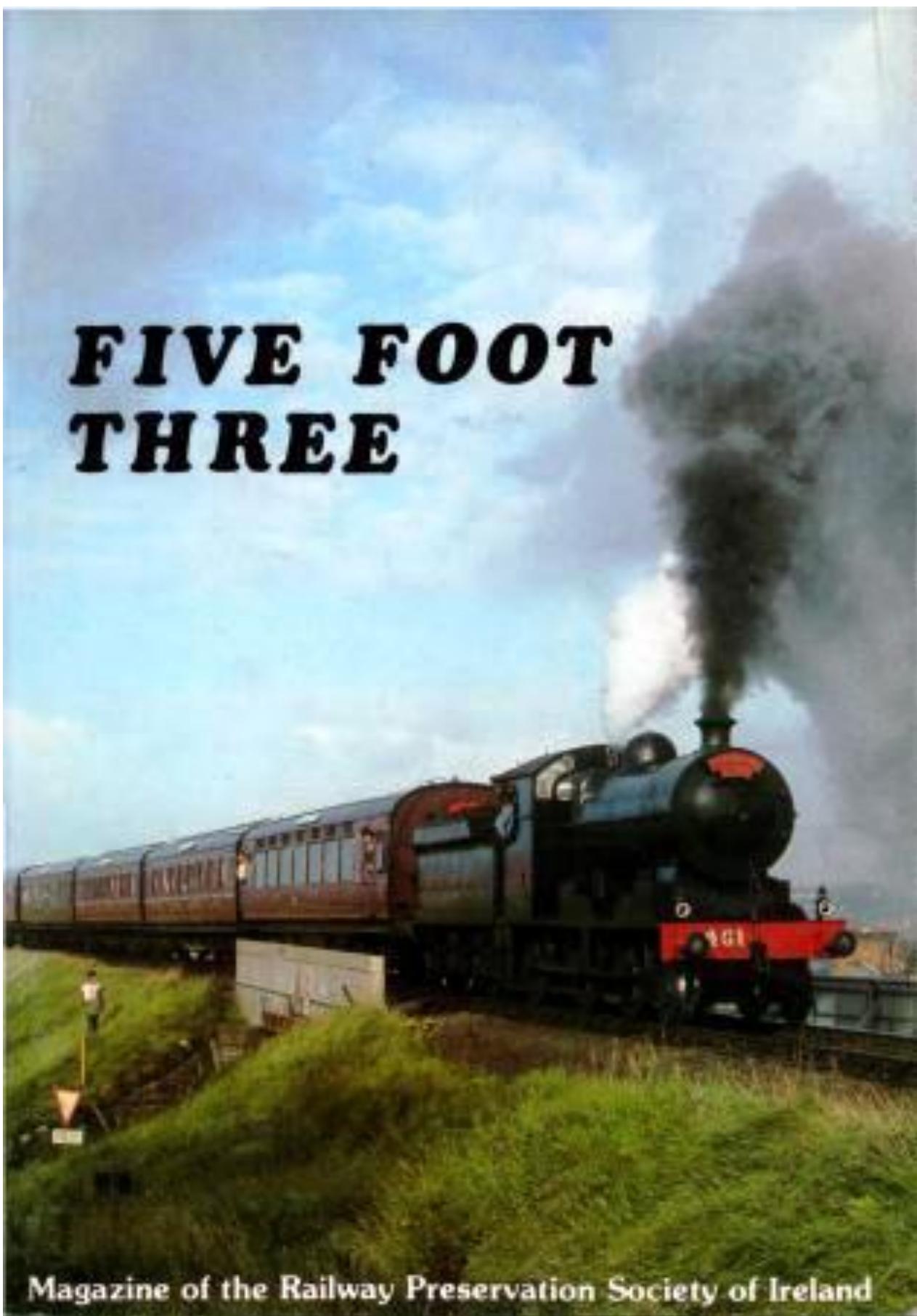


# **FIVE FOOT THREE**



Magazine of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

# FIVE FOOT THREE

## No.38

### Winter 1991/92

**Editor: Nelson Poots**

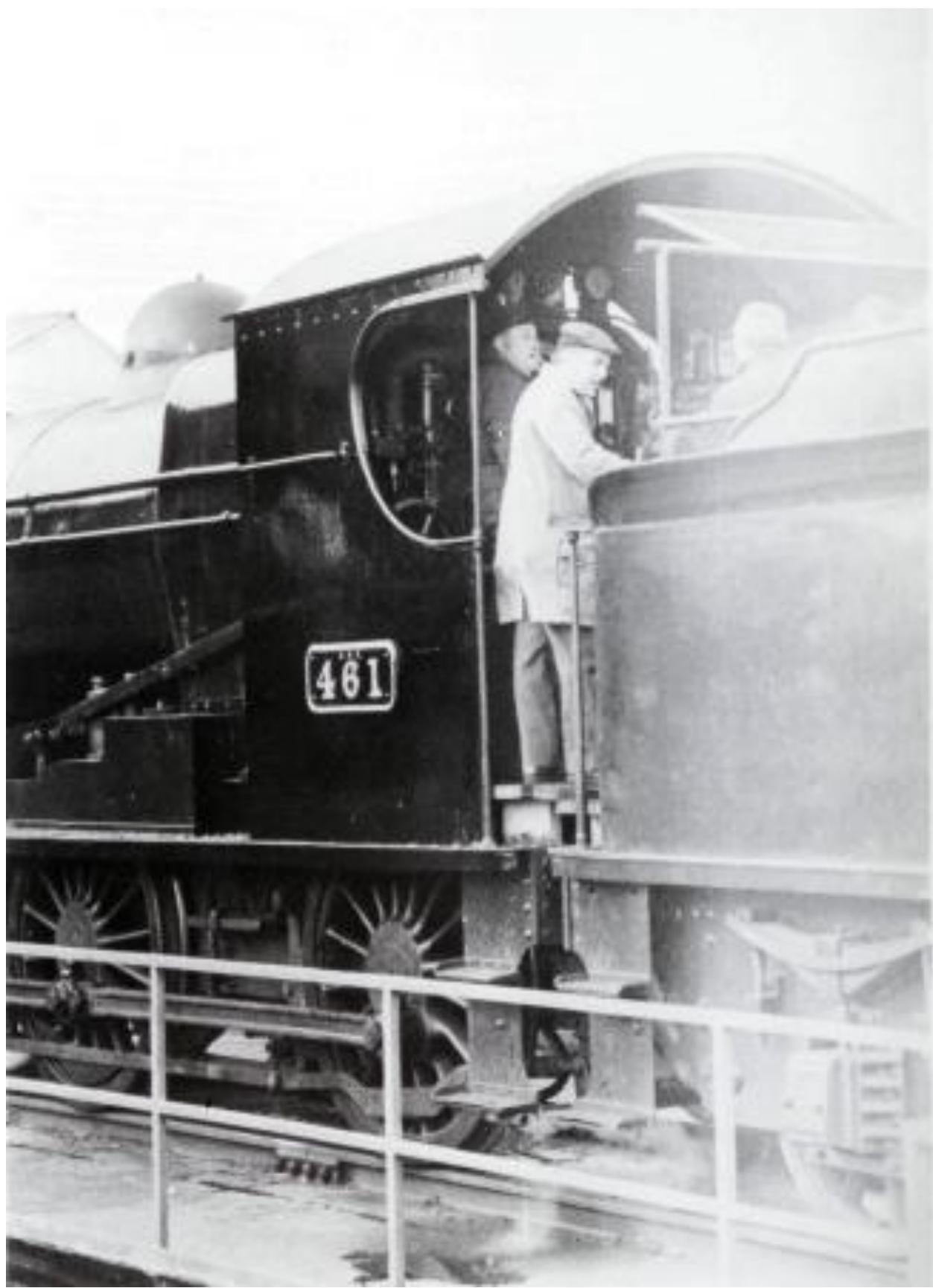
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Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or the Council of the Society.

