LNER COACH ASSOCIATION

NER Luggage Composite No. 1111

1890

The oldest carriage on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and, indeed, those under the wing of the LNERCA is NER No. 1111

Dereliction at Bishop Auckland in 1973. NER No. 1111 had survived for almost an incredible 50 years as a departmental vehicle, numbered DE 900192. The reason for the removal of its middle wheelset is unknown, although likely removed to provide a spare for another 6-wheeler. The coach was unfit to travel and BR intended it was to be broken up on site, but, fortunately, the restorers got there first. Photo. Peter Brumby.

Luggage Composite No. 1111 was built at York in 1890 – indeed, all NER coach building was concentrated at its York Carriage Works which went on to be the main LNER carriage works after the 'Grouping in 1923.
Built to NER Diagram 9, the carriage had two Third class compartments, two First class, and a luggage compartment.
With the introduction of the standard 32-foot (9.8 m) 6-wheeled coaches NER carriage livery was standardised as 'deep crimson' (a deeper colour with more blue in it than that used by the Midland Railway), lined with cream, edged on both sides with a thin vermillion line. For a time the cream was replaced with gold leaf. Lettering ('N.E.R.' or when there was sufficient space 'North Eastern Railway' in full, together with 'First', 'Third' and 'Luggage Compt.' on the appropriate door) and numbering; was in strongly seried characters, blocked and shaded to give a 3D effect.
With the NER's ample supply of bogied carriages, six wheel coaches were reserved for strengthening and excursion trains.

NER No. 1111's only journey on the NYMR was from New Bridge, Pickering, to Levisham where it has resided ever since. This view shows the Luggage Composite carriage having arrived from Bishop Auckland and awaiting unloading at New Bridge. Photo. Peter Brumby.

With its surroundings at Levisham station, beautifully restored in North Eastern Railway livery with memorabilia to augment, including the magnificent NER slotted post signals, No. 1111 could not be at a better location and earns its keep as a workshop for the Levisham Station Group. One day, its middle wheelset will be put back.

Like virtually all carriages, and opposite to locomotives, the history of No. 111 is not to be found. That is until 1924.

No. 1111's long life was inevitably occasioned by its transfer to departmental use when withdrawn from passenger service in 1924. It was converted to become a Tool Van for use with a breakdown train and given the number DE 900192. It is believed at this time, its middle wheelset was removed but for what reason is not known.

It is therefore quite remarkable that it remained in this use for a period of all but 50 years until finally withdrawn at Bishop Auckland on May 19 1973.

It was clearly not fit to be moved at this juncture and was earmarked to be broken up on site. There is no indication it had been given an Internal User number, i.e not permitted to leave the depot confines. Luckily, it had been spotted by a member of the North Eastern Railway Coach Group, Graham Holt, who made inquiries to buy it. The NERCG already had its hands full with NER 3453 and the imminent acquisition of NER 945 - so four individuals of the group clubbed together to secure No. 1111 as joint owners.

DE 900192 arrived by road at Pickering, New Bridge, to begin its preservation life on the NYMR and was taken to Levisham where it has resided ever since.

The third wheelset and all fittings (except bearings) were acquired from a condemned NER van at Sheffield Darnall, with the intention of eventually re-instating the missing wheelset.
Some initial work was done on replacing external panels, but after a while it was handed on long term loan to the Levisham Station Group for use as a small workshop and store. They applied a protective covering of roofing felt and have generally looked after the vehicle.
Meanwhile, the owners have collected other spare parts - doors, locks, door handles, interior wood mouldings (including first class), unused (!) wooden buffer collars and two buffer beams.

In 2016, with only Peter Brumby and Graham Holt left of the original four owners, they decided to offer it to LNERCA because there was no realistic prospect of us completing the restoration. The LNERCA gratefully accepted it as No. 1111 will form an important part of the Association's collection. It will stay at Levisham under a 10-year agreement with the Levisham Station Group who will continue to look after it and use it as before.

Murray Brown Founder and Vice Chairman, LNER Coach Association.

If you have enjoyed reading about this historical vehicle, you might like to find out more about the LNER Coach Association, formed in 1979 and affiliated tothe NYMR. We welcome new members and provide a regularly updated website and a quarterly newsletter. For more information please call me – Murray Brown on 01733 578000 or email murray@lnerca.org

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