

WEST COUNTRY CLASS NAMEPLATE COLOURS

As built, ^{some of} the first batch of West Country Class locomotives' Nameplates and West Country Class Scrolls were painted in black. This was unusual, because generally speaking the Southern Railway painted the locomotive nameplate and numberplate backgrounds in red.

In 1946 the black was abandoned and the normal red reinstated. Red continued for 1947, and in 1948 with the formation of British Railways, the red was continued. The shade of red used was the same as used on buffer beams but in B. R. days the red was altered very slightly.

In 1952 B. R. decreed that in future all nameplates would be painted in black. It was believed that the Western Region had been pressing for this as red nameplates were undesirable on their locomotives.

On the Southern Region the decree was most unpopular, as ex S. R. locomotives didn't have the Western Region brass work. When locomotives returned from Works with black nameplates it was not uncommon for the shed staff, who had stocks of buffer beam red paint, to repaint the nameplates in red again.

The period of mourning lasted until 1962, when the red painted nameplates were reinstated. It must be mentioned that the raised letters of the names, and other raised portions of the nameplates were gunmetal and left bright.

BULLEID PACIFIC COFFEE TABLES.

It was in the early 1960s that the author first learned of the existence of Bulleid Pacific Coffee Tables. In conversation with Mr. John Miller, Paintshop Foreman at Eastleigh Works about Merchant Navy Class nameplates he said that the metal parts were cast in the Works Foundry in three parts, i.e., the central ring and the two wings. He said that the Southern Railway then ordered from Messrs Mead Mclean the central vitreous enamel plaques bearing the Shipping Lines' house flag. He said that they ordered one for the Right Hand side and two of the Left hand ones.

BULLEID PACIFIC COFFEE TABLES (Continued)

One of the Left Hand plaques would fit into the nameplate and the other would be made into a Coffee Table. The plaque was sent over to the Carriage Works where the carpenters used it as a table top, with a circular wooden top to support the plaque. The table had three short legs, with cross pieces below, the joints covered by a wooden disc. The wood was a dark brown colour. They have been described as rather roughly built.

Dimensions:- The vitreous enamel top was 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ "(1425) diameter.
The legs were 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long.(63,5 x 22,4 x 343)
The lower disc was 9"(228,6) diameter, $\frac{5}{8}$ "(16) thick.

Apart from one exception, only one table was made for each locomotive and this was given as a gift to the person performing the naming ceremony. This person was also given a framed photograph of the locomotive.

On the 12th May 2002, Sheffield Auctions held a sale at Ashford Kent. One of the items for sale was a *CHANNEL PACKET* Coffee Table. This was advertised as the Dover Harbour Master's Table. This was the first time that the Author learned that more than one table for one locomotive had been made. It seemed logical that there would be tables for the Harbour Masters at Folkestone, Newhaven and Southampton. These together with the table presented to the Rt Hon. Lord Moore-Brabazon, meant that five tables were made for No. 21C 1 *CHANNEL PACKET*. In all other ceremonies only one table was made for each locomotive. As far as the Author remembers, the "Ashford" coffee table sold for £5300.

All the first twenty Merchant Navy Class locomotives had tables and the Author is fairly sure that they were also provided for Nos. 35021-25. However, the last five locomotives Nos. 35026-30 were not named until 1950/1 and the Author does not know if British Railways Southern Region authorised tables for them.

As the tables were presented to an individual, not the Shipping Line, some of the recipients were not British. There was an American Admiral and some representatives from the Continent so their tables probably left England. The Author does wonder whether some of the present owners of any surviving tables realise their history.

WEST COUNTRY CLASS TABLES

It was decided that the person performing the naming ceremony of a West Country Class locomotive would be presented with a Coffee Table and a framed photograph of their Towns' locomotive. However, unlike the Merchant Navy Class which had a circular plaque, these locomotives had a shield bearing the Arms of the County or Town. Consequently the design of the table needed to be modified. It was decided that the same basic shape and size would continue, but the top was re-designed. Above the circular wooden top was a circular piece on which the paint shop liner would paint in full colour, a copy of the shield carried by the locomotive. Naturally the new table top was ~~smaller than the~~ was protected by a circular plate glass cover which was held in place by a chromium plated steel rim. The three legs, cross pieces below and the wooden disc were all as before. In addition a rectangular chromium plated steel plate was screwed to the top of the of the lower wooden disc. This plate was engraved with the details of the locomotive number and name, the name of the person who performed the ceremony and where it occurred. See the drawing on Page 63 for the dimensions of a West Country Class locomotive Coffee Table.

