

BR 30 T BOGIE BOLSTER C B 923235

A bogie bolster wagon is designed to carry long thin items such as timber, rails, steel sections, etc. The load is carried longitudinally and borne by three or more bolsters (baulks of timber) fixed transversely.

Sometimes loads were constrained sideways by movable vertical metal stanchions, fitted into the underframe at the ends of bolsters, but were always secured with chains and shackles or ratchet straps.

Different variations were needed but Bogie Bolster C wagons were the most numerous type built by BR. A total of almost 5,700 being constructed between 1949 and 1962. All were 45ft long over headstocks and the final 1400, which included B 923235, were built with vacuum brakes.

B 923235 was built in 1961 as part of BR order Lot No. 3341 to design 1/477. Swindon Carriage & Wagon Works constructed 200 vehicles in this batch numbered 923100 to 923299. They all ran on two Gloucester C&W designed diamond frame bogies fitted with roller bearings.

B923235 weighed 18 Tons 5 cwt empty and, having a 30 Ton load limit meant that, it had a Gross Laden Weight of 48 Tons 5 cwt. This was slightly heavier than some earlier Bogie Bolster C wagons due to the installation of vacuum braking equipment from new.

In revenue earning service it was coded BCW. The 'B' stood for Bogie Steel; 'C' was the sub-division within this group; and the 'W' represented Vacuum braked with through air piping.

Bogie Bolster C's went out of general use around 1980 with most being sent for scrap. However, some were transferred to the Engineers Department, became Internal User on depots or acted as runner wagons for cranes. In fact, B 923235 did get transferred to Departmental Service, with the Signal & Telegraph section, and was re-numbered KDB 923235 as a consequence.

It was found condemned at Reading Carriage & Wagon sidings from where the Southern Catering Project Group [SCPG] purchased KDB 923235 in February 2003. However, it was not until November that the wagon was moved by road transport from Reading to the Swanage Railway's Arne Road road/rail siding at Norden.

For several years it carried the frames of Southern Locomotives Limited (SLL) Bulleid pacific 34010 'SIDMOUTH' until November 2021. Then they were lifted onto a lorry to take them to the SLL site at Sellindge for shot blasting prior to the loco's restoration in due course. This work could not be undertaken at SLL's main restoration site at Herston Works.

Subsequently no further use was found for B 923235 and SCPG placed it for sale on the Carriage Exchange website. The vehicle was still in reasonable condition overall but needed completely new wooden decking.

It would appear that the putative Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum, which was a registered Charity (CIO) number 1191551, had 'first refusal' to purchase B 923235 due to it running on a pair of Gloucester designed diamond frame bogies. However the Museum had to close in 2020.

Eventually, B 923235 was moved to the Great Western Society's Didcot Railway Centre premises in Oxfordshire. It was extracted from Woodpecker Siding on Monday 31st May 2023 ready for later despatch by road and was understood to have been

transported by road at the beginning of August 2023.

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 16th October 2021

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