

Article – 45055 ‘The Royal Corps of Transport’

45055 was built as D84 at Crewe Works, being released to traffic in January 1961, fitted with split headcode boxes and sporting all over green livery with grey roof, bodyside stripe and engine room grilles. A small yellow warning panel was later added and in 1966 it received a coat of ‘economy green’, without the grey embellishments.

The loco was named ‘The Royal Corps of Transport’ without ceremony at Derby Works on 18/06/66. It was one of the five Class 45s to receive plates with a raised border around the edge (the others were 45004/039/059 and 135). These plates were cast in resin as one complete moulding with the regimental crest, in contrast with the locos that received alloy plates, made as a separate casting to the crests. This gave an advantage in that the crests could not be stolen, as was seen with many of the class.



D84, by now in BR blue livery, was renumbered with TOPS number 45055 in January 1975 and in 1976 it became the 6th Class 45 to have the headcode boxes removed during overhaul at Derby Works, being released on 04/06/76 with flush front ends and marker lights. The Overhead Live Electrification warning signs, normally fixed next to the marker lights, were mounted higher up on the nose, making the loco quite distinctive from the rest of the class.

45055 received its last light overhaul at Derby, released on 23/01/81. It was still carrying both nameplates on 01/08/81, but by 23/07/82 the nameplate from the B (secondman) side had gone missing.

Between 14th and 20th August 1982, the loco was repainted at its home depot, Toton, to haul a special Trafford Park to Tees Dock Freightliner service containing equipment for troops in the Falkland Islands. The repaint included the addition of red bufferbeams, white buffers and tyres and yellow axle box covers.



This photo by Allan Brooks, appeared in the January 1983 edition of 'Modern Railways Pictorial' and shows a repainted 45055 hauling the special Trafford Park- Tees Dock Freightliner containing equipment for troops in the Falklands. It is seen passing Eaglescliffe Jn on 20/08/82. Note the missing nameplate this side.



Just two days after its special working to Tees Dock, 45055 hauls a less glamorous ballast train past Miles Platting. Note the OLE warning signs mounted higher up the nose end than usual.
Photo: Roger Varley 22/08/82.

The A (drivers) side nameplate was removed between 06/11/82 and 30/12/82 to enable a replacement to be made to replace the missing plate from the other side. The loco then ran nameless until plates were refitted to both sides between 30/04/83 and 07/05/83. The replacement plate was again cast as one piece with the crest, but may well have been in alloy, rather than resin. Unusually both plates were now painted with a BR green backplate, as seen in the picture below.



Museum of Army Transport

ON 20 March British Rail presented the locomotive nameplate 'Royal Corps of Transport' to the Corps for display in the Museum of Army Transport. The locomotive is still in service on East Midland Region track, and former Deputy-General Manager, Mr R W Rayner, who has just moved to our own region, made the presentation.

The nameplate is to be displayed in the museum bar and completes the preparation of the room for public use in due course.



The loco then ran with both plates right up until withdrawal. In March 1985, with the rundown of the 45/0 fleet well underway, 45055 was stopped at Toton Depot due to a power unit defect (leaking cylinder liners) and sadly, repairs were not authorised. Instead, it was sent to Derby Works for withdrawal and stripping of spare parts. It is thought that the nameplate from the B (secondman) side was removed at Toton before the loco moved to Derby Works, as it is reported that a nameplate was presented to the regiment on 20th March 1985 for display in the Museum of Army Transport (see article left).

However, the picture below, taken by Andy Cole on 13th April 1985, shows the loco two days after withdrawal at Derby Works with the A (drivers) side nameplate still in situ.



It is thought that this nameplate was removed and either sold via Collectors Corner or found its way to the National Railway Museum in York where a plate is pictured displayed below left.



Also of interest is that a wooden nameplate pattern still exists in the 'Museum of Making' at Derby Silk Mill (pictured above right).

After languishing at Derby Works for around 18 months, 45055 was sold for scrap to Vic Berrys in Leicester and hauled with 45043/045 as 9L42 10:00 Derby Works – Vic Berrys on 23rd October 1986. Disposal was quick, as the once proud loco had been cut up by 9th November 1986.

Steve Dexter