

# WHAT REALLY HAPPEN

## Can you help?

Exclusive revelations in *The Railway Magazine* in recent years concerning inaccurate steam locomotive disposal records have caused a sensation among enthusiasts and historians – but we can now reveal that there are also numerous diesel locos whose scrapping details are shrouded in mystery. **Peter Hall** provides the details.

**D**URING the last five years, *The Railway Magazine* has carried a number of articles under the heading ‘What Really Happened to Steam’, detailing efforts to research afresh the disposal of the BR steam locomotive fleet in the 1960s.

Work by a group known as the HSBT project has revealed that a significant number of facts that have appeared in print are simply not correct (see *The RM* for November 2009, October 2010 and May 2013).

A few of the errors can be explained by typographical mistakes, but the majority are the result of fabrications by a rogue historian.

Now an increasing amount of evidence is emerging to show that a number of published storage and scrapping details for some of Britain’s 5,000 or so diesels and electrics are not correct either.

In the late 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, *The Railway Observer*, journal of the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society (RCTS) was very prominent in recording diesel disposals and I believe it is fair to say that had tremendous efforts not been made by the society’s then ‘Withdrawn Locomotives’ editorial representative, Peter Trushell, much of the information we now have would not have come to light. In recent years, the RCTS has also included the results of research undertaken so far into the disposals of a number of diesel locos, as well as querying others, in the ‘Diesel Dilemmas’ section of its website ([www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels/](http://www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels/)).

### Mystery

For main line locos, most of the date and location errors have been found to be due either to repetition of typographical errors or by misinterpretation by authors of previously published information, not realising that corrections had subsequently appeared elsewhere. Disposal queries recently solved by the RCTS for D5908, D6146, 33203, 40173, 47089 and 56015 are good examples of this. Remarkably, the main line locomotive disposal most persistently still wrongly quoted is that of D0260 *Lion* (see separate panel on p32).

Matters are far less clear for a significant number of diesel shunters, particularly those disposed of in the late 1960s and early ’70s, when British Rail was sending vast numbers of locomotives for scrap.

The most intriguing mystery involves the identities of locos exported to Italy, particularly those for use by Rome-based infrastructure contractor Attilio Rossi. Above right is a photo taken at Albate Camerlata, north of Milan, in 1974 depicting what, in the opinion of those



**Above: BR Type 2 No. D5139 was one of four Class 24s written off after a runaway incident at Chester depot in July 1969 – but where was it cut up? It is pictured at Crewe on June 14, 1961. D FORSYTH/COLOUR-RAIL.COM**



**Right: Was D2042 (whose sister is pictured here) scrapped at Kentish Town or not? See panel on p31. TRANSPORT TREASURY.CO.UK**



**One of the most intriguing mysteries of all concerns this unidentifiable Class 10 shunter, photographed in Italy in 1974. See text below. ROBERTO COCCHI**



**Only two BR shunters are known to have been photographed in Scottish scrapyards! This is one of them; D2725 at Inshaw works, Wishaw, in 1967. KEITH ROMIG**

who have studied it carefully, is a BR Class 10 from the D3137-D3145 or D3152-D3166 batches. What is curious is that all the locos in those two batches, along with all the other Class 10s that did not survive into industry or preservation after 1974, are accounted for – so what is the identity of this loco and how did it find its way to Italy, and when? The assumption has to be that one of the already listed disposals for Class 10 is incorrect.

Attilio Rossi also operated at least one

ex-BR Class 04, but was it No. D2232, as always quoted, or was it actually D2242 (or possibly another 04)? If it was D2242, then was D2232 scrapped along with D2321 at Cohen’s Middlesbrough yard in 1969, or elsewhere?