At all the West Country Class Naming Ceremonies for Nos. 21C101-20, 34031/40, 34042, s21C148, 34091/2 the person naming each locomotive did receive a table and photo.

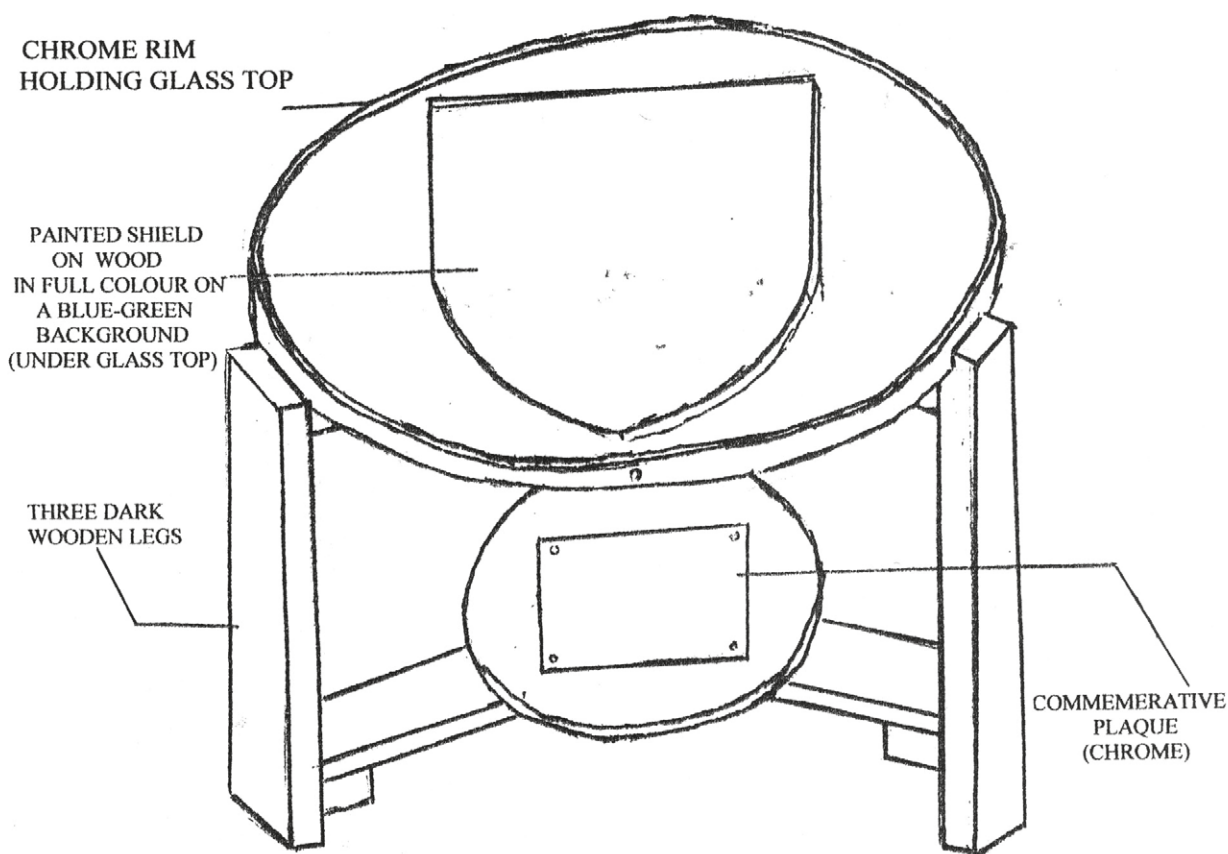
In June 1973, the Author and his wife Jean had a holiday in Somerset and Devon. Prior to leaving he had written to a number of people, or their descendants to try to trace, and where possible, visit them to see their Coffee Tables. He traced three, Barnstaple, Crediton and Crewkerne. It was the last one, still in Mr Deeley's possession that was the most interesting. No. 34040 *CREWKERNE* was the only West Country Class locomotive to have a Naming Ceremony and not carry shields, although they were fitted later. Consequently there was no shield to be painted on the Coffee Table top. The Eastleigh Paint Shop liners got over this by painting the locomotive itself in its Malachite Green livery, and they made a very good job of it.

