

All episodes written by Britt Allcroft and David Mitton. Episodes marked with an asterisk (*) are credited alongside David Maidment, and those marked with two (**) were originally written by Andrew Brenner.

Cranky Bugs

This episode introduces us to Cranky the crane, one of the few newbies introduced in series five to be carried over onto future series. It's overall a nice simple start to the post-Awdry/Allcroft era, though the cast of engines is kind of interchangeable. For example, Bill and Ben could easily take the place of Thomas and Percy since they live and work near Brendam and the story wouldn't change much. It's still got funny moments though, like Percy accidentally pulling on Cranky and he falls over again.

Rating: Good (7/10)

Horrid Lorry

Title's kind of misleading since there were **three** horrid lorries the engines had to deal with, but that's neither here nor there. The lorries themselves aren't the most popular characters because they're merely jerks to the engines for no reason; yes, they're meant to be unlikable, but I think they could've done more with them since (besides faceless cameos) they haven't appeared since this episode. Instead of being genuine threats, they're practically nuisances until they get their comeuppance in the end. Also, since Toby's had his work taken over by lorries back in East Anglia, it would've made better sense to have him be the main character, especially if he was to worry about history repeating itself.

Rating: Okay (6/10)

A Better View for Gordon*

One of the best episodes of this series, and it's not without reason. It was based upon [the Montparnasse derailment in 1895 Paris, France](#), courtesy of railway consultant David Maidment. But with that being said, saying that Gordon had "something broken" inside isn't really explained that well. They could've told the same story with Gordon refusing to have his brakes checked before the opening of Kirk Ronan station and not much would change. Then again, it would probably feel a bit more like *The Fastest Red Engine on Sodor* nearly 20 years later.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

Lady Hatt's Birthday Party*

For the first time, we get a Thomas story that focuses on the human side of Sodor. Sir Topham Hatt goes through a lot of humiliation and embarrassment just to get to his wife's birthday party. In a series that's loaded with crashes, it's nice to have episodes like this that are lighter in tone and more comedic. And despite his suit being ruined, Sir Topham manages to make it to Lady Hatt's birthday on time and she doesn't mind the fact that he's dirty; it's a really heartwarming moment that shows how much they love each other.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

James and the Trouble with Trees*

This episode was written as an amendment about the trees being too close to the railway line in *Henry's Forest*, though it does seem a bit two-faced since Britt Allcroft defended the series three episode about real railways having the same thing and no one doing a thing about it. Either she had changed her mind or David Maidment said otherwise, I'm not sure. It's still a nice episode overall about listening to advice.

Rating: Good (8/10)

Gordon and the Gremlin*

This episode is really confusing at places; first, it starts off with the engines talking about gremlins, and then Gordon has to pick up Dowager Hatt (in her debut story) from Thomas only to give her back to him again... and the dog is revealed to belong to her and is given the name "Gremlin". It almost feels like this episode had too many ideas going on and that they decided to go with what stuck on the wall and then go from there. Maybe this episode would've worked better had they decided to stick with Gordon trying to keep to time and then Dowager Hatt tells him that she wouldn't have minded arriving late. As long as she reached her destination, that's all that matters. The dog himself was pointless since he never appeared after this episode, but the animation used to indicate him running was great.

Rating: Bad (3/10)

Bye George!

Britt Allcroft and David Mitton were both intending for series five to be a showcase of what to expect in *Thomas and the Magic Railroad*, such as George the steamroller working as a henchman for Diesel 10. I believe this episode was meant to serve as a bit of foreshadowing to George's role in the movie, but since he didn't appear in the final cut (or the leaked workprint), this pretty much leads to nothing. A great shame, really, since the message about ignoring the problem will make it worse, something that's relevant today. Side note: It's pretty pathetic that fans criticise BWBA for being unrealistic and yet this episode has a truck flying after Gordon runs into it and it smashes into pieces on the ground. How's that for unrealistic? I know this doesn't factor into the writing itself, but fans just can't cherry pick what should and shouldn't be defined as the "true" Thomas; all I'm asking for is a little consistency there. Episodes like this shouldn't get a pass in unrealism just because it's a classic series episode. Thomas didn't get popular because of railway practices; it was because of the lessons that it taught children. The show shouldn't be about railway practices 100% the time.

