

MAVERICK 43007 I2D - 1966

Years ago when I was a young Engine Cleaner at Workington M.P.D. a distant outpost of the Furness Railway, MC Rly, CKP Rly, LNWR, LMS and finally B.R.

I was on my way to work one winter's morning in November to Book on at 04.00 I normally walked to work via the road from Casson Road Mossbay to the Loco Shed but that morning I decided to walk down the Line. I made my way to Derwent Haematite Iron WORKS signal box which was closed at night so I climbed over the fence and set off towards Workington No 1 Box and the Motive Power Depot. Approximately 2 miles away. No 1 Box is open all night because of shunting and the moves of the M.P.D.

The route it-self is facing the up main on your left and a loop line and Solway colliery with sidings on your right with the Steele Works 200yds or so on your left together with the down main and up main, down slow and up slow and down loop(incidentally

95% of B.R. Rails are made here) it's an eerie walk in the dark except for occasionally fire works brilliance of slag tipping from near by Workington Steel Works and with a very hard frost it's quite spooky.

When suddenly I heard a sound of intermittent steam from an engine cylinder drain cocks and there coming towards me like a ghost train at a slow speed, with a red headlight on the front buffer beam of which I thought was strange as the engine was travelling on the right line in the proper direction towards Whitehaven 8 miles away, I called to the train crew as she glided passed like the Mary Celeste of the rail's but there was no sign of life, nor a friendly glow from the firebox to stab the dark chill air, she was what footplate men call a cold engine, once that as just lighted up with very little steam in her anyhow it was such a cold night I thought the crew must be huddled up near the face plate to keep warm so thinking no more of it I hurried on towards the Loco shed a mile or so away.

When I arrived there all hell was let loose on seeing me the Shed Foreman Mr Tom Watson shouted have you seen 43007 meaning B R Mogul Class 4mt built by Ivatt with high cab and double chimney she as done a runner and left her footplate crew behind when I told him what I had seen he took off at great speed the fastest I have ever seen him move shouting she will never get round Harrington Station Viaduct bridge and made for a telephone .The viaduct as a 15mph speed limit on it because of a sharp curve and also 60 feet

Above the road way and a falling grade on approached if she managed to get round there, there is still a 20mph Permanent speed Limit along the face of the cliff with the ranging sea on her right and a good chance of running into a rock fall the line as to be searched every morning before the first Passenger train of the day by a light locomotive because of the danger, epically in bad weather the ganger also has to patrol the line from Parton. The Forman by now had reached a telephone and rang Whitehaven Bransty No 1 signal box 8 miles away the intermediate signal box's were all switched out at night anyhow she would take no notice of any signal's as luck would have it we had a night shunter at Whitehaven Preston Street Warehouse in the shape of 47604 tank engine and she was dispatched all haste towards

Workington on the down line to intercept the runner way with driver Tom Ousby and Fleck Tunstell on board she was spotted near Parton Station going a fine old pace, she had to be stopped or derailed at Whitehaven before she got onto the single line tunnel, of which is blocked every night after the last train from Whitehaven Corkickle as gone thro for Engineers work s train wagons to be placed in the tunnel. A quick switch into reverse by 7604 as the run away passed and took off in pursuit running wrong line towards Whitehaven, no time for wrong line order's forms here, drawing along side of 43007 near the distant signal for Whitehaven Bransty the fireman Flec Tunstell jumped aboard and so ended her escape, she had made about 150psi of steam and the water was in the top of the glass, she had ran about 7 miles and good for another 27miles.It transpired that the driver was preparing her, put her in full forward gear to reach all the valve gear for oiling then when to the store's for more oil, stayed awhile around the store keeper M'kays fire to thaw out as Motive Power Depot's are cold draughty place's in winter and in his absent made good her escape, the regulator blowing thro a bit and the steam raiser jamming the boiler solid with water, then she would be ok all night he could hide up on a warm engine and have a sleep. As 43007 started to warm up the water would expand that started her on Hydraulic not steam, the action of the piston would draw the fire and as long as she kept on the move steam would get higher and stronger and with the signalman at Workington No 1 leaving all the points set of the depot he would then clear the ground signal of course 43007 took no heed of signal's or regulation. A few week's later she ran thro the stores and demolished the place and derailed three set's of wheel's I think she was taking revenge on M 'kay the store keeper, and later still she came derailed in Workington Yard and blow me the next time I saw her was year's later she was of the road again all wheel's on Nuneaton MPD having had a free transfer from Workington and me a transfer to Crewe North I am still here as a driver but I don't know where she is now but if they ever made razor blade's from her I would never use them in case of accident's knowing her she would strike from the grave R.I.P. old girl you were a rogue when you were alive, a proper jinx Locomotive.

Les Jackson Driver - Crewe North 1966.