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**OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

**“W&L COUNTESS” RADIO CONTROL**

**SAFETY FIRST**

All our locomotives are safe to run, and will give many hours of pleasure, providing the following safety procedures are followed: -

- 1. Please read the instructions thoroughly before running for the first time.**
- 2. Never let the engine run out of water.**
- 3. When refilling the gas, do not have any naked flame present, and NO SMOKING!**
- 4. Do not pick up the engine by the bodywork, chimney or boiler, especially when hot.**
- 5. Only pick up the engine by the buffer beams and, when hot, use old gloves or a cloth.**
- 6. Do not stand over the chimney. Ejected boiling water or steam may cause serious injury.**
- 7. Do not open the smoke box door while the engine is alight.**

8. **Constant supervision of the boiler water level is imperative as the gas WILL outlast the water. Failure to do so will be treated as misuse and is not covered by the warranty. The boiler will require topping up about every 10 minutes.**

### **General Hints**

As with all operating machinery, whether model or full size, wear will occur. In the model steam locomotive much can be done to help prolong its life and decrease the amount of time required in the workshop for servicing.

Keep the engine as clean as possible, and the motion free from dirt and garden debris. The valve gear, axles and crank pins should be oiled sparingly with light oil, e.g. "3-in -1 Oil". Over-oiling attracts dirt and grit, which will increase wear.

Regularly check that all screws and motion bolts are firm. Do not over-tighten, as this strips threads and shears bolts. **When filling the lubricator, always use a high temperature steam oil; this is available from your dealer. FAILURE TO USE THE CORRECT GRADE OF OIL CAN LEAD TO BLOCKED STEAM PIPES, AND WILL INVALIDATE THE GUARANTEE.**

When running your engine avoid excessive speed and acceleration, both will cause premature wear in the valve gear. Prototypically, narrow gauge locomotives ran at a speed of between 10 and 20 M.P.H., and never exceeded 25 M.P.H.

### **Positions of Fillers and Drains etc.**

The cab roof lifts up then tilts over sideways to give access to all fillers.

*The gas inlet valve* is in the front near side corner of the cab, at the top of the gas tank turret. The gas control valve is attached to the filler turret, and can be operated through the left hand cab doorway.

***The lubricator*** is in the offside of the cab, by the doorway. The filler cap has a “T” bar in it to aid removal. The lubricator drain is just to the rear of the right hand cab step. To drain, un-screw the drain valve through about a turn using the small brass tool with the steel pin handle, and hole in the end of the brass part. Put the hole over the pin in the side of the drain valve and turn.

***The boiler water filler*** is on top of the steam turret on the boiler in the middle of the cab. Undo the knurled cap to fill with water. As the loco is supplied with a Boiler Filler Cap, change the original plastic topped cap with the one supplied loose with the loco. This one has a non return valve on the underside and is used when filling the boiler when in steam. The main steam regulator valve is the valve on the rear of the boiler-filling turret with the steel handle attached.

***Radio switch*** for the loco is on the left hand front face of the bunker. To switch on, move the slide switch downwards. The loco is fitted with rechargeable batteries; the recharge lead is on a fly lead in the bunker. We recommend giving the loco batteries a full 12 hour charge before the first use. A battery charger is supplied for the loco battery pack. The transmitter is fitted with four alkaline AA size dry batteries.

### **Preparation for Running**

The Countess is fitted with a water gauge; this allows the driver to keep the model in steam continuously for longer periods of time. This is done using the Boiler Top-up valve supplied with your loco. We have only supplied the valve as many customers now possess a pump bottle. Should you need a pump bottle you should be able to purchase one from your dealer.

Always service the engine in the following order; first gas, then oil then water. Although we recommend Butane gas, the system will also work with, and is safe for Butane/Propane mix gas.

***To fill the gas tank:*** invert the gas can and apply the nipple to the gas inlet valve on the top of the tank turret. It is advisable to support the loco under the gas tank whilst filling, to prevent the engine tipping over.

You will know when the tank is full; gas will blow back from the inlet valve in a strong jet. A small amount of gas and air will escape during filling, but the difference between this and when the tank is full is always clear. Always keep the gas can vertical when filling the gas tank.