*Cover Photograph: No.461 at Dhu Varren, on the climb out of Portrush, on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1991.  
(C.P. Friel)*



*Bobby Quail and Roy Stanfield with No.461 on York Road turntable en route to Bangor on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1991. (W.T. Scott)*

## **EDITORIAL**

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At last, the corner seems to have been turned and, as most are already aware, substantial funds are now available to the Society provided we fulfil our part of the bargain. Little more need be said here except that money is currently having to be used to pay people to do things that one might expect railway enthusiasts to do voluntarily.

Despite negotiations, the running sore of the 'wooden body' edict continues to blight our operations. In addition to the problems in relation to coaching stock on the annual Railtour the popular and profitable Steam Enterprise trains to Dublin can only be provisionally included in our 1992 programme. If operated with hired stock they might still be popular, but not profitable. This has a knock-on effect on the Bangor Belle trains which normally would use the Steam Enterprise coaches. Not least of the difficulties created by the present state of uncertainty is that of making any sort of long-term plans for our existing carriage stock.

Since our benefactors, the EC Tourism Fund, appear to recognise our value to the tourism industry in Ireland it seems not unreasonable to hope that others in high places should do likewise. Accepting that in our position we can only ask, rather than demand, it is difficult to see by what process of logic we are allowed to run on some lines but denied access to other parts of what - DART system aside - is a fairly lightly-trafficked railway system.

In his "NCC Saga" the late Mac Arnold referred to speculation as to which of the tanks would be next to go. Drivers are different in that the day of their departure is known well in advance but it is no less regrettable to lose some more old friends. In May 1991, after an all too short acquaintance with RPSI operations, Frank Dunlop's successor, Roy Stanfield, followed him into retirement. Roy's unobtrusive and helpful presence as Locomotive Inspector was much appreciated by all who worked with him.

Of somewhat different temperament, driver Bobby Quail was wont to breathe fire - as was his locomotive when he deemed it appropriate! An excellent engineman, Bobby was also a mine of information, some of which will hopefully be passed on in the not too distant future as he is now believed to be busy with his pen.

Finally - though less noticeably, since he had not worked on steam for several years - the calendar caught up with Alan Robinson. In his heyday very few things could have caught up with this quiet man with the loud engine! We wish them all a long and happy retirement.

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## **CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN**

## **Sullivan Boomer**

This annual column is like a preliminary "State of the Union" message, which allows me to prepare a more thorough report for the Annual General Meeting. So often in the past I have had to report bad news that this year seems totally out of character. We have begun our financial recovery (a little ahead, it would seem, of the British Government one) and we would appear to be on course for a good operating surplus for this year. However, we are not yet at a stage where there can be any relaxation of the tight control on expenditure which our Treasurer and his Finance Committee have imposed upon all departments of the Society, and maintained rigorously against all entreaties, however deserving! The Council is continuing to exercise a very strict limit on all spending, only essential items getting approval. It is our intention over the next few years to provide the Society with a sound financial base, something which is very necessary for our continued expansion.

After the 1990 operating season being mixed - I have to be polite, or the Editor will expurgate me - it was a delight to find the 1991 operating season running with relatively few upsets. The failure of No.461 on the Decies Railtour caused some concern, but the engine would seem to be running much better now, and should be properly fit for the 1992 season, which will be shared with No.171. No.4 will

get her long overdue and much deserved boiler refurbishment, as will No.85 and No.184.

Most trains in 1991 have been well filled; indeed, we have been turning passengers away from nearly every operation, and there should be a reasonable profit from them. Costs have had to be carefully monitored, however, and some aspects of operations have escalated above acceptable levels. A more economic approach may be necessary next year.

One unpleasant aspect of 1991 operations was the re-appearance in Dublin of the malicious bomb scare. The Greystones Shuttles on 8<sup>th</sup> September were badly affected, and the spite was obviously aimed at our train. It is a tragedy that some cretin should be able to get away with causing so much trouble for other people, and spoiling a trip on a steam train for so many of our passengers. *[Subsequent intemperate remarks expurgated! - Ed.]*



*Trains still sometimes stop at Adavoyle - see Sammy Adams' article. 24<sup>th</sup> February was not one of No.461's better days and a late arrival at Dundalk left no time to get to Drogheda for turning. Somewhat winded by the ascent of Mountpleasant, No.461 prepares for the last few miles to the summit. (W.T. Scott)*

Continuing with the good news, by the time you read this we hope that contracts will have been issued for the completion of the Carriage Shed at Whitehead, and that a contractor will be busy on site. This project is receiving 50% funding from the International Fund for Ireland. Since the project was initiated construction costs have escalated. To keep expenditure within the budgeted amount it has been necessary to scale down our plans so that a 12-coach shed should be ready for occupation by April 1992. There will be extra expenditure needed in due course to cover the provision of certain essential services such as power and water, but these can be funded out of revenue over the next couple of years.

The grant from the European Regional Development Fund has been well publicised, and at £274,000 must be one of the largest ever won by a preservation society. What is more sobering is the realisation that we have to find the other 25% for these projects, and that amounts to £92,000, albeit spread over four years.

