

SR 8 PLANK GOODS WAGON S 37064

This is a typical example of Southern Railway's (SR) open goods type of wagon. It was built to carry general merchandise although, if no purpose-built mineral wagons were available, it could be used to carry coal. Under SR's Chief mechanical Engineer R E L Maunsell, eight different versions of the 8-plank open wagon were constructed.

S 37064 was built at Ashford Carriage & Wagon Works, to diagram 1398, in Lot Number A864 and was outshopped in 1936. Lot A864 was ordered on 30th April 1935 and comprised 250 vehicles constructed (very quickly!) between December 1935 and January 1936 numbered S 37051 to S 37300. Diagram 1398 was the first to have the (until then) 9 ft standard wheelbase extended to 10 ft with a tare weight of 7 tons 5 cwt.

S 37064 was based on SR's standard 17 ft 6 ins underframe, designed to carry up to 13 Tons of materials and had sheet (tarpaulin) supports which were used when goods being carried needed protection from adverse weather. All Lot 864 vehicles were equipped with vacuum brakes as they were intended for newly introduced faster freight services. One 7 inch vacuum cylinder acted upon four brake blocks – one for each wheel.

In general service it seems S 37064's duties were unremarkable. In any event, no details have been discovered apart from the fact that S 37064 was withdrawn from revenue earning service by SR sometime in 1942. It was then transferred to it's Departmental Service as a Mechanical & Electrical Engineers Stores wagon. It was renumbered ADS 1756 for this purpose and carried stores for the various Works at Ashford, Brighton and Eastleigh.

ADS 1756 (S 37064) was noted at Eastleigh Works during a visit on Saturday 27th June 1970. After withdrawal from Departmental duties it was condemned and then sold to the Kent & East Sussex Railway arriving at Tenterden in spring 1984. It was restored and allocated KESR number 147 being noted at Northiam on a couple of days in 1992.

It was purchased from the KESR for use on the Swanage Railway where it arrived during the late 1990's. It was restored to SR's vacuum braked vehicle original livery of Bauxite with it's S 37064 number.

Over several years, it's main duties have involved the movement of locomotive ash and clinker from the Swanage loco shed area. It's contents would then be unloaded along the line to help 'bolster' various embankments or create safe(r) walking routes along the lineside.

On Wednesday 7th August 2024 it was extracted from storage in Woodpecker Siding and moved the short distance to Arne Road Siding. There it awaited road transport to come and move it to the North Dorset Railway based at Shillingstone station

Information compiled by Peter Sykes - 19th August 2024

and checked by Jeremy Weller