

STARS

THE RHINELAND TOUR REPORT

Wednesday 5th to Sunday 9th November, 2008

Narrative and Numeric by Simon Smith

Wednesday 5th November

Here we are at the end of another year and the final tour was about to commence. Once more it was going out in a large coach. A couple of members usually confined to the French tours joined us for this one, Rose Purdy and Tony Deacon. It's never too late to start a new country and the Germans are certainly more amenable to rail enthusiasts than the French. Due to changing ferry timings by Sea France the pick-up from Waterloo was later than normally scheduled and so traffic would be light leaving London. Departure was on time with Trevor and Maurice our would be chauffeurs for the trip. Dover was reached in plenty of time and soon we were ready for boarding the latest addition to the Sea France fleet, the Moliere. The interior of this ship may be of an improvement to the older vessels in the fleet but I doubt very much whether the cuisine is any different. The crossing of the channel was completed without a hitch.

Thursday 6th November

A good run through France and Belgium during the hours of darkness brought us to Stolberg. With our later than normal arrival time we encountered a slight increase in traffic. We usually arrive here during the hours of darkness and watch the sun rise but today the sun is already up and about, and shinning. During the hour long stay plenty of traffic passed through including some foreign interlopers, two Belgian 77's and three Swiss 482's. Time's up and we're on the road again heading for Koln. For a change traffic was light as we travelled along the autobahn and before we knew it we had arrived at Gremberg.

First thing on the agenda was the clearing up of the shunters in the yard including a Press loco in blue livery. Once identification and photos were completed it was back on board the coach for the run up to the depot. As is usual here we were left to our own devices and mopped up everything that could be seen. Among some of the parked locos were two MRCE 189's (ex DB 189's not the ex Siemens Dispolok ones) in black livery as well as 260.311 (360.311) in its original livery of dark red and a French 37000. With the sun shinning for all it's worth on them the opportunity for everyone to take plenty of photos wasn't missed. The workshops were as always out of bounds but everything was identified through the doors. Eifeltor had its usual collection of DB and SBB locos stabled up as well as another French 37000. Time was spent watching the traffic pass by as tea, coffee and Bovril were served up before we left for the hotel at Leverkusen.

As the rest of the day was now our own most of the party ended up at Koln West to photograph the numerous freights that pass through here. The drivers from First Capital took the short trip down to Sud with a rabbit and shortly returned to West with another. With time and darkness getting on I was eager to try and get my last 111 off Deutzerfeld so Colin Jaggs, Alan Carter and I returned to the Hbf and joined up with Rose, Brian Davies and Phil Regan on gleis sechs who had been here for quite some time. They hadn't seen my required 111 so at least I knew I hadn't missed it. Trying to get loco numbers in the dark is difficult enough but some bright spark in DB has decided to remove the normal sized numbers off the sides and replaced them with small numbers in the UIC format on the solebar making identification difficult and, on some of the more filthy locos, almost impossible. Not that the units were much better. Thank goodness I was surrounded by people with much better eyesight than my own. With tired eyes and weary bodies most of us called it a night and returned to the hotel for some beers and bed.

Friday 7th November

With it being a free day a few early risers made it downstairs for breakfast at six o'clock with the intention of getting up to Dusseldorf for the rush hour. As our (NRW Schone Reise) day tickets were not valid until after nine o'clock we had to purchase single tickets. Brian, Tony, Alan and I boarded the well packed Regional Express for the twenty minute journey and set up post at the southern end of the S-bahn platforms. Fortunately for Tony and me the designated smoking area was in the same place and before long Phil and Alan Wesson soon joined us. A small number of freights went through as well as a couple of specials with charter stock, a HGK 185 and a Swiss 482 on the front of each. Colin, Tony Bartlett and Mike Casper were also appeared but assumed position at the end of one of the long platforms for some photography.

