

This article comes from the March 1978 issue of Steam Plough Times. It is believed to have been written by the then secretary and editor Vic Burrough

Ploughing On

Our friend Mr.Woolley has been keeping up the good work in his part of the world. During January 1977 he finished the job of dredging lakes at Onslow Hall. The engines, 15194/5 were then washed out, looked at by the boiler inspector, who was satisfied and then refilled.

On January 31st 1977 they started up the A5 for Corwen and on the Wednesday afternoon they arrived at the Rhug estate, where there is a six acre, lake complete with an island, which was last dredged in 1940 by Evans of Whittington. Mr.Woolley was here until July.

The chief mishap here was the failure of the bush in the winding drum of one engine. It collapsed and they were lucky to get a replacement casting from Beeby's; Lloyd Jones were able to machine it, so that it was fitted and they were back at work on the Thursday.

When this job had been completed, they travelled to the Gwysaney Estate near Mold, to do a lake of about one acre full of mud, again with an island in the middle. They did this job in about five weeks. The estate owner then wanted a new lake excavated in a wet peaty location, so after spending a week altering the scoop door, they did the job. However, the ground was getting wetter and wetter and just before completion, his engine slipped off of its dry perch into the peat. She was in it! The steerman's stand was level with the ground.

However, the wind had blown an elm tree over, so cord wood was cut, they dug down to the wheel and behind the tank, put some wood under the wheel, put a snatch block in the coupling, the Foden tractor behind, the dead end onto a handy oak tree and started to pull. Not too much throttle on the engine or the cord wood would be pulled under.

She came out slowly; it took half a day and he thinks they were very lucky. The engines were then washed out and packed up; then they started for home on December 19th getting to Ruabon on Monday night and to Nescliffe on the A5 on Tuesday night and being foggy had to park up early. He took the men back to their cars, collected groceries in West Felton, and got knocked down by a car. He was in Gobowen Hospital for 10 days but is getting better.

That is all for now, but there will no doubt be more jobs to be done in the future.