D2242 was last known to be at Booth’s Rotherham yard in August 1971... and most disposal books record it as having been scrapped there shortly afterwards, but one gives its disposal as Shipbreaking, of Queenborough, Kent – and *The Railway*

# ED TO THESE DIESELS?



**Above: This damage, sustained in a collision on the Midland Main Line in 1965, resulted in BRCW Type 2 No. D5383 reportedly being sent from Derby Works to Cashmore's, of Great Bridge... but it doesn't appear in the scrap firm's records. R MABEY/ COLOUR-RAIL**



**Left: Class 08 shunter No. 3093; was it sent to Kettering, Swindon or elsewhere for cutting? Your help is needed. COLOUR-RAIL**



**Did an Italian adventure lie ahead for Class 04 No. D2232 when it was pictured on this trip working in the Newcastle area circa 1967? Upon withdrawal from Gateshead in early '68, it is believed to have gone to Cohen's, Middlesbrough – but was it cut there or was it exported to Attilio Rossi, of Italy? If not, which Class 04 was? TRANSPORT TREASURY.CO.UK**

*Observer* records that one of the shunter's builders' plates was seen there.

So, was it not scrapped at all but shipped from the Kent coast to Italy? Does anyone have photographic or other evidence of it being moved south from Yorkshire?

In fact, any sightings of ex-BR shunters at Queenborough or in Italy are required.

The more one delves into the subject of diesel locomotive disposals, the more anomalies emerge. At the time, many BR locos

were being acquired by companies dealing in component re-sale and export, such as R E Trem Ltd, of Finningley, South Yorkshire, and Hartwood Finance, of Barnsley, which then distributed them to various scrap merchants for dismantling. Also, scrap merchants possessing several different yards would buy centrally, so a reference to a loco being disposed of to George Cohen, for example, could easily have been taken to mean that company's Kettering yard, when in fact it might have been consigned to

THERE are believed to be as many as 200 diesel locomotives whose disposal details are uncertain or unknown and it is hoped that the definitive list will be ready to publish in *The RM* later this year. For now, here is a selection of the more high-profile examples in the hope that our readers can assist:

**D2002/D2003/D2031/D2042:** All reported cut up at Kentish Town in September 1969, but confirmation or photographic evidence is required as it could well be that they were only there while in transit to other yards.

**D2232 and D2242:** Sightings and information required for D2232 following its arrival at Middlesbrough in February 1969, and for D2242 from August 1971, after it was last seen at C F Booth, Rotherham. (See also main text).

**D2593:** Reported cut at Hunslet, Leeds, in Sep/Oct 1968. However, it was sold via R E Trem Ltd and so was almost certainly cut in the Scottish yard of Campbell's, of Airdrie.

**D2724 and D2745:** Both were noted in Scotland three months after their published disposal at Slag Reduction, of Ickles, near Rotherham. Were they sold to a Scottish yard?

**D3093:** Reported sold to Cohen's, Kettering, in January 1974 but no sightings to confirm this. It has also been reported as ticketed for movement to Swindon Works, but no reports of it there have emerged either.

**D3117:** Reported sold to Cashmore Ltd, of Great Bridge, West Midlands, in October 1967, but does not appear in that company's registers.

**D3193:** This is understood to have been scrapped at Derby Works in September 1967 – five years before any other Class 08 and at a time when other condemned locos at the works were being offered for scrap by tender. Confirmation is required as to whether it was indeed cut there, and why?

**D3621:** There is no evidence that this ever arrived at Booth's of Rotherham in November 1969. Given the fact that the last sighting of it was on November 2 at Doncaster depot along with D3639/D3649 for export via C F Booth of Doncaster, was it cut at Booth's Doncaster yard or was it too exported? Although there are several references to locos being cut up at Booth's Doncaster yard, no evidence or observation to support this has emerged.

**D5043/D5093/D5138/D5139:** All four were damaged in an accident on July 9, 1969 when a runaway coal train was diverted into Chester depot and hit locos standing on the shed's fuelling line. They were reported sold and moved (minus power units) to Cashmore's, of Great Bridge, in May/June 1970, but no observations have been traced confirming this – so were they in fact cut up completely at Chester with only their dismantled remains sent to Great Bridge for final disposal?

