

# The Cumbrian Engines

## Volume 5 – The Caledonian Engine

Dear friends,

I know that there are a lot of you that are fond of our eldest engine, City of Carlisle. We recently held a party to honour his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday! He has worked at Carlisle for many years and has many stories to tell. These are just a selection of the most exciting stories he told us during the festivities.

The Author

### **Dramatis Personae**

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

*City of Glasgow* – LMS Princess Coronation 8P 4-6-2 steam locomotive, once based at Carlisle

*Craig* – CR 0F 0-4-0ST steam locomotive, once based at Carlisle

*Jack* – LMS 4MT 2-6-4T steam locomotive, once based at Carlisle

*Michael* – LMS 5MT 4-6-0 steam locomotive, once based at Carlisle

*Scafell Pike* – BR Class 44 1Co-Co1 diesel-electric locomotive, once based at Carlisle

## **The Caledonian**

The Caledonian was a special train which ran from Glasgow Central to London Euston. It had eight special coaches and ran down what is now the West Coast Main Line. Only the strongest engines were selected to pull this magnificent train. They were the Princess Coronation, or Duchess Class.

City of Carlisle was an example of these. He would sometimes take over from engines overnight that had stopped at Carlisle on their journey north. A restaurant car was added at the rear of the train, and City of Carlisle would take the passengers up to Glasgow.

There were always eight coaches on the train without fail. Never more, and never less. There would then be the extra restaurant car during the sleepers, which would serve the passengers with their breakfasts.

Sometimes, sleeping cars would be attached, and there would be a change of crew. The journey was a long one, as it was over four hundred miles from Glasgow to London.

City of Carlisle lived at one of the sheds at Carlisle. He shared the shed with several other engines.

There was Craig, the Pug tank engine station pilot of Carlisle. He had a black coat of paint and had six small wheels.

There was also a large 2-6-4 Tank who would pull the trains from platform two down the line to Barrow. His name was Jack.

City of Glasgow was one of City of Carlisle's brothers. He would pull the *Royal Scot*, which was another of the important trains from Euston to Glasgow. He was younger than City of Carlisle, and was always very eager and rather bouncy.

There were engines that came and went over time, but the shed was always full of engines, whether be that they were stationed at Carlisle, or were simply spending the night in one of the Carlisle sheds to take a train the next morning.

A regular visitor was a black five locomotive named Michael who would pull trains either from Euston or from Perth, and an engine change would happen at Carlisle, with another engine carrying on the journey.

All the engines got on well with each other, but hard times were coming, the dawn of dieselisation was upon them, and steam engines were becoming more and more rare, but I mustn't explain anymore, or I'll spoil the next story...

## Dieselisation

On the main lines, diesels were becoming more and more common. Even on the branch lines, railcars were cropping up and taking the passengers from the steam engines.

In Cumbria, it was the "Peaks" who were taking over. The Classes 44 to 46 diesels were now hauling the express trains. Most of the diesels were rude and good for nothing. They would make fun of the steam engines and their vastness in number made retaliation by steam engines impossible.

They were making the lives of steam engines miserable, and doing it well. They would badly imitate the puffing sound of the pistons and childish whistle attempts.

"Poop poop!" they would shout stupidly at the steam engines. Then they would all laugh stupidly at their own wit.

One morning, after half an hour of amusing themselves by trying to imitate the steam engines, they were finally silenced by one in their midst.

"Be quiet!" he said angrily. "You can't talk about them like that at all, look at you. You clank too much, your engine stalls frequently, and none of the coaches like you."

The Peaks were horrified. They'd been betrayed by one of their own diesels.

"Get out of our sight." They said icily. "Go play with the choo-choo trains."

"Don't mind if I do." The diesel replied, and he bustled out of the shed to join the steam engines.

"My name's Scafell Pike, by the way." He told them. "I'm just new up here. I know some diesels don't really like you, but those idiots back there break the mould, if that's possible for diesels like them."

The engines all acquainted themselves with Scafell Pike, and they were soon fast friends with him.

That afternoon, when he was waiting with a down train, some of the Peaks clattered past, all hissing at him and giving him dirty looks.

The station master walked up to him. "Leave those coaches there please, there's been a change of plans. You're to take the Royal Scot instead of City of Glasgow. The coaches are waiting on Platform one."

"Why isn't City of Glasgow taking it?" Scafell Pike inquired.

"He's been scra...erm...I mean...he's busy at the minute, and you'll have to take his train." The stationmaster stuttered. He then smirked slyly.

So Scafell Pike set off on the long journey. It took many hours but finally they reached London. Then, to his dismay, they take to come all the way back after only a 40 minute rest at Euston.

When he returned home, he didn't go to the diesel shed, instead, he went with his new friends to the steam shed, where he knew he was liked.