It is still £23,000 per year we have got to earn over and above our normal running costs! This grant covers some twelve separate projects, and will assist the refurbishment of five locomotives, three specific coaches at Whitehead plus the Mullingar set, and the construction at Whitehead of the sheer-legs as well as a locomotive lifting shop, machine shop and smithy. Northern Ireland Railways have agreed to let us have the overhead travelling crane from Queen's Quay (Central Service Depot) when it becomes available in about two years time. This crane is well worthy of preservation, dating from 1893, and having been the BCDR's locomotive workshop crane it will at least continue to be used for its original purpose!



***Bobby Quail would have liked his final steam turn to have been on his GN home ground but here he is about to leave York Road for Derry on 21<sup>st</sup> September, encouraged by Irwin Pryce and fellow NIR drivers Willie Gillespie and George Gaw. (Belfast Telegraph)***

We have even had further negotiations with Irish Rail about the use of our own coaches in the future, and it seems that a set of conditions satisfactory to all parties may be worked out which will allow wooden bodied rolling stock to be used, hopefully from next year.

But I cannot close without mentioning some serious problems which face the Society. I know that everyone is heartily sick of the regular appeals for help, but manpower shortage is the one cloud on our

horizon. We need more workers at Whitehead (and Mullingar) to help with the restoration programme for which we have won funding. We need more helpers in sales, in publicity, in carriage cleaning (which is currently being handled by a couple of very dedicated individuals) and in the operating grades. I never believed that the day would dawn when we were short of members willing to train as shunters, steam-raisers, firemen or drivers, but even here we are liable to have to cancel operations because there are no Society crews available. We expected it from the railway companies, but not from the Society!

So, it's up to you. If you live 'across the water' then it is obvious that we can't expect you to turn up at Whitehead on a regular basis, but there are lots of members in Ireland who could do more. The Society knows where it should be going. The Council has arranged the funding. It would be a dreadful indictment if the members failed to take advantage. Will we have to cancel "Gráinne Uaile" for lack of active support?

## **NEWS FROM COUNCIL**

**Paul McCann**

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It's been a year of mixed fortunes - definitely better than last year, but still a long way from perfect. The only real disaster to hit us was the collapse into bankruptcy of Colbert Jennings Production Ltd., the advertising agency in charge of the Satzenbrau account. They went into liquidation owing the Society £3,000 for the hire of coaches for the television advert which has run on our screens for most of the year. It was definitely a hard learned lesson, but one which will ensure that we ask for deposits in future.

On the up side, member Rick Edmondson donated £1,000 towards our carriages, and a member who wishes to remain anonymous contributed £1,500 towards the overhaul of No.171. Also, the BBC's Children In Need gave £1,200 towards the conversion of coach 1097 for use with disabled passengers.

The AGM in February saw the creation of the new Council post of Fundraiser, ably filled by Ernie Gilmore, who was replaced on Operations by the return of Michael McMahon to Council. It was considered necessary to have a fundraiser as a major program of expenditure was required and our usual methods of raising funds were not proving adequate. The re-introduction of Life Membership for a limited period was seen as another method to raise some capital.

The first move of the Fundraiser was to submit the Society's proposed 3 to 4 year £366,000 package of work to the European Regional Development Fund. The ERDF gave us a grant which will cover 75% of this cost. However, this is not money in our hands but a 75% rebate on whatever expenditure we incur on the authorised projects. In other words we have to raise £91,500 net and organise facilities to temporarily finance a similar amount before we can make claims on the fund. Nevertheless, we should be able to see substantial developments on the Whitehead site and on our locomotives and coaches over the next few years. A lot will depend on whether we can muster the manpower to put the work into the projects.

In August, Johnny Glendinning was co-opted on to the Council as Project Manager for the carriage shed and ERDF projects on the Whitehead site. This will include a workshop and installation of the ex-NIR turntable from the Central Services Depot. A sub-committee has been set up to assist Johnny, and Don McQuillan of Kirk, McClure and Morton, our structural consulting engineers, is a member. At long last the carriage shed is being progressed and should hopefully be complete by the spring of 1992, with the other site work following on.

The other major event of the year was the official launch of Ex-DSER locomotive No.461 by Her Excellency, Mrs Mary Robinson, President of Ireland. The 16<sup>th</sup> April saw No.461 and her train beautifully turned out at Westland Row station. The occasion, hosted by the RPSI vice-president, Dr

Garret FitzGerald, was a great success due mainly to the effort put in by the members of the Dublin Area Operations Committee. The trip to Dun Laoghaire had a live radio broadcast on board and the event achieved widespread coverage on television and in the press south of the border.

Throughout the winter those few members who were interested availed themselves of the succession of running-in trips that were necessary to get No.461 into traffic. Unfortunately these were proved to be insufficient as the locomotive let us down at Gorey on the first day of the Railtour to Waterford in May. However, No.4 was in excellent form and operated splendidly on the Sunday, and indeed throughout the rest of the season. The number of participants on the tour was an all-time record which makes the cancellation of the September Limerick Treaty 300 operation due to low bookings all the more peculiar.



*The Presidential party at Dun Laoghaire (left to right): D. Waters, managing director, Irish Rail; Mr Nicholas Robinson; President Mary Robinson and Dr Garret FitzGerald. (Irish Times)*

The Society's Articles of Association were updated at the AGM to give Council the power to expel members or refuse membership to any applicant. This was deemed to be an oversight when the Articles were originally drawn up. All applications for membership are now referred to the monthly Council meetings.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> March the RPSI Social Club officially opened in the old "Stables" at Whitehead. There are now nearly 30 members, and all RPSI members are welcome to join.

A very interesting approach was made to the RPSI this year when Irish Rail asked for our advice on the

feasibility of running a steam service between Cork and Cobh. Society expertise was duly provided but no further details have been received.

Some progress has been made by member Chas Meredith acting on Council's behalf in the negotiations with CIÉ on the possibility of a lease for the Society's site at Mullingar. A signed agreement is required before we can commit any sizeable expenditure to the premises.

Negotiations are continuing with a view to having the ban on wooden-bodied stock over the Irish Rail network lifted.

Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the loan of No.27 "Lough Erne" to Westrail. If the loan goes ahead, the locomotive will go to Tuam to be overhauled and subsequently operated between Tuam, Athenry and Galway.

As usual I must thank NIR and Irish Rail for the use of their facilities for Council meetings, and Alan Campbell and John Creaner for professional advice on insurance and legal matters. Also, thanks to those members who took on posts of special responsibility thus reducing the burden of work on Council members.