By the time nine o'clock approached the peak period had slowed down and after a coffee break down below we took to the rails. Tony, Alan and myself headed for Hagen to cop some of the silver Abellio units working in that area and en route passed through Wuppertal with its elevated railway. After Hagen we then continued onto Hamm and as we arrived the ex Swiss 10019 was sitting on the next platform with I suppose what you would call a p**s up special. It soon then pulled away taking its passengers, who certainly sounded in good spirits, to wherever they were heading for. No chance of that ever happening at home. Hamm is one of those places where everything happens all at once followed by interludes of nothing going on except for a few freights passing on the avoiding lines. Passing the Rbf I could just about make out with what I thought were the roofs of stored coaching stock but it turned out to be a large dump of 614/914, 628/928 and 634/934 units and trailers.

Dortmund was next and another p**s up special was waiting on the next platform as we arrived. A few lines over a very smart 218.387 in original livery was waiting to manoeuvre onto this train to take the happy participants on another mystery tour. During our busy period of train watching 628.664 rolled into the station with one side of it covered from top to bottom in graffiti. I have never seen a locomotive or unit so disfigured by these so called artists and was surprised that DB had even allowed it to be in service. As the evening peak was about to start we quickly headed for Essen where Adrian had already set up shop for the rush hour. Phil arrived a little later from Munster via the scenic route just as the rush hour was getting into full swing. Those small and dirty side numbers of the 143's were once again causing problems with identification. During our stay we saw only one 426 unit, considering they are based in Essen, and wondered if they had all of a sudden been re-allocated elsewhere. Adrian then decided he needed to look after the inner man and headed back to Leverkusen and about an hour later the rest of us soon followed.

A meal in Leverkusen was then followed by a few drinks in the bar back in the hotel. Rose returned from her day's travelling and told that she had managed to sweet talk somebody at Hamm to walk down the yard and identify most of the units and trailers there. As time was running out for her guide she could not get them all. Some of the party spent the day photographing the freights at Koln Sud or West and others spent it just travelling around the area which covers a vast region from Bonn and Siegen in the south to Rheine in the north and from Aachen in the west to Minden and Paderborn in the east. All of these places and everywhere in between on one ticket for just 22.30 Euros for one day on everything except ICE/IC/EC services is very good value and if you go off the main routes you never know what you might find.

Saturday 8th November

Another day dawns and the sun is shining as we are all back on board the coach and first up for today is a brief look at Hagen Hbf. On passing the former depot, which still has plenty of wagons parked up, I started to reminisce about past visits with plenty of 150's and 151's based here. A reasonable amount of items were on Vorhalle including a pair of Dutch 6400's and a damaged 260 belonging to EFW. The crossing of lines was forbidden here but our guide was kind enough to identify a 155 whose number we could not see.

Dortmund depot was next where for the first time I saw a 420 parked up. These units were still working services out of Essen and Dusseldorf at the time of our visit but with new units on their way it cannot be much longer before these venerable machines will be withdrawn. The traverser was well stocked up with locos and the heavily vandalised 628.664 which some of us saw yesterday. A Westfalenbahn unit was ideally positioned for photos as we carried on round the side of the shed overlooking the stabled shunters before we came to the fire damaged and recently withdrawn 112.135. Not many units stabled up at the back of the shed this time and once everything had been noted we on our way to the next location.

Wanne Eickel revealed the replacement 185.055 as well as three RAG machines mixing it with plenty of 294's and 232's. We then parked up next to the Hbf stabling point to photograph the 363's and another Dutch 6400 and for a coffee/tea break to watch the passing traffic. A quick look round the corner alongside the Hbf a single 151 was parked up.

One of the biggest depots in the region was next, Oberhausen Osterfeld Sud. As usual we were left to guide ourselves round with nothing out of the ordinary here except maybe a few 232's missing but a couple of renumbered 232/9's were noted including the second loco to be numbered 232.908. There were a few items of interest passed by, HGB's V100.03 and EFW's 221.117 among them. The stabling point at the other end of the depot towards the station had more than it's usual amount of shunters parked up, obviously they no longer stable them in Vonderort Rbf. The yard was completely devoid of any locos, dumped or otherwise. Oberhausen West was the final location of the day and as we walked up the driveway and across the bridge we saw that most of the buildings had been removed. The usual suspects were parked up as well as a couple of EH locos passing by.

