

Danish Loco Names by Rory Wilson

Locomotive names in Denmark fall almost entirely into four groups: the early days of the Sjællandske Jernbane-Selskab, the private lines in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the private lines since 1984 and DSB since 1986. The only exceptions were the Nordfyenske Jernbane's Scandia railbuses Sm 2 *Falken* (the Falcon) and Sm 3 *Maagen* (the Seagull) from 1947 and 1948 (a third railbus was also to have been named), and the Silkeborg-Kjellerup-Rodkærsbro Jernbane's Triangel railbus M 4, which was rebuilt as a small loco and renamed *David* after being burnt out in 1954 while on loan to the Hammelbane (*Fønix* - Phoenix - would have been more appropriate). Two doubtful cases were converted (road) buses: Kalvehavebanen's M 2 (later Sm 2), a 1944 rebuild of a 1937 Chevrolet, which carried *Mønboen* on its sides, and an unnumbered 1945 conversion of a 1938 Bedford for the Køge-Ringsted Banen, which had *Midtsjællænderen* on its sides: these two may have been advertising, rather than naming.

When the Sjællandske Jernbane-Selskab (SJS) opened from København to Roskilde in 1847 its first locos were five 2-2-2 from Sharp Brothers: *Odin*, *Kjøbenhavn*, *Sjælland*, *Danmark* and *Korsør* (the last was a spare loco that did not have its own tender). From then on until 1884 all but five SJS locos were given names from Norse, Danish or (in one case) Swedish mythology. The exceptions were four second-hand Cramptons: *Roeskilde*, *Ringsted*, *Sorø* and *Slagelse* (Note 1); and German-built Crampton *H.C. Ørsted*. Fifty-seven different names from Norse mythology were used, eight of them twice, including *Rota*, which was first used as the new name for *Sjælland* when it was rebuilt in 1866 (*Odin* and *Danmark* were also rebuilt: the latter became *Hildur*, but the former kept its name; *Rota* and *Hildur* were both Valkyrie). Eight names from Danish mythology were used (I have included *Stærkodder* in this group as he is mentioned by Saxo Grammaticus), four of these making up a small class of suburban tank-locos, while *Gylfe* came from Swedish mythology. The earliest locos took the names of major figures: the second delivery of locos in 1854 consisted of *Thor*, *Baldur*, *Njord*, *Fenris*, *Skirner* and *Vidar*, with *Loke*, *Heimdal* and *Ægir* following in 1858; the two later members of the latter type were *Skjold* and *Stærkodder*, major characters in Danish mythology. However, by the time the last two locos were named in 1884, the names were becoming somewhat obscure: *Alsved* and *Arvak* were both among the horses that pulled the chariots containing the Moon and the Sun. All remaining named locos lost their names in the late 1880s, numbers having been introduced in 1856 (Note 2).

Between 1875 and 1900 ten private lines gave thirty-five different names to forty locos: three names were used twice (*Vemb*, *Lemvig* and *Harboør*), but *Bjerreherred* was given to all three of the Horsens-Juelsminde Jernbane's locos delivered in 1884 and 1885, which raises a doubt over whether this can truly be described as a name, as it fails to distinguish between locos. Four locos of the Sydfyenske Jernbaner (SFJ) took the names of major figures in Norse mythology (*Odin*, *Thor*, *Loke* and *Baldur*) as did *Freyr* and *Freya* of the Ringe-Faaborg Banen (RFB); the latter line (in truth a state-owned line worked by the SFJ) was the only line to use the name of a person from history: *Palnatoke*, a chieftain on Fyn and Svein Forkbeard's foster-father, although there is a slight doubt as to whether he really existed. (SFJ named two of its earliest locos *St Jørgen* and *St Knud*, but on orthographic grounds I consider that these names were taken from the parishes in Svendborg and Odense: if they had been

named after the saints, I believe that the spelling would have been Sankt.) All the other names were those of local places, mostly towns and villages served by the lines, but in 1897 *Vestkysten* (West Coast) was used by the Lemvig-Thyborøn Jernbane and *Nordfyen* by the Nordfyenske Jernbane. Not surprisingly, as the lines were mostly only of local importance, some of the places were fairly small: *Ramme* and *Tisselholt* are hardly great metropolises. Three herred (district or hundred) were used: *Bjerreherred* as mentioned above, and *Hadsherred* and *Ningherred* by the Hads-Herreds Jernbane. The only narrow-gauge locos named were the Horsens-Tørring Jernbane's *Horsens* and *Tørring* of 1891, the line's first locos. The last loco named was the Vemb-Lemvig Jernbane's second *Lemvig*, but it seems probably that some locos carried names until 1933.

