



# The Ramble 547 - 10/11/25

Monday 17th November	[548]
Monday 24th November	[549]
Monday 1st December	[550]
Monday 8th December	No Ramble
Monday 15th December	[551]
Monday 22nd December	[552]
Thursday 25th December	Christmas
Monday 29th December	[553]

I am deciding in the next few weeks what I want to do with the Ramble. I am getting a lot of material and I am having a problem dealing with it all. There is one of me producing a 30+ page newsletter on a weekly basis. There is a lot of information to continuously process and if I go away, there is a venerable tsunami to come back to.

There will be a list refresh in December and I will continue or the Ramble will close with Issue 553.

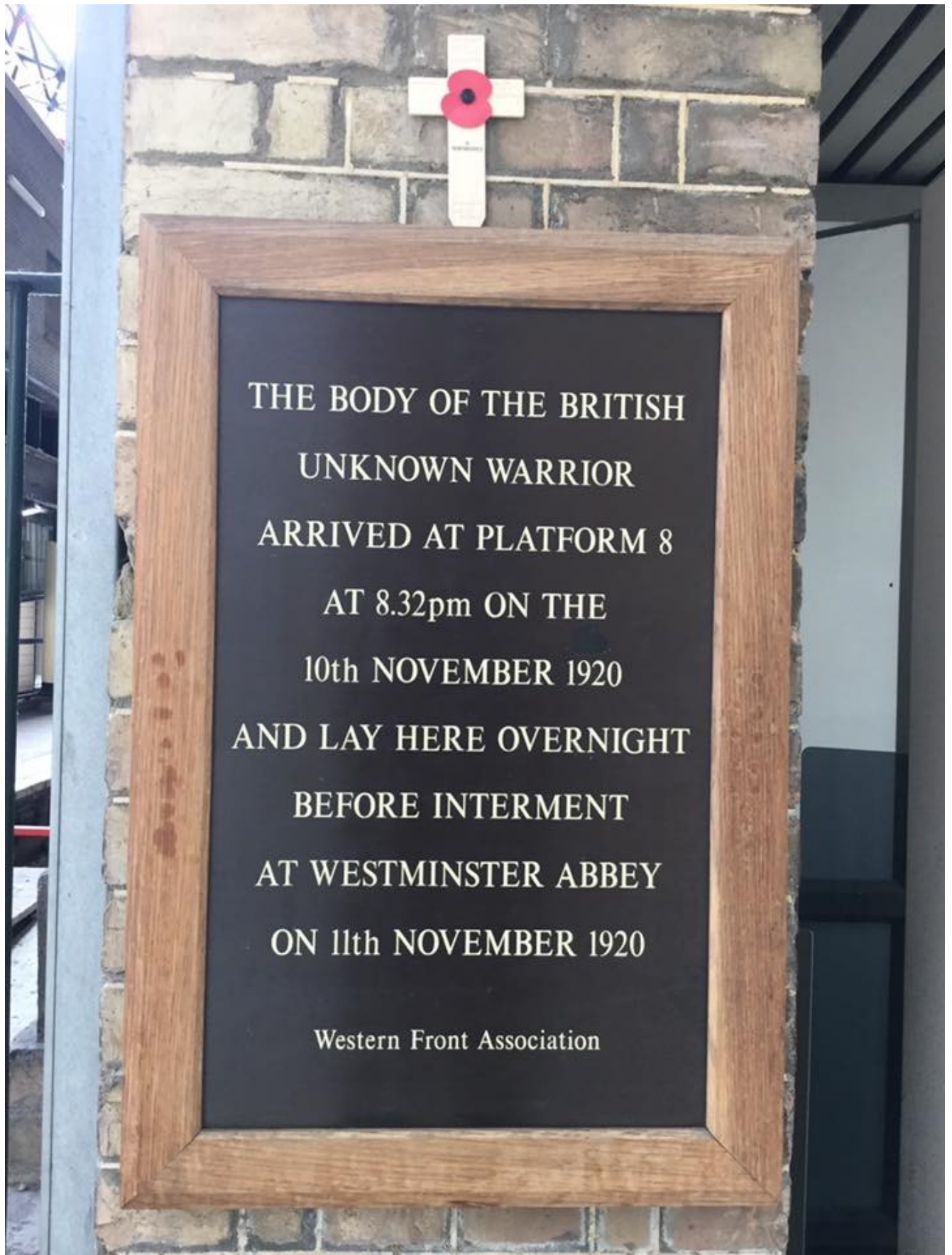
## **European Railtours Ramble Extra**

I will be doing a Ramble Extra on the European Railtours trip on 1st November 2025.

## Simple Flowchart To Work Out If It's Christmas:



## Armistice Day



Photograph by Ian Lang. One hundred and five years ago tonight.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Unknown\\_Warrior](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Unknown_Warrior)

A You Tube video by Dan Snow as part of the History Hit series. It is worth a watch with additional information to the above Wikipedia article.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-KffYvXBjA>

Coffin of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. They wanted a body that was only bone. They did not want a more recent body with flesh still on it as they did not want a putrid corpse rotting away in the Abbey [13:33].





Laurence Binyon



# Belgische Nachrichten Nouvelles belges Belgisch Nieuws

## HLE 21

I am starting to ask questions about the end of the HLE 21s and 27s on Friday 12th December 2025. The P trains work out on a Friday and sit all weekend at St. Ghislain, De Panne, Poperinge etc. So I would assume that most will work into Schaarbeek on Friday 12th December and not work out again on Friday evening. They would be replaced by HLE 18s daytime on Friday 12th with perhaps one train operated with a 21/27 in the evening peak on Friday 12th as the farewell.

# HOWEVER!



Its never over in Belgium until the Fat Lady sings!

The word on the streets is that the HLE 21s will continue into 2026.