Rating: Okay (6/10)

Baa!*

If *A Better View for Gordon* is in the vein of Wilbert's writing, then this episode is in the vein of Christopher's. It's not a bad episode overall, though it is a bit plain in places. The ending gag with Sir Topham losing his hat to the ram was pretty funny though.

Rating: Okay (6/10)

Put Upon Percy

Series five probably contained Percy's best portrayal pre-CGI; he's dedicated to his work and loyal to his friends, but every now and again, he has a bad day and gets cross over it. He may have been naive at times, but he still showed signs of intelligence by suggesting the use of the canvas barrier to protect himself and his crew from the landslide. It's a shame that this side of Percy is rarely seen these days, since half the time, he freaks out over nothing or is stupid enough to assume something is real when it isn't.

Rating: Good (8/10)

Toby and the Flood

This episode seems hell-bent on suspending a lot of disbelief. Like, how did Toby not sink along with the bridge? Sure, he's lighter than Thomas, but he isn't exactly a feather either. Not only that, him examining the dam was irrelevant since Harold was already there, and why did he stop in the middle of the bridge when it was on the verge of collapsing. In fairness, however, unlike a lot of episodes where Toby is just a wimp for no reason, he does have a genuine reason for it since flooding is a real concern, and your own personal safety is important. This episode and another later in this series feel like they're just given to Toby just because he was one of the main characters at the time.

Rating: Okay (4/10)

Haunted Henry*

Some fans may have been scared of this episode as kids, but I don't think I ever was, likely because I was the target audience at the time (I was born in 1995). The spooky atmosphere is some of the best in the show; maybe not as good as *Ghost Train*, but it is within the ballpark and the mystery was great too. I've not got much else to say here.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

Double Teething Troubles*

If there is anything the CGI series is lacking in, it's big diesels. It became obvious from the next series onward, especially since this episode is BoCo's last starring role in an episode and Derek's only appearance (excluding a music video cameo in *Calling All Engines*). It was nice that they'd done their research on Derek's prototype, the BR Class 17, being prone to breaking down. It would've been nice to see Derek being expanded upon, especially if his faults would've been rectified like BoCo's were in the Railway Series. I think that may have been one of Britt Allcroft's ideas before plans were changed prior to the filming of series six.

Rating: Good (8/10)

Stepney Gets Lost

Out of their appearances in the series, this was Arry and Bert's best since they felt akin to people you would never want to run into in a dark alley. Since then, they've been reduced to generic bullies with no hints of their series five personalities. It gets even worse since they

barely even appear in the CGI series, making you wonder why they're even there at all. However, that's the least of my issues here, as this episode just forces the idea of Stepney being a Sodor resident despite the fact that he's a real engine working on the real life Bluebell Railway. This could've worked better with Douglas or Oliver since they were threatened with scrap in the past, especially the latter given that a merchandise depiction says that Arry and Bert wish to scrap Oliver. This episode marks Stepney's last speaking role in the series barring cameo roles in series six and twelve (I exclude series seven as it was basically stock footage being used) which just feel like fan-pandering.

Rating: Bad (3/10)

Toby's Discovery

Well, here we go now with the episode that marked the beginning of Toby's wimpy personality, and this episode is one that he's yet to fully live down. Being concerned about a dam breaking apart and causing damage is one thing, but being afraid of ghosts despite being wise? Sorry, no can do. (And again, people claim that Britt Allcroft understood the characters.) But even if we ignore that, Bertram was featured for not even twenty seconds and was never seen again (though at least Duke's model was reverted back since), unless he was planned to appear in series six had Allcroft not left. Apart from Tidmouth Bay being restored, this episode just comes off as disposable in the long run.

