

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

PATRON: THE RT. HON. THE LORD O'NEILL

FIVE FOOT THREE



No. 7

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P. G. Harris
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Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or the Council of the Society.

Front Cover: PPs 4'6" No.50 at Dungannon on 23rd April 1957 after the run described in the P and PP Class article. (D.T.R. Henderson)

THE P AND PP CLASSES OF THE NORTHERN

Fred Graham

Ps 6'6"

Great Northern express trains between Belfast and Dublin prior to February 1892 were worked by the four H class 2-4-0s of 1885 and the two 4-2-2 singles of 1898, but in that month the first 4-4-0 engines (Nos. 82 and 83) designed by Charles Clifford and built by Beyer Peacock were delivered to the Company. They had 6'7" driving wheels, 17" x 24" cylinders, boiler 4'1" x 10'2", pressure 140 lbs (raised subsequently to 150 lbs) coupled wheelbase 8' and weight in working order 39 tons 6 cwt.

In March two sister engines, Nos. 72 and 73, followed, also built by Beyer Peacock. They were named in 1896 as follows - No.72 "Daffodil", 73 "Primrose", 82 "Daisy" and 83 "Narcissus".

Then in 1913-5, all the class were rebuilt with 4'6" x 10'2" saturated boilers worked at 175 lbs pressure with the centre line raised from 7'2" to 7'6", grate area was 16.6 square feet and weight in working order was increased to 43½ tons. New cabs with extended roofs were provided and one piece cast iron chimneys and new deep tone whistles fitted. They also had the distinction of being fitted with the first Ross "Pop" safety valves on the GNR and also the first of Clifford's engines to be "Gloverised" and among the first passenger engines to be painted black.

Further rebuilding took place in 1931-2 when they received superheated boilers and 6½" diameter piston valves placed between the cylinders which were increased in diameter to 18 inches, the weight going up to 44 tons 8 cwt.

With the introduction of the Compounds in 1932, Nos. 82 and 83 were renumbered 27 and 26 respectively. No.26 was scrapped in 1957 and the remainder were handed over to the UTA in September 1958.

Only one of the class was involved in an accident - No.73 broke a connecting rod when working between Omagh and Newtownstewart about 1933. The fireman Fred Gould was badly burned but recovered and in due time became a driver.



Ps 6'6" No.73 on Up Sunday Bundoran Express at Culloville on 3rd June 1956. (A. Donaldson)

P 5'6"

Eight months after the introduction of the class P 6'6" engines, Beyer Peacock delivered the first three engines of class P 5'6". They were numbered as follows No.51 "Hyacinth", 52 "Snowdrop" and 53 was to be named "Carnation" but never carried the name. In February 1895 No.54 arrived and was allocated the name "Pink" but again this name was never carried.

Nos. 88 and 89 were built at Dundalk in 1905 and incorporated parts from the two scrapped 4-2-2s, including their names "Victoria" and "Albert". The last two, Nos. 104 "Ovoca" and 105 "Foyle" were also built at Dundalk in 1906. They had boiler 4'2" diameter x 10'3" barrel, working pressure 150 lbs per square inch, cylinders 17" x 24", coupled wheels 5'7", coupled wheelbase 8' and weight 39 tons. In 1906-7 the first three were rebuilt with 4'6" boilers working at 175 lbs per square inch, weight going up to 41 tons 9 cwt. No.54 was not altered until 1916. During the period 1923-7 all the class received 4'6" diameter superheated boilers, cylinder diameter was increased to 18" with 6½" piston valves placed between the cylinders; pressure remained at 175 lbs.

They remained in this condition until scrapping - 51, 52, 53 and 54 in 1950, 88, 89 and 104 in 1956; only 105 was handed over to CIÉ intact.

PPs 6'7"

This class, constructed between 1896 and 1901, eventually totalled seventeen engines divided into series A, B, C, D, E, F and G according to date of building.

Series A comprising three engines - Nos. 70 "Precursor", 71 "Bundoran" and 74 "Rostrevor" were delivered by Beyer Peacock to Dundalk in April 1916 and had 18" x 24" cylinders, boiler 4'2" x 10'2", working pressure 140 lbs, coupled wheelbase 8'3" and grate area 18.3 square feet.

Series B Nos. 75 “Jupiter”, 76 “Hercules” and 77 “Achilles” arrived in March 1898 and were fitted with 4’3” diameter boilers, cylinder diameter was increased to 18½” and weight in working order was 42 tons. No more of the class was built until February 1906 when 106 “Tornado” and 107 “Cyclone” of Series C arrived from Beyer Peacock. These were the only engines built specially for the “Derry Road” and worked the Mail trains until superseded by the Q class in 1912. Cylinder diameter reverted to 18” but pressure was increased to 175 lbs per square inch, later reduced to 160 lbs.

In December 1909 Nos. 45 “Sirocco” and 46 “Typhoon” of D arrived, similar to Series C but with working pressure remaining at 175 lbs.

Dundalk Works now took a hand in building the two engines of Series E. They were Nos. 25 “Liffey” and 43 “Lagan” and were handed over to the Traffic. Department in April 1911. They differed from Series D only in heating surface.

An interesting experiment began with the introduction in May 1911 of Nos. 12 “Ulster” and 42 “Munster” of Series F which were fitted with Phoenix Superheaters and Drummond Feedwater Heaters. They were the heaviest engines of the class, weighing 46½ tons distributed as follows: bogie 16 tons, driving wheels 15½ tons and trailing wheels 15 tons. This experiment was not a success and the superheaters and feedwater heaters were removed in 1914-5 and the pressure raised from 160 to 175 lbs, but they retained their extended smokeboxes until 1922.

Nos. 44 “Leinster”, 50 “Donard” and 129 “Connaught” of Series G were delivered at the same time as Series F and they too had extended smokeboxes for fitting superheaters if satisfactory, and exhaust injectors, but were lighter than the previous series by 2½ tons. The exhaust injectors were removed in 1920 and the smokeboxes altered in 1921-1932.

In the period 1917-20 Nos. 70, 71, 74, 75, 76 and 77 were all rebuilt with 4’6” diameter saturated boilers, new cylinders 17½” x 24”, boiler centre line raised from 7’2½” to 7’6”, pressure 175 lbs and total weight 44 tons 4 cwt, while Nos. 12, 25, 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 106 and 129 during 1927-30 all received sixteen-element superheaters and 4’3” diameter boilers, the centre line remaining at 7’2½”. Cylinders were 18” x 24” with piston valves 6½” diameter. Weight fell to 42 tons 12 cwt. All had by this time been given new cabs, etc., similar to the P 6’6” class.

More rebuilding took place in 1928-31 when Nos. 45, 70, 74, 76, 77 and 107 were given 4’6” diameter superheated boilers, the weight going up to 45 tons. About the same time No.71 reverted to a 4’3” boiler and in 1943 had the 4’6” boiler restored and again Nos. 12, 25, 42, 43, 44, 46, 50 and 106 had their boilers replaced by 4’6” ones during the war years, leaving only No.129 to finish her days with a 4’3” boiler until scrapped in 1957.

