

# On Her Majesty's Service

WASC 1807

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Addressed to Dr John Jenkin

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Friday 1st July 1988

Dear John,

Sorry not to have been in touch for a while; I have been making enquiries among the Industrial Railway Society's records in the hope of adding something to the Waltham Abbey story. I have managed to solve one mystery, that of the 1930's battery locos, and I may as well itemise the information as follows:

Edison loco: I regret that no further information seems to be forthcoming on this, although I still believe it was an early Wingrove and Rogers /BEV loco.

1930's locos: I suspected that the unidentified locos supplied in the 30's may have been WR/BEV products, and it turns out that they were. There were five, supplied in 1937 to 'Royal Gunpowder and Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock' and I feel these fit the bill for the missing locos your article refers to. They were WR's Type W117, 4-wheel outside frame locos with shaft drive to each axle, weight i.w.o.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons, maximum load hauled 10 to 15 tons. Works numbers were 1043 and 1044 delivered on 31.7.37, while 1045, 1046 and 1047 were delivered on 31.8.37. *smallly used to haul ...*

Loco disposals: No disposal details for battery locos except to say that at least three of the Greenwood & Batley locos were still on site (if not in use) in 1958. An interesting point has turned up regarding one of the Ruston locos, 51901 to be exact. It seems to have turned up in 1933 at the Oakeley slate quarries in North Wales, but the story is far from straightforward. A Ruston loco was offered for sale in October 1933 by Harry Gardam of Staines, a plant dealer, and went to Oakeley quarries in November of that year; the number is believed to have been 51901 which would mean it was one of the RGPF locos. What complicates the story is that the gauge was given as 2ft, while of course the RGPF locos were 18in, however the correspondence at Oakeley apparently makes no mention of the loco being re-gauged; unless of course it had been re-gauged before dealer Gardam got it. There is always the possibility that the Oakeley loco was not 51901 at all (when consulted, the makers claimed it was built in 1925 which would be wrong) but I think that only a limited number of Ruston Proctor works numbers were applied to locomotives and it may be there were no other 'similar' numbers which could cause confusion, eg. if the maker's plate was damaged. I have the name of a contact at Ruston's and will see if they can shed any light.

Rail traffic at Enfield lock: The rail connection from the main line at Brimsdown may have been put in as late as 1917, coinciding with the extensions of the

18in gauge system at the RGPF. I have another contact who may be able to give more detail on the standard gauge connection although of course we don't want to get too involved with historical matters at Enfield when the main purpose of the article is to describe the RGPF system. It seems that Enfield had at least two standard gauge locos; first a 4w petrol loco built by Muir Hill (A120 of 1925) then a 4w diesel by Ruston Hornsby (187077 of 1938); no disposals known for either, while apparently an IRS note reads '3 diesels here gone for scrap, last one went 1966, line closed c1963-64.'

This does not answer the question of how the standard gauge connection to the RGPF was worked during the First War, possibly by horses or, at a pinch, by Great Eastern locomotives although their activities may have been very restricted considering the nature of the loads carried!

Cableway: I am sending you a copy of the 'cableway' item, which seems to refer to Waltham Abbey; it would be nice to know exactly where this was although I suppose it is of limited railway interest.

Drawings: As time allows I have been studying the material you sent, and have made good progress with a drawing of the Hudson wagon. The dimensioned sketches you sent were just the job, and the drawing should be quite satisfactory when finished. I agree that the bogie wagon illustrated in the little book on Woolwich is very similar to the RGPF ones, but I wonder whether it is safe to assume that they were the same? Unfortunately it is not now possible to contact Hudson's diplomatically because they are in receivership. Once the next issue of the 'Industrial Railway Record' has been completed I will spend some time on the RGPF drawings, and will send copies for your approval when available. I am not quite sure what format some of these will take, but most (eg the swing bridges) should be straightforward enough.