Back at Leverkusen most of the party got off at the station to do their own thing while it was still light. Not wanting to carry my bag around with me all evening I chose to stay on board to the hotel. Once relieved of my bag I

headed for Koln along with Tony, Phil and Alan to pick off some of the ICE's at the Hbf. Another p**s up special came through, this time with Bocholter Eisenbahns 221.135 at the helm. After which it was then followed by a very nice meal then back at the hotel bar for drinks and entertainment provided by the joke machine (Trevor Drew's mobile phone), a few jokes that even the barman could understand, and the German version of Britain's Got Talent. One contestant on there was dressed up in a skin tight red suit with a prominent bulge in a certain area. This was hardly the thing to show at this time of the evening and with children in the audience too. But you know what these crazy Germans are like.

Sunday 9th November

A wet start to a very interesting day saw the first call being made to Deutzerfeld depot. As we waited under the bike shelter we were able to pick off a couple of locos between the gaps of the buildings whilst Adrian was conducting protracted talks in the office. The man in charge on site was quite happy for us to go around but only if the depot chief (who was at home) would give his authorisation. He would only say yes if he saw the paperwork in person, therefore a refusal was inevitable. I have been coming to Germany every year for twelve years and this was the first time that I encountered a refusal at a depot on a Stars tour in this country. With Deutzerfeld not being as prolific as it once was I was not too disappointed about this and so we had to make do with a view. Mind you, knowing my luck, my last 111 based here would have possibly been parked up round the corner or inside the shed. Better luck next time. Had we done the depot by foot we probably wouldn't have seen the shunters at the other end of the yard.

By the time we reached Aachen West the rain had stopped and the sun had come out. After disembarking from the coach we could here the familiar sound of a GM "66" on the other side of the yard. Mike went to investigate and returned to tell us there were two sheds parked up. The usual collection of locos was present as well as a Veolia 185 and a pair of Crossrail electrics. One of the sheds from up the other end of the yard made an appearance before we set off towards the Hbf. With road closures prohibiting our journey another route had to be taken and we found ourselves down a very narrow road that passed alongside the sidings next to the depot. The view here was much better than that from the bridge, maybe one for the future. The late departure time for the ferry meant that we had plenty of time to kill and so a vote was conducted the day before as to where we would go next.

Montzen was the unanimous choice and so a quick diversion into Holland was needed through the hills (yes, there are hills in Holland) to reach the once important Belgian freight yard. As we pulled in we could see a few electrics stabled and the long lines of stored 51's and 62's. Adrian went to the office but found the door to be locked and whilst looking for an alternative a voice from one of the loud speakers for the yard was heard, I'M COMING DOWN. Everyone found this quite amusing as it sounded like someone from a very high level was speaking to us all. Someone appeared from one of the doors to the tower and after a short chat with Adrian he was quite happy for us to walk up the yard so long as we stayed on one side of the locos as we walked through. A pair of 186's on hire to SNCB (numbered as class 28) was present and also another GM shed. The shed we saw at Aachen powered past on a freight heading west before we boarded the coach for the long run through Belgium. A quick call at De Panne was next for the stabling point and tobacconists before we headed for Calais.

