

LONDON & SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

DRUMMOND CLASS T9 4-4-0 No. 120

This loco was built for the LSWR, under Nine Elms Works order number G9, in a batch of 10 locomotives (numbered 113 to 122) constructed from June 1899. Loco 120 was outshopped in August 1899, at a cost of £2,285, and had the narrower design of cab. It was not fitted with firebox cross water tubes, as other T9's were, nor did it have steam sanding equipment but it did have a steam reverser.

Some early footplate staff had nicknamed the T9's as 'Greyhounds' because of their turn of speed, free running qualities and smoothness with which they carried out their duties. They could run at up to 85 mph hauling express trains, between London and Plymouth, when there was fierce competition between the London and South Western Railway and the Great Western Railway for transatlantic liner passengers.

The LSWR introduced new stock on their West of England services so 120, along with nine other T9's, were fitted with carriage heating apparatus. T9's were still in front line service for many years, even after the introduction of more powerful 4-6-0 locos. Initially, it was outshopped with a six-wheel tender and allocated to nearby Nine Elms shed. When allocated to services such as those between Waterloo and Bournemouth it could run without taking water although, during winter, the use of steam heating made the margin quite 'tight'.

At some stage the LSWR decided that all T9's would receive bigger bogie tenders, to give them greater range, and the 'discarded' six-wheel tenders would be transferred to Class K10 or later Class L11 4-4-0s being built at Eastleigh. An eight-wheel bogie tender was attached to 120 during June 1907. The longer tender was carried on two bogies, contained 4,000 gallons of water and weighed 44 tons 17 cwt.

Just after the outbreak of the First World War, 120 was re-allocated to Bournemouth shed for nine years service being used on trains to/from Waterloo as well as to/from Weymouth. The 'water-cart' tender would have been useful carrying more coal and water. T9s worked widely over the Southern Railway network and, after their main line days were over, many were put to work on secondary line and branch line passenger and freight trains.

After the Grouping, on 1st January 1923, 120 became E120 due to it being allocated to Eastleigh Works for overhauls, etc. Later that year, E120 was allocated to Plymouth Friary shed and, in June 1925, it was painted into Southern Green livery.

Robert Urie, successor to Drummond, ordered that the whole class be fitted with superheaters to further improve performance and reduce coal and water consumption. In 1922, T9 No. 314 was the first to be converted and all sixty six of the Class were superheated during the remainder of the 1920's. T9's were generally good performers and necessitated no other major modifications, apart from the creation of enlarged smoke boxes to contain the superheater header, fitment of a stovepipe chimney and increase of the cylinder bores to 19 inches.

E120 had it's sandboxes moved, from the front driving wheel splashers [where they tended

to work loose], to be fixed between the frames. The injector clack boxes were also moved to the side of the boiler. E120 did not receive Urie's superheater so went straight to the Maunsell version of superheating. This work was undertaken at Eastleigh Works in May 1927 complete with the addition of snifting valves.

E120 was outshopped in Maunsell's Southern Railway Sage Green livery. On 5th April 1929 it had to go into Eastleigh Works again, for caulking of firebox stays and, two years later (on 7th February 1931) it had to return for a new firebox brick arch, studs and plugs.

Most T9's remained on Western Section services despite being removed from most front-line trains. They proved very useful on secondary passenger workings as well as weekend holiday extras, special excursions, VIP services and even Royal trains. On 24th September 1932, E120 emerged from Eastleigh Works having had repairs to the boiler's foundation ring and the fitting of new corner rivets. It had also lost its 'E' prefix and, reverting to plain 120 again it was re-allocated to Eastleigh shed.

Further attention from Eastleigh Works was needed on 19th January 1934 when 120 went in for the firebox lead fusible plugs to be renewed and, during October 1935, some holes in the superheaters needed welding. On 16th November, 442 copper firebox stays were renewed plus a new replacement three-quarters copper firehole was fitted. It remained at Eastleigh shed until the Portsmouth Line electrification was inaugurated in July 1937.

120 was then re-allocated to Fratton shed to help with non-electrified services as ten Drummond D15 class 4-4-0's had been moved to Eastleigh. On 1st May 1940, it left Eastleigh Works having had 124 new 'Talbot Stead' replacement tubes installed, the capuchon from the front of the stovepipe chimney removed and been repainted into unlined dark green livery with cab side numerals.