The 14th December 2025 was an artificial date based around the mandatory introduction of ETCS. This is not happening until the end of 2027 due to a number of freight operators not having their fleets equipped.

There are a number of HLE 18s undergoing ETCS works at Salzinnes Works. This is on top of the regular revisions and something called SAFI being done on the 18s. Also one of the depots maintaining HLE 18s and 19s has appalling availability figures which all adds into a heady mix of not enough HLE 18s to go round. This is on top of Availability figures that were already "soft" to say the least.

When the HLE 21s & 27s stop then the M5 driving trailers will also stop being used as driving trailers. There is nothing stopping a M6 or M7 driving trailer being used instead but on a P train this is a bit of a waste. The problem is at places like Quiévrain the platform tracks end at dead end stubs with no run round. So some P-trains will need to be formed of something else once the M5 driving trailers stop being used or top and tailed.

The M4s may also stay on into 2026 as hot spares with perhaps the odd booked service. I do not think using them on the Airport trains is a good advert for Belgium as first impressions count. Getting off a long haul flight, paying the rip off supplement at the airport to be faced with something that looks like a New York subway train from the 1970s is not acceptable. It appears that the M7s are to take over the Mons - Airport - Tournai trains and so the M4s will not be used there any more.

2105 on P8800 15:45 Schaarbeek - St. Ghislain at Jubise on Wednesday 5th November.



At the time I thought this was my last run with a HLE 21/27. My first 21/27 was 2741 on 14th September 2000 on the 16.12 Brussel Zuid - Hasselt. This train went north and did Line 27B/1 [Prinsenhoek to Hever] and the Leuven Avoiding curve, Line 53/1 [Dijlebrug to Holsbeek].

I am going over on 12th February for Krokusvakantie and I am expecting to have another farewell ride with a HLE 21.

### **2155 - Gate Guardian at Salzinnes Works**

On 6th November 2155 began its second life as a static monument on the grounds of the NMBS/SNCB workshop in Salzinnes. The locomotive was refurbished and given a 'New Look' livery. 2155 replaces the 9206, which was scrapped at the end of September.