**D5383:** This locomotive was damaged in an accident at East Langton, Leicestershire, in August 1965 and withdrawn the following January after a period in Derby Works yard. It is recorded as disposed to Cashmore's, Great Bridge, in June 1967, but is not in the company's register.

**D9501:** The movements of this loco after it disappeared from store in Worcester MPD on October 29, 1968, cannot be traced. It does not appear to have been sold to R E Trem Ltd, even though reported as such. This would place a question mark over whether it did in fact go in December of that year to Booth's of Rotherham, most of whose locos at the time were bought via Trem. An alternative disposal to A King & Son, of Norwich, has not so far been verified.

**E2001:** This electric loco is also causing doubt. Although recorded as scrapped at Cashmore's, Great Bridge, in the winter of 1972/73, no documental or observational confirmation has emerged. So was it scrapped there or was it cut up on site at the former Rugby testing station or elsewhere?

# WAS LION SHIPPED TO AMERICA?

MYSTERY and intrigue still surround the final months of one of Britain's most striking diesel locomotives – the white-liveried prototype D0260 *Lion*.

The story of this BRCW-built Type 4 was told in the September 2013 edition of *The RM*. It entered traffic with British Railways in May 1962 but its main line career was dogged by teething problems and it hauled its last train in early 1964. Since then, many publications have wrongly recorded it as having been scrapped in November 1963 at BRCW's Smethwick works, but that is simply not possible as it was working regularly between King's Cross and Sheffield the following month!

It was also still in service on the East Coast Main Line during January 1964 and possibly so in early February. The last reported sighting was on February 13, 1964, when it was spotted in the consist of train OD01, a Finsbury Park to Doncaster Plant working hauled by 'Deltic' No. D9008.

The origin of the oft-quoted 1963 scrapping myth is a letter written in 1978 by a rogue correspondent known to have falsified the disposal

details of many steam locomotives and now, it seems, some early diesels too (see main text).

Fortunately, the myth was not repeated in the *RM* article, which recorded final scrapping as taking place in TW Ward's Beighton, Sheffield, yard during spring 1965. Even that, though, is not quite correct as it is now known that the bodysell and bogies were cut up in Ward's nearby Attercliffe yard after AEI and Sulzer had removed the power unit and other major components at AEI's adjacent Attercliffe Common premises. The exact date in 1965 on which the bodysell and bogies were cut is still unknown.

Perhaps the most extraordinary mystery surrounding *Lion*, though, concerns its whereabouts between February 1964 and spring 1965.

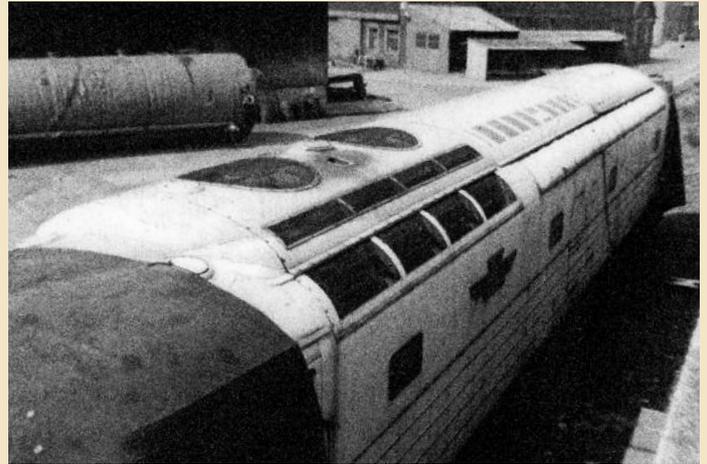
The photo on the right shows it in AEI's Attercliffe yard and photographer John Wade is pretty sure he took it in April 1965. At the moment, there are no other sightings for the whole of that period and eye-witness accounts suggest that the loco only arrived there shortly before this picture was taken. However, there is now a remarkable

school of thought that D0260 was shipped to the United States of America to try to drum up export sales. If so, it seems odd that no photos of it in the USA have come to light, but it is believed that the shipment was made under wraps and that the visit was hushed up in case export sales failed to materialise.