During the war, 120 was transferred to Eastleigh shed and this remained its base until 1950. On Saturday 28th November 1942, the loco was near Wool Station hauling a goods train, from Brockenhurst yard to Dorchester, when it was strafed by two Luftwaffe Messerschmitt Me109 fighters.

One of the cannon shells exploded on the footplate, causing shrapnel wounds to the driver's head and the fireman's back. Both were treated at the nearby military hospital at Bovington Camp. According to eye-witness statements, at the time of the attack, the T9 was said to be blowing off steam. It was stopped just past the rear of the Ship Inn pub, west of Wool station, apparently waiting for the next section towards Moreton to clear.

At least one report stated that - *20mm cannon fire was found to have caused serious damage to 120 from end to end. The firebox was punctured together with the hydrostatic lubricator's steam pipe being severed and both cab lookout windows were shattered.* However, some of the above must be taken with a pinch of salt as loco firebox being punctured with the boiler at full pressure [it was blowing off steam] would more than likely have exploded entirely at this sudden release of pressure.

No records have been discovered of where that damage was repaired [presumably at Eastleigh Works] nor what work proved necessary. Wartime austerity measures saw the livery changed again to unlined black livery with 'sunshine' lettering and numerals. This occurred prior to the loco being released from Eastleigh Works on 17th November 1943 where, in addition to the repaint it had received boiler attention with 496 copper stays

being renewed. Later, during 1947, a new firebox was fitted with 120 being outshopped on 15th February.

Following Nationalisation, on 1st January 1948, British Railways renumbered 120 into their Southern '30xxx' series and became 30120 in January 1949. In the following year, 30120 went to Eastleigh Works for some more work including having snifting valves removed and a repaint into lined BR Black livery. It was released to service on 9th June 1950.

Major changes to depot allocations saw 30120 moving comparatively rapidly back to Fratton (September 1950); then Dorchester South (March 1951); Guildford (October 1952); back to Dorchester South (December 1952) and returning to Eastleigh shed in September 1953.

During the mid-1950's Eastleigh Works must have been very busy as 30120 went to Brighton Works a number of times. Between 10th June and 11th August 1953 it received a General Overhaul during which 493 copper stays were rivetted over. From 9th September to 22nd October 1955, it had a Heavy Intermediate repair including 517 copper stays rivetted over and new piston rings fitted. Between 16th October and 7th November 1956, 30120 went in for a Light Casual repair including straightening the left side of the front buffer beam after a rough shunt somewhere.

It was noted that, since Nationalisation (almost 9 years earlier), 30120 had covered a further 75,454 miles. On Saturday 4th October 1958, 30120 hauled the RCTS "Sapper Rail Tour" from Waterloo to Liss and back from Bordon. Stanier designed Class 8F 2-8-0 WD400 "Sir Guy Williams" hauled this rail tour over the extensive Longmoor Military Railway between Liss and Bordon.

30120 stayed resident at Eastleigh shed for a few more years where it was used on the many van services to/from Southampton Docks as well as some of the local secondary passengers trains. On Saturday 5th March 1960, 30120 hauled the very last Didcot to Eastleigh service over the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton line.

During February/March 1961 Westward Television opened newly purpose-built studios, at Derry's Cross in Plymouth, broadcasting to the South West under a ten-year licence from the Independent Television Authority. In those days, it's programmes were made on 16mm black and white negative film stock with in-house printing and editing services. To promote the inauguration of their services they chartered a six vehicle rake from Western Region for a six-weeks tour of their transmission area.

It comprised W17907 – a 'Toad' Goods Brake Van containing diesel generator and other equipment [currently based at Swindon & Cricklade Railway]; W1012 – a BR MK I RSO fitted out as a 'cinema' which was subsequently UIC registered and ran in France. At the time of writing, W1012 is stored by the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) Ltd at Ruddington; W9103W – a Collett nondescript Brake Saloon equipped as a studio [currently restored to original condition and in service at the Severn Valley Railway]; plus ex-GWR Siphon G vans W2769W, W2983W and W2941W which were all converted as showrooms [W2983W is currently at Gloucs. & Warks. Railway but the other two were scrapped].

Both sides of each vehicle were painted in White and light Blue with the ends in blue. The legend "WESTWARD TELEVISION EXHIBITION TRAIN" appeared in italic 'old gold' lettering along each side with W17907 having a shorter legend - "LOOK WESTWARD".