Photos: At first I had doubts as to whether we could use colour prints in the 'Record'; we certainly can't afford to reproduce them in colour and I wasn't sure whether the printers can make a b/w half-tone neg off a colour print. I have checked with the printers and it seems they can, which is a relief because I wouldn't want you to have to do all the photos again in black and white, with all the associated security problems etc. So there is no problem there.

I hope to have a few more points to pass on before too long, and with luck a few drawings. I can't say at the moment when the work is likely to appear in print, because we need to clear up some aspects of the text, however we are getting there; and the more loose ends we tidy up now the better the finished article will be.

All best wishes for now,

Sincerely

*Peter Holmes*

ROYAL GUN POWDER FACTORY, WALTHAM ABBEYLOCO LIST

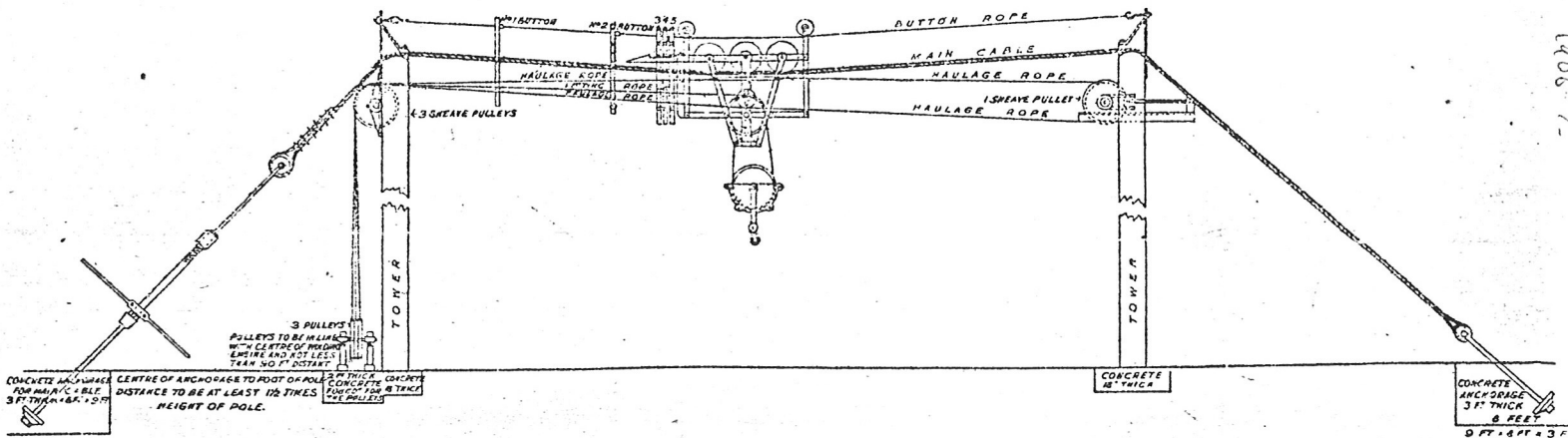
Gauge: 18 inches

4w Paraffin	RP	51697	30. 1.1917	New	
4w Paraffin	RP	51707	16. 3.1917	New	
4w Paraffin	RP	51901	28. 9.1917	New	To Oakeley??
4w Paraffin	RP	51927	29.10.1917	New	
4w Battery	'Edison'		?	?	
4w Battery	BEV	1043	31. 7.1937	New	
4w Battery	BEV	1044	31. 7.1937	New	
4w Battery	BEV	1045	31. 8.1937	New	
4w Battery	BEV	1046	31. 8.1937	New	
4w Battery	BEV	1047	31. 8.1937	New	
4w Battery	GB	1668	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1669	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1670	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1671	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1672	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1673	1940	New	
4w Battery	GB	1851	1942	New	
4w Battery	GB	1852	1942	New	
4w Battery	GB	1861	1942	New	
4w Battery	GB	1862	1942	New	

Also: BEV 59 of 1918, a battery vehicle; not clear whether this was a locomotive or a flat platform truck. If a locomotive, it could be the same machine as the 'Edison' listed above which has certain BEV features. If it was actually a flat truck it is debateable whether it should be listed as a 'loco' at all.