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## INSIGHT ON RUNNING A SEASON

**David Humphries**

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### Introduction

In the space available to me I shall attempt to give some insight on the 'behind the scenes' activities on planning and running a season of trains. Elsewhere in this issue Rory McNamee will give you his usual colourful account of the actual trips themselves. I do not propose to duplicate his 'magnum opus' but rather to cover the season from a different perspective.

### Initial Planning

The backbone of the Summer Steam programmes is the Dublin Area Operations Committee (DAOC). There are presently eleven members of the committee as follows:

Aiden McDonnell	Carriage Running Officer & Chairman of DAOC
David Humphries	Marketing & Publicity Officer & Secretary of DAOC
Barry Carse	Treasurer
Mark Hodge	Carriage Maintenance Officer
Peter Emmett	Mullingar Site Officer
Joe Fitzpatrick	Commercial Officer
David Carse	PSR for Locomotive Running
Charles Meredith	PSR for Locomotive Maintenance
Tim Moriarty	PSR for Catering
Joe McKeown	PSR for Safety
Peter Rigney	PSR for Carriage Maintenance

In turn each committee member has his own panel of active members who assist him with his responsibilities. The DAOC will meet about every 4 to 5 weeks and planning a season will normally begin around October for the following year's events. Routes and dates are chosen. Draft paths are agreed - giving due regard to watering and turning facilities en route - and submitted to Iarnród Éireann for approval. Each operation is fully costed and income budgeted. Ticket printing, poster design, members' circulars, Welcome Aboard brochure and overseas advertising are all matters which are

attended to at this early stage. It is desirable to get most of this work completed by about March. Ticket distribution to Irish Life Building Society, poster distribution, press releases, mail shots to offices and factories, and other publicity matters take on an impetus of their own from April onwards. All the while essential repairs and maintenance are going on to the train - but I will leave the detailing of that to others.

### **Launch Of No.461**

The 'event' of 16<sup>th</sup> April 1991 was undoubtedly the most ambitious ever undertaken by the DAOC. We felt that the locomotive's return to traffic was worthy of a celebration. An opportunity not to be missed to portray the activities of the RPSI to the general public. Your writer had, for years, visualised No.461's return to Dublin as being something special. I have to say that the day's events truly lived up to my dream. A resplendent No.461 and four coaches from the Mullingar set did our Society proud.



***President Mary Robinson and RPSI vice-president Dr. Garret Fitzgerald admire No.461 at Dun Laoghaire. (Irish Times)***

Our vice-president, Dr Garret Fitzgerald, willingly agreed to be our host for the day and through his good offices the Society was honoured by the presence of Her Excellency, Mrs Mary Robinson, President of Ireland as our guest of honour. The day afforded us the opportunity to say thank you to both Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways, to representatives from both Governments, to

people from the business world and others who have been supportive of our efforts over the years. The total guest list on the day exceeded 70 people.

From a planning point of view the launch was very time consuming. A guest list had to be agreed, invitations and souvenir brochure designed and printed. The Garda Band had to be engaged. Planning the logistics of the train movements was critical. Organising the reception at Restaurant na Mara, presentations for both the President and Lord Killanin of the National Heritage Council, press, radio and TV coverage all added to a very demanding time for the committee. While I do not intend to single out any one for special mention I do feel it appropriate to record our thanks for the outside help from Oliver Doyle and Pat Kinsella of Iarnród Éireann, Brian Gillen of RTÉ, Billy Walters of The Irish Times and the staff of Iarnród Éireann who were magnificent in their support for the event.

### **Maynooth And Enfield Shuttles**

After the hype of the launch it was back to more bread and butter matters with our first public excursion of the season. We were pleased to be associated with the Royal Canal Festival for this operation. The RPSI is very keen to develop its association with local/community events where there is a good 'fit'. In his subsequent letter Matthew Kennedy of the Royal Canal Amenity Group said "... the day was a complete success, and we hope to talk to you in the future ..." We certainly do look forward to working with them again. On the day we carried about 1,200 passengers. No.4 acquitted herself very well on the day and, although we were not to know at that point in time, would continue to serve the rest of our season with distinction. It is a matter of record now that No.461's return to regular traffic was somewhat troublesome but all being well she should be the Dublin engine in 1992.

### **Sea Breeze**

Perhaps the most successful ongoing operation to date that the DAOC has achieved is the running of the Sea Breezes. Three such trains were included in Summer Steam 1991 and all three were well patronised. A feature of our trains now is the demand for party bookings. Bray Seaside Festival (second time), The Parnell Society and Bank of Ireland were three significant patrons this year. The Parnell Society on 24<sup>th</sup> August were very colourful, resplendent in their 1890s period costumes. In addition there were a number of smaller, private, parties. Of particular note are those organised by Norman Foster - they get bigger every year! An interesting statistic about the final Sea Breeze was that we loaded over 80 passengers from Rathdrum. The DAOC is particularly keen to make access to our trains as wide as possible and support from places like Rathdrum, Maynooth and Wexford this season is very encouraging.

### **Limerick Treaty 300**

I will refer to this event as 'what might have been'. The trip was aimed at the British enthusiasts' market. However, whereas the International Railtour in May had to turn away about 100 bookings, the September event did not attract anything like that number from the same market. In the event, and with only five weeks to go, with such a low level of support we had no option but to cancel.

All our worries as to whether the Barrow Bridge would be open in time were of no consequence in the end. The real disappointments are that all the ongoing work came to nothing and the loss of revenue is something that our Society can ill afford.

A special word of thanks to the Limerick Treaty 300 committee for all their support and encouragement. To those who had booked I can but share your disappointment.

### **Greystones Shuttles**

Undaunted by the setback of Limerick the DAOC set about replacing the vacant date in our calendar and this resulted in three trips around Bray Head. A measure of the popularity of our public excursions is that all three trains were filled - despite the very short time to publicise them. Members who travelled

will be aware that the second and third trains were disrupted by a person unknown who obviously has a very warped sense of humour. Certainly such people have no regard or appreciation for the amount of voluntary work which goes into running our events.



*No.461 between Nos. 4 and 5 tunnels on the spectacular route around Bray Head, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1991.  
(C.P. Friel)*

## Conclusion

Sitting down at my PC to compile this report is but a mild interruption to the early stages of planning the 1992 season. Normally we can expect a month or two of rest at this time of the year but in our wisdom(!) we have decided to run Santa Specials at Mullingar in December 1991. ARE WE MAD?

In conclusion I should like to pay tribute to my colleagues on committee who work so hard to make things happen. A word of appreciation too to that band of members who, in one way or another, give willingly of their time to assist throughout the year. And finally, a special word of appreciation to my wife, Breda, who thought she only married me all those years ago and not the RPSI as well!