In 1984 the Lemvigbane named its three new Lynette DMUs *Storåen*, *Vigen* and *Tangen* (all are local geographical features), and since then there have been occasional namings by the private railways. Most of the names still have local associations, but there is more variety: the Lemvigbane's *Tørfisken* (dried fish, a local speciality), the Østbane's *Kong Hother* (a legendary character supposed to be buried locally), the Vestbane's *æ' Å*, *æ' Huk* and *æ' Gaf* (local dialect names) and the Gribskovbane's *Mor Grib* (a character from local folklore) amongst others. One of the Nordjyske Jernbaner's Desiros was named *Tordenskjold*; the name also appears on DSB's IC3 set 27 as *Peter Tordenskiold* (twinned with Frederikshavn). Lokalbansen's LINT 114 was christened *Nordpilen* by the Crown Prince in October 2006, but no more of the type have been named.

On 19 March 1986 Hans Henrik Ørsted named electric-locomotive EA 3001 after his great-great-grandfather *H.C.Ørsted* and EA 3002 was named *Niels Bohr*; the remainder of the class were later named after notable men and women in Danish science, medicine, technology and railway development. It is sadly fair to say that, of the twenty-two names, only *Niels Bohr* is widely known outside of Denmark or their particular fields. In 1989 to 1993 the eighty-five new Randers-built IC3 DMUs were given names of a person associated with a town with which each unit was (loosely) twinned; the name could be taken from history, folklore or mythology, but was not to be that of a living person. Set 10 was twinned with Roskilde and named *Roar*, after whom the town is named: this was the only one of the mythological names used by SJS to reappear. In addition to nearly ninety Danish towns and cities, Flensburg, Hamburg and Lübeck in Germany and (later) Ystad in Sweden were twinned. The only exceptions to the naming policy were set 58, which was twinned with and simply called *Flensborg* (why not *Elvira Madigan*?), and 84 and 85, the last of the original series, which were twinned with Randers (in addition to previously twinned set 04) and given the names of two of the men behind the IC3 project: *Niels Tovgaard Nielsen* and *Jens Nielsen*, both of whom were prematurely deceased. Namings of the latter arrivals continued slowly on the same basis, except for two units which were named *Selandia* and *Fionia* after the Storebælts's drilling machines (themselves named after the ancient names for Sjælland and Fyn). It was intended to name the IR4 EMUs after writers, but as the type had a lengthy and troublesome introduction only *Elsa Gress* received this dubious honour. In the mid-1990s the refurbished class MY were given girls' names, while departmental MYs 1105 and 1108 were called *Den flyvende hollænder* (The Flying Dutchman) and *Hasse* after test-train supervisor Paul de Kruiff and photographer Jens Hasse.

Odin, *Thor* and *Baldur* were each used three times, twice by SJS and once by SFJ, while *Loke* was used once by each; *Fenris*, *Njord*, *Rota*, *Skirner* and *Vidar* were all used twice by SJS. *Freja* was used by SJS and *Freya* by the RFB (these are alternate spellings of the same character), while SJS also used *Vanadis*, another name for *Freja/Freya*; to further confuse matters, *Freyr* (not another spelling of *Freja/Freya*) was used by RFB and *Frigga* by SJS: both characters were probably originally identical with *Freja/Freya*. With the exception of *Rota*, all the names reused by SJS were major ones that had been given to early locos that were withdrawn before 1883, leaving the name available for reuse. It is noticeable that *Loke* and *Fenris*, two of the most malignant figures in the canon, were amongst those that reappear. Back down amongst the mortals, only *H.C.Ørsted* appears twice: the leading physicist and discoverer of electromagnetism had died only seven years before SJS gave his name to a loco and was later an appropriate choice for an electric-loco. As it seems likely that four SFJ (originally Svendborg-Nyborg Banen) locos lost their names on rebuilding in 1919 and 1920 (all lasted until the early 1950s), there were probably no locos carrying names between 1933 and 1947, and again between the withdrawal of *David* in 1981 and 1984.