At the dissolution of the Company on 30th September 1958 the UTA were handed over 42, 43, 46, 50, 74, 76 and 107 whereas CIÉ received Nos. 12, 44, 71, 75 and 106.

In their final condition the class PPs were a very neat and pleasing design. Those stationed at Newry and Enniskillen did a lot of fine work and were always kept in good running order.

In pre-compound days they performed pilot work on the heavy rugby specials between Belfast and Dublin and on the midnight excursions to Killarney which usually loaded to twelve bogies.

Going down the bank into Dundalk speeds quite often reached the upper seventies and at that time they had spiral springs on all four drivers - one can imagine how lively conditions were on the footplate - indeed I can remember their cab roofs vibrating as they travelled over points and crossings at Adelaide Shed.

From time to time different types of chimney were fitted to all three classes, e.g. Nos. 51 and 54 of the 5’6” class, Nos. 26 and 27 of class PP 6’6” and No.74 of class PP 6’7” had wide diameter almost parallel chimneys, others had a very neat tapered chimney while the engines with the 4’3” boilers had

narrower tapered chimneys. The “odd man out” was No.46 which finished her career fitted with a QLs type chimney which gave her a heavier exhaust beat.

The PPs were my favourite class - possibly because they had the monopoly of the passenger trains on the Newcastle line in their unsuperheated days, strangely enough I can only remember the 70-77 batch during my periodical visits to Banbridge.



P 5'6" No.105 running round 4pm ex-Belfast at Armagh on 23rd April 1957 (A. Donaldson)

What a pity No.77 was not preserved - she would have made a fine partner for No.171.

[There seems to be no record of the performance of the saturated engines, but of course the superheated have been thoroughly covered by a number of competent timers. In the nature of things, these classes did not tend to find their way on to fast long distance trains except as pilot engines, so it is not easy to find a 70 behind any of them, though 79 mph has been recorded behind No.77 piloting No.191 on a Killarney special and 82 mph with No.46 assisting No.87 on the pre-war 10:30am Up.

In any case, their 6½" piston valves, arranged offset, one above and one below the centre line of the cylinders would not seem to make for free running and their exhaust sounded accordingly, as is well known. Yet the men didn't complain of their being spoiled by superheating like the QLs - so possibly the saturated versions did not create any tradition of fast running - certainly the GNR continued to use the 4-2-2s on the Mails long after the 4-4-0s had been introduced.

One naturally tends to compare the GNR 6'7" classes with the earlier 60 class of the GSWR; the GNR engines were all bigger and the PPs in particular were considerably more powerful, though with lighter trains the 60 class would probably have reached higher maximum speeds in the long run. The Killarney Expresses, introduced three years before Coey's first 4-4-0s were considerably faster than anything which the GNR asked of the Ps and PPs.

Still the PPs excelled on stopping trains, being capable of tremendous acceleration, in spite of their large driving wheels and low nominal tractive effort. They produced consistently excellent work on the Newry stopping trains, where speeds in the sixties were regular on distances of five miles or so start-to-stop.

The 5 miles between Goragewood and Poyntzpass, for example, were frequently covered in under

seven minutes, start-to-stop, with maxima up to 66 mph, the load on these trains being four or five bogies. The best start-to-stop time I can find over the 5.5 miles from Moira to Lurgan by any engine is 7 mins 29 secs by Ernie Allister with loco 43 and three bogies, speed rising to 50 mph up the bank to MP 96 and reaching a max of 65 thereafter.

As to longer runs, the 5:35pm Warrenpoint, whose minimum load was six bogies, was for long a PP turn, and made rewarding timing. On one such occasion H. Patton of Newry, with No.43 and six bogies, cleared Lisburn in 12-32 after a maximum of 51 and ran thence to the Lurgan stop in 13-42, attaining 63 at Moira and 64 before the stop, minimum at MP 96 being 54. Restarting, Portadown was reached in 6-58, with a maximum of 61.

The hill-climbing capabilities of the PPs may be illustrated by an exploit on the Derry Road. The 8:25am was for a time put back to 9:20 (diesel worked) and booked to reach Derry in the record time of 2½ hours. Extra stops later increased the overall time, but the 40 min Dungannon-Omagh schedule remained, providing a stiff test for the sexagenarian 43 which I found at the head of the train one morning in February 1958. With five bogies, Hasty got his engine up to 46¾ at Donaghmore, and climbed the bank at 43-45 mph apart from a momentary fall to 39, followed by a 47 mph spurt before the Pomeroy slack. Thus that station was cleared in 14-29 at 24 mph, from which the engine recovered to 40 mph at the MP 26½ summit. In spite of restrained running downhill, with speed never quite reaching 56 mph, we stopped in Omagh in 40-37.

But perhaps the most remarkable PP performance was that of No.50 on the 2:20pm Derry (deputising for a diesel) on 23rd April 1957 when P. Clifford with a six-bogie load ran from Belfast to Portadown in 28-46 start-to-stop. Lisburn was cleared at 56¼ mph in the excellent time of 11-17. Speed then rose to 64 at Maze and, after a minimum of 62, to 67 at Moira. Minimum at MP 96 was as high as 55 mph and speed rose to 69½ below Lurgan (passed in 23-15 at 67 mph). It is fortunate that a competent recorder (in the person of Derek Henderson, to whom I am indebted for much of the material in these notes) was present; and unfortunate that schoolboy finance only enabled him to book to Dungannon. Portadown to Dungannon was run in 22-38 with a maximum of 58.

Possibly it was because of their smaller fireboxes, but the Ps 6'6" engines did not seem to compare with the PPs. The best piece of work I can find is a run on the 5:35pm by "the Bacon" Quinn of Newry, in 1955 with 27 and six bogies. Lisburn was passed in 15.27 (normal 5:35 running; there was a stopping train ahead). Speed then rose to 61 at Moira and 61½ down into Lurgan, reached in 29-21. Later, with load reduced to four bogies, she ran from Poyntzpass to Goraghwood in 7-29, max 59¾.