***Filling the lubricator:*** As you will read in the instructions for the end of the run, the lubricator should be empty of oil and water with the drain valve left in the open position. Now close the valve and remove the lubricator filler cap. We have supplied a long tool with a 'T' bar handle to aid in the removal of the lubricator cap; it has a cut out shape in the bottom end which fits over the 'T' bar on the lubricator cap. Fill up the lubricator with steam oil to about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch below the top. Leave the filler cap off for the present, so that any trapped air can escape. It can be refitted after you have filled up the boiler.

***To fill the boiler:*** remove the filler cap. Fill up the boiler to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full – ideally use filtered rainwater or distilled water using the large syringe provided. Replace the boiler filler cap, check that the lubricator does not need topping up, and then replace its filler cap also. Filler caps should be firm finger tight. They are sealed with a trapped 'O' ring and, therefore should not be over-tightened.

### **Lighting Up**

Open the smoke box door; just pull it open by the door handle. Light your lighter/match etc. and gently open the gas control valve until a gentle hiss is heard in the burner. Apply your light into the smokebox and the flame should 'pop' down the fire tube and ignite the burner inside the fire tube.

If the gas valve is opened too much the flame will not pop back; it will either fail to ignite, will roar in flame out of the smokebox, or there will be a ball of flame around the front of the engine, which will then blow the whole fire out (after giving the driver a fright)! When the fire sound has stabilised, after about 30 seconds the gas can be turned up until a gentle roar is heard. The smoke box door may be shut after about two minutes. Now leave the locomotive to raise steam and let the locomotive raise at least 50 p.s.i.

## **Running**

When the engine has raised about 50 psi you are ready to start running. It is advisable to run the engine in reverse first; it clears the condensed water from the cylinders best this way. Before commencing your first run of the day, it is advisable to put a cloth loosely over the chimney for a few minutes, as condensed water will be ejected from the chimney. This is quite normal; the motion of the engine will be jerky until all condensate has been ejected. **DO NOT stand over the chimney as ejected boiling water/steam could cause serious scalding.**

Switch on the transmitter first, then the locomotive. The controls on the transmitter are set up as follows. The left hand stick is for the steam regulator, closed is in the upper position. The right hand stick is for direction, the sprung centre position is for mid gear, the upper position is for forward and the lower position is for reverse. The stick must be pushed fully up or down for the desired direction of travel.

First put the direction stick fully down into reverse then open the regulator. The engine should start to move off in the reverse direction. When starting from cold it will be jerky, this is normal, as it has to clear the condensate from the system. The more the main steam valve is opened, the faster the engine will go; our advice is to start slowly and learn the road with your engine

After a minute or so, remove the cloth and continue running. In running it is correct practice to balance the boiler pressure against the load being pulled and the track conditions. With a light load and level track the pressure may need to be only 25-30 p.s.i. therefore, turn the gas control down to keep this pressure. When running a heavy train with steep gradients, increase the pressure by turning up the gas.

The ideal running pressure can be learnt by experience and is one of the pleasures of running a live steam engine. There is no need to have the safety valve constantly blowing off (it is what its name implies – a safety vent for excess steam pressure). When

the gas runs out a complete gas, oil and water service must be done (remember GOW, also remember to shut the gas regulator before refilling, and **DO NOT** refill with gas near any other live steam loco). When the locomotive slows as the pressure falls at the end of a run, stop the engine.

With the reverse stick of the transmitter in mid position slightly open the steam regulator, then gently open the lubricator valve and blow out any condensed water. If you intend to continue running, close the drain when you see oil coming out of it and carry out a general refill. If it is the last run of the day, leave the lubricator drain valve open and blow the lubricator completely clean.

### **Continuous Running**

Running for longer periods of time than the normal, requires the use of the Boiler Filling System. This consists of a pump bottle with tube attached and a replacement boiler filler cap, which has a non-return valve on its underside. For the first fill service in the normal way. Then run for about 10 minutes, now have a look at the water level. You will probably need to pump some water into the boiler. Lift up and tilt over the cab roof to uncover the filler cap, place the tube in the hole and holding it in firmly, pump water into the boiler until the gauge glass is showing about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Keep an eye on the water gauge and try to run between  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a glass.