DSB's train-ferries

When DSB's first train-ferry was named *Lillebælt* in 1872, it inaugurated a practice which was to see a further twenty-five of DSB's fifty-four train-ferries given names connected to their route: the stretch of water, ports, islands and local features (*Kronborg* and *Kärnan* of the Helsingør-Helsingborg route). Although ships sometimes moved from one route to another, there were only four renamings: *Jylland* and *Fyn* both gave their names to new builds, becoming *Fenris* and *Svea* in 1933 and 1937; *Helsingborg* became *Glyngøre* when she moved from the Øresund to the Sallingsund in 1946 and *Ørehoved* (of 1916) became *Kärnan* in 1950 after she was rebuilt for the Helsingør-Helsingborg route, finally becoming *Senior* for her last three months of service in 1970 to release the name for a new build. Only *Sjælland* was used three times, while five others appeared twice and two more reappeared with different spellings: *Helsingborg/Hälsingborg* and *Storebælt/Store-Bælt*. The eight private train-ferries all took names associated with their routes.

In 1883 DSB took over *Ingeborg*, named after one of the country's princesses, and eighteen more train-ferries later received royal names. Some consisted of a single name, such as *Marie* or *Alexandra* (later Edward VII's queen), while others carried the full title, including *Kronprins Frederik* and *Dronning Ingrid*, the only names to be used twice. The first *Dronning Ingrid* was the only ship to be renamed, becoming the third *Sjælland* to release the name for a new build. The only train-ferries built post DSB, Scandlines' *Prins Richard* and *Prinsesse Benedikte* for the Fugleflugtslinie, also followed this practice.

The remainder of the fifty-one different names that were used came from a variety of different sources, including Danish and Norse mythology; the last DSB train-ferry took its name from an historical character, the astronomer *Tycho Brahe*. (As a digression, *Tycho Brahe* was the first of two ferries introduced to the Helsingør-Helsingborg route in 1991 and 1992. The Swedish one was to have been named *Magnus Stenbock*, but it was felt that the general who ejected the Danes from Skåne in a bloody battle outside Helsingborg in February 1710 might not be the most tactful

choice and the slightly bland *Aurora af Helsingborg* was chosen instead; the simpler *Aurora* was already registered.)

Since *Heimdal* of 1930, the first car-ferry, these vessels have taken their names from a variety of sources, although in recent years a number of Norse mythological names have been given to leased ships. DSB's other ships were four ice-breakers and two post-ships during the second half of the nineteenth century, all of which were given names from Norse or Danish mythology, and a second-hand steamer acquired in 1917 for the Kalundborg-Århus route and named *Niels Holst* after DSB's first general-director.

Note 1: The four locos are believed to have been built in 1849 by Tulk & Ley of Lowca (Whitehaven) for Thomas Crampton, who used them as demonstrators in various parts of Europe. They were then acquired by contractors Fox, Henderson & Co. and were rebuilt or overhauled in 1854 by R. & W. Hawthorn in Newcastle. They were used on the construction of the Roskilde-Korsør line, after which they were taken over by the SJS. They were withdrawn between 1864 and 1871.

Note 2: SJS had been nationalised in 1880 and united with the lines on Jylland and Fyn in 1885, but it was only on 1 January 1893 that a single organisation was really formed.

Sources:

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Sjællandske jernbaneselskabs Lokomotiver; Dresler; Jernbanemuseum; 2002

Various copies of Danske lokomotiver og motorvogne and Jernbane

Various web sites, notably jernbanen.dk and dfhs.dk