



British Railways Standard 4MT 80104

The life histories of 80104 and sister locomotive 80078 have been inextricably linked throughout. Both engines were built at Brighton works, both were allocated to the London, Tilbury & Southend section of the Eastern Region from new, and both were later transferred to the Western and London Midland Regions to finish their working lives in North Wales. They even had a common resting place at the Barry Island Scrapyard of Woodham Brothers, a destiny they shared with most former



L.T.&S. Standard Tanks. However, these two in particular have continued to enjoy a common existence, having both been saved from Barry by the Southern Steam Trust, only to have their restorations finally completed by Southern Locomotives Ltd.

This engine was part of Brighton lot 6167, made up of 14 engines, again for the Eastern Region, and it emerged on 31st March 1955 at a cost of £18,206. Just like 80078, its first shed was Plaistow, (33A), in East London from where it worked the busy commuter trains between Fenchurch Street and Shoeburyness on the former London, Tilbury and Southend Railway. It remained at Plaistow until November 1959 when the shed closed. Its next allocation was Tilbury, (33B), where it remained until the electrification of the L.T.&S. lines in June 1962.

Following electrification of the L.T.&S., many of the older locomotives on the line were withdrawn but the Standard class 4 engines, being almost new were stored at Old Oak Common whilst their fate was decided.



Transfer to the Western Region was effective from 15th July 1962, with its first allocation shown as Old Oak Common, (81A), where it may have been used on empty coaching stock workings out of Paddington. Relocation to Croes Newydd, (89B), took place during November 1962 and absorption into London Midland stock was from, 1st January 1963. A final move to Machynlleth, (89C), and its sub-shed at Aberystwyth, took place in March 1963 and the shed code was

changed from 89C to 6F on 9th September 1963. No.80104 was finally withdrawn from Machynlleth on 24th July 1965.

The locomotive's first overhaul was at Stratford in September 1956, followed by a heavy overhaul at Darlington works during May 1958. After the transfer of its maintenance to Crewe on 17th June 1962, 80104 received a heavy general repair at Crewe dated 8th December 1962.

Withdrawal from Service

No.80104 arrived at Barry Island in January 1966. Her stay was several years longer than 80078's, finally departing in September 1984 to join her sister, having also been bought by the Southern Steam Trust. She was cosmetically restored and placed on display in the headshunt at Swanage where she remained for a number of years. The locomotive was sold to a group of supporters in January 1988 when it became obvious that her restoration would not be possible in the near future.

The locomotive was moved to the former Swindon Works Weighbridge for restoration in November 1989 where she joined 257 Squadron which was currently undergoing restoration. Work commenced alongside 257 Squadron and the locomotive was dismantled during the summer and autumn of 1990.



Once 257 Squadron had been completed the owners were asked to vacate the Swindon works site which meant finding another location to continue the restoration work. Fortunately the Avon Valley Railway at Bitton became a new home to 80104 in January 1991 and a small team kept the restoration work progressing for the next few years.

As a result of both the opening of Herston Works and the negotiation of a financial package to speed her rebuilding, 80104 returned to Swanage during August and October 1995. Various major milestones were passed during the following year including re-wheeling. The side-tanks and bunker were rebuilt at Bitton and the boiler was refurbished by a specialist firm. By autumn 1996, the locomotive was beginning to take shape and in March 1997 the boiler passed its hydraulic test and then its steam test. Both of these tests required the boiler to be out of the frames.

Returning to Service

80104 travelled to Norden from Herston Works on a low-loader on 10th April 1997 and was towed down the line to Swanage shed for the remaining jobs to be completed, entering service later in 1997. The locomotive is now one of the Swanage-based fleet and sees regular service on the line between Swanage and Norden.

Locomotive Details:

Class: British Railways Standard 4MT

Owner: Southern Locomotives Ltd

Technical Details:

- Wheel arrangement: 2-6-4
- Boiler pressure: 225 lbs per square inch
- Driving wheel diameter: 5' 8"

Last update: 7 December 2011

All photographs courtesy Andrew PM Wright