

LSWR CLASS F9 INSPECTION SALOON No. 733

Dugald Drummond became Locomotive Engineer of the London and South Western Railway (LSWR) in 1895. The title of his post was changed to Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) in January 1905, although his duties remained largely the same. He was also the LSWR's Running Superintendent and, as such, he ranged far and wide over the system, taking an extremely close and highly critical personal interest in every aspect of daily locomotive operations.

As CME he designed, and had built, a 4-2-4T locomotive/inspection saloon to enable him and senior LSWR staff to visit all parts of their system. This included frequent journeys from his company house at 2 South Bank, Surbiton to Nine Elms Works as well as the extensive work involved in transferring the company's production and maintenance to the new locomotive and carriage works at Eastleigh. Thereafter he would travel daily to Eastleigh unless he needed to inspect another shed on the LSWR network.

The Class F9 self-propelled Inspection Saloon was built at LSWR's original Nine Elms works near Battersea in April 1899 at a cost of £1,765 and became the 563rd loco built there. It was numbered 733 and given the official title "Mr Drummond's Car". However, many loco men and enthusiasts nicknamed it 'The Bug'.

Mileages were quite significant for such a small locomotive, and the late D. L. Bradley records that the Car covered 171,304 miles between January 1900 and December 1912. Ignoring holidays, this represents an average of over 250 miles per week throughout this entire period. However, Tony Fairclough and Alan Wills, in their *Southern Steam Locomotive Survey - The Drummond Classes*, records that between 1900 - 1912 'The Bug' ran no less than 361,000 miles. O. S. Nock, in his *London and South Western Railway*, noted that after the move of the Works to Eastleigh, the Bug covered - 8 - at least 120 miles a day, running in a specially-reserved path in the morning and evening timetables, at near-express speeds.

Because it had only single driving wheels the vehicle had sanding equipment from new. Vacuum brakes acted only through one pair of brake blocks upon the leading edge of those solitary pair of driving wheels. This would have made accurate stopping something of a delicate business – especially when rails were greasy.

Lamp brackets were carried in the usual six positions to indicate the route of travel, not the class of train. However, 'The Bug' carried four white cast-iron discs edged in red, at the smokebox top and the three buffer beam positions, this being not entirely inappropriately a permutation of the Royal Train headcode! The original livery for the loco was Apple Green edged with chocolate and black lines edged either side by white.

The saloon part comprised a single compartment situated over the trailing bogie. It contained a table, some easy chairs, a tiny buffet servery of sorts, and an umbrella stand. One imagines that umbrellas were as useful for shaking at miscreant members of staff as for fending off rain. There was also a small lavatory in the front left-hand corner, with a tiny attendant's compartment in the right-hand corner. In between, a porthole lead through to the cab.

The saloon was lit by gas, and, most unusually, this supply also lit a lamp in the loco's cab.

Externally, there were three small windows to each side of the saloon's bodywork, plus a door to each side with steps giving access to track level. There were also three windows across the rear, as well as two rooftop ventilators. Communication between Drummond and the crew was through an all-too-convenient sliding porthole trap, so he could keep events on the footplate in view.

There was also an electric bell for communication to the cab, a very unusual fitting for the era, though the trap-door probably made it superfluous. Presumably a battery was carried to power the bell but no location for it has been identified. Footplate crews of the time must have developed a very special philosophy for coping with this intensive level of management surveillance.

Livery of the saloon body was LSWR's standard Salmon Pink upper quarters with dark brown lower panels. The number 733 was carried below the window line on both sides. The roof was painted white originally but this soon became grey in service.

An impatient man, Drummond was known to order the F9 to be driven as fast as possible with speeds (allegedly) of 80 to 85 miles per hour not unknown. The potential maximum top speed was never recorded, but it was certainly very high, no doubt aided by its relatively large driving wheels and its very small and low-mounted boiler, which barely came up to half the height of the cab.

If 85mph was indeed within its capability, and setting-aside the need to stop for more coal or water, it could have Drummond from his Surbiton lineside home to the West Country and back within a working day. Exeter Queen Street, with a brief stop at Salisbury for water and a flying dash down the main line, would work out at barely more than two and a half hours. Even Plymouth Friary could have been reached within a morning.

Drummond remained with the LSWR until his death on 8th November 1912 aged 72 at his home in Surbiton. His successor, Robert Urie, rarely used the locomotive so it was stored in Eastleigh Paint Shop. During December 1913 it was transferred to Service Stock to be used to transport members of the Engineer's Department on inspection tours of Southampton Eastern Docks and the construction works for Western Docks. In 1916 it was laid aside again and stored at Eastleigh Works until a decision was made about its future.

At that time it was still painted in LSWR colours with the coach portion retaining its characteristic salmon and chocolate livery including the initials 'LSWR'. At the Grouping, on 1st January 1923, it was probably the last engine on any UK railway in nominal (if not actual) service to retain its pre-grouping identity.