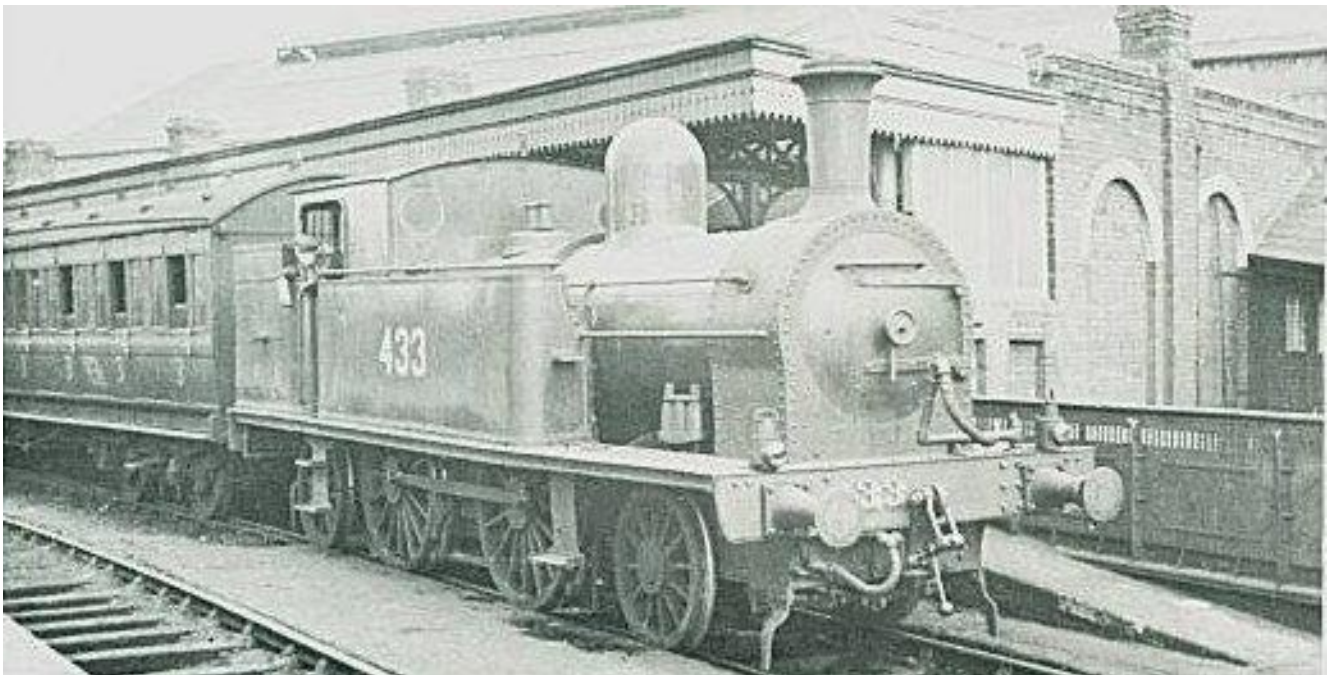
The Ps 5'6"s spent most of their lives trundling on all-stations locals, though I remember 104 working Clones semi-fasts before the War. But I shall never forget one Sunday in 1936 when a small party of us arrived at Great Victoria Street to find Nos. 89 and 52 at the head of two seven-bogie Bundoran specials. We travelled on the second train (the first was packed out) with 52, driven by Larry Kyle, a top-link man at the time. From Portadown to Omagh a net time of 67½ minutes was very creditable for this loco and load and Kyle worked his engine up to a rousing 64 down into Omagh. 89 had turned (her train being worked forward by a PG 0-6-0) and took us on to Bundoran and back, though frequent stops put high maxima out of the question. On the way home, Kyle got No.52 over Carrickmore bank at a minimum of 22¾, to the accompaniment of a fine pyrotechnic display, to reach Dungannon in 46½ minutes. Another feat was the maintenance of a 60 mph average from Moira to the Maze.

105, as stated above, was the last of the class to be shopped and Dundalk made an excellent job of her (we suspected that the best of several engines went into her, as in the case of No.132). She put in some smart work on the 4pm Armagh, including a max of 58 in Moira-Lurgan start-to-stop - an interesting turn, the engine working back tender first to Portadown where her three bogies were attached to the 3:50pm ex Derry, she then waited at Portadown and worked a Clones connection out of the 6pm Up Dublin. - Ed.]

On reading the article by Sean Kennedy in the January edition of "Five Foot Three", I became so overtaken with nostalgia that I was forced to remember some of my bygone experiences on the Bray line of the GSR - an experience which stretches over morning and evening travel daily from 1928 to 1942.

Those were the days when one shilling brought you from Bray to Dublin and back if you were an adult, while if you were a child and had a season ticket a return journey each day worked out at around five pennies. What an outcry when the return fare went up by a penny. But I must not digress too far, if you, my reader, fail to be interested please remember what pleasure I have had in writing.

Many the morning was I awakened by the double-headed train ex Bray at 7:21am due in Greystones at 7:33. There was always a lot of noise for she consisted of twelve 60 ft. coaches and the gradient out of Bray on a frosty morning was hard going. At Greystones one part formed the 8:15 Up train and the other half made up the 8:46 due in Bray at 8:58 and ex Bray at 9am. This train, before the advent of the 670 class, was invariably hauled by 850. 850 - that pride and joy of the GSR. What a thrill to a boy to see the outside cylinders - the only engine of its type. For me, it wasn't till 1937 that I ever saw any other engine with outside cylinders when the Woolwich class worked the Galway trains from Westland Row - but more of that later.



***F2 No.433 at Amiens Street shortly after the introduction of the green livery, 29th June 1948.
(A. Donaldson)***

To me 850 epitomised the glory of steam as she took water and safety valves blew off under the administrations of the toiling fireman. What a thrill to ride behind her, but even greater was the excitement to stand at the Dublin end of the one platform - the time 7:07pm - the purpose, awaiting the mail train from Wexford which at that time gloried in a travelling post office and rejoiced in cream and chocolate livery. What if she was twenty minutes late, no matter, she often changed engines at Bray, the 4-4-0 which had taken her from Wexford being replaced by 850 for the run to Amiens Street. A wave of the green flag clean and resplendent - it wasn't so important on the locals when a wave of the arm and a snap of the fingers sufficed - the mail had departed for Dublin and the evening's

entertainment had passed.

I recall 101, an 0-6-0. At times she would take the 1pm to Foxrock running tender first carrying the race-goers to Leopardstown. The black tarpaulin flapping in the wind forming the footplatemen's only protection from the weather. How as a boy I longed to ride on the footplate and what a thrill when occasionally an old six-wheeled inspection coach was coupled on the train and through its glass end the activities of the crew could be observed, but oh what a frustration if the glass end only abutted on to another coach. I often thought they did it on purpose! Then I had to console myself watching the behaviour of buffers and couplings under load.

Jumping from a moving train when the new second platform was opened at Bray, falling on one's knees, and being arraigned before an Inspector and the Station Master - being held in terror what they would collectively do to me if they ever caught me again. A far cry from the later years of my travelling when at Harcourt Street Station the feat of all the young bloods was to jump from the first two or three doors of the first coach as they came level with the exit door halfway along the platform, race down the steps and be at the bottom before a final squeal from the brakes announced that the engine had travelled its final 350 feet and ground to a halt. For these who are ignorant of its history, the approach to Harcourt Street was always made with due care as once in the distant past the train had failed to stop and the engine had finished up protruding through the terminal wall, hanging in mid-air by its coupling - at least I remember a photograph my father had and it looked like that - enough to put a scare into the heart of the most intrepid engine driver! Indeed since that awful day all the Up trains were obliged to stop at Ranelagh - the station before the terminus in order to test that their brakes were functioning satisfactorily.

The trip up in the lift at Harcourt Street with the milk cans (strictly against the rules).

The man with the taper lighting the gas lamps where the rain which had seeped through the carriage roof had put out the pilot light and then jumping clear as the water in the globe spilled to the floor.