Please note: this locomotive is located in a place that is not accessible to the public. Photo by Maarten Schoubben.



2155 was moved into position on Thursday 6th November by Dick Transport. The track it now sits on is isolated from the other lines and one way to get it there was to road it the short distance. You could slew some track but it is easier to put it on a truck.

These photographs by Chris Traxx.





Photograph by Michael Walschot



Photograph by Christian Charneux

All the HLE 21s worked passenger trains last week except 2148.

2135 last worked a passenger train on 3rd September and has been stopped. It was in for a bogie swap at Kinkempois and did not get one.

2148 has not worked at passenger train since 24th October 2025

2160 was inside at Melle on Sunday 2nd November having been moved off the scrap line.



## **HLR 77/78**

7701 was inside the depot at Antwerpen Noord on Sunday 2nd November.

## HLE 27

The HLE 27s have problems around their bearings and are likely to go by the end of 2025. Unlike the HLE 21s they will be switched off.

2741 having not been used on passenger since 2nd October, it reappeared on P8009 17:27 Schaarbeek – Poperinge on Friday 7th November 2025.

2715's last last journey as to power a locomotive transfer train E15142 with 1894 & 1866 between Schaarbeek and Kinkempois on 15th October. Maarten Schoubben was able to photograph the train on Line 36A at Grâce Hollogne.

2715 had worked out of Brussels on P8306 16:57 Brussel Zuid – Tongeren on Friday 10th October. 2715 worked back to Brussels on Monday morning on P7306 and was taken off the stock. John Allen saw it moving about and it's very last working was E15142 on Wednesday 15th.



This is a nice photograph but at the same time very sad. Nice because it is well composed and the trees are beginning to turn with some nice autumnal shades. Sad however that in just a few kilometres, 2715 career with Belgian Railways will be over.

In the last Ramble I featured my photograph of 2715 at Tongeren on 10th October. Maarten saw this and said he was also there taking a photograph of 2715 from the other side. He saw someone taking photographs which was apparently me.

## AM/MS 86

AM/MS 86 935 had a little accident at Schaarbeek which will result in the unit being stored and then withdrawn. With only five years or so of life left it is not cost effective to repair the set for such a short time. 935 will surrender spares to keep other sets going. The other unit involved was 922 and all that there was to check was the GF coupler. Photographs by Hugo Jonot











The damage is not very impressive in the photo, but for example the compressor is totally destroyed and the floor is deformed inside. Likewise for the ends of the ABx car which are quite damaged.

## M4

The M4s are expected to stay on into 2026 as hot spares with perhaps the odd booked service. It will not be for too long

## M5

When the HLE 21s & 27s stop then the M5 driving trailers will also stop being used as driving trailers and simply be hauled stock. There is nothing stopping a M6 or M7 driving trailer being used instead but on a P train this is a bit of a waste. The problem is at places like Quiévrain the platform tracks end at dead end stubs with no run round. So some P-trains will need to be formed of something else once the M5 driving trailers stop.

## M7

76017 has been moved within Melle for the Spares Fairy to start work. It was supposed to be a training vehicle but it looks as if the only training will be for the Spares Fairies.



These M7 BMx are **very** complicated vehicles and the bogies they are sat on are worth about the same as the GDP of a small African country. It will not be long before 76017 is a metal shed on wheels.

## The Spares Fairy

You smell her more than you see her as she wears a lot of cheap perfume. She originally comes from Eastern Europe and like a lot of ladies from there, likes her perfume.



## 8008 Transfer

Here are three photographs from Didier Delattre of the transfer from Forest to Coucou by HLD 5514 + 5501 with Siemens set 8006 for the Egyptian Railways.

Enghien Station on 7th November 2025.



**Ex-NS 1600**

1837 has been taken from service by RFO due to a mechanical problem that is not cost effective to repair.

**Ex NS TRAXX**

I got word that 186 040 and 186 041 had been moved to Brugge for work to be done on them in the Alstom Works. Still need the Revision Date off 041.