However, in December 1924, it was repainted into Southern Green livery and renumbered 58S, over a year after it had passed into Southern Railway (SR) ownership. It was not overhauled to operational use until May 1932 when it was used briefly, together with a single 6-wheeled carriage, to take parties to view the extension to Southampton's "New Docks" then under construction. This coach was a 33 ft long 6-wheeled ex-South Eastern & Chatham Railway saloon numbered 0824S in the SR service stock register.

58S was returned to store in Eastleigh Works Paint Shop from 1933 until August 1940 when it was withdrawn for the last time. The cab, boiler, cylinders and driving wheels, as well as the Inspection Saloon, were then stripped away leaving the frames, with just leading and trailing bogies intact, to be used as a means of transporting heavy loads such as boilers

around Eastleigh Works. This use continued until 1957 before being scrapped.

The grounded Inspection Saloon section was used by Mr Pepper as his Timber Inspector's office in Eastleigh Carriage Works until the late 1960s. Thereafter it was sold to be used as a garden shed. Interestingly, the small toilet compartment remained largely intact. Eventually the Saloon ended up sited alongside the former Durley Light Railway [Hants Narrow Gauge Railway Society] in the Eastleigh area.

Around 1996 it was purchased and moved to the rear garden of a Bed & Breakfast establishment in Swanage where it still resides. It can be viewed from passing trains on the Swanage Railway. It is owned currently by Drummond Locomotives Limited – the owners of Drummond Class M7 No. 30053.

A slow restoration is being undertaken. Some original features remain including the compact toilet compartment which still survives largely complete. It is not known how long this refurbishment work will take nor whether it will go on public display eventually.

INSPECTION SALOON - ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL SPECIFICATIONS			
Leading and Trailing Bogie Wheels Diameter	2 ft 6 ins	Driving Wheels Diameter	5ft 7 ins
Overall length	35ft 7 ins	Weight (working order)	37 Tons 8 cwt
Coal Capacity	1 Ton	Water Capacity	1,000 gallons
Boiler Pressure	175 psi	Two Cylinders (each)	11 ½ x 18 ins
Tractive Effort	5,285 lbf.	Firebox Grate Area	11.3 sq ft
Boiler Heating Area	550 sq ft		

Apparently an OO Gauge model of the complete F9 is currently on display at the Bluebell Railway's museum at Sheffield Park Station.

Reminiscences found on: <https://svsfilm.com/nineelms/bug.htm>

Nine Elms Chief Inspector James, was the dedicated Engineman on Dugald Drummond's special saloon known as 'The Bug' with Fireman William Eaton. The following were the latter's recollections from his time on the footplate of Drummond's "Bug"

In my younger days on the then 'London & South Western Railway' I had the interesting experience of being the regular fireman on Mr. Dugald Drummond's famous saloon, which was stabled at Nine Elms and known to all and sundry as "The Bug". The late Chief Inspector James was the driver, he was quite fearless, and he needed to be for his Chief had a pronounced taste for speed.

For the benefit of readers who know nothing of the subject of this article, let me say that it was no

locomotive antique which had had some superannuated coach tacked on to it for inspection purposes. This unique combined engine and coach, specially designed by Drummond, appeared brand new from Nine Elms Works in 1898. The locomotive itself was a single-driver with driving wheels 5ft 7in in diameter; it had a leading bogie with 2ft 6in wheels, and a trailing bogie of longer wheelbase which supported the cab and the short saloon adjoining it.

The whole thus made a 4-2-4T wheel arrangement; it measured 35ft 7in over buffers and weighed 37 tons in running trim. Chimney and dome, the latter with safety-valves above, were typical Drummond pattern; the boiler had a heating surface of 550sq ft. and the little firebox a grate area of 11.3sq ft; working pressure was 175 lb per sq in. This boiler was nicely proportioned to supply two outside cylinders 11 ½ in diameter by 18in stroke. About 1,000 gallons of water could be stored in the side-tanks, and the coal bunker, inside the cab, held a ton.

"The Bug" was built for speed, and could certainly show its paces on the slightest provocation. Mr. Drummond, in his capacity as Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Superintendent (as the Chief Mechanical Engineer was then known), used his saloon for visiting all the out-station locomotive depots, and in his journeys he covered every stretch of line on the old South Western system. It enabled him for instance, to travel from London to Eastleigh Works and back within a few hours, or to visit Exeter in a day with a comfortable margin of time to do business at that end of the line.

The saloon was cleaned daily at Nine Elms, and an experienced cleaner was allocated to this work. Our usual orders were to arrive at Surbiton station at 9.00am sharp. Mr. Drummond would come from his residence nearby, settle down in the saloon, and off we would go, sometimes for a short trip to Portsmouth and sometimes to the far West. We were always well prepared with food, in case we should have to 'lodge' for a night.

I remember one occasion when we had been down the North Cornwall line. We were on our way back to London and were held up by a goods train at Ashbury, near Okehampton. It was seven o'clock in the evening, and as it was so late Mr. Drummond decided that he would stay the night at Exeter. A message was to be sent forward to book him a room at an hotel. This was before the days of telephones, and Ashbury station had a single-needle telegraph instrument, which the only porter on duty was quite incapable of manipulating.