Although it was a bit windy at the French port the weather on the other side of the channel was playing havoc with the timings. Our allotted ferry was cancelled and we were therefore put on the 19.30 sailing which didn't depart until well past 20.15. The crossing itself was a bit up and down and from side to side and as we approached Dover we were halted. With wind speeds of up to sixty knots Dover was operating a one in and one out policy and with a queue of boats in front and behind us we were in for a very long wait. After three hours (yes, THREE hours) of waiting we were finally given permission to enter the harbour. It was very close as we passed by the harbour entrance and turning the boat round to back it up against the ramps tested the skill of the captain as the wind was now hitting us from the side. By the time we drove off the ferry it was gone midnight and therefore we didn't reach Waterloo until 2 am Monday morning. Obviously there were no taxis to be had as the station was by now closed so Colin, Phil and myself had to flag one down on the main road. Colin had already booked into the Travel Inn next to Euston before he left home while I had rang a nearby hotel, one that I had stayed in previously, whilst on the boat. As to how everyone else got on I sincerely hope that you all got home, what ever time that may have been, safe and sound. A very late and disappointing end to what was a very enjoyable tour. My thanks to Adrian and Gary for their efforts during the tour, Maurice and Trevor for once again doing a superb job, Trevor's mobile phone for the entertainment and to everyone else for their company. See you all again in 2009.

Numeric list

** Seen during free time

Thursday 6th November

Stolberg Hbf 111.015/150 146.012/019 155.043 185.194 294.670/703
643.201/208/210/211/213/215/223/226 R4C 185.541 SBB 482.006/018/031 SNCB 7780/7782

Gremberg Rbf 294.880 296.050/051/052/053/059 Press 293.016 (ex CD 745.527)

Gremberg Depot 139.122/164/309 140.291/674/737/782 145.021 151.075/146/163/166 152.013/162
155.043/112/113/143/183/203/267 185.176/295 189.029/050/070/080
225.023/040/053/059/060/145 290.509 294.675/714/715/758/808 296.040 333.043
335.011/156/218/236 360.311 362.540 363.200/203/675 Hupac ES 64 U2 101 (182.601)
MRCE 189.092/099 SNCF 37028

Eifelort Rbf 140.353/368/632/765/876 151.043/057/068 152.102/117/168 155.034/263/265 185.168
294.682
EFW 212.381 HGK DE 86 (Mak 1000887/1993)
VSFT V1001 021(2001) SBB 421.391 (ex 11391) 482.014/045/047 SNCF 37027
Passing 401.018/518

Leverkusen Mitte* 143.292 146.031

Koln Mullheim* 146.030

Koln Deutz* 423.039/055 425.108

Koln Hbf* 101.015 110.363 143.262/611 146.010/020 402.028 403.003/063 (complete sets)
423.035/127/195/246/280 425.092/093/098/105/106 643.206/209 644.023

Koln Bbf* 101.118 120.142 143.132 423.041/191

Koln West* 101.001/029/032/034/094/101/131/132 111.159 140.765/876 145.068 146.009/014/017/024
151.003/005/011/101/121/164 152.038 155.043/261 182.015 185.177/186 189.068
218.151/217 225.018/024/025 294.758
402.005 425.023/030/037/040/067/068/073/094/095/096/098/101/103/108
644.002/010/022/029/030/033/039/041/045/047/048/050/053/057 Crossrail 185.581
HGK DE 76 (Mak 1000839/1987)/82 (Mak 1000883/1993)/83 (Mak 1000884/1993)/
91 (Mak 1000838/1987) R4C 185.541/563 RSB 185.524 Wiebe Lok 3 (ex DB 212.192)
SNCB 7777/7790/7836

Koln Hbf* 101.015/025/036/059/067/116 110.493 111.111/124/127/150/196 112.136/138/158/161/163
120.133 143.008/031/114/241/262/292/611/616/815/822/833/842/913
146.009/010/014/018/021/023/025/030 218.151/216 294.845
401.055/555 402.007/016/033/035
403.002/003/006/013/030/054 (complete sets)
403.012 (403.621 inserted)/026 (403.323 inserted)
406.010/011/051/053
423.034/035/036/037/038/039/042/043/045/046/048/049/050/055/056/057/127/191/
423.192/196/197/198/199/246/247/248/252/253/254/255/258/262/291/296/297/298
425.028/030/033/034/037/040/054/063/064/066/067/069/072/093/094/095/096/098/101/
425.103/108
628.499/503/511/532/661/662 643.206/209 644.002/003/004/010/012/016/017/019/025
644.027/031/039/042/043/047/048/053/057