The three Siphons also had the TV station's 'ident' which the Chairman, Peter Cadbury, introduced to Westward's viewers in person on their first day of transmission – 29th April 1961. He said that the galleon, a model of Drake's flagship (the Golden Hind), was chosen as it embodied the four counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset.

As there was no brake coach in the exhibition consist, BR also hired to Westward a Mk 1 BSK W34915 in BR Maroon. Although this travelled with the train it was uncoupled whilst the train was on show to the public. Originally, it had been on public display at Kensington Olympia for two days prior to being given a ceremonial send off, on 9th February, by the Lord Mayor of London Sir Bernard Nathaniel Waley-Cohen, 1st Baronet. The departure from Olympia to the first destination at Truro, and much of the West Country haulage, used 3440 City of Truro but this loco was out of gauge on some branch lines as well as ex-SR lines being visited.

Apparently the exhibition train had around 22 separate display sites in the itinerary being open, mainly, between 14:00 and 21:00 and, whilst there, you could buy a descriptive catalogue for 1s/-d (5p). It looks like the itinerary might have been: Truro; Falmouth; Camborne (15th Feb.); Penzance; St Ives; Newquay; Bodmin; St Austell; Tavistock; Launceston; Bude; Tiverton; Taunton; Bridgwater (3rd Mar.); Weston-super-Mare; Yeovil; Weymouth; Exmouth; Exeter; Newton Abbot; Paignton; Torquay and Plymouth.

It was hosted by British Comic Actor Jack Train, a local celebrity from Plymouth, who came to prominence during the last war. One of his famous characters was Colonel Chinstrap in the wartime comedy series ITMA (It's That Man Again). It was estimated that almost 200,000 people visited the Exhibition Train during the six-week period and was thought to be the largest public event in the West Country since the Coronation.

Apparently Adams Radial 4-4-2T no. 30582 was on the train at Exmouth and 120 was noted at the head of the train, at some stage, although no distinct indication of the location has been discovered. It is likely that the weight of this train may have been heavier than 30582 could manage alone so 120 might have double-headed it.

By 18th March 1961, 30120's transfer to Exmouth Junction shed had been used to 'reinforce' the existing batch of T9's for a few months as, even in their dotage, the T9's could still achieve over 75 mph at times and had minimal restrictions on most of the ex-SR lines in the West Country. 30120 is known to have worked over quite a few West Country routes including out of Okehampton shed to locations as widespread as Bude, Padstow and Plymouth Friary.

These workings ceased in June 1961 so 30120 was transferred back to Eastleigh. Unfortunately most T9's were withdrawn around this time and cut up although 30120 was listed for preservation as part of the National Collection. As such it remained in revenue earning service.

Between 22nd February and 3rd March 1962, 30120 was in Eastleigh Works for a Heavy Casual overhaul and a repaint into 1920's Urie LSWR light green lined livery. It emerged with it's original number – 120 – and a capuchon refitted to the stovepipe chimney. It was then used on a few local trains as part of running-in requirements. Usually, these were out-and-back schedules from Eastleigh to Bournemouth via Sway (or the 'Old Road' via Ringwood) but not always.

120 was photographed on Saturday 7th July, near Farnborough, hauling Bulleid coaches

forming the 12:42 Saturdays-only Waterloo to Basingstoke stopping service. It also hauled this train on a number of other occasions normally returning to London on the 19:40 from Basingstoke. How it returned to Eastleigh remains a mystery.

The uses of 120 seem to have been quite diverse during this period in addition to occasional outing on passenger workings. On Friday 26th October 1962 it was used to move a 4CEP electric unit from Stewarts Lane depot to Eastleigh. Presumably it had a Goods Brake Van at the rear as 120's vacuum brakes would not have been compatible with the 4CEP's air braking.

120 hauled several rail tours around the Southern Region network and some have been listed below:

On Sunday 24th June 1962 – “The Sussex Coast Limited” was organised by the Locomotive Club of Great Britain. It hauled Southern Region seven coach set No. 237 from Waterloo to Horsham via Surbiton and Christ's Hospital. Other locos took the train via various routes to Rotherfield from where 120 returned the train to London Bridge.

On Sunday 8th July 1962 - The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society had planned to use 120 on it's “The Clausentum Rail Tour” to Southampton [Clausentum was the Roman name for what is now the Bitterne suburb of Southampton]. But, for reasons not discovered, the tour was cancelled.