## SOUTHERN STEAM

Rory McNamee

In August 1990 after many years of hard work No.461, our DSER mogul, was returned to traffic. Her restoration represented the heaviest overhaul undertaken, to date, by the RPSI. After several running-in trips, which were not without their problems, it was decided that the locomotive was ready to go South for the 1991 operating season and on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1991 Bobby Quail and George Gaw, along with Inspector Roy Stanfield, headed for Dublin. It was intended that an IR crew would meet us at Newry but no men were available so the NIR crew had to take us all the way. At Dundalk Inspector Tony Foley relieved Roy who reassured George that he would send on the ransom money. It seems that Geordie, an NCC man, had never worked across the border, never mind been to Dublin before. That, of course was not the only first of that day. In the 1920s No.461 and No.462 were hauled dead to Belfast for safe-keeping but today No.461 was crossing the Boyne viaduct under steam for the first time. At Connolly shed a large crowd was on hand to welcome her to Dublin again.

To celebrate the locomotive's arrival Bobby and Geordie were invited to the Theatre Bar in Talbot Street where, after testing the Guinness, Geordie declared Dublin not to be a bad place at all.

In order to give Nicky Moore and Dan Renehan some hands-on experience, a light engine run to Mullingar was organised for 6<sup>th</sup> April. The trip was uneventful as far as Enfield where we were held for two hours. Concern about her steaming ability has arisen on recent trips and as we limped into Mullingar with 60 lbs on the gauge we were slightly more than concerned about how we were going to run a season with this engine. With a clean fire and instructions to strictly adhere to the little and often rule, with emphasis on the little, we set out again with four impressively restored coaches and reached Dublin with no further steaming problems and a very relieved crew.

The Society has, since its founding, passed many milestones of achievement, but on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April the atmosphere in Connolly shed was electric, the reason being that No.461 was to be officially launched that day.

A lot of midnight oil was burnt and a mountain of organisation was put in to ensure that everything went as planned. Pearse Station was the chosen venue, where the Garda Band played appropriate railway-linked tunes while we awaited the arrival of RPSI Vice-President Garret FitzGerald, who escorted Ireland's first woman President, Mrs Mary Robinson, who would perform the ceremony. Commuters at Pearse could be forgiven for wondering what all the fuss was about, but if they had tuned in to RTÉ radio they would have had no doubt as to what was going on, because Gay Byrne was informing the Nation what exactly we were up to and indeed his roving reporter, Joe Duffy, was actually broadcasting from the footplate of the engine.

With all assembled, and Mrs Robinson in place, the country's first lady found that she would have to take second place on this occasion. At 11am, to an appropriate fanfare and hoarse whistling, the lady of the day arrived to deserved applause, running wrong road to give all a better view. After a short pause the Lady President ceremonially gave a starting signal and away No.461 went amid cheers. Before long

the engine re-appeared at the head of the RPSI's presidential train, where Mrs Robinson, when suitably attired, was invited onto the footplate to meet drivers Nicky Moore, Dan Renehan and Inspector Jack Ahern. The footplate visit was captured for posterity by RTÉ television, not that it's likely that our proud crew would ever need reminding of this high point of their careers. When safely returned to the train we set off at a sedate pace for Dun Laoghaire where the train came to a stop in the shell of the original Kingstown Terminal. God only knows the last time that a steam engine was in that part of the station. With the necessary photo-calls completed, the VIP party retired to Restaurant Na Mara where lunch was taken, after which speeches and presentations were made.

With all the hobnobbing over and pains in our arms from clapping ourselves on the back, it was time to get back to the business of running trains. The annual International Three Day Tour, which was to go to Waterford, was already in trouble as once more the Barrow Bridge had been struck by a ship and put out of action.



***No.461 crosses the rebuilt Bann Bridge at Portadown on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1991. (C.P. Friel)***

This meant that the tour would run to Wellington Bridge and the passengers would go on by bus to their hotels in Waterford while No.461 and the tour train would retrace their steps and reach Waterford via Kilkenny. That was the plan but let us stick to what actually happened.

Over the last twenty years or so the Renehan brothers, Tony and Dan, were a regular feature on the tours, developing their footplate skills. This year both men sat Board of Trade Examinations and were

passed out as steam drivers.

On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May an understandably proud Dan Renahan took the regulator of No.461, with Stephen Byrne of Drogheda acting as fireman. Progress was fine until Newcastle on the Murragh where, after a runpast, heat in the right hand driving axlebox gave cause for concern. Glenealy and Rathdrum banks were climbed easily but with a further build-up of heat. When water had been taken at Rathdrum it was decided to continue to Arklow, with a liberal application of cylinder oil and tallow given to the offending bearing. At Arklow a cement train complete with engine formed part of a contingency plan whereby the diesel could be called on if required. On reaching Gorey with matters deteriorating the reluctant decision was taken to abandon No.461 and to proceed with the diesel.

Later in the day No.461 was worked light engine to Dublin under her own steam.

No.4 had arrived in Dublin on 4<sup>th</sup> May to work the stage from Kilkenny on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, in order to prevent tender-first work with No.461. Now she had an opportunity to make up for her last three-day performance.

To compensate for the loss of the Waterford/Thomastown steam run, as Bridge 114 again prevented No.4 from reaching Waterford, an added trip from Kildare to Tullamore was fitted in. Later that day, while No.4 was being prepared at Connolly to continue with the tour northwards, yet another emergency meeting was taking place on the platform to consider locomotive availability for the 1991 Dublin-based operations. We could do without this becoming an annual event.

With No.4 and tour train back in Whitehead the decision was made that No.461 would return also, on 16<sup>th</sup> May, to use the wheel-drop. A request to use the facilities at Inchicore was reluctantly declined due to pressure of work there so the offending axlebox would have to be re-metalled at Whitehead.

However, a thorough examination of No.4 revealed that she was in much better condition than at first thought so, on 26<sup>th</sup> May, No.4 returned to Dublin after receiving minor attention.

When transferring No.4 to Dublin, problems in steaming were temporarily cured at Lisburn by attention to the smokebox door. The problem recurred later, during the Maynooth operations, and it seemed that a new door would be required. A number of years ago No.184 suffered a similar problem which was tackled by making an inner door and retaining the old door merely for cosmetic purposes. It worked for No.184 so there was no reason why it should not work for No.4. We now know that it does.

We had expected to run the season with No.461 and, taking into account her lower speed in comparison with No.4, it was felt that the Sligo trips would make it too long a day, so we decided to concentrate on Rosslare.

