

# The Cumbrian Engines

By Eliot Andersen

## Volume 14 – Cumbrian Diesel Engines

Dear friends,

Although the steam engines are now the press face of our line, the real work horses are our diesels. We have several diesels, and here is a chance for them to shine, and you can see what they get up to as they keep the line running smoothly. We even have our own Virgin Trains Voyager stationed at Carlisle Upperby depot, and Penny the aptly named Pendolino is an almost permanent shed mate of *Cumbrian Voyager*. I hope that you enjoy the stories in this volume, and see how our diesels fare in a variety of situations.

The Author

### **Dramatis Personae**

*Arthur* – BR Class 25 Bo-Bo diesel-electric locomotive, owned by Cumbrian Engines Enterprises

*Calder Hall Power Station* – BR Class 31 A1A-A1A diesel-electric locomotive, owned by Direct Rail Services

*City of Carlisle* – LMS Princess Coronation 8P 4-6-2 steam locomotive, owned by Cumbrian Engines Enterprises

*Ewan* – BR Class 37 Co-Co diesel-electric locomotive, owned by Direct Rail Services

*Huw* – Cowans & Sheldon 20T diesel crane, owned by Direct Rail Services

*Penny* – BR Class 390 “Pendolino” electric multiple unit, operated by Virgin Trains

*Scafell Pike* – BR Class 44 1Co-Co1 diesel-electric locomotive, owned by Cumbrian Engines Enterprises

*Tom, Dick and Harry* – BR Class 20 Bo-Bo diesel-electric locomotives, owned by Direct Rail Services

## Calder goes a-slipping

Diesels are very important on the coastal line. Arthur and Scafell Pike are goods diesels who help Roger and Michael with freight traffic, which is now increasing by the month.

Calder, Tom, Dick & Harry are DRS diesels stationed at Sellafield. They work with the Nuclear flasks, and take them far and wide across the country. They sometimes work at Drigg, which is where the nuclear flasks are buried under the sands.

One day, Calder had been assigned to working at Drigg. Calder didn't like this. He found it dull and lonely, with only the passenger trains going past on the main line for company.

Calder was busy shunting, and he reversed into one of the sidings and felt his wheels spinning on some very slippery rails. His driver braked hard, and got out to inspect the tracks.

After much deliberation, the foreman, fitter and driver decided that when the tide was in, the water seeped through the sand and surfaced at the depression in which the particular siding was located in. Luckily, the tide was going out, and they sanded the rails heavily and Calder was able to collect some of the trucks at the end of the siding, and leaving some more.

He set off south to Ravenglass, where he would be rendezvousing with Tom and Harry for a trip down the West Coast Main Line. He pulled into the station where the brothers stood waiting.

“Here he is; old slow diesel!” chirped Tom.

“It took you long enough.” Chimed in Harry.

Calder rolled his eyes and buffered up to the back of the small train. His driver scratched his head. “This looks very short, don't you think? We could collect some more trucks to add on to save an extra journey?”

So his driver put Calder into reverse and they returned to Drigg to collect the other trucks. They saw them waiting at the end of one of the sidings. Unfortunately, they failed to see which siding they were in. The tide had begun to seep back in, and the sand beneath the siding was now like sludge. Calder rolled forwards, and his driver eased the brake on, but too slow.

Calder went skidding and sliding down the siding, gathering speed, bashing the trucks on and through the buffers, straight into a sand dune, while Calder came off the rails and his front bogie sunk deep in the sludge. The workmen tried to dig away the sand, but it just stuck harder, and it was basically sinking sand.