Rating: Bad (1/10)

Something in the Air**

A huge improvement to the previous two episodes; this episode feels like another story that Awdry could've penned himself, although it was Andrew Brenner of course who wrote the original magazine stories. It still has that Awdry vibe with Henry ignoring Thomas' warnings and then lands himself in trouble when he derails on the coastal track and spits out water. Regarding the latter point, it's still amazing to this day how the modelmakers managed to do that. A great episode all around with little to complain about.

Rating: Excellent (10/10)

Thomas, Percy and Old Slow Coach**

Another really good episode. Old Slow Coach had a very unique design, but it's a shame, again, that they never built upon her character for future seasons. While it would be nice to see her interact with Duck and Oliver, I do think Old Slow Coach should work with Emily since it'd be nice to have her pulling more than two coaches. It was also a nice touch, of course, that James' incident with the fuel tankers led to the conflict with the firefighters needing water to put out the fire in the workman's hut. It does everything a good episode should do.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

Thomas and the Rumours**

I love the message the episode goes for; people mishear something and then rumors and speculation are spread around, eventually leading to people jumping to conclusions and they

panic. It's a very relevant message in today's world given that misinformation is often spread regarding COVID-19. However, it's the execution that's a bit baffling; why would the visitor need Harold just to find sand for a children's playground? In the original magazine stories, the visitor was looking for a site for a new tunnel, and that made better sense. So why not just go with that instead? At least Gordon's accident with the tunnel would've made better sense.

Rating: Okay (5/10)

Oliver's Find

I like how Allcroft and Mitton wanted to expand upon Oliver's character since the Awdrys never had the chance to do so. I also like how they seemed to expand upon the mail train services; it can't just be Percy taking the mail by himself, right? Though the end result is underwhelming as Oliver's discovery of the old station yard leads to nothing, not to mention that him shunting trucks into the turntable well was just pointless and served solely to kick off the plot. (Though it was pretty ironic in a humorous way, especially since the trucks shoved him into one in *Oliver Owns Up*.)

Rating: Okay (4/10)

Happy Ever After

For this series, Mrs. Kyndley appears to have gained a new model from what she had in the first, though I guess it was to indicate that she had gotten older since then. And in case fans are asking, this was the first episode, not *Rosie is Red*, to include romance in the series as a plot point, and yet no one gets upset with this episode showing a wedding, nor the bride kissing Percy. But regardless, it's a very sweet episode and it suited Percy's character perfectly. It was also nice having Old Slow Coach make a second appearance, though it was a shame, as I said, that she didn't appear since this episode.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

Sir Topham Hatt's Holiday

Another of series five's best episodes, as well as one of its funniest. Sir Topham and Lady Hatt riding on the canal boat only to be revealed that they're on Percy's flatbed will always be one of the best gags of the show. This episode was also the one where Annie and Clarabel got new models, so it was nice for them to acknowledge that the old models were starting to deteriorate and wrote that into the episode.

Rating: Excellent (10/10)

A (Big) Surprise for Percy*

I can relate to Percy's situation here, the only difference being that I haven't a job of my own. However, I have been getting bored with constantly being stuck at home and being unable to go anywhere because of the recent pandemic, even though it's for the sake of my own health and safety, so with that being said, I can understand Percy's situation about feeling bored. Things can get very tedious after a while and you just want some excitement in your life, but you don't

know when it may happen. The moral itself is a very good one, though it was rather illogical that the guard didn't think of using the brake van's brakes to stop the train going as far as it did.

Rating: Good (7/10)

Make Someone Happy

A great episode featuring James in the lead role about helping others when they're feeling down, especially for someone like Mrs. Kyndley who's a friend of the railway. Not much else to say here.

Rating: Excellent (9/10)

Busy Going Backwards*

Like I said with *Oliver's Find*, it was a nice idea to expand upon Oliver and Toad, especially given how little they appeared in the Railway Series, though I feel that *Toad's Adventure* did this story better since Toad's runaway in the series 18 episode was more of a slight bump rather than a long-running chase. To this episode's credit, though, it has a wonderful rendition of the William Tell Overture during Toad's runaway, which adds to the overall entertainment factor. Fun fact: a clip appeared on an episode of *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* featuring Alec Baldwin when the latter was told that he made James sound gay; is our favorite red engine **really** hiding something that we don't know about?

