

# David Veltom Portuguese Memories

Compiled by John Marsh

Totem Publishing

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Totem Publishing is an imprint of The Transport Treasury photographic archive specialising in short run photographic albums, using images from the collection accompanied by interesting and informative captions.

When steam finished on British Railways in 1968, many enthusiasts looked to Europe to find railways still worked with steam – while there was still time. David Veltom was one such enthusiast, who made his first visit to northern Portugal in 1969 and photographed trains on four further visits up to 1975 on both the broad and metre gauge lines around Porto. He recorded many different classes of locos at stations large and small, in depots, and out on the line in some spectacular scenery.

This collection opens with a brief biography and an introduction. Oddly this page is repeated, but there is no contents page. There is, however, a useful map showing the lines and the places featured.

The photos are sensibly presented according to location, combining views from the different visits.

The sections are:

- the Dão line to Viseu (3 pages)
- the Vouga Valley line from Espinho to Sernada and thence either Viseu or Aveiro (8 pages)
- the Tua line to Bragaça (12 pages)
- the Tamega line from Livração to Amarante and Arco de Baúlhe (3 pages)
- the Sabor line from Pocinho to Duas Igrejas-Miranda (4 pages)

- the Corgo line from Régua to Chaves (8 pages)
- the Porto system, to Póvoa de Varzim and to Famalicão (4 pages)
- the line from Trofa to Guimarães and Fafa (5 pages)
- the broad gauge Minho line, Porto São Bento to Monção and the Braga branch (12 pages)
- the broad gauge Douro valley line to Barca d'Alva (21 pages)
- the broad gauge line from Contumil to Leixões (1 page)
- and Régua shed (1 page) with its mixed gauge turntable.

Note that the metre gauge branches off the Douro valley are not in order, and the longest lines do not necessarily get the most coverage.

All the images are previously unpublished.

A high proportion are loco portraits, taken at stations during halts and around loco depots, but we are also treated to a number of wider views of complete trains, often in attractive scenery, and sometimes taken from the train.

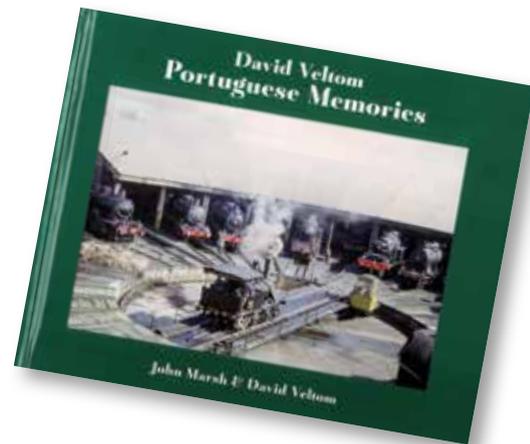
The motive power is exclusively steam, generally kept in excellent condition.

Some of the journeys (in 1973, 1974, and 1975) were as part of excursions organised by the Locomotive Club of Great Britain (LCGB), so there are some staged run-pasts and sometimes other tour participants in view.

The picture quality is very good: the colours have generally lasted well. David was luckier with the weather than some visitors to this area, but there are some darker images – as well as one or two slightly over-exposed. They are all well reproduced, evidence of the quality of the originals.

Most are presented large, one to a page, with some instances of two or three smaller.

The smaller pictures on around a dozen pages could have been reproduced larger; the book is only 88 pages compared to the usual 96 for this style of album from Totem. While twelve extra pages to accommodate everything might have exceeded a convenient



count, the eight available with the limit could have been well used.

The captions are lengthy, packed with background information as well specific details of the particular image; most are dated, usually specifically. Some seem to have been compiled in sections and some minor revision might have been beneficial to achieve an easier read.

David Veltom died in 2023 so was not available to assist with the text beyond his original records and notes, and John March has done a good job in collating data from authoritative published sources, not least *Narrow Gauge Railways of Portugal* by W.J.K.Davies, a book which grew from a series of articles in CM over thirty years ago!

We are delighted to see The Transport Treasury making European pictures available to a wider audience, and look forward to more in a similar form. We hope they have access to more from David Veltom's other overseas travels.