The thrill when the first twelve (and only twelve in my day) steel coaches arrived with their centre corridors and electric light and heather coloured upholstery - what modern décor! They were often hauled by 4-4-2T 455, 456, 457, 459 and 460, while 423-5 served the lighter trains made up with the old six-wheelers. I also seem to remember 427, a 2-4-2T which I think was an old LNWR altered to 5ft 3in gauge.

The delivery of 670, 671, 672 and 673, 0-6-2T - we never seemed to see 672, no one ever knew why - how retrograde they appeared after 850 but with six spanking new steel coaches they made quite a sight on the 9am ex Bray running from Dun Laoghaire to Westland Row in eight minutes or else on the 5:15 ex Westland Row which was the same train.

Talking of Westland Row, when the Broadstone closed in 1937, I remember a famous broadcast on the wireless complete with railway sounds. How primitive that old Radio Athlone programme would sound today - but oh for a tape recorder. What a thrill to see a 2-6-0 Woolwich engine with its tapered boiler. They were stabled at Broadstone and ran light across to Westland Row to take the 2:30pm to Galway and the west. If she was late starting it meant that the 2:45 local to Bray would be held up, for the Galway trains started out of the Down line at Westland Row.

Timekeeping as I remember it was excellent, seldom were we ever late on the business trains which were standing room only. Dun Laoghaire was the only bottle neck and occasionally in the morning we had a check of one minute at Sandycove if the Down train was late or we were early but the business trains were practically always spot on time.

I think I only remember a couple of engine failures but never on the Westland Row line. However I do remember the day in war time coal when steam failed between Shankhill and Carrickmines and the

fireman tried to get things going with the aid of sleeper fence posts.

I remember 660, an ex Midland 2-4-0, with glowing red spots at the bottom of her smokebox due to clinker formation. What a strange engine she was to a schoolboy! How she had to be put into reverse sometimes before she would go forward. She had a very open cab and by leaning out of the first carriage window it was easy to see what was happening - how after going 100 yards or so the regulator had to be shut and opened again. (Now I know why, but in those days it added to the thrill.) I think she may have had a genuine Midland fly-away cab for these were scrapped in the early thirties and this recollection was around that time.



J9 No.354 on 2:10pm Market Stock Special ex-Gorey at Woodbrook on 4th May 1957.
(A. Donaldson)

Then came the Drumm train, Ireland's answer to electric traction without the expense of rail electrification. The heavy batteries on the two coach units were charged at Bray, Harcourt Street or Amiens Street. Seldom did the train run on the Westland Row line as she just did not have the reserve of electricity for the distance. Indeed if she got into Harcourt Street later than ten past the hour and hadn't the full twenty minutes to charge and if the driver yielded to the impatience of the guard to be off and away she was quite capable of running out of electricity before she reached Bray (usually around Shankill) and what ignominy to send for a steam engine. Indeed any really bad timekeeping was due to the Drumm trains and yet A was followed by B and C. I learned afterwards that they suffered a fate worse than death - stripped of their batteries - but that was after my day.

The thrill when the electric light signals were installed. The new signal boxes at Westland Row and Bray. The Dargle bridge rebuilt at Bray. Every day brought some new and fresh interest, every day a fresh challenge to the timetable.

The staff appeared all happy and full of enthusiasm; they knew all the regular travellers. I do remember my sadness as a boy when a ticket collector was demoted to porter on account of his activity in a strike - I can still see his face.

HIGH SUMMER ON THE BUNDORAN LINE

Charles P. Friel

Although I travelled regularly from Enniskillen to Bundoran for several years, I was only beginning to take an interest in things when the Irish North was offered in sacrifice to the great God Progress, but with the help of some GN Weekly Arrangements booklets I have been filling in some of the gaps in my own experiences of the branch.

Bundoran, as most people know, was the Warrenpoint for that part of the GN that lay west of the Bann. On a summer Sunday there were trains from Derry, Clones, Enniskillen and Dublin, sometimes running in duplicate and often there were specials from other places as well. On a typical Sunday in summer there were seven or eight locos at Bundoran shed, as well as the regular branch engine (which was hors-de-combat on a Sunday). It was usual for the engines off specials to shunt the coaches of a following train, enabling its engine to get to the shed.

The shed at Bundoran was a piece of cut-stone extravaganza, with room for four engines. When built by the Enniskillen, Bundoran and Sligo Railway it was probably intended as the main shed for their line which was to be extended along the coast to Sligo. The extension was never built, although its route was surveyed intermittently until the early 1900s. The shed was seldom crowded for in winter the everyday occupants were the passenger and goods engine that worked the branch, but these were based on Enniskillen shed and seldom stayed overnight. The passenger engine could be any one of half a dozen PPs - 43, 46, 72, 74 or 76 with No.43 appearing almost every other day; the goods engine was No.11 until 1955 when she was replaced by sister engine No.10, although a PPs or even a U did take an odd turn on the goods. These engines only came on shed for routine servicing, although the U which worked the Bundoran Express did stay overnight, to work back to Dundalk next day.



***U No.200 "Lough Melvin" on Up Bundoran Express at Bundoran Junction, ca. 1955.
(D.T.R. Henderson)***

For specials working to Bundoran, the crew's day may have started as early as five o'clock in the morning and gone on until one the following morning (as in the case of ex Cookstown trains). As one now-deceased driver put it, "You could have the brave thirst by the time you got to Bundoran". The Cookstown working is perhaps the most involved of the specials. A train of Empty Carriages would leave Portadown at six o'clock and run non-stop to Cookstown (arr 7:10). Leaving there at 7:30, the first reversal of direction came at Dungannon, which the train left at 8:30. Reversing again at Omagh (depart 9:30) the train ran non-stop to Belleek by means of the back road at Bundoran Junction between the North and West Auxiliary Cabins. Stopping again at Ballyshannon, for Customs examination, Bundoran was reached at 11:20. As the man said, "... a brave thirst". The return trek began at 7:05, hard on the heels of the seven o'clock Cavan. Making Customs stops at Ballyshannon and Belleek, a water stop was made at the Junction and Omagh was reached at nine o'clock. An hour and a half later the

excursionists, no doubt in varying degrees of unstable merriment arrived in Dungannon and at half eleven were released on an unsuspecting and otherwise peaceful Cookstown. The empty carriages were worked to Portadown immediately where they arrived at 12:45. This marathon was mounted annually by St Patrick's Accordion Band of Pomeroy who, no doubt, played 'Slieve Gallion Braes' sine fine on the way home.

Not all excursions were as involved as the Cookstown one. For the usual Enniskillen, Cavan and Derry trains things were fairly straightforward. They arrived at 11:10, 11:40 and 1:40 respectively and left again at 8:15, 7:00 and 6:15. All the excursions had usually arrived by two o'clock leaving the Up and Down Expresses with the branch to themselves - on a Sunday the Expresses crossed at Ballyshannon, whereas on weekdays they crossed at Pettigo. But the arrival of the Down Express did not mean that things were quiet until evening. The coaches of the regular ex-Enniskillen often went back to there to work in another special. Siding space at Bundoran was limited but Ballyshannon had ample goods sidings and some trains of empty coaches were brought there for storage.

