

GWR 'TOAD' VAN No. 17410

The SVR is an ex-GWR branch line, which handled passenger and freight traffic from its opening in 1862 until closure almost 100 years later in 1962. At the rear of all its goods trains was a Brake Van, an example of the GWR's ubiquitous 'TOAD'. There are currently two of these characterful vans residing on the present day SVR, Nos. 17410 and 68501. Having finally completed the restoration of its last Gresley Teak Carriage, the LNER Carriage Group has taken on the restoration of No.17410.

The design of the 'TOAD' van, originating from 1894, was unique to the GWR and after nationalisation to British Railways Western Region until the end of unfitted freights and the universal availability of rear locomotive cabs for the guard to ride in. The nickname 'TOAD' was derived from the GWR's telegraphic code for a brake van.

TOAD A 17410



Vacuum-brake fitted 20 Ton Goods Brake Van (TOAD) No. 17410 was built at Swindon in 1940 to Diagram AA21. The order of 100 vehicles was financed by the War department, but it went straight into GWR stock and appears from a stencil inside the cabin to have initially been allocated to Cardiff. It passed to BR(W) on Nationalisation, receiving an overhaul at Swindon in 1948 (denoted by a plate on the underframe) and at an unknown date was sold to Oxfordshire Ironstone. Also at an unknown date the sanding gear was removed and more weight added by filling the now empty sandbox containers with scrap brake blocks. It was purchased by the "17410 Fund" and arrived on the SVR in November 1970 from Tipton. Since then it has been used extensively as part of the commercial SVR(H)'s Permanent Way Department until withdrawal due to its by then poor condition early in 2015, after which it lay at Bewdley for a while awaiting repair.

The contributors to the 17410 Fund decided early in 2016 to donate their vehicle to the SVR Charitable Trust for restoration and safekeeping in SVR service, and the LNER Carriage Group undertook to do the job, which after its 45 years' hard work on SVR will be considerable. Much of the steelwork needs repair or replacement, whilst the wheel tyres need turning to remove flats, and the brake rigging needs the usual bush and pin replacement, setting up accurately and overhaul of the vacuum brake cylinder and associated equipment. Similarly, most, if not all of

the woodwork, planking, doors, windows, floor, and interior fittings is well past its best and needs replacement. It will be finished in wartime GWR grey livery, and branded "Stourport on Severn", although if so desired it may appear in its later BR(W) bauxite livery for a period in the future. It's intended to use the Toad in its proper role' as a goods brake van on demonstration freight trains, photo charters, and for brake van rides. With side doors and vacuum brakes 17410 should prove particularly suitable for the latter purpose.

Work has already begun by dismantling the veranda end prior to rebuilding with new materials, and 17410 should shortly be lifted to remove the wheels for tyre turning. A replacement pair of side doors and end window frames has also been constructed, but as always further progress is dependent on finance being raised. Donations towards the estimated £10-15k cost will be gratefully received by the Charitable Trust, via the LNER Carriage Group (via VLO), C/O Platform 1, Bewdley Station, Bewdley DY12 1DP Cheques should be made payable to "SVR Charitable Trust Ltd" and please write "GWR Toad" on the reverse. The attached Gift Aid form can be used by UK taxpayers to allow the SVR Charitable Trust to reclaim the tax that you've paid on your donation during the current financial year. Thank You.

LNER Carriage Group, SVR Charitable Trust.
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