband Max lived on the edge of Wallingford for 42 years, during which she wrote some of her most famous works. They are buried together in the north-west of the churchyard.

Passengers can rejoin one of the later services to return to Wallingford. Here, Christie fans can take a short walk into Winterbrook, on the outskirts of Wallingford, where the author lived, although Winterbrook House, the home she shared with her husband, is a private residence to this day.

For the future

As well as focusing more on being event-led, the railway works with local schools to offer educational events, including running evacuation events for pupils. Providing these educational and learning opportunities adds value for money to the railway, while also offering the children a chance to see something they have been studying at school come to life in front of them. The railway is also looking at replacing the ground frame at Wallingford with a signalbox to replicate the original one lost in 1959. The railway hopes that this too will increase the learning opportunities available for children, as they can see old-fashioned signals in action, and in a hands-on fashion.

Further famous connections

Sir Winston Churchill's train is known to have visited the line, using it as an alternate siding, but the jury is out as to whether he was present.

The Royal Train was also frequently stabled on the branch (leaving the main line at Cholsey and journeying a short way for the evening when the day's traffic was done). A permanent fixture of a police telephone box was added on the line, in the event communications with the train were required. The telephone box is sadly in a poor state of repair, but a planned project to restore this piece of C&WR history to its glory is underway.

Agatha Christie also journeyed on the branch when she needed to travel to London. Infamous for her desire to live out of the spotlight, her reasons for choosing her place of residence are not terribly flattering to the railway at the time.

In her autobiography, she said: "Wallingford was a nice place. It had a poor railway service and was therefore not at all the sort of place people came to, either from Oxford or from London."

Further plans that have been touted include constructing a 'proper' station building and a water tower. While not intending to recreate the original Wallingford station building, the C&WR is committed to doing so in GWR style.

Director Michael Palfrey said: "We have made significant progress over the last few years. We have some very exciting times ahead, with some major improvements planned for the Wallingford station site, alongside coach restoration projects and a full schedule of running days and events. We may not be the biggest heritage railway, but we have some big plans."

Finally, the railway has been working on a volunteer recruitment drive, in particular for the permanent way gang. Anyone interested in getting involved is invited to email volunteer co-ordinator John Sharman at volunteer@bunkline.uk.

Yes, the CW&R is a small railway and never likely to challenge the massive tourist attractions of the UK's bigger railways, but what it does it does very well. For visitors willing to take the time to dig a little deeper into the history and surroundings of the line, it provides a charming, enjoyable and memorable day out. HR





Take a seat with carriage offerings from Bachmann

PRE-GROUPING rolling stock has seen a surge of interest in recent years, and now Bachmann has revealed it will be responsible for producing the first rake of carriages in OO based on those seen on the London & North Western Railway.

Of the general service vehicles built by Wolverton for the LNWR and West Coast Joint Stock, 50ft arc roof vehicles made up the majority, with 664 passenger coaches turned out covering six different types.

Three of the most numerous passenger vehicles were diagrams 138 (corridor tricomposite), 268 (corridor third) and 316 (corridor brake composite), which form the basis that have been chosen for the upcoming OO scale models.

Employed initially on primary express services, they were also used on excursions 'off territory' as far as the Kent coast, where they could have been hauled by London, Brighton & South Coast Railway locomotives from H1 & H2 Atlantics to E4 tanks.

The 50ft vehicles were later replaced by longer and more modern types, relegating many of the arc roof coaches to secondary lines and services.

Sadly, none survived into preservation and so the models have been developed through painstaking research which has drawn upon the expertise of the London & North Western Railway Society and the Midland & Great Northeren Circle, to which Bachmann offers its thanks.

Four vehicle types make up the range: D138 Tricomposite; D268 Third; D316 Brake Composite/Third and D377 Full Brake, the latter being a scale 6in wider than its counterparts, as per the prototype. The extensive tooling suite allows the vehicles to be modelled in any guise throughout their working lives.

The real vehicles were constructed with wood-panelled bodies which are replicated in miniature with high-fidelity injection mouldings, adorning which are ventilators above each window and door on the bodysides – these are separately fitted, a necessity to allow the full and ornate LNWR livery to be applied in all its glory.

As has come to be expected, a wealth of separately fitted details will be present, including roof ventilators, turned brass toilet fillers, finely moulded gas pipework and brake suspension components.

Liveries will cover LNWR, M&GN brown, and LMS crimson lake schemes, with the RRP for each carriage set at £99.95 (£109.95 for the more ornate LNWR scheme), and there are the usual discounts available at many stockists.

Further announcements made focus on Bachmann's 009 scale narrow gauge range, which has continued to offer a strong Ffestiniog presence.

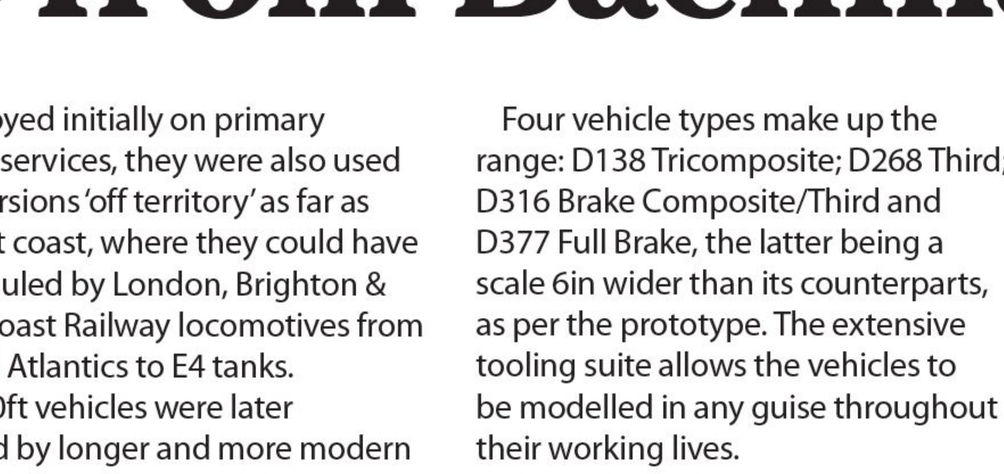
Headlining the latest revelation were tooling samples for the iconic 'curly roof' and brake third bogie vans.

The FR built three luggage vans between 1873 and 1876 which were originally known as the 'turtle roof' vans owing to their uniquely shaped roofs, each comprising a guard's compartment with veranda, a large luggage compartment and a smaller compartment for dogs. None survived into preservation, but a replica was completed in 2004. Prices are set at £59.95 per vehicle, with interesting livery choices on offer.

For those modelling the more recent history of the heritage line, the FR's iconic 'tin car' carriages, as introduced from the late 1970s, were not only revealed but available to purchase from the railway itself at the start of October.

The originals were built using second-hand underframes acquired from Isle of Man vehicles; all were withdrawn by 2018 and all bar one sold off or scrapped.

Bachmann's models depict carriages Nos. 119 and 120 in either full maroon or the crimson and cream liveries. Priced £64.95, they can also be bought at festrail.co.uk/shop, with wider retail distribution to follow at a later time.

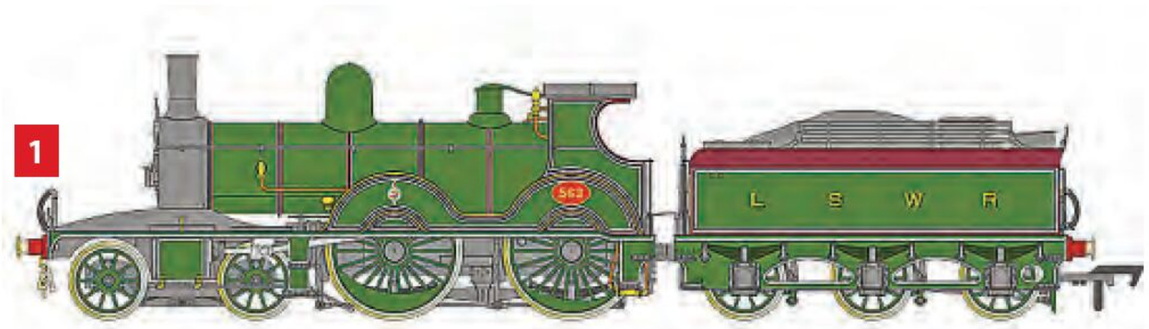





Send your model news to staff writer **Owen Hayward** on **OHayward@mortons.co.uk@mortons.co.uk**

Fresh new schemes and familiar faces feature in Bachmann winter line-up

In addition to the new tooled models mentioned, Bachmann's November 7 winter catalogue announcements gave an update on some other previously announced projects and added several new identities for existing tools.



1



2

1. LSWR T3

One of the most anticipated models recently revealed to be on the cards is the LSWR 4-4-0 T3 in OO gauge, with the sole-surviving example having made headlines when it returned to steam in the autumn of 2023. Having already shown off tooling samples, the liveries and running numbers were confirmed, with preserved No. 563 of course included among them in its LSWR Drummond colours. Further versions include Nos. 564 (LSWR Urie green), 561 (LSWR Adams green), and 5558 and 560 both in SR lined Maunsell green.

With an RRP set at £199.95, these are certain to be popular among SR and preserved era collectors. Models of No. 563 will be available for the first two weeks of release exclusively through the Swanage Railway shop, with proceeds going towards maintaining the prototype based there. These can be secured by visiting swanagerailway.co.uk/Bachmann-t3-model and ordering with a non-refundable £50 deposit.

Furthermore, Kernow Model Centre will be the exclusive retailer for all sound-fitted versions of these models, with prices set at £289.99 and models containing a Zimo sound decoder, stay alives, and audio recorded from No. 563 exclusively for KMR by YouChoos.

Delivery of the T3 models is anticipated to take place in January 2025.

2. EFE Rail Warships

Stepping down to N gauge, livery samples were shown for EFE Class 41 Warships, the precursor to the more familiar Class 42 diesel hydraulics of the same nickname.

The RRP is set at £174.95, with four different running numbers produced covering D600 *Active*, D601 *Ark Royal*, D602 *Bulldog*, and D604 *Cossack*. Liveries include BR Blue, BR all-over green with late crest and BR green with small yellow panel. Body variations will cater for split headcode boxes and route indicator discs.

3. Buildings

The Scenecraft range expands further with structures such as March station and a two-road stone locomotive shed added to the N gauge offerings, while OO receives Snodland signalbox, a thatched cottage, and low relief town shop fronts.

Of particular interest is a new addition to the 009 range which sees the inclusion of a corrugated platform shelter and office. To many an unremarkable and ordinary building, but the model bears a striking resemblance to some of those found at intermediate stops along the Vale of Rheidol Railway – no doubt perfect for the upcoming Revolution Trains' models of the line's 2-6-2T locomotives.

4. Familiar faces

Existing model tools welcome back some examples that have been absent in recent years, such as the LNWR G2 and G2A 0-8-0 'Super D' locomotives in both LNWR and BR schemes. The Midland Railway 1P 0-4-4T also makes a comeback with a pair of MR lined crimson lake options fitted with condensing gear. Two LMS black versions and four BR identities are also planned.


3

Western Region modellers will have plenty of choice, with a trio of classes covering 5600, 4575 and 8750 set to hit shelves. Of the first, running numbers include No. 6619 in plain BR black with early emblem, the locomotive being preserved at the Kent & East Sussex Railway where it currently awaits restoration. The small prairie offerings contain the South Devon Railway's No. 5542 in GWR green with shirtbutton crest, while the pannier tanks include Didcot Railway Centre's No. 3650 and Vintage Trains' No. 9600.

While the steam era dominates this slate of releases, London Transport's maroon-liveried Class 438 4TC unit should appeal to those who model modern heritage scenes and the London Underground network.



4



Heljan modernises WR Warship diesel hydraulics

WITH calls for an all-new Warship growing in recent years, the last model being first released way back in 1980, Heljan has responded with one that will set new standards for detail and high-end features. Developed thanks to the manufacturer's popular O gauge models, they will offer a similar level of detail, complete with light and sound. Retailer Rails of Sheffield has also commissioned an exclusive run of the first 13 examples of the class to have been built – another first for the scale – with D800-D812 having been initially built with nose-mounted frames to carry GWR steam era-style train reporting numbers.

These exclusive versions will include a set of magnetic plates to allow modellers to easily add their own headcodes to suit their individual needs.

Engineering samples have already been received and livery artwork approved, with delivery anticipated to occur in the final months of 2025.

Prices start at £219 for DCC-ready examples of the Rails of Sheffield exclusive run of models, with that price also set as the RRP for general models available from other retailers.



Please look after this Bear

With the class having celebrated its Diamond Jubilee this year, which included a gathering of seven examples in Derbyshire, **Daniel Long** recounts the lives of the Class 14 diesel hydraulics that have developed a devout fanbase in preservation.

ALTHOUGH we know them as the Class 14s, they were never in service long enough under BR to gain their TOPS title. They were known from their inception as 'Teddy Bears' with Swindon Works' erecting shop foreman George Cole apparently saying: "We've built *The Great Bear*, now we're going to build a 'Teddy Bear'!"

As produced, they were Swindon's take on a Type 1, a low-powered diesel designed almost exclusively for trip-freight workings. In typical fashion, the ex-GWR staff were inclined to produce something entirely different to any other region. Not even in BR service long enough to wear their assigned TOPS numbers, the Class 14s are often overlooked in the history of British Railways. Their story, however, is one filled with unique fascination.

Bare necessities

The Western Region was what became of the Great Western Railway when nationalised, and the GWR had always ploughed its own furrow.

The discussion of dieselisation in the UK veered towards diesel-electric types, but on the continent it was diesel-hydraulics which ruled the rails. The Western Region's intention was to emulate successful foreign diesels, and so its pilot scheme saw the launch of multiple diesel-hydraulic locomotives such as the Hymeks, Westerns and Warships.

These could not do all the work required to replace steam, however. A significant duty, carried out throughout Britain's railways, was the numerous pick-up goods which plodded gamely from station to station on both main lines and branch lines, carrying anything and everything that might be required. The WR required an engine for these trip freight workings, while DMUs handled the passenger work.

The existing Class 08 was dismissed as being both not powerful enough and far too slow to run on the main line. The Class 20s, English Electric's attempt at a Type 1 diesel, while successful to a degree, had run into bother on account of their long bonnets which made visibility from the cab difficult. With plenty of shunting expected from the new engines, this would not do for the WR.

Instead, their engines would follow steam practice. Instead of running on bogies, an 0-6-0 arrangement was proposed, with engines rated to generate 650hp. Compared to the Class 17 which was also put forward, the 'Teddy Bears' would theoretically be cheaper by some £15,000. The order was made in mid-March 1963.

At the end of March, *The Reshaping of Britain's Railways* by Dr Richard Beeching was published.

Beeching's bugbear

It's worth noting that until the early 1960s, the railways were obliged to provide transport for customers, no matter what. This was done through various pick-up goods which plodded between stations every day and was the bread and butter of what the 'Teddy Bears' were designed to do.

The work was not popular among management, but necessary. There were scores of goods facilities up and down the country which were often seldom used and deeply unprofitable. This was a result of both the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1854 and the later 1947 Transport Act which was designed to nationalise long-distance road haulage, railways, canals and bus companies under one roof. Within three years, however, the road hauliers had been privatised and deregulated, giving them a significant advantage. They could choose their work, and they chose the most lucrative.

A year before Beeching's report was released, the 1962 Transport Act rewrote these laws, allowing BR freedom of choice in terms of what it carried. There was no longer any obligation. Beeching's proposals put a plan for the future on the table, using the new flexibility offered to introduce many efficiencies. It also saw the end of the work for which Swindon's Type 1 had been designed, a situation which could not have been foreseen when they had been ordered.

Getting my bearings

By the time the first of Swindon's Type 1s entered service in July 1964, it was around three months overdue and had cost £7000 more than intended. This put the final production price for the Type 1s as built at Swindon slightly higher than had been suggested by private companies.

The estimates had been made before final details for the class had been worked out. It also meant the workers at Swindon were kept busy. The class would not be required in other regions, and so this first order was also the last. The final and 56th member of the class entered traffic in October 1965.

Powered by a Paxman six-cylinder Ventura 6YJXL engine, the 'Teddy Bears' had the power to get things moving. The off-centre cab and relatively low bonnets allowed for clear views in front



Shortly after being built in December 1954, D9524 brings a freight working through Narroways Junction near Bristol. This locomotive has been preserved and currently resides at Peak Rail. COLOUR RAIL

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D9508 fulfils a duty for which it had been intended; in October 1965 it works a trip freight through Cardiff General station. HUGH LLEWELYN/CREATIVE COMMONS



The class saw minor modifications applied in their working lives; D9523 (right, based on the Wensleydale Railway) retains its split headcode boxes, while D9529 (Nene Valley Railway) has had these plated over, the pair rubbing shoulders at Duffield on July 26 during the '14s @ 60' gala. OWEN HAYWARD



The Diamond Jubilee celebration was the final opportunity to see Ecclesbourne Valley Railway resident D9537 *Eric* in action prior to its withdrawal for overhaul. The 'Teddy Bears' received a variety of liveries as they passed between owners, though the black livery carried here is of the preservation era. OWEN HAYWARD



In the summer the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway celebrated the 60th anniversary of the class with a four day gala that brought together seven examples of the class (though only six were operational). In a scene reminiscent of the half centenary gala a decade beforehand, a septuple-headed service arrives at Wirksworth on July 27. OWEN HAYWARD

and behind when shunting. Air and vacuum brakes were fitted, but no train heating facilities were included. It was a rare example of BR's diesels not being designed for mixed-traffic work. The class were spread across the system but found their duties disappearing beneath their wheels. Many were sent to South Wales, to accelerate the process of dieselisation. None went to the West Country. There are reports of a member of the class putting in an impressive performance as a banker on the infamous Lickey incline, getting a 750-ton load moving on the bank.

To Hull and back

In 1967, with little work on the Western Region forthcoming, 33 of the Type 1s were dispatched to Hull Dairycoates in the Eastern Region. In just three years, they had proven surplus to requirements.

The Eastern Region was looking to dispose of steam entirely, but found Swindon's Type 1s far from ideal for the task. They were not powerful enough to work alone, and working in tandem required two crews.

Initially, 20 were sent over, but by April only two were in use. The staff at Hull did not think the Western interloper was powerful or economical enough to bother trying with. By July, all 33 of the class had arrived, but they would be gone by April the next year, replaced with Class 20s and 37s.

The class, like any new design, had teething troubles. In December 1964, a report briefly mentioned that :"21 are now in service, after some minor problems with reversing clutches, and now appear to be satisfactory." The class had continuing issues with engine vibration which were never resolved. They also had a tendency to overheat, particularly when working the stiff climbs at Aberbeeg.

Stopping power

Perhaps the most pressing issue apart from these was braking. In the coalfields of South Wales, with heavy unfitted coal trains, this was a serious concern.

Firstly, the class earned a reputation for fracturing tyres when put under too much strain. This was resolved, but it did not stop the class from making a name for itself as prone to runaway if not handled carefully. D9529, when shunting five wagons, ran away on June 11, 1965 at Glyncorrwg. It was caught by the catch points and ended up on the front page of the *South Wales Evening Post*. D9542 did similar at Abergwynfi Colliery with a loaded train of coal in August 1966. D9551 ended up ploughing through the bufferstops in October 1965 at Adamstown, Cardiff, with another loaded train.

It was not for these reasons, however, that the class was withdrawn. There was not the work for them, and they were not 'standard'with the classes used across the rest of the railway network. Through no fault of their own, the Swindon Type 1s were withdrawn, the last straggler lasting until April 1969. They had not even managed five years on the main line before being consigned to the scrapheap.

What would happen to them next?

Titans of industry

Visitors to industrial networks would often find sprawling complexes which were dependant on a host of small shunting engines. These were designed to be hard, rugged and cheap to build and maintain.

When Swindon's shunters came onto the market, they were snapped up. Sold at bargain prices, nearly new and with only one careful owner, class members acquitted themselves in a host of different situations.

Forty-eight of the class made their way into industrial work, with only eight being scrapped by BR.

Their success in this new line of work was proportional to the size of the operation – the larger the site, the better they were. They reached particular distinction working for the National Coal Board and the British Steel Corporation.

Designed for trip working, the larger systems run by the NCB in the North East proved ideal for the class shuttling rakes of wagons back and forth.

They had not been looked after before being sold. LMS Jinty No. 47445 at British Oak began its retirement on January 27, 1969, only to be lit up again four days later when both of the diesels it was being replaced by failed. The steam locomtive continued working out its retirement until November in the same year, until both engines could be made reliable.

The system at Ashington was one where the Class 14s were particularly popular, with many engines owned by the NCB ending up here over the years. The 10 which had originally been sent were supplemented by nine others. Although the class was not much liked when it arrived in 1969 – as with the Eastern Region, interlopers are rarely welcomed – by the 1980s, the class were the preferred choice compared with other industrial types. Although other engines were trialled, it was the Paxman diesels which survived and they saw the site out when it closed in 1987.

Crews appreciated their power and capability – not to mention the comfortable seating in the large cab.

Steely stalwarts

The Class 14s also acquitted themselves well at sites worked by the British Steel Corporation.

Fifteen of the class made their way to the site at Corby, and the price for all of these was lower than the cost of building one engine at Swindon. The Class 14s made a name for themselves at the Northants facility. As at Ashington, there was a sizeable system to care for, which lasted until 1980.

Other sites run by BSC also benefited from BR's bargain locomotives, though not always without modification. The engines working at Harlaxton had their cab roofs reduced in height from 13ft to 12ft 8in by flattening the top. This was in order to accommodate a low tunnel.

The engines which arrived on industrial railways were by no means perfect, but given care and attention – especially at sites such as Corby where crews were assigned an engine – they could easily hold their own. Some of the class even found their way abroad, with Belgium and Spain, as well as potentially Italy and Turkey, hosting the class for a time. Even in preservation, the class has been called upon to support industry. Two Class 14s (D9504 and D9529) were hired to assist in construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Links in the early 2000s.

Preservation has been quite kind to the Class 14s. Of the 56 produced, 19 have been saved, including class pioneer D9500, and many have continued to run well.

Notable moments must include the East Lancashire Railway's celebration in 2014, commemorating 50 years of Swindon's Type 1s – 10 examples were brought together. A similar event was held this year to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Class 14s at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway with seven of the class meeting up, as featured in issue 323.

It is clear that there is a great affection for the class from a variety of places – it is obviously well-earned. At long last, perhaps the class have found their 'forever homes'.

The models

There's something about the look of the Class 14s, and over the years, the engines have worn a range of interesting and eye-catching liveries. Little wonder, therefore, that the class has become a popular model in a variety of gauges from various manufacturers.

In OO gauge, Heljan produces a model to a typically high specification. Its first models of the class came out in 2010 and have become a staple of its range.

Suitably adjusted in recent years to maintain the standards modellers expect, the latest batch boasts a 21-pin DCC socket and improved directional lighting to complement the intricate detail typical of Heljan. While the brain considers these fripperies excessive, the heart loves seeing the headlights change from red to white as the engine waddles along the track. This most recent batch can still be found in shops, and a range of liveries from BR green through to NCB pale blue means the history of the class can be told.

In N gauge, Graham Farish offers a diminutive version of the 'Teddy Bears'. Its version, like Heljan's, has recently been updated and comes in a host of liveries including British oak orange and preservation maroon. At this scale, the detailing on the wasp stripes is incredible. I am particularly taken with the optional bufferbeams. The depth means that a hole for the standard N gauge coupling is a necessary evil, but how nice to have another option included which offers the full depth and all the associated pipework. This is a most welcome inclusion which adds significant value to the model. This model has also been released with DCC sound for those who like all the bells and whistles!

More recently, Minerva Model Railways has released a Class 14 in O gauge, and this really is a beast. At this scale, the chunky weight of the prototype can really be captured. Driven by a five-pole motor with a 21-pin DCC decoder socket, you can expect a strong performance right out of the box.

The option for sound completes the set, with a high quality Zimo decoder acting as the heart of the machine. Directional lighting is included, as is lighting in the cab so the detail can really be seen.

The model comes with transfer sheets for the locomotive numbers as well as printed headcodes so that modellers can choose their own specific prototype. I like the option to customise an engine to suit my specific needs – it means it's easy to ensure it has that all-important personal touch. Unfortunately, one of the cab doors is modelled with the handles on the wrong side and some feel the shade of green might be a little light. The model has only been released in BR Green as yet.

No matter what the scale, 'Teddy Bears' seem a popular addition to any model railway with a charm and character all their own. Their working lives seem defined by the work being pulled out from beneath their feet. Now, with the chance to reappraise, we can see how useful they were – and just a fraction of how useful they could have been! HR



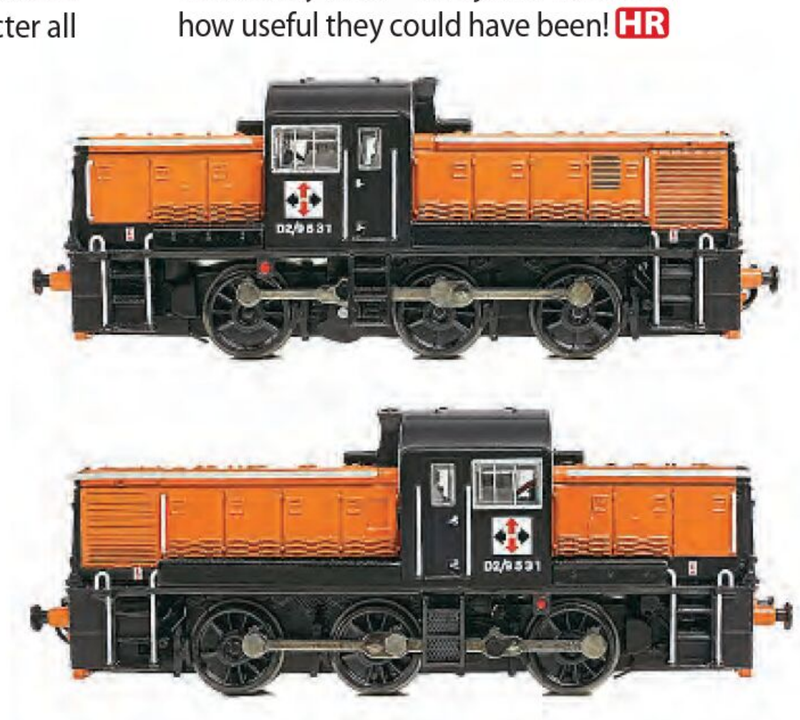
The Class 14 was Minerva Models' first O gauge diesel locomotive and is exceptionally well detailed, though is currently only offered in BR green livery. MINERVA MODELS



First released as a Hattons exclusive, Heljan has since added these locomotives to its wider OO gauge range and covers a number of liveries that were worn throughout the working lives of the 'Teddy Bears'. HELJAN







One of the impressive features of Graham Farish's N gauge models is the slot in lower bufferbeam, which covers the coupling pocket for modellers who don't have the need to shunt or run round consists. GRAHAM FARISH

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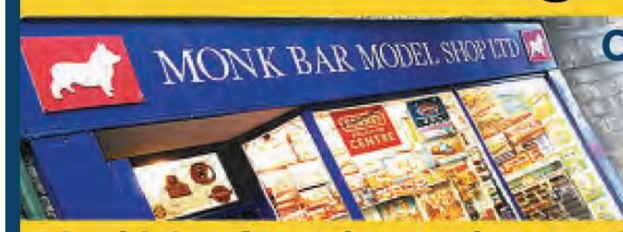
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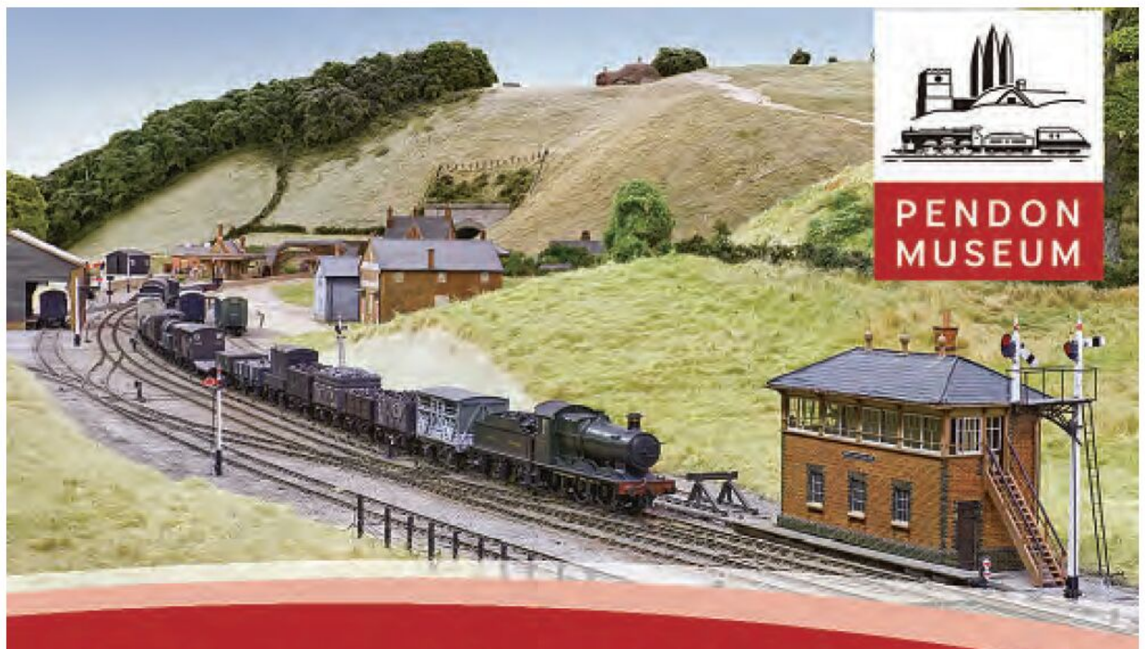
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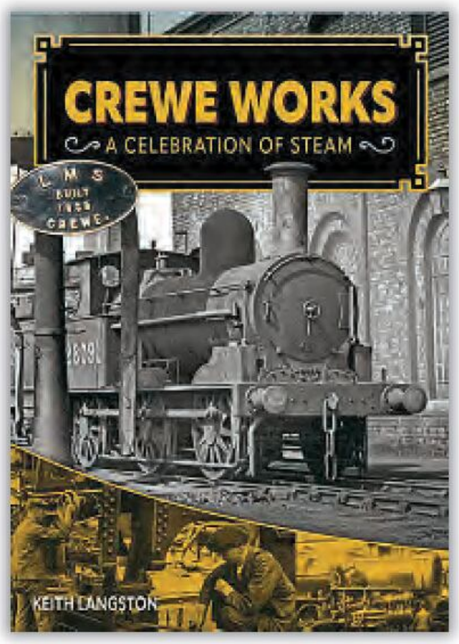


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Crewe Works – A Celebration of Steam

By Keith Langston (hardback, Gresley Books/Mortons Books Ltd, www.mortonbooks.co.uk, 199pp, £39.99, ISBN 978-1-9117-4-18-8).

BRITAIN'S proud ground-breaking railway legacy is set to become the focus of international attention big time in 2025 with the Stockton & Darlington bicentenary celebrations and the Railway 200 programme. The pivotal role that Crewe Works played in the development of the modern railway will surely come under scrutiny – and in many ways this new volume provides a definitive introduction both to the lay reader and the seasoned enthusiast.

In 1913, *The Railway Magazine* proudly described Crewe as "the most famous railway works in the world." Indeed, railways throughout the world are held to have benefited from adopting 'best Crewe practice,' which became a byword for excellence in the field.

The town owes its existence to Crewe station which was opened in fields near Crewe Hall in 1837 by the Grand Junction Railway, four years after the works for which construction to the north began in 1833, with none other than George Stephenson as engineer in charge. In 1843, Grand Junction 2-2-2 No. 32 *Tamerlane* became the first locomotive to be built there.

By 1947, Crewe Works was also responsible for the maintenance of 2779 stream locomotives.

In December 1958, BR Standard 9F 2-10-0 No. 92250 became the 7331st steam locomotive to be turned out by Crewe Works, with the last steam heavy repair carried out to Britannia Pacific No. 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* on February 2, 1967.

This volume is a veritable encyclopaedia of knowledge spanning the history of the works, from the beginning until the present day, and among many achievements details the 38 steam classes built at Crewe and its succession of locomotive superintendents and Chief Mechanical Engineers, all of whom left their mark on UK railway history.

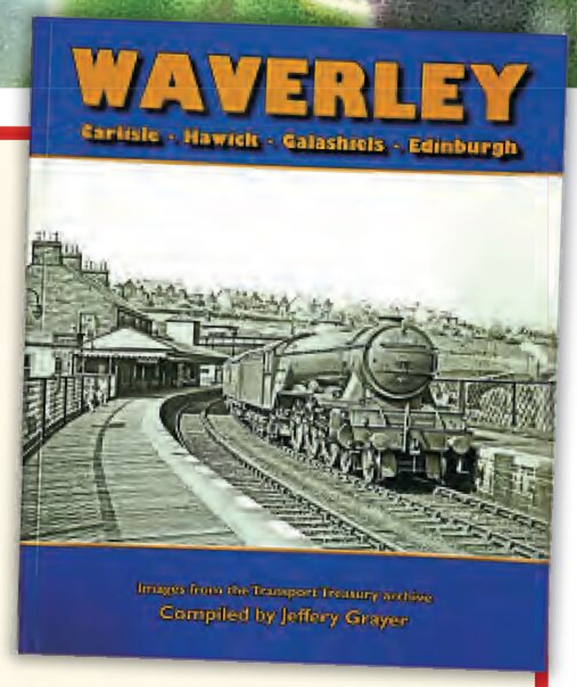
As the story unfolds, it is superbly illustrated by a treasure trove of photographs, both black-and-white and colour, with informative captions.

The book is also a tribute to the thousands of people employed at the works during the steam era.

BIOGRAPHY OF A BEATING HEART OF THE STEAM AGE

Waverley

Compiled by Jeffery Grayer (softback, Transport Treasury Publishing, 112pp, £14.95 + £3 p&p, cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing and sent to: 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ. ISBN 978-1-913251-79-6).



THE Carlisle to Edinburgh 'Waverley' route is one of the country's lines that has attained an almost iconic status, akin to the revered Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway, **writes Geoff Courtney.** Indeed, such is its appeal and instant recognition that Transport Treasury was confident that its newly-released book on the subject needed only a one-word title. 'Waverley' says it all.

In his introduction, Jeffery Grayer says that the closure of the near 100-mile line in January 1969 was a 'short-sighted' decision that led to the isolation of much of the Borders region and left Galashiels and Hawick further from the rail network than any other town of comparable size in the UK.

Jeffery, whose affection for the route comes across despite – or perhaps because – his home is in faraway Devon, begins his literary journey at Carlisle and heads north through Newcastleton, Hawick, St Boswells, Melrose, Galashiels and on to Edinburgh Waverley, aided by the admirable support of photographs taken by such luminaries as Neville Stead, Norris Forrest and WAC Smith.

Ironically, some of those images are a frustration for a London-centric steam era trainspotter such as yours truly, for leaping out of its pages are members of the A3 class which were regularly used on the route but which, for obvious geographical reasons, were never underlined in my 1959 Combined Volume. That starts at the very beginning, with the cover featuring No. 60057 *Ormonde* of Haymarket (64B) at Hawick in 1954, and carries on to the back cover, which shows Gateshead (52A) resident No. 60085 *Manna* on a Carlisle-Millerhill yard freight train in September 1964, just two weeks before it was withdrawn.

There's also No. 60037 *Hyperion* of Edinburgh St Margaret's (64A) on freight duty, near Riddings Junction, in April 1963, and No. 60093 *Coronach* (Carlisle Canal, 12C) entering Melrose station in September 1961 with a Carlisle-bound train. That quartet would have gone a long way towards my completing the class, but it's too late now!

Waverley at Waverley

The book shows that the A3s were not the only Pacifics to grace the line, for other images include A4 No. 60004 *William Whitelaw* (64B) near Hawick in 1960, A1 No. 60132 *Marmion* (52A) at Longtown heading south with a freight train, and Haymarket A2 trio Nos. 60510 *Robert the Bruce*, 60535 *Hornet's Beauty*, and 60537 *Batchelor's Button*, all at Carlisle on Edinburgh trains, while another Haymarket A2, No. 60509, appropriately named *Waverley*, is seen awaiting departure from the Edinburgh station of the same name to travel in the opposite direction in 1954.

The Waverley line was not all about the elite members of the Scottish Region's stable, however, although some of the lesser locomotives featured in the book were still named, including Class D30 and D34 4-4-0s such as No. 62425 *Ellangowan* in Hawick shed yard and No. 62471 *Glen Falloch* at St. Boswells.

Lower down the motive power pecking order comes a variety of steam traction, and not only former LNER locomotives, for in the line's latter days LMS Ivatt Class 4 2-6-0s and Standard locomotives made an entrance. Diesels are not ignored either, with Type 2 D53xx Bo-Bos and DMUs featured.

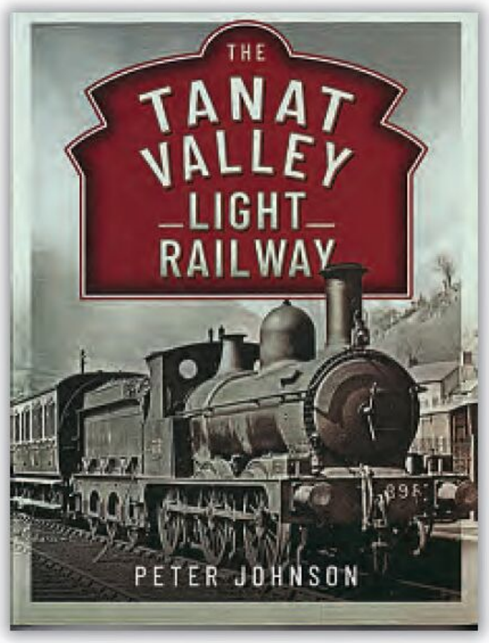
Jeffery's homily to a fondly-remembered line includes a sense of optimism when he writes of the reopening in 2015 of part of the route from Edinburgh through Galashiels to Tweedbank: "The future looks bright for a further extension to Melrose, St Boswells and Hawick, and perhaps in the long term, reopening as far as Carlisle should not be discounted."

PICTORIAL MEMORIES OF A MUCH-LOVED LINE

The Tanat Valley Light Railway

By Peter Johnson (hardback, Pen and Sword Transport, 149pp, £25, ISBN 978-1-399039-67-3).

SCHEMES to build a railway along the Tanat Valley had failed several times from the 1800s. Eventually, three plans survived as options and were being considered in the early 1900s: one from the Shropshire Railway Company, one from the Cambrian Railway Company and one from The Tanat Light Railway. Shareholders had been asked to vote on an agreement between Tanat and Cambrian railways, with the two



planning to work together to build the line. A further agreement saw all three collaborate a year later.

Delays and further disagreements ensued but slowly the line started to be built between Oswestry and Llangynog and eventually began to open in sections, firstly carrying freight in 1903, then passengers in 1904. The slow mixed trains frustrated passengers, but while matters had improved by the time the line fully opened in 1906, it never reached its full potential.

This book explains in detail the difficulties of getting the railway started; as with Peter's books, no stone is left unturned and it covers the difficult terrain to conquer which delayed the full opening of the line. It also details each station along the line, with sidings shown and maps and photographs of the railway that ran through a very scenic part of Wales.

Mounting debts in 1911 forced reorganisation, with further share movement in 1920 allowing the railway to continue; ticket sales had fallen from 67,000 in 1913 to 11,670 in 1938, but the railway continued until the 1950s. Closure came in stages and in 1925 the section that had used the Old Potteries trackbed

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

between Wern & Blodwell closed. Stock upgrades in 1926 did little to increase ticket sales and following Nationalisation, passenger services were withdrawn in 1951, with freight continuing for some years before full closure. A small section of the line survived and enabled stone traffic to continue on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire's Nantmawr branch line until 1971.

A section of track at Porthywaen survives today, while interest from preservationists to revive part of the railway saw the formation of the Tanat Valley Light Railway Company in 2005. The group has since been developing a visitor centre and cafe at Nantmawr Sidings and has laid track along a section of the line where it has been collecting railway stock. Its long-term plan is to extend to Llanyblodwel.

DETAILED PORTRAIT OF A LOST MID-WALES LINE

Upgrading The Isle of Wight's Railway: All Change at Ryde

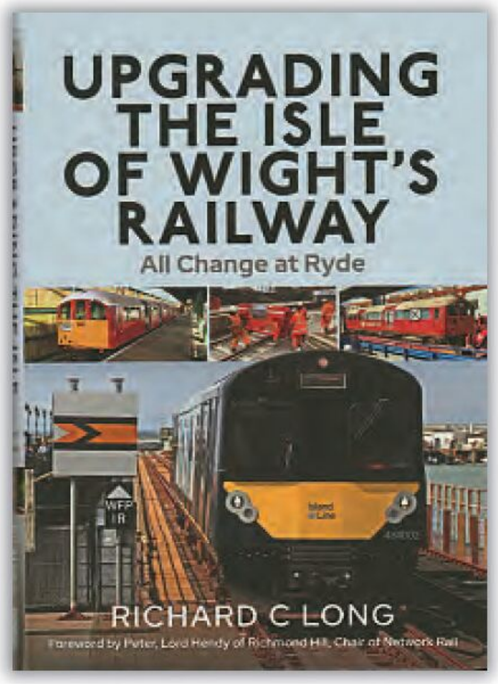
By Richard C Long (hardback, Pen and Sword Transport, 232pp, ISBN 978-1-399045-17-9).

IN 2019 it was decided to replace the oldest running stock in the UK, the 1938-built former LT Tube stock Class 483s that had been in use on the Isle of Wight Railway for 30 years. After looking at several options, it was eventually decided again to purchase refurbished former LT stock, this time 1978-1981 D-stock, which was going to be being replaced in the capital by new S-stock.

Although the D-stock had been refurbished for LT between 2004 and 2008, it was decided that it would receive a complete refurbishment and upgrade before moving to the Island Rail.

In 2014, Vivarail successfully bid to purchase and upgrade 228 of the D-stock carriages, which included 150 driving coaches. Their first refitted trains entered service on the Marston Vale line in 2019. By September that year it was announced that £26 million would be spent for Vivarail to deliver an upgraded fleet for the Island Rail. Once the work was completed, they would be known as Class 484 EMUs, and an additional amount was set aside to upgrade the island's railway infrastructure as well.

It took almost two years for the first of the newly refurbished trains to be delivered; most will have heard of the constant problems that left the IOW with no trains for periods of time. From May 2021, a new timetable was finally introduced although this would not see a service for a while and then only a part service as software problems took some time to sort out, causing further delays and frustration among the island's residents and visitors. Eventually, the last of the 484s entered service in September 2022, although service was restored earlier that year and finally, in April 2023, the upgrade of Ryde Pier station was completed.



Although most island residents welcomed the plan for newer trains, the old 1938 stock also had many admirers, and this book informs where the rescued old stock went and details the newer stock, too.

The author covers in stages the whole expensive and delayed plans, from the withdrawal of old stock and the arrival of its replacement trains, in detail. As well as indicating other plans that included a possibility of reopening some of the island's closed branch lines in the future, this was as part of the then Government's Beeching reversal scheme, which is now looking unlikely under the current government's proposed spending cuts, which has seen many of these plans shelved or cancelled completely.

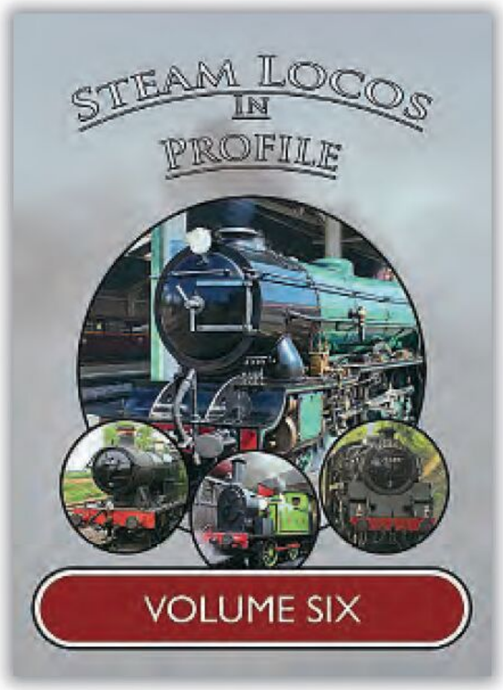
The numerous photographs include old stock in original livery and the new stock looking pristine in its first weeks of service. It will be enjoyed by all enthusiasts who may think they know most of this story that was partly covered in the national media, but there are other plans included that never came to fruition and not widely known that will add to the reader's enjoyment.

MODERN DEVELOPMENTS IN A UNIQUE ISLAND SYSTEM

Steam Locos in Profile: Volume 6

DVD (e-gmedia.co.uk, 124 minutes, £19.99).

SINCE 2012, Chris Eden-Green has been helping to educate new generations of enthusiasts with this series of short films looking into the histories of some of preservation's best-loved classes of locomotives. Following their original short run released online, the four in-depth insights featured on this volume cover BR Standard 2MT 2-6-0s and 4MT



4-6-0s, and the GWR 0-6-2T 5600 and LNER 0-4-0T Y7 classes for variety.

The format of each film makes matters easy to understand for those who are not of railway mindset, and without talking down to the viewer. The vast amount of research Chris has undertaken is clear as day; from detailed facts and figures to personal stories from people who have crewed the locomotives in question, there is much more to these than a simple parroting of easily obtained information gleamed from Wikipedia. Equally impressive are the number of locomotives filmed and various locations used, so you are not seeing the same train filmed on the same day at the same place.

GWR Class 43 Christmas ornament

(Great Western Railway, www.thelondonchristmascompany.com/products/gwr, £59 plus p&p).



WITH the final four Castle Class High Speed Train sets set to be withdrawn in 2025, here is an ideal keepsake for fans.

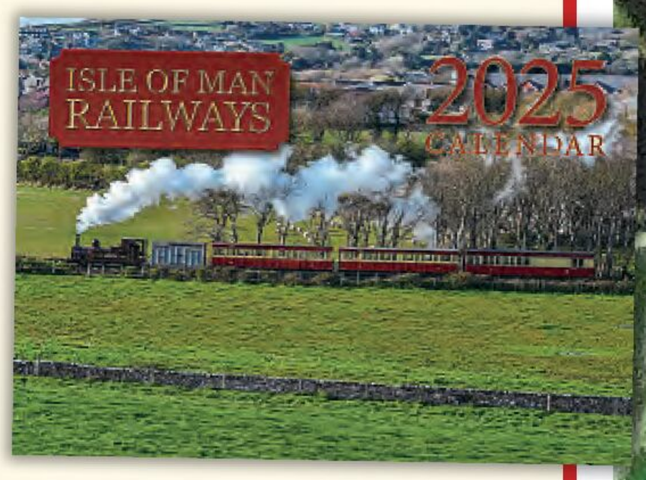
The modern-day GWR has teamed up with The London Christmas Company to produce a Christmas tree ornament celebrating the iconic class.

It is hand-crafted from pure brass, finished in 24-carat gold, and screen-printed in vibrant colours, with a luxury gift box included. GWR's head of external communications, Dan Panes, said: "For railway enthusiasts, customers and colleagues alike, the HST represents more than a train – it holds a deep emotional connection tied to reunions, celebrations and nostalgia."

The partnership will continue beyond the Class 43 ornament, with GWR and The London Christmas Company releasing new designs annually to celebrate other cherished trains.

Isle of Man Rails 2025 calendar

(manxnationalheritage.im/shop, £6.50+p&p).



ONE of the major selling points for the Isle of Man is its use of heritage as a major component in its transport network, with Ramsey in the north east being connected to Port Erin in the south west thanks to the steam railway and horse and electric tramway networks.

A mecca for enthusiasts the world over, the Manx landscape, its rich history and varied architecture provides some stunning backdrops for photography, with a handful of images picked out from a wide array of submissions from those who have recently visited.

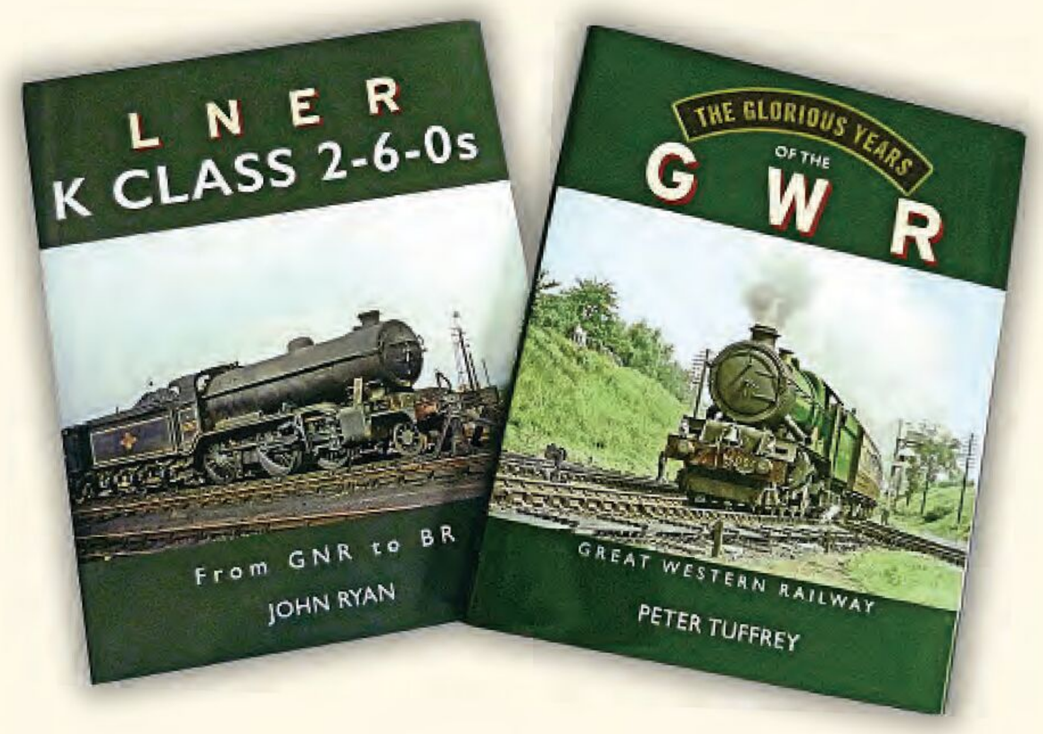
Covering the four main heritage networks (which includes the Snaefell Mountain Railway), it offers a range of scenes from around the island, with drone photography adding new perspectives.

This year, this A4-sized calendar has even had its plastic sleeve substituted by a more economical plant-based wrapping.

Printed in excellent quality and bound within a thick, glossy cover, making it excellent value for money and an ideal stocking filler.

GWR The Glorious Years of the GWR and LNER K Class 2-6-0s

By Peter Tuffrey (hardback, Great Northern Books, 160pp, £27.50, ISBN 978-1-914227-74-5), and John Ryan (hardback, Great Northern Books, 144pp, £30, ISBN 978-1-914227-75-2).



THE authors of these two newcomers from Great Northern Books have a strong geographical link, as well as each being knowledgeable railway enthusiasts, **writes Geoff Courtney.** Both were born in Doncaster – John in 1950 and Peter three years later – and both have historical ties with Doncaster Rovers, John having been its chairman between 1998 and 2013 and Peter its media consultant from 2000 to 2002.

Peter has strayed some miles from home for his contribution to this railway book review double-header, to Wales, the West Midlands, and the South West. Aided by a selection of fascinating photographs, many from his own collection, Peter takes the reader on a GWR journey from the era of the 7ft broad gauge to pre- and thence post-Grouping standard gauge, and onto carriages, buses, and other road vehicles, and finally to stations, listed alphabetically from Ashton to Yelverton.

