

SR BOGIE GOODS BRAKE VAN S 56284

S 56284 was built to Southern Railway (SR) diagram No. 1550 as part of Lot No. A867 comprising a batch of 25 bogie brake vans numbered 56282-56306. The underframe had been constructed by SR's Carriage and Wagon Works at Lancing in Sussex then transported to Ashford for completion of everything else. S 56284 was outshopped from the SR wagon works at Ashford in Kent during the summer of 1936.

The bogies were a heavy-duty version of the standard SR carriage bogie with both of them being equipped with vacuum brakes. Sand boxes were installed at each end outside the large Guard's compartment 'verandahs', with delivery pipes down near the rails. The use of sand aided braking effectiveness during poor railhead conditions.

The overall design was specific to SR enabling easier operation of their fast fitted goods trains which had to be interspersed with many express passenger trains. Standard four wheeled vans were not considered suitable. As a result, they were officially designated '*Bogie Goods Brake Vans, Express Service*' and Guards soon took to them, duly appreciating their much better riding characteristics. Despite the Guard's compartment being slightly bigger the only additional equipment installed was the emergency vacuum brake 'setter' and vacuum brake pipe gauge.

They were regularly rostered for the fastest Goods Trains, many of which would be timed for up to 75 mph, as well as mail and parcels trains where time was of the essence. The Southern also had a lot of perishables traffic which needed to be worked in fast (brake-) fitted trains. Additionally, there was plenty of similar traffic to/from the continent to be dropped off/picked up at Dover and even more arising at Southampton.

Generally, SR was primarily a passenger railway but it carried a lot of traffic that needed rapid movement scheduled between regular passenger services. Many of the Goods Trains from Southampton and Weymouth (Channel Islands perishables) would be hauled by the SR's S15 and H15 locos or, later, by BR Class 5 4-6-0's to Feltham Yard. Generally wagons would be sorted here, if going further afield, or run direct to Nine Elms Goods Depot if destined for London.

At some stage S 56284 was withdrawn from revenue earning service being transferred to Departmental Service. It served the Mechanical Engineering section being renumbered ADS 56284 and was painted in BR Engineers Grey livery with a Light Grey scheme for the upper panels.

It was seen in the sidings at Guildford Yard, on Wednesday 4th July 1979, stabled outside the former Bowyer & Baker Ltd, corn merchants building. A photograph was taken of it whilst in Clapham Junction sidings in 1981.

ADS 56284 was believed to be one of three 'Queen Mary' brake vans hauled by USA class 0-6-0T loco number 30072, along with ADS 56289, which gave rides along a

lengthy siding during the “Woking 150” special event on 28th and 29th May 1988.

As part of British Rail's privatisation, Eastleigh Works was acquired from British Rail Engineering Limited through a management buyout in June 1995. The business was rebranded Wessex Traincare Limited but, three years later, it was sold to Alstom being renamed Alstom Wessex Traincare Ltd.

ADS 56284 had latterly been based there and carried the stencilled description “WTL” on each side. It was purchased and brought to Swanage where it waited its turn in the restoration queue. This was achieved and 56284 was outshopped in Bauxite livery.

It has since formed part of the Swanage Railway's demonstration goods train seen in various steam galas over the years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Swanage Railway Stock Books

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