



The First Ten

By Bill James

My family lived in a house in King's Avenue, Winchester, from 1938, when I was 9, to 1948. There was a gap between the houses across the road, which allowed me to see about 100 yards of the LSWR main line, approximately 1 mile south of Winchester station. The majority of these notes are of observations from Winchester, but from 1940 onwards, I used my bike to get about to look at other railway locations – Eastleigh, Southampton, Andover and Fareham.

My first sight of 21C1 was in Feb 1941, in grey undercoat, running light engine, tender first, to Winchester, probably about 3.00pm. This was the usual time for ex-works engines to perform their first mainline test run. It returned south about an hour later. It was a complete surprise, no mention had been made of it in the (bi-monthly) Railway Magazine, the main source of railway developments at that time. It appeared a few weeks later in its full malachite glory and, according to Winkworth, was named on 10 March, probably at Waterloo.

21C2 followed with a test run about a month later, I think, and I saw 21C3 in photographic grey, with white lines, in Eastleigh Works yard, straight out of the paint shop. This loco worked an up freight through Winchester in this livery before being repainted in wartime black.

I saw all the first batch of 10 in turn as they came out of works.