On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July we headed out on the first Sea Breeze and Nicky Moore and Stephen Byrne had an effortless run to the Harbour where they handed over to Dan Renahan and Mick McGuinness.

Naturally everyone was wishing that Dan would have an excellent run and everything was fine until approaching the turntable when the pony truck derailed. Various attempts to re-rail were in vain, not that it mattered, as, even if we had succeeded the engine would not have been allowed to run until it had been examined. The diesel off the Wellington Bridge shuttle was commandeered and once more we were catering for the modern traction enthusiasts. Would our luck ever change for the better? More importantly, would Dan's?

On Sunday the break-down crew had re-railed No.4 and on the 18<sup>th</sup> she returned to Dublin bunker-first at a restricted speed supervised by Bruce Stokes, an Inchicore based engineer. After an uneventful run it was nice to report Bruce's impression that the engine was innocent of guilt. Subsequent examination confirmed this and an excessively sharp curve on the turntable road was accepted by the Permanent Way Department as the culprit. No.4 was in the clear again.

The trip to Rosslare on 13<sup>th</sup> July was to prove to be unlucky for Dan as well, problems with the steam

brake hindering his progress.

On the third trip to Rosslare Nicky Moore on the outward journey produced yet another first class run. What about Dan - was he to break this run of bad luck? We wanted nothing to go wrong this time and with Dan's brother, Tony, to keep evil spirits at bay, we made Dublin with no problems and in a style that could only be described as star running. That morning, on the down run, Stephen Byrne had made sure that as it was his last day on steam, he was going out in style. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

With the cancellation of "Limerick 300" it was decided to operate another series of Sunday trips, this time to Greystones and three sell-out trips were run. On these outings IR driver and steam enthusiast, Hugh McCarthy, took what hopefully is his first step on the road to follow the Renahan brothers; he need look no further than Dan for a mentor.

Our gratitude once again to both NIR and IR for their co-operation and encouragement. Roll on next year, we are feeling fit.

## **LOCOMOTIVE REPORT**

**Peter Scott**

### **General**

The ERDF grant, referred to elsewhere, will be of great benefit to the Locomotive Department as it will fund 75% of expenditure on materials and specialist services. This will cover most of the cost of repairs to No.85 and will contribute towards repairs to Nos. 3, 4, 171 and 184.

### **Locomotive Workshops**

At present, space in Whitehead locomotive shed is at a premium, assorted locomotive parts competing with machine tools for the available floor space. Indeed, we have items of machinery which cannot be used at present because there is no room for them. The ERDF grant will assist in the erection of a proper locomotive workshop and plans have been drawn up for a building, approximately 150 ft by 50 ft which will contain the 30-ton overhead gantry crane at present in use at NIR's Central Service Depot. This belt-driven crane dating from 1895 is in itself a working museum piece. It will not be easy to fit the new building into the existing site as it will have to share the available space with the present locomotive shed and water tower, the wheel-drop and wheel lathe as well as the new carriage shed.

### **Locomotives**

#### **No.3 "R.H. Smyth" (ex-LP&HC 0-6-0ST)**

Undergoing boiler repairs including replacement of the lower  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the copper firebox and lower part of the tubeplate, together with replacement of firebox rivets and stays. A new smokebox is required, along with repairs to the saddle tank and ashpan. Attention to various mechanical parts will also be required.

#### **No.4 (ex-LMS/NCC 2-6-4T)**

Awaiting boiler repairs. Requires replacement of firebox rivets and stays, also re-tubing.

#### **No.85 "Merlin" (ex-GNRI 4-4-0 Compound)**

Boiler dismantled and lifted out of frames. The firebox requires extensive renewal of copper plates and, consequentially, rivets and stays. The boiler will also require re-tubing.

#### **No.171 "Slieve Gullion" (ex-GNRI 4-4-0)**

Has been steam tested following boiler repairs. The front tubeplate has been completely renewed together with stays and tubes. The fire area of the firebox has been re-stayed and seam rivets renewed as have those in the foundation ring and firehole. No copper plating in the firebox has been renewed

although if the ERDF grant had come sooner such work would have been included in the overhaul. Further steam testing has taken place, following completion of work on the brake gear and oil pipes. Our thanks are due to Irish Rail for machining the new tubeplate at their Inchicore Works.



*On one of No.461's early outings Peter Scott does some firing as a change from fixing. The strange pipe at the top left is part of a manometer temporarily fitted to measure smokebox vacuum when the locomotive was showing a reluctance to steam. (Belfast Telegraph)*



*NIR drivers Jimmy Donnelly and Willie McCaughley on the footplate of No.461 at Dundalk, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1991. (C.P. Friel)*

### No.184 (ex-GSWR 0-6-0)

At Mullingar, where the boiler is being dismantled for removal. The cylinder block has been found to be badly corroded and cracked.

### No.461 (ex-DSER 2-6-0)

Was moved to Mullingar during November for use on 1991 Santa trains and Southern operations in 1992. Steam heating equipment has been fitted in Dublin. The locomotive failed with a hot driving axlebox during the May Railtour. The cause of this is unknown since the locomotive had run satisfactorily on trips to Coleraine, Dundalk, etc. British Rail specification oil and a water treatment compound - the latter generously donated by Chemical Treatment Services of Belfast - have been used on a trial basis on this loco. It is too early to assess the effects of either.

### No.23 (ex-Irish Shell 0-4-0 DM)

Now back in traffic after replacement of a broken tappet. Repair of this involved the removal of the cylinder head and block - hence the delay.

### No.4? "Carlow" (ex-Irish Sugar Co. 0-4-0 DM)

The engine has been reinstalled and the air system is being overhauled, also the brake gear. Since the Carlow factory had three steam locos before acquiring this diesel it would appear to qualify as No.4 but it is not clear whether it ever carried this number. *[To avoid confusion, perhaps we should number it IV and call it "Ivy"! - Ed.]*



*No.461 receives what appears to be last-minute oiling before leaving Antrim on her running-in trip to Bangor on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1991. (Chris Aspinwall)*

