

How to use Access to Archives (A2A)

The NRM catalogues for the below collections can be searched online via the [Access to Archives \(A2A\)](#) website.

- Doncaster Locomotive Works archive catalogue
- British Railways Standard Locomotive Drawing catalogue
- NRM "Guide to Photographic Collections"

To search A2A for the above NRM collections

From the [A2A](#) homepage click on "Advance Search" below the text box. Enter "National Railway Museum" in the "this exact wording or phrase" search box, and select "National Railway Museum Library and Archives" from the "Repository" drop-down list, and then click on the red "Search" button.

The screenshot shows the 'Access to Archives' search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text 'Search the archives' and a search button. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links: 'About us', 'Visit us', 'Research and learning', 'Search the archives', 'Services for professionals', 'News', and 'Shop online'. The main content area is titled 'Access to Archives' and 'Part of the UK archives network'. It features a search form with the following fields and options:

- Quick search** | **Advanced search** | **Search result**
- Find results (enter keyword(s) in **one** or **more** of the search boxes)
- all these words**:
- one or more of these words**:
- this exact wording or phrase**:
- Date range**: **from** (dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy) **to** (dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy)
- Place**:
- Repository**:
- Region**:
- Search** button
- [Start a new search](#)

Below the search form, it displays: Returned: **17212** results for **National Railway Museum** in **National Railway Museum Library and Archives** | Showing results **1 - 10**

At the bottom of the search results, there is a pagination control: << < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >>

On the right side of the interface, there are two sections:

- Need Help?** with links: [Help with searching](#), [Glossary](#), [Frequently asked questions](#), and [About A2A](#)
- Archives 4 All** with text: Archives 4 All is an aUK (Archives UK consortium) programme to make archives more appealing and more accessible through activities and projects. [Visit the A4A website](#)
- Summary of Results** with links: [National Railway Museum Locomotive & General...](#), [Locomotive Publishing...](#), [BR STANDARD LOCOMOTIVES...](#), and [Paddington Station...](#)

This will bring up all the sub-collections within the three collections listed above.

To limit the search to a specific collection you need to do the following:

To search Doncaster Locomotive Works archive catalogue

(NRM ref. 2000-7200).

Select NRM as your chosen repository and type the reference number into the search box "this exact wording or phrase" and click the red search button. The full catalogue records are returned.

The catalogue has been put on A2A in sections, which are:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Register & Schedules
- 3) Explanation of drawing letter codes
- 4) Drawing sections A-E, F-L, M-O, P-T, U-X, Y-Z

Doncaster Works coded its drawings by letter according to the components or sub-assemblies depicted on the drawings. Sections P and Q contain the surviving locomotive General Arrangement/Pipe and Rod/Painting Diagram drawings. Section R contains the surviving Tender Arrangement drawings. These are the drawings that will probably be of most interest to railway modellers.

To search BR Standard Locomotive Drawing catalogue

(NRM ref 2001-8487)

Search in the same way as described above, using the relevant NRM reference number.

This catalogue has been put on A2A in three sections. These are: Introduction and "BR" (Brighton) drawings, "DE" (Derby) drawings and "DN" (Doncaster) and "SW" Swindon) drawings.

Explanation of reference codes

On the A2A website the NRM archive catalogues have quite long reference numbers. This is so each archive has an internationally unique reference that identifies that collection to a particular repository.

What each bit of the number means is outlined below:

- "GB 756" is the national standard repository code for the NRM Library & Archive, and is used by A2A as a prefix for NRM archive references.
- NRM reference codes in the format "YYYY-nnnn" (e.g. "2000-7200" or "2001-8487") are NRM Inventory codes to uniquely identify individual archives or items within archives.
- Individual engineering drawings are referenced by their original railway drawing office number as a suffix to the full A2A reference code. For example, the full A2A archive reference code for Doncaster Locomotive Works drawing number "F100" is "GB 756 2000-7200/F100" and the full A2A reference code for BR Standard Locomotive Swindon drawing number "SL-SW-124" is "GB 756 2001-8487-SL_SW-124"

- If you wish to consult these drawings in Search Engine then you only need quote the original drawing number(s), not the full A2A reference code.

To search NRM Guide to Photographic Collections

This finding aid has been split up so each photographic archive held by the NRM has its own section on A2A. Each entry gives a high-level overview of the contents of the archive, together with information on the date range covered, and whether any detailed finding aids exist for the archive. The guide does not contain any detailed listings of individual photographs in each archive - its purpose is to allow users to identify which archives may be of interest to them for further research.

The entire photographic archive is returned if you do a general search as outlined in the above first example.

If you need more help on searching there is a help page on the A2A website.