The first chapter, on the broad gauge, offers a pictorial reminder of just how impressive these engines were. Iron Duke 4-2-2 *Sultan*, *Timour*, *Sebastopol*, *Amazon* and *Lord of the Isles*, for example, portray amazing examples of Victorian steam engineering when stationary, as in their images, so how they looked at express speed is almost impossible to visualise.

The last of this quintet is shown at Westbourne Park station, near Paddington, decked out in flags and other embellishments to welcome home the Brigade of Guards on their return from the Crimean War in 1856 – those were the days when patriotic fervour was not frowned upon – and Peter's caption to the image says the locomotive was withdrawn in 1884 and stored until early the following century before being scrapped.

How sad that preservation wasn't achieved.

Next under the author's spotlight are the pre-Grouping standard gauge locomotives, and here too is a fascinating array of locomotion, starting with 79 class 0-6-0 No. 123 that entered traffic in 1861, was rebuilt as a saddle tank 18 years later, rebuilt again as a pannier tank in 1920, and survived into the post-Grouping era before being withdrawn in 1927.

This chapter also includes an intriguing image of one-off Pacific No. 111 *The Great Bear* inside Old Oak Common shed in May 1921, with a smart bowler-hatted individual posing alongside, leaning on his cane, hand in pocket, and an almost self-satisfied expression as he looks directly at the photographer. More than a century later, his identity appears to be unknown.

Onward then to the post-Grouping era, which includes images of all the expected classes from Star, Saint, County, City and Earl to King, Castle, Hall and Grange, but also lower-profile motive power, represented by tender 0-6-0s, pannier, saddle and side tanks, and also the diesel railcars that so fascinated many 1950s trainspotters.

Deeper into to the book, the chapters on carriages, buses and other road vehicles, and stations provide an overview of a railway company that to this day is revered by some and respected by many, and which remains a giant among Britain's railway history.

LNER K class under the microscope

THE subject chosen by Peter's fellow Doncastrian John Ryan appears on the surface to be somewhat more restrictive than the history of the GWR from its inception up to Nationalisation. After all, the K class isn't one to set a railway enthusiast's pulse racing, nor was it the topic of much discussion when trainspotters compared notes as they waited on a platform for the next cop.

However, there's a clue in the book's subtitle, 'From GNR to BR,' which is a broad remit, while the author says they were a mainstay of secondary passenger and goods services on the ECML from 1912 to the end of steam in the 1960s, and even found new areas of operation after Grouping in 1923.

Couple that with their ancestry of having been designed by Nigel Gresley when he was Chief Mechanical Engineer of the GNR, and also a select few being built for a specialised role on the West Highland Line and given such fine Scottish names as *Cameron of Lochiel* and *Macleod of Macleod*, and their suitability for a publication dedicated solely to the class becomes clearer.

John writes in his introduction that he hoped the book would serve to honour a hardworking group of locomotives that was overshadowed by more famous designs; supported by more than 160 colour and black-and-white photographs taken lineside and at stations, sheds and workshops, that aim has surely been achieved.

The author's authoritative and detailed captions, allied to a commendably varied selection of images, ensure ennui doesn't set in, resulting in a publication that provides something new whenever its pages are turned.

From No. 61885 in splendid isolation climbing Whitrope summit on the Waverley route with a freight working in 1952, and No. 61801 near Chelmsford in rural Essex in October 1959 with a train of cattle wagons, to No. 61891 in a busy Lincoln scene with a passenger train in August 1954, and No. 116 on a lengthy Newcastle-King's Cross express taking water at Langley troughs near Stevenage in 1927, the varied roles of the class are well-illustrated.

Pacey thoroughbreds on the glamour trains they may not have been, but the K class 2-6-0s had a decent enough pedigree and ability to undertake hard work that led to them being an important element of the LNER and BR stables for many years.

GWR AND LNER DOUBLE-HEADER WITH IMPRESSIVE IMAGES

Welsh narrow gauge Christmas cards

TWO of the most attractive Christmas cards we have received this year has been from two of the Great Little Trains of Wales.



The Corris Railway offering features the line's new-build Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 in an attractive wintry landscape. It costs £5 for a pack of five plus £1 p&p, with four packs post free, from John Knight, 40 Fladgate Road, Leytonstone, Londonn E11 1LY; cheques payable to Corris Railway.

The Welshpool & Llanfair's card is based on a Jonathan Clay painting and shows an Austrian pairing, the recently-restored Franco-Belge 0-8-0T No. 10 *Sir Drefaldwin* with U class 0-6-2T *Zillertal* visiting from the Zillertalbahn in Austria, on a snow day at Llanfair Caereinion.

The card costs £3.50 for a pack of five plus £2.95 for UK postage or £6 overseas (for any number of packs), and these can be ordered from W&LLR Christmas Cards, 7 Sutherland Grove, Perton, South Staffordshire WV6 7PA, with cheques made to W&L Sales.



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Chris's style intersperses clips of working examples (all filmed especially at railways across the British Isles) with presented pieces to camera, keeping things visually engaging and much more than a slideshow of clips and narration, aided by the editing style that pays homage to a much-loved motoring programme.

A bonus programme thrown into the mix features the fleet of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, very much a main line miniature, with some interesting background shared that some may have not previously been aware of.

Whether you're an enthusiast of old or coming into it with fresh eyes, this series ticks most of the boxes.

FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO CLASSIC LOCOMOTIVES

Talyllyn Railway Christmas jumper

(www.talyllynrailway.co.uk, £32+p&p).

NEW for 2024 and available in time for the festive season, the Talyllyn Railway has entered the Christmas jumper market with this cosy offering.

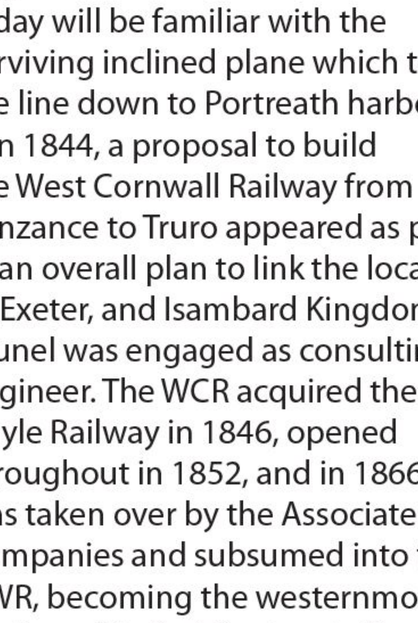
Artwork has been created by Haydn Spencer and depicts one of the line's two original locomotives – namely Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0WT No. 2 *Dolgoch* – crossing Dolgoch viaduct on a snowy winter's night in a modern take that harks back to the iconic Terence Cuneo painting of the same location.

Available in a choice of three colours and in sizes from small to XXXL, these will no doubt prove to be a fine and tasteful choice for all manner of railway enthusiasts.



The Hayle and West Cornwall Railways: Penzance to Truro (1834-1865)

By Roger Langley, with David Birch and John Gabb (The Trevithick Society, PO Box No.62 Camborne, Cornwall TR14 7ZN, email trevpub@thornemail.uk, softback, £22 including p&p or £20 if collected; hardback £28 including p&p or £25 if collected, 115pp).



HERE is a very long-awaited history of the Hayle Railway – one was promised 60 years ago but never came to fruition. West Cornwall, with its rich copper mining landscape, boasted several early house-drawn tramways, the earliest dating from about 1812 and linking mines at Poldice to the harbour at Portreath, and was followed in 1824 by the Redruth & Chasewater Railway linking Redruth mines to Devoran serving the English Channel coast. The 17-mile Hayle Railway was mooted in 1832, received its Act of Parliament in 1834 as a 4ft gauge line, but ended up being built to standard gauge as a locomotive-worked concern. Its first sections were opened in December 23, 1837, and the remainder by June 23, 1838. Its big advantage as seen by mine owners was that ships carrying ore to South Wales could avoid rounding the potentially hazardous Lizard peninsula and Land's End, as was the case if they sailed from Devoran.

The Hayle Railway carried its first passenger services in May 1843. Regular visitors to West Cornwall today will be familiar with the surviving inclined plane which took the line down to Portreath harbour.

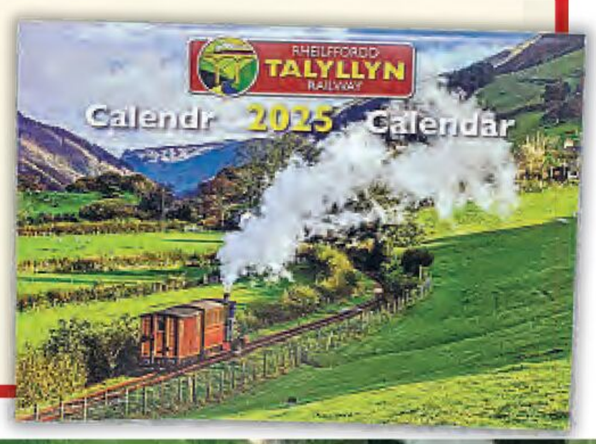
In 1844, a proposal to build the West Cornwall Railway from Penzance to Truro appeared as part of an overall plan to link the locality to Exeter, and Isambard Kingdom Brunel was engaged as consulting engineer. The WCR acquired the Hayle Railway in 1846, opened throughout in 1852, and in 1866 was taken over by the Associated Companies and subsumed into the GWR, becoming the westernmost section of its Paddington to Penzance main line.

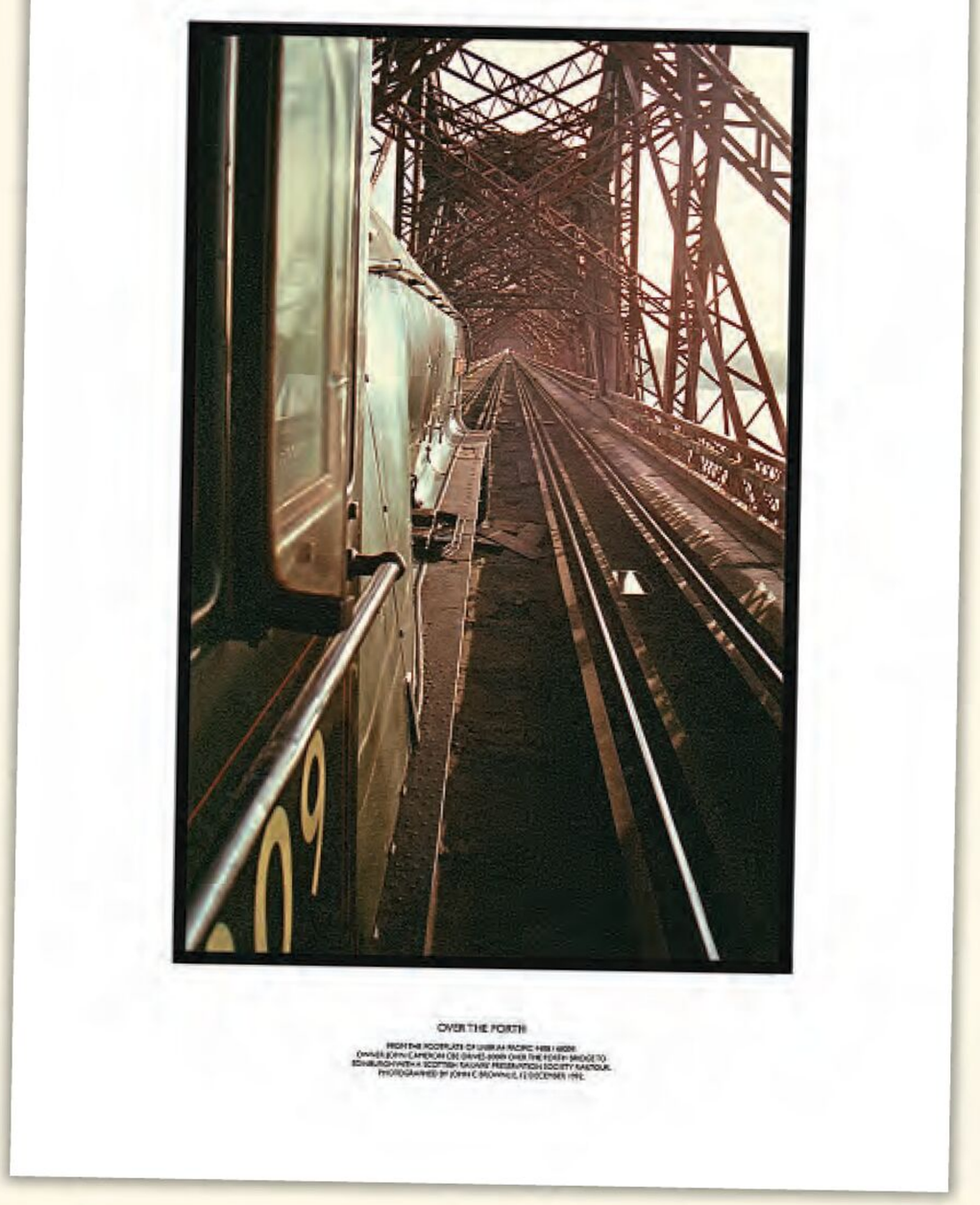
Talyllyn Railway 2025 calendar

(www.talyllynrailway.co.uk, £8+p&p).

THE world's first volunteer-run railway has once again curated a fine selection of photographs submitted by its volunteers and visitors capturing scenes and moments from across the seasons.

Each month is accompanied by a selection of smaller images with some blurb about the railway and is sure to prove enticing to visitors both new and old. With the 75th anniversary of both the Talyllyn and railway preservation as we know it not far off, it's also another way to support the railway that is so often referred to as having a 'Heart of Gold.'





Over the Forth

Fine art print by John C Brownlie (www.johncharlesmedia.com/shop/Forth, print only 11.7x16.5in, £150; 16.5x23.4in, £190; 23x33.1in, £230, all plus p&p).

Here is a new commemorative-edition fine art print of a photograph of LNER A4 Pacific No. 4488/60009 *Union of South Africa* which captures a rare glimpse from the driver's cab while crossing the Forth Bridge, released to mark the locomotive's retirement.

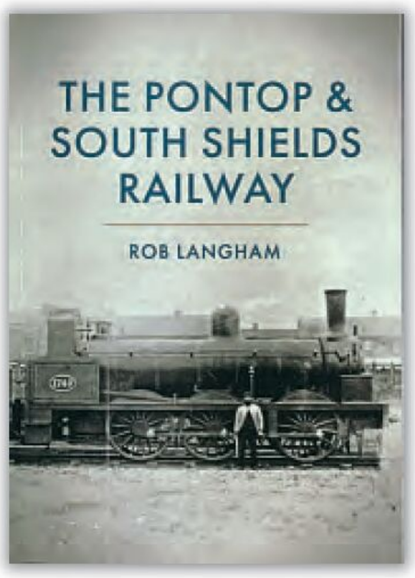
A nod to the classic LNER lithographic poster art Over The Forth to the North from 1928, to create this brand-new gallery-standard print the original 35mm negative was digitised in high resolution – revealing detail unseen when first processed, while still preserving the characteristic warmth and grain of the Kodak Ektar Professional film stock. The photograph was taken by John C Brownlie in his schooldays in the 1990s when he was involved with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society and the print has been personally approved by the locomotive's owner, John Cameron CBE.

Ten per cent of proceeds from the sales of Over The Forth will be going to The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust's project to build new Gresley P2 2-8-2 No. 2007 *Prince of Wales*.

Trust chairman Steve Davies OBE said: "We are delighted that the P2 project has been singled out for support by this artistic initiative, celebrating the many parallels between the subject of John's stunning photograph and our cause."

With previous research long hampered by the absence of many surviving records from the line's earliest years, Roger Langley has impressed with his reconstruction of a history as detailed as possible in the circumstances, while local contributors David Birch and John Gabb have added a coloured photographic gazetteer of what survives today.

ESSENTIAL FRESH INSIGHT INTO CORNISH RAILWAY HISTORY



The Pontop & South Shields Railway

By Rob Langham (softback, Amberley Publishing, 96pp, £15.99, ISBN 978-1-3981-1146-6).

WITH the Stockton & Darlington 200 celebrations set to shower unrivalled public attention on the railway history of County Durham in 2025, here is the story of another line which came into existence to carry coal from pitheads to harbour.

The Pontop & South Shields Railway was established in the wake of the 1841 financial collapse of the Stanhope & Tyne Railroad Company, subject of a previous Amberley volume, to continue its essential coal-carrying operations from the Consett area to the River Tyne.

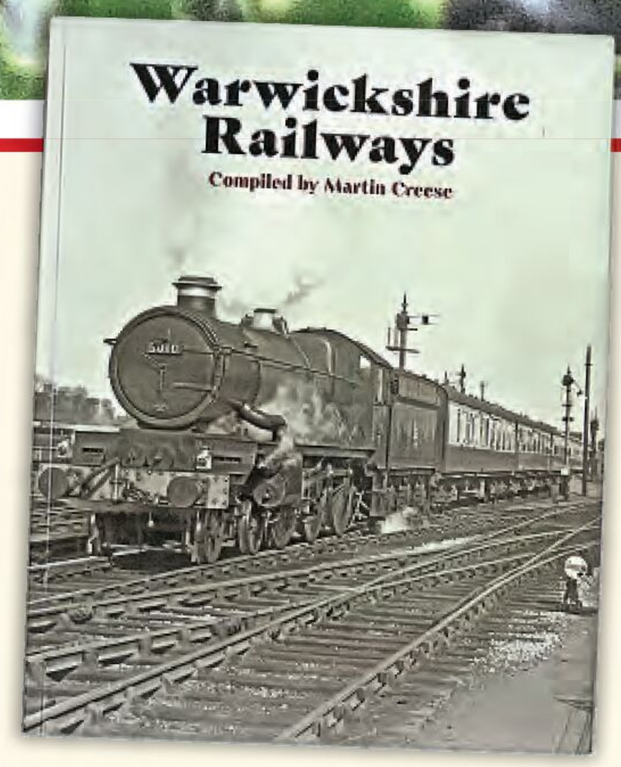
Famous for the steep gradients from Tyne Docks to Consett, the subject of detailed accounts in the volume, the line survived until the closure of the town's steelworks in 1980.

BR did not respond to public appeals for passenger services to be reinstated and after several specials were run over the line, the final train came on March 17, 1984, in the form of a Derwentside Rail Action Groups charter from Newcastle Central to the site of Consett station behind Class 46 'Peak' No. 46046 *Leicestershire & Derbyshire Yeomanry*.

The author's superb narrative, which excels in bringing the story of the line and the many changes it underwent back to life, is superbly illustrated by many rare and previously unpublished photographs which alone are worth the cover price.

SPLENDID ACCOUNT OF A NORTH EAST FREIGHT ARTERY

Warwickshire Railways



Compiled by Martin Creese (softback, Transport Treasury Publishing, 112pp, £14.95 + £3 p&p, cheques payable to Transport Treasury Publishing, 16 Highworth Close, High Wycombe HP13 7PJ, ISBN 978-1-913251-65-9).

FOR compiler Martin Creese, this new Transport Treasury publication was obviously a labour of love, for the county's railways have been a recurring part of his life, starting when as a youngster in the early 1970s he took refuge in the waiting room at Wilmcote, three miles north of Stratford-upon-Avon on the line to Birmingham Snow Hill, as No. 4771 *Green Arrow* passed through on a railtour.

This was followed in October 1974 at the same station, when No. 35028 *Clan Line* struggled to make a getaway after a photo stop – the station is at the crest of a 1-in-75 incline – and it was where Martin saw No. 4468 *Mallard* in steam, while he also remembers with delight the sight of No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* on a set of chocolate and cream coaches passing Henley-in-Arden on a glorious September afternoon.

Using mainly previously unpublished images, Martin's tour of Warwickshire's railways starts at Fenny Compton, proceeds on the former GWR route to Birmingham Snow Hill – the city was in the county until 1974 – and thence down to Stratford-upon-Avon, onto the former LMS route from Redditch to Evesham, a trip to Leamington Spa, a look at the Shipston-on-Stour branch, and a return to Fenny Compton via Broom Junction.

Such an itinerary means the accent is on GWR steam, but the LMS gets involved, and so too DMUs, while I also spotted at least one Standard representative, the now-preserved Class 9F 2-10-0 No. 92212 at Stratford.

Essentially, the usual suspects are there, headed by Kings, Castles, Halls and even Saint class No. 2905 *Lady Macbeth* at Stratford-upon-Avon in May 1947, when the 4-6-0 was 41 years old and less than a year from withdrawal.

I enjoyed the view from the footplate of No. 6003 *King George IV* as it approached Leamington Spa in April 1960, and also, at the opposite end of the aesthetic spectrum, 2-8-0 No. 2816 on Tyseley's west roundhouse turntable in December 1954 in the smoky, almost foggy atmosphere that typified steam engine sheds up and down the country.

The LMS fayre on show may not compare with the majesty of a King, but there's a decent variety on offer, embracing both tender and tank representatives, and there are also a couple of images of the 3½-mile Edge Hill Light Railway, in the south-east of the county near Burton Dassett, that was engineered by Col Holman Stephens to carry ironstone traffic.

This line, which operated for only three years from 1922 until January 1925, incorporated a 1-in-6 cable-operated incline and was worked by three locomotives, including two ex-LBSCR A1 'Terrier' 0-6-0Ts, formerly Nos. 673 *Deptford* and 674 *Shadwell*.

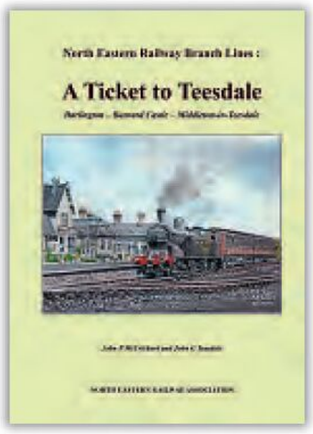
GWR AND LMS MIX IN CENTRAL ENGLAND

A Ticket to Teesdale

By John P McCrickard and John G Teasdale (softback, North Eastern Railway Association, ner.org.uk, 136pp, £14.95, ISBN: 978-1-911360-41-4).

THIS book was inspired by a North Eastern Railway Association exhibition of the same title and, in addition to the work of the principal authors, draws on input from several contributors to produce a fascinating insight into the origins of the railway from Darlington to Barnard Castle, and also the line subsequently built to link the latter town with Middleton-in-Teesdale.

It takes up the story from the very beginning, when a combination of canals and waggonways were initially proposed for moving coal from the south western corner of County Durham to the lower reaches of the River Tees. The reader is introduced to the various figures involved in the promotion (and opposition) of railway plans that followed, how Middleton-in-Teesdale residents later lobbied to be connected, and the growth and demise of the railway, followed by the closure of its remaining stub 26 years later.



The book is illustrated with a good selection of black-and-white and colour photographs and timetable extracts, as well as drawings of station buildings and track layouts.

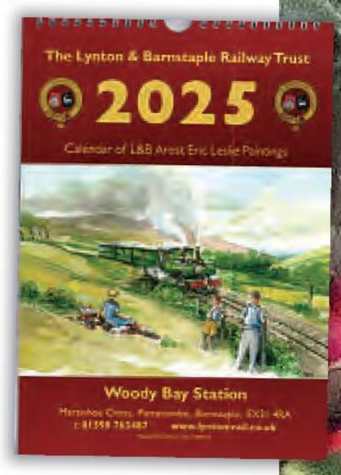
A historical summary is followed by detailed chapters on the route, passenger and goods traffic, and reflections regarding its closure.

There are appendices detailing stationmasters and accidents, and also featuring signalling diagrams.

It is not only the meticulous approach to, and depth of, the content which makes this an outstanding read. Despite NERA being a small organisation, the overall quality of the finished book is comparable with that from any of the big publishers, and reasonably priced too.

COMPREHENSIVE RAILWAY HISTORY DOES NOT DISAPPOINT

Lynton & Barnstaple 2025 calendar and Christmas card



(Lynton & Basrnstaple Railway Trust Ltd, calendar £8 from Woody Bay station shop on 01598 763487 or £12 from www.lynton-rail.co.uk; cards £5 for pack of five in shop or £6.50 including p&p).

Artist Eric Leslie's watercolours capturing the essential atmosphere of the legendary North Devon line have gone hand in hand with the L&B revival, and his superb works are again showcased in this calendar and greetings card. One for every month of the year, plus the cover, will delight and inspire the whole year round.



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The interior of the Goathland camping coach. CHARLOTTE GRAHAM/NYMR

Winter self-catering breaks on the Moors

(North Yorkshire Moors Railway, www.nymr.co.uk/short-winter-breaks).

BRITAIN'S most popular heritage line is offering short winter breaks which are ideal for a festive getaway in the heart of the North York Moors National Park.

Guests can book the beautifully restored Station House at Grosmont Station, suitable for up to five people with one double and one family bedroom (both with king-sized beds and one has an extra single bed), a fully-equipped kitchen and bathroom. A three-night stay starts at £660.

Levisham Camping Coach has three bedrooms and sleeps up to five people. Its location offers dark skies perfect for stargazing, and access to local forest trails with glimpses of the wildlife.

Heating is installed throughout the coach, which has a fully-equipped kitchen and a bathroom with a shower cubicle.

Located on the line's 'celebrity station' which became Hogsmeade Station in the first Harry Potter film and featured as Aidensfield in ITV's Heartbeat, Goathland Camping Coach is just a few minutes' walk away from the village. It ideal for up to four people, with one standard double and one twin bedroom. A three-night stay in either camping coach starts at £660.



Duke of Gloucester tumbler

(BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust, www.theduke.uk.com/product-category/shop/ £30 including p&p).

THIS year has seen the 50th anniversary of the retrieval of unique Riddles BR Class 8 Pacific No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* from Barry scrapyard and the start of its Impossible Dream rebuild for heritage use, 70 years after it was outshopped. To mark these dates, its owning group has produced a special boxed drinks goblet for sale. Trust chairman Trevor Tuckley said: "Hopefully, this will provide a permanent reminder to all true heritage steam enthusiasts of the enormous challenges that have been faced and overcome in order to complete the Impossible Dream so that the unique *Duke* can be seen working on the main line in the condition Riddles envisaged those long 70 years ago."

Unique handmade railway items

(On the Rails, www.etsy.com/uk/shop/NenesDesignStudio).

ON The Rails uses its own highly detailed and vibrant drawings for its products and included in the range are these velvet cushion covers and cotton socks. A standard cushion is suitable for the soft cover, which includes a hidden zip and comes in three designs so you can choose between electric, diesel or steam traction. The cotton socks are one size fits all (up to UK size 15) and there are more than 20 designs for adults. Based in Tunbridge Wells, if you visit the online shop you'll also see other quality products that make great practical gifts for enthusiasts of all ages.

➜ **Advertisement – page 92.**





Limited-edition Christmas beer packs

(Engine Shed Brewery, www.engineshedbrewery.com, email info@engineshedbrewery.com).

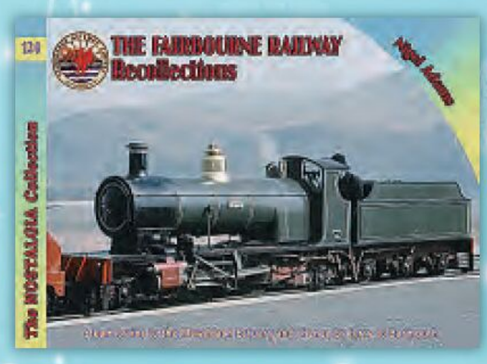
ENGINE Shed Brewery is offering specially curated limited-edition gift sets featuring two of its finest brews in time for Christmas and the 2025 Stockton & Darlington bicentenary celebrations.

The beers are Black 5, inspired by the iconic LMS 4-6-0, boasting a rich, smoky flavour and aroma, capturing the essence of railway heritage, and Buckjumper, a blonde ale with a floral aroma and a crisp, citrus twist, paying homage to the spirited J67-69 locomotives. The pack includes a limited-edition glass plus a selection of extra goodies to enhance the festive experience.

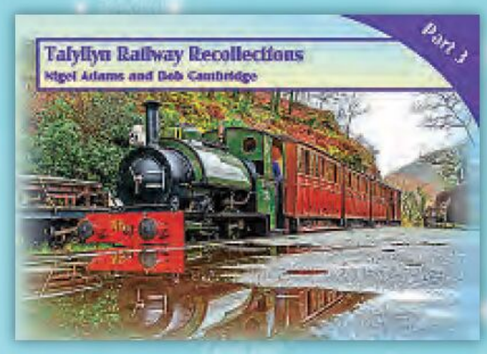
➜ **Advertisement – page 17.** HR

HERITAGE RAILWAY

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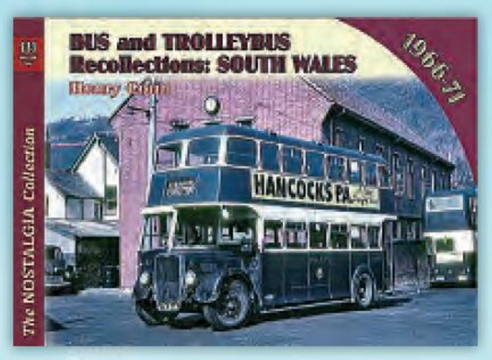
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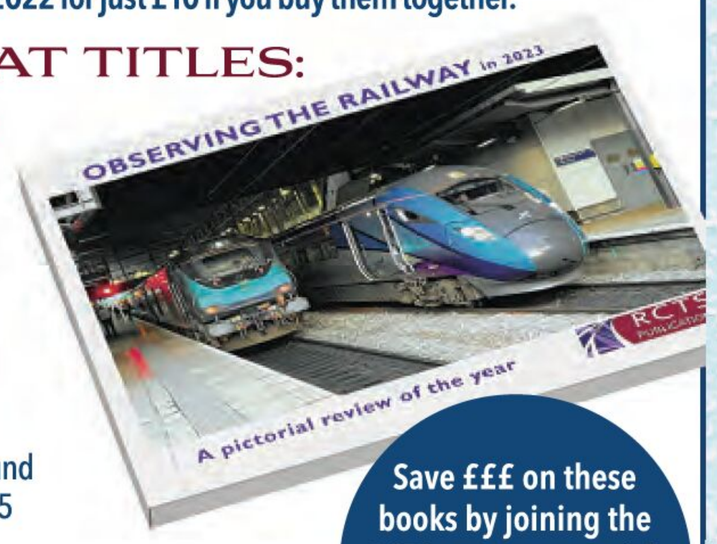
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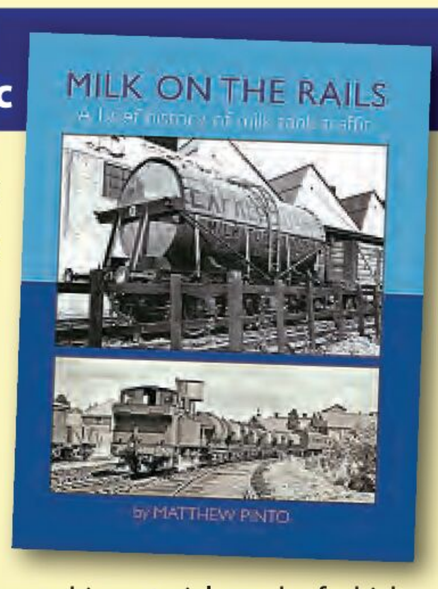
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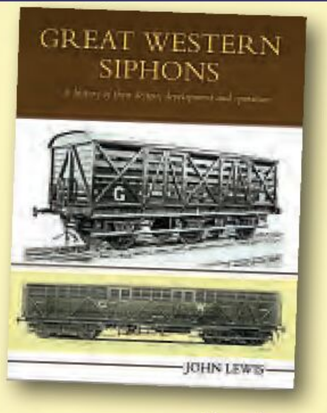
The first book on this fascinating traffic to be published - the result of long held interest and much research. In "Milk On The Rails" author Matt Pinto tells the complete story of how milk was transported on British Railways in the era of bulk transportation. Starting with the origins of the traffic and how it built up before the Second World War, it covers development and details of the rail vehicles, dairies and other facilities used, and the routes and services that carried milk tanks.

The companies who carried out all this work are also described, as is the development of the Milk Marketing Board, together with later developments and how they led to the end of the traffic.

For the modeller, the book contains a wealth of photographic material, much of which has not been seen in print before, together with many operational details covering motive power, rolling stock and the varied rail served terminals and facilities built for the traffic. The book covers all eras from earlier steam operations up until the later diesel operations.

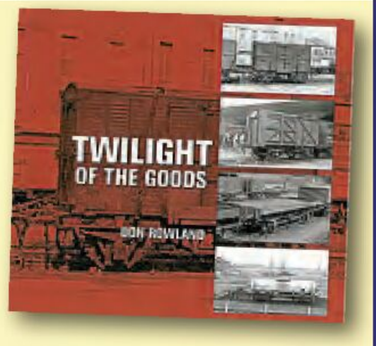
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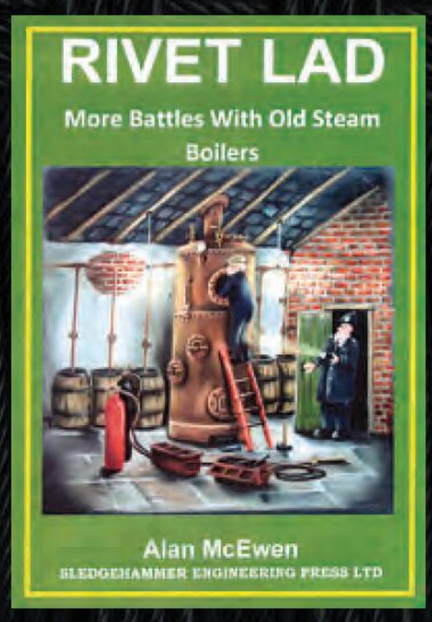
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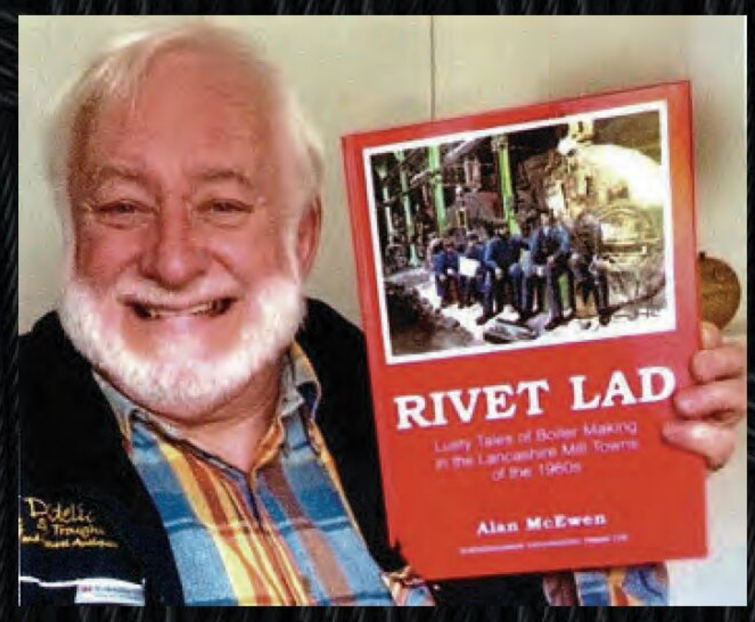
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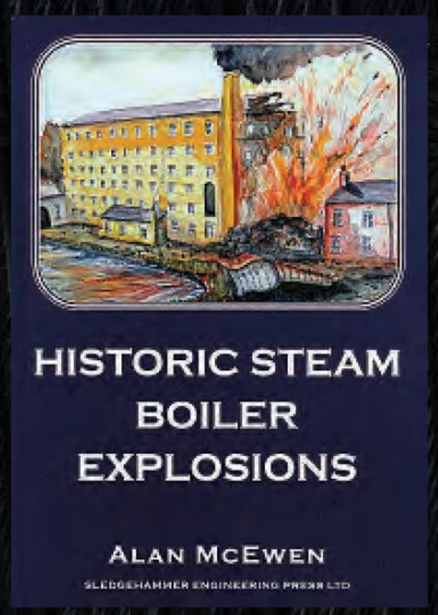
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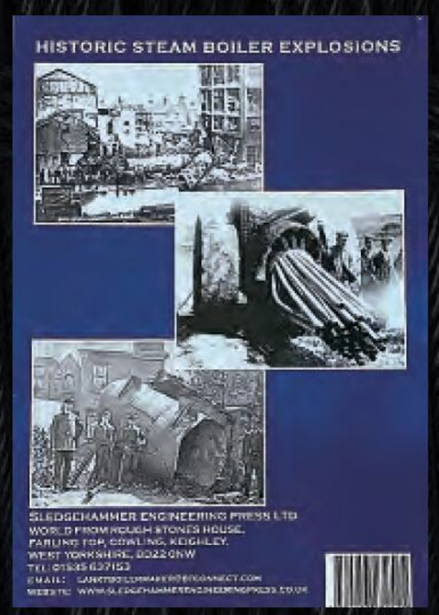
When Master Boiler Maker and author, Alan McEwen was a young sprog, he loved banging and hammering on rusty old boilers; now that he is an old hog, he just prefers others to bang and hammer! Alan McEwen's Boiler Making adventures and also 'potted histories' of several Lancashire and Yorkshire Boiler Making firms, can be read in **RIVET LAD - *Lusty Tales of Boiler Making in the Lancashire Mill Towns of the 1960s***. The book is crammed with 'hands on' technical information of how Lancashire, Locomotive, Economic, and Cochran Vertical boilers were repaired over 50 years ago.





The book's larger-than-life characters, the hard as nails, ale-supping, chain-smoking Boiler Makers: Carrot Crampthorn, Reuben 'Iron Man' Ramsbottom, Teddy Tulip, genial Irishman Paddy O'Boyle, and not least Alan himself, are, to a man, throw-backs to times gone by when British industry was the envy of the world.





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STAR LETTER

Double-header from Vintage Trains was a real winner!

I WRITE to express my appreciation of and thanks for the herculean efforts by Vintage Trains staff to produce the triumph that was 'The Mayflower' railtour of September 27, 2024.

Despite the fact that I only made it as far as the waiting list for tickets and did not manage to get on the train, the whole day was a wonderful achievement, and I wonder whether it can ever be bettered? From the two engines pausing at Dorridge on the outward positioning move to their eventual return to Tyseley some 40 hours later, the actual railtour was only a fraction of the working hours expended, particularly so if the diesel crews, fire raisers, on-train staff, support staff and so on are all accounted for, and I feel it unlikely that this is appreciated by the wider public.

The results were a tour that combined the 'right locomotives in the right place,' with sparkling performance and interest all the way. Heritage diesels on the first leg were attractive in their own right, and then, when the two Castles took over, the excitement really began. The day ran to time on all but the very first steam leg (to avoid the pathing stop at Taunton?) and never failed to delight. In my conversations at the lineside I encountered folk who had travelled from Germany to watch the tour, along with others who had journeyed from far and wide around the UK, bringing trade and money to the pubs and cafes along the route. The excited descriptions of the char and embers raining down on those watching from the platform at Totnes as the tour whistled through the middle road on the outward run, along with the realisation that Real Time Trains had gone down just as the distant sounds of the Castles were heard at the foot of Hemerdon, will remain long in my memory.

Perhaps even more memorable though were the real smiles and appreciation of those at the lineside, mirrored by the happy, excited waves from those lucky souls on the train, as the two Castles triumphantly breasted the top of Hemerdon bank in a spectacle that was not to be missed.



WR 4-6-0 No. 7029 *Clun Castle* and GWR No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* double-heading 'The Mayflower' at Dorridge on September 27. TIM LOW

I have been following and enjoying main line steam for more than 50 years and, while recognising that others may disagree, for me this trip represents something very close to absolute perfection. My only slight doubt is whether it can ever be repeated, or even bettered.

As a Great Western fan, I believe that the only chance of another triumph like this will be courtesy of Vintage Trains, and I look forward to seeing what its future programme will bring. For the moment though, I have just two words to add: thank you!

Tim Low, email



Pre-Grouping splendour in full view: LSWR T3 4-4-0 No. 563 at Swanage. ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Pre-Grouping should take precedence

WHY should enthusiasts who enjoy our heritage railways so much pay to sit in a beautifully restored Victorian carriage hauled by Victorian locomotive disguised as a BR machine – we have said it many times.

Still we see many like the new-build Atlantic H2 and the Adams radial tank masquerading as BR locomotives instead of their original splendid paint job; just look at the way the T3 pulls the crowds at Swanage.

However welcome to the model world, here I notice the manufacturers have stepped up and are producing high-quality OO gauge models displaying their pre-Grouping liveries. I am sure that not only the model fraternity will be interested, but also the collectors will be filling their show cases displaying these highly detailed models.

Derrick Martin, Hornchurch, Essex.

Beeching closed key lines through 'misunderstanding'

WHILE accepting you cannot cover everything, it must be said that through Dr Beeching, many people lost their jobs. Dr Beeching was not a railway man, so he did not understand the network and he closed strategic routes.

What made people angry, and this was not covered by Simon Jones (Platform, issue 325), was the way BR deliberately closed some routes. It was determined at all costs to close the line from Wolverhampton Low Level to Birmingham Snow Hill, so in March 1968 it closed the two connecting lines of Stafford Road Junction to Low Level and Birmingham Moor Street to Snow Hill. This meant it was difficult for those who worked in the Black Country and who lived north of Wolverhampton and south of Snow Hill to access their places of work.

Also, the railcars used on the line had to travel via Langley Green instead of direct into Snow Hill, which put the cost up of running the service, and closure came in 1972.

There were other lines that BR ran down, with connections missed and so on, which eventually led to closure. People should know this.

Chris Magner, email

Comparing the Beattock A2s

THE restoration of LNER A2 Pacific No. 60532 *Blue Peter* reminds one of the last days of steam on the West Coast Main Line when a few A2s were based as Glasgow Polmadie working expresses over Beattock to Carlisle.

One wonders if there are any records of their performances when compared with the big Stanier Duchess Pacifics? In theory, the A2s were slightly more powerful on accord of their smaller 6ft 2in diameter driving wheels.

One also wonders whether they ever strayed as far south as Crewe of Euston.

Malcolm Braddock, Stockport, Cheshire

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Heritage railway double-headers are most certainly authentic sights!

I WAS surprised to read in Platform, *Heritage Railway* issue 325, the letter from David Barnett on the subject 'Double-headers are not authentic.'

My experience differs as my trainspotting notebooks confirm that they were not rare events but fairly regular occurrences.

I was perhaps fortunate to live in Worcester (1939-56), where in BR days both Western Region and Midland Region passenger trains were sometimes double-headed, including those which bypassed the city on the 'Midland' main line from Birmingham to Bristol. This was necessary because of the weight of the train involved and, in a few cases where the operation was regular, to provide a balancing working to get a locomotive somewhere without the need to travel 'light engine.' I can quote examples from my records.

I have been transferring my copious records from my notebooks to Excel spreadsheets in the hope that they may be of some interest and use to someone in the future – I am 86 years old!

This has enabled me to scan quickly through my records and I have found that I also saw double-headed passenger trains at such diverse locations as Weedon and Crewe (West Coast Main Line), Manchester Victoria, Piershill station (adjacent to St Margaret's loco depot) east of Edinburgh Waverley station, Swindon, Bath & Bristol on the WR main line, and Bath (Somerset & Dorset) where, apart from local services, virtually all southbound passenger trains were double-headed. I also noted a southbound double-headed freight train on the Great Central main line at Rugby.

There will be many other locations where double-heading was common – over the South Devon banks between Newton Abbot and Plymouth, for instance – where it was not unknown for two King class locomotives to work in tandem. In the Worcester area I noted two Castle class locomotives hauling a train on more than a few occasions.

Lloyd Daniels, email

Double-headers were not a scarcity

DOUBLE-HEADERS are very authentic. In the days when the railways owned an excess of rolling stock, it was usual to reinforce a busy service with two, three or more coaches. If the load then exceeded the capacity of the rostered locomotive, a pilot would be attached.

'The Waverley' and 'Thames-Clyde' expresses that I observed regularly had a 2P 4-4-0 double-heading a Jubilee or 'Black Five' on summer Saturdays.

There would quite often be a relief train as well, such was the demand. Double-headers were also used for operational reasons, i.e., getting a light engine back to its own shed.

There was a regular double-headed evening commuter train out of King's Cross hauled by two B1s. The train would split up the line and one locomotive would take part of the train to Cambridge and the other take part to Peterborough.

I can mention numerous other examples. The Red Bank parcels train, GWR double-headers on the banks in the south-west, double-header Black 5's on the hilly routes in Scotland – the list is endless.

Barry Bryan, Measham, Leicestershire

Neither do present-day attractions represent bygone times

MR BARNETT'S letter in last month's issue in which he criticises heritage railways for their operation of double-headers is rather unfair.

Like him, I was a trainspotter in the 1950s and 1960s, and indeed on my local main line double-headers were all but non-existent, but I have to disagree when he says the aim of heritage lines is to provide accurate representation of a bygone era and as such, these types of trains should not, as he puts it, 'proliferate.'

Heritage lines are struggling in today's economic climate and need every bit of help they can think of to attract visitors, and double-headers are indeed an enormous attraction, as I witnessed myself at a recent gala.

And if, as he said, the aim of heritage lines is to accurately represent a bygone era – and I would contest that – then their stations and locomotive depots should be run-down, their trains invariably late, engines and carriages filthy, staff not particularly helpful, and refreshments mediocre.

During my years of avid trainspotting, I don't remember Santa specials, real ale festivals, Halloween fun or any of the other attractions put on by heritage lines, so presumably Mr Barnett thinks they too should cease.

If our much-loved heritage lines were to simply represent a bygone era and so not put on attractions such as double-headers that draw in the crowds, who swell the railways' coffers with much-needed cash, then probably many, if not all, would not survive and have to close down, and so another line would be lost. Now that would represent the bygone era.

Name and address withheld

WESTERN TRAM: History was made in Blackpool early on October 22 as the popular Western Train made its way to the North Station tram terminus, for the last time any of the resort's heritage trams ran up Talbot Road was back in the 1960s. The trip was a preview of an event being planned alongside Holiday Inn Blackpool for December. BLACKPOOL HERITAGE TRAM TOURS



Plum cottage!

IN the late 1950s, cycling to school in Malvern I would regularly pass a cottage which displayed a GWR *Pershore Plum* nameplate.

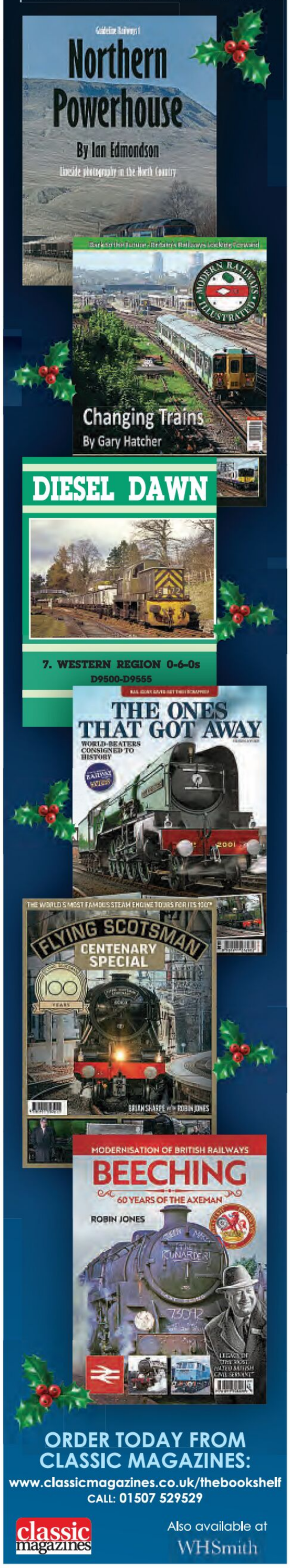
The cottage was situated adjacent to a crossroads, opposite to what is now a part of the Three Counties Showground. This was also only a short distance away from the by-then closed LMS Malvern Wells station.

I wonder whether this was one of the nameplates sold to Mr Daniels in 1947, as reported in issue 322?

Christopher Dyche, Stourbridge, West Midlands

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OPERATIONAL HERITAGE LINES AND MUSEUMS

SOUTH EAST

Amberley Museum
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Arundel, West Sussex. Tel: 01798 831370.
Open: Weds-Suns until Dec 22.

Bluebell Railway
Standard gauge, 11 miles. Sheffield Park, East Sussex TN22 2QL. Tel: 01825 720800.
Running: Dec 28-31.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bredgar, Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01622 884254.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Chatham Historic Dockyard
Standard gauge, one mile. Chatham, Kent. Tel: 01634 820800. Reo**pens: Spring 2025.**

East Kent Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Shepherdswell, Kent. Tel: 01304 832042.
Normal unning resumes 2025.

Eastleigh Lakeside Railway
10¼in & 7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Running: W/Es.

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway
12¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Exbury, Southampton. Tel: 023 8089 1203.
Reopens 2025.

Hayling Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Hayling Island, Hants. Tel: 07902 446340.
Running: Weds, W/Es, sch hols.

Hollycombe Steam in the Country
2ft gauge, 1½ miles. Liphook, Hants. Tel: 01428 724900.
Reopens 2025.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Havenstreet, Isle of Wight. Tel: 01983 882204.
Running: Dec 26.

Kent & East Sussex Railway
Standard gauge, 10½ miles. Tenterden, Kent. Tel: 01580 765155.
Running: Dec 29-Jan 1.

Lavender Line
Standard gauge, one mile. Isfield, East Sussex. Tel: 01825 750515.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Mid-Hants Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Alresford, Hants SO24 9JG. Tel: 01962 733810.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Mizens Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Woking, Surrey. Tel: 07962 400922.
Running: Jan 1, 2025.

Old Kiln Light Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Farnham, Surrey.
Reopens 2025.

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
15in gauge, 13½ miles. New Romney, Kent. Tel: 01797 362353.
Running: Dec 28-31.

Royal Victoria Railway
10¼in gauge, one mile. Netley, Southampton. Tel: 02380 456246.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, 1¾ miles. Sittingbourne, Kent. Tel: 01795 424899.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Spa Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel: 01892 300141.
Running: W/Es from Dec 28.

Volk's Electric Railway
2ft 8½in gauge, one mile. Brighton.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

SOUTH WEST

Avon Valley Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Bitton, Bristol. Tel: 0117 932 5538.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Bodmin & Wenford Railway
Standard gauge, 6½ miles, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: 01208 73555.
Running: Dec 29.

Bristol Harbour Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Princes Wharf, Bristol. Tel: 0117 352 6600.
M Shed Museum open Tues-Suns.

Dartmouth Steam Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Paignton, Devon. Tel: 01803 555872.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Devon Railway Centre
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Bickleigh, Devon. Tel: 01884 855671.
Reopens 2025.

East Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, two miles. Cranmore, Somerset. Tel: 01749 880417.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Gartell Light Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Yenston, Templecombe, Somerset. Tel: 01963 370752.
Reopens 2025.

Helston Railway
Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Helston, Cornwall. Tel: 07901 977 597.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Lappa Valley Railway
7¼in, 10¼ and 15in gauge, one mile. Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 01872 510317.
Open: W/Es + Dec 30/31.

Launceston Steam Railway
1ft 11½in gauge, 2 ½ miles. Launceston, Cornwall. Tel: 01566 775665
Reopens 2025.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Woody Bay, North Devon. Tel: 01598 763487.
Running: Dec 28-Jan 5.

Moors Valley Railway
7¼in gauge, one mile. Ringwood, Hants. Tel: 01425 471415. **Running: W/Es + Dec 30-Jan 3.**

North Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, 1200ft. Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, Dorset. Tel: 01258 860696.
Open: Weds, W/Es.

Plym Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Marsh Mills, Plymouth. Tel: 01752 345078.
Running: Dec 28/29.

Seaton Tramway
2ft 9in gauge, three miles. Harbour Road, Seaton, Devon. Tel: 01297 20375.
Running: Dec 27-Jan 5.

Somerset & Dorset Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Midsomer Norton station, Silver Street, BA3 2EY. Tel: 01761 411221
Running: Jan 1.

