

## 45149 Headcode Mystery Solved

When 45149 was built as D135 in 1961, it was fitted with split headcode boxes mounted in the centre of each nose end. However by 1973, No.1 end cab had been modified with a one piece headcode panel, whilst No.2 end still had split boxes (this arrangement has been restored on the loco in preservation) On researching the history of the loco I was unable to find out why it had been modified in this way except that it had occurred between 1967 and 1973 and presumably as a result of accident damage. Trawling through websites, old magazines and accident reports failed to unearth any information. Then, whilst visiting the Mid Norfolk Railway in March 2010 to enjoy 45133 in action, I had a conversation with Class 45/1 Preservation Society Membership Secretary, Steve Gross. Steve happened to mention that he had a photo of an accident damaged peak at Chinley. Initially I thought this must be 45014, involved in the collision with 31436 in 1986, but then Steve said it was taken when he lived in Chinley in the late '60s early '70s! I asked Steve if I could have copies of the photos and they duly arrived in the post the following week. As soon as I took them out of the envelope the loco number stood out – 135. Mystery solved (well partly). Steve's notes state that the pictures were taken in January 1971 and that the loco stood in the yard at Chinley station for a few days before being towed away. Magazine notes of the time report that 135 was in the yard at Derby Works on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1971, so this coincides. Also, one of the restoration team working on No.1 cab had found '1971' written in marker pen under the lining.

Finally we knew what damage had been sustained, along with the month and year. However it would still be interesting to know exactly what happened to cause the damage. The headcode displayed on the damaged No.1 end may give a clue. 6V23 is the code for a Tunstead – Margam stone train, which at the time used to have to run round at Chinley to head towards Sheffield. The BR Safety Report of 1971 mentions an incident at Chinley where a loco was uncoupled from its train at Chinley North Jn to run round via Chinley station and the wagons ran away down the gradient, following the loco and then colliding with it. Could this be the explanation? If anybody has any further information on this please let me know by emailing [dexter-skiddaw@sky.com](mailto:dexter-skiddaw@sky.com).



135 displaying the damage to No.1 end – Chinley, January 1971 (Photos: Steve Gross)



135 showing the modified headcode arrangement following repairs at Derby Works  
(Photo: Kevin Connolly)

**Steve Dexter**