Friday 7th November

Leverkusen Mitte*	143.587 146.017
Dusseldorf Hbf*	101.001/036/066/078/092(ii)/119 110.374/396/398/463 111.010/011/014/113/114/115/118/119/120/124/146/149/153/156/159/160 112.166 120.101/103/114 143.008/014/085/177/215/241/258/262/292/353/358/577/578/579/581/582 143.587/596/597/604/605/608/611/612/618/660/815/840/842/854/870/905/942/964 146.008/009/011/014/016/017/018/020/022/024/027/029/031 212.007 294.801 402.008/017 403.001/036/056 (complete sets) 403.020 (403.121/621 inserted) 420.215/258/378/379/389 423.247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/291/293/294 423.296/297/298/299/300 628.495/501/507/511/521/531/532/533/534/535/539/540/661/662/667/668 643.034/038/046/051/054/204/212/219 EFW 212.240 HGK 2057(185.589) DH751 (VSFT 1001035/2001) MRCE 5001677/2007 Regiobahn 1001/1002/1004/1005/1006/1007/1008/1009/ 1009/1010/1012 SBB 482.047
Dusseldorf Flingern*	143.870
Wuppertal Steinbeck*	420.386
Wuppertal Hbf*	420.385
Wuppertal Barmen*	402.001
Schwelm*	143.177/581
Ennepetal*	112.156
Hagen Haspe*	HWB VL9 (Mak 1000372/1699)
Hagen Hbf*	101.005 110.325 111.009/014/114/149/160 112.158/163 120.144 143.258/358/660/823/905 189.083 402.019/040 612.040/041 628.517/519/526/663/664/671/673/676 703.009 ABR ET22.001/002/004/006/008/009 ABR ET23.001/003/004/005 EFW 212.052 Wiebe Lok 3 (ex DB 212.192)
Schwerte Rbf*	155.183 294.273/718
Schwerte (Ruhr)*	112.137 140.692
Holzwickede*	110.501

Hamm (Westfalen)* 101.057/098 110.494 111.117/119/126/156/158 120.135 145.042 146.015/027/030/031
155.158
365.145
402.015
425.014/019/057/104
708.329 711.110 10019 (ex SBB) Eurobahn ET 5.09 RBH 145 CL 206

Hamm Rbf* NS 6467

Hamm Rbf (seen by Rose Purdy)

614.001/002/004/007/008/011/012/019/020/031/032/033/034/037/038/054/055/056/057/
614.059/060/061/062/063/064/071/075/076 628.101/102/103
634.607/608/610/613/617/618/619/627/633/651/652/657/665
914.002/006/008/010/016/018/019/024/025/028/028/030/032/037/038 928.101/102/103
934.422/443/445/448/449/450/451/453

Dortmund Depot (pass)*363.660/702 403.027 (complete set)

Dortmund Hbf* 101.016/034/039/047/104/111/113/132/137 110.236/415/450/457/470/501
111.011/118/124/153/154 112.159/160/166 114.501 (ex 755.025, ex 112.025)
120.104/115/145/148
143.177/245/288/353/588/590/596/597/605/608/615/617/643/645/905/942
146.003/008/011/016/018/021/029/031
218.387
402.005/018/023/024/037
403.006/035 (complete sets)
628.537/664/676 648.101/102/105/106/109/111/113/
114/115 NWB 0011 VT 2.08
PEG 643.03/05/09/11/12/015/016/017

Bochum Hbf* 402.037

Wattenscheid* 146.027

Essen Hbf* 101.048/077/082/124/139 112.159 113.309 120.133
143.030/036/215/288/298/304/587/593/605/614/615/617/815/840/854
146.001/002/005/006/008/011/015/018/019/021/023/030
294.890
402.006/018/021
403.006/011/036/054 (complete sets)
403.012 (403.821 inserted)/016 (403.210 inserted)
420.174/183/258/359/369/388 425.020/022/025/027/055/056/062/071 426.019
628.514
ABR ET22.006 ET23.003/004/005 HWB VL7 (ex DB 346.953)