South Devon Railway
Standard gauge, seven miles. Buckfastleigh, Devon. Tel: 01364 644370.
Running: Dec 26-Jan 1, Jan 3-5.

Swanage Railway
Standard gauge, six miles. Swanage, Dorset. Tel: 01929 425800.
Running: Dec 27-31.

Swindon & Cricklade Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Blunsdon, Wiltshire. Tel: 01793 771615.
Normal running resumes 2025.

West Somerset Railway
Standard gauge, 20 miles. Minehead, Somerset. Tel: 01643 704996.
Running: Dec 27-29, 31-Jan 1.

Yeovil Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Yeovil Junction station, Somerset. Tel: 01935 410420.
Normal running resumes 2025.



An unusual sight at Bodmin Parkway on October 18 was small prairie No. 5552 on a permanent way train, seen departing with the rolling stock led by BSO No. 9214, which had previously been converted by British Rail for re-railing support duties. JIMMY JAMES/BODMIN RAILWAY

EAST ANGLIA

Bressingham Steam Museum
Narrow and standard gauge, one mile. Diss, Norfolk. Tel: 01379 686900.
Reopens 2025.

Bure Valley Railway
15in gauge, nine miles. Aylsham, Norfolk. Tel: 01263 733858.
Running: Dec 27-Jan 5.

Colne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Castle Hedingham, Essex. Tel: 01787 461174.
Running: Dec 28/29.

East Anglian Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¼ mile. Wakes Colne, Essex. Tel: 01206 242524.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Running: Jan 1.

Ferry Meadows Railway
10¼in gauge, ½ mile. Peterborough, Cambs. Tel: 01733 398 889.
Running: W/Es, sch hols.

Mangapps Railway Museum
Standard gauge, ¾ mile. Near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex. Tel: 01621 784898.
Reopens 2025.

Mid-Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 11½ miles. Dereham, Norfolk. Tel: 01362 851723.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Brockford, Suffolk.
Tel: 01449 766899.
Running: Jan 1.

Nene Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 7½ miles.
Wansford, Peterborough, Cambs.
Tel: 01780 784444.
Running: Jan 4/5.

North Norfolk Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8RA.
Tel: 01263 820800.
Running: Dec 27-Jan 5.

Wells & Walsingham Railway
10¼in gauge, four miles.
Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.
Tel: 01328 711630.
Reopens 2025.

Whitwell & Reepham Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Reepham, Norfolk. Tel: 01603 871694.
Open: Tues-Suns. Running: Dec 1.

HOME COUNTIES

Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Quainton Road, Bucks.
Tel: 01296 655720
Cafe open Mon-Fri. Normal running resumes 2025.

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Chinnor, Oxon.
Tel: 07979 055366
Running: Dec 28/29, Jan 1.

Cholsey & Wallingford Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Wallingford, Oxon. Tel: 01491 835067
Normal running resumes 2025.

Didcot Railway Centre
Standard gauge. Didcot, Oxon.
Tel: 01235 817200.
Open: W/Es from Jan 5. Running: Jan 1.

Epping Ongar Railway
Standard gauge, six miles.
Ongar, Essex.
Tel: 01277 365200.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Great Whipsnade Railway
2ft 6in gauge. Whipsnade Zoo, Dunstable.
Tel: 0344 225 1826.
Reopens 2025.

Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway
2ft gauge.
Hanworth, Middlesex.
Tel: 01932 212235.
Reopens 2025.

Leighton Buzzard Railway
2ft gauge, three miles.
Leighton Buzzard, Beds.
Tel: 01525 373888
Running: Dec 27-29.

London Museum of Water & Steam
2ft gauge, 400 yards.
Brentford, London. Tel: 0208 568 4757.
Open: Thurs-Suns.

MIDLANDS

Abbey Pumping Station
2ft gauge, ¼ mile. Corporation Road, Leicester, LE4 5PX.Tel: 0116 299 5111.
Reopens 2025.

Amerton Railway
2ft gauge, one mile. Stowe-by-Chartley, Staffs. Tel: 01889 271337.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Apedale Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Apedale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. Tel: 0845 094 1953.
Running: Dec 28.

Barrow Hill Roundhouse
Standard gauge. Barrow Hill, near Chesterfield. Tel: 01246 475554.
Open: W/Es.

Battlefield Line
Standard gauge, five miles.
Shackerstone, Leics. Tel: 01827 880754.
Running: Dec 30-Jan 1.

Cambrian Heritage Railways
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles (Oswestry), ¾ mile (Llynclys). Oswestry and Llynclys, Shropshire. Tel: 01691 728131.
Running: Dec 28/29.

Chasewater Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Walsall, West Midlands. Tel: 01543 452623.
Open: Daily. Normal running resumes 2025.

Churnet Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 5¼ miles.
Cheddleton, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 360522.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Crich Tramway Village
Standard gauge, one mile.
Crich, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01773 854 321
Reopens 2025.

Dean Forest Railway
Standard gauge, 4½ miles.
Norchard, Lydney, Glos.
Tel: 01594 845840.
Running: Dec 28/29, 31.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Standard gauge, nine miles.
Wirksworth, Derbyshire.
Tel: 01629 823076.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Echills Wood Railway
7¼in gauge, 1¼ miles.
Kingsbury Water Park, Sutton Coldfield.
Running: Suns.

Foxfield Railway
Standard gauge, 5½ miles.
Blythe Bridge, Staffs.
Tel: 01782 396210.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
Standard gauge, 15 miles.
Toddington, Glos.
Tel: 01242 621405.
Running: Dec 27-Jan 1.

Great Central Railway
Standard gauge, eight miles.
Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RW.
Tel: 01509 632323. www.gcrailway.co.uk
Running: Dec 27-31.

Great Central Railway (Nottingham)
Standard gauge, 10 miles.
Ruddington, Notts.
Tel: 0115 940 5705.
Open: W/Es.

Leek & Rudyard Railway
10¼in gauge, 1½ miles. Leek, Staffs.
Tel: 01538 269948.
Running: Dec 31/Jan 1.

Midland Railway – Butterley
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Ripley, Derbyshire. Tel: 01773 570140.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Northampton & Lamport Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
Pitsford, Northants.
Tel: 01604 820327.
Running: Jan 1.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Hunsbury Hill, Northampton. Tel: 01604 702031.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Peak Rail
Standard gauge, four miles.
Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 01629 580381.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Perrygrove Railway
15in gauge. B4228, Coleford, Gloucestershire. Tel: 01594 834991.
Open: Tues, Thurs, W/Es.

Rocks by Rail
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cottesmore, Rutland. Tel: 07974 171068.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Rushden Transport Museum & Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Rushden, Northants. Tel 0300 3023 150.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Severn Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 16 miles. Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 1QR. Tel: 01562 757900.
Running: Dec 26-Jan 1, 4/5.

Statfold Country Park
2ft gauge, one mile. Tamworth, Staffs B79 0BU. Tel: 01827 830389.
Open: Fris-Suns + Dec 17-19, 23, 30

Tanat Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Nantmawr, Shropshire SY10 9HW. Tel: 01691 780042. www.tanatvalleyrailway.co.uk
Open: TBA.

Telford Steam Railway
Standard gauge, one mile. Telford, Shropshire.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Toddington Narrow Gauge Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, Toddington.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Valley Railway Adventure
15in gauge, 1¼ miles. A46 north of Evesham, Worcs. Tel: 01386 422282.
Running: W/Es.

Railway Museums

Beamish
The Living Museum of the North, County Durham.
Open: Weds-Suns.
Tel: 0191 370 4000.

Coleford GWR Museum
Coleford, Gloucestershire.
Open: Fris, Sats.
Tel: 01594 832032/833569.

Colonel Stephens Railway Museum
Tenterden station, KESR.
Open on KESR operating days.
Tel: 01580 765155.

Crewe Heritage Centre
Vernon Way, Crewe.
Reopens 2025.
Tel: 01270 212130.

Donegal Railway Heritage Centre
Donegal.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 00353 (0) 749722655.

Hopetown Darlington
North Road Station, Darlington.
Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: 01325 405060.

Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum
Irchester, Northamptonshire.
Open: Suns.
Tel: 01604 675368.

Leeds Industrial Museum
Armley Mills, Leeds.
Open: Tues-Suns.
Tel: 0113 378 2097.

Locomotion: The National Railway Museum, Shildon
Co Durham.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

London Transport Museum
Covent Garden.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0343 222 5000.

Manchester Museum of Science & Industry
Castlefield, Manchester.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Museum of Scottish Railways
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01506 825855.

National Railway Museum
Leeman Road, York.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 033 0058 0058.

Penrhyn Castle & Railway Museum
Bangor, Gwynedd.
Open: W/Es.
Tel: 01258 353084.

Rail Story
Ingrow, West Yorks.
Open: Carriage Works daily, Engine Shed Tues-Suns.
Tel: 01535 690739 or 01535 680425.

Railworld Wildlife Haven
Peterborough.
Open: Weds, W/Es.
Tel: 01733 344420.

Riverside Museum
Glasgow.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 0141 287 2720.

STEAM – Museum of the GWR
Swindon.
Open: Daily.
Tel: 01793 466637.

Tiverton Museum
Tiverton, Devon.
Open: Tues-Sats.
Tel: 01884 256295.

West Cumberland Railway Museum
St Bees, Cumbria.
Open one week per month or by appointment for special interest groups – contact petergrooke@btinternet.com

NORTH WEST

Blackpool Heritage Depot & Tram Tours
Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Blackpool, Lancs. Tel: 01253 209521.
www.blackpoolheritage.com
Depot: Mons, Sats.
Heritage tram tours: Dates until Dec 31.

East Lancashire Railway
Standard gauge, 12 miles. Bury, Lancs.
Tel: 0333 320 2830.
Running: Dec 26, 28/29, Jan 1.

Eden Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 2½ miles.
Warcop, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 342309.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Great Laxey Mine Railway
19in gauge, ¼ mile. Laxey, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 862007/670386.
Reopens 2025.

Groudle Glen Railway
2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 670453.
Running: Dec 26.

Heaton Park Tramway
Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Manchester.
Tel: 0161 740 1919.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Isle of Man Steam Railway
3ft gauge, 15½ miles. Douglas, Isle of Man.
Tel: 01624 662525.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Kirkby Stephen East
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Kirkby Stephen,
Cumbria. Tel: 01768 371700.
Open: Suns.

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles.
Near Ulverston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01539 531594.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway
3ft gauge, 17 miles (MER), 5½ miles (SMR).
Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 01624 697473.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
15in gauge, seven miles. Ravenglass,
Cumbria. Tel: 01229 717171.
Running: Dec 26-Jan 1.

Ribble Steam Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Preston, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 728800.
Normal running resumes 2025.

South Tynedale Railway
2ft gauge, 4¾ miles.
Alston, Cumbria.
Tel: 01434 338212.
Running: Weds & W/Es until Oct 30 + Oct 29.

Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum
2ft gauge, ½ mile. Threlkeld, Cumbria.
Tel: 01768 779747.
Normal running resumes 2025.

West Lancashire Light Railway
2ft gauge. Hesketh Bank, Lancs.
Tel: 01772 815881.
Normal running resumes 2025.

NORTH EAST

Aln Valley Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Alnwick,
Northumberland. Tel: 0300 030 3311.
Running: Dec 1, 27-29.

Appleby Frodingham Railway-Scunthorpe
Standard gauge, 15 miles. British Steel
Steelworks, Scunthorpe.
Tel: 07889 297271.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Bowes Railway
Standard gauge, 1¾ miles. Springwell,
Tyne & Wear. Tel: 07850 916484.
Open: Tues & Thurs to pre-booked groups only.

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire
Tel: 01472 604657.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Derwent Valley Light Railway
Standard gauge, ½ mile. Murton, near
York. Tel: 01904 489966.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Standard gauge, five miles.
Embsay, North Yorks.
Tel: 01756 710614.
Normal running resumes 2025.



A rather patchwork Crompton, the appearance of No. 33063 on the Spa Valley Railway has come about due to the locomotive being needed to provide electric train heating during upcoming winter services, despite being part way through a body overhaul. It will return to the shed in the New Year for finishing off, but in the meantime it can be seen in green primer with small yellow warning panel in an identical style to that currently being applied to some Class 69s being delivered to GBRf. DAVID STAINES

Heatherslaw Light Railway
15in gauge, two miles.
Ford Forge, Northumberland.
Tel: 01890 820244.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
Standard gauge, five miles. Haworth,
West Yorks, BD22 8NJ.
Tel: 01535 645214.
Running: W/Es + Dec 26/27, 30- Jan 3.

Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway
2ft gauge. Skegness, Lincs.
Tel: 07407 500884.
Reopens 2025.

Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles. Ludborough,
Lincolnshire.
Tel: 01507 363881.
Running: Jan 1.

Middleton Railway
Standard gauge, 1½ miles.
Hunslet, Leeds. Tel: 0845 680 1758.
Normal running resumes 2025.

North Yorkshire Moors Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Grosmont, North Yorks.
Tel: 01751 472508.
Running: Dec 27-Jan 5.

Scarborough North Bay Railway
20in gauge, 7/8 mile.
Scarborough, North Yorks.
Tel: 01723 368791.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Stephenson Steam Railway
Standard gauge, two miles.
North Shields.
Tel: 0191 277 7135.
Open: W/Es. Normal running resumes 2025.

Tanfield Railway
Standard gauge, three miles. Near
Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 07508 092365.
Running: Dec 26, 29, 31.

Weardale Railway
Standard gauge, 18 miles.
Stanhope, Co. Durham.
Running: Dec 29.

Wensleydale Railway
Standard gauge, 22 miles.
Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire.
Tel: 01677 425805.
Running: Dec 28-29.

Whistlestop Valley Railway (Kirklees)
15in gauge, four miles.
Huddersfield, West Yorks.
Tel: 01484 865727.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Yorkshire Wolds Railway
Standard gauge, 1,000ft. Fimber, East
Yorkshire. Tel: 01377 338053.
Reopens 2025

WALES

Bala Lake Railway
2ft gauge, 4½ miles. Llanuwchllyn,
Gwynedd. Tel: 01678 540666.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Blaenavon's Heritage Railway
Standard gauge, 3½ miles. Blaenavon,
Torfaen. Tel: 01495 792263.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Brecon Mountain Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, five miles.
Pant, Mid-Glamorgan.
Tel: 01685 722988.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Corris Railway
2ft 3in gauge, ¾ mile.
Corris, near Machynlleth.
Tel: 01654 761701.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Fairbourne Railway
12¼in gauge, two miles. Fairbourne,
Gwynedd. Tel: 01341 250362.
Reopens 2025.

Ffestiniog Railway
2ft gauge, 13½ miles. Porthmadog,
Gwynedd. Tel: 01766 516000.
Running: W/Es until Dec 29 + Dec 23, 30- Jan 1.

Gwili Railway
Standard gauge, four miles. Bronwydd
Arms, Carmarthenshire. Tel: 01267 238213.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Llanberis Lake Railway
2ft gauge, three miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd. Tel: 01286 870549.
Running: Tues-Thus until Dec 19.

Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway
Standard gauge, ¼ mile.
Cynheidre, Carmarthenshire.
Tel: 07956 082305.
Reopens: TBA.

Llangollen Railway
Standard gauge, 10 miles. Llangollen,
Denbighshire. Tel: 01978 860979.
Running: Dec 27-29.

Rhyl Miniature Railway
15in gauge. Rhyl, North Wales.
Tel: 01352 759109.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Snowdon Mountain Railway
800mm gauge, 4½ miles.
Llanberis, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01286 870223.
Reopens 2025.

Talyllyn Railway
2ft 3in gauge, 7½ miles.
Tywyn, Gwynedd. Tel: 01654 710472.
Running: Dec 7/8, 14/15, 26-Jan 3.

Teifi Valley Railway
2ft gauge, ½ mile.
Henllan, Ceredigion, SA44 5TD.
Tel: 01559 371077.
Reopens 2025.

Vale of Rheidol Railway
1ft 11¾in gauge, 12 miles.
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion.
Tel: 01970 625819.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
2ft gauge, one mile.
Porthmadog, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 513402.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Welsh Highland Railway
2ft gauge, 26 miles.Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
Tel: 01766 516000.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway
2ft 6in gauge, eight miles. Llanfair
Caereinion, Powys.Tel: 01938 810441.
Running: Dec 28-30.

The details in this list were correct at the time of going to press. We strongly advise that you confirm details with the venue concerned. Pre-booking is often essential.
TBA = To Be Announced

Pre-order Issue 327: Order your copy from **mrtns.uk/pre-order-hr** or call **01507 529529**.

FESTIVE DIARY DATES

With a variety of festive services to choose from, check below to see what types can be found where. Please check with the relevant venue for more specific dates, times and availability. Some venues may also be running non-rail centric events.

ILLUMINATION TRAINS

- Bluebell Railway – until Dec 23
- Dartmouth Steam Railway – until Dec 30
- Eastleigh Lakeisde Railway – Dec 13, 20, 23
- Epping Ongar Railway – until Jan 12
- Mid-Hants Railway – until Jan 4, 2025
- North Norfolk Railway – until Jan 4

POLAR EXPRESS

- Caledonian Railway – until Dec 22
- Churnet Valley Railway – until Dec 23
- Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway – until Dec 23
- Isle of Man Steam Railway – until Dec 23
- Mid-Norfolk Railway – until Dec 23
- Seaton Tramway – until Dec 24
- South Devon Railway – until Dec 23
- Spa Valley Railway – until Dec 23
- Swanage Railway – until Dec 24
- Telford Steam Railway – until Dec 20
- Vale of Rheidol Railway – until Dec 24
- Wensleydale Railway – until Dec 23

SANTA SPECIALS

- Aln Valley Railway – Dec 14/15, 21
- Amberley Museum – until Dec 22
- Amerton Railway – until Dec 24
- Apedale Valley Railway – until Dec 22
- Avon Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Bala Lake Railway – Dec 7/8
- Battlefield Line – until Dec 24
- Blaenavon Heritage Railway – until Dec 23
- Bluebell Railway – until Dec 24
- Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway – until December 24
- Bodmin Railway – until Dec 24
- Brecon Mountain Railway – until Dec 22
- Bredgar & Wormshill Railway – Dec 7/8, 14/15
- Buckinghamshire Railway Centre – until Dec 22
- Bure Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Cambrian Heritage Railway – until Dec 22
- Chasewater Railway – until Dec 24
- Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway – until Dec 23
- Cholsey & Wallingford Railway – until Dec 23
- Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway – until Dec 24
- Colne Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Corris Railway – Dec 7/8
- Dean Forest Railway – until Dec 24
- Didcot Railway Centre – until Dec 23
- Doon Valley Railway – until Dec 8
- Downpatrick & Country Down Railway – until Dec 22
- East Anglian Railway Museum – until Dec 21
- East Kent Railway – until Dec 24
- East Lancashire Railway – until 24
- East Somerset Railway – until Dec 24
- Eastleigh Lakeisde Railway – until Dec 22
- Ecclesbourne Valley Railway – until Dec 23
- Echills Wood Railway – Dec 7/8, 14/15
- Epping Ongar Railway – until Dec 24
- Foxfield Railway – until Dec 24
- Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway – until Dec 23
- Great Central Railway – until Dec 24
- Groudle Glen Railway – Dec 14/15, 21/22
- Gwili Railway – until Dec 23
- Hampton & Kempton Waterworks Railway – Dec 14/15, 21/22
- Hayling Light Railway – until Dec 24
- Heatherslaw Light Railway – until Dec 15
- Helston Railway – until Dec 23
- Isle of Wight Steam Railway – until Dec 24
- Keighley & Worth Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Keith & Dufftown Railway – until Dec 22
- Kent & East Sussex Railway – until Dec 24
- Lappa Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Lavender Line – until Dec 22
- Leek & Rudyard Railway – until Dec 22
- Leighton Buzzard Railway – until Dec 24
- Lincolnshire Wolds Railway – until Dec 15
- Llangollen Railway – until Dec 24
- Lynton & Barnstaple Railway – until Dec 24
- Mid-Hants Railway – until Dec 23
- Mid-Suffolk Light Railway – until Dec 23
- Middleton Railway – until Dec 24
- Midland Railway Butterley – until Dec 24
- Mizens Railway – until Dec 15
- Nene Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- North Norfolk Railway – until Dec 23
- North Yorkshire Moors Railway – until Dec 24
- Northampton & Lamport Railway – until Dec 22
- Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway – until Dec 24
- Peak Rail – until Dec 24
- Perrygrove Railway – until Dec 24
- Plym Valley Railway – until Dec 22
- Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway – until Dec 23
- Rhyl Miniature Railway – until Dec 24
- Ribble Steam Railway – until Dec 22
- Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway – until Dec 24
- Royal Deeside Railway – until Dec 22
- Rushden Transport Museum – Dec 7-15
- Scarborough North Bay Railway – until Dec 24
- Severn Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway – until Dec 23
- Somerset & Dorset Railway – until Dec 22
- Statfold Country Park – until Dec 23
- Strathspey Railway – until Dec 23
- Swindon & Cricklade Railway – until Dec 22
- Talyllyn Railway – Dec 21-24
- Tanfield Railway – until Dec 24
- Threkeld Quarry & Mining Museum – until Dec 24
- Valley Railway Adventure – until Dec 24
- Weardale Railway – until Dec 24
- Welsh Highland Heritage Railway – Dec 14/15
- Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway – until Dec 23
- West Lancashire Railway – Until Dec 22
- West Somerset Railway – until Dec 24
- Whistlestop Valley Railway – until Dec 24
- Whitwell & Reepham Railway – until Dec 22
- Yeovil Railway Centre – until Dec 23

Organising a gala or other big event and want it included? Let us know the details by emailing Owen Hayward at: ohayward@mortons.co.uk



The commercial success of illuminated trains will see them return to many heritage lines this winter, with WR Hall No. 4953 Pitchford Hall pictured in Epping Forest during the 2023 services on the Epping Ongar Railway in Essex. OWEN HAYWARD

SCOTLAND

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

Standard gauge, five miles.
Bo'ness, West Lothian.
Tel: 01506 825855.
Running: Dec 28-31, Jan 2/3.

Caledonian Railway

Standard gauge, four miles.
Brechin, Angus.
Tel: 01356 622992.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Doon Valley Railway

Standard gauge. Dunaskin, Ayrshire.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Keith & Dufftown Railway

Standard gauge, 11 miles.
Dufftown, Banffshire.
Tel: 01340 821181.
Running: Dec 31, Jan 25.

Lathalmond Railway Museum

Standard gauge, ½ mile.
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum, Lathalmond, near Dunfermline.
Tel: 07379 914801.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway

2ft gauge, ¾ mile. Leadhills, South Lanarkshire.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Royal Deeside Railway

Standard gauge, 1¼ miles. Banchory, Kincardineshire.
Tel: 01330 844416.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Strathspey Railway

Standard gauge, 10 miles. Aviemore, Inverness-shire. Tel: 01479 810725.
Running: Dec 28/29, Jan 1-5.

IRELAND

Cavan and Leitrim Railway

3ft gauge.
Drumod, Co. Leitrim.
Tel: +353 71 963 8599.
Reopens: Spring 2025.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway

5ft 3in gauge.
Downpatrick, Co. Down.
Tel: 028 4461 5779.
Normal running resumes 2025.

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

5ft 3in gauge.
Whitehead, Co. Antrim.
Tel: +44 28 9358 6200.
Museum open: Thurs-Sats.

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Please feel free to give us a call to discuss your needs.



And in case you were wondering...
Albert is the dog.

Get In Touch!

01756 701 451

dave@ellisclarktrains.com

ellis@ellisclarktrains.com

ellisclarktrains.com

Unit 2, Toller Court Short Bank Road Skipton BD23 2HG

RIBBLE STEAM
RAILWAY AND MUSEUM

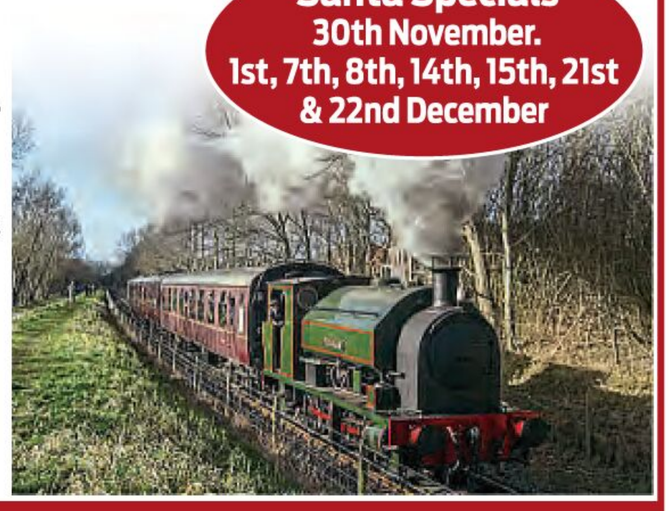
Hop aboard a Steam Train and discover the history of Preston's Docks and Railway...

With Ribble Steam Railway's fascinating working and static exhibits, the museum is a proud reminder of what makes Preston and Lancashire the vibrant place it is today.

Discover the history of Preston's Docks and the stories of the first electric trains, then hop aboard a steam train and travel the railway's 1¼ mile dock and riverside line. Uncover a hidden part of the city as the line passes Preston Marina and ventures over its impressive swing bridge.

Job Opportunities

Santa Specials
30th November.
1st, 7th, 8th, 14th, 15th, 21st & 22nd December



Contact us on 01772 728800 or visit www.ribblesteam.org.uk

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Enjoy unlimited train rides, help Santa find his Reindeer and fill your stocking with presents!



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17th December
6.30pm



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DART VALLEY RAILWAY LTD

Vacancy for

Assistant Infrastructure Manager

The Dart Valley Railway Company operates the Dartmouth Steam Railway in South Devon, which runs between Paignton and Kingswear and is currently seeking to appoint an Assistant Infrastructure Manager, who will report to the Infrastructure Manager and be involved in assisting with maintaining the physical safety of the railway's infrastructure and in the day to day undertaking of all works of maintenance and repair of the infrastructure. Prospective applicants for the post must be able to provide relevant evidence of practical experience in Permanent Way maintenance work, ideally within a traditional jointed track and S&C environment. Additional practical experience of P.W. renewals work, P.W. design work and other relevant structures, track drainage, earthworks and associated railway civil engineering types of work would be beneficial.

The ideal applicant will already have had some prior supervisory experience of both P.W. and railway civil engineering works. Good IT literacy will be an essential skill, especially with Microsoft Office Word and Excel and thus be able to assist with the PW team's infrastructure works planning and budgeting requirements and also with the requirement to maintain departmental work and safety records for both audit and reference purposes. Any relevant technical or academic qualifications would be an advantage, but it will be essential that applicants can provide evidence of being a practical, hands on team player.

Competitive remuneration package.

If this opportunity is of interest to you then please apply via the following email address in order to be forwarded the relevant job application pack:-

paulmerrington@dsrrb.co.uk

The closing date for submitting applications is 15th December 2024

Apedale Valley Light Railway

See Santa - Dec 14,15, 21,22

Book in advance at www.santa.avlr.org.uk



Dec 28 - Winter Steam Gala
Debut of "WOTO" at Apedale
Stafford-built steam in Staffordshire!

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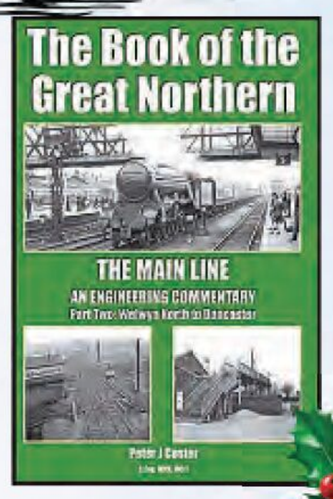
BAG A BARGAIN OR TWO WIT

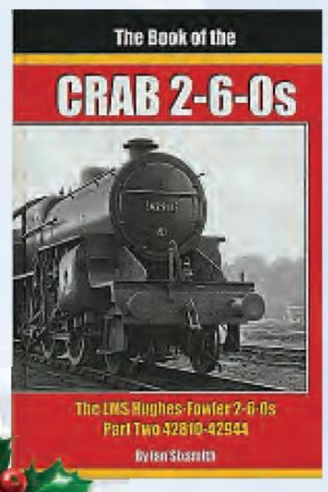


Save another 20% across our entire range with

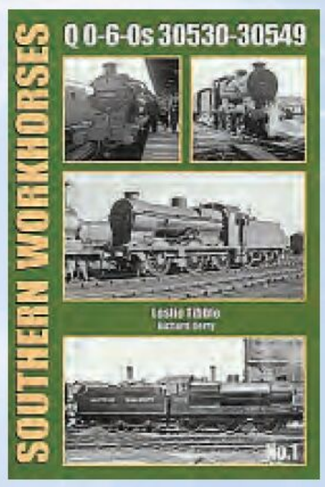
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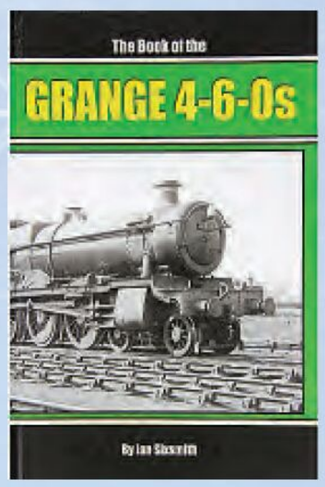
Add this extra discount and it means there are

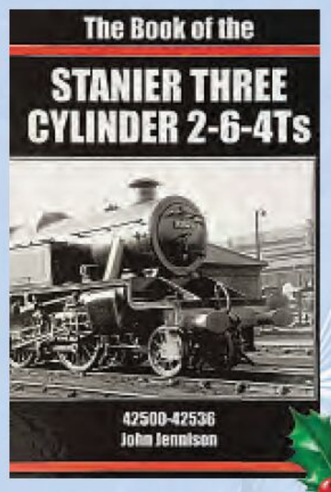


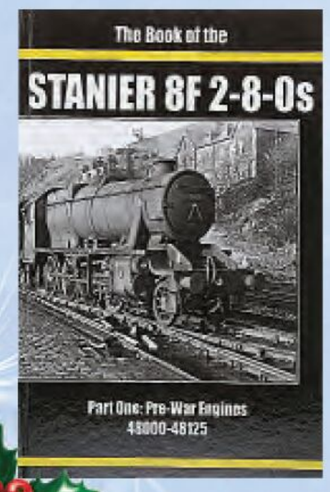


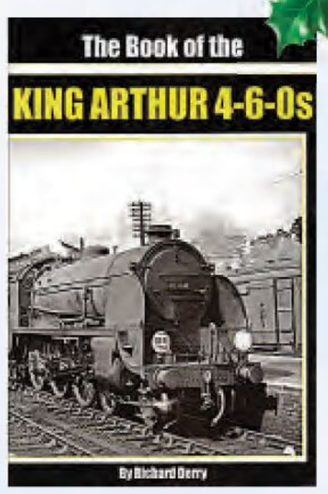


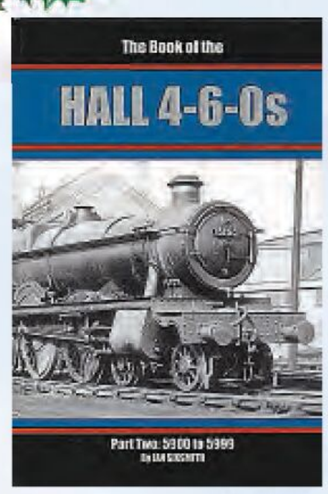


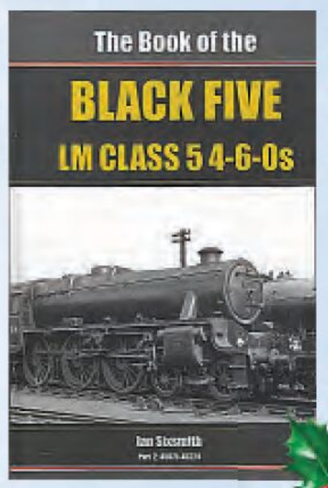


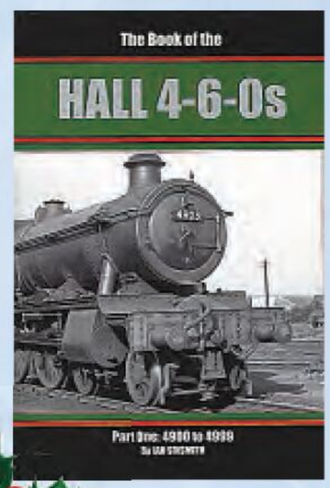


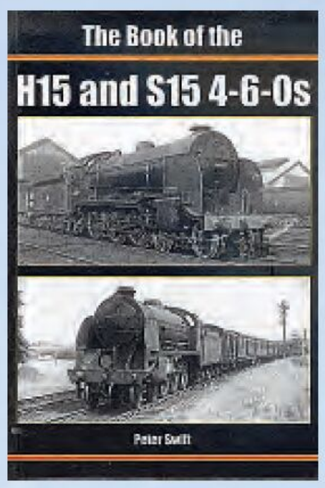


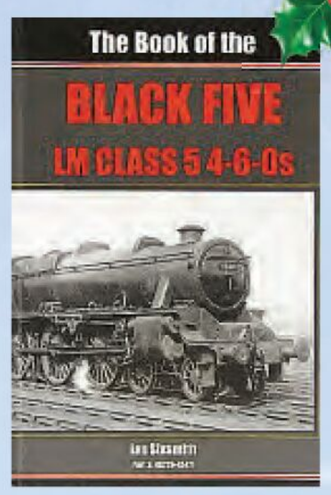


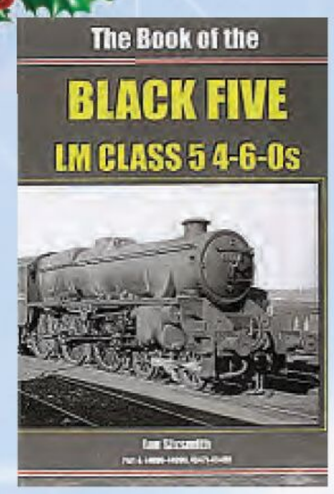


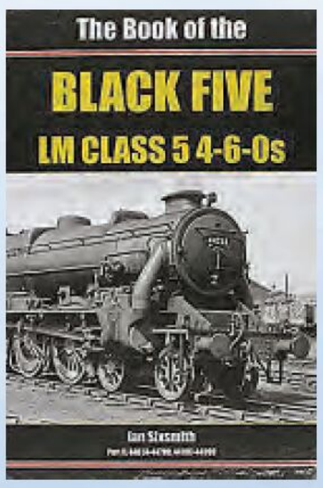


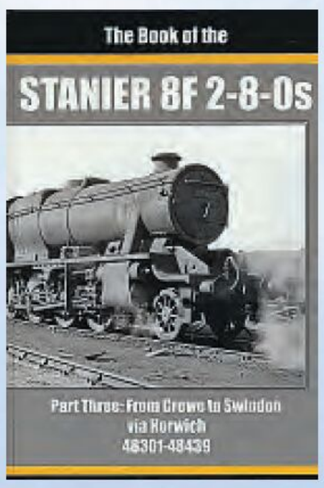


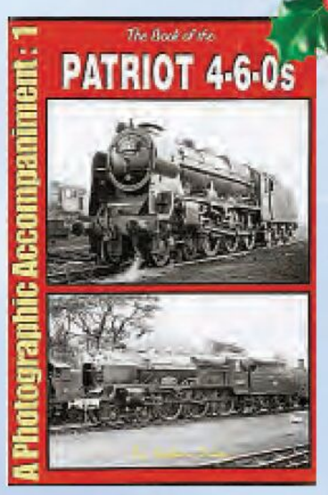


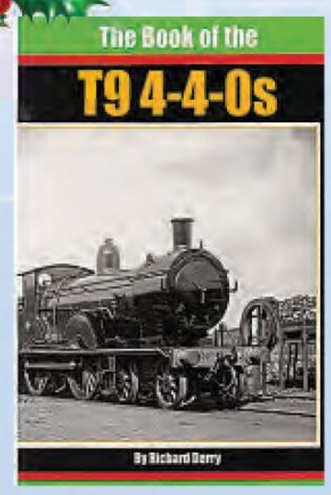


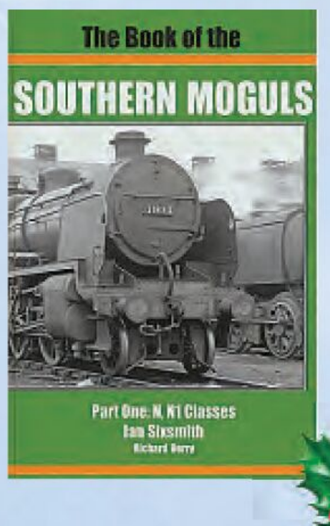


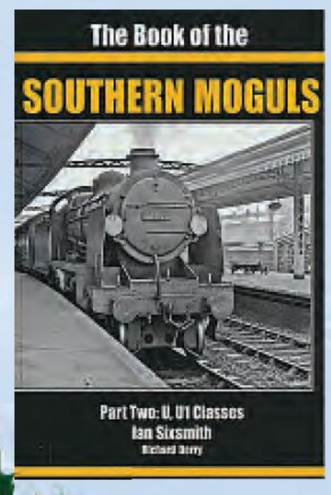




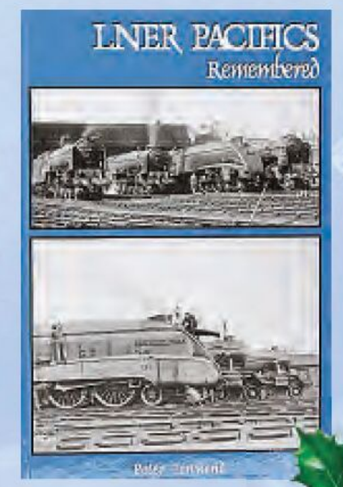


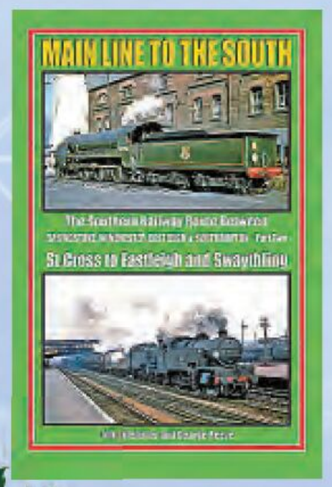


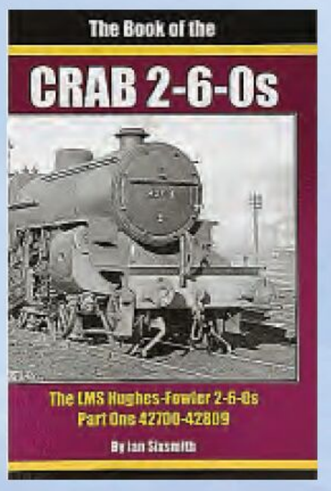


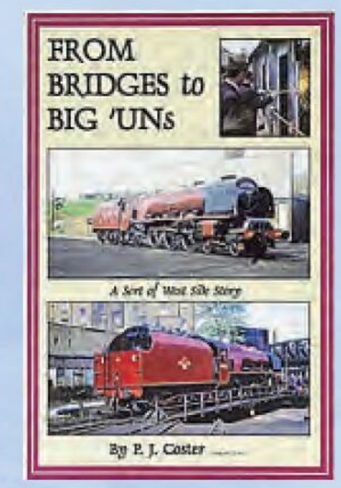


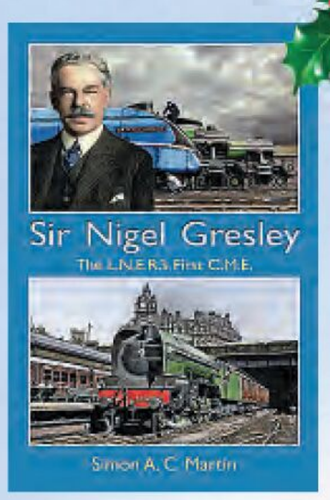


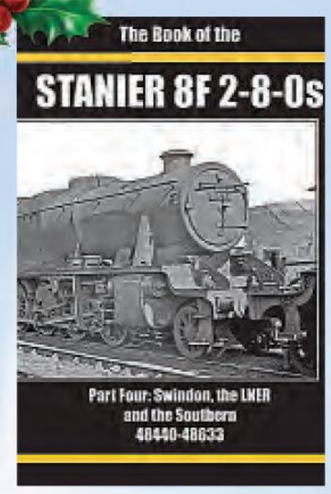


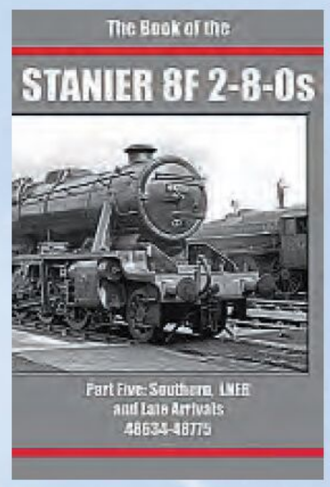




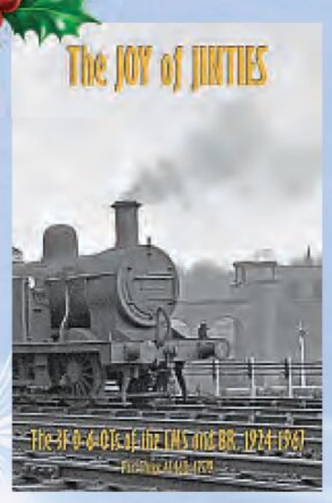


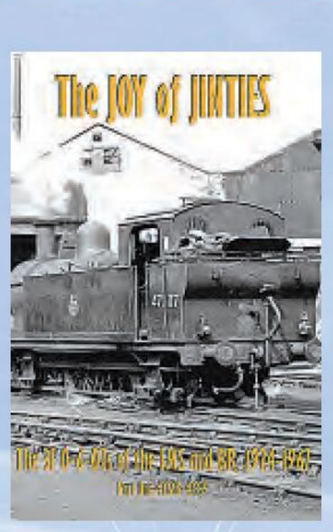


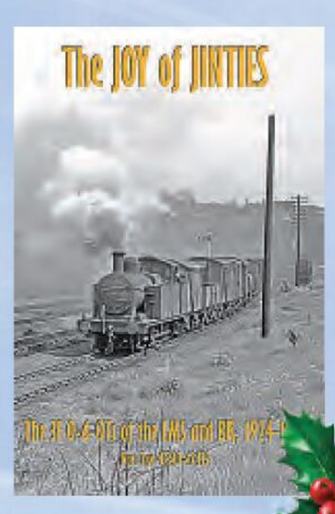




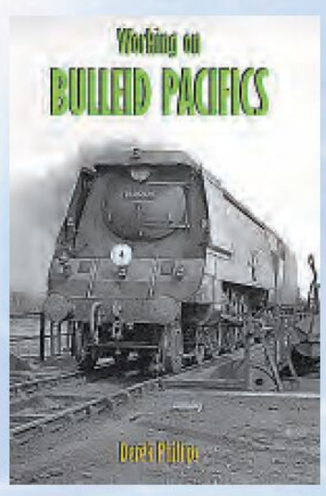


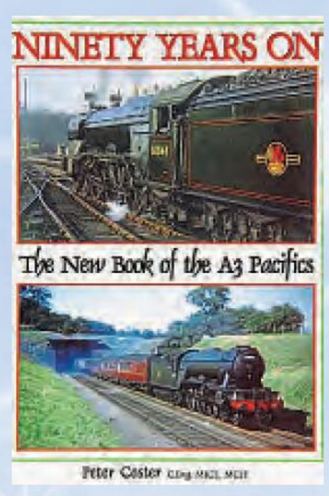












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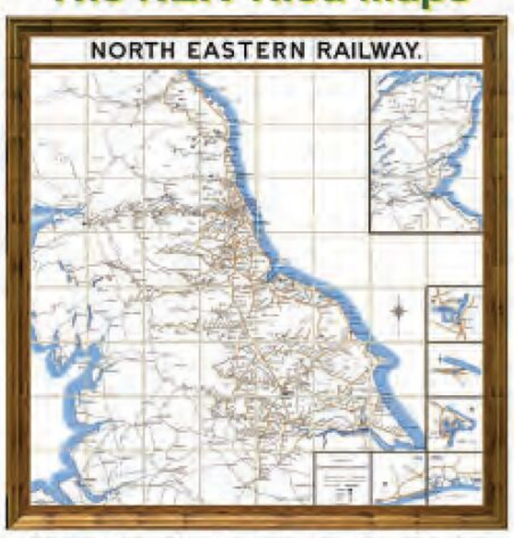
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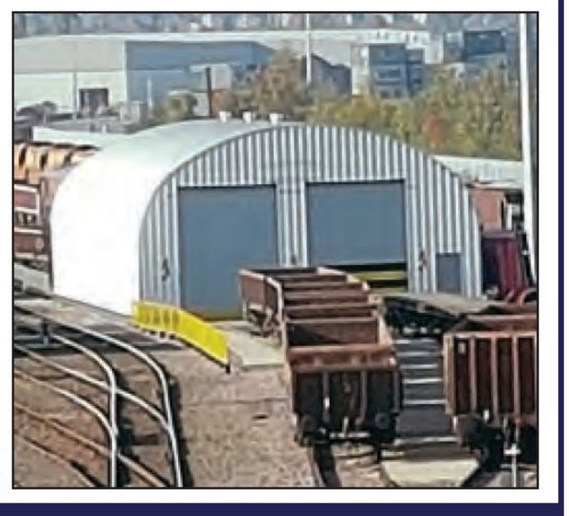
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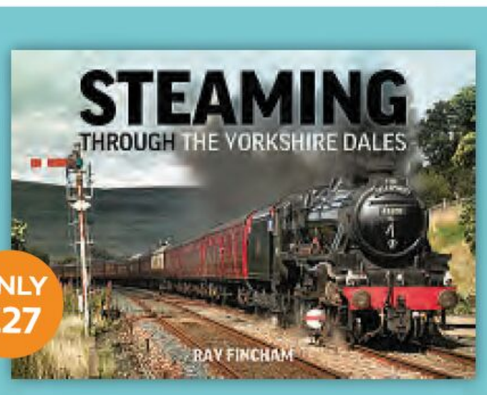
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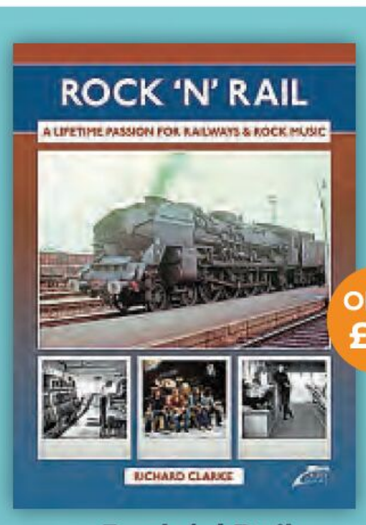


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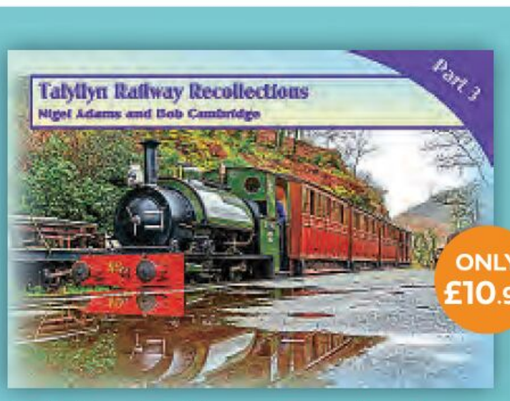


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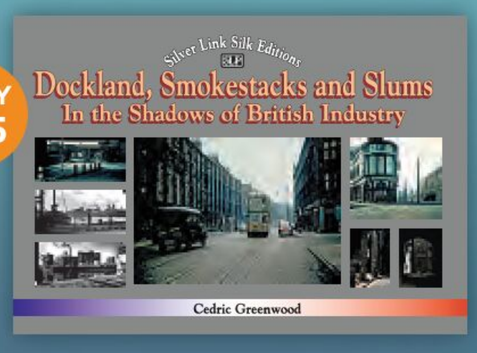
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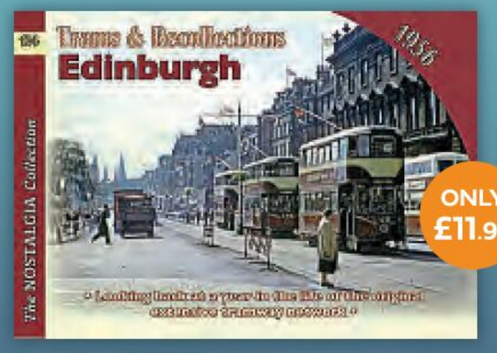


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'Double' Dukes celebrate turning 10 years old with joint party at Lappa Valley

THE Lappa Valley Railway marked two 'Duke' 10th birthdays at its St Newlyn East home on October 19.

Alan Keef 0-6-0DH *The Duke* was built in 2014 for the 10¼in gauge Wells Harbour Railway at Wells-next-the-Sea in Norfolk, but it was closed in September 2021 and its track, equipment, and much of the rolling stock was sold to the Lappa Valley (as reported in issue 287).

A weekend of birthday festivities saw *The Duke*, which now runs on the LVR's Newlyn Downs branch, joined by namesake Kaiden Duke – who was also celebrating his 10th birthday. Kaiden and his family first visited Lappa Valley in September, and ever since he had been asking to spend his birthday at the attraction. His family, which is currently relocating from Spain to Lanlivery in Cornwall, even returned to the UK a week early for the visit.

Kaiden's mother Amy said: "We are moving back to Cornwall, and we gave him the option of either spending his birthday in Spain or coming back here – he chose Lappa Valley! I went onto the website and saw that it was *The Duke*'s 10th birthday too so I thought, wow, it's fate, isn't it?"

Kaiden was invited to be the guest of honour as visitors joined with LVR owner Keith Southwell to sing happy birthday to them both. Keith said: "Two Dukes with their 10th birthdays at the same time is such an incredible coincidence – and a great excuse for a double celebration!

Kaiden said: "It's pretty good having all those people singing to you, but it's confusing having the same name as a train!"





Left: A Duke on the footplate of *The Duke* as both celebrate their birthdays. LVR

Right: Kaiden Duke with namesake diesel *The Duke* and Lappa Valley owner Keith Southwell holding a 10th birthday cake. LVR

A welcome mix that helped make a steam gala

By Geoff Courtney

STEAM locomotives and real ale are an archetypal male-dominated partnership, but if the recent North Yorkshire Moors Railway gala was anything to go by, the times they are a-changin,' as sung by the great Bob Dylan 60 years ago.

Yes, the platforms throughout the four-day event in late September and the bar in the railway's Goathland station were populated throughout by men of all ages, many with notebook or pint glass – or both – in hand, but women were far from outnumbered and frequently sounded as knowledgeable on the twin subjects of steam motive power and ale as we men.

It added a welcome and healthy mix to what was a highly successful event, and congratulations must go the all the railway's staff and volunteers – again both men and women – who were also clearly enjoying themselves and savouring the buzz of the occasion as equally much as their visitors.

Children too – yep, girls and boys – revealed their enjoyment in a way that is the exclusive domain of youngsters, and it was a pleasure to witness. Only the canines in abundance seemed to be largely apprehensive, but it's difficult teaching our four-legged friends the nuances of tank and tender engines, or why the smell of steam and oil evokes nostalgia to so many.

Such galas doubtless test to the limit the mental and even physical strengths of everyone involved in their organisation, and it is all too easy for visitors to take everything for granted without understanding the work that has gone on for literally months into a gala's creation.

So, it's hats – and bonnets – off to the heritage lines up and down the country, and we await with eager anticipation the calendar for the 2025 season.



Cheers to a successful event: A real ale drinker raises his glass to Class 9F No. 92134, in the temporary guise of former Lickey Incline banker No. 92079, at Goathland station on September 27 during the North Yorkshire Moors Railway steam and real ale gala. BARBARA PRINCE

NEXT ISSUE

Issue 327 out Dec 20

Sally Clifford looks at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's recent volunteer-led Bridge 27 replacement project.