Ballyshannon had an extensive goods yard as well as other sidings (on the Up side of the over-bridge) put in during 1946 in connection with stone traffic to the hydro-electric dam then being built at Assaroe Falls. All this siding space provided relief for an over-crowded Bundoran.

Some of Ballyshannon's tradition of heavy goods traffic may have something to do with a story I heard from a former fireman on the branch. It appears that when the Irish North bought out the EB&S in 1879, the goods traffic was not up to their liking. They are supposed to have bribed an unfortunate River Erne pilot to run a few cargo ships, bound for Ballyshannon, onto the sand bar across the Erne estuary. The result was that quite a few cargo boats were diverted to Derry and their traffic routed over the Irish North to Ballyshannon. The luckless pilot received £300 for his trouble and bought a public house in Ballyshannon but died, a few years later "of the drink".

But to get back to the excursions, there were two which were run regularly. These were the "Hills of Donegal" excursions which ran from Dublin and Belfast. The Dublin version of the "Hills" was latterly a diesel with buffet car that worked via Portadown to St. Johnston where the passengers left the train for a bus tour of the "Danubian Blue Hills" (as the Donegal liked to call them) with return via the same route. The Belfast train also worked via Portadown to Strabane where the passengers transferred to a CDRJC train for the journey to Ballyshannon. The County Donegal train could have been either steam or diesel railcar, (squeezing the contents of three GN bogies into two Donegal railcars seems to have been a common source of amusement for station staff at Strabane). While the participants were rattling over the Donegal, the GN train worked empty to Bundoran while the usual branch train made a "short-working" to Ballyshannon to collect the travellers there. At Ballyshannon the GN and Donegal stations were over a mile apart on opposite banks of the deeply-cut Erne valley. In later years the gap was bridged by a bus but in former times a railway employee led a route march through the town with the participants straggling along behind. Without waiting too long for late-comers, the branch train set off for Bundoran where there was a three hour lie-over before setting off for Belfast at 6:25 or so, arriving in Belfast shortly after ten.

Until the late forties two engines were involved in the GN portion of the "Hills" - maybe a Q to Strabane and back with the empty coaches as far as Omagh where it would have been replaced, possibly by a UG. In the fifties the train was worked throughout by a UG, but by the mid-fifties it had succumbed to diesel power.

One run of the Editor on this excursion records that the County Donegal train was an unaided class 4 hauling eleven coaches and two six-wheelers (this was in 1948, in pre-compression days). No.12 "Mourne", on coming down from Barnesmore into Donegal town managed a max of 38 mph. Later on the same day the return train ex-Bundoran was in charge of a U which reached a max of no less than 58½ between Pettigo and Kesh.

Other parties coming to Bundoran for the day were usually accommodated by the regular trains or one of the advertised excursion trains. But often trains were run specially for the larger groups. These included an "Owen Roe O'Neill" excursion from Derry, Herdman's outing from Sion Mills, Maguiresbridge United Sunday Schools, a contingent from the Dundalk Textiles factory and Newtownstewart Sunday Schools who might have been taken aback if they had known that the train they had to stop for at Irvinestown was a returning Father Matthew Pilgrimage train.

Almost every other day the Weekly Booklet had a note of some group or other going to or coming from St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg; all this traffic was handled through Pettigo. The groups came for the most part from one of the many Catholic parishes or religious societies in Dublin, though traffic from Belfast, Lurgan and Monaghan provided an annual special from each.

Most of the Pilgrimage traffic from Dublin was easily handled by the Bundoran Express (ex-Dublin 8:45, arrive Pettigo 12:30 and Bundoran 1:30) although a duplicate was often run at 8:53 ex-Dublin.

Both trains would be made up to eight bogies and worked forward from Dundalk by a U. The coaches of the Express itself worked back to Dublin the following day while the coaches of a Down duplicate lay over until the third day when they rose again to form a relief to the Up Express, when the penitents had "done the Island".

On one occasion when the Up Express was loaded to nine bogies instead of the usual eight, a light engine was sent to Pettigo from Clones to pilot the train back to there. I only know of one occasion when CIÉ stock worked into Bundoran; supposedly from Waterford in 1953 in connection with a Lough Derg pilgrimage. Like the stock of the relief Express, the coaches were stabled at Bundoran whilst awaiting the return journey.

The priest in charge of the Island is said to have been responsible for the improvement of conditions at Pettigo station. Asbestos sheeting was put up along the entire length of the Up platform to form a canopy and Cavan footbridge was taken down and brought to Pettigo for use there, leaving Cavan with only a short gangplank to join the two platforms, in effect making two bay platforms of what was formerly a through road.

But traffic on the branch was not all one way. A GAA final in Dublin, or provincial finals in Clones, provided sufficient excuse for running specials from Bundoran, while Newtownbutler Feis or the RDS Spring Show gave other opportunities for sending specials scurrying over the system.

When Donegal played Cork in Dublin in April 1952, a special ran from Bundoran at 6am, picked up everywhere on the branch and arrived in Dublin at 11:40. Return was at 6:45 ex-Dublin and Bundoran was not reached until 12:30 next morning. In July 1952 there was a Feis and Pageant at Newtownbutler and included in the many specials was one from Bundoran. At the Junction it combined with one from Omagh - a manoeuvre complicated by having to have the Bundoran engine pilot the train as far as Enniskillen. The Bundoran engine piloted the return train back to the Junction again and then had to disentangle its own stock from the Omagh coaches.

A month later there were no fewer than ten specials to the provincial GAA finals at Clones. There were three from Belfast and one each from Dublin, Cavan, Derry, Warrenpoint, Ballybay, Carrickmacross, Bundoran and Monaghan. The ex-Bundoran coaches worked empty to Monaghan to form their special and while the regular train took care of the returning Monaghan supporters, specials left Clones every five or six minutes for nearly an hour.

All this hectic activity was far removed from the weekday traffic on the branch where a U or PP with two bogies and a handful of vans looked after the passenger side of things while maybe fifteen wagons behind a PG passed for the goods train.

Irvinestown Fair provided some mid-week activity at the Junction end of the branch. Enniskillen

provided an engine to shunt the stock at Irvinestown and it worked the laden stock special to Omagh or Derry as required. Stock for Maysfields was worked to the Junction to be collected by the 10:55am goods ex-Clones. If there had been a stock special into Derry the previous day, it worked empty to Irvinestown during the night to take up the turn next morning. If the fair happened to be on a Monday, an empty stock special worked out of Maysfields at 2am to Irvinestown and later worked to Derry or Maysfields as required.



PG No.11 on goods ex-Bundoran at Bundoran Junction on 28th July 1956. (A. Donaldson)

Belleek Fair gave less cause for excitement. The 7:55am goods from Enniskillen was double-headed as far as Belleek where the pilot came off and did station pilot work until mid-afternoon when it hauled a special to Omagh. It was more frequent to find, however, that the traffic offering at Belleek could go forward by ordinary train. When this happened a light engine was sent out from Bundoran to do the shunting until 1pm when it returned LE to Bundoran.