91 84 1186 041-7 NL-AKIEM

Unit: 532 AKT-TS 23 .01. 25

**NS Vectrons**

Staying with NS are 6193 263, 733, 737, 759 & 766 [5]. A number of people think that five is on the low side and assumptions are that one more Vectron will stay.

6193 499 moved to LWR on 02/11/25. Now in plain white.

Seen on 10/11 with 6193 936 on the Routier Shuttle from Gekkengraaf to (normally) Curtici (RO). This is a train run by Frachtbahn

6193 500 moved to Talbot on 09/11/25 presumably for NS destickering.

6193 766 has gone to Austria for a Revision

6193 735 was in service with NS last week

6193 931 is still working for NS and is booked to work tomorrow

6193 932 is back in ELL livery and working freight.

[https://www.flickr.com/photos/martin\\_rail/54910023894/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/martin_rail/54910023894/)

6193 934 moved to Talbot on 09/11/25 presumably for NS destickering.

6193 935 is back in ELL livery

6193 936 moved to LWR on 02/11/25. Now in ELL Livery.

Seen on 10/11 with 6193 499 on the Routier Shuttle from Gekkengraaf to (normally) Curtici (RO). This is a train run by Frachtbahn

6193 939 is in service with NS

6193 948 last worked on 22/10/25 and I do not know it's location

6193 956 last worked on 22/10/25 and I do not know it's location

The last day of the Vectrons working the Amsterdam - Berlin trains was Friday 31st October. With a railtour the following day there were a large number of UK cranks around. There was one compartment, on the last train from Berlin, that had some very dubious characters in it.

6193 263 sweeping into Amersfoort with IC 146 09:54 Berlin Ost - Amsterdam Centraal. Photographs by Graham Morris.



**IC 146**



**Letzte Fahrt mit Intercity 1 von Berlin nach Amsterdam auf der Intercity-Linie 77  
Laatste Intercity Berlijn-Amsterdam met vectron en DB IC rjtuigen 31.10.2025**

DB Fernverkehr AG/Uml. FZ 806 31.10.2025

**Berlin Ostbahnhof -**

Berlin Hbf - Berlin-Spandau - Hannover Hbf -

Bünde(Westf) - Osnabrück Hbf - Rheine -

Bad Bentheim - Hengelo - Deventer - Apeldoorn -

Amersfoort Centraal - Hilversum -

**Amsterdam Centraal -**



I spy with my little eye....



## NS Units

### ICM

Amersfoort to Houtrakpolder (towed with 4055 as brake force).

29th October: 4031, mBFk 4021, sBk 4021

30th October: 4022

From Houtrakpolder by road for scrap:

28th October: all of 4020, all of 4039

4th November: all of 4028, all of 4047

The current scrapping status is now believed to be:

All cars scrapped: 4012, 4014 to 4020, 4023 to 4025, 4028, 4030, 4035, 4037 to 4039, 4041, 4042, 4044, 4046 to 4049, 4051, 4204, 4208, 4232, 4240, 4242

At least one car scrapped: 4013, 4026, 4034, 4036, 4247

All of those stored or withdrawn before 2025 are now at Houtrakpolder except:

4011 preserved at the NS Museum

4040 at Kleefse Waard, Arnhem for Prorail training

4045 at Amersfoort for training

4087 and the AB of 4021 at Amersfoort

mBFk of 4043 at Haarlem Works

It is reported that mFBk of the 4043 will become a gate guardian at the NS technology factory training centre.

All of those stored in 2025 are now at Arnhem Goods or Amersfoort except:

4228 and 4239 are Haarlem Carriage Sidings

### ICNG

In Service are 59 examples. As with all things ICNG, "Service" is open to interpretation.