BRCW is known to have moved out

of manufacturing in order to become a financial services company in 1963, so was no longer interested in D0260. The unsuccessful export efforts are therefore more likely to have been instigated by AEI/Sulzer.

Could the tarpaulins in the photo below have been used to protect the loco's cabs from the elements during an Atlantic sea crossing?



One of only two known photographs of BRCW Type 4 prototype No. D0260 *Lion* in the Attercliffe yard of Associated Electrical Industries (AEI) circa April 1965. JOHN WADE

one of several other yards operated by the Cohen company. D3093, another mystery locomotive, will probably turn out to be such an example.

In the mid-1970s, *The Railway Observer* published listings of locomotives for which disposals were not known. Answers were duly supplied, but, worryingly, documents recently examined by the HSBT Project team suggest that many of those were supplied by the same rogue correspondent who supplied the answers for similar lists for steam locomotives.

An example of this is BR Departmental 0-4-0 shunter ED2 (see panel below).

Over the years, tremendous efforts have been made into researching the fraught subject

of diesel disposals by the likes of Peter Trushell, myself and numerous railway authors and historians. Now the whole subject is being taken forward on behalf of the HSBT team by John Hall and fellow Engine Shed Society members Roger Butcher and myself. The only way to get to the bottom of these discrepancies is to go back to basics and we are thus hoping that by making readers of the widely circulated *RM* aware of the discrepancies, the missing information will come to light, either from photographs or from personal observations.

Particularly required are photos and/or observations of locos in scrapyards or after withdrawal, especially in Scotland. For instance, of all the ex-BR diesel shunters that

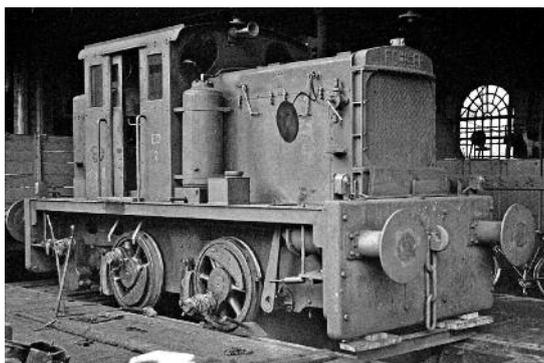
disappeared into Scottish scrapyards, only D2725 and 12107 are 'known' disposals as they are so far the only two known to have been photographed in a scrapyard! There must be more pictures out there, surely?

We also require official documentation, or photocopies thereof. Little BR paperwork has come to light for the years 1967-1973, but it is likely that tender, sale and despatch notices do exist in someone's private collection.

Details are needed from all UK scrapyards, including the Kettering and other yards of George Cohen as it is thought some records from there were fabricated, and also C F Booth's yards at Rotherham and Doncaster for the period prior to 1975. The latter company is

## SOLVED: THE ED2 MYSTERY

FALSE information supplied by a rogue correspondent some years ago stated that BR Departmental 0-4-0 shunter ED2 was scrapped at Derby Works in February 1965. However, two recently unearthed official BR letters, along with an eye-witness account, confirm this to be untrue. The documents (one



of which is reproduced on the right) show that it was sold by BR to G Cohen on December 7, 1967 and despatched on February 5, 1968 to that company's little-known Rotherham yard. Picture: COLOUR-RAIL.COM

**British Railways**

to C.M. & E.S., Nelson Street, DERBY.		o/r DP4/3/3 date 14.2.68 from Movements Manager, DERBY. ext 056-2352
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**SALE OF CONDEMNED LOCOMOTIVES**  
 WEEK ENDED 10TH FEBRUARY, 1968.