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CAPTURING STEAM ON SHED



John Titlow delves into his collection of railway shed photography to showcase what we have missed of this changing scene and what can still be done.

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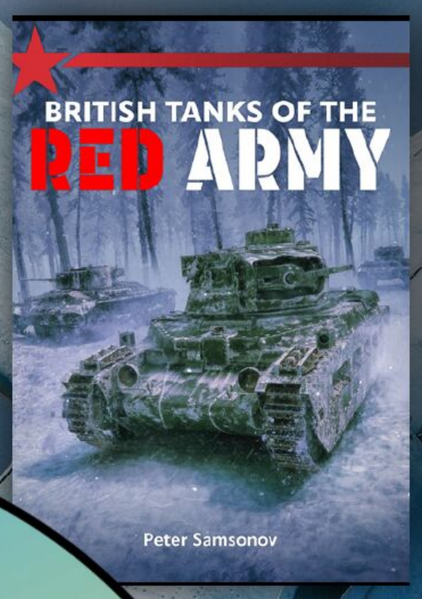
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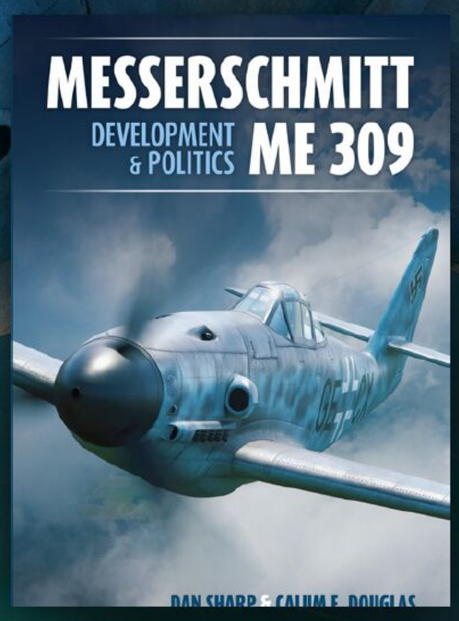


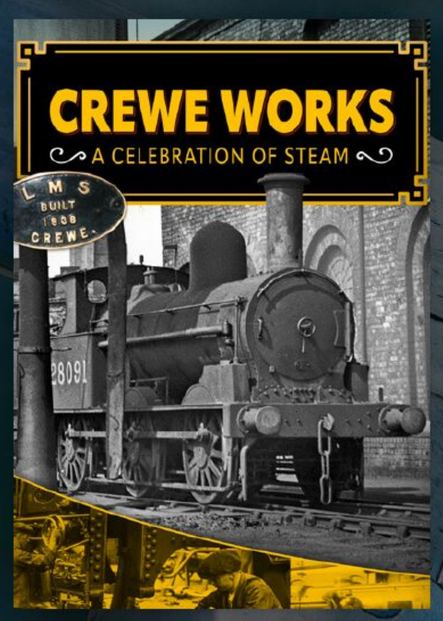
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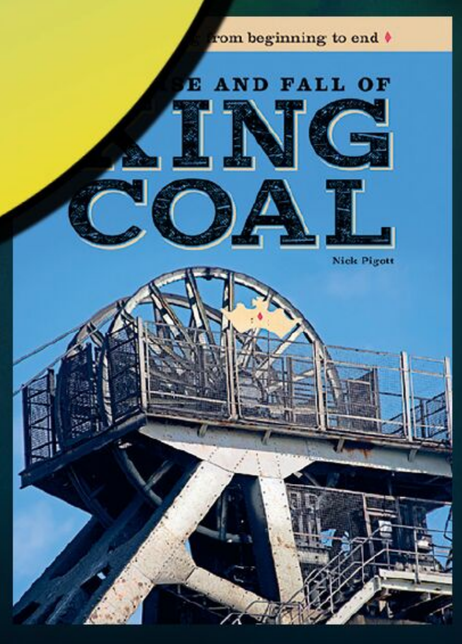
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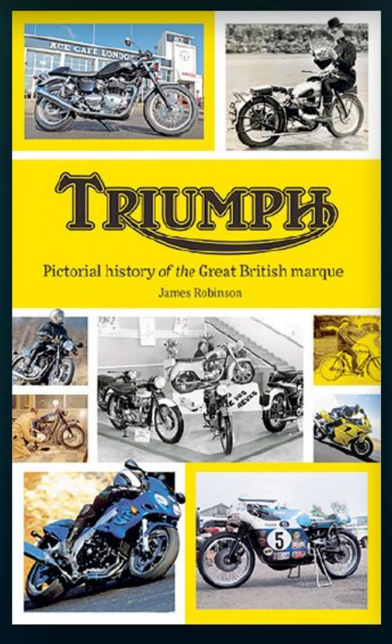
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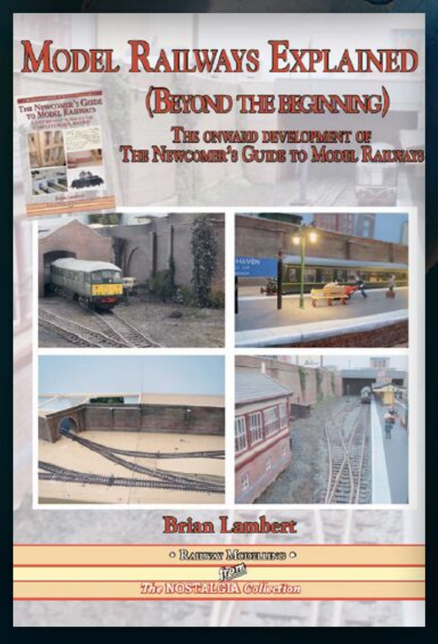


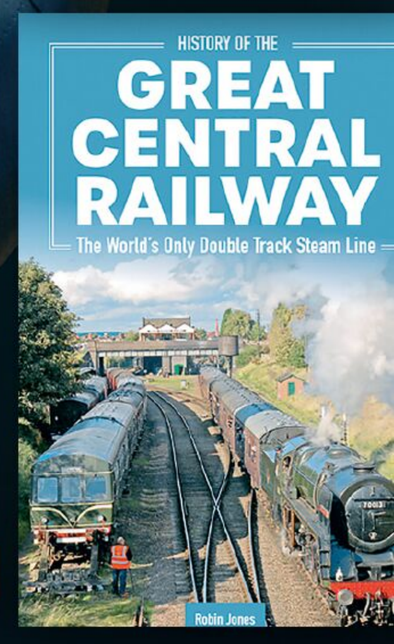












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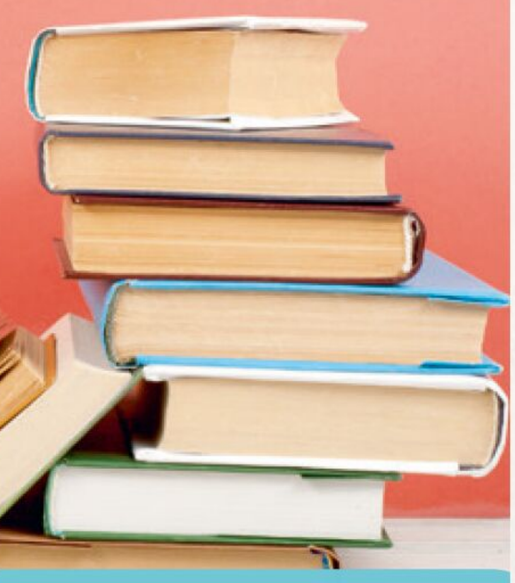
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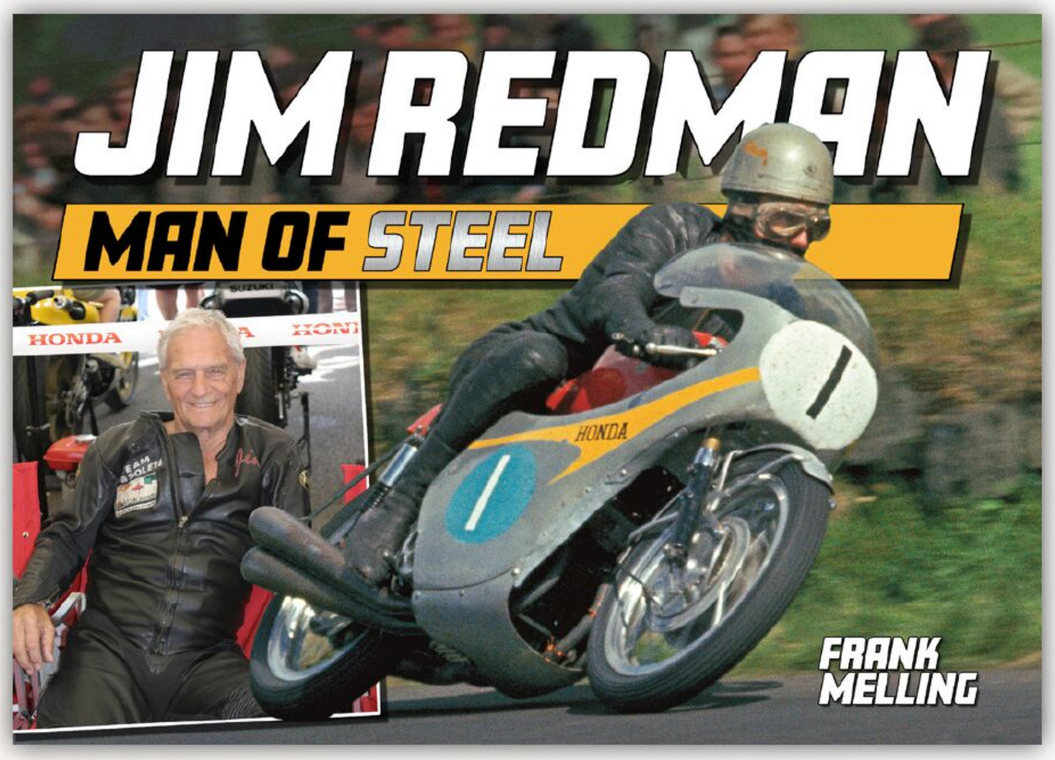
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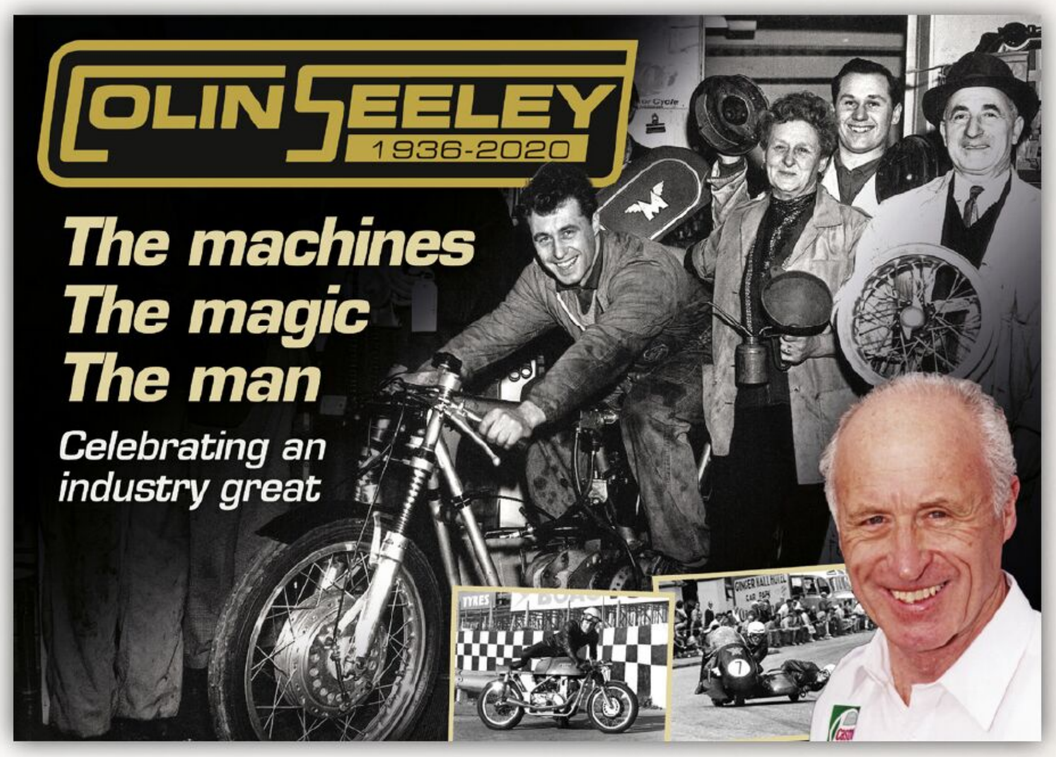
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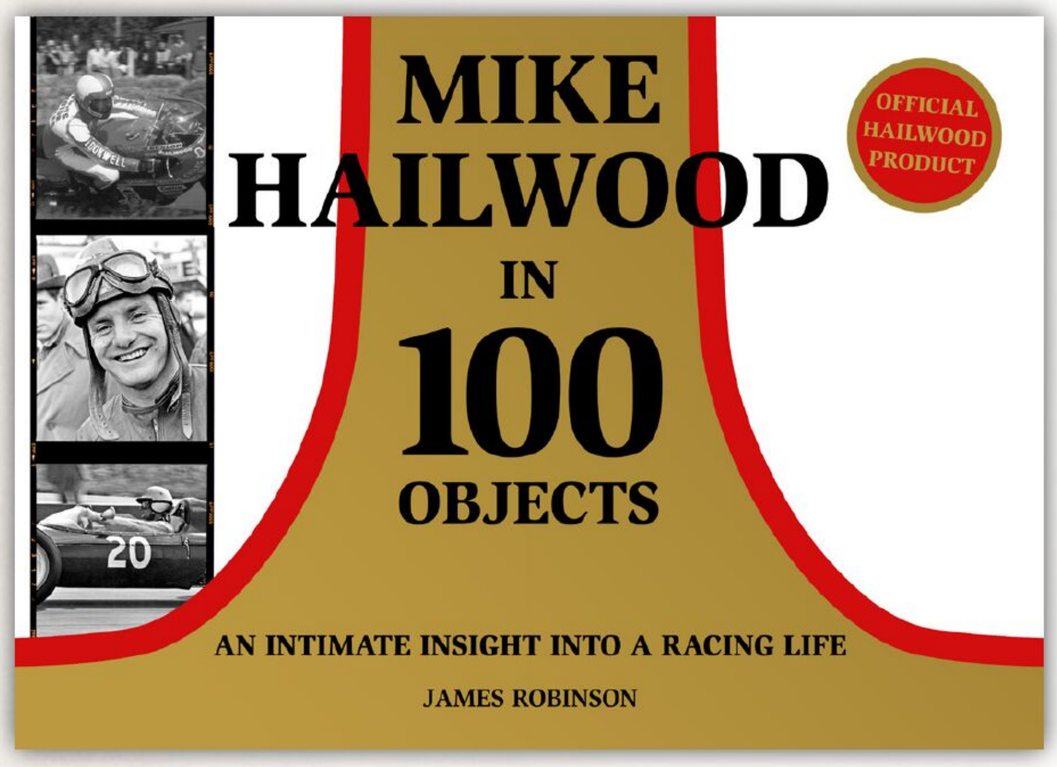
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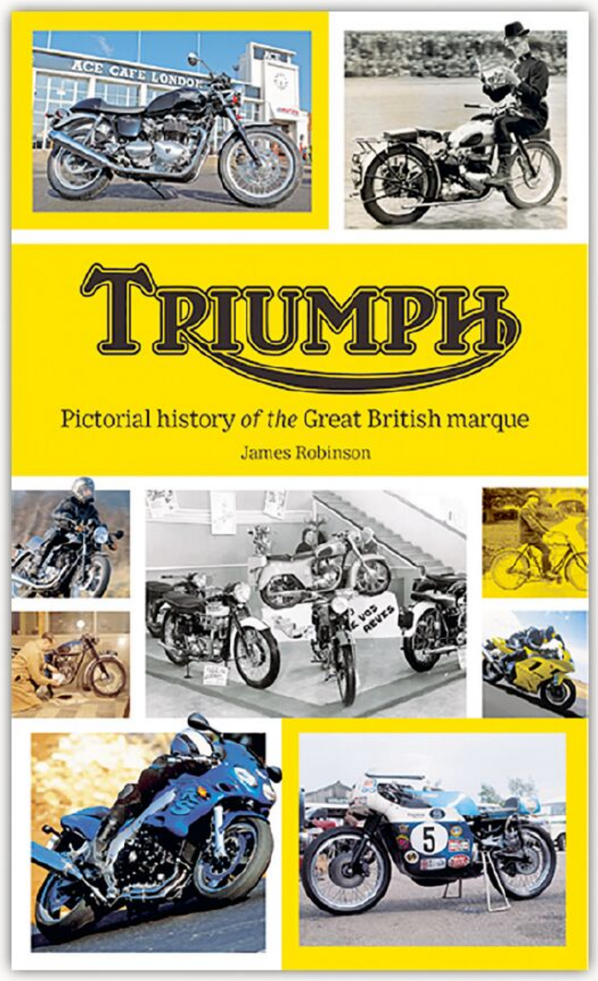
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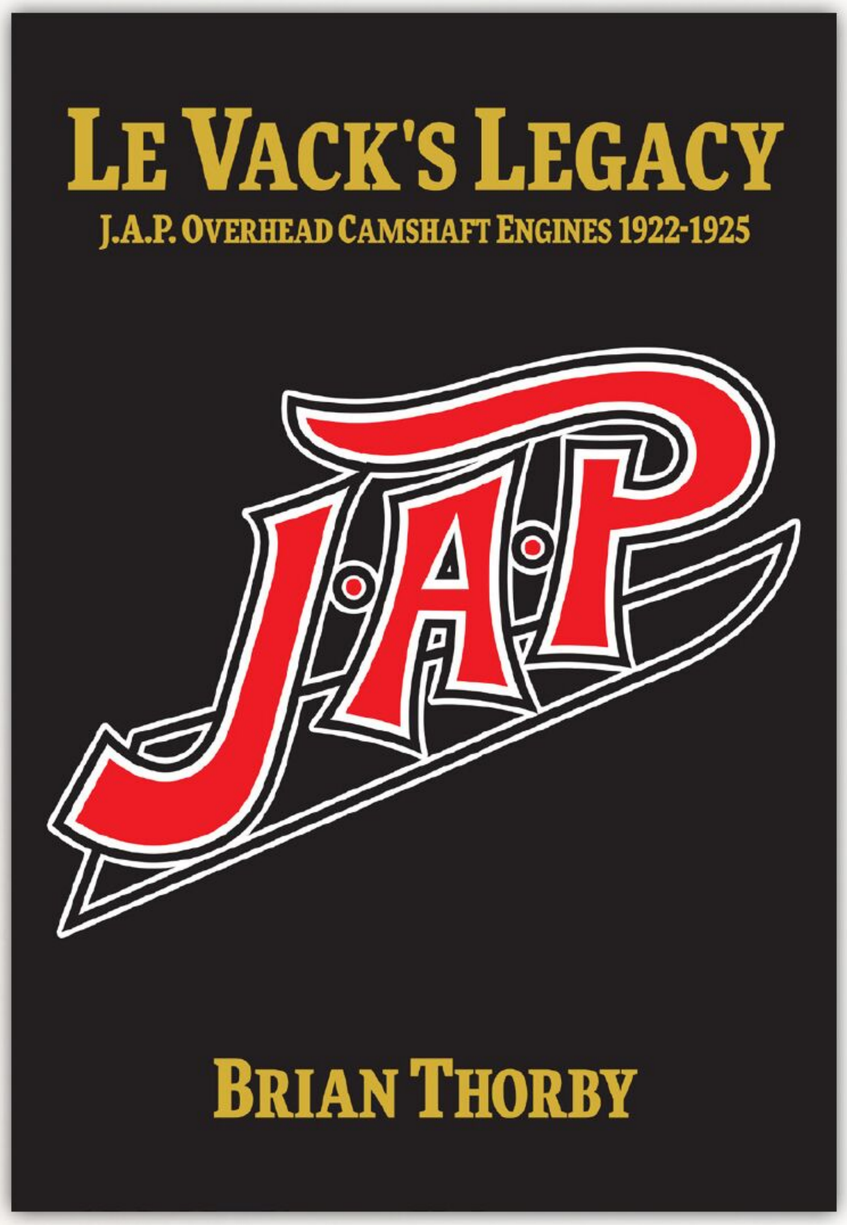
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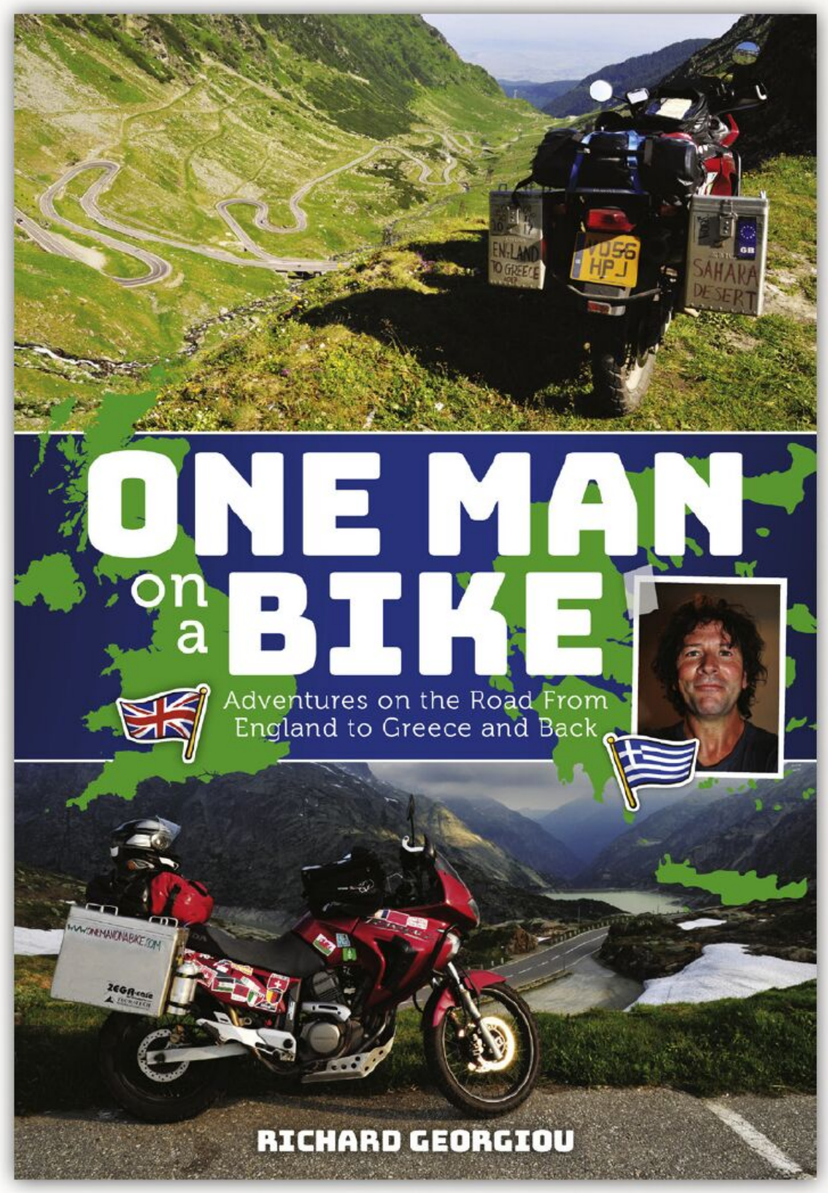
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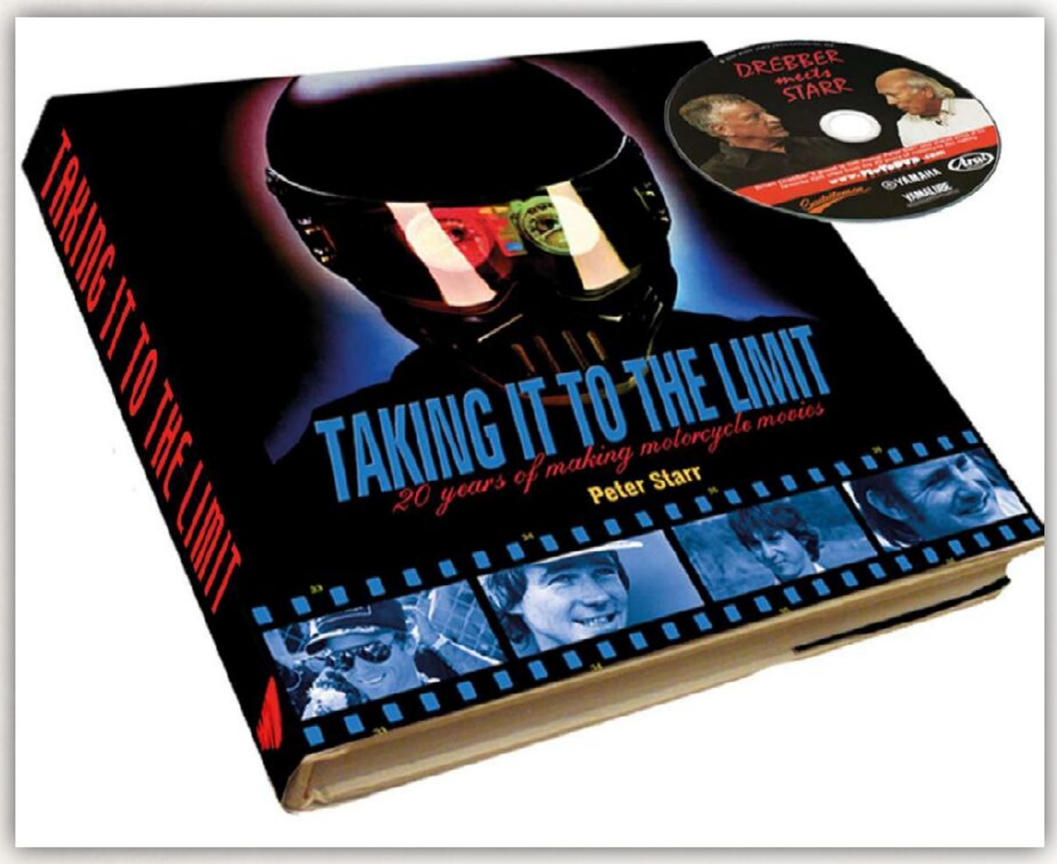
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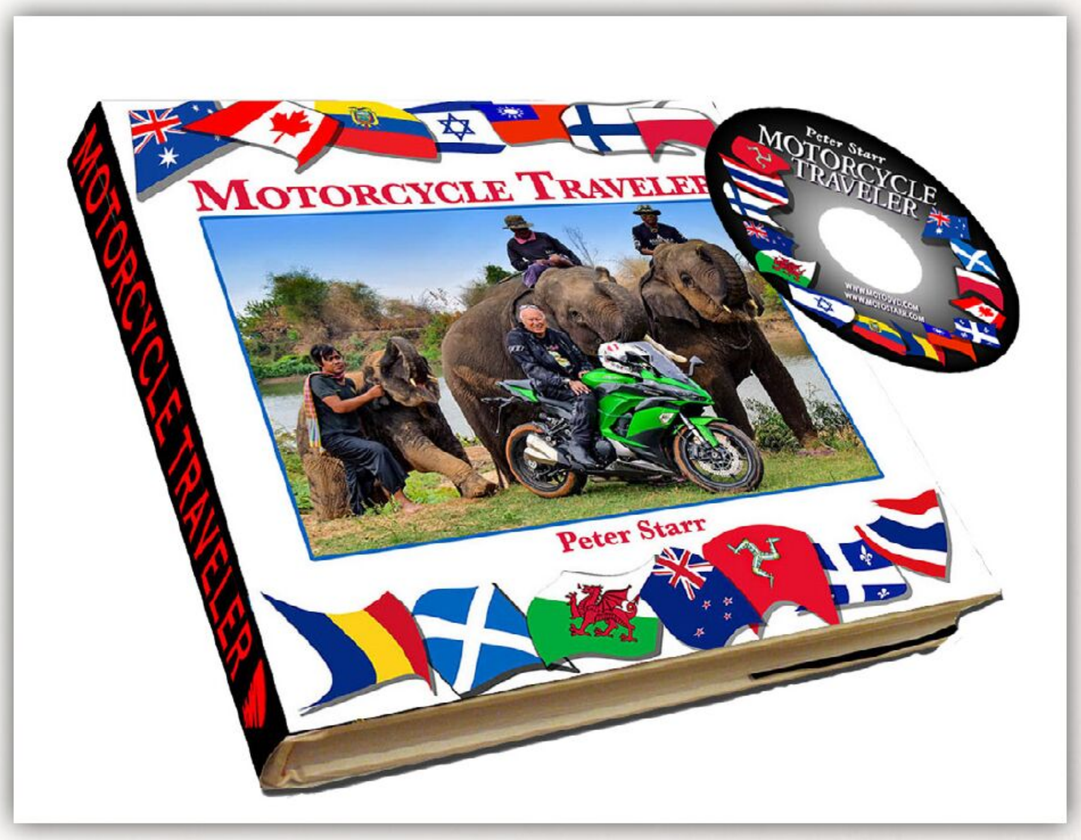
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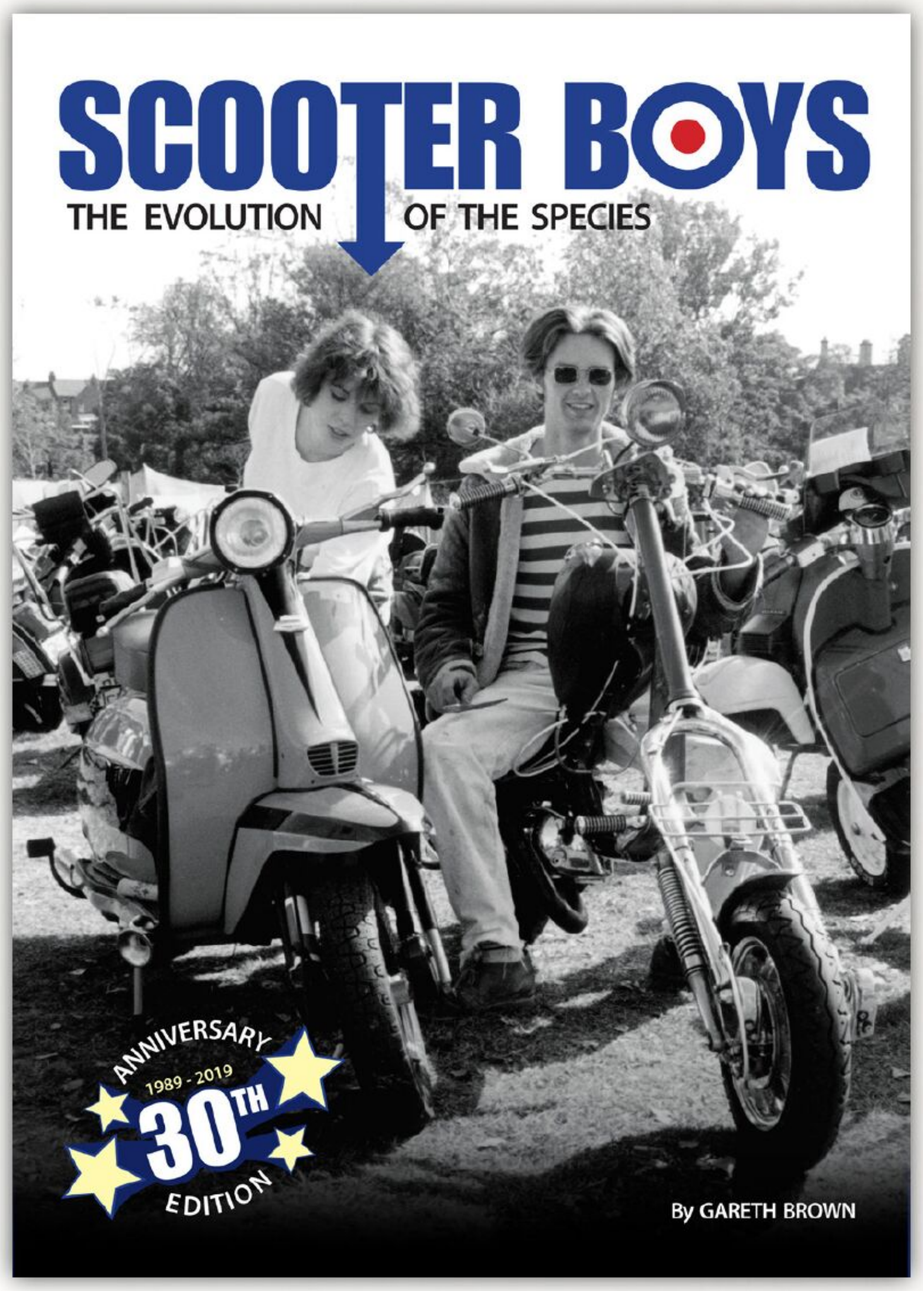
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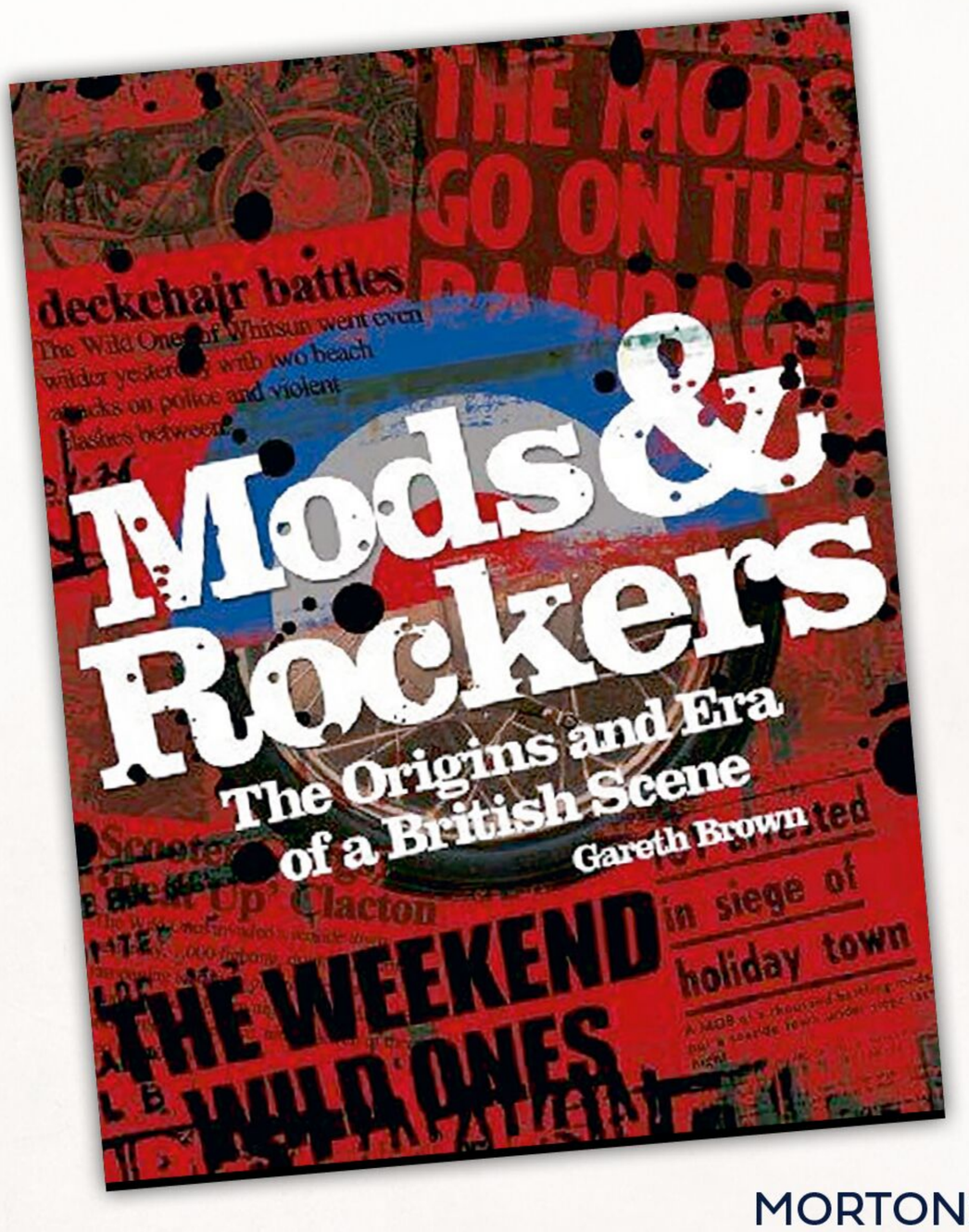
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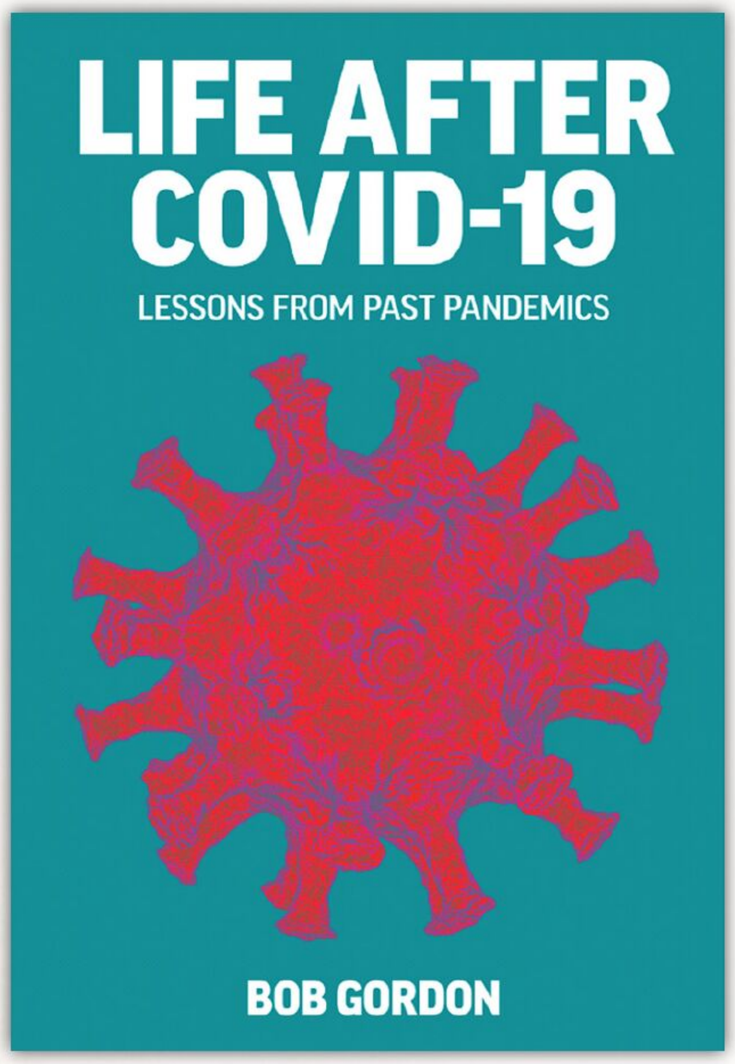
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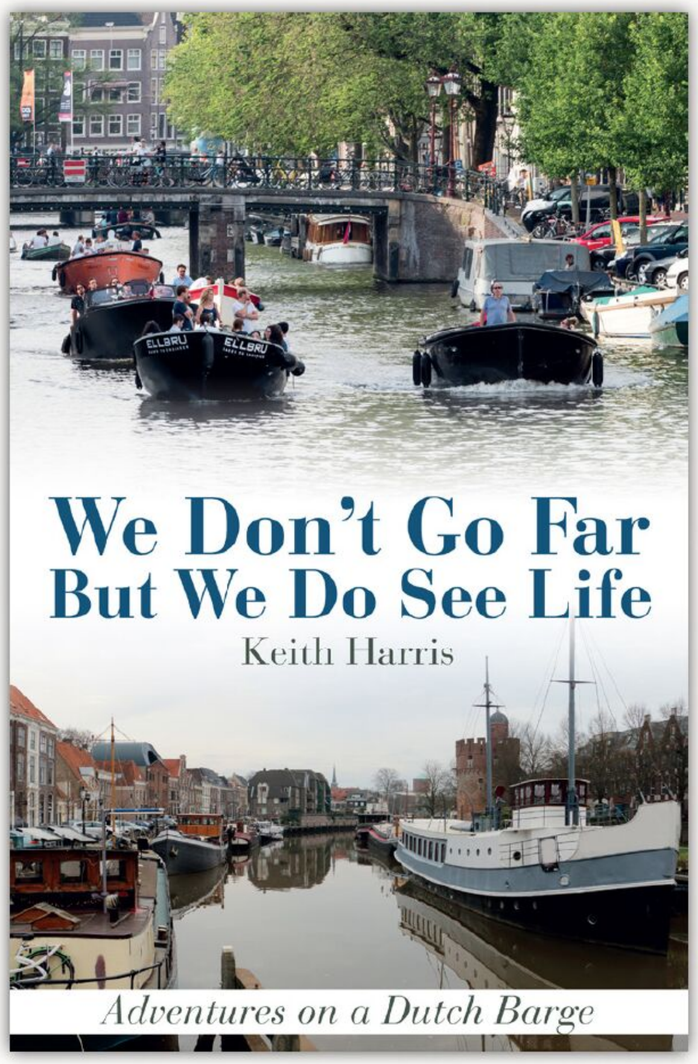
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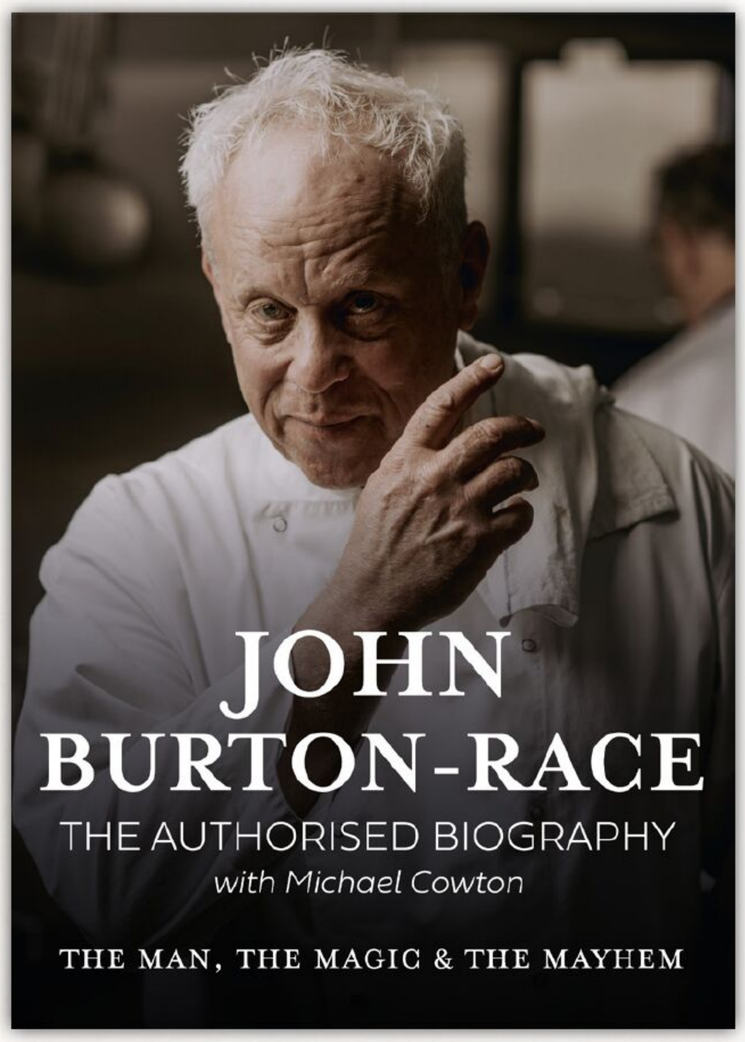
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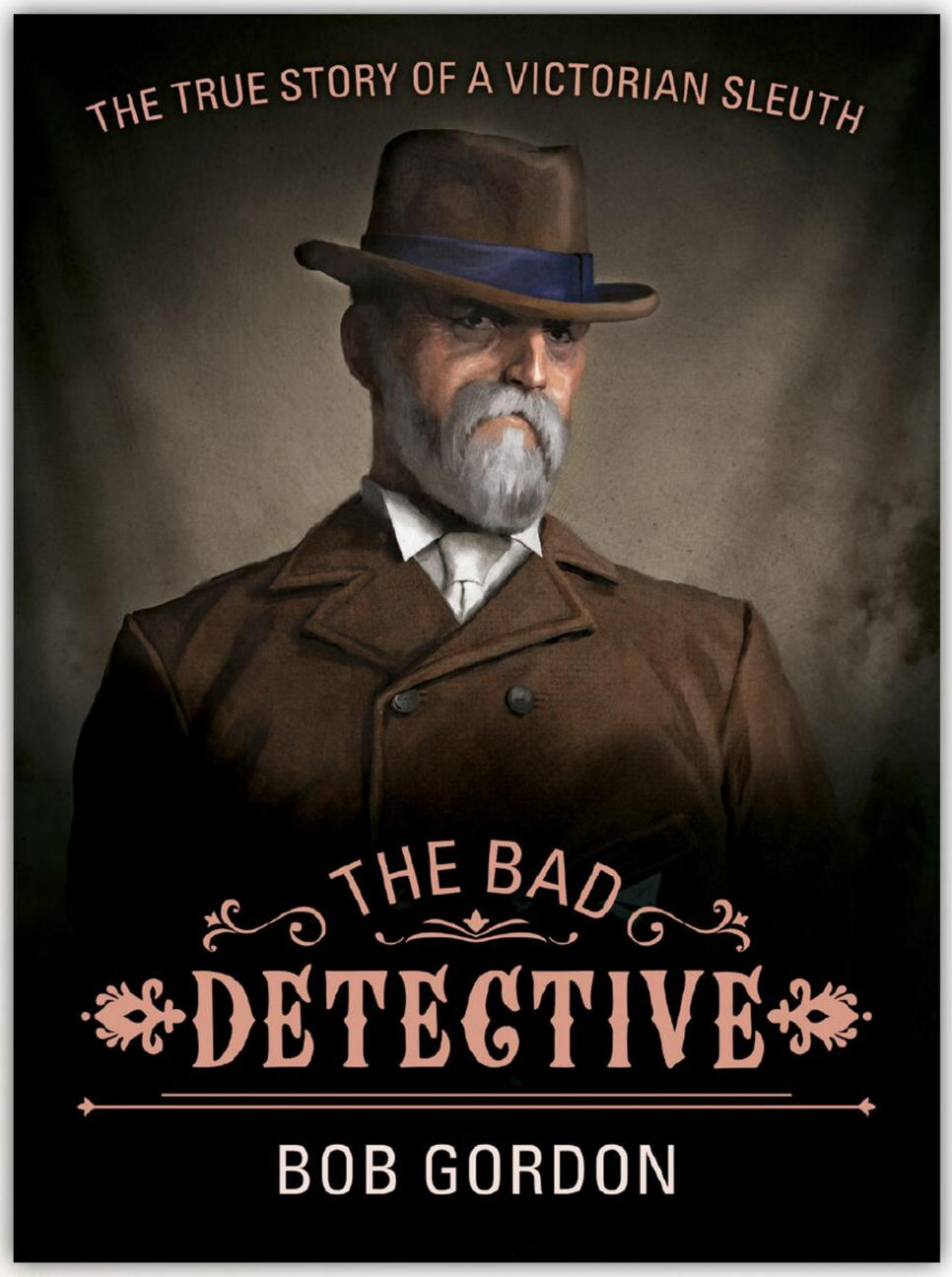
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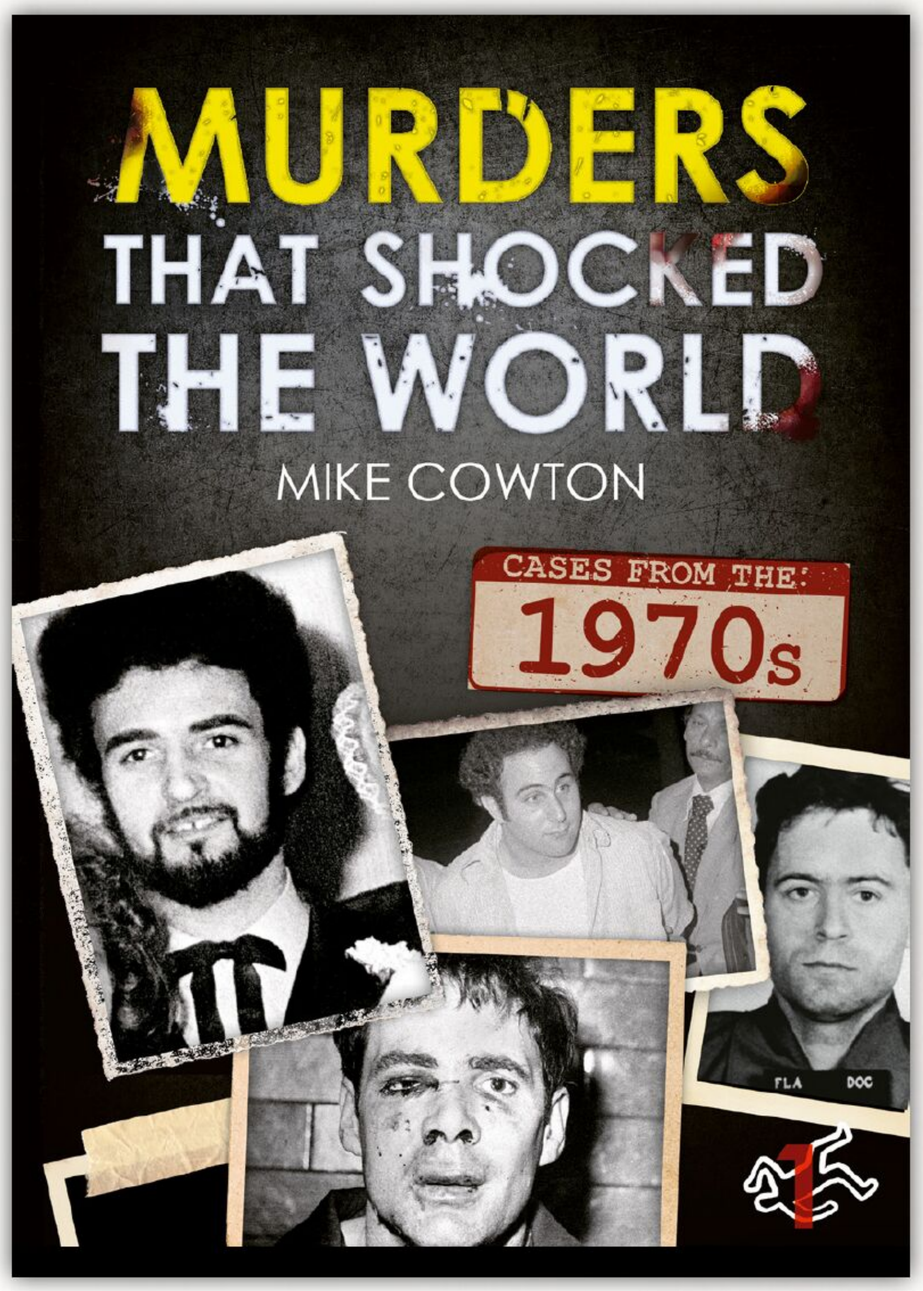
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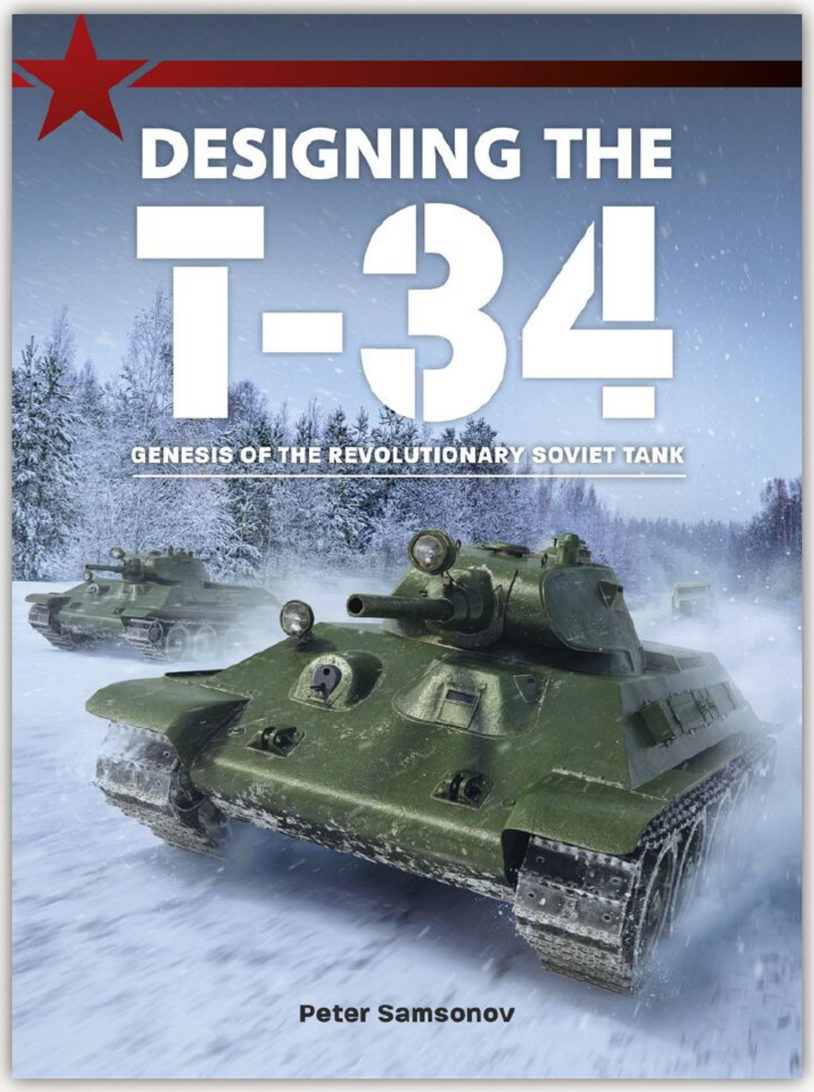
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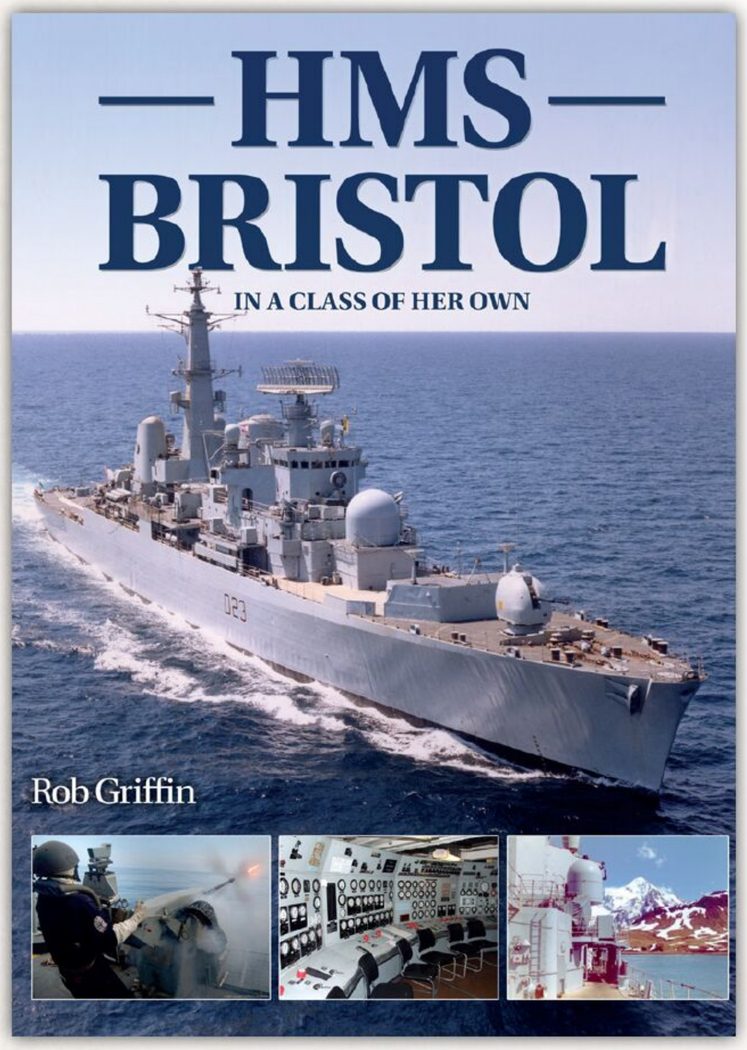
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The first encounter between British armour and the Red Army was not on friendly terms – with the British sending surplus tanks to reinforce the pro-monarchy White Army in the Russian Civil War. When the Reds won, war trophy Mark V heavy tanks as well as medium Mk.A Whippets and Mk.B Hornets entered service with the RKKA. As the political landscape changed during the 1920s, the Red Army assessed British designs available for export and a licensed copy of the Vickers Mk.E entered production in 1931 as the T-26.