ICNG-5 3101, 3102, 3103, 3105 [4]  
3111, 3115 [2]  
3123, 3124, 3126, 3127, 3128, 3129, 3130 [7]  
3131, 3132, 3133, 3134, 3135, 3136, 3137, 3138, 3139, 3140 [10]  
3141, 3142, 3143, 3144, 3145, 3146, 3147, 3148, 3149 [9]

ICNG-8 3205, 3206, 3209 [3]  
3211, 3212 [2]  
3220, 3221, 3222, 3223, 3224, 3225, 3226, 3227 [8]

ICNG-B 3304, 3305, 3306 [3]  
3311, 3312, 3313, 3314, 3315, 3316, 3317, 3318, 3319, 3320 [10]  
3321 [1]

In Commissioning/Acceptance/Testing are 3113, 3120, 3121, 3219, 3307, 3351 & 3352.

3113 has been photographed on test recently but it is taking a long time to get this unit into service. 54 days is a long time now.

3120 has been photographed on test recently.

3121 arrived on Monday 10th November 2025.

3127 entered service on 7th November.

3129 has entered service on Monday 10th November.

3143 is at Alstom Brugge for retrofit work.

3212 returned to service on 30th October (was in collision with a car at Boxtel on 3rd October).

3219 was delivered on 2nd November and out on test on 5th November.

3307 was delivered on 8th November and should be out on test on Tuesday 11th.



ICNG set 3219 leaving Amersfoort on a test run on what I think was the sets first day out on test. Photograph by Frans van den Hurk on 5th November 2025 and posted to the ICNG Group on Facebook.



3121 was photographed at Hengelo on Monday 10th November on delivery by Trainspotterhengeloofficial. The current rate of deliveries is what I was expecting months ago but it never happened.

<https://treinpositities.nl/foto/400505>

3307 should be out tomorrow if the delivery checks are OK.

## VIRM

8633 hit a truck loaded with pears on a level crossing at Meteren on 30th October. The leading mBvk1 290 8565 was severely damaged and derailed with one bogie.

Set 8656 was travelling in the opposite direction and was said to have been grazed by the derailed front end of 8633. However 8656 soon returned to service, while 8633 has been moved to Haarlem Works.

[https://youtu.be/awBcg\\_X0E7c?si=\\_BnjqHZCansSk96W](https://youtu.be/awBcg_X0E7c?si=_BnjqHZCansSk96W)