But all this nostalgic hustle and bustle is in the past - no more bucketing along the Lough shore behind No.43, reaching 40 in places and watching the ballast and grass fleet past below the incomplete floor - no more blue Us blowing off impatiently as they round the curves at Enniskillen with the Express - no more waiting at the Junction for the leisurely branch train - gone too is the immense Pettigo traffic, now easily handled by the morning and afternoon trains between Sligo and Pearse (the decline in penitents is probably due in part to there being no Lough Derg in America) and gone too is the Pettigo porter who took the world at a relaxed tempo and who, I remember, asked the driver of the 2:35 ex Bundoran to “pull yon oul van away t’hell outa yon store, it’s got us in awful jam!” and things were such on the branch that 74 was hooked off and we were left cooling our heels while the driver obliged.

I am keeping alive my hope of modelling the terminus one day and, le cúnamh Dé [*with the help of God*], compiling an illustrated history of the line and its Express. If you have photographs or notes on either please get in touch with me and some of the old Irish North character might be re-created - who

knows but we might even unearth a photograph of PPs No.42 shunting empty coaches on one of the last of those idyllic Sundays - struggling out of Bundoran to the overbridge with no less than twelve bogies.



PP 4'3" No.42 on Down Morning train at Kesh, ca. 1955. (D.T.R. Henderson)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Yesterday at the "Open Day" at Inchicore I bought a copy of the January issue of Five Foot Three and would like to say how much interested I was by the article on the DSER section (suburban) by your contributor Sean V. Kennedy. From 1951 onwards I travelled on many of the locomotives he mentions, and was also privileged to fire them, I also know Drivers Martin White, "Cobbler" Byrne, Jack Hiney, Paddy Furlong and Billy Downes, likewise George Sterling and other Bray drivers. At one time, Hines and Downes were on alternate duty shifts and worked 850 with the 5:07pm express to Greystones from Amiens Street. Martin White and I became personal friends and I was with him on his last run in 1958 prior to retirement. The 670 class (a tank version of the 710s) had one fault, viz: they were exceedingly hot and it was a warm job firing them in summer. I also knew Fortune and Kearney.

Downes taught me the rudiments of driving, my first experience of this being on 850. I last fired her one Sunday morning on the Boat Train from Dun Laoghaire Pier, in April 1955, two months before she was scrapped. 436 was the Bray shunter, her Westland Row counterparts being 424 and 425. These little engines even worked suburban trains during busy Summer months. 850, however, was always my favourite.

Your contributor will I am sure, regret to learn that Martin White died after a stroke in May 1964, and Fortune passed away within the last year. He had been in and out of hospital and had had to leave the service some years earlier, owing to health reasons. One of the Wheelers used to work 61, with Hyland

as his fireman. “Wooly” Fortune’s fireman (O’Toole) and Kearney are today driving local diesel trains. Those were certainly the good days, although towards the end locos were in very indifferent condition, and from the GSWR and MGW lines. Even some of the 623s worked suburban trains, also 601 and 602.

Yours faithfully,

Alan T. Newham

Dun Laoghaire

[Acknowledgement of this letter produced the following additional interesting information from Mr Newham.]

I am indeed pleased that my earlier letter contained data which you felt should be included in an issue of “Five Foot Three”. I agree that personal recollections can be more valuable than these of the onlooker of the railway scene.

850 was a grand engine to fire, in that, unlike most GSR locos, other than the 800s, she had a raised trap, or hatch, for getting coal from her bunker. The older GSR engines involved shovelling from floor level. Possibly the cause of the 670s being so hot was that, following entry into service, it was found that the bunkers were not large enough, so they were extended into the cabs. Result: when the firedoors were open the heat impinged on the bunker back, while acting like the reflector of an electric fire, throwing out the heat, and thus the fireman got roasted at back and front! 673 had a curious feature about her firebox in that the fire would burn down quicker in the left front corner than in any other part; therefore this always had to be watched, Small round holes had been bored in her roof for ventilation but someone in their wisdom saw fit to close them again. The person responsible for this decision should have had to do a spell of firing on her! The bunker floor of all five engines were somewhat steeply pitched, with the result that when the bunker was full, the coal trap door could only be opened a small amount, otherwise you would have a cascade of coal falling on to the footplate. I was told only yesterday that when those engines first came out from shops, they worked the Wexford trains. In those days, of course, bunkers could if necessary be replenished at Enniscorthy. They certainly swallowed coal in their latter days, as I know when on the 5:42pm business train from Amiens Street to Bray, on rare occasions.

The last engine I saw “Cobbler” Byrne on was No.340, and she promptly slipped on moving out of Amiens Street. No.544 was a “good hand” at this in her last days.

Yours sincerely,

Alan T. Newham

THE SOCIETY

Locomotives

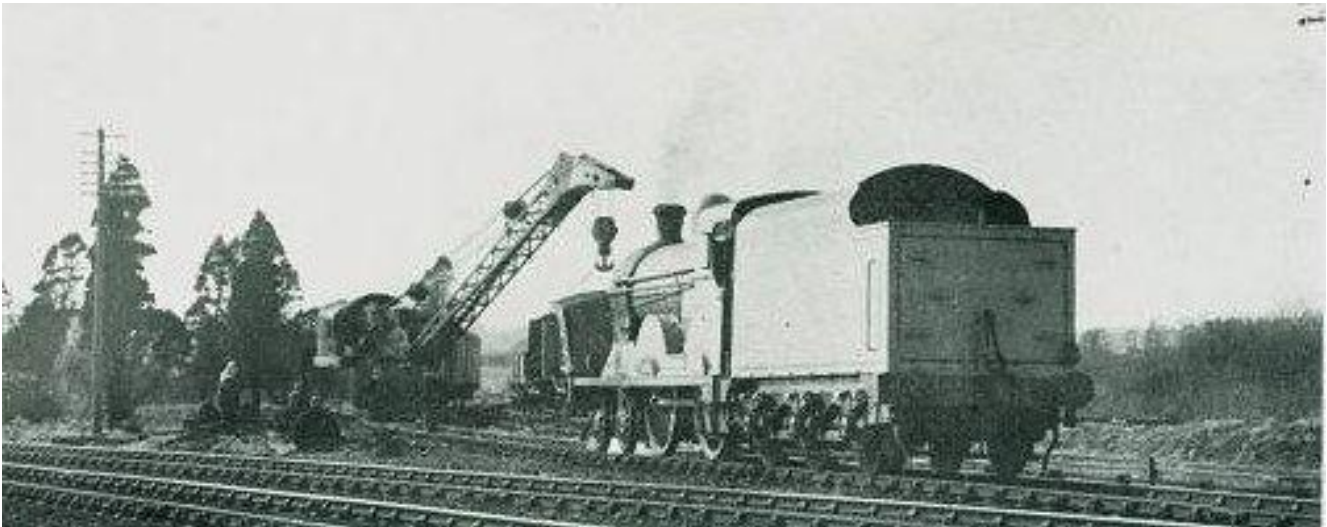
The most important development with the Society’s locomotives has, of course, been the return to traffic of No.171. From Christmas onwards, York Road fitter Bob McDonald spent much of what little time he had between dealing with the Jeeps on replacing the boiler fittings. The first steaming revealed a bad leakage through the regulator valve. This was corrected by Harland & Wolff, but unfortunately after the dome had been replaced the joint was blowing and the dome had to be removed again. Only after this could the boiler inspection proceed.