During the early days of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, armour losses were huge and the Red Army once again looked abroad to acquire new fighting vehicles. A large-scale programme of military aid to the USSR began in August 1941, with the US and Britain offering help under separate terms – though not for free. A deal was struck and Convoy PQ-1 with the first 20 British tanks for the Red Army left for Arkhangelsk on September 29, 1941. These tanks arrived in time to take place in the Battle of Moscow and as shipments continued, British armoured vehicles would remain in service with the Red Army until the conclusion of the Second World War nearly four years later.

A wide range of British vehicles served under the Red flag during the war – ranging from Matildas and Valentines to Churchills and even Tetrarch light tanks.

In British Tanks of the Red Army, tank expert Peter Samsonov presents a history of British tanks in the Soviet Union and provides a detailed account of their use on the battlefield, including what the Red Army tankers thought of them.

Locomotive No 32 Tamerline became the first steam locomotive to be completed at Crewe Works on 10 March 1843. One hundred and fifteen years later BR 9F No 92250 became the 7,331st steam locomotive to be built at the Cheshire works, when completed in December 1958. This publication is a tribute to the thousands of people employed there during the steam locomotive building era.

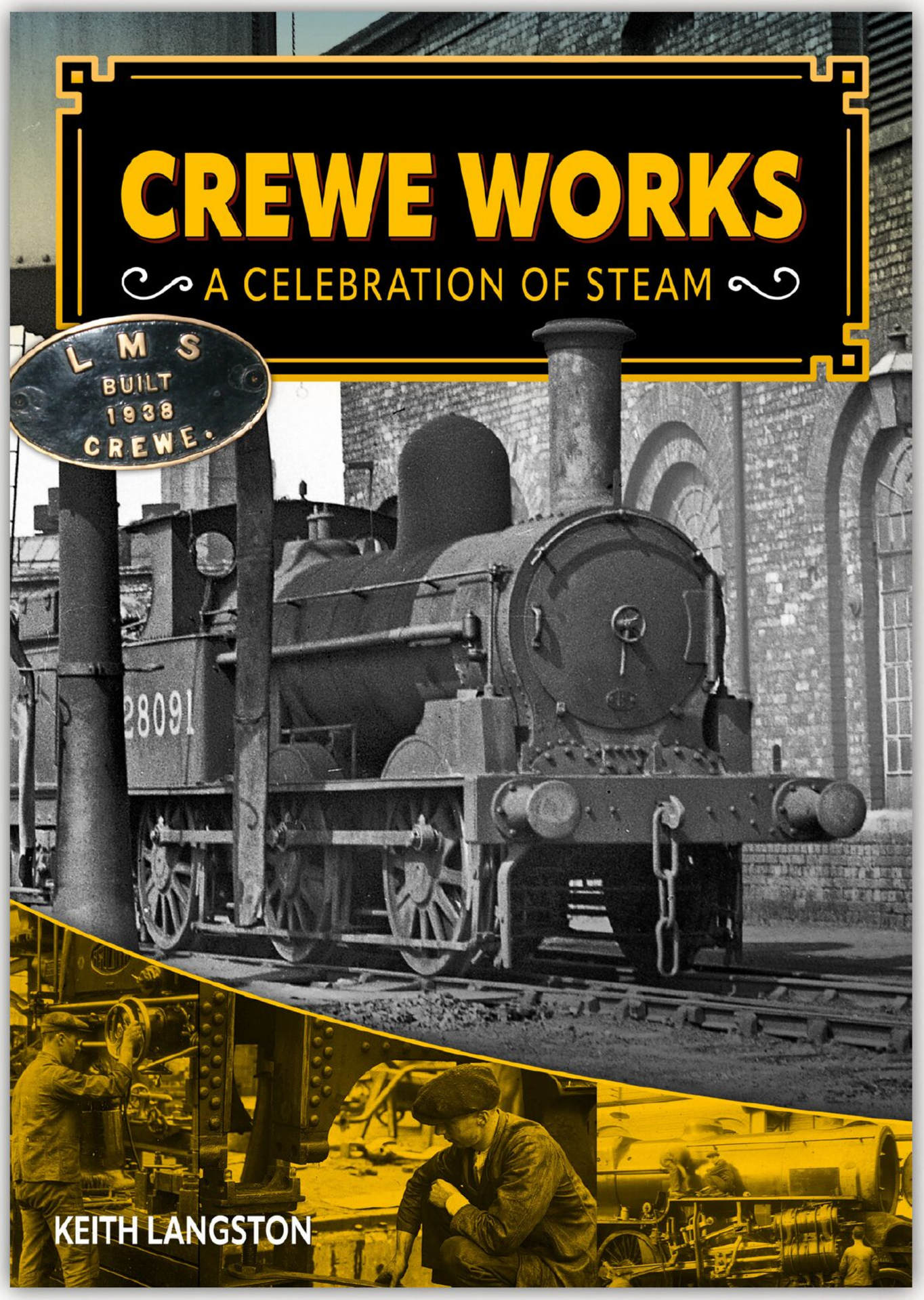
In 1913 The Railway Magazine proudly described Crewe as "the most famous railway works in the world". Indeed, railways throughout the world benefited from adopting 'best Crewe practice'. Many who worked at Crewe in its heyday, first under the London & North Western Railway and later the London Midland & Scottish Railway, held the firm belief that the works was the 'beating heart' of the Cheshire town.

Back in those days you would be hard put to find a local family without some kind of connection to that vast engineering enterprise. In earlier times the works not only provided the steadily growing town with employment, but furthermore supplied the town with both gas and domestic water. For example, the consumption of the gas produced at the works in the 1940s was assessed as 30% to the works, 20% to Rolls-Royce and 50% to the town. Those statistics are a great example of the many close ties that existed between the works and the town.

After the post-war Trasport Act, steam locomotive construction and maintenance continued under the newly created company British Railways. From 1948 under Nationalisation in addition to locomotive building, BR Crewe Works was responsible for the maintenance of some 2,779 steam locomotives. However, even as the Standard Locomotive building programme got underway plans for a future railway system without steam traction were being drawn up.

The timeline of this publication highlights those steam locomotive classes which were listed as being built by Crewe Works (in any time period) but importantly included in the BR January 1948 stock list. It also includes BR Standard class locomotives built at Crewe post 1951. Steam traction did return to the works, albeit in only a token manner during the occasion of the September 2005 Great Gathering.

Crewe Works – A Celebration of Steam by Keith Langston is not intended to be a source of detailed steam engineering practices, but is a comprehensively illustrated record of steam locomotive building and maintenance at Crewe Works. Fortunately, important engineering work was still carried out at Crewe Works in 2023. Given the reduced size of the works, and reduction in numbers employed, it would not be unfair to say that the once 'beating heart' of the town is at least a 'discernible pulse'.



