

# IN A LAND ONCE ROAMED BY GARRATTS END OF A DREAM



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEYER-GARRATT LOCOMOTIVE

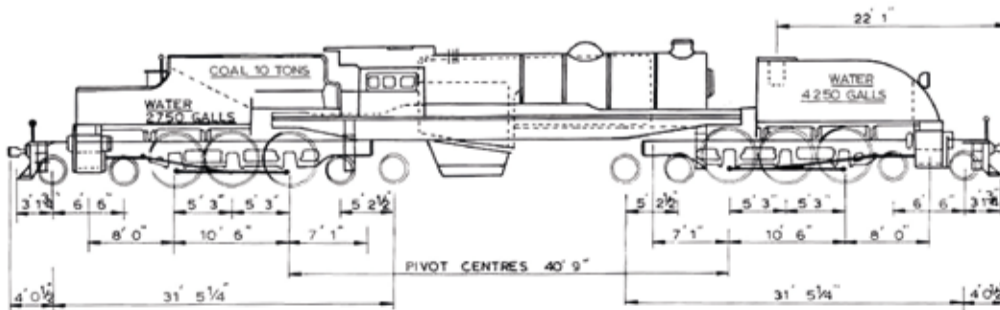


A DOUBLE PACIFIC GARRATT WHICH ARTICULATES VIA THE PIVOTS SHOWN IN RED



West Nicholson Branch - 1975

Having departed the water stop at Tank, the train load of cement is now rounding the curve at Bushtick. The next leg of the journey to Cement takes the freight through Ntunteni and on to the main line at Heany Junction.



### 15th Class 4-6-4+4-6-4 Garratts

Manufacturer: Beyer Peacock, Manchester, UK, 1940 – 1949 • Built in three batches.  
Works No. 6936 – 6939 • Works No. 7228 – 7237 • Works No. 7260 – 7279 • Total of 34 locos in class  
Locomotive weight: 181 tons 5 cwt • Driving wheels 4ft 9in • Boiler pressure: 180 psi • Cylinders: 4  
Grate area 496 sq ft • Tractive effort at 85 %: 42,750 lb • Water capacity 7,000 gallons • Coal capacity 10 tons

Final Running No. 350 – 353 • Final Running No. 354 – 363 • Final Running No. 364 – 383  
Last year in NRZ service 1994.

### 15A Class 4-6-4+4-6-4 Garratts

Manufacturer: Beyer Peacock, Manchester, UK, 1950 – 1951 • Built in two batches. • Works No. 7326 – 7340 / 7351 – 7365 • Total of 30 locos.  
Locomotive weight: 186 tons 15 cwt • Driving wheels 4ft 9in • Boiler pressure: 200 psi • Cylinders: 4  
Grate area 496 sq ft • Tractive effort at 85 %: 47,496 lb • Water capacity 8,000 gallons • Coal capacity 10 tons 16 cwt

Running No. 384 – 398 • Running No. 399 – 413. Last year in NRZ service 1998  
Following several accidents 404 renumbered 424.

Manufacturer: Société Franco-Belge, Raismes, France, 1952 • Works No. 2963 – 2972 • Total of 10 locos.  
Running No. 414 – 423 • Last year in NRZ service 1998

## GARRATT OPERATIONS IN POST INDEPENDENCE ZIMBABWE



The mail is scheduled to arrive at Victoria Falls before sunrise in winter, so it can only be photographed north of TJ when running late.

We were very fortunate to find it running nearly two and a half hours late one morning, and it is seen at Zanguja behind 15th 372 after the 25km climb from Deka River. This is one of the best photographic locations on this section of line, especially on a clear morning such as this when colliery smoke is not being blown north and you can see bush country stretching many miles into the distance. However, the location is some way from the nearest road access and care is needed as lions have been seen in this area.



‘The joy of operating steam’; the dirt and grime associated with the unceasing tasks of operating live steam is well in evidence in these views of 15th 372 and 16th 601 and 610. With nearly 100 Garratts to service and maintain, there was a need for a very large staff contingent, managed with a rod of iron by the legendary shedmaster, Dave Putnam. Due to staff shortages, Indian fitting staff were being employed on contract at both Bulawayo and Thomson junction (TJ). Only Masons Mill in Pietermaritzburg in the early 1970’s had a larger Garratt allocation than Bulawayo had at the time of my visit.

## GARRATTS IN RETREAT POST 1993



“Yes, the smoke is just about right.”

The ageing signal gantries, disused telegraph lines and broken glass are all a sign of the times. 14A 519 looks the part while barrelling out of Bulawayo station through Westgate. Sadly, the leaking steam, highlighted by the backlight and the vegetation, tells another story. Within one hour, the front water tender had developed a serious leak halfway up the tank, a leak which chewing gum failed to cure. That was the end of 519’s journey in lovely early morning light. Our destination, Cement, 21 kilometres out from Bulawayo (walking time about 4 hours) was reached many hours later. As for the hole in the tender, it received a metal patch some days later, Africa style! I am sure you know what I mean!





Round the corner from Hwange station. Sadly, the telegraph poles and their fittings are crying out for help today. There must have been many an interesting tale travelling along those wires in the good old days.