Calder was frightened. He felt himself being sucked into the sand. Soon, Tom, Dick and Harry had arrived to pull Calder back onto the rails. It took sometime, but he was finally

safe. For a while, Calder never thought he'd hear the end of the triplet's song about it, and it went like this:

*“Calder likes to work so hard,  
He really makes you think,  
That really why on earth would he  
Go off the rails and sink!*

*Well he's too fat and he's too slow,  
He should leave it all to youngsters.  
We hope he won't do it again,  
Yup, he should leave it to us youngsters!”*

## Vandals

Whitehaven is a fairly large town about halfway down the coast line. There are two stations here, Corkickle and Bransty, which is now officially known as Whitehaven. The stations are separated by a long tunnel, nearly a mile long.

Arthur was one day cheerfully rumbling north with a passenger train, heading towards Whitehaven. He journeyed up into the little valley which Whitehaven was in. In the distance was a road bridge over the railway, and Arthur could see some boys on it. As he got nearer, they began throwing pieces of the old bridge wall onto the tracks and then all heaved a shopping trolley onto the line!

“Well, paint me a DRS livery and call me Calder!” exclaimed Arthur, as he crashed into the trolley, and it got pulled under him. The naughty boys cheered and ran away.

Arthur’s front wheels had mangled the trolley up, but the axles were damaged. Arthur’s driver was furious. “I can remember the time when the same boys were small and would just wave happily at us from the bridge. Now they’re sabotaging the service. What on earth is this place coming to?”

All through the week, the engines all reported similar attacks from the same boys at the same place. Thankfully, none had been as severe as the one on Arthur, but the passengers were worried for their safety.

The manager was concerned, and went to the transport police, who agreed to send officers down near the bridge the next day. Some normal policemen went too, to make sure the naughty boys didn’t escape.

The next day, City of Carlisle was approaching the bridge. He could see the boys, and as he saw them readying for a barrage, his driver and fireman stopped the train a good way away from the bridge.

The policemen then jumped into action. They had taken photos of the boys getting ready to throw the rocks and knew who the boys were from previous offences.

The policemen went to see the boys’ parents, and they were very cross. The boys were very sorry, and as a punishment had to clean the coaches in the carriage shed until they’d learnt to be good boys.

One day, Scafell Pike was waiting to depart from Carlisle in Platform 1. A man was rushing about, pulling a suitcase. He was looking for a toilet. The nearest one he could see was a staff one, so he raced in there, but there was trouble.

The door had no handle on the inside, and the man had no key – he was locked in the staff toilet. Once he had done his business, he realised his problem. He then heard the

voice over the intercom saying “The Virgin Trains Service to London Euston is now approaching Platform 3.”

“Hello Penny!” called Scafell Pike to the friendly Pendolino. “Take it easy, kiddo – the line still needs fixing here so that you can go at full speed.”

“I know.” smiled Penny. “It’s only after Preston that I can really pick up speed.”

Meanwhile, the man in the toilet had resorted to desperate measures. He had shouted but nobody had heard, so he lifted up his suitcase and smashed it through the window.

“Good heavens, there’s a man trapped in there!” Penny shouted.

“Argh, don’t leave without me!” the man spluttered, trying to heave himself up through the window.

A nearby transport policeman arrived at the window with the station master. “I hope you’ve got your wallet, sir, as I’d like you to pay for the damages before you leave, as you’re in such of a rush.” smiled the policeman.

The man apologised and hastily thrust the money into the station master’s hand, before getting into Penny, quite embarrassed.

“Well,” smiled Scafell Pike. “Some people will go to any extremes to catch a train.”

“They certainly will.” replied Penny, and she departed the station giving a cheery toot of her horn.

## **New Diesel on the Block**

Ewan the diesel rolled sadly down the Cumbrian Coast line. He was feeling depressed. He had just been gotten rid of by EWS, as they were modernising their fleet. All of his friends had tried to save him, but it had been no use. Ewan didn't know where he was going to work now, and he felt as if everyone thought he was old and useless.

Suddenly, he realised he was being reversed into a shed. He looked around and saw three diesel brothers looking at him.

"It must be miracle week, this week!" chortled one.

"Yup, I think you're right!" agreed another.