After another 10 minutes running you will need to refill the lubricator and top up the gas tank. Also check the water level and top up if necessary. Stop the loco in a convenient location, away from other locomotives and turn off the gas. Ensure the fire is completely out and then top up the gas tank. Blow around the engine so there is no residual gas about, then re-light the fire. To refill the lubricator first put the loco in neutral (mid gear). Open the under floor drain valve then gently open the steam regulator. When the lubricator has been blown clean, close the regulator and remove the lubricator cap. Now close the drain valve and refill with superheat steam oil to the correct level. Re-fit the lubricator cap. Keep an eye on the water level at all times and try to refill the gas tank and lubricator every 20 minutes to half an hour.

## **Gauge Changing**

All “Countess” locomotives are supplied set to 45mm gauge, but a “gauge change” kit is supplied with each engine. This will allow you to run on either 32mm or 45mm gauge track. To change the gauge, lay the engine gently on its side, on a thick cloth, loosen all the grub screws in the boss on the back of the wheels using the Allen key provided. The axles are dimpled for each gauge, so you do not have to measure for the right gauge. Slide the wheels to the gauge required and tighten up the grub screws. **These should be checked as a routine at the start of each running session.**

## **End of Run**

As previously mentioned, the locomotive will slow (due to pressure dropping) when the fire has gone out, stop at a convenient place and open the lubricator drain valve. Blow out all condensed water and the remaining oil. Leave the drain valve open and allow all the remaining steam to blow out. The locomotive should be allowed to cool. When cool, clean the engine, check the motion and oil if necessary. The locomotive should always be put away in a clean condition as it attracts less dust and is always ready for the next run (or to be shown to an admiring friend). Always leave the lubricator drain valve and the main steam valve open so that the boiler will not be strained if subject to any temperature change. It is advisable to store the locomotive where any residual drips of oil or water do not matter.

## **Blocked Gas Jets**

If the gas jet becomes blocked with particles of dirt within the gas, the jet will have to be removed and cleaned. With a spanner or pliers carefully undo the pipe union on the gas control valve. Remove the pipe and jet holder assembly from the burner. Holding the jet holder gently in a vice, unscrew the jet. To clear, place the jet nozzle against the inverted gas can nozzle and clear the jet with a blast of gas. Under no circumstances use a pricker wire, this will damage the jet hole. Replace the jet in the holder, ideally using a thread sealant sparingly on the threads. Ensure it is tightened up firmly. Replace the assembly into the burner and re-

connect the pipe to the control valve. Ensure this is done up tightly, test **CAREFULLY** for gas leaks, first with a 50/50 mixture of washing up liquid and water, and then if no bubbles are showing, with a flame and the gas “just on”. Tighten if required.

### **Names and Number Plates**

We have supplied loose, name and number plates, and GW transfers for both ‘The Earl’ and ‘Countess’ locomotives.

In the GWR period the locomotives ran in the GWR Green. ‘The Earl’ was 822 and ‘Countess’ was 823. Both locomotives carried the number plate in the middle of the side tank with the GW letters either side, and the name plate on the cab side.

In the BR period the Locomotives ran in an unlined black livery but still carried the names and numbers in the same places as in the GWR period.

In the early preservation period the locomotives ran in various liveries. ‘The Earl’ and ‘Countess’ have been seen in both fully lined Green and fully lined Black liveries. When running like this they did not carry their number plates at all, and the name plates were in the middle of the side tank. ‘Countess’ then carried her full name ‘The Countess’, which she used to carry in the Cambrian period.

In the period that we have modelled the locomotives ‘The Earl’ is running in unlined BR Black with 822 on the tank, and ‘Countess’ is running in unlined GWR Green with 823 and GW on the side tank.

To fix the plates we do not recommend adhesive, this can damage the paint. We have always fixed nameplates with double sided tape. This allows removal if the position is wrong, and in the future should you wish to repaint or line the model and change the running era, it allows easy changing of the plates.

We always recommend consulting photographs for the exact position of both name and number plates for the correct running era that you are modelling.

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