### OPERATIONS AT HWANGE COLLIERY



Hwange colliery, and it is dirty, dusty work for the train and yard crews.



Illuminated by the last rays of sunlight, 611 makes its final shunting movement of the day, marshalling the loaded coal wagons in preparation for their run down to Thomson Junction the following day.

### DEATH CAN BE CRUEL, EVEN FOR FAITHFUL SERVANTS



Does the mythical elephant's graveyard really exist? Is there a fabled, secret place where the great beasts wandered off alone, to die. In railway terms it does, and can be found in Bulawayo, in the overgrown sidings behind the steam loco depot.



The thorns are the only protection for this endangered species.



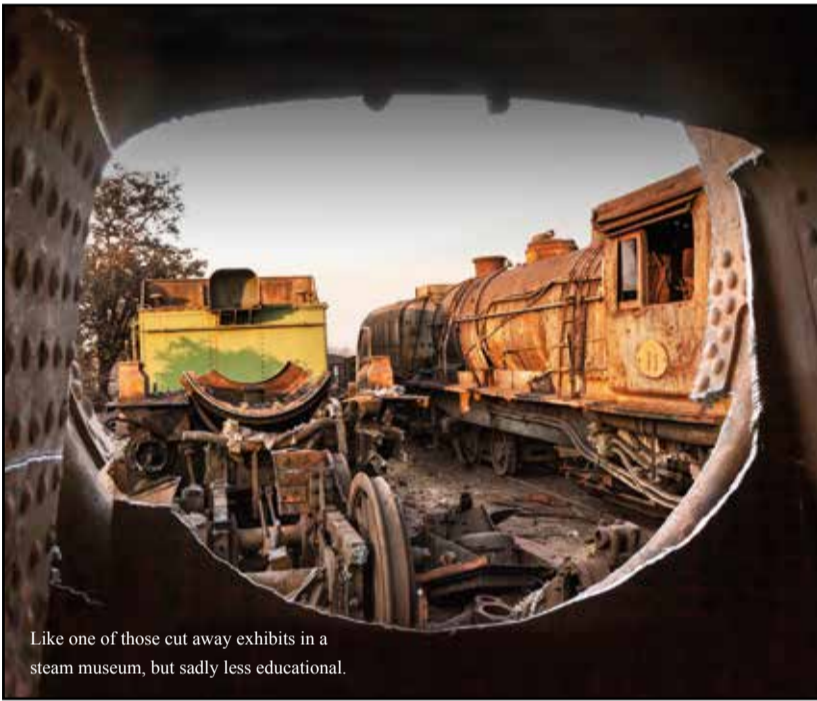
A lethal cocktail of oxygen and acetylene.



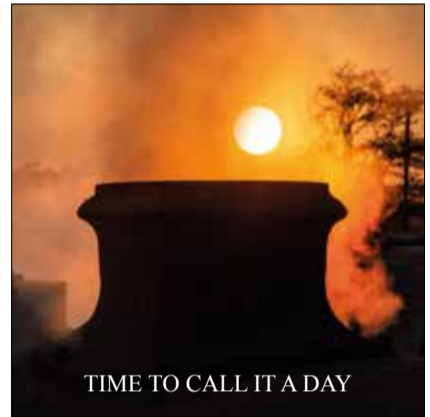
Steam operated lines in 1988



Aerial view of the Hwange mining complex



Like one of those cut away exhibits in a steam museum, but sadly less educational.



TIME TO CALL IT A DAY

NRZ 15A 414 makes its final shunting manoeuvre before moving to the depot for the very last time. A servicing crew with their train from NRZ Bulawayo were waiting to collect the loco and return it to there the following day.

The rumour mongers from the service team were of the opinion that a diesel would be used in future.

From what has been learned since that evening in June 2018, this was indeed the last working day on which steam was used by Hwange Colliery and the very last use of a steam loco in revenue earning service anywhere in the Dark Continent. How appropriate that this duty was performed by a Garratt.

When I wrote that ‘The Reign of the Mikado’ was the final book in the series, like the rest of the world, I did not know what was coming. This “life pause” resulted in a further 176 pages and a garden that is now under control... Fortunately, my office has not suffered the same fate.

- Contents of the book
- A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEYER-GARRATT LOCOMOTIVE
- Bob Illingworth
- GARRATTS IN RHODESIA
- Bob Illingworth
- GARRATT OPERATIONS IN POST-INDEPENDENCE ZIMBABWE
- Dick Manton ‘A window of opportunity’ including photography
- GARRATTS IN RETREAT POST 1993
- OPERATIONS AT HWANGE COLLIERY
- DEATH CAN BE CRUEL, EVEN FOR FAITHFUL SERVANTS
- Dave Hill ‘Endangered Species’ including post processing of the images

Details on this book.  
 Hardback, landscape format, page size 300 x 250mm. Printed on Regency Satin finish paper and hand sewn.  
 176 pages with 220 captioned images, maps and diagrams.

Books will be ready for distribution from 12 November 2021 and after that date will be dispatched within 14 days of payment.

Cost including post and packaging, and how to pay:

- In the UK GBP 24-00
- In Europe EUR 28-00
- North America / Australia / Asia etc. USD 38-00

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