

York Railway Museum

Relics train from Stewarts Lane Depot to York on April 12th 1975.

With the building of the new railway museum at York the task of stocking it with relics from the past began. To this end a number of 'specials' ran from London carrying the large number of saved items ranging from locomotives and rolling stock, signalling and so on down to small items such as trophies and drawings. Running these specials was a problem in itself because it had to be done at the weekend in-between normal traffic. Avoiding main line running was not always possible and this gave logistical problems because the special had a 25 mph speed limit. So for some of the way this cumbersome train ran main line with stops built in to allow for passing traffic. Elsewhere the running was on freight lines which meant that it would be nearly an all day job to get from London to York. Starting from Stewarts Lane Depot was another hindrance because that was on the Southern and the train needed to get onto the Midland lines.

My role, as a headquarters rolling stock inspector, was to make sure that the wagons got through without running into problems, particularly 'hot boxes' as detaching vehicles would not be acceptable. The presence of a carriage with Transport Police in it hinted at the valuables that were being transported.

Apologies for picture quality

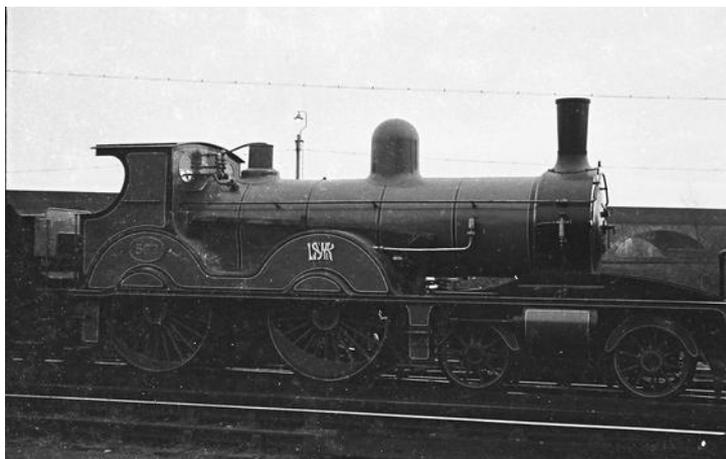
I had forgotten that I had taken pictures and came across the negatives quite recently. Alas my storage techniques seem to have failed me because on scanning them I found they were a bit 'noisy' from dust. Nevertheless I include them here for interested parties. Sometime in the future I may get chance to rescue them.



This picture shows the train being prepared at Stewarts Lane Depot prior to departure.

Behind the escort coach is the unmistakable outline of a LNER A4 Pacific which is, of course, Mallard. Preservation of the world's fastest recorded steam locomotive was inevitable but at the time it was envisaged that it would become a static display. Who would have thought back then that so many steam locomotives would not only be saved but would return to active duty.

London and South Western Railway locomotive number 563, (right), is evocative of the golden age of railways with its beautifully proportioned lines. Oh to have been a train spotter then!





Fortunately railway locomotives are well balanced weight wise and little Boxhill was sitting comfortably on this Flatrol WX wagon.

Uneven loading on wagons can adversely affect the performance of the wheel axle box bearings leading to a hot axlebox. That would have been the last thing I would have wanted. The wagon was allocated to the Hither Green Breakdown fleet so I hoped that it had been well maintained.



We are under way and on LMR rails after crossing London and leaving it behind.



The first inspection stop. Why is Mallard getting all the adulation whilst I am slogging up and down the train checking axleboxes, suspension and brakes?



I am not the only one getting my hands dirty!



Mind you, some people have time for pictures!



Picture, left -The police escort stretch their legs past Boxhill.

Picture, right – on the Edwalton line. Yet another inspection stop.