"First Calder playing in his sandpit and now Ewan coming to help us!" put in the last one.

"Coming to help you?!" exclaimed Ewan, "What sort of silly trick are you pulling this time, Tom? Or is it Dick? Or are you Harry?"

The three triplets all laughed. "Well, manager said that a new engine was coming permanently to be stationed here with us and Oldie-One Kenobi, who's just gone gallivanting to Kingmoor depot after his royal highness decided to play in the sand at Drigg."

"Oldie-One Kenobi?" asked Ewan.

"Calder, the silly old thing." smiled Tom.

"Didn't you hear about what happened last week?" asked Dick.

"Come to mention it, I did hear Arthur and Jack discussing Calder being a bit careless." said Ewan thoughtfully.

The door at the back of the shed opened and the manager walked in with Ewan's new driver. "Ah, I'm glad that it's you that they sent, Ewan." said the manager.

"Well, you're a sight for sore eyes, sir!" laughed Ewan.

The Triplets looked confused. "You two know each other? How?" they enquired.

"Ah, this is Davey Scott, and his dad used to be my driver many years ago." Ewan told them.

"And that's not all," continued Mr Scott. "I always wanted to have an engine of my own, and now Ewan's in our fleet, I'm a very happy man."

“So, what would you like me to do first?” asked Ewan eagerly.

“We’re collecting a line of trucks and taking them to Lancaster.” his driver replied.

“Ah, just the sort of job that sounds interesting.” Ewan smiled. “Cheerio then, you three, and he tooted away.

## Bomb-Scare

There is always construction going on at Sellafield. New offices and buildings are being built all the time, and the rock and soil that is cleared for the new structures is taken away by rail.

One day, Ewan was waiting until some of his trucks were filled up with rock, when the site manager and the foreman came along. They were discussing a very big rock that stood where the new building would be.

“I do agree with you, Jim, we really do need a little bright open space so that the workers can have a bit of relaxing time out in the open during their breaks. If we had a statue made from that rock, it would really make it an impressive place to be.”

The foreman came to see Ewan’s driver. “Right, we’ll need a flat truck to put that rock on, and then it’ll need taken to one of the far sidings by the station, just offsite.”

“Excuse me, sir.” asked Ewan, “but how about we let the triplets take it – it’ll make them feel important.”

“Oh, very well, as long as it gets moved, that’s all.” sighed the foreman.

Ewan then went to the shed. “Oi, you three!” he called. “The foreman wants you to take a special load to that siding over by the station, but be careful with it; I think it could be an old bomb that they’ve uncovered!”

Tom, Dick and Harry were excited. They collected their truck and raced to find their load. Huw the crane was being very careful as he loaded it up.

“Now, the foreman says that it has to be handled with care, it could go off any time and smash.” Huw warned.

The triplets were very gentle as they set off. The rock hadn’t been tied down as it had an unsuitable shape for the chains.

“Tom, you’re pulling to hard!” hissed Harry.

“You needn’t talk, Harry,” put in Dick, “You’re bashing your buffers with the truck.”

“Come on, concentrate!” snapped Tom. “The last thing we want is to be blown to smithereens!”

It was a strange sight to behold – the triplets working together, without shouting, without teasing, without grumbling, and without causing havoc. Ewan had explained the situation to Calder, and the two tried to hold back giggles as the triplets pushed the truck gently into the siding, and were uncoupled.

Several days later, the manager called all the engines to the station, where he unveiled the new statue – it was of the three different types of diesel, a 20 for the triplets, a 31 for Calder and a 37 for Ewan.

“Well, that’s a funny shaped bomb.” remarked Tom.

“Must be a homing missile.” whispered Harry.

“Let’s get out of here before it goes off.” said Dick.

Ewan and Calder said nothing, they just winked at each other and smiled. The twins had definitely learned to be much more cautious, and it’s made all of the engine’s lives easier, but the silly brothers still think that the statue is a bomb – but we know better, don’t we?