



Lion – A Brief History

In January 1923 an interesting 'Old Locomotive' was noticed still doing duty as a pumping engine at the Graving Dock, Princes Dock on the River Mersey. This locomotive was subsequently identified as **LION**, built in Leeds in 1838 by Messrs Todd, Kitson & Laird for the Liverpool & Manchester Railway and sold 'Out of Service' to the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board in 1859. She had been used as a pumping engine since 1871.

Late in 1927, a number of members of the now defunct Liverpool Engineering Society, conscious of the recent Centenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and anxious that the Centenary of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway should reflect the greater importance of the latter enterprise, began to look towards seeking **LION**'s restoration and with this objective in view, formed themselves into an Old Locomotive Committee.

LION was restored to working order and provided with a tender and a train of six period carriages by mid 1930, in time for the Liverpool & Manchester Centenary celebrations at Wavertree Park, Liverpool, where she played a prominent part, giving a faultless performance. In 1938 she was used by the London Midland & Scottish Railway both in steam and as a static exhibit for the London & Birmingham Centenary celebrations. In 1980 she was again restored to working order in time to lead the cavalcade on the first day of the Rocket 150 Celebrations at Rainhill. She was a major point of interest for the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh when she was in steam supported by **OLCO** members in costume for the Crewe celebrations of 1987. HRH the Prince of Wales rode on her footplate in the course of the Royal visit to Tyseley which took place during the last period **LION** was steamed in 1988 - her 150th birthday year.

LION is probably best known for her starring role in the film *The Titfield Thunderbolt* but she was also used for the films *Victoria the Great* of 1937 and *The Lady with the Lamp* in 1951. Before the last war she was kept on a plinth at Lime Street Station, Liverpool, but latterly, having been passed to the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, following the demise of the Liverpool Engineering Society, she was displayed in the Transport Gallery of Liverpool Museum. Following that museum's successful lottery bid, however, she was displayed at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester from mid June 1999 until early 2007, then returned to store in Liverpool. She has now been restored to display condition and is currently installed in the new Museum of Liverpool's Great Port gallery, opened in December 2011. See video at: <http://vimeo.com/32436680>. At present she is not in a steampable condition, but details of what would be needed to restore her to working order have been established. Compared with some other successful restorations, they are not extensive.

Following **LION** being put back into working order in 1980, interest in the locomotive revived dramatically so that when moves to institute a society connected with the locomotive were made in 1984, the fledgling organisation adopted the name "Old Locomotive Committee" as a tribute to the stalwarts of the former Liverpool Engineering Society who had rescued the locomotive originally. This full name has conveniently been contracted to **OLCO**, with a logo based on the letterhead of the successor company - Kitson & Co - of the partnership which originally built **LION**. **OLCO** members have been instrumental in helping to run the locomotive when in steam, researching her history, providing a focus for modellers with drawings (measured from Lion herself), other information and annual steaming meets at various venues.

If you are interested in knowing more about **LION**, perhaps you would care to join **OLCO**? An application form is appended below for your consideration. Also, see our web site: <http://www.lionlocomotive.org.uk/>

OLD LOCOMOTIVE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I hereby apply for membership of **OLCO** for the year ending:

Ref: WEB 2020

- a) 31st March 2021, for the sum of £5.00 (Five Pounds), ie one year membership; **
- b) 31st March 2026, for the sum of £20.00 (Twenty Pounds), ie five year membership; **

I enclose the sum of £5.00** £20.00**

** Delete where inapplicable

Cheques should be made payable to the **Old Locomotive Committee**

Note: All classes of membership (junior, individual, family, etc.), are covered by the above subscription rates.

New members please note: There is no joining fee – just the flat subscription. All classes of membership (junior, individual, family, etc.), are covered by the above subscription rates.

Name..

Current Project/Model and Scale...

Address..

Postcode..

Tel..

email address:

(To which Lionsheart, the OLCO newsletter, will be sent, unless you specify to the contrary. Please note that, due to postal charges, Lionsheart can be sent to non UK addresses by email only).

Please send completed form, with fee, to:

Mr J Swindlehurst, 20 Ford Lane, Upton, Wirral, Cheshire, CH49 0TT