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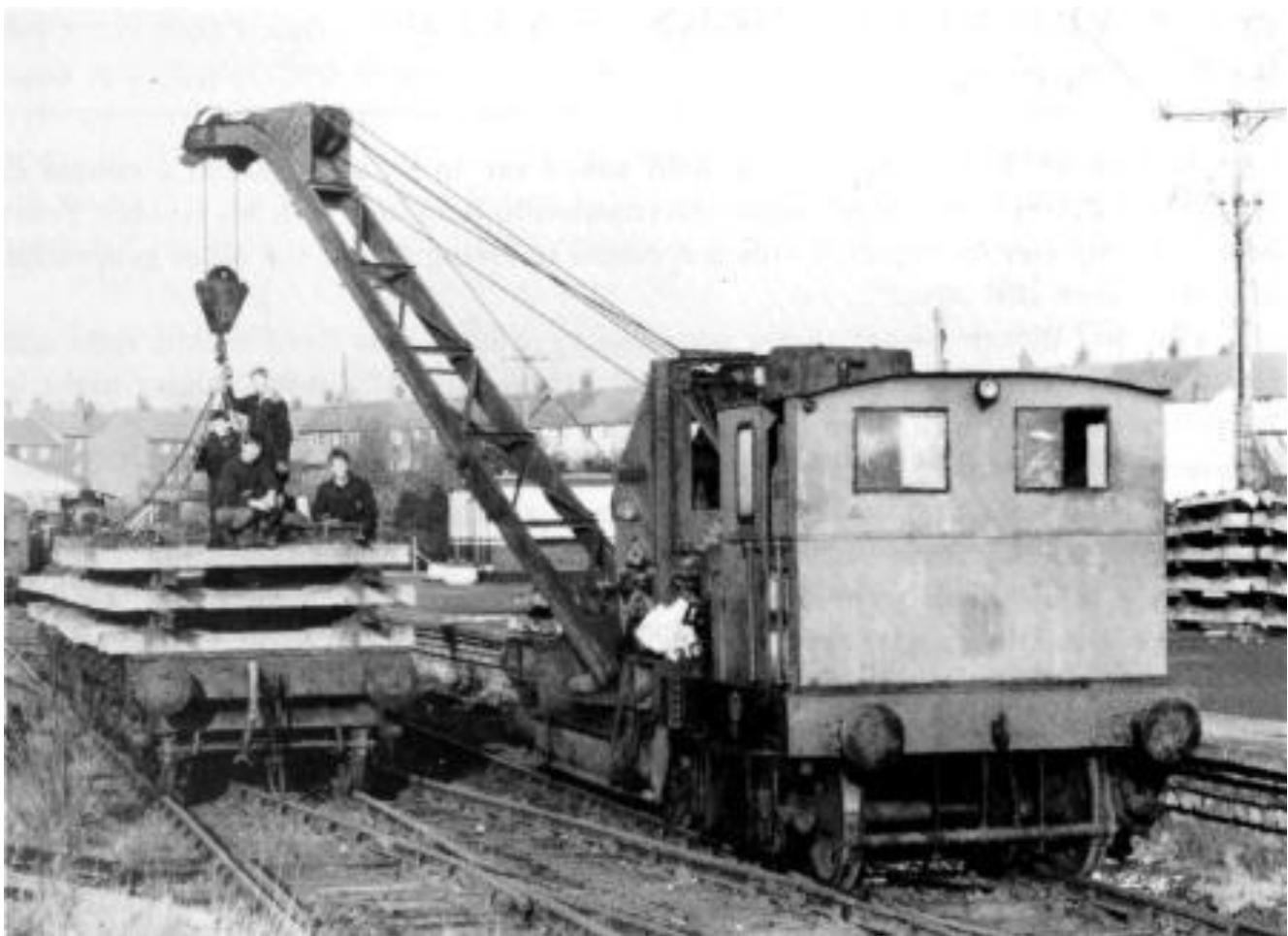
### SITE REPORT

**Dermot Mackie**

The last twelve months as Site Officer at Whitehead seem to have flown - initially the task seemed impossible! Track work in disarray, an exhausted JCB, No.23 with a very sick engine and a hand crane which was in dire need of a radical overhaul. Believe it or not, all the above are inter-connected and indispensable because modern track is based on concrete sleepers, is definitely not 'user friendly' and only manageable with machinery such as the JCB. Panels of track must be lifted by a hand crane, which unfortunately does not have its own motive power, hence the need for No.23. Almost a case of "for the want of a nail".

Inspection of the JCB revealed a broken silencer which belched all its soot out onto a, by now, blocked radiator and a distinct reluctance to start. A modification of the exhaust system together with a Massey Ferguson silencer rectified the first problem while a good wash in detergent solved the second. It is wonderful what clean fuel and air filters, together with an oil change can do for any engine. The JCB has responded magnificently and now gives sterling service.

The engine overhaul on No.23 proved to be a much taller order. A blown cylinder head gasket, together with a broken push rod cam follower, meant removal of the cylinder head and the engine block. This required many long hours of hard work on winter nights with grazed knuckles and frozen oily hands. While the head and block were away being machined new parts were fitted under the helpful eye of Peter Scott. After re-assembly, new filters and a complete oil change it was a happy bunch of workers who, on a cold May morning, saw No.23 kick into life.



*Dermot Mackie and gang with newly assembled track panels (C.P. Friel)*

Now, at last, we could start assembling track panels on the platform, but ... to lift them would require an overhaul of the hand crane. It was about that time that the Society was fortunate enough to win an ERDF grant, one proposal of which was to replace trackwork. After much negotiation new cables were fitted and tested on the crane and a new chain sling, which could lift up to six tonnes weight, was purchased.

November saw the jigsaw complete with a gang lifting the first panels of concrete sleepered track onto a flat wagon, ready to be used to lay the Number One siding.

The decision of Council to go ahead with the new carriage shed means that trackwork has taken on a new urgency, but thanks to the help of the intrepid Messrs Glendinning, Mounstephen, Henderson and Charters, amongst others, we are all set for the 1992 season.

If you feel like a good day's physical work in the fresh air and want to make a significant contribution to our efforts at Whitehead why not come down and give us a helping hand? We are not the most glamorous side of the RPSI, but track to run on is crucial and you will be most welcome.

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### **A DRIVER REMEMBERS - A CHAT WITH SAMMY ADAMS**

**Charles P. Friel**

Back in 1974, Mac Arnold asked me to go and talk to a couple of Portadown drivers and gather some information to help him with his Golden Years books. To my eternal regret, I only got round to seeing two of the older generation of drivers then still alive.

The first driver I went to see was Sammy Adams who lived within sight and sound of the goods yard and Castle Street bridge. It was a dark, blowy night in February when I knocked on his door and waited ... and waited. The door was eventually opened and Sammy told me that he was being bothered by some yobbos who had been knocking on his front door and running away. Then, when he did open his door, they made obscene remarks and called offensive names from the anonymity and security of the darkness. Sammy was most upset by this blackguardism and was, of course, reluctant to open the front door. He did open it in the end and I, for one, am very glad that Sammy overcame his fears that night which now seems so very long ago.