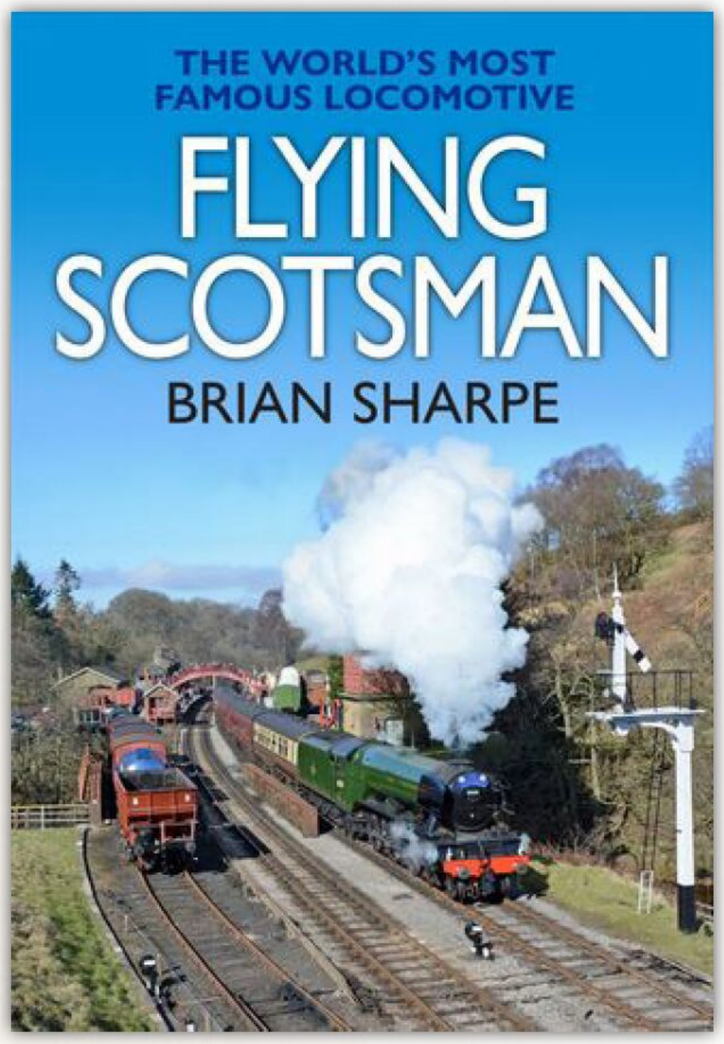
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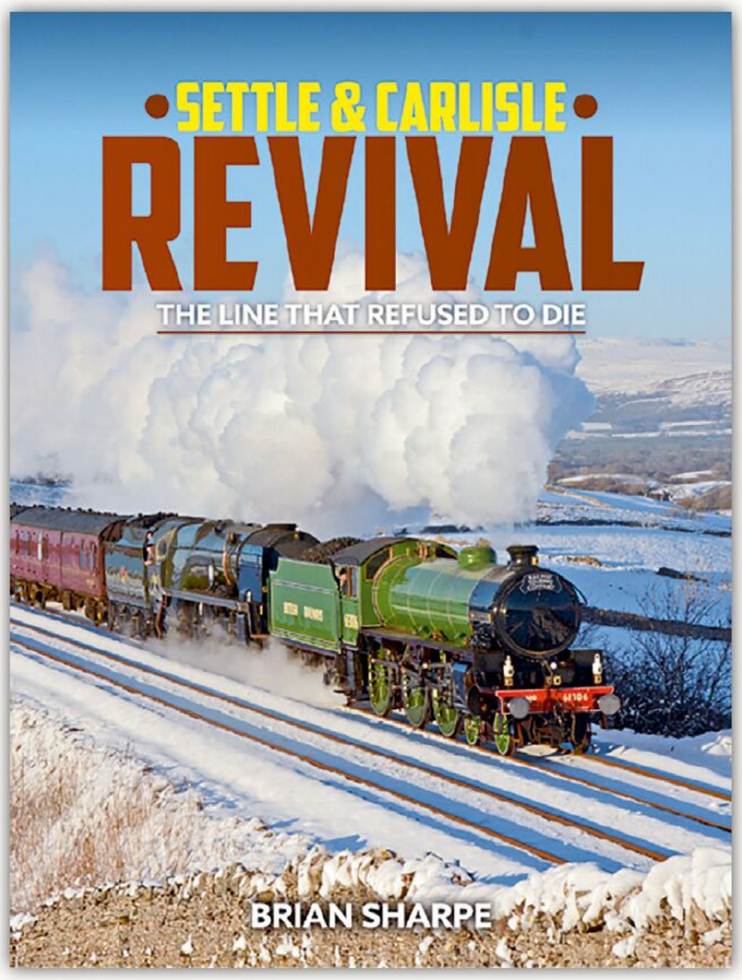
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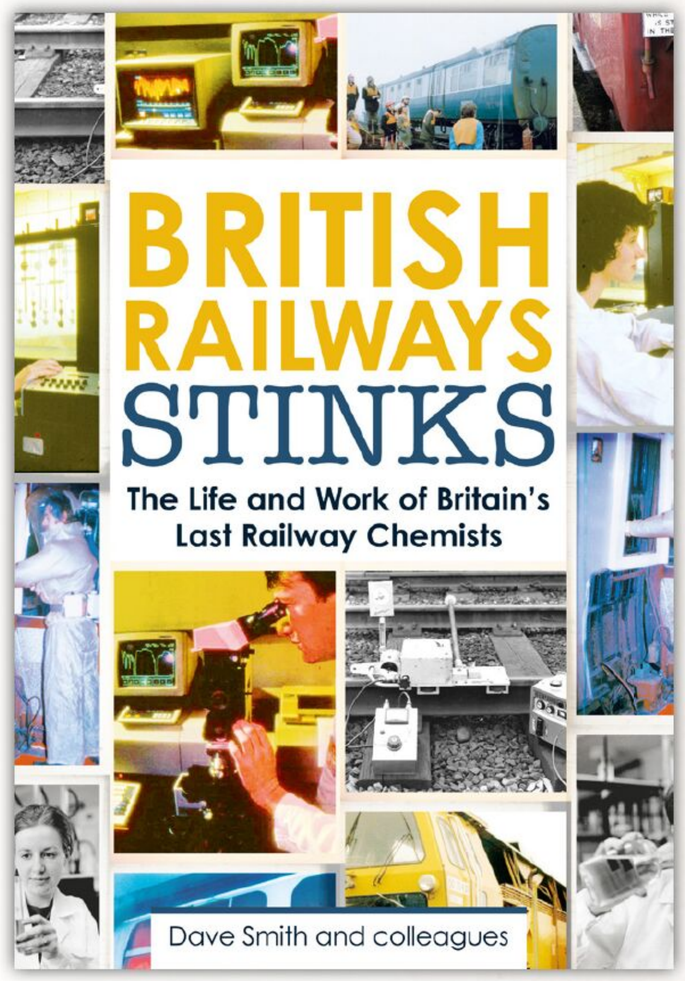
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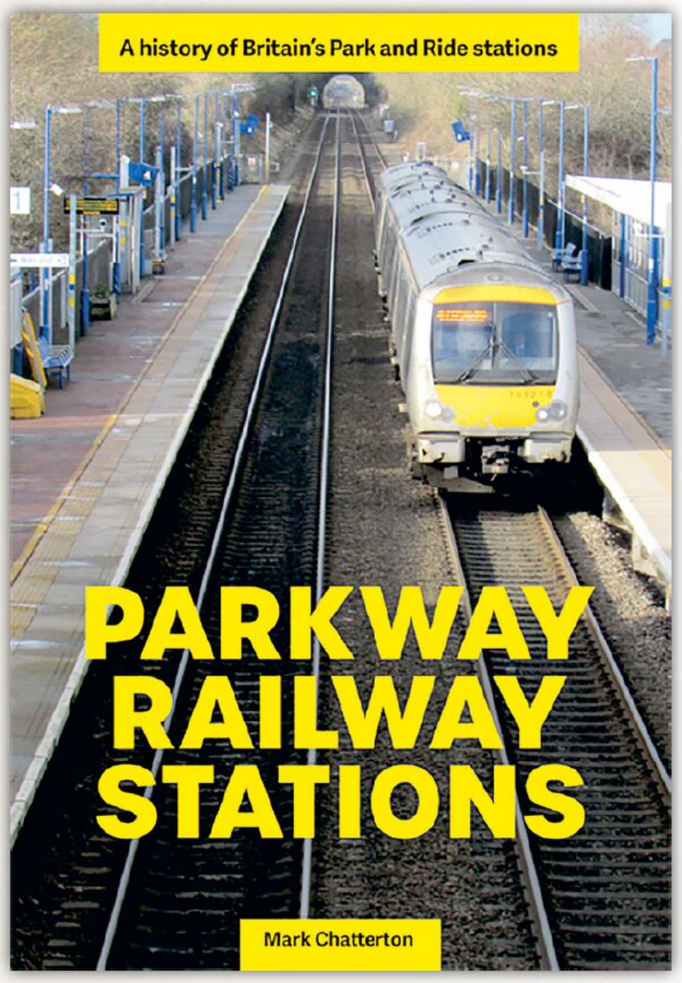
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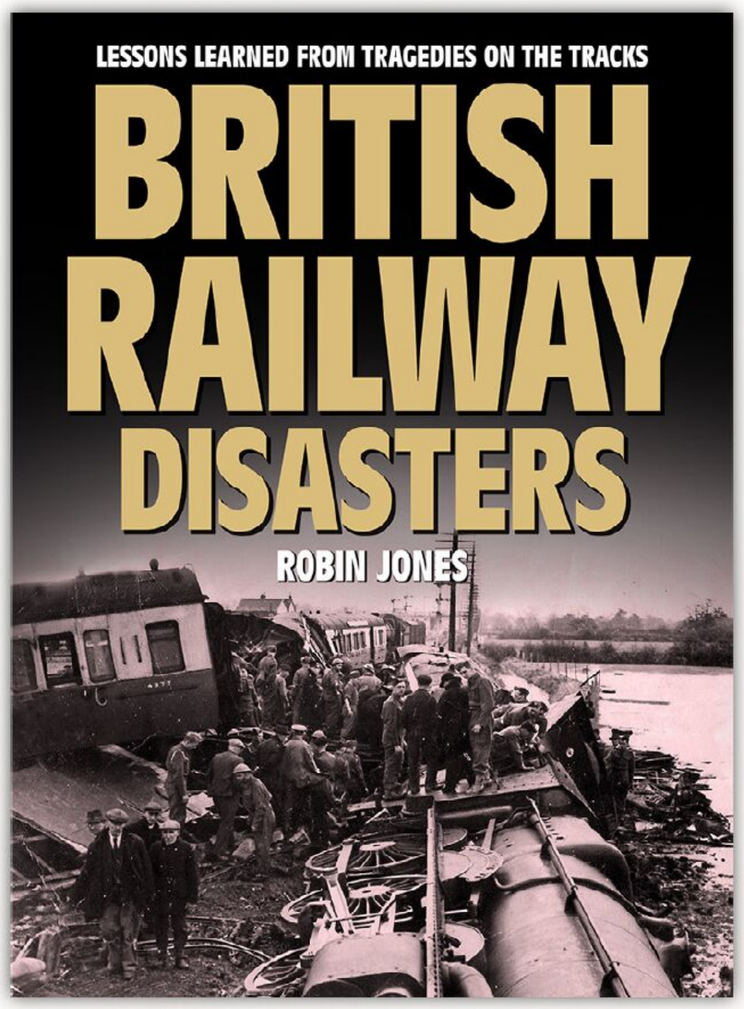
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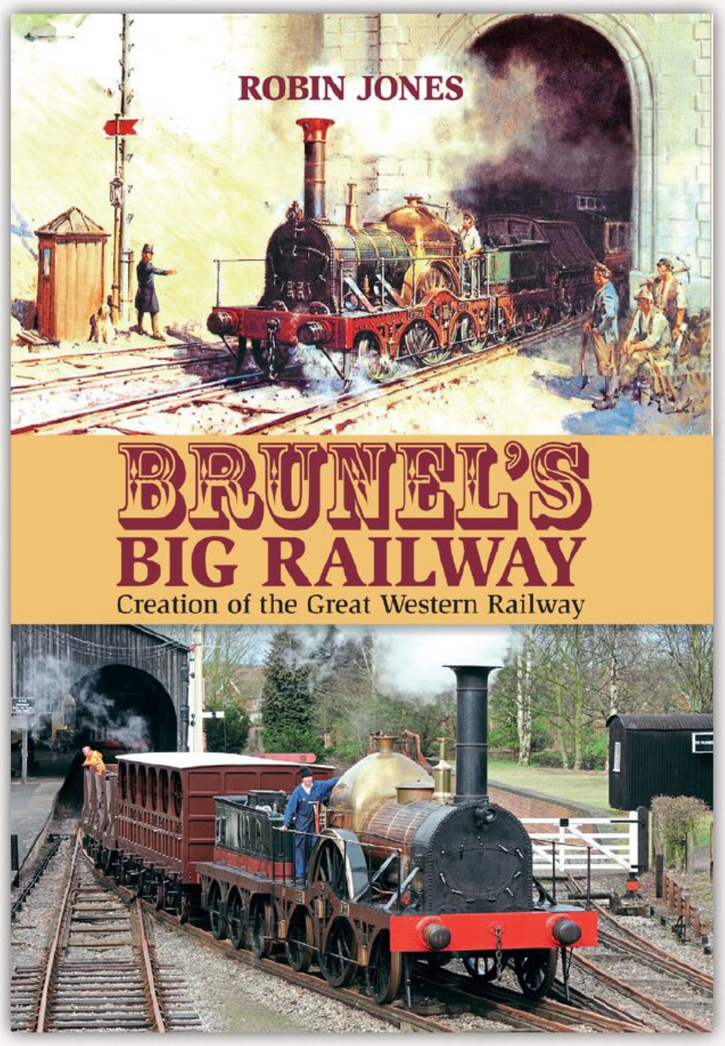
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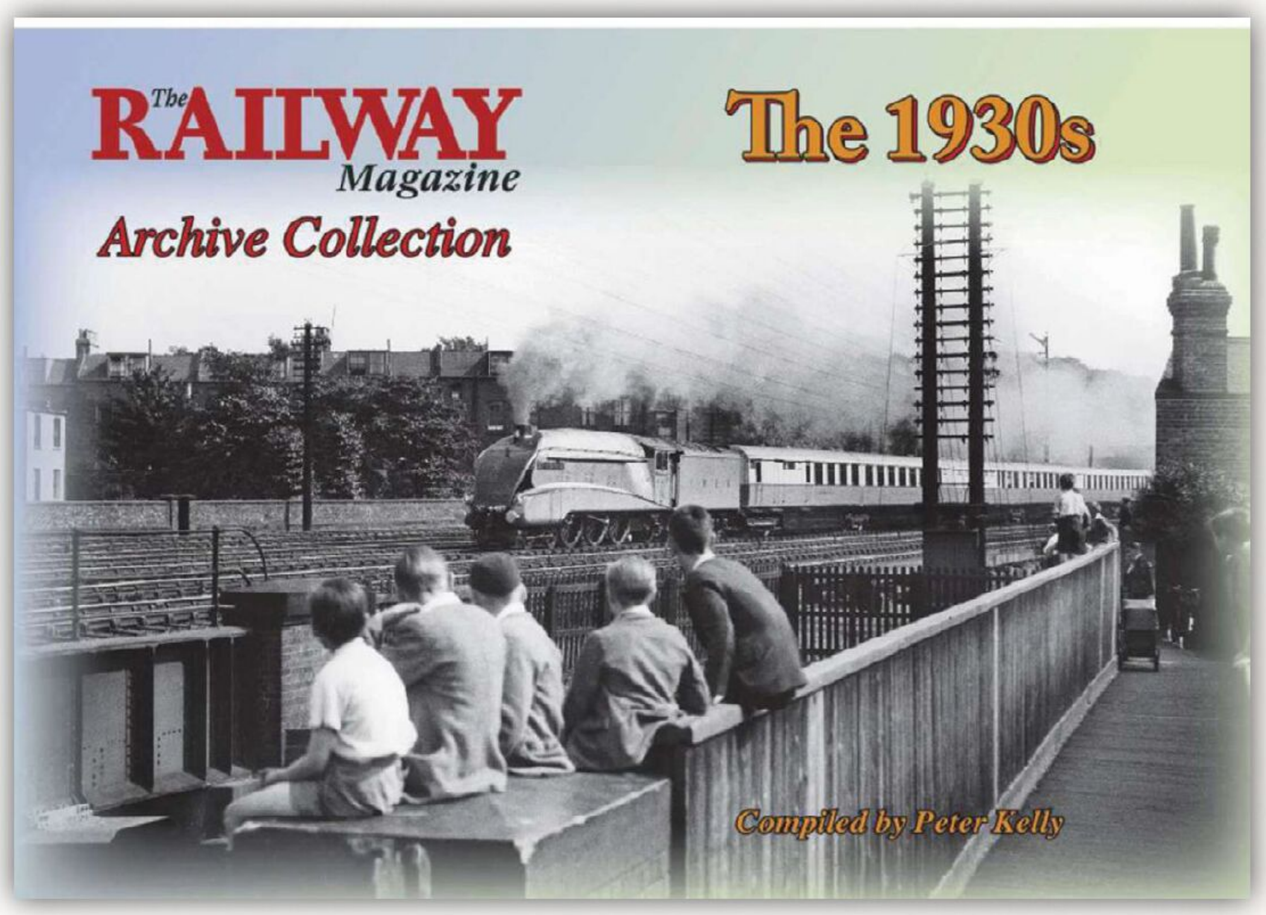
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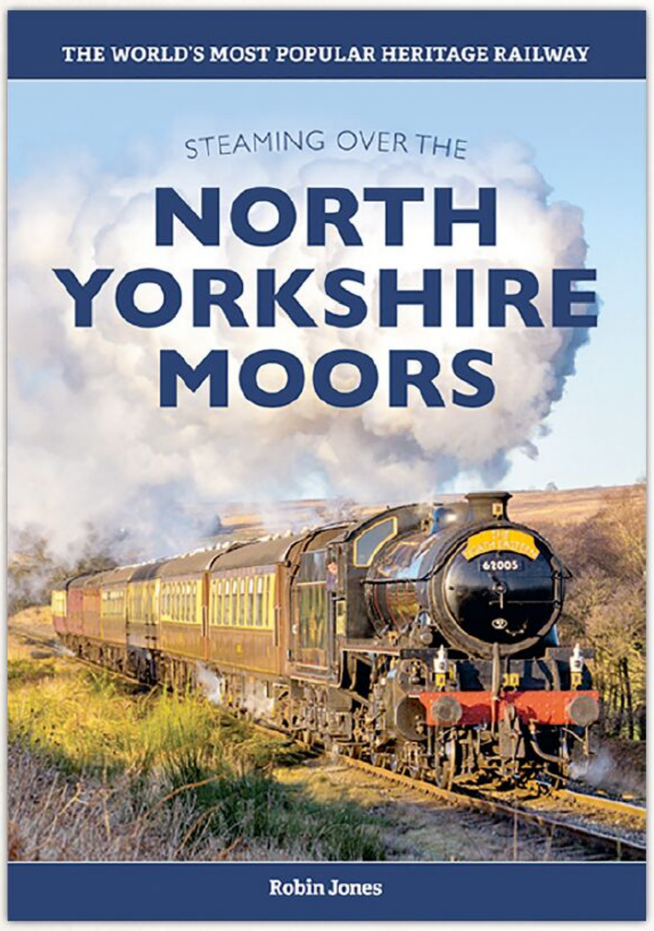
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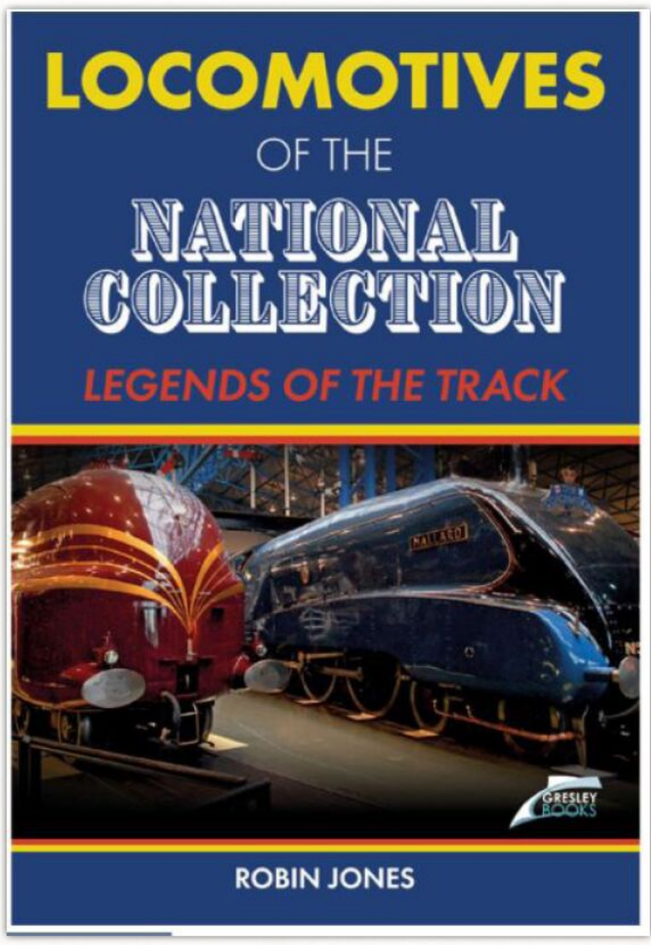
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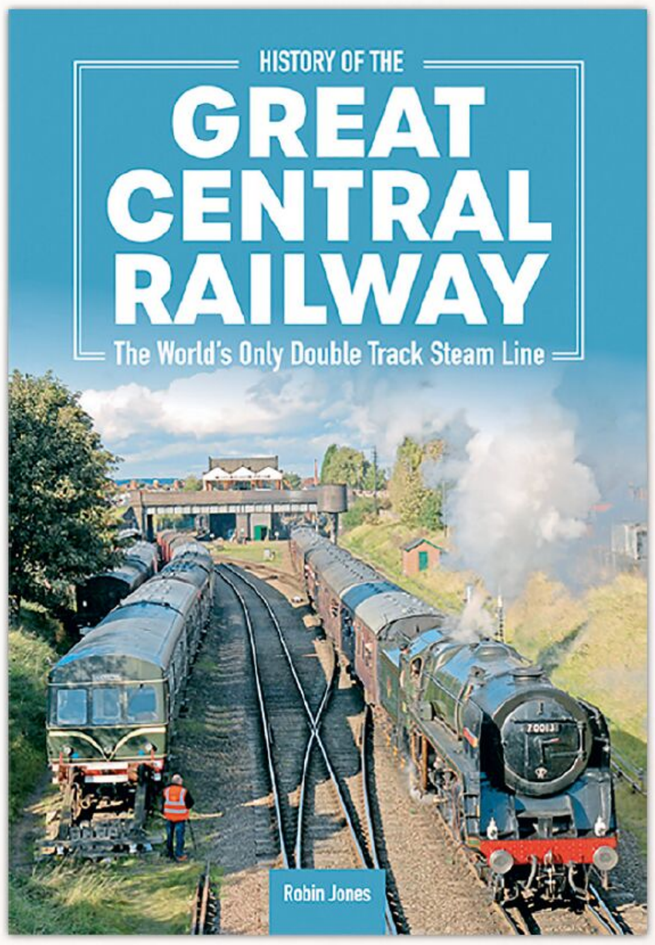
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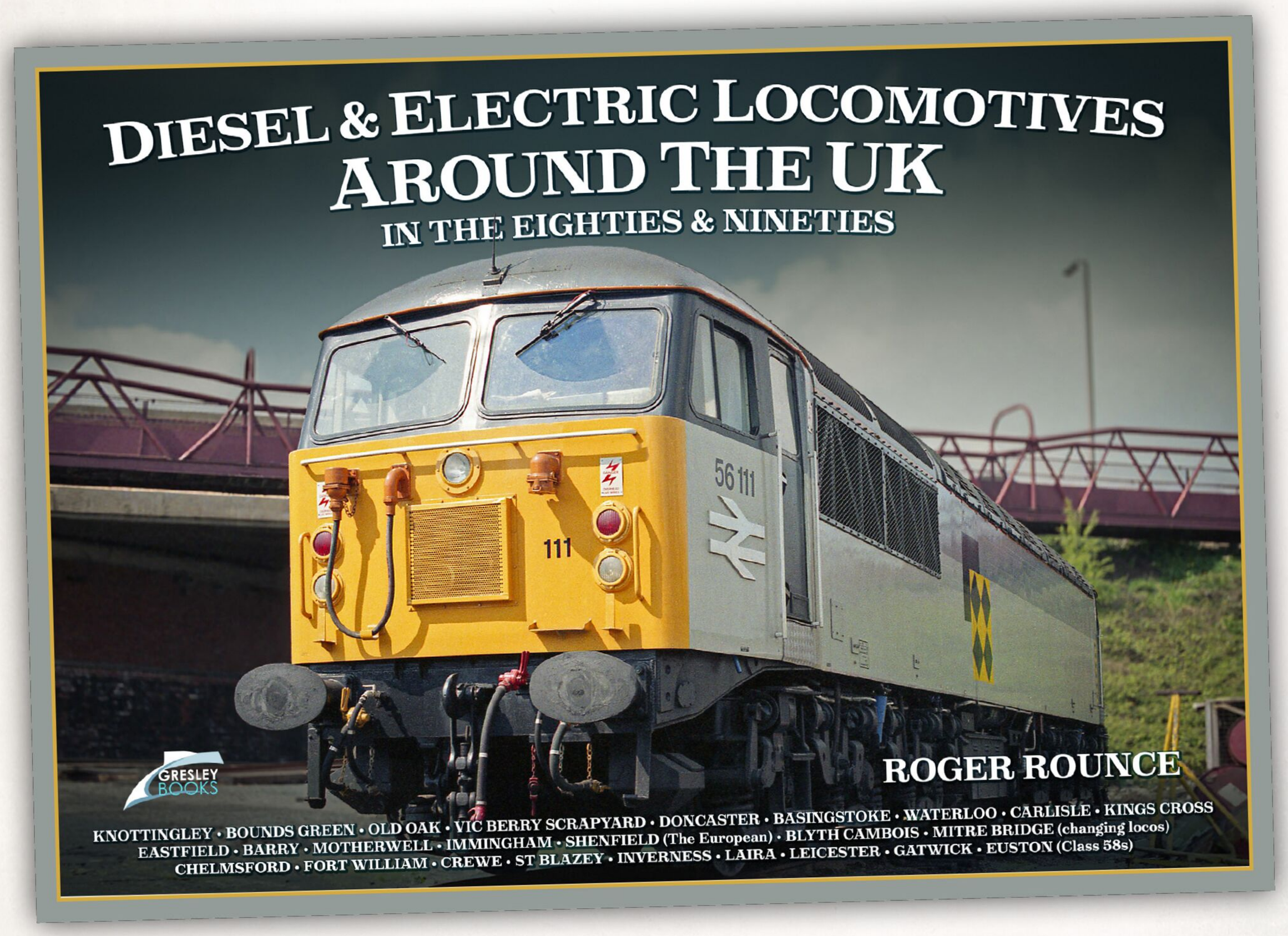
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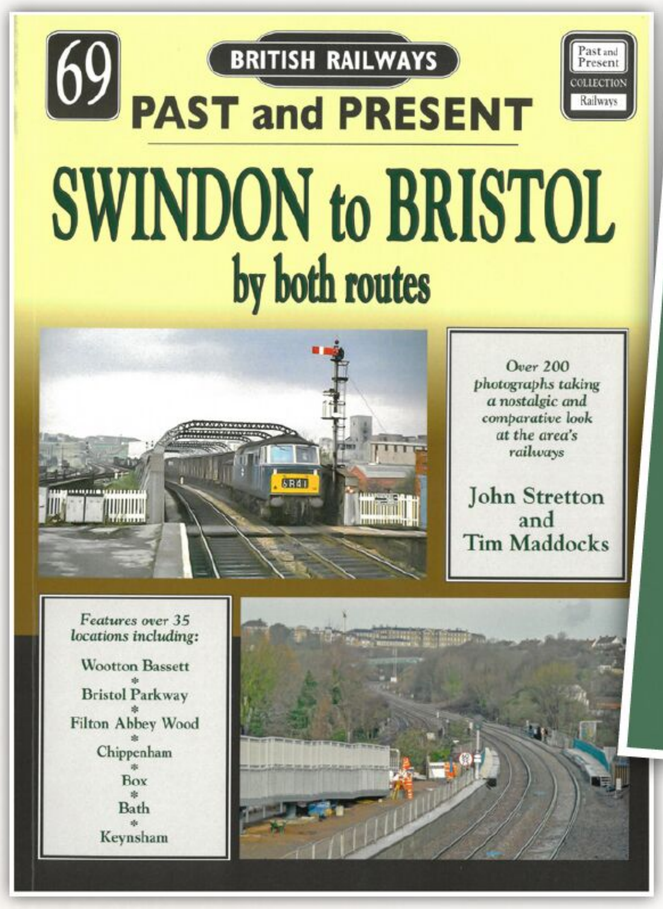
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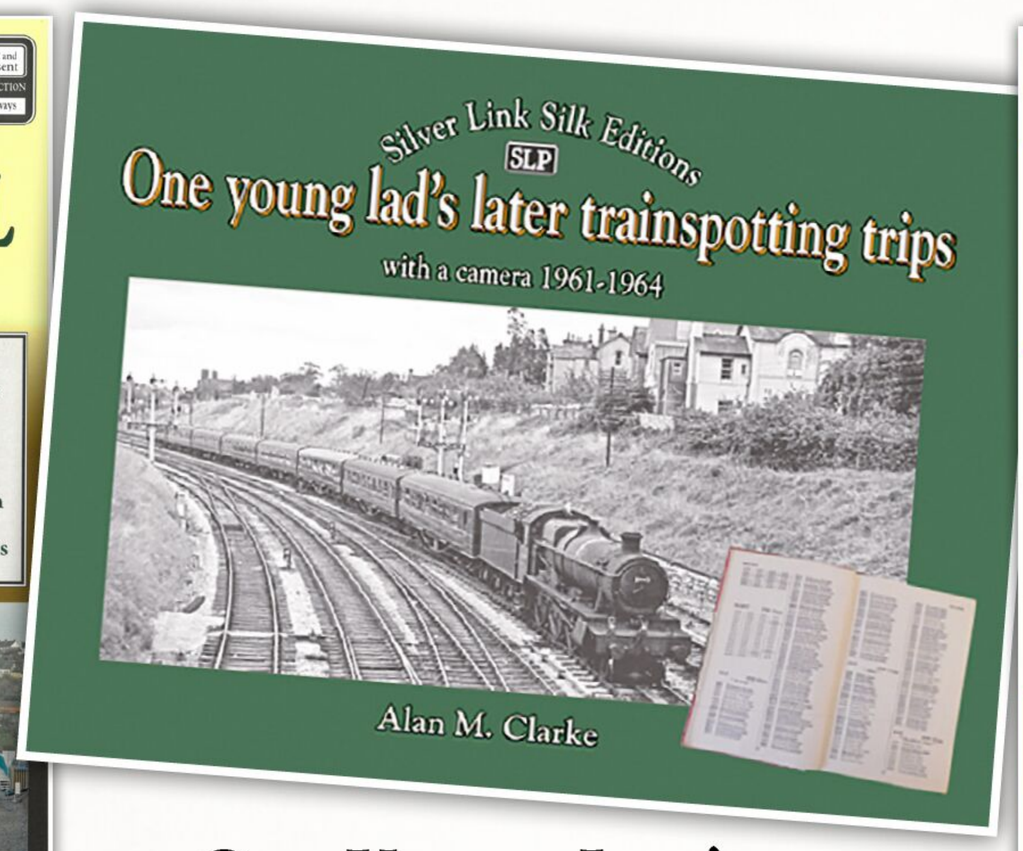
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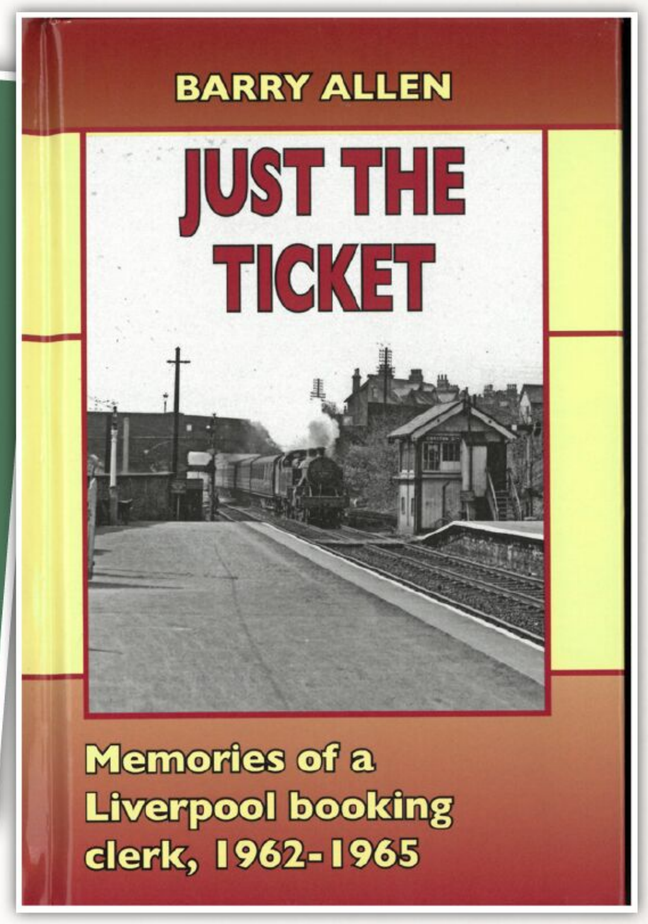
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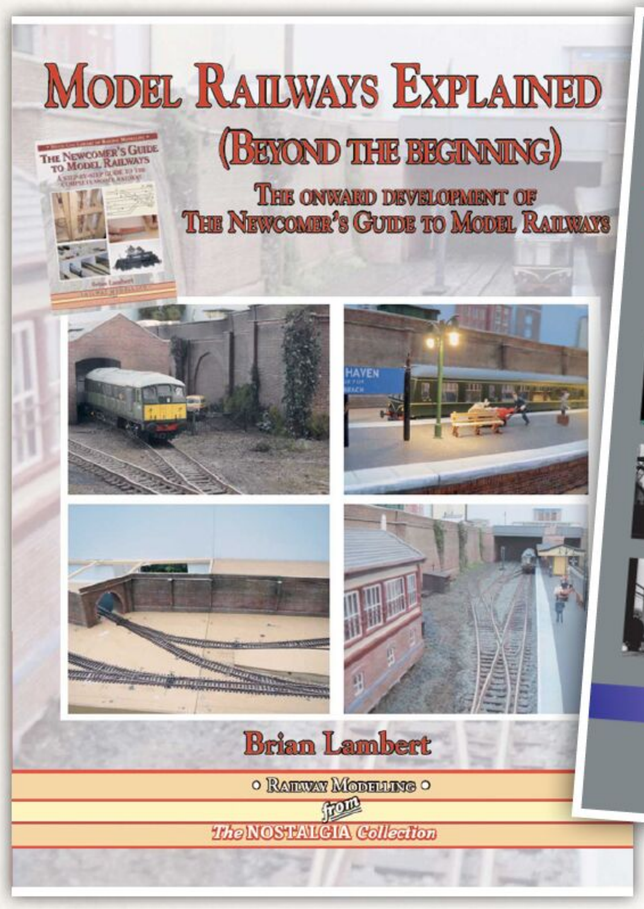
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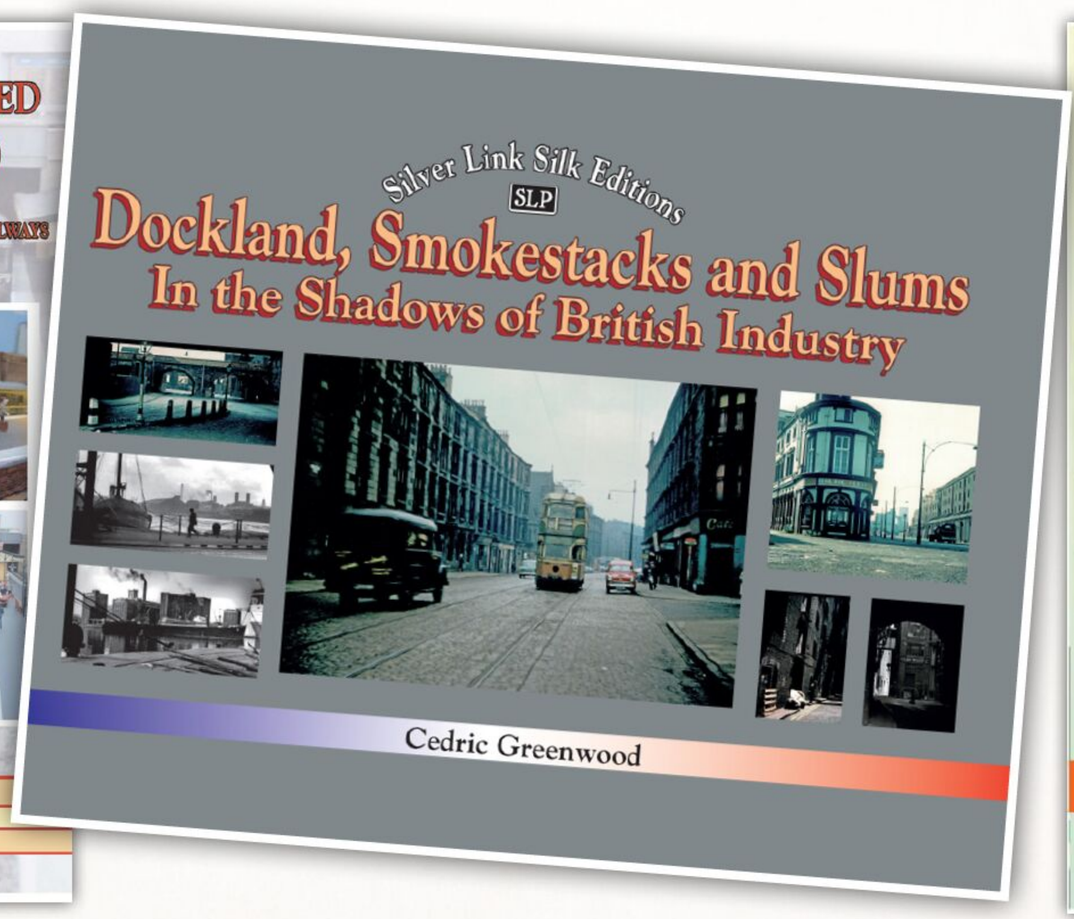
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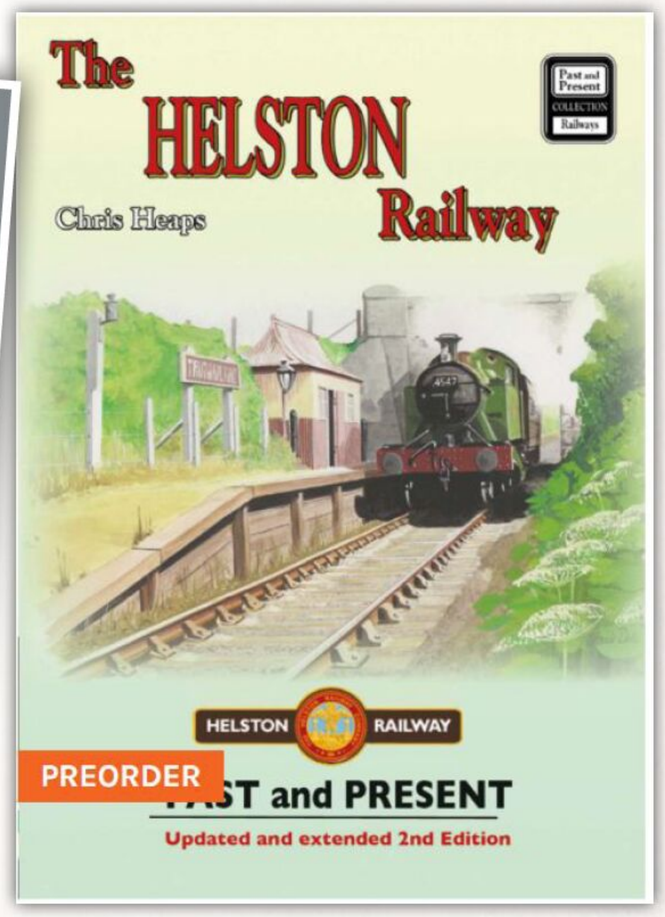
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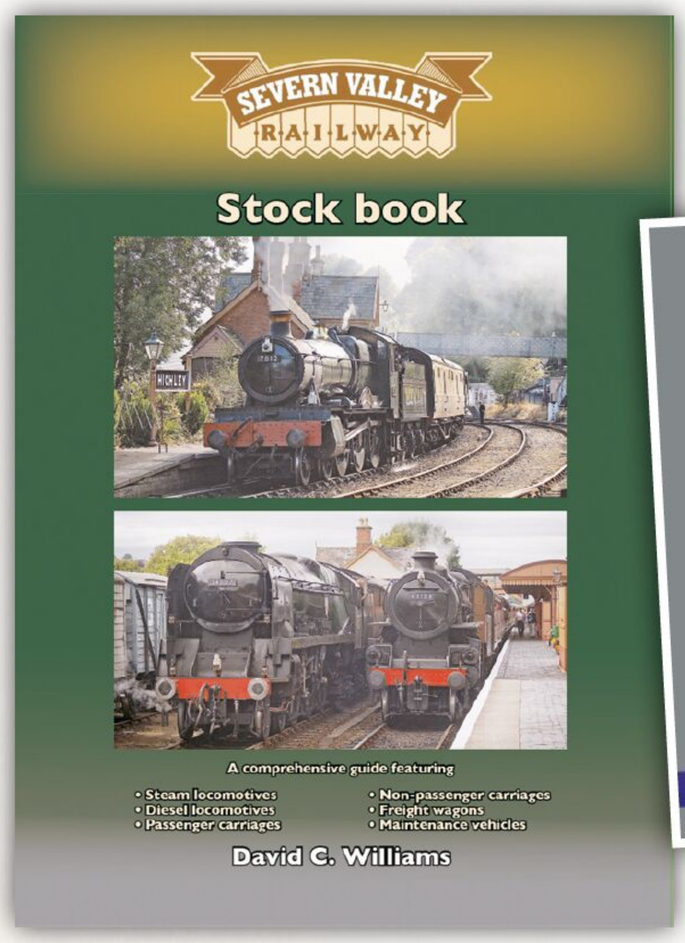
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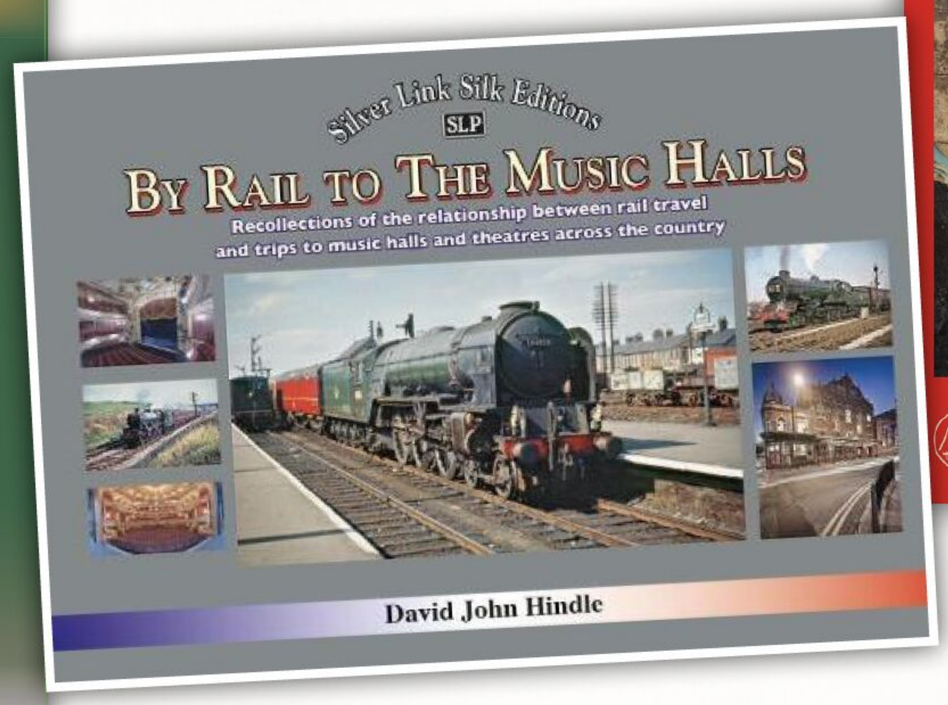
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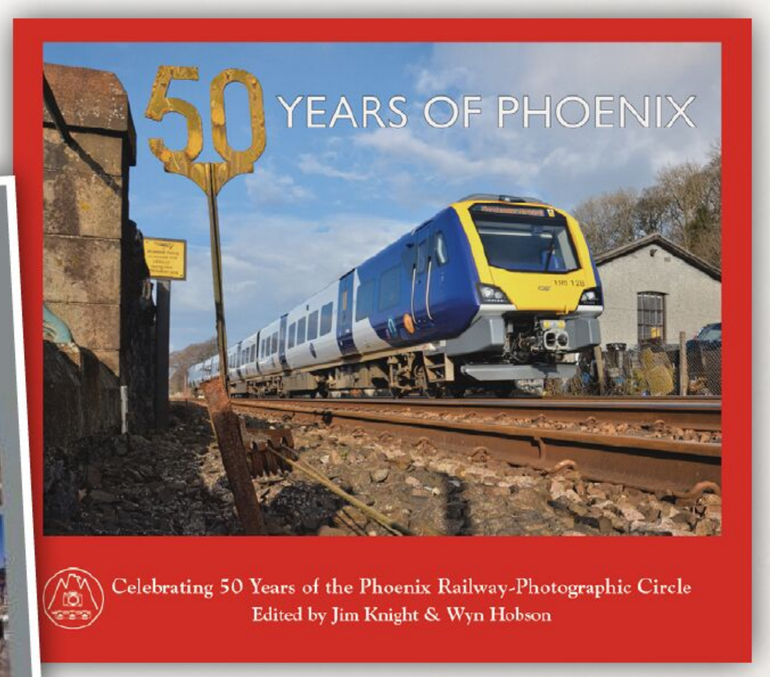
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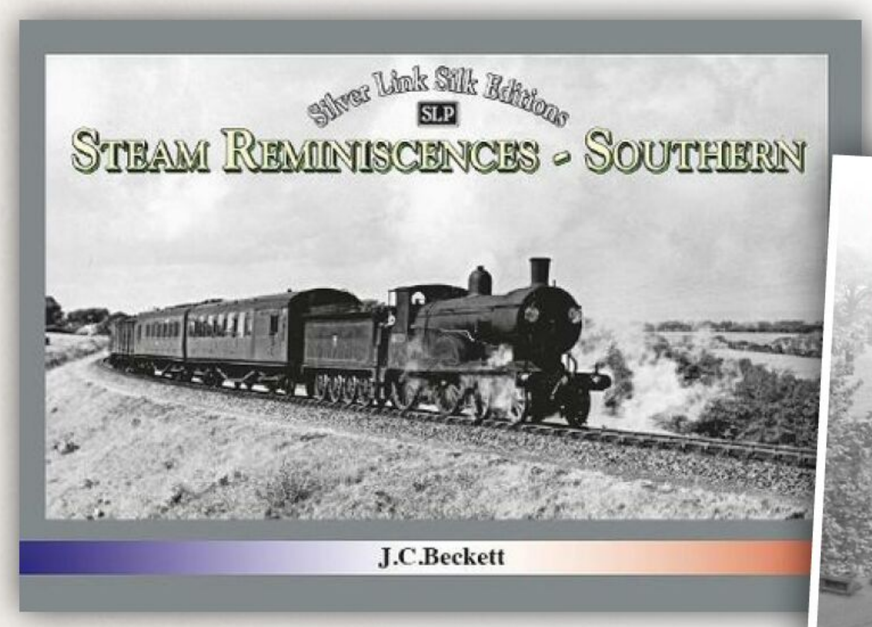
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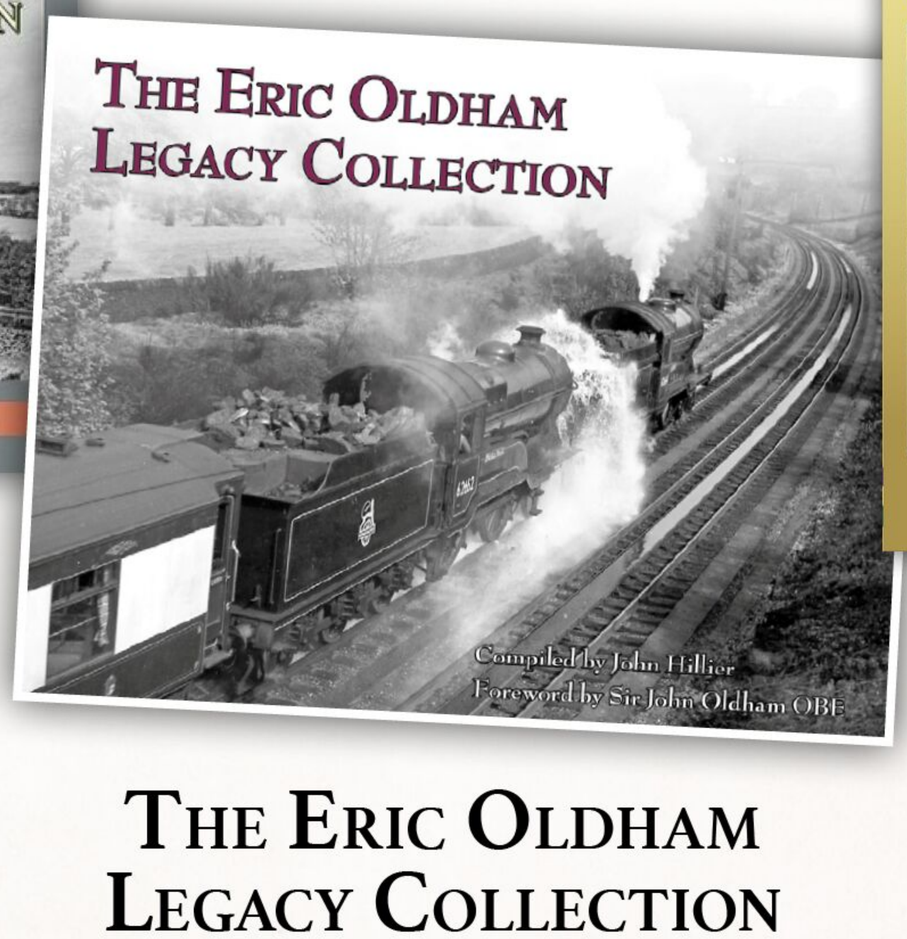
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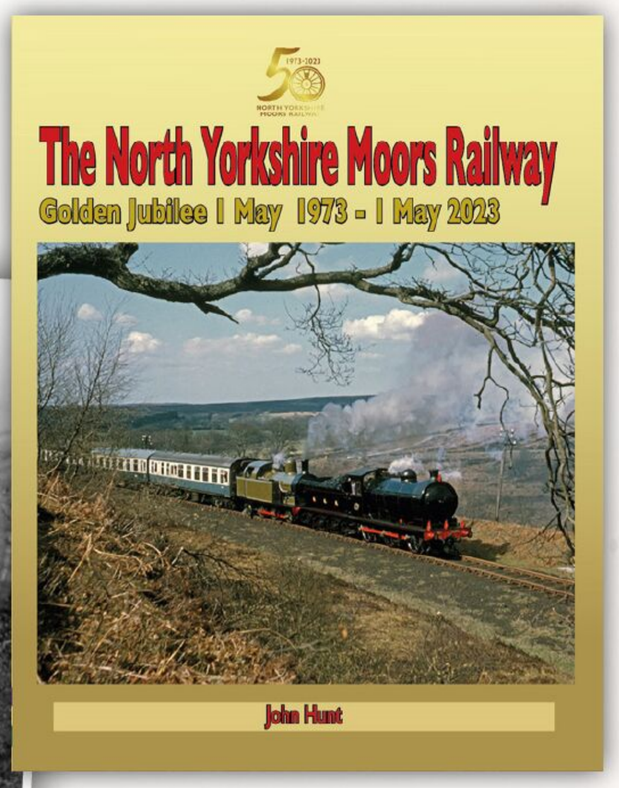
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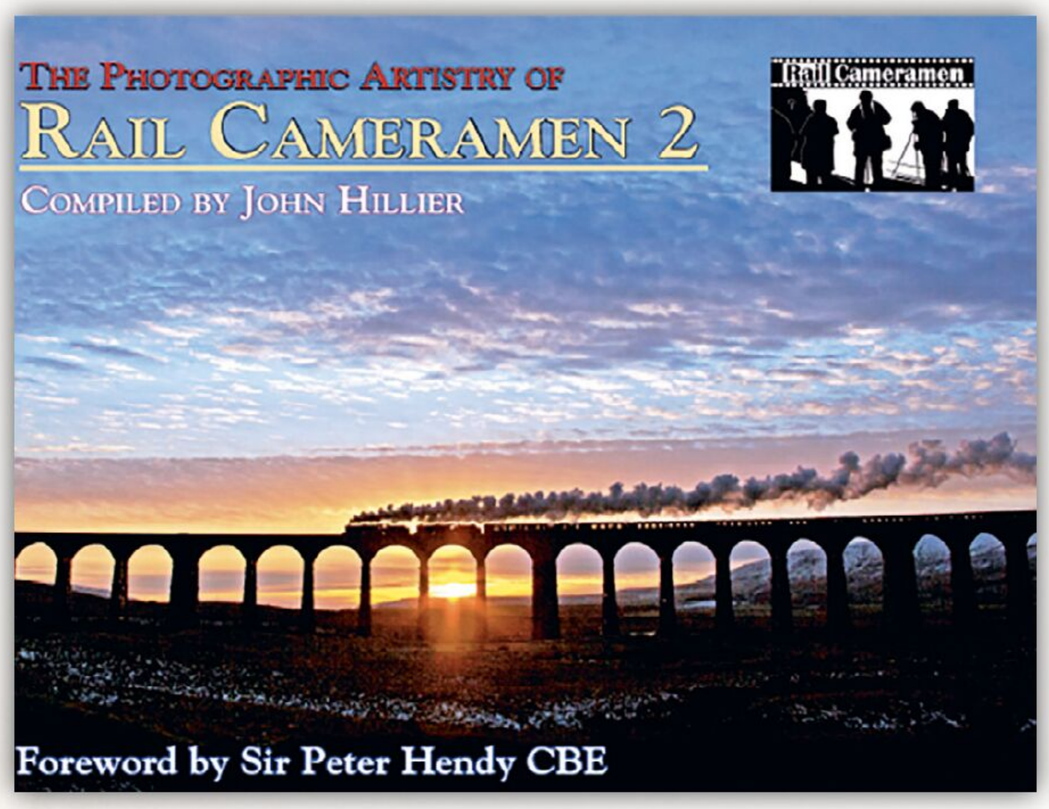
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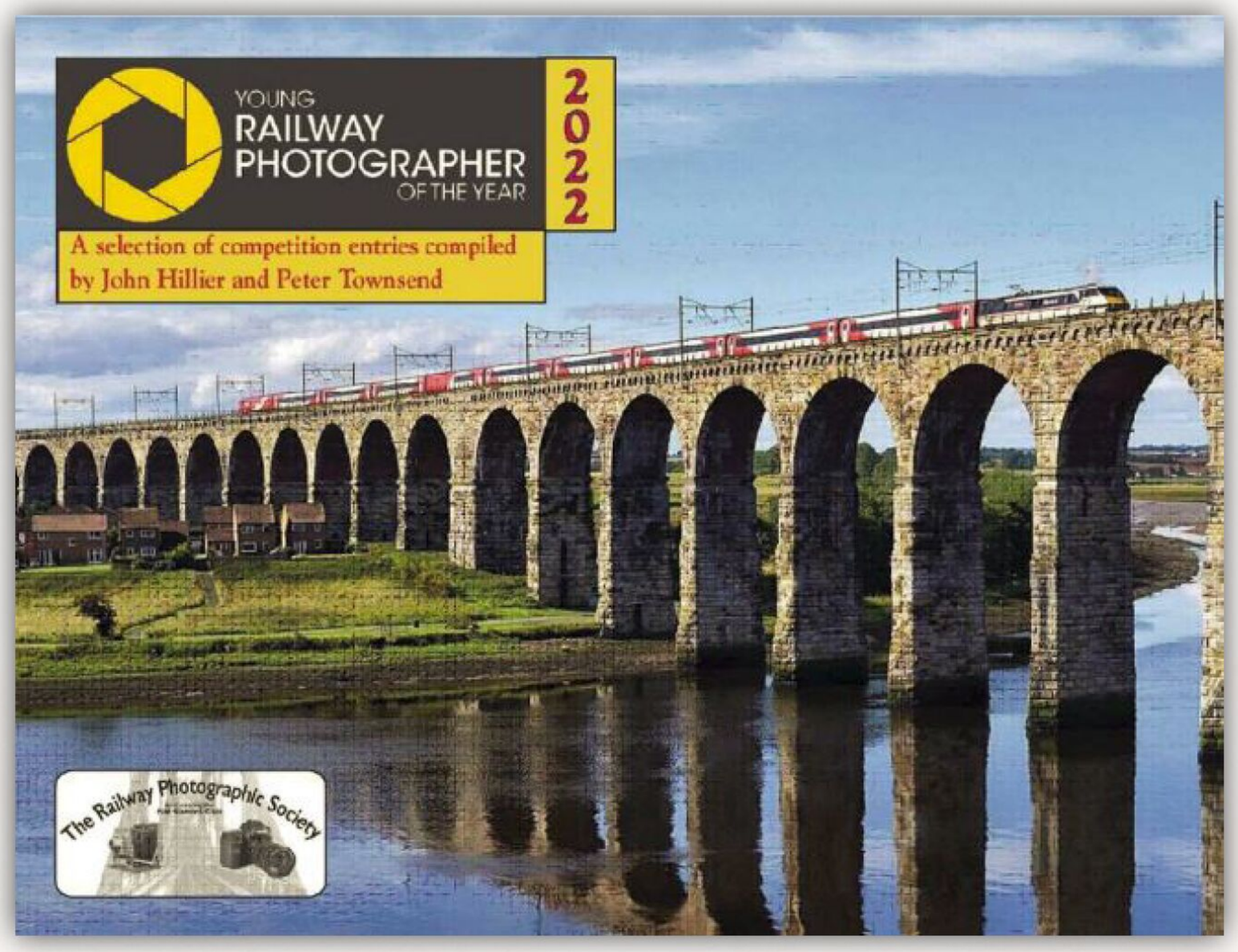
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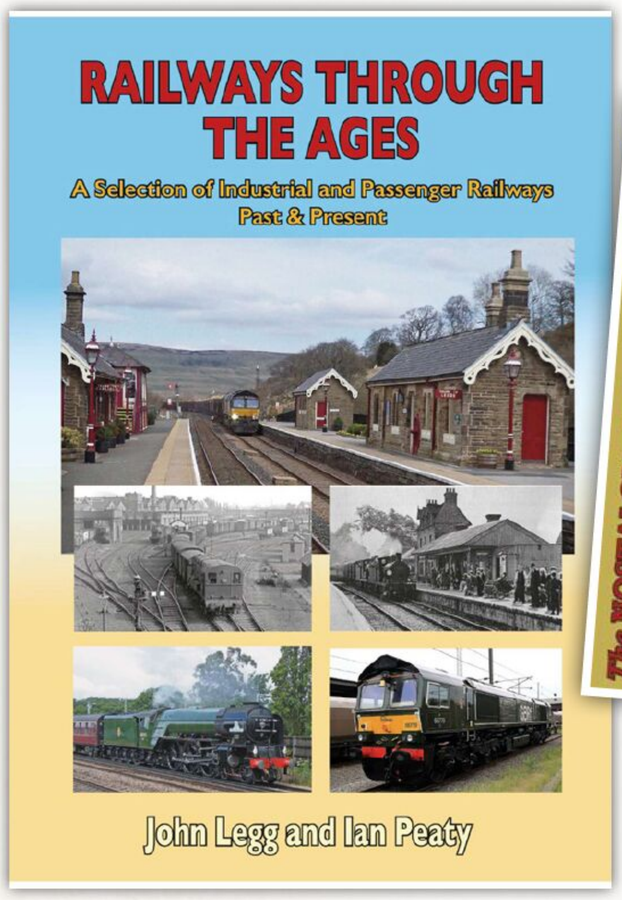
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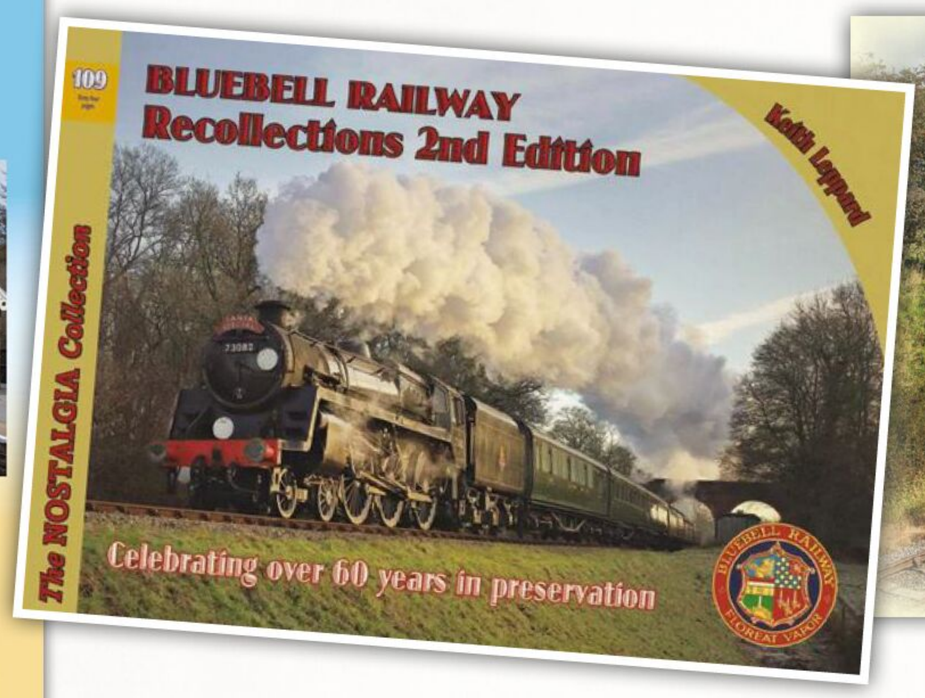
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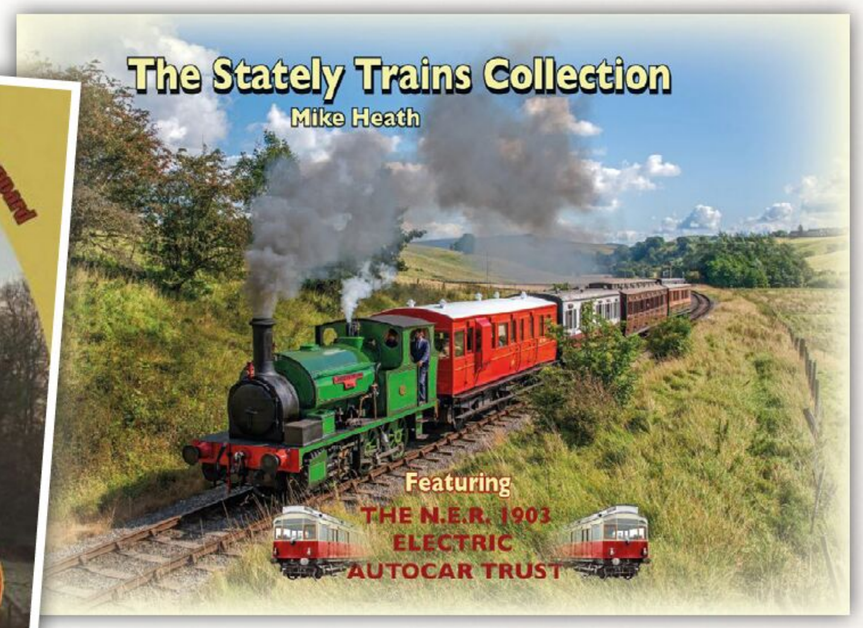
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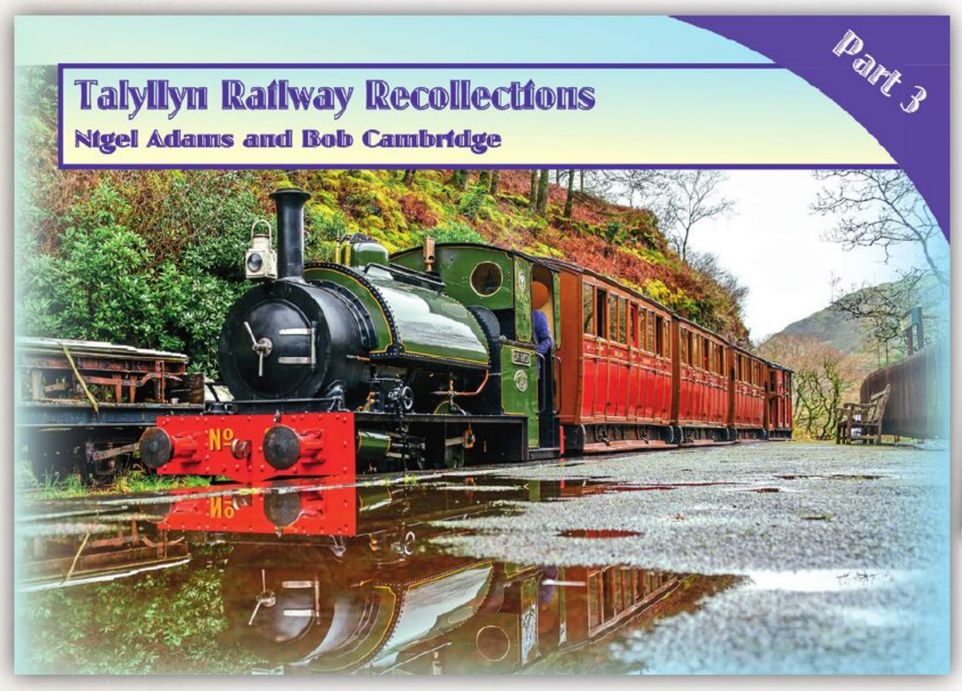
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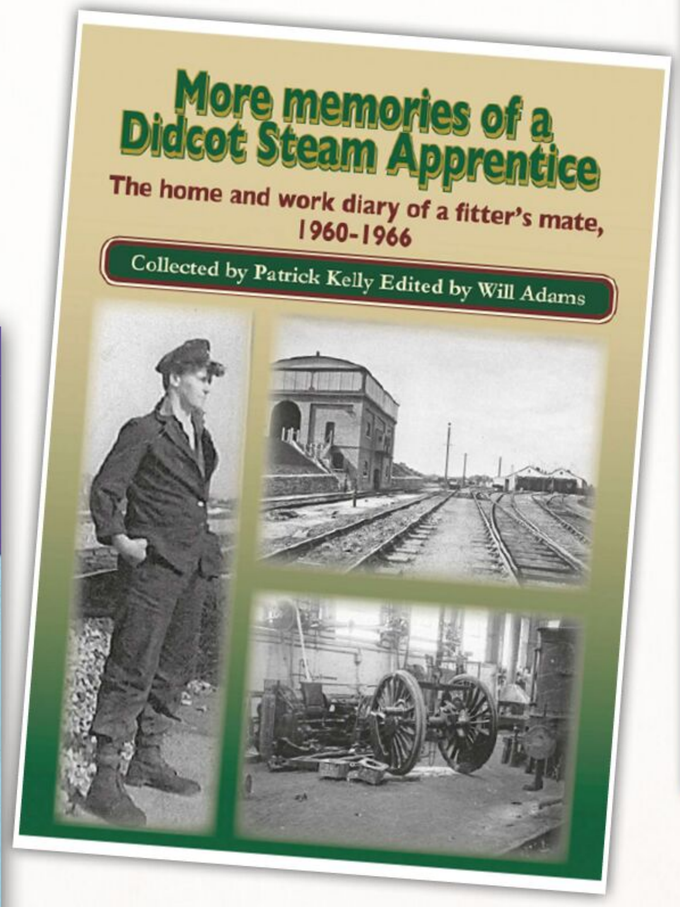
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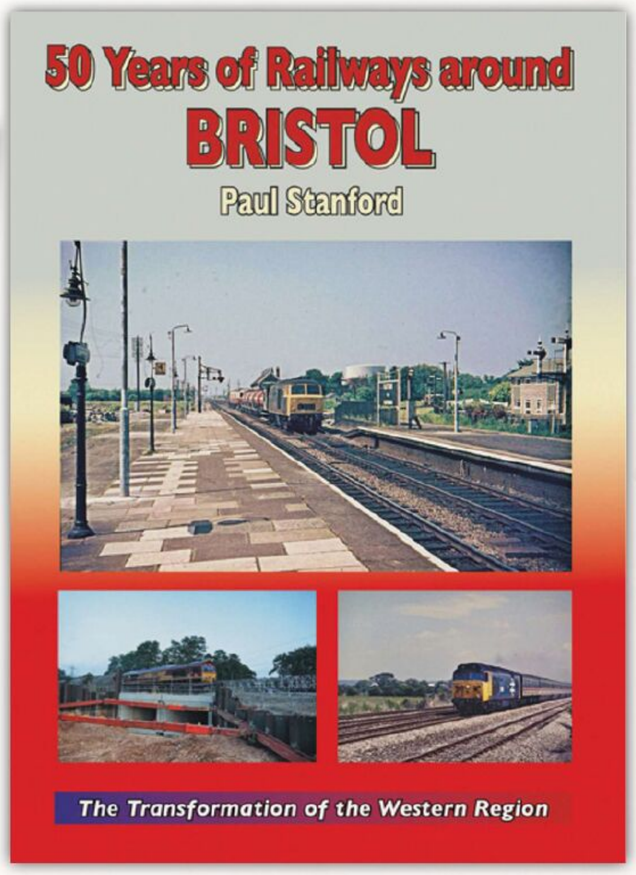
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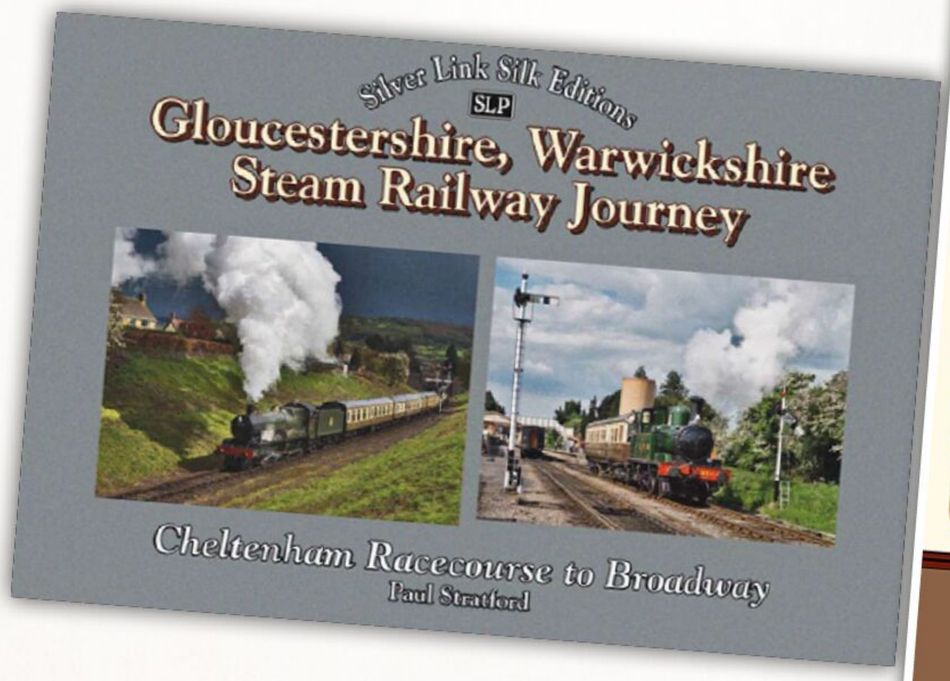
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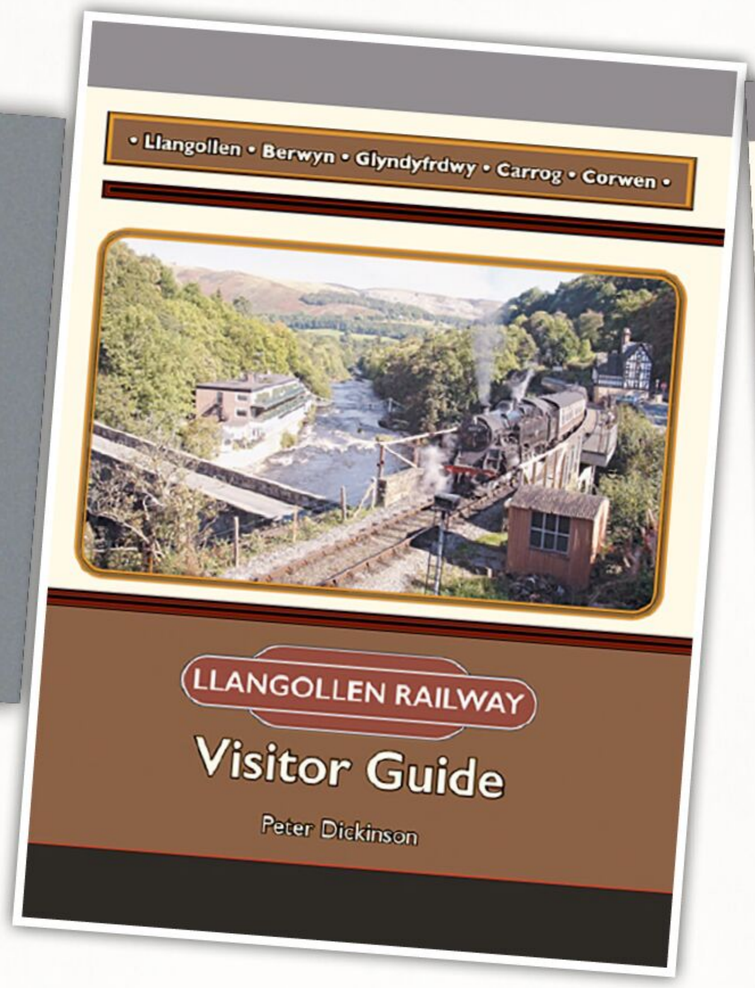
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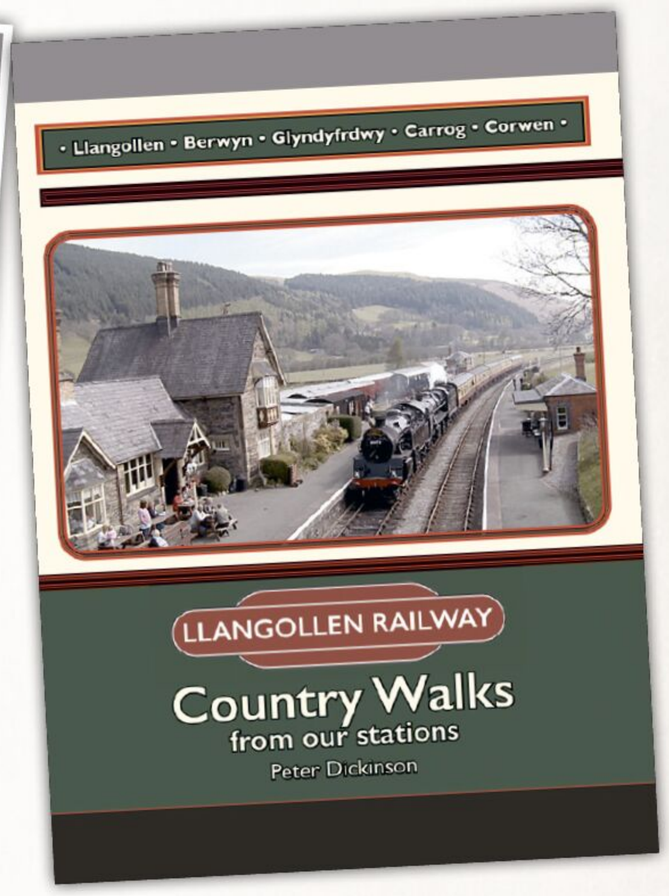
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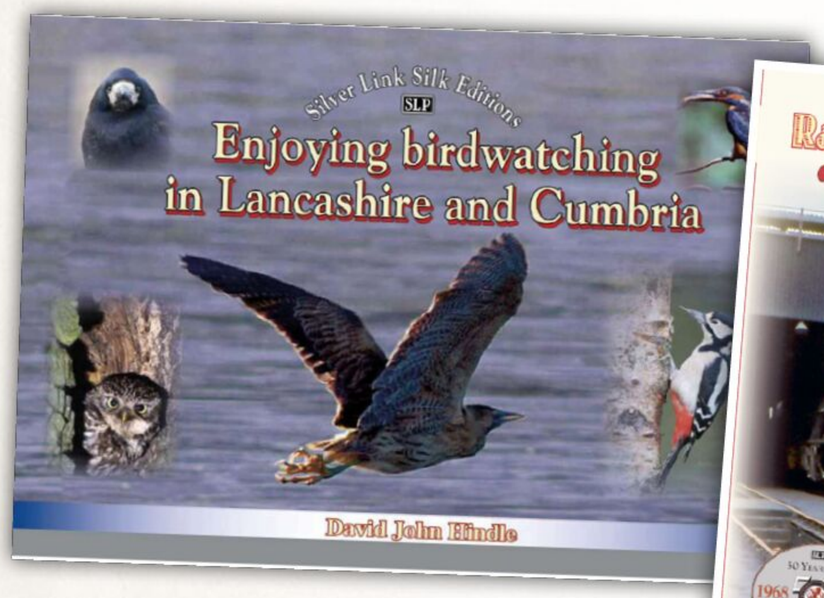
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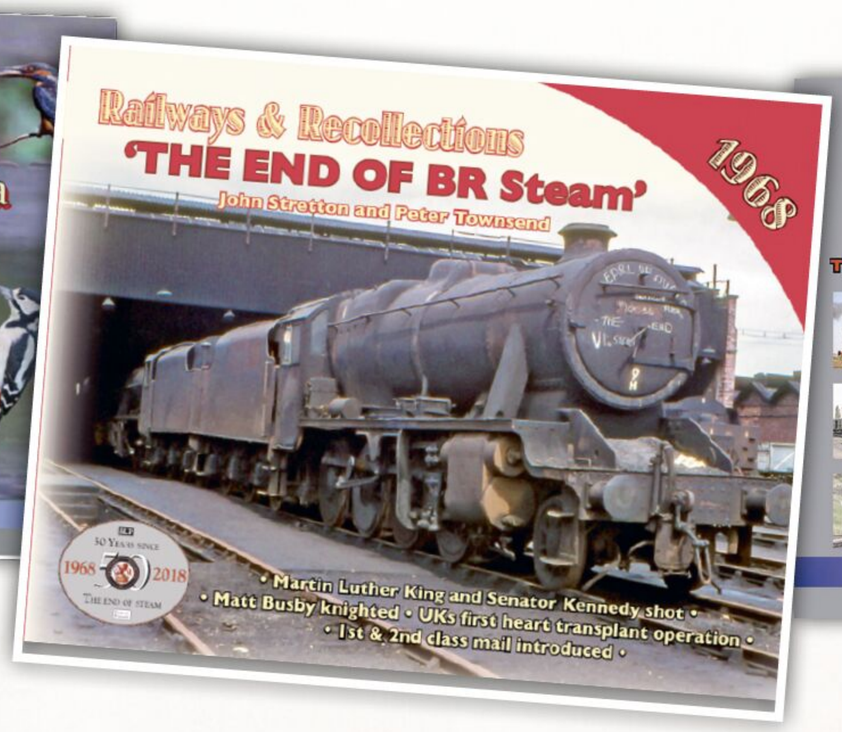
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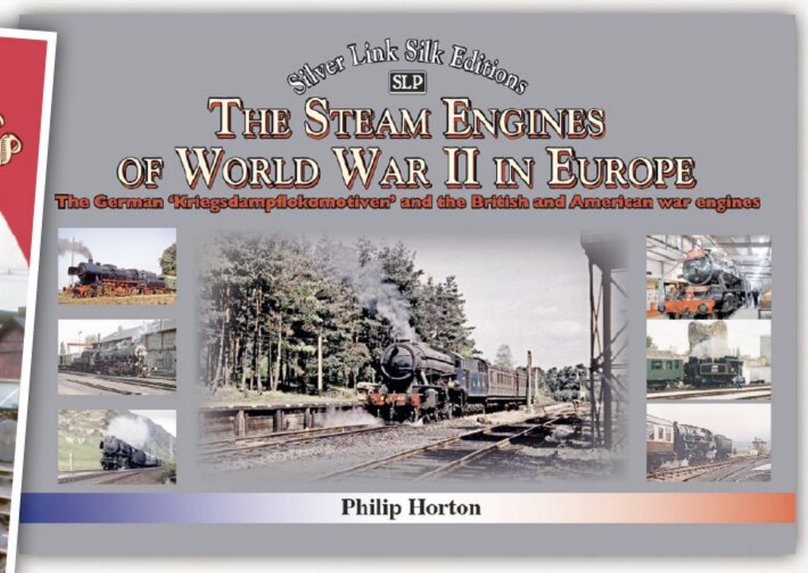
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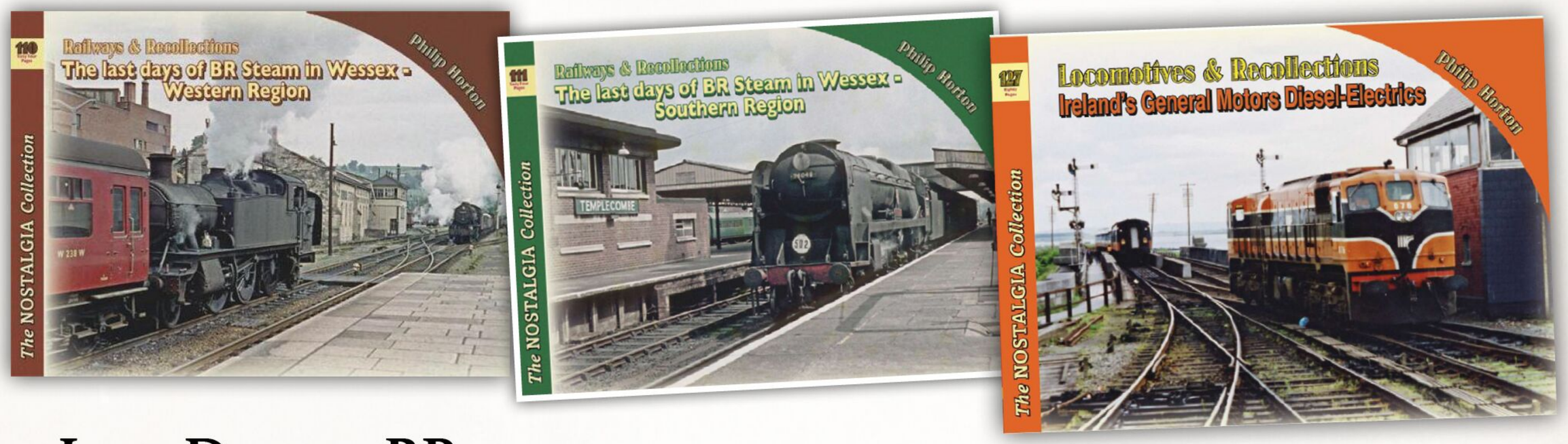
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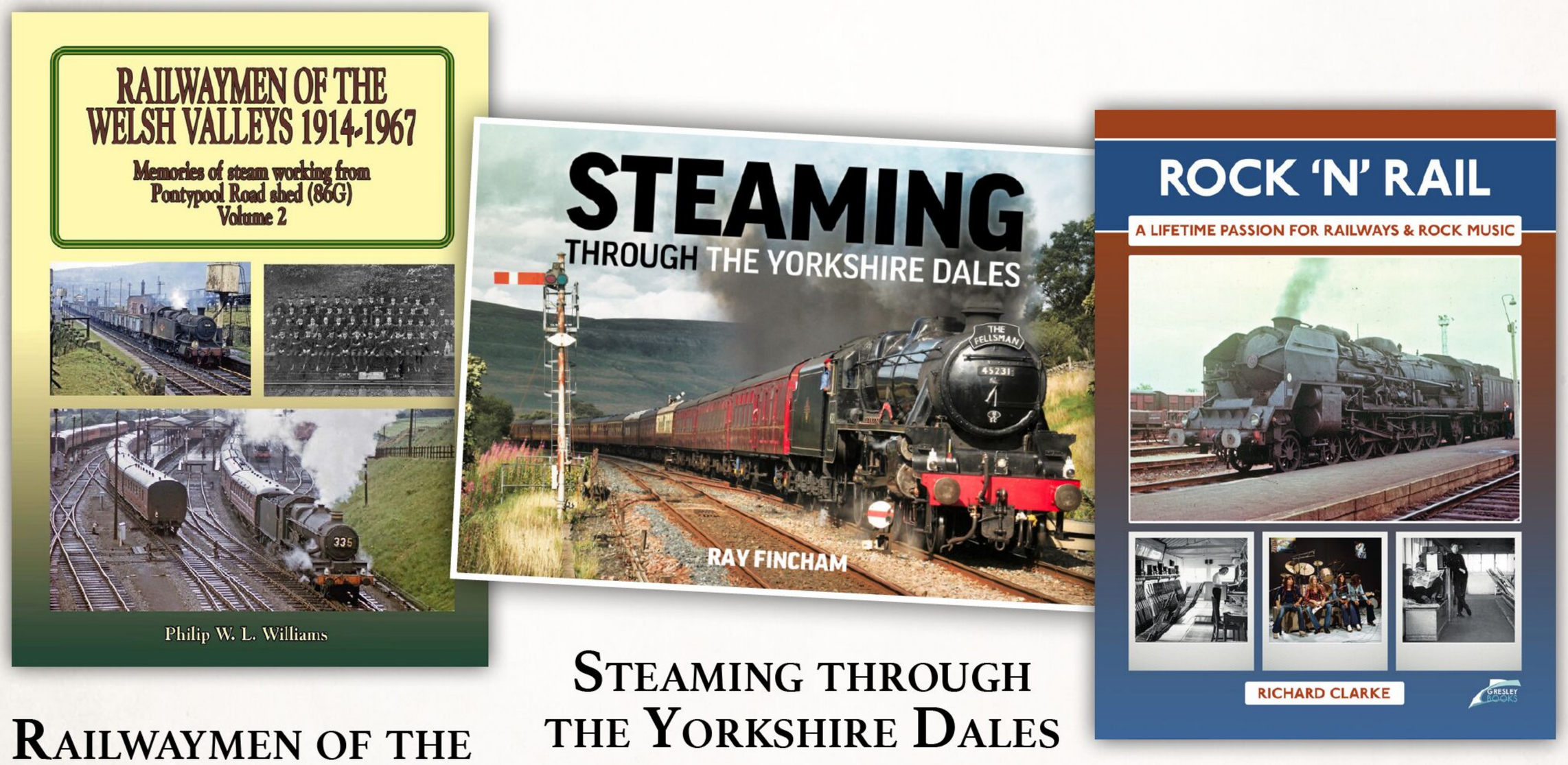
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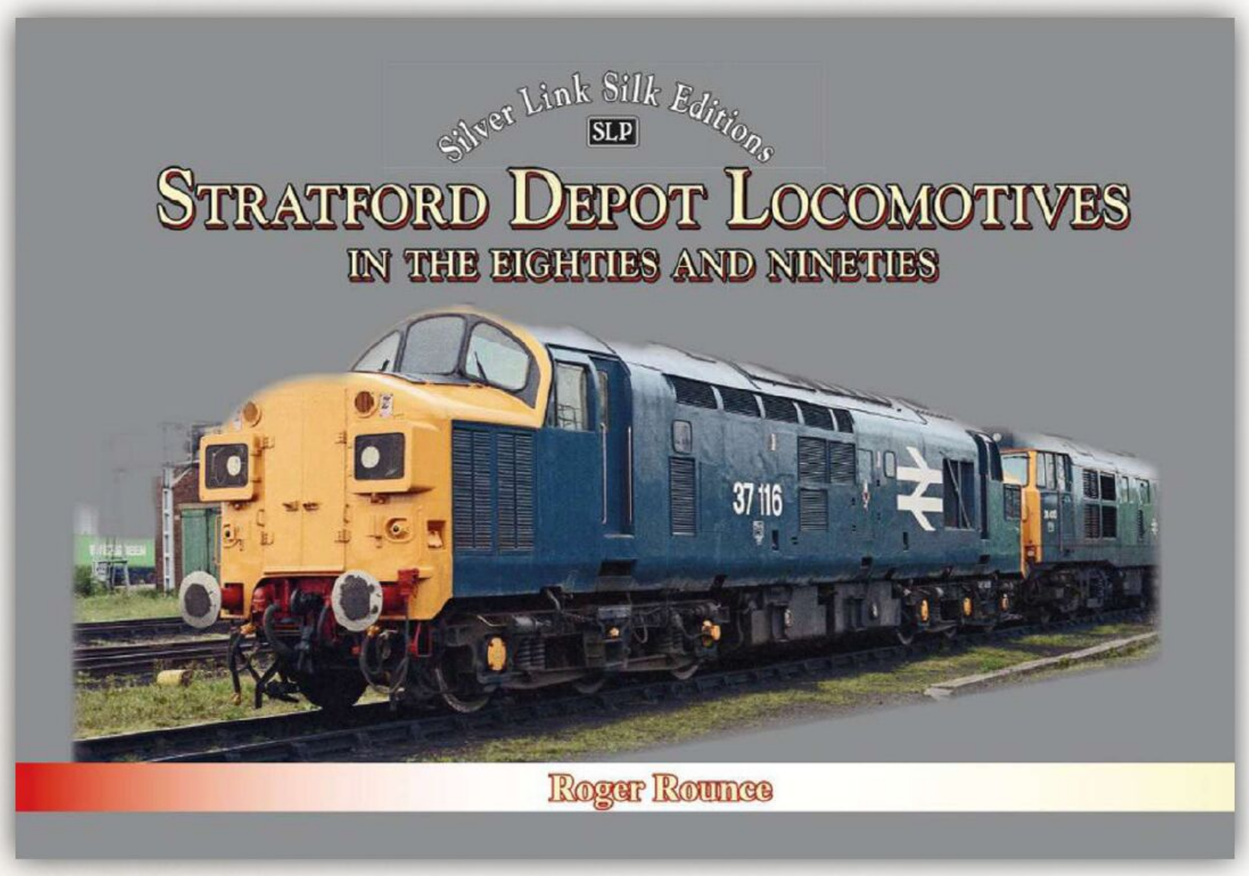
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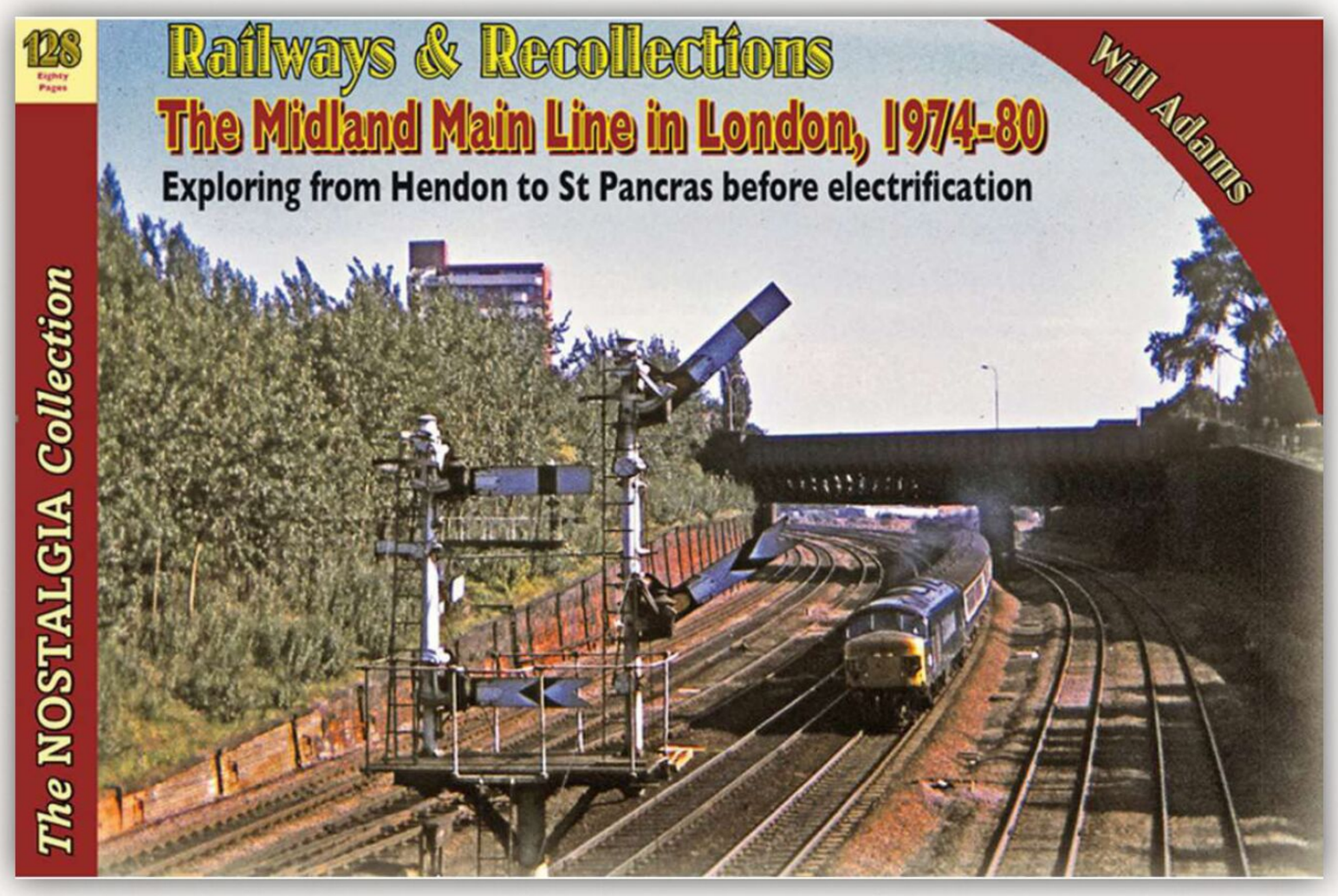