After two week’s shunting at York Road she ran to Lisburn goods store where a band of volunteers worked each weekend for six weeks applying five coats of paint under the direction of Ciaran Clendenning.

After this, trials continued in the shape of a sleeper train to Cullybackey and a steam crane special to Knockmore Junction. NIR also agreed to put her to the test on a seven bogie train to Portrush on Easter Tuesday. Arrival at Portrush revealed two hot boxes and the Loco Inspector decided that the safest course was for the engine to return at a more sedate pace the following day, hauling two ailing coaches.

Hasty efforts were made to diagnose the trouble and after re-balancing the engine and checking the mechanical lubricator no further trouble was experienced on a test run to Coleraine with six bogies on 17th April.

The final touches were now applied in the shape of the lining, crests and replica nameplates.



No.171 on Crane Train at Knockmore Junction. (A. Donaldson)

Members can now understand the extent to which the various departments of NIR co-operated with the Society to produce No.171 in time for the Cork trip.

Since then troubles have been fewer. The blown gland and a knocking small end were put right at Whitehead by Raymond Hall of Harland & Wolff. Another irritation was the erratic behaviour of the engine brake. This reached such a pitch that a replacement cylinder had to be obtained from UG No.49 at Great Victoria Street. This was fitted by Bob McDonald at York road in the early hours of the morning of the “Sorley Boy” trip to Coleraine, and seems to have cured the trouble.

Guinness No.3 saw use at the Whitehead Open Day, carrying about three hundred passengers on a quarter mile trip in a bogie coach and the Society’s Belgian-built Brake Van. No.171 was on display, in steam at the platform, together with No.186 which was static. During the day No.3 was driven by Foreman Billy Steenson of York Road and No.171 by Driver Tommy Carroll of Great Victoria Street.

No.3 has also been used at Whitehead in connection with maintenance work.

No.186 has not been in use since last October, but we hope to have her out again for the trip to Derry postponed from last year.

Driver Jack O’Neill of Waterford gave a talk to the regular gang of workers at Whitehead on locomotive practice from the engineman’s point of view. This was enlivened by some hair-raising tales of happenings during his services on the DSE section of CIÉ.

Jack also did more than his share of the loading of the two hundred bags of coal needed for the Cork trip - a job I’m sure he thought he had finished with twenty years ago!

We continue to receive much help and advice from railwaymen at all levels, and to them our thanks go,

as usual.

In addition, we thank Messrs Eastwoods who allowed us to remove the brake cylinder from No.49, free of charge, and Messrs Courtneys who supplied paint for No.171.

Annual General Meeting

A curious feature at the AGM was the absence of the minutes of the previous AGM, the Hon. Secretary having tried repeatedly to obtain them from his predecessor but without success. Anyhow, this did not prevent the important decision being made to go ahead with plans for the acquisition of a 2-6-4T from NIR.

The Officers of the Society for 1969-70 are:

Chairman:	R. Grayson
Secretary:	R.C. Edwards
Treasurer:	J. Richardson
Assistant Secretary:	W.T. Scott
Locomotives:	I.C. Pryce and J.H. McGuigan
Railtours:	A.C. Robb
Publicity:	J. Stuart
Magazine:	A. Donaldson
Site:	A.H.J. Glendinning
Dublin Rep:	S.J. Carse

A.C. Robb resigned on doctor's advice, immediately after the "Brian Boru" railtour and J. Glendinning, from pressure of work, after the Society's Open Day. The Committee decided to replace Johnny Glendinning by D. Trotter but Craig Robb's post is being filled by W.T. Scott assisted by A. Donaldson (this is why there was no Spring News Sheet), the Assistant Secretary's job being now largely performed by an addressograph.

Members have already received evidence of the new Chairman's determination to raise money for the WT. The prizes listed have been donated by various organisations unable to resist Roy's enthusiasm. The operating expenses have already been cleared and all future sales represent clear profit.

It is hoped that many members who have not previously found an outlet in Society activities will support this new venture. Roy has also produced a number of fine coloured prints of No.171. These can be obtained from him at 2s.6d. each (there are two varieties).

A full appeal for funds for the WT will go to members and English magazines in the autumn.

Dublin Area

The film show provided by Maca Film Studios, on 7th February at the CIÉ Club, made a small profit which has been allocated to the Loco Fund.

Our thanks are due to Messrs McKeown, Flynn and the lads who cleaned Jeep No.4 for the Brian Born railtour.

Railtours

The circular for the "Saint Canice" Railtour (i.e. to Kilkenny) is enclosed with this issue. Its early return will ease the strain on the organisers - late bookings are a nuisance and in any case it shows every sign of being booked out early.

Remember also the Colmcille Railtour (i.e. to Derry) is booked for 18th October, using No.171 and No.186.

The Bray Festival Charter trip had to be cancelled. This was due to a breakdown of communications,

especially in the matter of guarantee, in spite of strenuous efforts by S.J. Carse and others.

The position in regard to the John McCormack Charter trip is uncertain.

Brian Boru

Many will have seen the excellent account in the "Railway World", in which the writer expressed appreciation of the way in which CIÉ staff battled to ensure that participants might have steam haulage throughout. There is one small remark, however, of which he was probably unaware, but which, perhaps unconsciously, sums up the position. Much of the responsibility for constant revision of the arrangements fell on Inspector Paddy Gannon, who could easily have been excused had he lost patience and sent us home behind a diesel. Yet his announcement to me of the Jeep's derailment at Limerick shed was made simply thus, "The Jeep's off the road and won't be on again for at least an hour - decide what you want to do."

Inspector Gannon has served us well on many occasions and there is one excellent way of showing appreciation - he is looking for a (spring-driven) clock from a closed station or signal cabin. If any member can make such a clock available, will he please contact the Editor.

Sorley Boy

You will be glad to know that No.171 behaved perfectly throughout - no trouble with heating, glands or brake.

Inchicore Open Day

We had a slightly improved display compared with last year and certainly attracted enormous crowds - in fact, Telefís Éireann described us as one of the greatest attractions, while one of the two national dailies who reported our participation gave the impression that the Open Day was one huge model railway display with military equipment (the National Army was, in fact, represented; but in 305 mm scale). In actuality there were two other outside model railways besides ours, while CIÉ apprentices showed an interesting series of sections of model railway to illustrate modern handling of bulk traffic.

Of great interest also was a display of historic photographs and cuttings set up near the entrance. This resembled at many points our own handout (again printed for us by courtesy of CIÉ) - in fact this display and our own were almost complementary.