Enquiries for the stationmaster or the booking clerk revealed that they had gone that evening to a Farmer's Hunt Supper. The "Old Man" started to read the Riot Act whereupon I suggested that, having had experience of telegraph instruments when a lad in the Traffic Department, I might be able to save the situation.

His comment to me was, 'You're not such a fool as you look'! Anyway, he got his room at the hotel that night, and James and I lodged in the enginemen's dormitory.

Talking of goods trains, there was a hatchway between the saloon and the engine footplate through which orders were transmitted to the driver. If our pace was too leisurely - that was below 60mph - Drummond would shout out. "What's the matter James? D'ye think this is a goods train"?

One day, an official of the old 'Highland Railway' was staying with him. We took them both to Eastleigh Works and afterwards to the South Western Hotel at Southampton for lunch. To give us a clear run back, it was arranged that our return journey should be made ahead of a Bournemouth express, which was due away from Southampton Central station (then called Southampton West) about 2.40pm. We therefore left at 2.30pm.

Before starting, Drummond came on the footplate, looked at my fire with the remark. "That's

verra good", and told James darkly that the Highland gentleman was to be given the run of his life. We went like a whirlwind. After racing up to Basingstoke, we ran the 23 miles from Basingstoke to Woking in 16 minutes by stop-watch, an average of 85mph!

As both engine and saloon together had but five axles on a short wheelbase, the saloon seemed to skip across the points and crossings like a horse jumping a gate! Anyway, the sensation of passing over the junction at the west end of Weybridge station was the last straw for the Highland man. Coming to the hatchway, he implored James to moderate the speed. As we were then approaching Surbiton, his wish was gratified, but Mr. Drummond enjoyed the joke hugely.

In my time the saloon was fitted with two brake blocks only, on the driving wheels. This meant that the brake power was none too good, and in a tight corner it was necessary to put the engine into reverse. Once, when running down into Ilfracombe, we nearly came to grief. James had stopped at Morteheo to examine his sand gear, to make sure we should be able to keep the saloon safely under control down the 1 in 36 gradient into Ilfracombe but, after we started away, a shower came on, and we just could not avoid giving the buffer-stops a hearty smack!

'Drum', who had risen from his seat to alight, was bumped down again by the impact, and we expected a storm. However, when he saw that no damage had been done, and remembered that James had stopped as a precaution at Morteheo he said little. But on the next trip to Ilfracombe he ordered a vacuum-braked coach to be attached in rear on the journey, for additional brake-power, although on the climb to Morteheo this nearly stalled the little single-wheeler, which was not used to being harnessed to other vehicles!

Drummond had the reputation of being something of a tyrant, and slackness he could not stand. However, he was always very kind to me, possibly because I was 'the boy', and when he observed my overalls in a filthy state – "from raking out the ash-pan", I told him, he gave me a golden sovereign with instructions to buy two new pairs at once. A similar sum came my way when he heard that I had become the father of twins, with instructions to "put it in the bank".

The fireman's duties on 'The Bug' were very exacting. Everything had to be just right. No coal dust was tolerated, and every piece of coal was hand-picked, broken into convenient lumps and carefully stacked in the rather inadequate bunker space. This part of the preparation work would often take me two hours, and I used to be on duty early for the purpose. On the road I also acted as 'steward'. Those were the days of luncheon baskets, which one could order in advance, to be available at certain principal stations. 'Drum' always had two baskets: one had to contain a bottle of lemonade and the other a bottle of 'Bass' [pale ale beer].

There was also a carafe of water in the saloon and in the Exeter area this had to be filled from a particular tap that supplied spring water. One day he saw me returning from the tap and as I held up the glass to the light the water was pure and clear I ventured to remark that it would be "nice with a drop of something in it", knowing his liking for Scotch. He said, "You don't want any of that, do ye"? To which I replied. "No. I'm teetotal Sir". He could be affable with those he knew would not disrespect his position, but woe betide any man who tried to argue with him!

Occasionally 'The Bug' was used by various traffic officers, I remember we were taking a few of them to Salisbury when two springs broke with a loud report underneath the saloon while we were approaching Andover at high speed. These springs had broken before, so we carried on knowing that we should come to no harm. What the occupants thought we never discovered, probably it was put down to loose ballast or something similar. But I think they preferred to travel by ordinary train after that!

Mr. Drummond died in 1912 and that was the end of the saloon's meteoric career, although it survived to become a Docks Inspection Car at Southampton, and only in the 1940s was it broken up at Eastleigh Works.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Service Stock of the Southern Railway by R W Kidner (Oakwood Press 1993)

London and South Western Railway by O S Nock

Southern Steam Locomotive Survey - The Drummond Classes

by Tony Fairclough and Alan Wills

<https://chasewaterstuff.wordpress.com/2010/11/23/steam-locos-of-a-leisurely-era-lswr-drummonds-bug/>

The Railway Heritage Register Carriage Survey Project:

<http://www.cs.rhrp.org.uk/se/CarriageInfo.asp?Ref=2610>

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