WEST COUNTRY CLASS COFFEE TABLES (Continued)

The Author traced the daughter of the gentleman who had named No.21C120 *SEATON*, and was told that the table had been damaged and destroyed. He was shown the only part remaining, which was the rectangular plate.

The Southern Railway decided that once the Battle of Britain Class locomotives were introduced in September 1947, they would NOT have coffee tables .

BULLEID WEST COUNTRY COFFEE TABLE



SIZES
 HEIGHT (OVERALL) 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
 TOP DIAM. 16 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
 LEGS 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ " HIGH x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{7}{8}$ "

BASE CIRCLE DIAM. 9" x $\frac{5}{8}$ "
 PLATE 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
 TOP CHROME BAND 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ " DEEP x $\frac{1}{4}$ " EDGE
 TOP SHIELD 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " TOP x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ " DEEP

SHADOW $\frac{1}{4}$ "

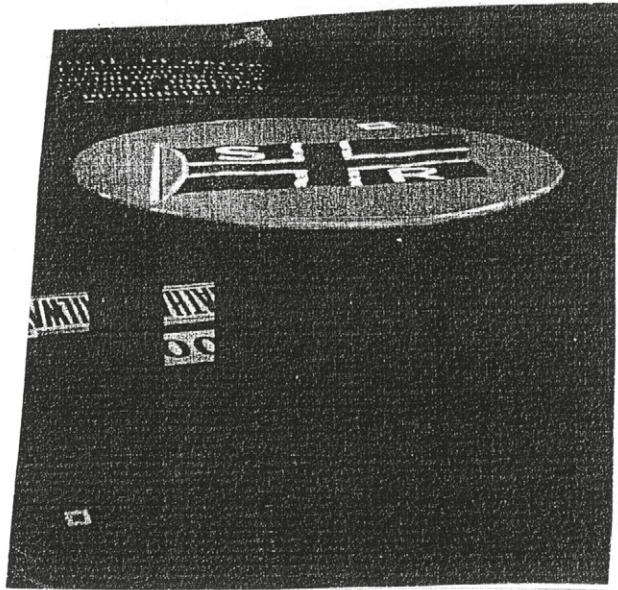
TOP FITTING
 GLASS PICTURE
 CHROME EDGE
 (SCREWED TO
 TOP CIRCLE)

WOODEN TOP

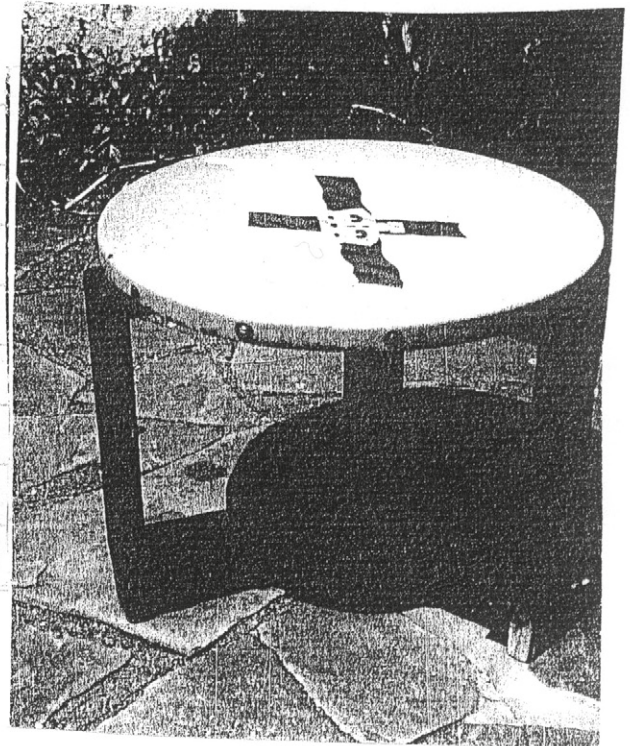
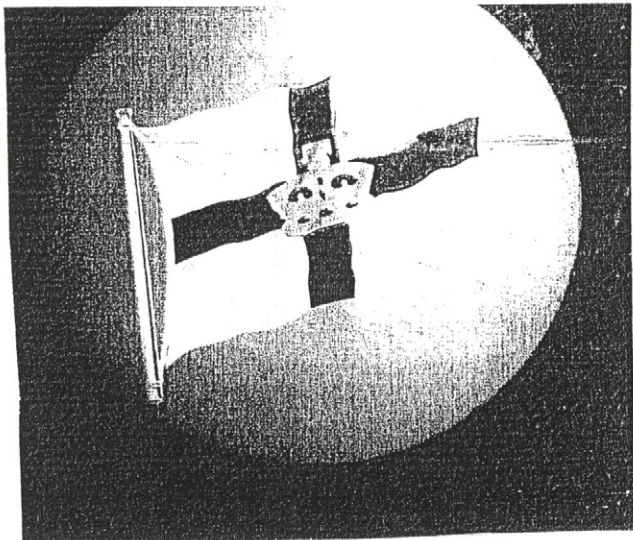
L EG