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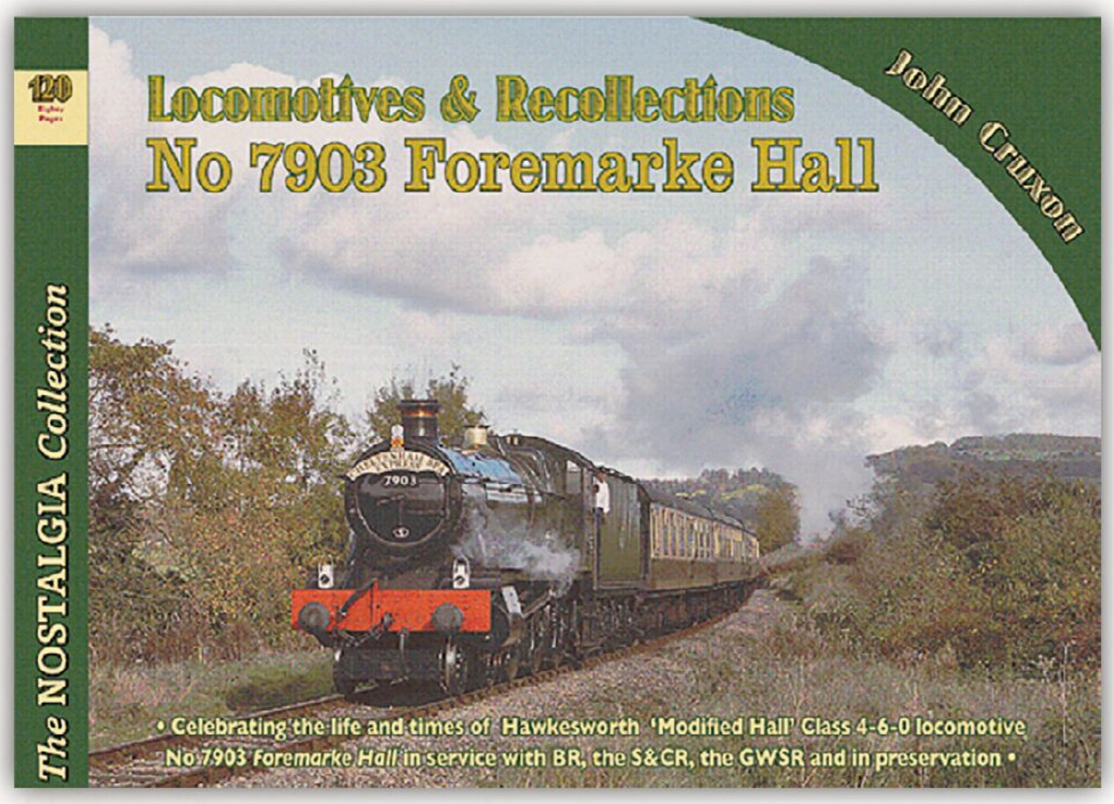


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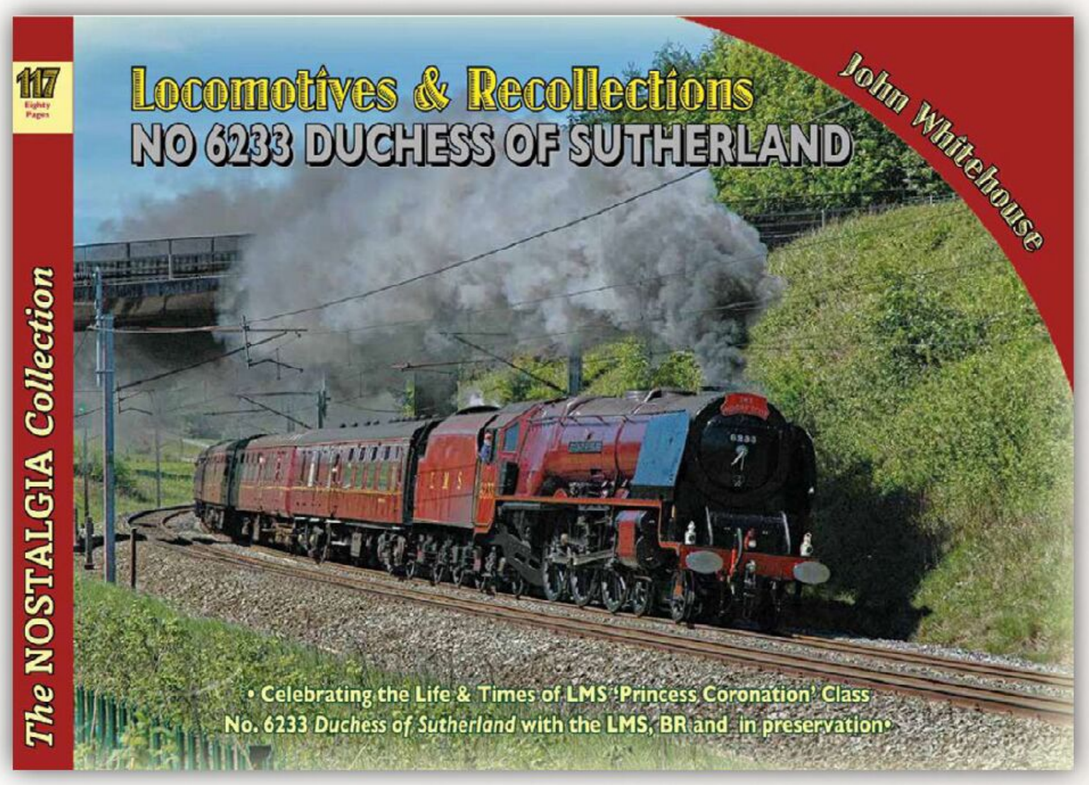
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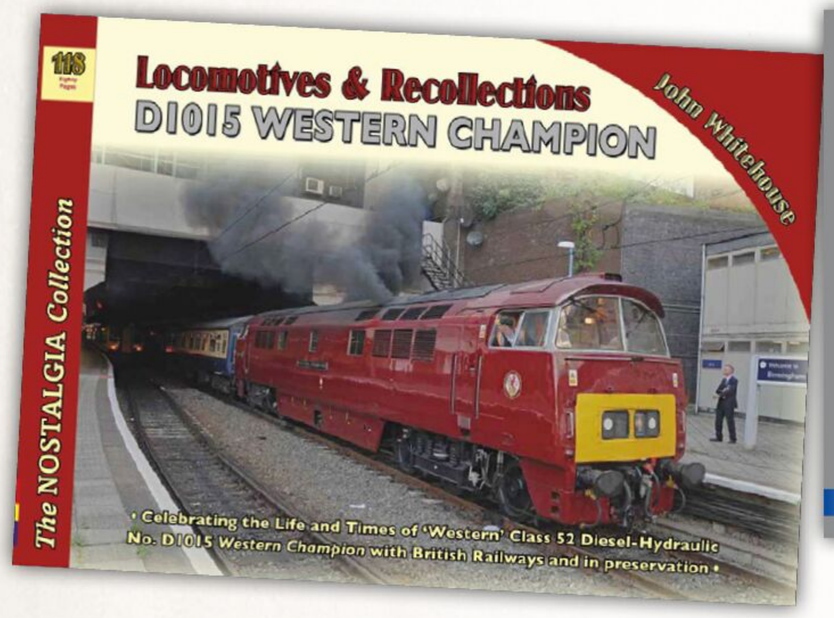
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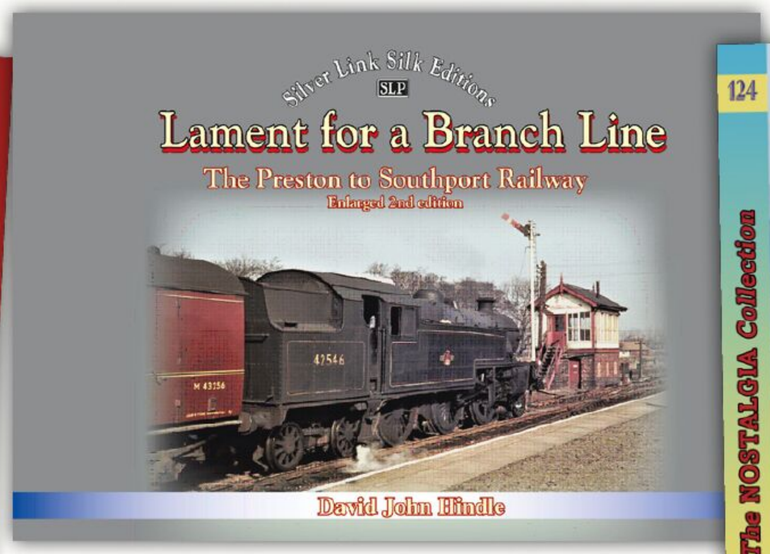
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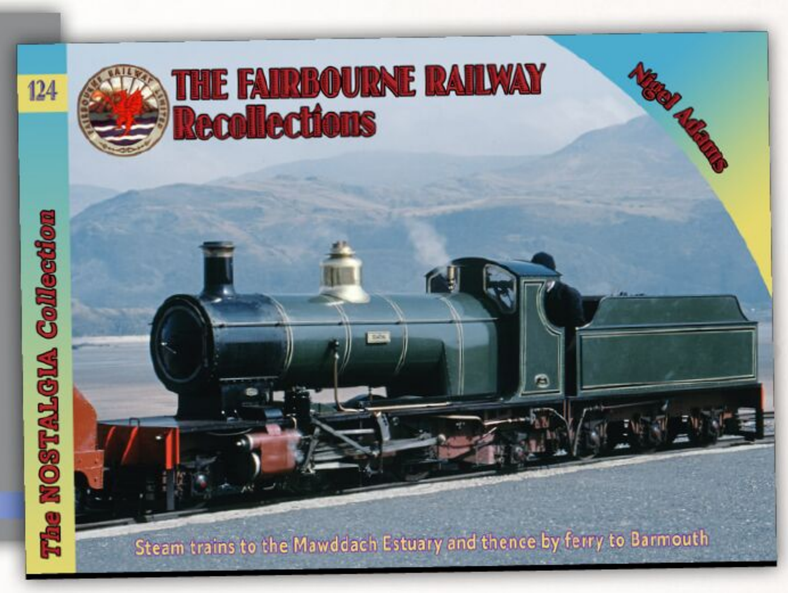
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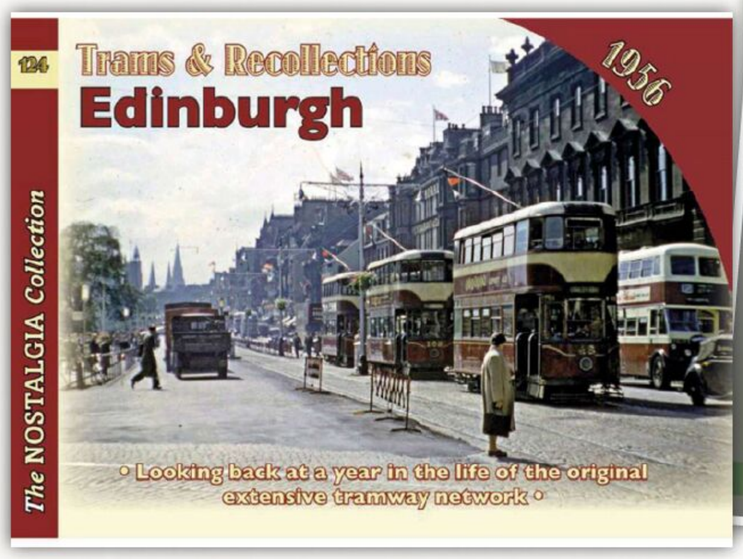
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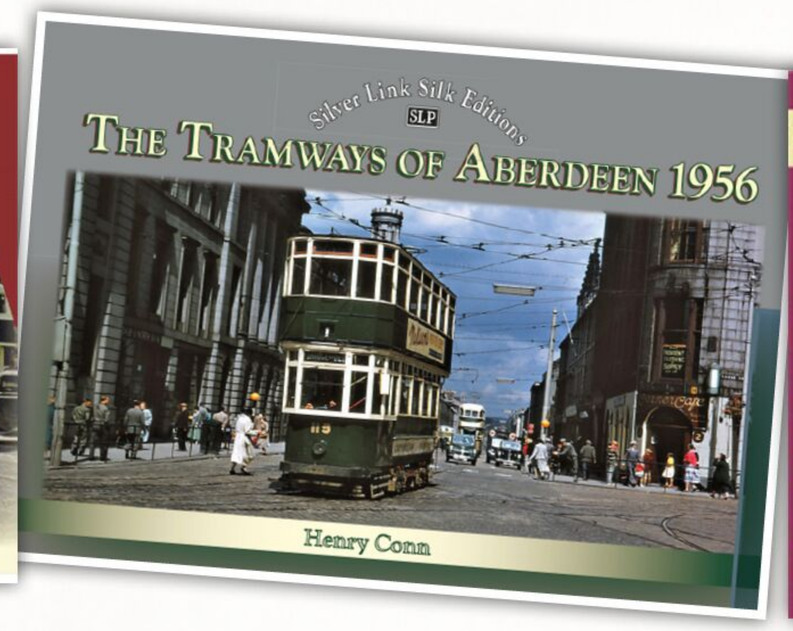
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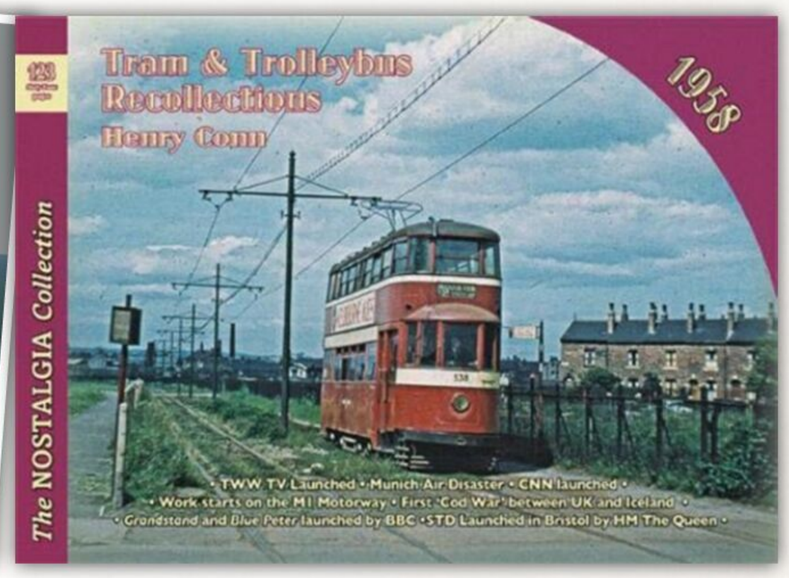
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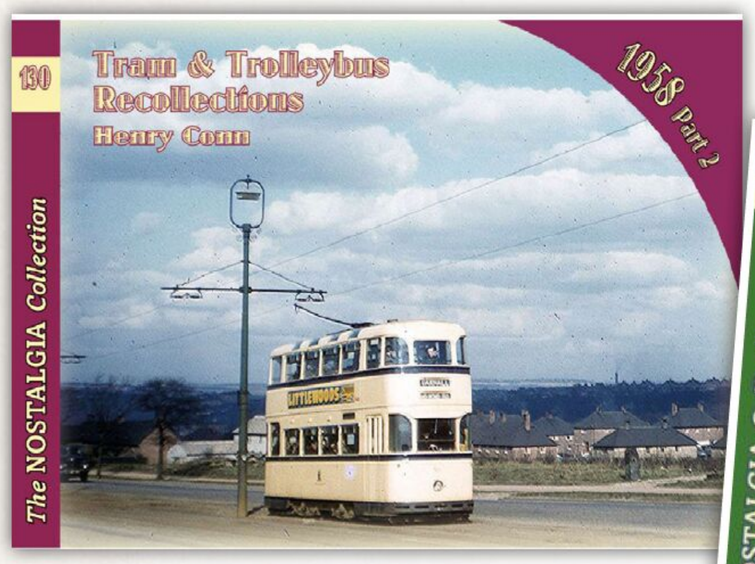
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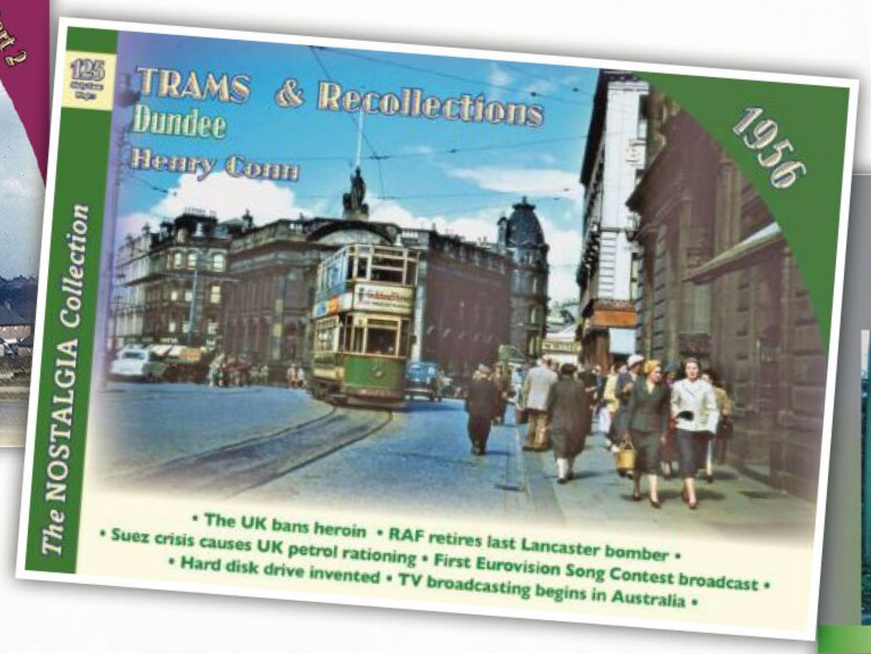
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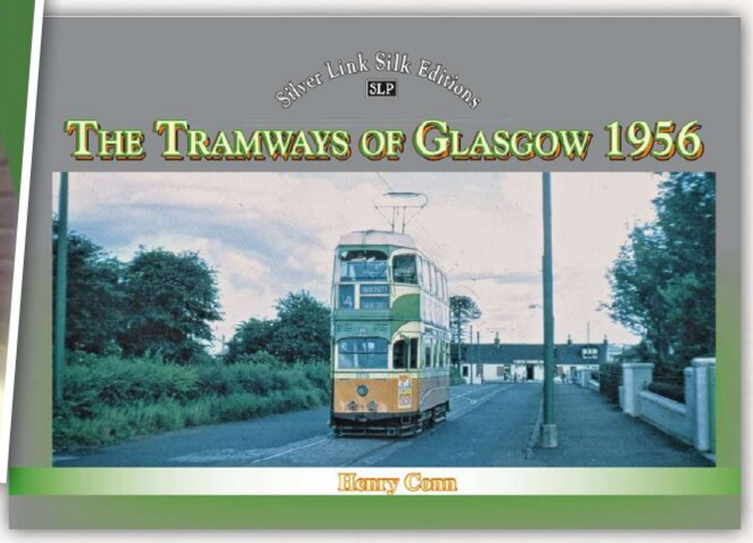
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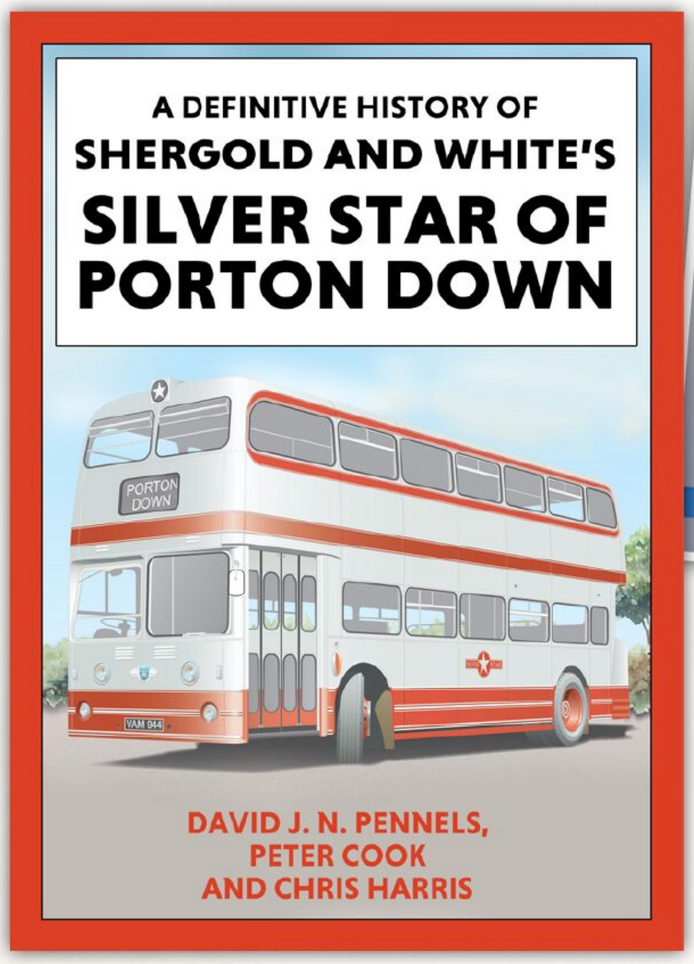
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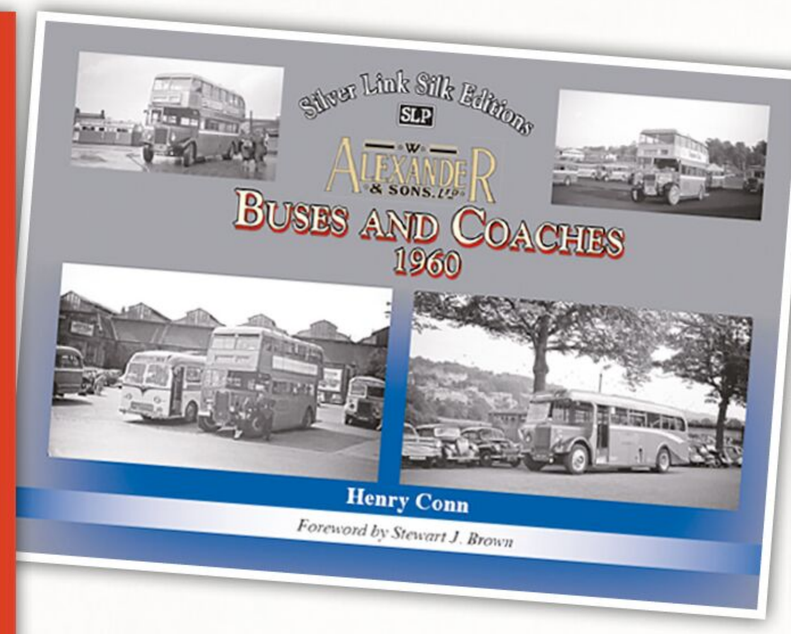
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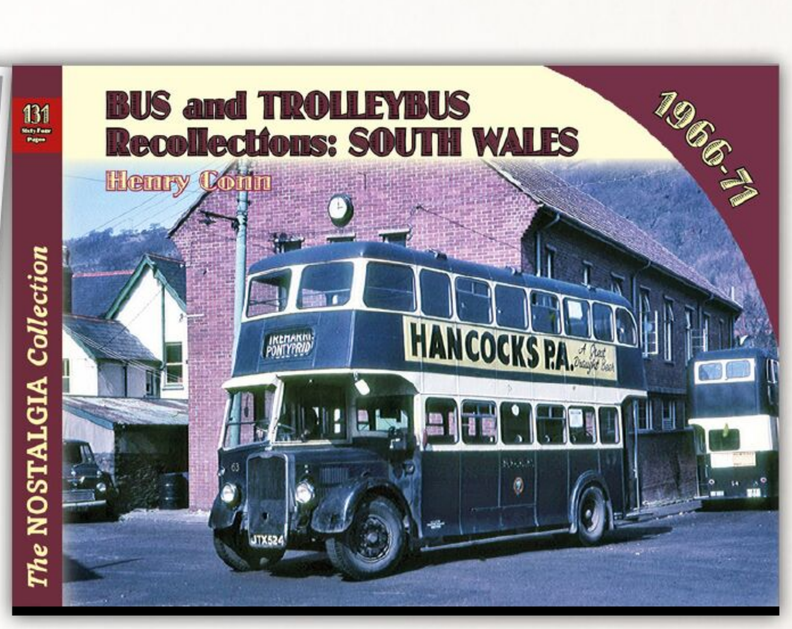
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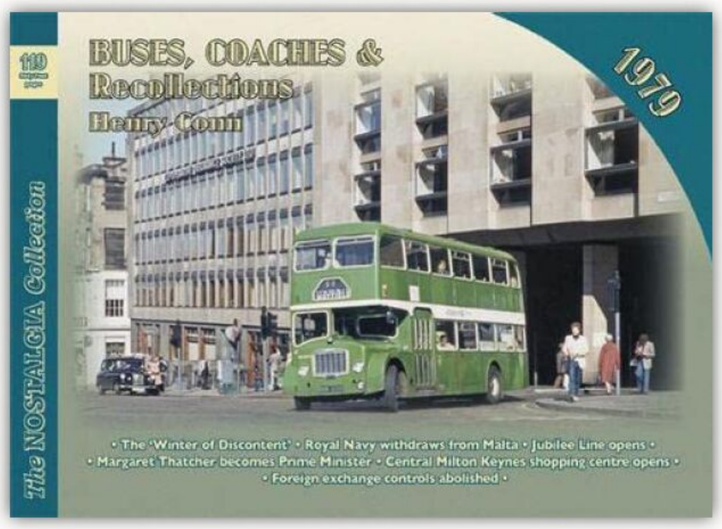
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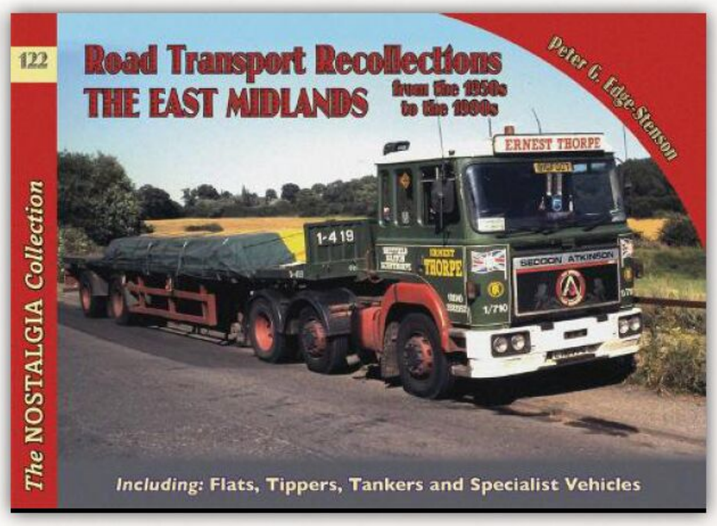
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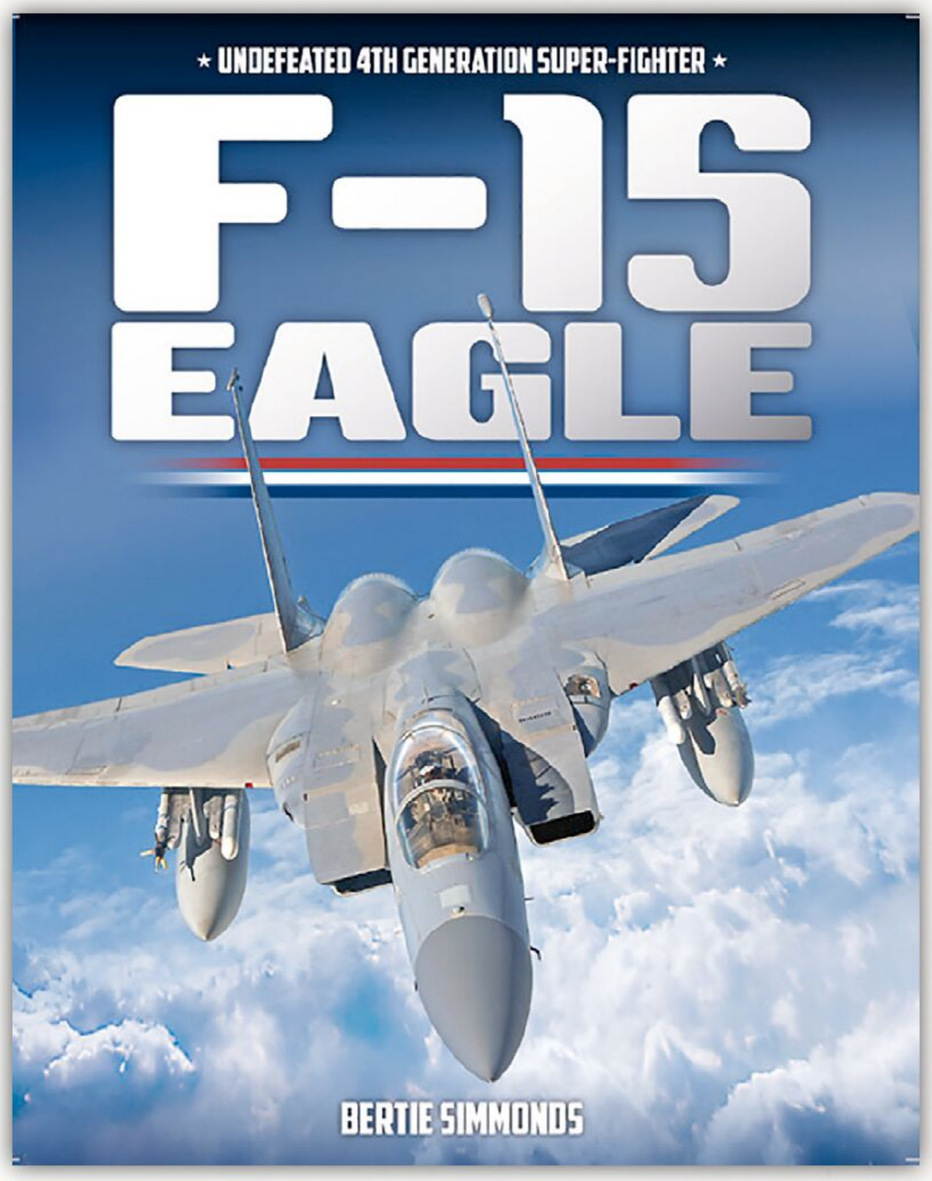


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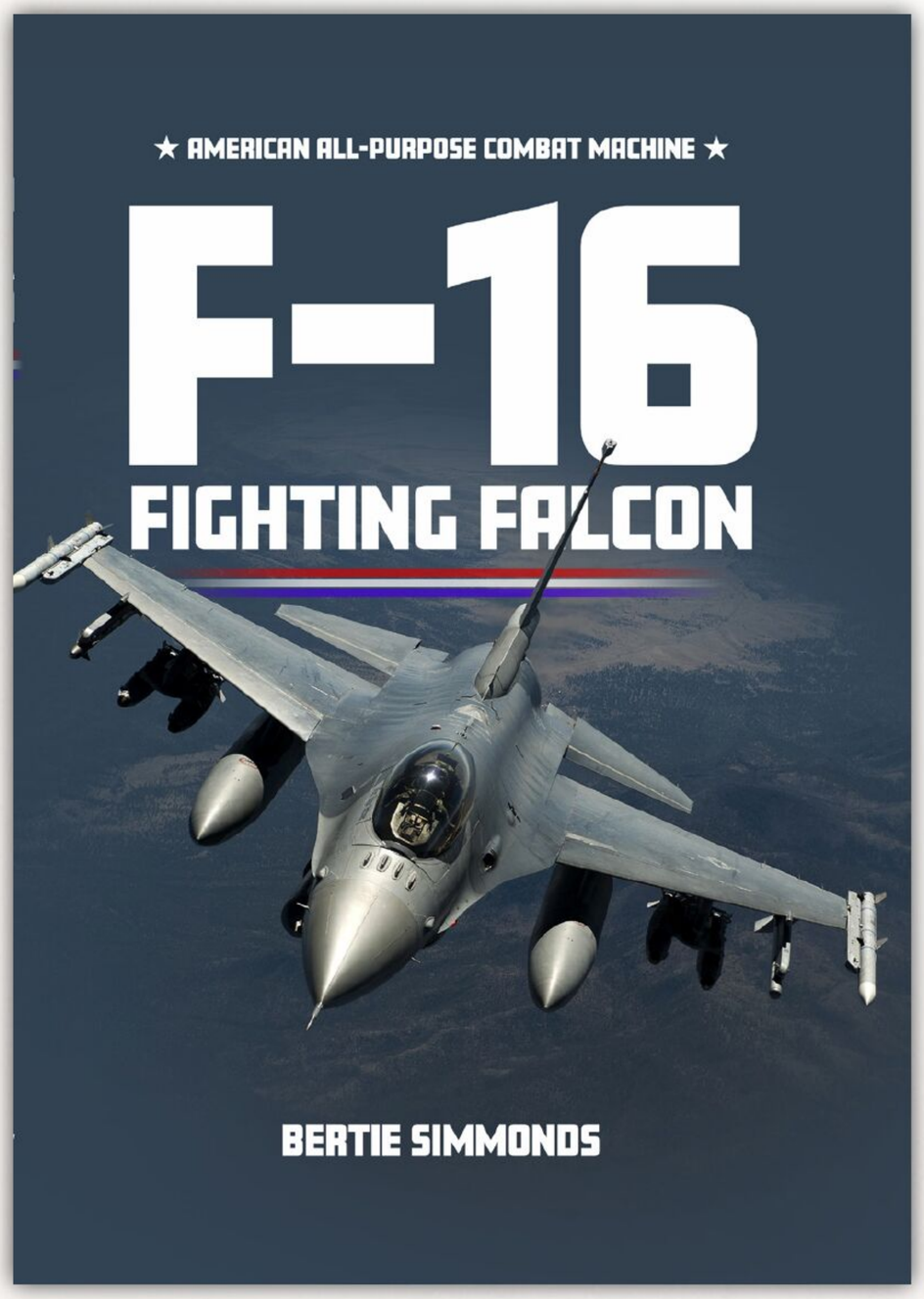


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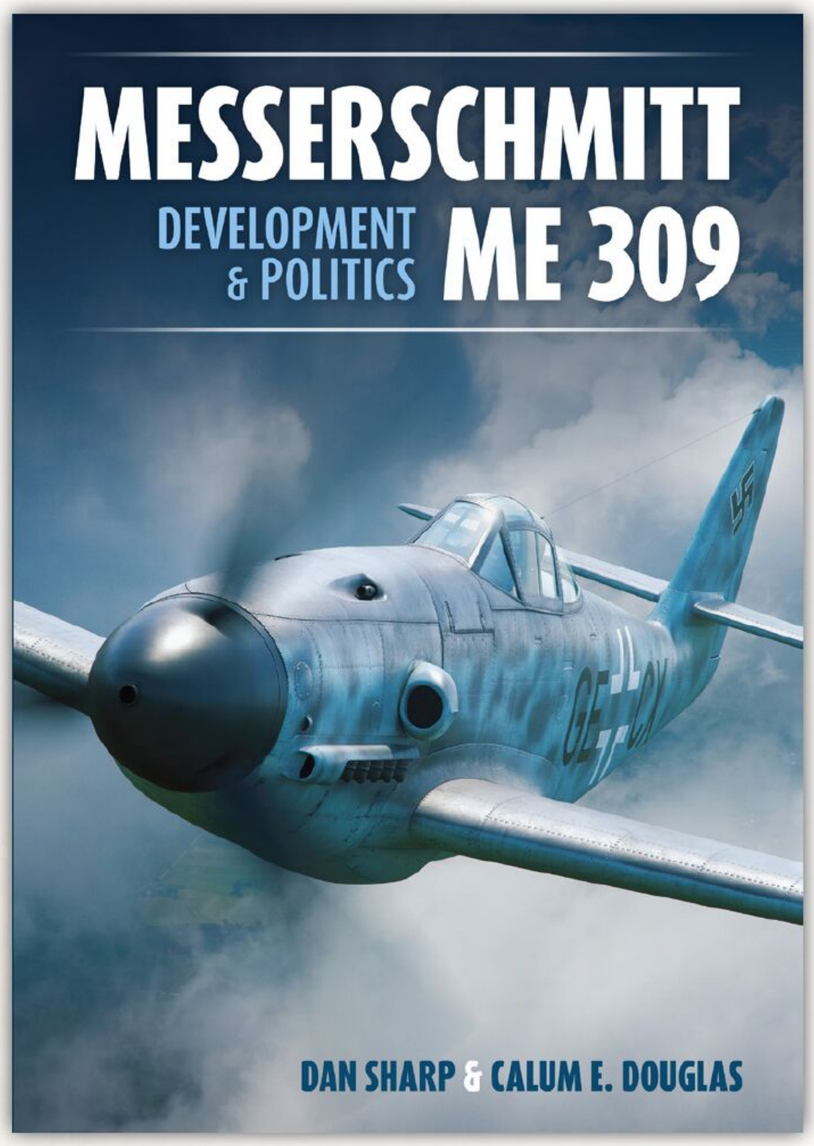
F-16 Fighting Falcon

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Messerschmitt Me 309 Development & Politics

CALUM E DOUGLAS/ DAN SHARP

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Chosen in 1941 to replace the Bf 109 as the Luftwaffe's standard front-line fighter, Messerschmitt's innovative Me 309 embodied a wealth of hard-won experience from the Battle of Britain. Its sturdy tricycle undercarriage would make landings safer, its capacious wings could accommodate much heavier weaponry, its retractable radiator would make it aerodynamically clean, its pressure cabin would allow high-altitude operations and its ejection seat would help preserve the Luftwaffe's most precious asset – its pilots.

All of this was made possible by a fuselage specifically tailored to accommodate Germany's newest and most powerful fighter engines: Daimler-Benz's DB 603 and Junkers' Jumo 213. Production of up to 800 Me 309s a month had been planned by May 1942 – more than all other German fighter types combined. Yet the type's advancement from prototype to full series production was reduced to a crawl, not by technical difficulties but by political in-fighting, deception and manipulation behind closed doors.

The Me 309 was set up to fail – doomed to join a lost generation of mid-war Luftwaffe combat aircraft alongside types such as Focke-Wulf's Fw 190 C and Junkers' Ju 288 – but why and by whom? Messerschmitt Me 309 Development & Politics, the first book ever written solely about this aircraft, sets out its full history – from its forerunners and commissioning to its eventual cancellation and sale to the Japanese military.

Using contemporary documents, authors Dan Sharp and Calum E. Douglas explain and explore the development and eventual failure of this fascinating 'secret project'.



The Secret Horsepower Race

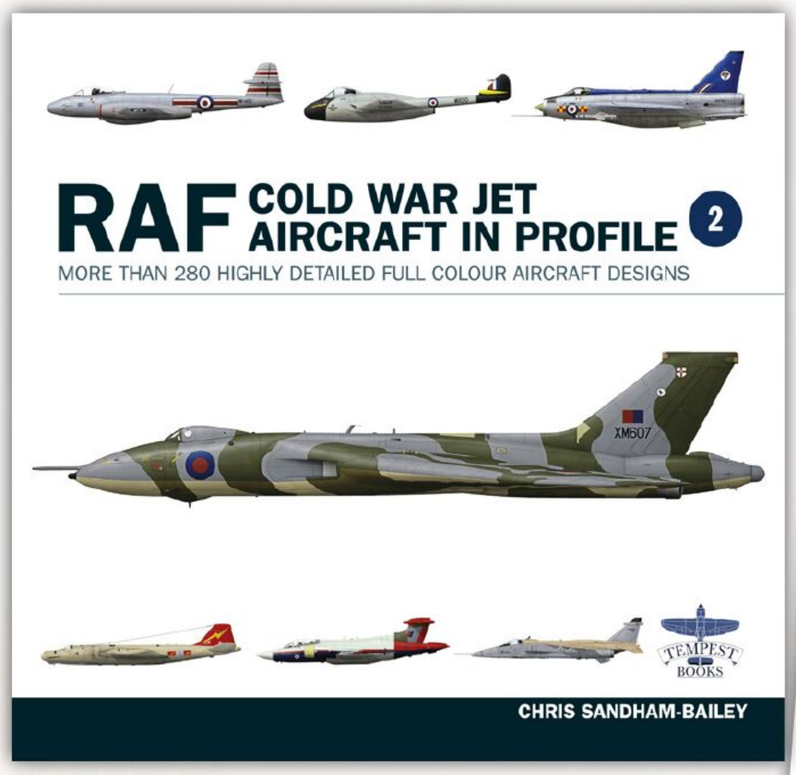
CALUM E. DOUGLAS

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ISBN: 9781911658504

The piston engines that powered Second World War fighters, the men who designed them, and the secret intelligence work carried out by both Britain and Germany would determine the outcome of the first global air war. Advanced jet engines may have been in development but every militarily significant air battle was fought by piston-engined fighters.

Whoever designed the most powerful piston engines would win air superiority and with it the ability to dictate the course of the war as a whole. This is the neverbefore- told story of a high-tech race, hidden behind the closed doors of design offices and intelligence agencies, to create the war's best fighter engine. Using the fruits of extensive research in archives around the world together with the previously unpublished memoirs of fighter engine designers, author Calum E. Douglas tells the story of a desperate contest between the world's best engineers – the Secret Horsepower Race.



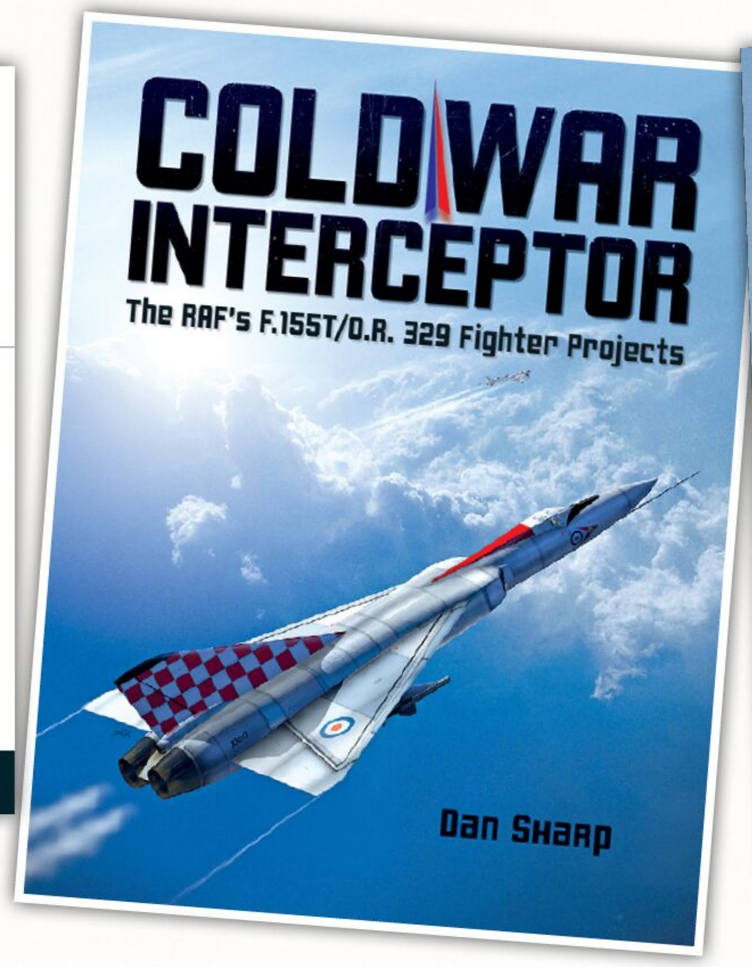
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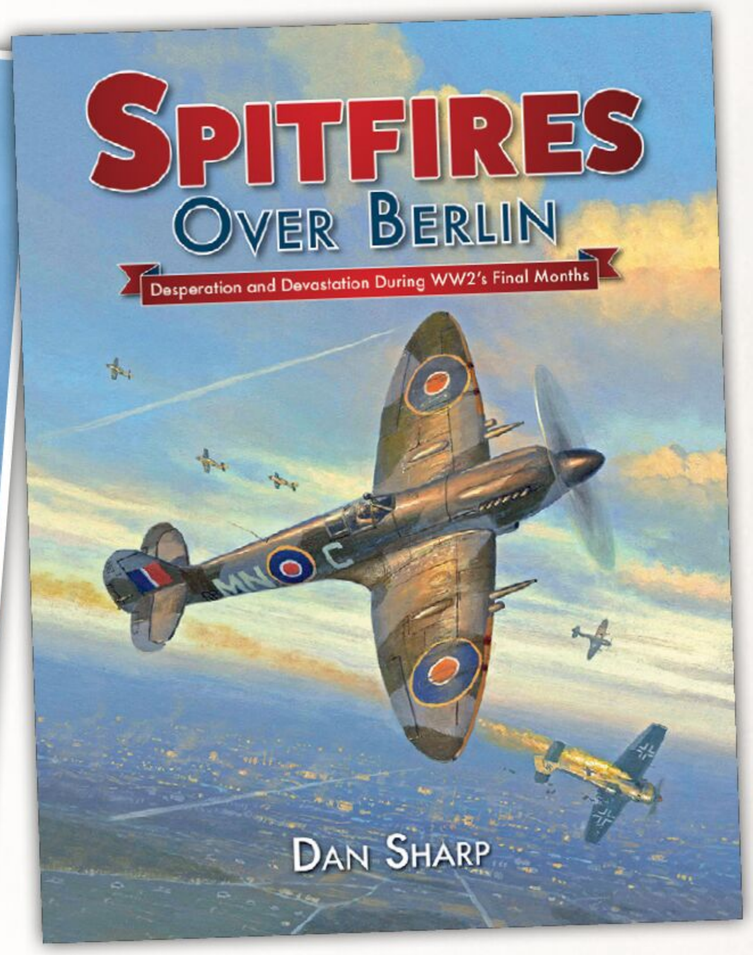
Cold War Interceptor

DAN SHARP

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Spitfires Over Berlin

DAN SHARP

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ISBN: 9781911658047

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) is a standing reminder of the heroism and sacrifice of countless British and Commonwealth aircrew who flew and fought during the Second World War.
Formed at RAF Biggin Hill on July 11, 1957, as the Historic Aircraft Flight, today the BBMF's incredible collection of aircraft includes six Spitfires, two Hurricanes, one of only two airworthy Avro Lancaster bombers in the world, a Douglas C-47 Dakota and two de Havilland Chipmunks.
The Flight's Second World War aircraft have survived against the odds to exist in flying condition today and this book charts each of their careers over the last seven decades or more. Author and illustrator Chris Sandham-Bailey has meticulously reproduced every known paint scheme worn by each of the aircraft – as well as gathering together an unrivalled collection of photographs to show how the appearance of the aircraft has changed. Never before have all of the BBMF aircraft liveries from the war's end to the present day been catalogued and illustrated in one publication. This book is a must for anyone with an interest in the BBMF aircraft and their histories.



Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Profile

CHRIS SANDHAM-BAILEY

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Messerschmitt Me 262: Development and Politics

DAN SHARP

AVAILABLE NOW Softback **£30.00**

ISBN: 9781911658276



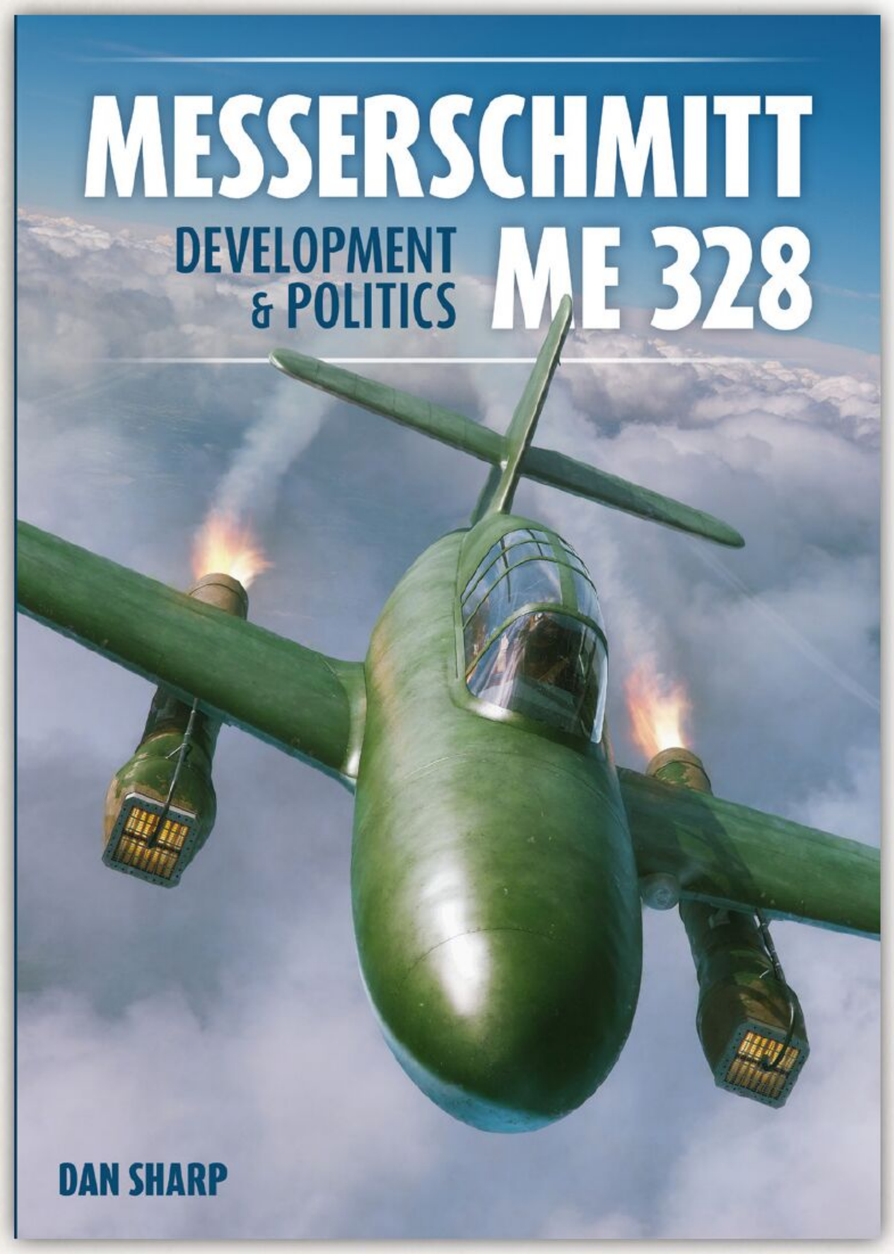
The first jet fighter to enter service and see combat anywhere in the world, the Messerschmitt Me 262 was a deadly technological marvel – yet it was also difficult to produce, dangerously unreliable and extremely vulnerable during takeoff and landing. Despite these flaws, its graceful swept wings, aggressive shark-like profile and undoubted combat abilities made it a legend. The aircraft underwent rapid development during its short front line career and numerous unusual variants were designed and produced. German Secret Projects: Messerschmitt Me 262 Versions examines unusual production models alongside one-offs and drawing board projects. More than 30 designs are detailed, including the Me 262 A-1a/U1-5, Me 262 A-1b, Me 262 A-2a/U1-2, Me 262 B-1a, Me 262 B-1a/U1, Me 262 B-2a, Me 262 C-1a-3a, Me 262 D-1, Me 262 E-1 and E-2, Me 262 HG I-III, Me 262 W, Me 262 Mistel, P 1099A-B, P 1100, Me 262 Interzeptor I-III, Aufklärer I-II and Schnellbomber I-III.

Messerschmitt Me 328 Development & Politics

DAN SHARP

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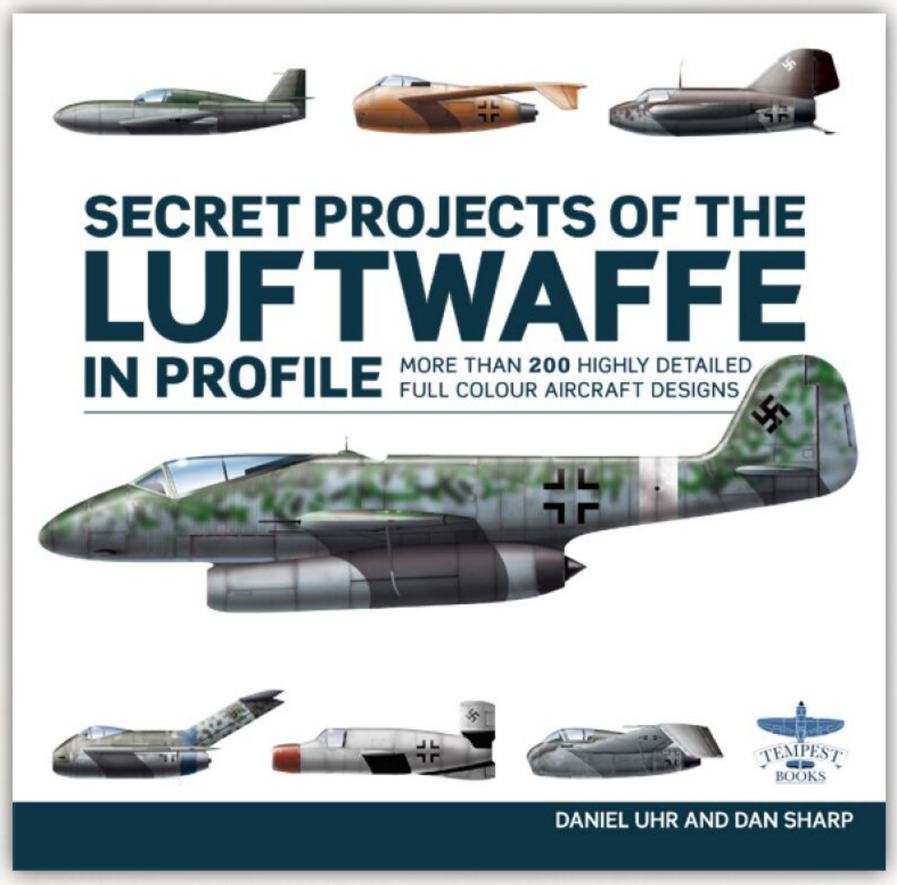
ISBN: 9781911704201



Conceived as a multirole combat aircraft based on promising early data from pulsejet tests, the Me 328 was arguably Messerschmitt's most controversial wartime project. Early projects imagined the compact machine as a fighter, a bomber, a reconnaissance platform or even a parasite aircraft – detaching from large bombers in mid-air to conduct operations before returning to the mothership. Enthusiasm was high, prototypes were built and extensively flight tested, with and without pulsejets, but it soon became clear that the airframe, the pulsejets and even the operational procedures mapped out for the Me 328 were proving far more troublesome than anticipated.

The type was cancelled – but then revived with a darker purpose: as a suicide bomber. Famous test pilot Hanna Reitsch and her cadre of fanatics chose the Me 328 as their vehicle for 'self-sacrifice' missions, where idealistic young pilots, plied with drugs to remove their inhibitions, would fly the aircraft, laden with bombs, directly into high-value Allied targets such as warships, bridges or command posts.

In Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe: Messerschmitt Me 328, German WW2 aircraft development specialist Dan Sharp presents the first ever book dedicated to the type and explores its history and purpose as far as surviving documentation allows.



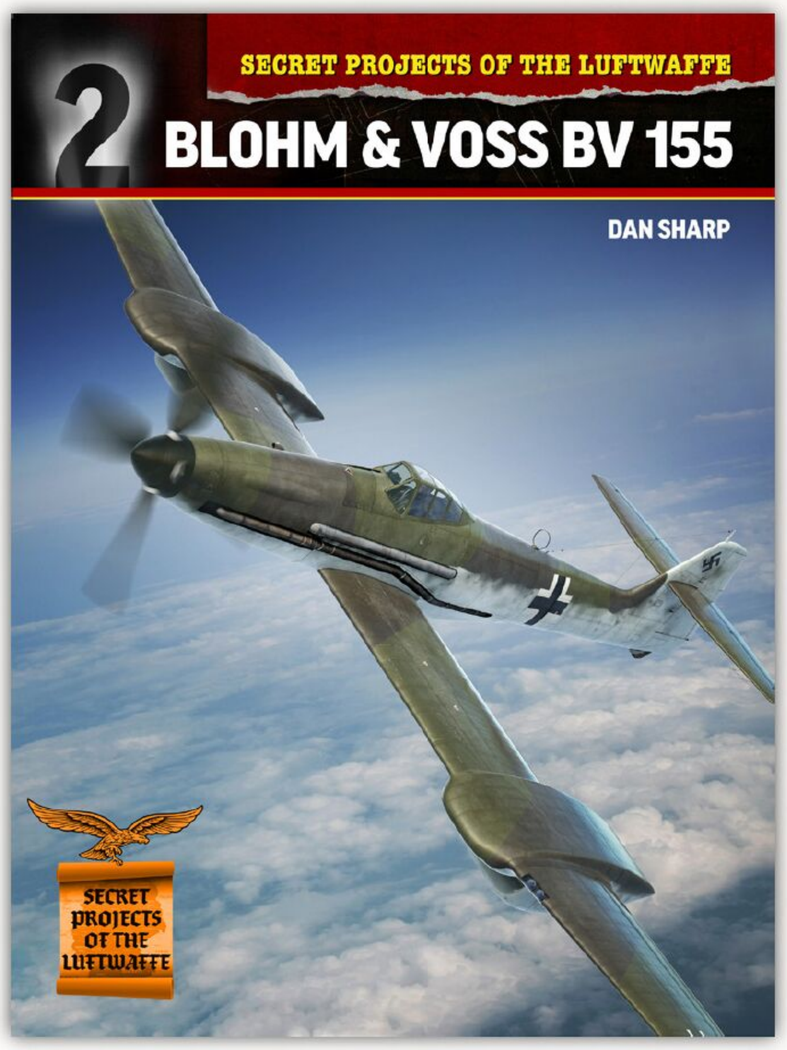
Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe in Profile

DANIEL UHR AND DAN SHARP

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Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe: Blohm & Voss BV 155

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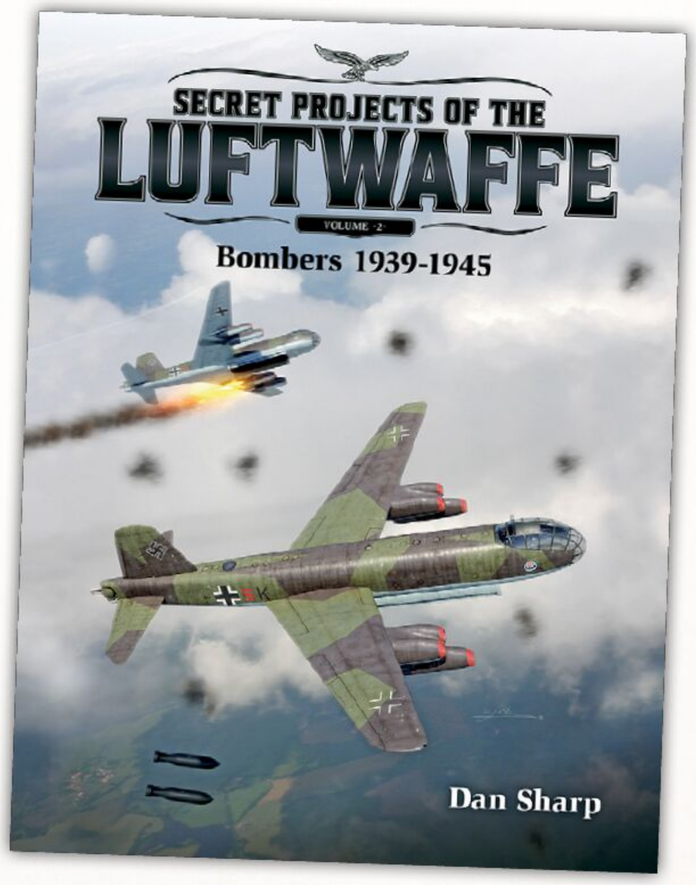
Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe: Heinkel He 162

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Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe - Vol 2 - Bombers 1939 -1945

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Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe: The Fastest Bomber

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HOTOL: Britain's Spaceplane

DAN SHARP

On sale: SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

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ISBN: 9781911704294



The start of Space Shuttle operations in 1981 marked a new era in spaceflight – with the five orbiters launching numerous satellites, interplanetary probes and the Hubble Space Telescope. But Shuttle was only partially reusable, its external fuel tank being expendable and its solid rocket boosters having to be recovered from the ocean and refurbished. Putting a satellite into orbit using a rocket was even more wasteful – with boosters such as Ariane being one-shot only. The costs were astronomical.

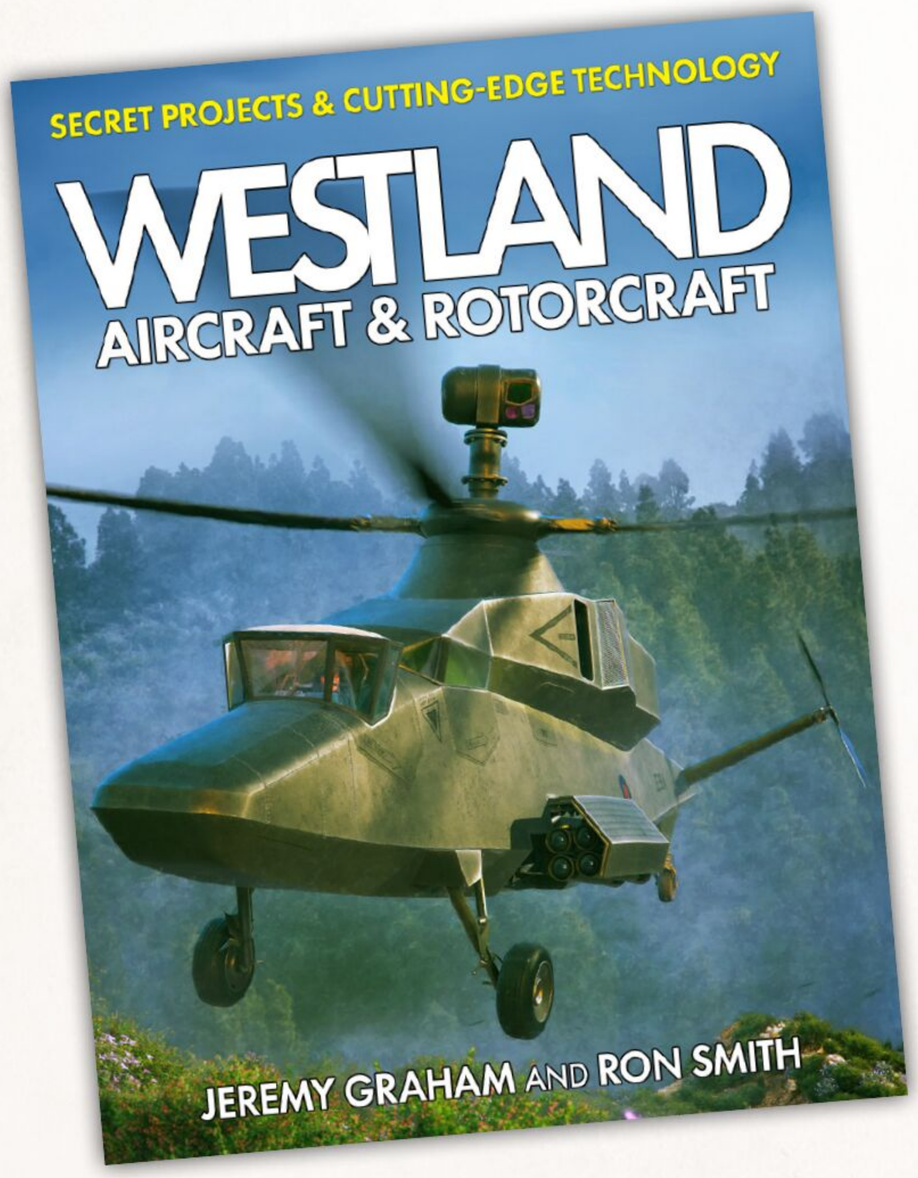
So when rocket scientist Alan Bond and aerospace engineer Bob Parkinson attended a British Interplanetary Society lecture on the proposed non-reusable Ariane 5 rocket in 1982, they began to discuss possible alternatives and concluded that the best solution was... an aerospaceplane.

The concept was deceptively simple – a vehicle able to take off from a conventional runway using airbreathing engines, switch to pure rocket propulsion at high altitude, fly up into space, complete its mission, then fly back down and land. Bond and Parkinson believed it could be done and HOTOL – HOrizontal Take-Off and Landing – was born.

By 1983 both British Aerospace and Rolls-Royce were backing the project. A broadcast on ITN's New at Ten in 1984 made HOTOL famous overnight, with the whole nation now aware of its existence. The Government agreed to match-fund the companies' financial commitment in 1985 and the work ramped up into high gear, with some of Britain's best engineers engaged in making this remarkable vehicle a reality.

Two years later, Minister of State of Trade and Industry Kenneth Clarke withdrew funding – signalling the beginning of the end of HOTOL, though there were attempts to revive it as an air-launched vehicle atop an Antonov An-225 as Interim HOTOL.

HOTOL: Britain's Spaceplane by Dan Sharp covers the full story of HOTOL's development in detail from beginning to end, drawing on the BAE Systems archive, the personal archives of the project's creators and extensive interviews with those involved. It includes new artwork plus hundreds of contemporary diagrams and illustrations, ranging from full colour brochures and publicity material – both used and unused – to previously unseen diagrams and schematics of HOTOL's numerous configurations.



Westland Aircraft & Rotorcraft: Secret Projects & Cutting-Edge Technology

DR RON SMITH AND JEREMY GRAHAM

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Half Century, Baby! - Fifty Years of the Grumman F-14 Tomcat

DAVID PARSONS, MADS BANGSO

AVAILABLE NOW Softback **£40.00**

ISBN: 9781911658924



Half Century, Baby! marks the 50th anniversary of the first two Grumman F-14A fleet squadrons (VF-1 and VF-2) receiving their first Tomcats during the summer of 1973. This lavishly illustrated volume tells the story of the aircraft from the beginning to its sunset of service with the US Navy in 2006; the longest operational career of any Naval Fighter to date. Preeminent Tomcat historian and former Tomcat RIO Dave Parsons explains the history of the F-14 decade by decade through the words of the aircrew who flew it. Artist Mads Bangsø brings his superlative illustration talents to the forefront with more than 120 F-14 profiles as well as highly accurate fully rendered recreations historical events featuring the Tomcat, highlighting the interesting markings of the aircraft (including helmets) as well as other aircraft associated with the Tomcat Community. The book features pertinent colour photography throughout, interwoven with the illustrations to complement the text.

Half Century Baby Volume II

DAVID PARSONS, MADS BANGSO.

On sale: SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Softback **£40.00**

ISBN: 9781911704232



Bomber Command Gardening Operations - The Invisible Campaign 1940-1945

JANE GULLIFORD LOWES

On sale: OCTOBER 18, 2024

Softback **£19.99** ISBN: 9781911704287



Aerial mining by RAF Bomber Command was a vital part of the Allied war effort – claiming far more tonnage of Axis shipping destroyed than direct attack by either Coastal or Bomber Command itself. Minelaying operations commenced in April 1940 and expanded dramatically as the war progressed, yet today this vital campaign and its wide-ranging achievements against Axis merchant vessels, Kriegsmarine ships and U-boats are virtually unknown. Invisible Campaigns, based on Air Ministry and Admiralty archival material, together with squadron records, veteran accounts and logbooks as well as contemporary publications and press releases, provides the most detailed account of Bomber Command's minelaying operations and their effects ever written.

Historian Jane Gulliford Lowes looks at the aims of the campaign and how it was implemented, together with the measure of its success and how it compared against the mining operations implemented by the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine. The role of Arthur 'Bomber' Harris in overseeing minelaying operations is assessed and the experiences of the men who delivered the campaign, particularly the hazards they faced, are explored.

Invisible Campaigns sheds new light on a little-discussed but important and ultimately highly successful aspect of Bomber Command and is a must-read for anyone interested the RAF's in wartime bombing operations.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Photos

LISA HARDING

AVAILABLE NOW Softback **£39.99**

ISBN: 9781911704249

This collection of more than 150 high-quality images offers a unique perspective on the historic aircraft and hard-working personnel of the unique Battle of Britain Memorial Flight based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire.

Photographer Lisa Harding has spent many years photographing the flight and now presents some of her finest work – chronicling winter maintenance, when the aircraft undergo extensive checks and repairs if required; out-of-season practice displays and some spectacular 'hot starts'. Ground crew can be seen performing their duties both indoors and out while pilot training provides views rarely seen by the public.

A collection of notable displays showcases memorable moments from the past decade, including the gathering of three Lancaster bombers at East Kirkby, the last two airworthy Lancasters flying together down the Derwent Valley, the RAF100 Buckingham Palace flypast and the Dambusters 80th anniversary.

The images are presented with commentary from the author, providing both background and technical details on how the shots were taken.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Photos offers a wealth of previously unseen views of the flight in incredible colour, detail and clarity – a must for any warbird enthusiast.



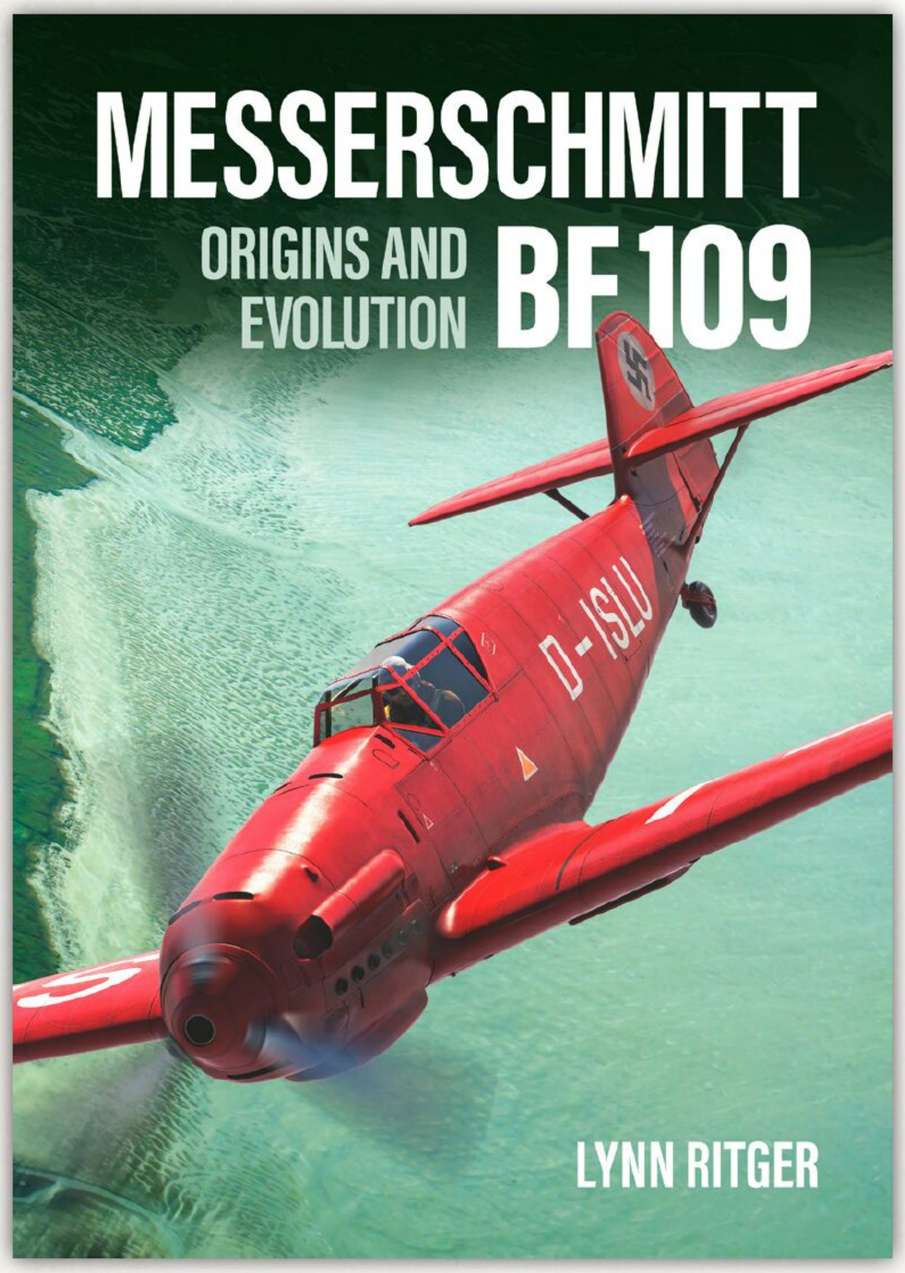
Messerschmitt Bf 109 Origins and Evolution

LYNN RITGER

On sale: SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

Softback **£39.99**

ISBN: 9781911704034



The most produced fighter aircraft in history, and arguably the single most important German aircraft of the Second World War, the Messerschmitt Bf 109 was unquestionably the most advanced fighter in the world when it first flew in May 1935. The scale of the development and production effort by Messerschmitt and its subcontractors over the next ten years to fulfil the operational needs of the Luftwaffe resulted in a seemingly endless variety of modifications to every aspect of the aircraft, from engines and weapons down to radios and tailwheels. Political gamesmanship and often heated discussions between Luftwaffe leaders and Messerschmitt company representatives, striving to keep their most successful product relevant in the face of ever-increasing Allied threats, also had a role to play in the developmental history of the Bf 109.

In Messerschmitt Bf 109 – Origins and Evolution, historian Lynn Ritger examines in detail the development of the Bf 109 family across its entire lifespan, from the first flight of the Bf 109 V1 to the last operational flight of a Spanish Hispano Ha 1112 M in 1965. Drawing upon original documentation from archival sources, including RLM meeting minutes and planning documents, intelligence reports, production records, factory handbooks, and front-line unit reports, Ritger traces the technical history of the Bf 109, illustrating prototype and service variant development, production batch differences, internal and external equipment and ordnance fitment, factory specific equipment and finish details, postwar variants developed in Czechoslovakia and Spain, and unrealised design proposals.



Fleet Air Arm Legends: Supermarine Seafire

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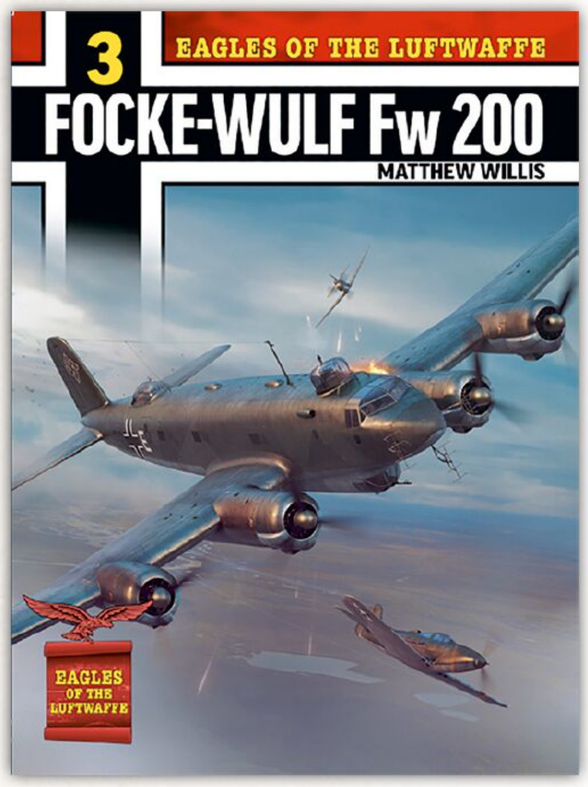
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Fleet Air Arm Legends: Hawker Sea Fury

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Eagles of the Luftwaffe: Focke-Wulf Fw 190 A, F and G

DAN SHARP

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Eagles of the Luftwaffe: DFS 230

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Snooperbase Waddington

MICHAEL HILEY

On sale: AUGUST 23, 2024
Softback **£16.99**
ISBN: 9781911704218



The air base at Waddington has been home to the RAF's most valuable surveillance, intelligence-gathering, communications and electronic warfare assets for more than three decades.

During the 1990s, Boeing E-3D Sentry AWACS and Hawker Siddeley Nimrod R1 signals intelligence platforms became familiar sights in the skies over Lincolnshire as ISTAR (Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) assets were brought together at RAF Waddington.

The Raytheon Sentinel R1 followed and more recently the base has become home to the RAF fleet of Beechcraft Shadow R1s, Boeing RC-135W Rivet Joints and General Atomics MQ-9 Reapers – as well as the Red Arrows aerobatic team and units experimenting with future drone technology.

Most recently, the base has received its first General Atomics Protector RG Mk 1s to take up the roles performed by the now 15-year-old Reaper fleet.

In Snooperbase Waddington, author and photographer Michael Hiley chronicle's the history of the RAF's ISTAR hub – including the aircraft flown, their known equipment and their operational use as far as the Official Secrets Act will allow.



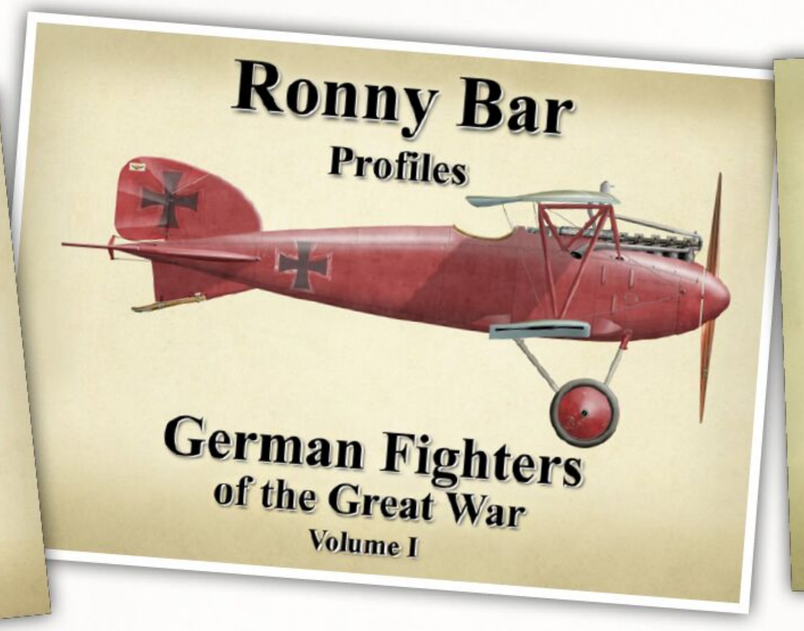
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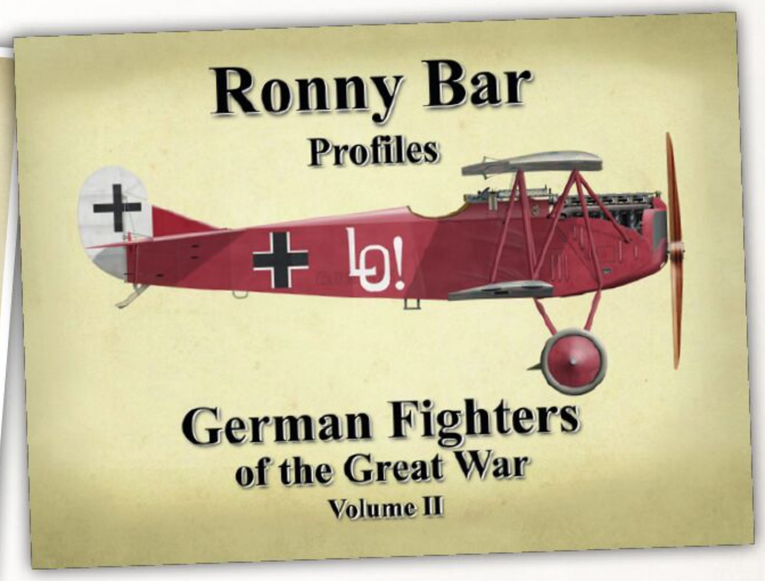
Ronny Bar Profiles - German Fighters of the Great War Vol 1

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Ronny Bar Profiles - German Fighters of the Great War Vol 2

RONNY BAR

AVAILABLE NOW

Softback **£40.00**

ISBN: 9781911704096

Supermarine's iconic Spitfire needs little introduction – its graceful lines and remarkable combat record during the Second World War speak for themselves. Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered Spitfire Mk Is fought their way through the Battle of Britain during the summer and autumn of 1940 with the Mk II, incorporating a more powerful Merlin, being introduced in the meantime.

As the war progressed, the Spitfire underwent an intensive programme of upgrades and enhancements as well as modifications to expand its capabilities. Unarmed Merlin-powered photo reconnaissance Spitfires flew hazardous missions over occupied Europe and Germany, while the Seafire, a navalised Spitfire, was operated from Royal Navy carriers in the Far East. In Europe, the Mk Is and IIs gave way to the Mk V and then the world-beating Mk IX before the last major Merlin-powered Spitfire, the Mk XVI, was introduced. While some later marks of Spitfire would receive Rolls-Royce Griffon engines, it is undoubtedly the Merlin variants that bore the brunt of the action and which are the most fondly remembered today.

In Ronny Bar Profiles – Spitfire The Merlin Variants, renowned profile artist Ronny Bar presents an exciting and colourful selection of more than 350 highly detailed artworks, most created specifically for this book, showcasing the full range of Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered variants from the original Type 300 prototype, K5054, to the late-war Seafires. Aircraft of RAF aces including Robert Stanford Tuck, Alan Deere, 'Sailor' Malan and Douglas Bader are included as well as colour schemes worn by Spitfires in service with Allied forces around the world. Bar's love of Spitfires clearly shines through in his incredible attention to historical accuracy throughout this fascinating and illuminating collection.



Ronny Bar Profiles - Spitfire the Merlin Variants

RONNY BAR

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ISBN: 9781911704164



Boeing B-47 Stratojet and B-52 Stratofortress: Origins and Evolution

SCOTT LOWTHER

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Hardback **£35.00**

ISBN: 9781911658764

Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-31 Foxhound

SERGIO SANTANA

On sale: AUGUST 30, 2024

Hardback **£25.00**

ISBN: 9781911704140

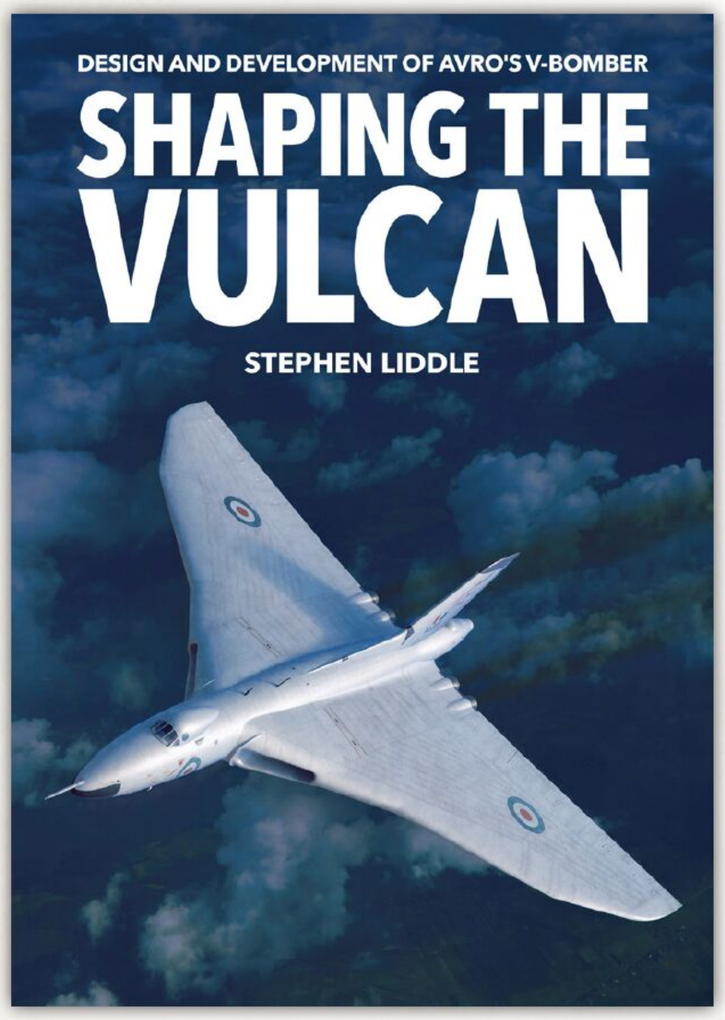
With a top speed approaching Mach 3 and equipped with both powerful sensors and air-to-air weaponry, the two-seater MiG-31 interceptor has proven to be one of the Cold War's most formidable survivors – finally coming into its own during the Ukraine War. Development began in 1975 with a design based on that of the MiG-25 Foxbat and progressed to the point where, although it bore a superficial similarly to its forebear, it was largely a new aircraft. The MiG-31, NATO reporting name Foxhound, entered service in 1981 and more than 500 were built.

Several dozen examples remain in service today with both the Russian and Kazakh air forces – and throughout 2022 and 2023 Foxhounds using R-37M long-range AAMs operated virtually unopposed against Ukrainian fighters, which lacked the speed, range, altitude and firepower to engage them. MiG-31s have also provided a valuable platform from which to launch Kh-47M2 Kinzhal hypersonic missiles against Ukraine while remaining within Russian airspace.

Author Sergio Santana details the aircraft's early development, its long operational history and its most recent operations in this all-new look at one of the world's deadliest combat aircraft.

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COVER COMING SOON



Shaping the Vulcan

STEPHEN LIDDLE

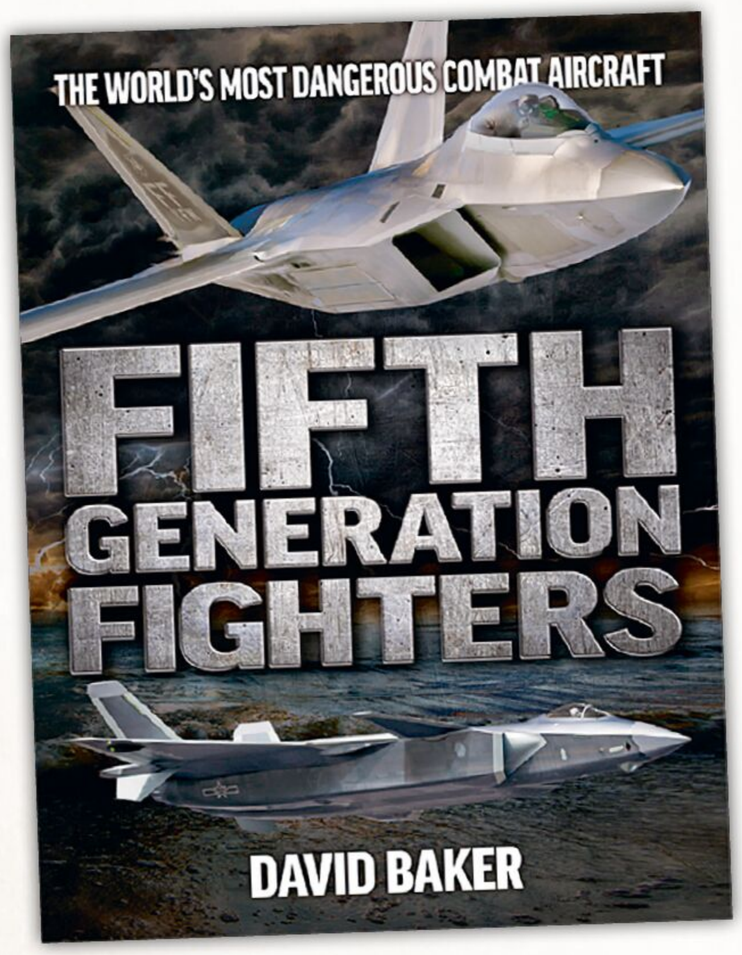
On sale: AUGUST 30, 2024 Hardback **£35.00**

ISBN: 9781911704072

The Avro Vulcan is one of the most striking aircraft ever made – its enormous wing stretching back from an improbably thick leading edge marked by cavernous wing root engine intakes. Perhaps even more incredible, its first flight was made just over ten years after the introduction of the piston-engined Lancaster during the Second World War. Within a decade, technology had taken a giant leap from straight-winged slow-moving conventional bombers to this vast delta designed to carry a nuclear payload.

But what led to such a radical configuration and what was the technology that enabled such an ambitious design? What possessed Avro to offer the Air Ministry such a futuristic aircraft and what prompted the Ministry to approve its development and entry into service?

Formula 1 racing team aerodynamicist and Vulcan to the Sky trustee Stephen Liddle presents a full history of the Vulcan's development and assesses the technological and engineering breakthroughs which underpinned the construction of this unparalleled aircraft.

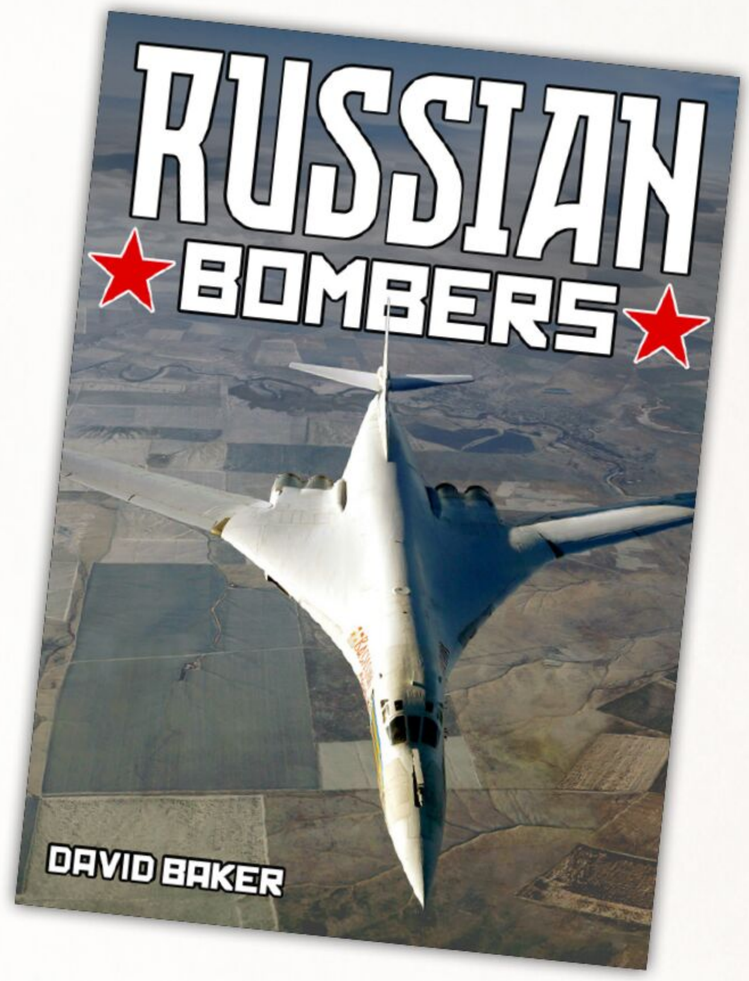


Fifth Generation Fighters

DAVID BAKER

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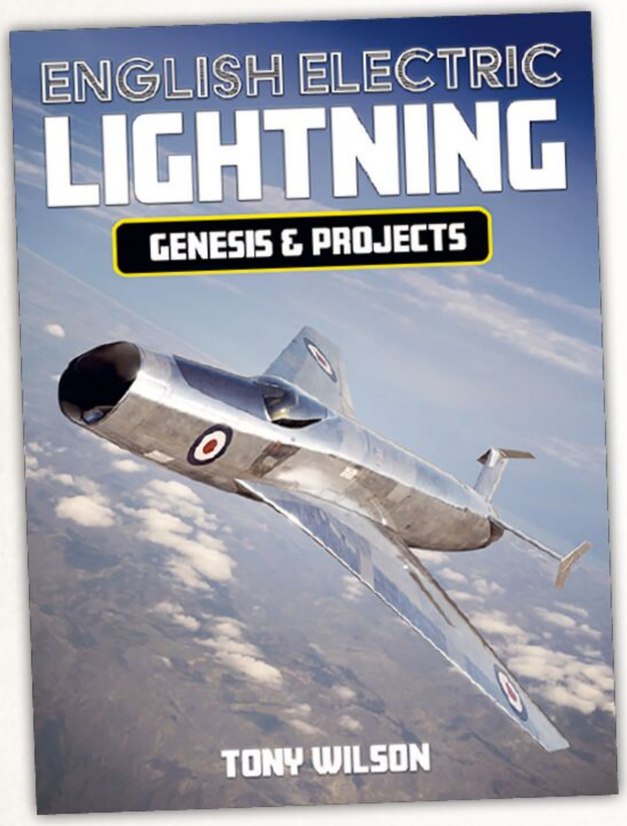


Russian Bombers

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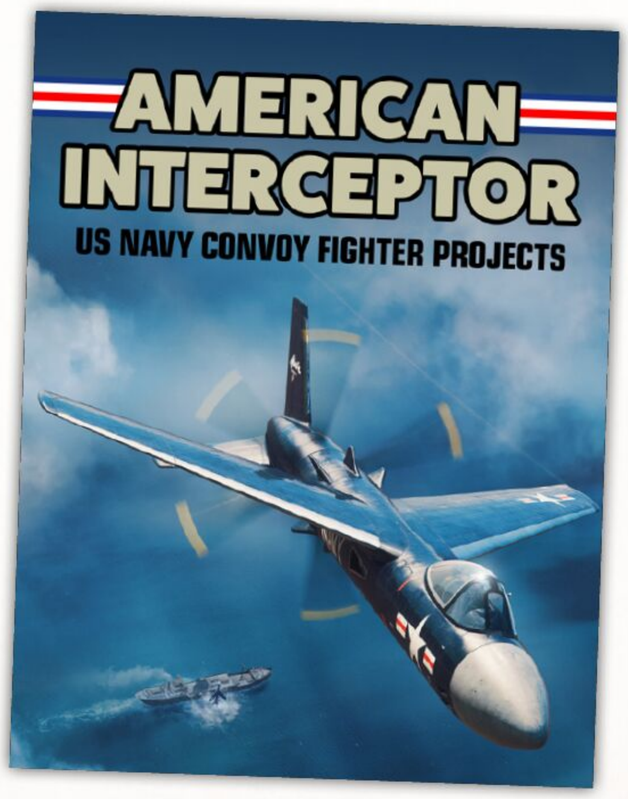
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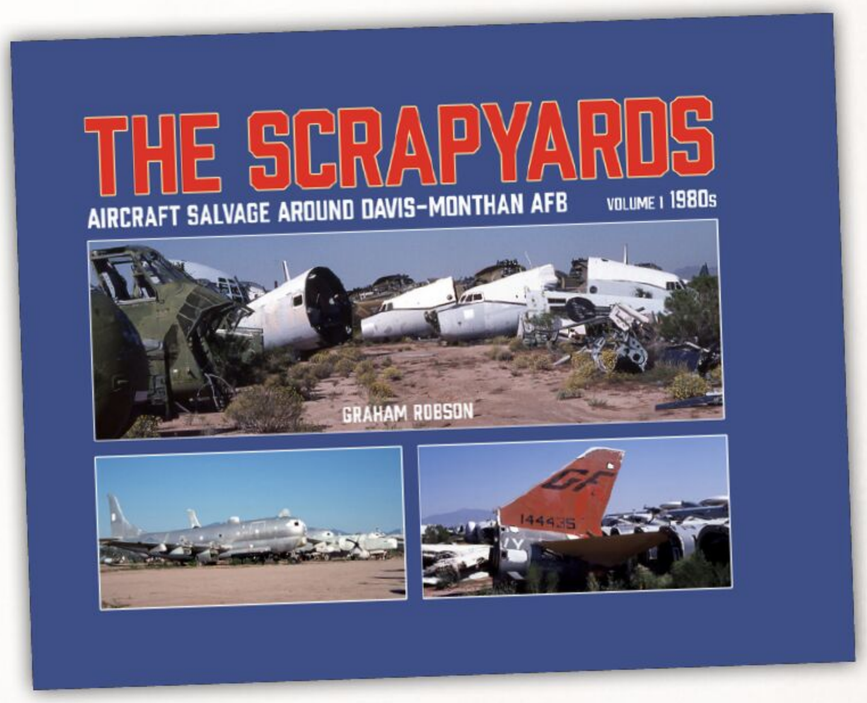
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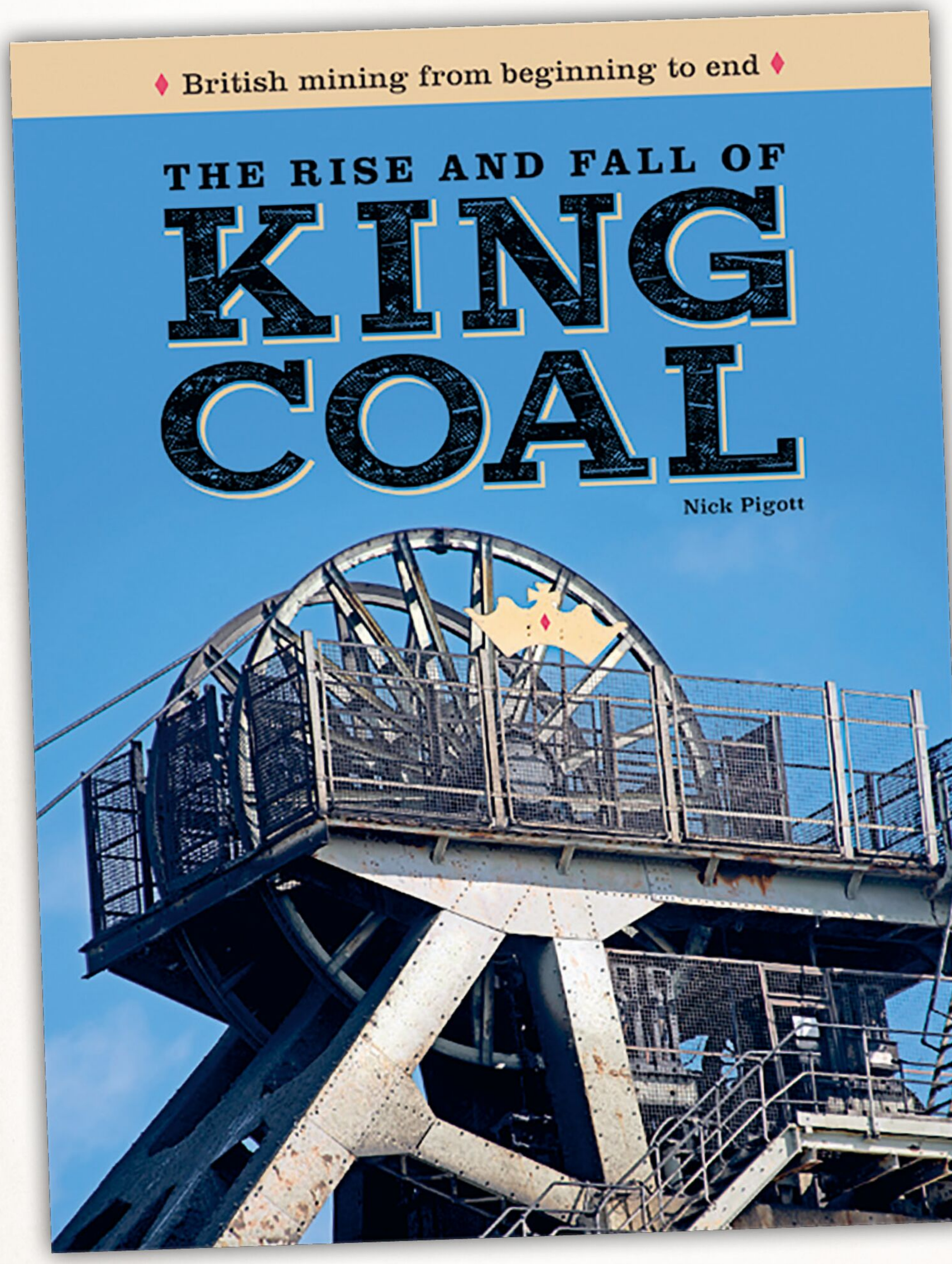
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