

Atlantic 5 ins. gauge Locomotive No. 3279 Update

Since the last update I've mainly worked on the locomotive backhead boiler fittings and pipework and completed a few bits of detail on the tender.

On the tender I've fitted two injector water supply strainers to stop any muck getting to the injectors. I drilled two holes for these in the base of the tank, quite symmetrical to look nice and then realised one strainer could not be fitted because the hand pump was in the way! The new relocated unsymmetrical hole will work just as well.

I've also fitted the tender draw bar and made the tender rear coupling link and vacuum hose. I contemplated buying two finished coupling links and two vacuum hoses with pipes to save a bit of time but at over £50 each I decided to save the £200 and make them! The ones I've made are not quite as detailed as those you can buy which use lost wax castings but the price of the lost wax ones put me off. I've also fitted a quick release tender hand pump connection. I have these on all my tender locomotives and they are far superior than having a curly piece of copper tube and a union nut which work harden and want to put up a fight when connecting up.

I'm now making a few bits of detail for the rear of the tender. The later 3,500 gallon LNER tender for this loco had a few erstwhile additions such as a handrail and two footsteps on the rear left hand side only and five lamp brackets, four towards the base of the tender unevenly spaced and one central and higher up. Interestingly, the four lower lamp brackets are a different size to the single central one which is higher up. I wonder why that is?

On the engine I have fitted the two injectors. The arrangement of these is a bit unusual. I did not want them visible outside of the frames but fitting them inside of the frames is not straight forward due to the engine having double frames at the rear and a rather large brake cylinder taking up a lot of room. To ensure that the injectors get plenty of water and steam I have used thin wall copper tube to pipe them up, not the stuff you would buy from the usual suppliers which they might try to tell you is thin wall. The stuff you will normally find which is 22 gauge and known as 'bending tube' but the really thin wall stuff is 24 gauge and is rather more difficult to source. It is also problematical to bend without crushing the pipe! Also on the backhead is pipework for the whistle, the blower, the steam brake, the pressure gauge and one outlet not yet piped up which is to supply a displacement lubricator. I've been researching displacement lubricators. To improve their reliability you are advised to fit a condensing coil in the steam supply pipe. Finding room to fit one is a problem. They usually go under the cab roof, but with a removeable section in the roof as an aid to seeing the controls for driving there isn't really the room. I might even yet resort to a mechanical lubricator but that means fitting a split eccentric to one of the axles which is another issue!