No.184 was again in steam and apart from a few minor leaks seemed to give every satisfaction - in fact she set people hoping ...

No.1461 was in evidence too, but still with severed piston rod - how enviously we looked at that lubricator!

Aldo Maloco was kept busy with sales (conducted through a full 360°) and answering queries.

Again our best thanks go to Messrs W. O'Shea and J. Boyne from Mr Wynne's Department, who helped with transport and other matters.

Transporting equipment was also provided by Messrs Clendinning, Edwards and Trotter, who have also earned our gratitude. Our thanks also go to Sean Kennedy who produced enlargements for sale and display at Open Day.

In all, our stand seems to have been quite an important part of Open Day this year and we are again glad of this chance to show our appreciation of the many ways in which CIÉ staff of all grades have helped us.

Go mairidh ár n-iarnróid slán [*May the railway endure*].

Why not start putting a little aside each week for the Jeep appeal - you might be surprised how much you will have by the time appeal goes out.

Maca Film Studies tell us they still have a few copies of their tape (advertised in Five Feet Three No.5). All proceeds from their sale goes to our Loco Fund. Incidentally, if you belong to an "outside" group, Maca are prepared to provide a sound film show, publicising the Society, to any interested group. Why not try it?

VAPORARIA - JANUARY TO JULY 1969

J.A. Cassells

GN Area

The construction of the new station at Portadown, as well as the regular ballast programme, has led to more steam (and more light engine mileage) than ever, and up to six ballast trains weekly have been at work. Apart from these, however, there have been several miscellaneous workings; notably a coach transfer to the NCC on 2nd April, a steam crane special (worked by No.171) on 3rd April, an engineer's inspection train to Dundalk on 28th May and a Sunday School special from Portadown to Portrush on 31st May. In addition, No.5 was held at Great Victoria Street after working the ballast on several evenings after Easter to act as station pilot following the failure of the Harlandic diesel. In contrast, steam blotted its copybook only once - on 26th May when No.6 failed at Great Victoria Street and had to be hauled back to the NCC by a second engine.

NCC Main Line

Easter and the Sunday School season generally constitute the oases in the winter desert on the main line, although one of the dull patches this year was marked by a remarkable crop of ballast trains discharging beyond Coleraine. While working one of these on 19th March, engine 3 lost a slidebar and had to be hauled back to Belfast by No.55. She was subsequently withdrawn from service. On a lighter note, the 4:50pm Cullybackey local was steam hauled on 10th February, engine 10 being involved. At Easter, the main line was particularly busy. 53 and 56 worked specials to Portrush from York Road and Antrim on Easter Monday, and a special from Derry, loaded up to eleven bogies, was hauled by No.4. All the trains were so well filled that during the afternoon, 4 was sent to Antrim to collect coaches for an extra return special, and No.10 was sent out from Belfast to work it. Other steam extras during the day were two branch locals, a special connection into the 5:45pm Derry train, and the 7pm diesel from Portrush to Coleraine, which had to be assisted by 53. On Easter Tuesday the 9:25 and 10:25 from Belfast and the 10:15 from Antrim were all steam (worked by 4, 171 and 56 respectively) and in the evening, four specials ran to Belfast, hauled by 53, 10, 4 and 56. 10 had come light from Belfast, this time replacing 171 which had run hot on the journey down.

What may well be the last ever Sunday School season began on 17th May and continued each Saturday until the end of June. One of the most interesting features of this year's working was the number of eleven coach trains sent out during the last few weeks of the specials. The first of them, on 14th June, was the only one to be unpioted to Kingsbog, and engine 53 whipped the 360 ton load up to 47 at the foot of the bank, holding a min of 12½ on the climb. Some of the more interesting workings of the year included a double-header to Antrim on 21st June (to provide the engine for an Antrim-Portrush special), the Carrickfergus-Portrush special on 28th June involving three engines (No.6 from Carrickfergus, No.50 from Belfast and No.5 piloting to Kingsbog) and a special from the GN area on 31st May. No.10 worked light engine from York Road to Portadown and brought the train to Antrim, where 51 took over. In the evening, the engines were again changed at Antrim, No.6 taking over from 51. On 14th and 15th July, three of the Portrush specials each day were steam-hauled, by Nos. 4, 50 and 53, and the 1:15pm Portrush was steam for several days in succession.

Larne Line

Diesel shortages led to a good deal of steam passenger work in the early part of the year. The 5:30 was generally steam at least once each week, and other trains steam hauled were 6:45am, 10:55am and

5:10pm. In addition, several railcar failures necessitated rescue work by steam. The 7:57am ex Larne Harbour was twice hauled in from Magheramorne Loop by a stone train engine, and twice also the 6:15pm from Larne arrived in Belfast hauled by an engine sent down from Magheramorne. Also, on 1st February, the 4:10pm ex Belfast failed at Ballycarry, and the 6:15 from Whitehead was hauled in by No.5. Yet another interesting working involving a stone engine took place on 9th January and 14th March, when the afternoon Larne perishable was steam hauled. As this train has no return working, the engine in each case was detached from an outgoing empty stone train, and returned light engine from the Harbour to Magheramorne to take up its normal duty. Then, on 4th July, when the 1:50pm was steam hauled, the return working changed engines at Magheramorne, No.55 replacing No.5. The July holiday week was a busy one on the Larne line. On 12th July 50 and 55 worked ten coach Orange specials from Jordanstown and Carrickfergus to Larne; on 14th the 5:05pm boat train was steam worked, and the following day the 7:55am and 2:05pm boat trains were hauled by engine 51.

Engines

The loco fleet is, unfortunately, running down - not unexpectedly in view of the proximity of complete dieselisation. The withdrawal of No.3 leaves only nine engines - Nos. 4, 5, 6, 10, 50, 51, 53, 55 and 56 and a question mark hangs over the future of Nos. 10 and 56, both at present out of traffic.

At the start of the year Nos. 4, 50, 51 and 53 were fitted with new sets of driving springs and 4, 50 and 53 were generally first choice engines for the Sunday School season. Until Easter, 56 was also a reliable engine, but on 29th April she cracked a piston and still awaits repair. Nos. 5, 6, 10 and 51 were generally weaker, although 55 manifested a surprising recovery by sustaining a min of 40 at Kingsbog, climbing from Antrim with an eleven coach special. Thus the main line has been virtually monopolised by three engines, (though recently eight consecutive weekdays of steam on the 5:30pm Larne produced six different engines), of which No.50 is probably in the best mechanical order.

The result has been occasional difficulty in providing engines for the work required, though on 31st May, the busiest day of the year so far, seven engines were turned out, and timekeeping on the four passenger specials was exemplary.

So with the running down of the engines, the approaching end of the stone contract, the ordering of new diesel stock, the demolition of the last provincial coaling plant, at Coleraine, and (not least) the reduction of the number of coaches available for working steam trains, the prospects for what looks like the last year of steam in Ireland, are, not unnaturally, fairly gloomy.

The author acknowledges, with thanks, information supplied by members S. Magee of Coleraine and M.A. Stevenson of Lisburn.