Rating: Okay (6/10)

Duncan Gets Spooked*

I feel it was far too harsh of Sir Topham Hatt to scold Peter Sam and his crew for not checking the coupling on his trucks properly when that's the responsibility of the shunter and possibly the guard as well. Not to mention that it doesn't add anything to the rest of the episode which is just Duncan dismissing the ghost story and his crew playing a trick on him to shut him up. Also, doesn't it seem a little strange for Rusty to be telling the story since he hasn't been on the line as long as Skarloey and Rheneas have? Either of them telling it probably would've worked better, especially if it was an engine that the others may not have heard about. The spooky atmosphere is, again, great and everything, but it's let down by a half-baked story with a few missed opportunities.

Rating: Okay (6/10)

Rusty and the Boulder

Fans complaining about BWBA being unrealistic? Tell me more about how you love episodes like *Rusty and the Boulder* despite being full of unrealistic moments. Okay, the Condescending Wonka meme aside, this episode is bizarre by Thomas standards. As much as I find the fantasy sequences of series 22-24 to be hit or miss at best, they at least make sense because they're obviously in the engines' mind rather than being part of reality. The chase with the boulder is the big talking point, and it's pretty much the definition of so bad, it's good. Well, that, and being an excuse for Britt and David to make the show's first homage to *Indiana Jones* (the second being in *Mines of Mystery*, in case you were wondering). Also, Thumper is practically redundant as he

was never featured in this episode again. This episode isn't so bad if it's on any other show (and if you're in the mood for action-packed excitement), but as a *Thomas and Friends* episode, it just doesn't work.

Rating: Bad (3/10)

Snow

And now we get to the final episode Britt Allcroft had any involvement in writing, and if it wasn't for *Rusty to the Rescue* breaking its fall, this would easily be the worst, but it still gets the dishonor of being the worst episode of series five. (The fact that it's the last just makes it even worse.) Avalanches are no laughing matter, especially since people can die or have died in them, and so to treat them like they're a joke just feels like a massive insult to avalanche victims, intentionally or not. If they showcased how dangerous avalanches can be - heck, they did show the dangers of floods in *Toby and the Flood*, as ridiculous as that episode was - this wouldn't be so bad. The only genuinely funny moment was Gordon getting stuck in the snow with his snow machine, but that's it. It's an awful episode, through and through.

Rating: Terrible (0/10)

Episode Rankings

1. Something in the Air - Excellent (10)
2. Sir Topham Hatt's Holiday - Excellent (10)
3. A Better View for Gordon - Excellent (9)
4. Make Someone Happy - Excellent (9)
5. Lady Hatt's Birthday Party - Excellent (9)
6. Happy Ever After - Excellent (9)
7. Haunted Henry - Excellent (9)
8. Thomas, Percy and Old Slow Coach - Excellent (9)
9. Double Teething Troubles - Good (8)
10. Put Upon Percy - Good (8)
11. James and the Trouble with Trees - Good (8)
12. A Surprise for Percy - Good (7)
13. Cranky Bugs - Good (7)
14. Duncan Gets Spooked - Okay (6)
15. Bye George! - Okay (6)
16. Busy Going Backwards - Okay (6)
17. Horrid Lorry - Okay (6)
18. Baa! - Okay (6)
19. Thomas and the Rumors - Okay (5)
20. Oliver's Find - Okay (4)
21. Toby and the Flood - Okay (4)
22. Rusty and the Boulder - Bad (3)
23. Stepney Gets Lost - Bad (3)
24. Gordon and the Gremlin - Bad (3)

25. Toby's Discovery - Bad (1)

26. Snow - Terrible (0)

Final Series Rating: 165/260 (6.3/10)

Series Rankings So Far

1. Series 2 (Excellent; 233/260 - 8.9/10)
2. Series 3 (Good; 211/260 - 8.1/10)
3. Series 1 (Good; 208/260 - 8/10)
4. Series 5 (Okay; 165/260 - 6.3/10)
5. Series 4 (Okay; 159/260 - 6.1/10)