Trans. Liverpool Eng Soc  
28, 198 et seq, 01906-7.

SKETCH SHOWING THE ARRANGEMENTS OF VARIOUS ROPES ON BLONDIN  
ANCHORAGES, CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS, TOWERS, ETC



ENTERED AT  
STATIONERS HALL.

FIG. 31.

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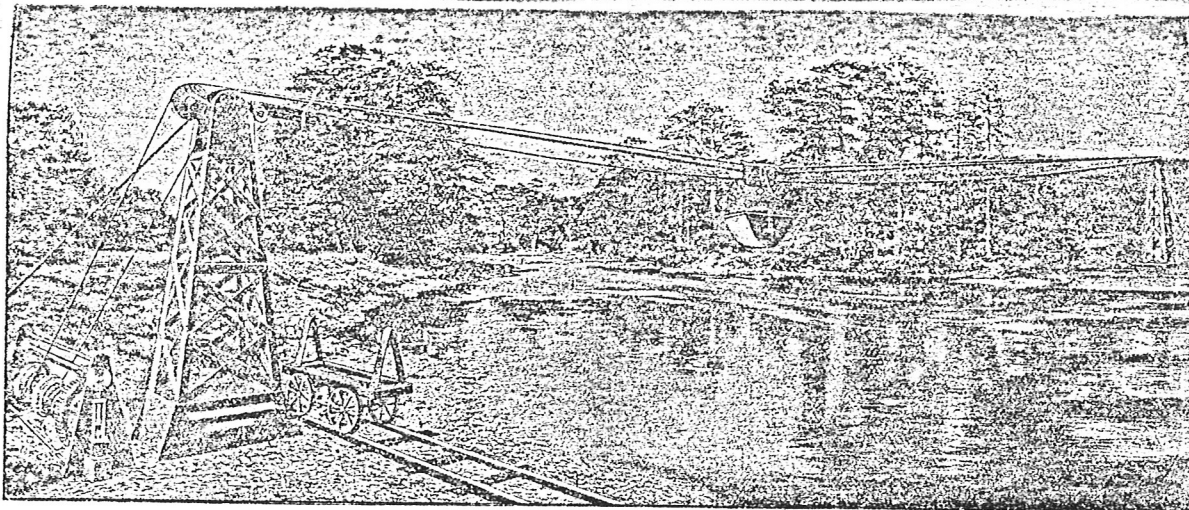


FIG. 34.

Hook-borne lifting and traversing Cableway.

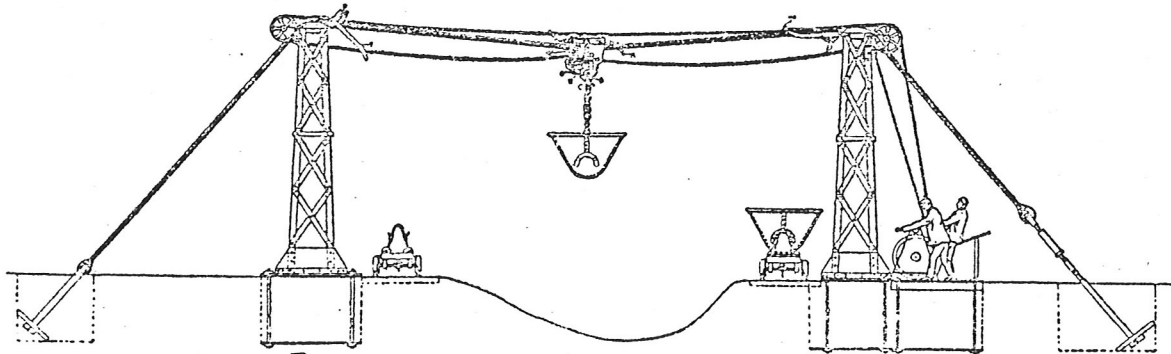


FIG. 35.

WHITE ON AERIAL ROPEWAYS AND CABLEWAYS.

W. White & Co.  
White.

W. White & Co.  
White.