The undermentioned condemned locomotives were despatched to  
 Private Buyers during the week:-

Loco No.	From	Firm to which sold	Date of Despatch
E.D.2	Derby	G. Cohen Sons & Co. Ltd., 600 Wood Lane, London. W.12	5.2.68



Further information on the Lion riddle can be found on websites [www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels/loco.htm?id=diesels/lion](http://www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels/loco.htm?id=diesels/lion) and [http://www.class47.co.uk/c47\\_feature\\_425\\_NEW.php](http://www.class47.co.uk/c47_feature_425_NEW.php) Other interesting sites include the Engine Shed Society ([www.engineshedsociety.co.uk](http://www.engineshedsociety.co.uk)); What Really Happened to Steam ([www.whatreallyhappenedtosteam.co.uk](http://www.whatreallyhappenedtosteam.co.uk)); RCTS Diesel Dilemmas ([www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels](http://www.rcts.org.uk/features/diesels)).

The white-liveried prototype *Lion* is probably the highest-profile of all the modern traction locomotives whose disposal details are still unclear. Looking a little worse for wear but still officially in BR service, the BRCW-built loco is seen at BR's Doncaster Works in October 1963 during one of its visits to the plant for attention. COLOUR-RAIL

still in business, but its pre-1975 company records no longer exist, so did you visit the yards in those days?

Because many scrapyards had definitive delivery sidings from where locos were tripped into a yard for final disposal, any observations of withdrawn locos at a BR Works, on a depot's dump line or elsewhere would be useful in pinpointing movements after withdrawal and timescales for delivery/disposal.

So, if you've ever been baffled because entries you made in your notebooks at the time do not correlate with what has since been published, now is the time to get in touch before such information is lost for ever. Please be aware that we are in possession of every commercially sold and society-produced book and booklet published on this subject, so please do not send information from those, even if it appears to answer or contradict what is written

in this article. The HSBT project is not yet ready to produce its own definitive list of queries as John Hall has not yet completed his intensive and time-consuming analysis of original documentation, but in the meantime, a small number of those identified are detailed in a separate panel on page 31.

Please send anything at all that you think will be useful (especially photographs or observation notes) to *The Railway Magazine* editorial address marked for the personal attention of the editor. We will forward it on immediately to the researchers concerned and – at a later date when the researchers have finished their work – we will make all the corrected information public for the benefit of everybody.

Remember, it just might be YOU who holds the vital clue to solving one of these missing links in British railway history. ■



Left: From 1969 to 1972, Class 80 No. E2001 was dumped in the vicinity of the closed Akeman Street station, south of Grendon Underwood Junction on the former Great Central in rural Buckinghamshire. In 1972, it was moved to the former testing station site at Rugby. Was it cut up on site there or was it sent for scrapping to John Cashmore's Great Bridge yard or elsewhere? COLOUR-RAIL.COM

## AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RCTS AND 'WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO STEAM'

AGREEMENT has been reached between the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society and What Really Happened to Steam, the HSBT team attempting to verify the disposals of steam locomotives in the 1960s.

In a statement, the RCTS's management committee says it has been clear for some time that some of the information available on the disposal of steam locomotives, primarily listed in the many volumes of 'What Happened to Steam', was seriously flawed and that, as a respected publisher, it accepts full responsibility for mistakes that subsequently found their way into some of its own publications.

"We are working with the HSBT team to agree how best to correct and publish any errors which the society might have unintentionally perpetrated. We will publish the corrected information in a future edition of the *Railway Observer*."

On behalf of the HSBT team, Roger Butcher said: "I am obviously very pleased that the RCTS has now agreed that its original decision in 2010/11 to not accept our work was a mistake. I would particularly like to thank Peter Fortune, the society's publicity officer, for his determination to reach this agreement. In addition I must mention the efforts of Bernie Holland, Geoff Plumb and Derek Plumb of the RCTS Watford branch. We can all move on now."