

Wheldale Newsletter



Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway

History Sheet H1 Issue 1

The Other Wheldale

Apart from regular duties such as taking coal to the washery at Fryston, we know that our loco, Wheldale, also tripped coal wagons down to the Aire and Calder Navigation basin. This second in our series of history newsletters takes a look at this alternative mode of transport.

After the loaded coal wagons had been taken down to the basin, they would be discharged into floating transfer containers known as 'Tom Puddings', each holding approximately 40 tonnes of coal.



The coal container loading point, Wheldale Colliery

Ref.2



Tug with a train of Tom Puddings

Ref.1



Canal Basin and River Aire

Ref.3

These were then coupled together into a long train and towed by barge down the river to unloading points such as at Ferrybridge Power Station and Goole docks.

Goole docks had five specially designed coal hoists that were capable of lifting the coal containers out from the water, and discharging them into waiting ships. Although now out of use, two of these huge coal handling machines still survive on the dockside.

What about 'The Other Wheldale' you may be wondering by now? The answer is simple- one of the surviving tugs is called Wheldale and is moored at the Yorkshire Waterways Museum in Goole, East Yorkshire. Visitors can take a trip around the docks on Wheldale and see the container hoists but what a shame it is that they can't be seen in action any longer.



Tug Wheldale

Ref.4



A vanished scene at Goole Docks Ref.5

Find out more ! The story of water-borne transport in Yorkshire can experienced at:

The Yorkshire Waterways Museum
Dutch River Side
Goole
DN14 STB
Tel 01405 768730
Fax 01405 769868
info@waterways museum.org.uk
www.waterways museum.org.uk



A surviving coal hoist Ref.6

The coal hoists and Tom Pudding boat system worked until around 1985. Two of the original five now remain in preservation.

Credits

- 1 NB Holderness
- 2 National Library of Scotland, OS Map Images
- 3 Yorkshire Waterways Museum Collection GOOWM:E2.1993.17
- 4 George Robinson, Geograph 381802
- 5 Yorkshire Waterways Museum Collection GOOWM :1993:418
- 6 en.m.wikipedia.org/wili/Goole

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