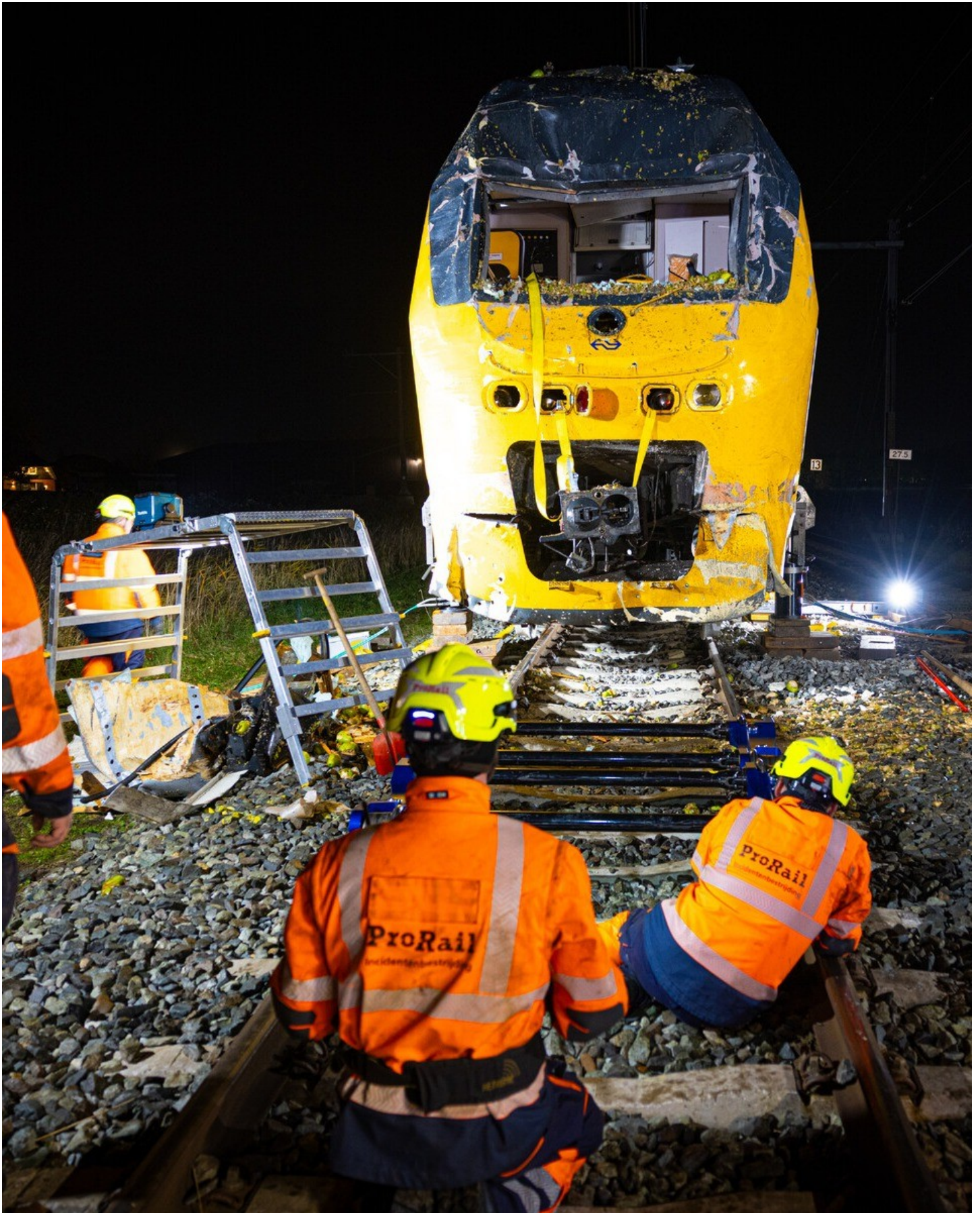


I bet they will still be eating pears in Meteren in 2030! I bet there is pear pies, pear jams and perhaps even a little local perry.

This photo is from the internet. I make a joke about an abundance of pears but some driver was quietly sat there and this happened to their cab. You put the brake onto emergency stop and get down behind the desk and wait..... Wait for death? Or wait to have life changing injuries? Or go home with a few bruises, a tale to tell and lots of pears!

The cab looks very fruity to me!





Rerailing by the looks of it. Also if you look someone had depeared the cab. It was deliciously fruity in the photograph above.

This is why the line did not reopen very quickly, the point onto the line to Betuwe Route Freight Line needed replacing. This is the line the diversion used between Utrecht and Arnhem when they were on. To the right of this Prorail photograph is a business called Wellner Fruit BV and I bet that is where the pears had come from. If you look at their website it shows some pears being processed. <http://www.wellnerfruit.nl/>



# Blast From The Past

Another Blast from Danny Moens showing 2719 at Blankenberge on 28th August 1999. The more observant will notice that it is sat a top of a rake of CFL Coaches.



2719's main claim to fame is that it was hit by 7754 on 6th September 2017 at Schaarbeek. The 77 needed a few minor items replacing and 2719 was written off!



On the tour on 1st November I did have my circa 1997's Vroom and Dressman top on



I got this message from Fabian "This was me in 1997 working at the V & D Utrecht during my student period". So there is the possibility he sold me the top!





# Belgian Can Can



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It is 1210's turn this week and I have two photographs from Czechia. The first one is from an unknown photographer and was taken on 18th May 2018.