On Sunday 21st October 1962 - The Bluebell Railway Preservation Society organised “Victory Bluebell Rail Tour” with 120 on the section between Victoria and Haywards Heath. Bluebell locos 55 “Stepney” and 488 took over between Haywards Heath and Horsted Keynes/Sheffield Park sections with around 300 passengers on board. 120 then hauled the tour on the return from Haywards Heath to Victoria.

On Sunday 11th November 1962 – The Home Counties Railway Club organised the “Eastleigh Special” which had 120 piloting 30926 *Repton* from Waterloo to Eastleigh down the main line. 76011 hauled the train into Eastleigh Works, for a short visit, and then USA tanks 30062 and 30072 took it for a tour around Southampton Docks. 120 and 30926 then returned the tour from Eastleigh to Waterloo via Fareham, Havant and Guildford.

On Sunday 10th March 1963 – The Southern Counties Touring Society organised the “Hampshire Venturer” with 120 heading the train from Waterloo to Andover Junction. After loco Bulleid Q1 class number 33039 took the train to Bulford Camp and on to Salisbury, 120 took over again for the section to Southampton Eastern Docks.

On Saturday 27th April 1963 – The “North Cornishman” was arranged jointly by the Plymouth Railway Circle and the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society. It is not known when 120 travelled from it's base at Eastleigh to Exmouth Junction but it needed to be in the area to haul this train from Exeter Central to Padstow (via Okehampton and Wadebridge) and return. It was, in fact, the last time a Class T9 loco hauled a passenger train over the route.

Whilst the rail tour was en-route to Padstow, 120 was photographed pausing at St Kew Highway station. It was passed by N Class 31874 [now being restored at Herston Works for service on the Swanage Railway] hauling a short train from Wadebridge.

Loco 120 had received a Light Casual repair at Eastleigh Works, between 7th and 12th February 1963, but 30120's time had come and it was withdrawn officially from capital stock in July 1963 - although it still continued to work special trains as can be seen from

it's next outing!

On 15th September 1963, the nine coach 'Scottish Belle' Rail tour to Horsted Keynes was double headed with Caledonian Railway Single No. 123 piloting 120. They hauled the section from Victoria to Hayward's Heath and then both continued light engine to Brighton for turning and servicing whilst the Bluebell's engines hauled the train over their tracks. 123 and 120 then returned the train from Hayward's Heath to Victoria. Incidentally, on both this train and that on 21st October 1962, 120 met a LSWR liveried counterpart at Haywards Heath – namely the Bluebell Railway's Adams Radial 4-4-2T number 488.

On 11th January 1964, 30120 went into store at Fratton shed but, on 21st September, it was towed to Stratford loco depot in East London for a further period of undercover storage and possible re-painting. In the consist were King Arthur class 777 *Sir Lamial* and Schools class 925 *Repton*. The three engines stayed there for four years before moving to the Pullman Car shed at Preston Park near Brighton in February 1968.

In September 1970, these same three engines were hauled to the Standard Gauge Steam Trust at Tyseley Depot in Birmingham. It had been intended to undertake some restoration work but, in the event, none was accomplished. Then 30120 was moved again, this time to the National Railway Museum in York via a display at BREL Derby Locomotives Works Open Day on 10th September 1977. On arrival it was placed out of public sight as part of the NRM Reserve Collection (NRM Object Number [1978-7024]).

In August 1981, the Urie S15 Preservation Group was given custody of the locomotive and it was moved to the Mid Hants Railway, during the following month, for restoration to steaming condition. It arrived at Alresford by road transporter on 18th September and was soon moved to Ropley Shed for assessment and commencement of restoration. It returned to steam on 14th May 1983 being outshopped in BR lined Black livery and renumbered to 30120. It worked the Mid-Hants' standard five coach rakes but this proved somewhat taxing during bad weather, because of steep gradients on the line, and so was then restricted to four coaches to reduce wear and tear on the engine.

On 28th and 29th May 1988, 120 was one of a number of engines on static (out-of-steam) display at the 'Woking 150' event. A set of wooden steps was placed alongside which permitted visits to the footplate. The Drummond Locomotive Ltd.'s M7 class 30053 was also nearby on photographic display.

A new agreement was reached with the NRM allowing 30120 to be moved to the Swanage Railway in 1991. On Friday 10th May 1991, 30120 hauled an Engineers train to become the first ex-BR steam locomotive, since June 1967, to reach Corfe Castle station on tracks relaid by Swanage Railway volunteers. In total it spent three years hauling trains between Swanage and Harman's Cross from 1991 until its boiler certificate expired in 1993.

