

NEMESIS ET EXIT

Nothing is more dangerous than an idea, when it's the only one we have.

Émile-Auguste Chartier (1868–1951); philosopher, poet and pacifist.

“You do not go into regulation if you wish to be liked,” said Dame Deidre Hutton, DBE, at a Guild of Air Pilots (now the Honourable Company) Livery dinner in 2013. Fasten your seat belts. She was appointed to the chair of the CAA, her qualification being the *Queen of the QUANGOs* (*Daily Telegraph*, 15th November 2009). She had come from the Food Standards Agency. According to the *Telegraph* she confessed, on appointment, that she knew “nothing about aeroplanes”. Of course not. Aviation, although highly technical, has always tended to be the arena of the instant expert. Likewise the CEO, Andrew Haines, had come from the railways.

At least the heart is a pump. My great grandfather designed the first mass produced steam locomotive, a 2-2-2 called the *Jenny Lind*, for the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. Lind (1820 – 1887) was an opera singer known as the *Swedish Nightingale*. She was admired by Schumann, Berlioz, and particularly, Mendelsohn, who often wrote entreating her to..... Having settled in London, she became a professor of singing at the Royal College of Music. Meanwhile, back at the Barrow Shipbuilding Company, my forebear’s steam valve-gear was eponymously named and extensively used, especially in Russia where 4,500 were installed on their O Class locomotive – half of a total production run of 9,129 both before and after the Russian revolution. The 5 ft gauge predominated.

Nemesis Et Exit 281