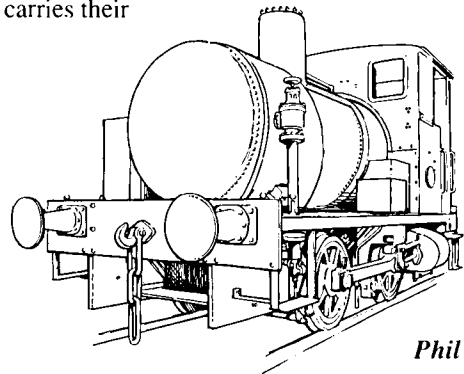


*barn conversion in progress*

## THE FIRELESS LOCOMOTIVE *by Alan Drewett*

The 21 ton fireless locomotive that arrived at the National Waterways Museum in mid September 1988 is only one of 163 such machines ever built in Britain. Among these it is the only one to have its own feed water carried in a side tank. Unlike a conventional steam railway engine it has a water filled reservoir which is pressurised from a stationary boiler. This allows it to work in places where fire would be dangerous and makes it an ideal light shunting engine where high pressure steam is plentiful. The first practical use of a fireless locomotive was in 1873 and the type gained popularity in the First World War. The N.W.M. engine was built by Andrew Barclays of Kilmarnock and carries their works number 2126. Its working life from delivery in 1942 to 1969 was spent at Castle Meads Power Station, Gloucester moving wagonloads of coal from the Severn Wharf to G.W.R. exchange sidings to the furnaces. "2126" was initially rescued from the doomed installation in 1973 by the Dowty Railway Preservation Society although it was never steam by them. Full restoration is now under way at Gloucester Docks with the help from the Friends of the National Waterways Museum. It should not be too long now before we see it chuffing out Llanthony Yard with the Museum's other railway rolling stock.



*Phil Moss*