30120 then moved to Sheffield Park on the Bluebell Railway, who could provide undercover accommodation and viewing access for the public. The loco was placed on static display until 1st February 2008 when it was taken to Cornwall. Once there the Bodmin & Wenford Railway Trust (B&WRT) decided to send it to the Flour Mill Workshop in the Forest of Dean for a heavy overhaul including major repairs to the cylinder block. The loco had its public debut in August 2010 under a long term loan from the NRM to B&WRT.

From 21st to 23rd September 2012, 30120 appeared at the Severn Valley Railway for its Autumn Steam Gala. Here it worked with Class U number 31086, on loan from the Mid Hants Railway, and Southern Locomotives Ltd. 34053 "Sir Keith Park", amongst other engines. In early March 2013 it was moved to the Mid Hants Railway for use at their Great Spring Steam Gala.

From June to December 2015, 30120 was again loaned to the Swanage Railway and visited the Mid Hants Railway in February 2016 followed by the Dean Forest Railway in July before returning to Bodmin. By December 2016 the locomotive had been hired to the Battlefield Line in Leicestershire to be one of two locomotives working their passenger services.

In July 2017, after a head on collision, the locomotive was transferred from Bodmin to Swanage. Further repairs to the cylinder block became necessary and these were carried out successfully by the Swanage Railway. 30120 undertook a light engine test run in early November 2017 returning to service during the following month's Santa Specials. A long term loan agreement was reached with the NRM meaning the locomotive would stay on the Swanage Railway until the 30th September 2020 when the boiler certificate would expire.

Meanwhile, 30120 visited the Great Central Railway to work during their Autumn Steam Gala between 3rd and 6th October 2019. The other visitor was 'Schools' class number 926 "Repton" courtesy of the North Yorks Moors Railway.

In August 2020 it was reported that 30120 had failed its annual steam test in July following which the National Railway Museum and the Swanage Railway decided to withdraw the engine from service. Given past mechanical problems, it raised the question as to whether the locomotive would ever be returned to steam again. The locomotive is now in store awaiting a detailed assessment of the condition of the boiler with a view to the possibility of a return to steam.

A potentially serious issue is the state of the cylinder block, located directly below the smokebox, which is vulnerable to sulphur-induced corrosion. When the locomotive was last overhauled several holes in the top of the block were given temporary repairs although it is now felt, in many quarters, that a new block may be required to ensure long-term steaming performance and reliability.

In February 2021 it was reported that an agreement between the NRM and the Swanage Railway could result in 30120 having a more active future. Under this agreement the Swanage Railway Trust would store the locomotive with provision for a boiler lift, in due course, to assess the potential for the locomotive to be returned to steam.

No timetable has yet been set but it is understood that the Swanage Railway are keen to complete the loco's move to the Flour Mill at Lydney in Gloucestershire as soon as possible. Now that Class T3 no. 563 has left there, and re-entered service on the Swanage Railway, it is hoped to send the T9 for dismantling. This will enable an assessment to be undertaken prior to a decision for restoration – or not. Discussions with the NRM will then be started on the T9's future.

The railway's highly successful 563 Loco Group have taken 30120 under its wing to ensure fund raising for future works are available as needed.

ORIGINAL TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Driving Wheels dia.	6 ft 7 ins	Loco Weight	46 tons 4 cwt
Bogie Wheels dia.	3 ft 7 ins	Bogie	15 tons 1 cwt
Wheelbase	$6\frac{1}{2}\text{ft}+6\frac{3}{4}\text{ft}+10\text{ft} = 23\text{ ft } 3\text{ ins}$	Leading Drivers	18 tons 1 cwt
Inside Cylinders (2)	18½ ins x 26 ins	Rear Drivers	16 ton 19 cwt
Heating surface (tubes)	1,187 sq ft	Loco Adhesive weight	50 tons 1 cwt
Heating surface (firebox)	148 sq ft	Tender Weight (6 wheel)	39 tons 4 cwt
Grate Area	24 sq ft	Overall total	89 tons 5 cwt
Tractive Effort	16,755 lbs ft	Coal capacity	4 tons
Boiler Pressure	175 psi	Water capacity	3,500 gallons

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Book of the T9 4-4-0s by Richard Derry (Irwell Press Ltd. 2009)
<https://preservedbritishsteamlocomotives.com/30120-lswr-120-sr-e120-sr-120-br-30120/>

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 1st March 2024