Dusseldorf Hbf* 708.331

Saturday 8th November

Hagen Hbf 612.040 ABR ET23.003

Vorhalle Rbf 140.037/440/569/651/829/861 145.029/052 152.060/087 155.033/147/181 185.186/270
189.083
225.109 294.604/671/696/772/774/794/847 296.037/045/046
332.294 335.013/217 363.652/691 365.109

EFW 260.773 (ex DB 360.773)
NS 6466/6471
Passing 185.342 ABR ET23.009

Dortmund Depot 101.103 110.360/377/414/420/426/497 111.016/124/126/146/147 112.134/135/159 115.211
146.003/026/028
333.648 363.128/160/655/660/702
420.175
628.518/526/528/536/537/664/665 640.010/016/020/024/025 648.101/116/202
Westfalenbahn ET.010

Wanne Eickel S.P. 140.012/632 185.055(ii)/162/330
225.011/101 232.280/553 294.154/614/630/674/693/700/707/806/890
RAG 804 (VSFT 1000903/1997)
RAG 806 (VSFT 1000905/1997)
RAG 811 (VSFT 1000917/1998)
WHE 22 (Mak 1000776/1978) NS 6470

Wanne Eickel Hbf 101.014 143.617 151.013 363.147/191/625/739 425.022/025 NS 6468

Gelsenkirchen Bismark Rbf Nbe 212.256 (ex DB)

Oberhausen 140.291/353/677/784/833/871 145.015

Osterfeld Sud Depot 151.001/004/010/021/024/046 152.161 155.192 185.270 189.042
225.001/016/075/120/131 232.011/156/201/283/575/587/595/654/663
232.901 (ex 234.072)/908(ii) (ex 232.699) 241.804/805 290.569
294.227/649/657/667/694/782/789/791/830/831/853/857/860/861/888/897
333.679 335.082/160 361.671 362.402/547/756/766 363.122/649/823
364.511/520/611/762/890 365.838
Passing 189.065 225.071/117
EFW 221.117 HGB V100.03 (ex DB 202.488)

Oberhausen West 140.727/796 145.035 152.059/087 155.251 189.086
232.241/428/494/534 294.773/792/827/852/855/891
EH 542 (VSFT 1001135/2001)/545 (VL 5001556/2004)

Sunday 9th November

Koln Deutz 110.493 112.161 425.030

Deutzerfeld Depot 110.200/321/483 120.141 155.098
333.681 335.163 362.582
423.251/252 425.040/069
Thalys 4305
Passing 101.068/107 112.156 143.854 402.034
403.056 (complete set) 425.056/103

Aachen West Gbf 139.135/552 140.534 151.157 155.249/273 185.019/155/207/269/272 189.048
225.005/018/020/021/025/026/027/051 241.803
Crossrail 185.591/593
DLC DE 6307 (GM 20058725-09)*
DLC DE 6309 (GM 20058725-11)
Veolia 185 CL 005 SNCB 7847
Passing 111.129 643.207/226

Aachen Hbf S.P. 110.396/398 362.915 363.437
643.203/208/212/214/215/224

Montzen Yard 2011/12/25 2321/34/63
2801 (E186.123)/03 (E186.125)
5102/03/10/25/36/38/41/43/52/54/56/57/58/62/67/68/70
5173/74/80/81/85/86 5505/07/29/35 6271/98 7351
DB 241.802
MRCE 653.05 (ex HGK DE55, GM20048653-05)
Passing DLC DE 6309

De Panne 186 359/375/411/422/431/435 527/528 619
2304 2510

Dunkerque Grand Synthe 66724 EWS 66229

Calais Trioxide Y6508