SEE PAGE 61 for METRIC SIZES

MERCHANT NAVY CLASS COFFEE TABLES

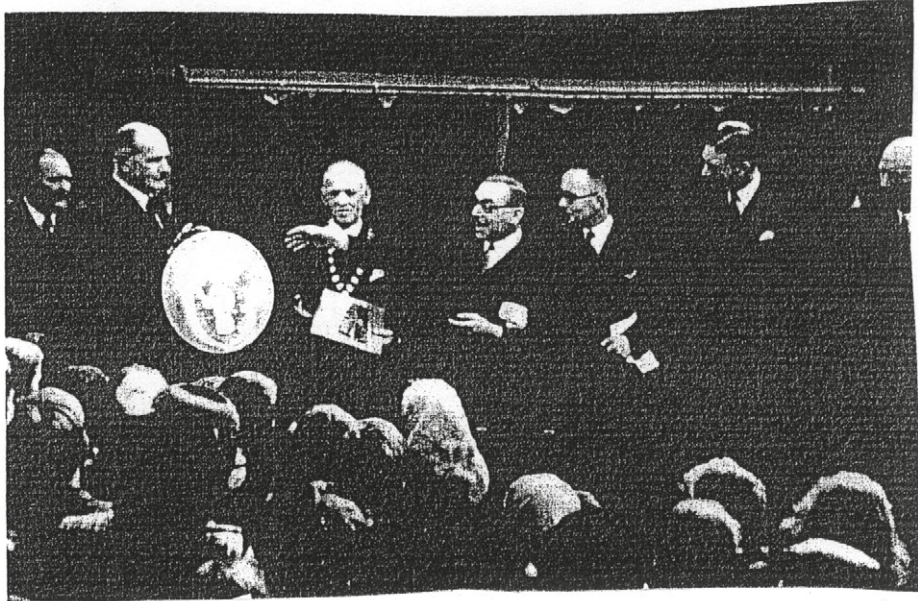


The *CHANNEL PACKET* Coffee Table at
Sheffield Auctions. Ashford Kent. 11/05/2002.
The Dover Harbour Master's Coffee Table.
B I F Collection

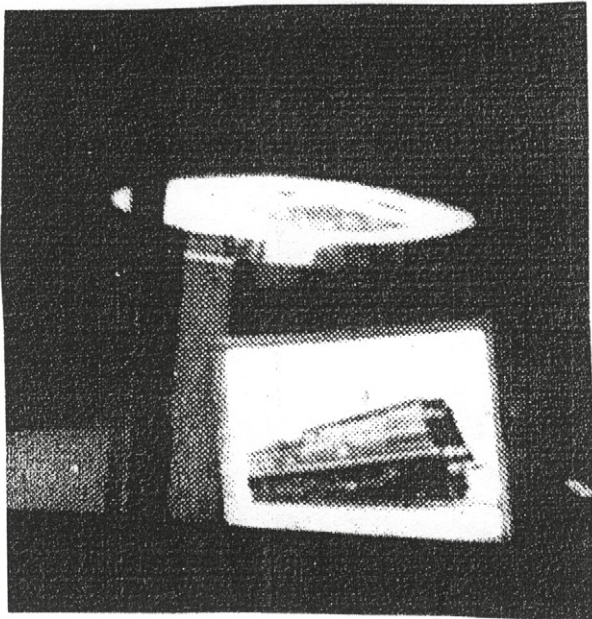


No. 21C 8 *ORIENT LINE*
Mr. Gedde's Coffee Table.
Photo 06/1986.
B I F Collection