## Scrapped

It had been several months since any one had either seen nor heard from City of Glasgow. Nobody had any idea as to where he could have gone to. At first they suspected that he had perhaps gone to Crewe to get mended, but when they inquired in there, the staff said that he hadn't been in for several years.

The steam engines were all worried about him. The diesels, meanwhile, were making horrid remarks that he had broken down and the diesels had captured him and cut him up.

Scafell Pike soon put these rumours to rest when he blackmailed the diesels and said that he'd inform the stationmaster of an accident that occurred several weeks ago that had been blamed on faulty points when it was actually the careless diesels.

One lunchtime, Craig was resting in one of the sidings after hauling some empty coaches back to the carriage yard. He overheard the station master's voice drifting from out of the open door of his office.

"Hello, is this Crewe works? Could you put me through to the scrap yard works please? Thank you. Hello? This is Carlisle Citadel station. I'd like to enquire on the progress you've made on loco Number 46242 that we sent several months ago. All broken down? Good, do you have room for another loco? Number 46238 Ok, thank you, goodbye."

Craig was horrified. He rushed back to the sheds to warn the others. City of Carlisle and Jack were in the sheds.

"I've got some bad news!" wailed Craig

"I'm sure it can't be that bad." Said Jack

"Just tell us, Craig." Soothed City of Carlisle.

"I've just heard the station master talking on those funny things-"

"-Telephones?"

"Yes, telephones. He was talking to the people at Crewe about things, and he said City of Glasgow has been scrapped! And then he said that you, City of Carlisle are going to be sent next!"

"Nonsense, Craig." Snorted Jack. "You probably didn't hear him right."

"I did!" protested Craig. "You'd better hide, City of Carlisle, or they'll cut you up!"

"Don't be daft." Said City of Carlisle calmly. "It's probably just a silly joke, that's all."

Just then, some men came into the shed. They worked on the railway, but they drove the diesels. They climbed into City of Carlisle's cab and he puffed out of the shed to the station.

The station master stood on the platform. "Change of plan, lads." He said to the new crew. You're to take him to Troon instead. Crewe's had to stop all requests after an accident in their yard.

Scafell Pike was waiting with a train and overheard this conversation very clearly. As soon as City of Carlisle had chuffed out of the station, Scafell Pike, purposely blew a fuse.

Another diesel was called to pull the train, and he was returned to the shed where he could inform the others of their situation.

## **The Rescue**

Craig and Jack were horrified at what was happening to their friend. All three engines' crews got together to create a rescue effort plan.

The most important thing was that they knew where he had been taken. They also had lots of time on their hands, as it would take the workmen over a just to assess him.

The fitters and guards also joined in with the rescue plans, and there was a team of over thirty men and four engines, including Michael, who were attempting to rescue City of Carlisle.

They had pinpointed the exact location of the scrap yard, and had scouted around the perimeter. They knew exactly where he was situated in the compound, and now all that was left was the rescue itself.

They travelled north overnight, and stayed in some secluded sidings out of the way. They marshalled some trucks that would be used as a distraction.

All the engines were greased and oiled. They had plenty of coal and water, and Scaffell Pike had enough fuel to keep him going for many hours.

As morning came, Jack lined the trucks up on the main line. He pushed them hard and they went speeding past the gates of the facility. The diesel that was "on guard" saw the trucks and sped off after them to investigate.

Craig then sped into the compound, whistling very shrilly. The workmen had to cover their ears as he sped past, and some diesel shunters chased after him in pursuit.

Michael rolled into the compound. They found City of Carlisle with his paint stripped off in one of the sidings behind a big metal gate. The crew jumped out, but they couldn't move it as it was too heavy.

Michael backed down and was tied to the gate by a cable. He pulled as hard as he could and the gate snapped right out of its hinges.

Scaffell Pike buffered up in front of City of Carlisle. "We'll get you out of here in no time at all." He said to his friend.

Michael, Scaffell Pike and City of Carlisle came out of the compound, buffer to buffer. Craig and Jack were waiting for them. "Quick!" they said anxiously. "They're dealing with the crash of the trucks down the line. We can escape while the coast is clear!"

And so the five friends returned home. It turned out that the engine crews had bought City of Carlisle back and had formed their own little preservation group: "The Cumbrian Engines Preservation Society"...

The party we were having went on all night long. It came as a great surprise and an incredible honour when I learnt that the engines had decided to have me as the new president of the preservation society, which supports the Cumbrian Engines Enterprises company and raises funds to help the engines during overhauls and repairs.

The engines were over the moon when we unveiled our surprise guests to the party – Scaffell Pike, Michael, Craig and Jack! We had heard about them from City of Carlisle and as his birthday celebration was coming up, we wanted to give him a nice surprise. They have now

been bought and have become part of the team. They now live and work on the coastal line with City of Carlisle.

The station master then got to his feet at the table. All the crowds fell silent as he prepared to make his special announcement. “Ladies, gentleman and of course, our great engines, this party marks the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday of our one and only Caledonian Engine!”