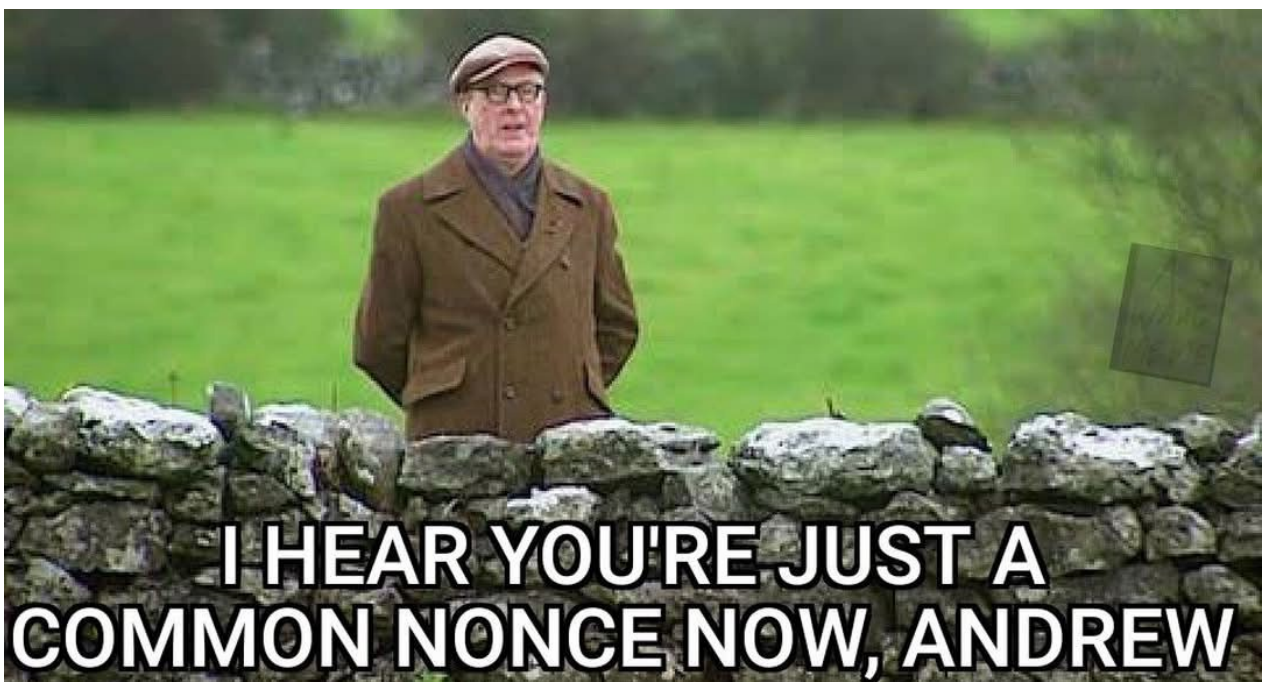


At Prerov Works on 15th September 2023 in a photograph by Neil Wesson. As you can see here, 1210 was empty two years ago.





# Other News



I HEAR YOU'RE JUST A COMMON NONCE NOW, ANDREW



**Anna Mazzola**

@Anna\_Mazz

...

It's 45 years since the best ever account of an attempted crime.

From the Edinburgh Evening News, 18 August 1978.

While they were waiting at a bus stop in Clermiston, Mr and Mrs Daniel Thirsty were threatened by Mr Robert Clear. 'He demanded that I give him my wife's purse,' said Mr Thirsty. 'Telling him that the purse was in her basket, I bent down, put my hands up her skirt, detached her artificial leg and hit him over the head with it. It was not my intention to do anything more than frighten him off, but unhappily for us all, he died.'

# Class 37 gala bingo

Taking pictures with a tablet	Armchair warrior	Rail 200	Beer in plastic glasses	Signal failure
Points failure	Shouting Veg	The Great gathering	TOC bag	Asking the driver for thrash
TikTok	Traveling Tavern runs out of beer	<b>FREE SPACE</b>	Drunk kids	901 isn't a real 37
Window hanging	I can drive it better	Quoting Bashers	37s where better before I was born	My lords!
Farce	Asking for a cab ride	Selfie stick	TOC uniform	Tonez kids



*“Since you can no longer afford insurance that covers X-rays, I can instead show you the plans for the White House ballroom.”*

Have a nice week

# *Iain*