WEST COUNTRY CLASS COFFEE TABLES 1

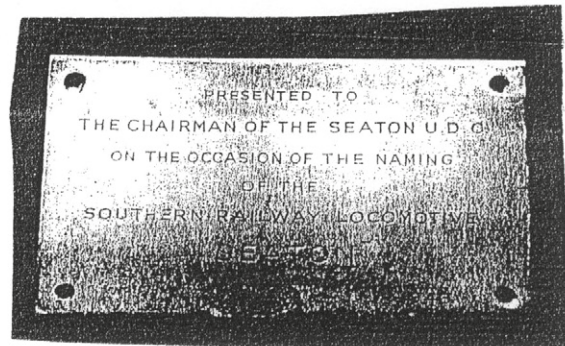


The Naming Ceremony of No. s21C148 *CREDITON* on 04/03/1948
N.B. Coffee Table and Locomotive Photo.

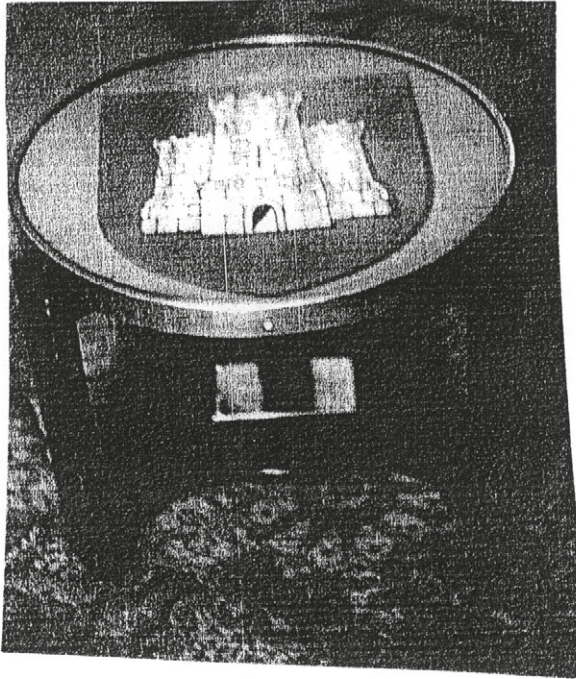


Coffee table and Locomotive
Photo on the platform at the
Naming Ceremony of
No. 34042 *DORCHESTER*
on 29/09/1948


The Chrome Plate from
No. 21C120 *SEATON*.
The table has been lost,
only this remains.
B I F Collection

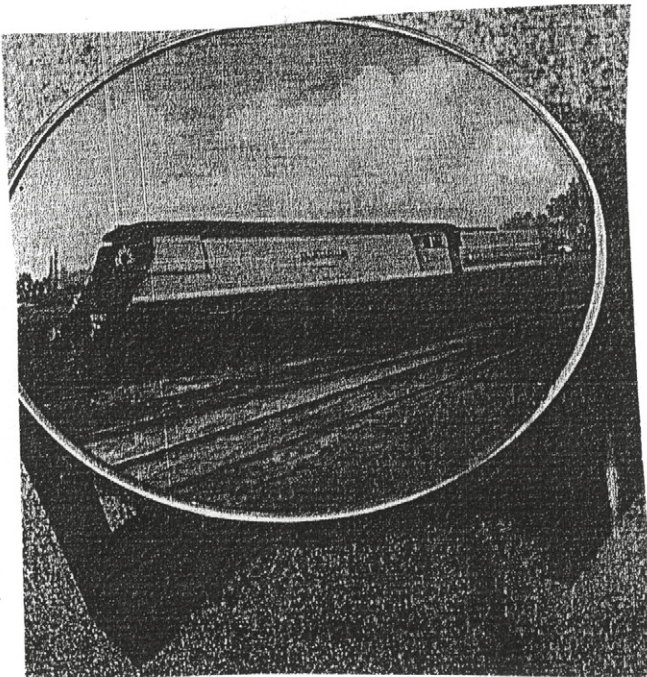



WEST COUNTRY CLASS COFFEE TABLES 2



The Coffee Table from
No. 21C105 *BARNSTAPLE*
at St. Annes Chapel Museum.
Barnstaple on 27/07/1973.
B I F Collection

The Coffee Table from
No. s21C148 *CREDITON* at
the Crediton U. D. C. Office
on 24/07/1973. 
B I F Collection



The Coffee Table from
No. 34040 *CREWKERNE*
N.B. The painting is of the
locomotive, as no shield,
was seen at Mr. Deeley's
home in Crewkerne on
 30/07/1973.
B I F Collection
See Page 62