Only a few of my notes were used by Mac but there is more than enough material left to warrant a reproduction of the whole thing. What follows is Sammy's story, told in his own words, based on the notes I made later that evening ...

When I started on the railway, I changed my job from being an apprentice carpenter. At that time we lived in the house at Broomhedge siding - my father had been in charge there since it opened in 1904 or thereabouts. I went to the carpentering for three years but I didn't like it much and was always hankering after the railway, and steam engines in particular. So my father got me a start at Adelaide and in those days there was no eight-hour day, of course. I got up at 4am, got the breakfast and cycled into Lisburn and caught the 5:15am train for Belfast. The train made only one stop, at Dunmurry, and I walked out from Great Victoria Street to Adelaide. You had to book on sharp to time for the signing-on window was bolted at two minutes past six and, though you could work on, your day's pay didn't start until 8am when the window was re-opened. You worked away until 6pm with two one-hour meal breaks. After work I walked into Great Victoria Street and caught the 6:15pm train to Lisburn, got off there and cycled home to Broomhedge. The rest of the day was my own! I can't remember what my wages were when I began but in 1917 I got a rise from two shillings to two and tuppence (or from the equivalent nowadays of 10p to not quite 11p).

After a while I got to be what they called a 'bar boy' - that was taking out faulty firebars and replacing them. The work was a lot easier than the cleaning, for in the cleaning (especially on the night turn) you would have six engines to clean the fireboxes of before nine o'clock or so. Many of the engines had big clinkered fires; many a time the fire was almost solid up to the bottom of the firebox door.

After cleaning and firing, I got the chance of a move to Portadown which I took. At that time my mother died and I worked it so that I got a move to Banbridge where I could lodge with my grandmother. But that arrangement lasted only a twelve-month for she died too and I went into digs in the town. My turns at Banbridge were usually to and from Scarva. The engines I remember on this duty were 33, 68 and 193. We worked tender-first to Scarva and chimney first coming back. Working tender-first wasn't altogether uncomfortable but you got fed up with it fairly quickly.

After a few years I got a bit fed up with the work at Banbridge too, so my mate and I put in for a transfer to Portadown which we duly got.

Soon after my move back to Portadown I got married and settled down here; that would have been about 1920. The girl I married was the name of Malcolmson and her father was a driver on the Carrickmacross branch. His wife often didn't see him for a whole week. Some of his jobs involved driving to Drogheda and picking up a train for Portadown or Belfast, then back to Dundalk and up the Irish North and home. He seemed to go everywhere. He had himself killed with all the tender-first work in all weathers and I'm not surprised that he died a young man at 37. Now that I think of it, I remember seeing 193 and 194 coming into Dundalk on passenger turns from Carrickmacross. I don't remember any of the other engines working that branch but Jack Fowler who used to live in Marley Street fired on that branch a long time ago. He went to live in Tandragee somewhere, I'm not sure where.



*GNR(I) A class No.68 in sorry state, having been withdrawn in 1948. Two questions: (a) where is this, (b) records show this locomotive as one of several fitted with lower chimneys to work over the former Belfast Central Railway to Donegall Quay, so was No.68 resurrected after this photo or did she get her tall chimney back before withdrawal? (C.P. Friel collection)*

The Northern, I feel, played many a dirty trick on its men. At Adelaide, for instance, the cleaners had to do the coaling and things like that; things they shouldn't have been doing at all. Another thing they did, too, was when you got on to main line driving. At one time the rate for a new driver was 3s 6d per day but on completion of a year's driving the rate went up to 4s per day. When you had eleven months and two or three weeks up they would put you back on a shunting turn and you lost all the time you had built up hoping and waiting for that extra 6d per day. Then they would try to get you to go to

Cookstown or somewhere out of the road and keep the 6d off you that way.

Another thing they did was to book you on at 11.55pm on a Saturday night for an eight hour shift without the expense of paying you Sunday rate. Or you'd book on at one minute after midnight for the same reason. Then there was the reserve turn when you sat at home for the whole day waiting for something extra to turn up and very often you'd be going to bed about 10 o'clock when a cleaner or a lamp boy would come to the door with a note for you to work a special of goods at midnight or 2 or 3 in the morning.



*E class No.193, also withdrawn in 1948, seen here not at Banbridge but at Enniskillen on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1947 while on loan to the SL&NCR. (C.P. Friel collection)*

I could write a book about the nasty tricks they pulled but what's the use. The management in later years didn't care about anything and it came down to everyone not to give a damn about anything.

Shed foremen had a difficult time of it but one man we had here, Mr. Gillespie, was a gentleman and did his best for the men but Ted Willis and his father thought only of themselves. I was off one time for three weeks with a bad bout of the flu and I still wasn't right when I went back. I had hoped to be given a light job, perhaps firing on one of the shunting engines, but no, that was too much bother to arrange, so I went straight back into my old turn firing goods trains.

Firing was an art in itself but a lot depended on the driver. There were men for whom it was a pleasure to fire and there were others who made every mile a torture. The best way to fire, of course, is little and often. When I was firing you could get a driver who thought he wasn't doing well until he could hear a mighty sharp blast from the chimney but all they were doing was wasting coal, water and the fireman's energy. They'd have a such a big draught coming up through the firebox that the fire hadn't a chance to

burn and indeed many a time the big draw would carry half the coal off the shovel up onto the top of the brick arch.

Then there were firemen who weren't happy unless they had a big black fire heaped up under the arch and under the door and they couldn't get enough coal on the shovel each time. And half the time they were lifting a scoop of water out of the tender with each shovel of coal and throwing that in on top of the black fire. Now there was no sense with that sort of thing.

I had a fireman on the goods out of Dundalk one time and night after night we would get away lovely and as soon as we got to Mountpleasant the engine would stop making steam and of course we were in bother to keep her going. He was one of these big black fire people and only thinking of himself - he thought he would put on a lot and sit himself down for a while but that, literally, got you nowhere. I always liked to have a nice red fire with a good lumpy bottom to it, well burnt through and, if anything, heaped along the sides with very little under the arch and not too much under the door, though you had to keep the back corners filled. About four or five tidy shovelfuls each round was enough; there was no sense in putting black coal on black coal.

What were my favourite engines? That is a difficult one for you had a favourite for a while and then a better one came along and she lasted for a while and then another new one would come along. But on the whole I think I liked the Big Ds the best. They were a grand steamer and very comfortable to work on. You'd hear them pounding away and you'd nearly think you had half of the station on behind but they were fit for anything.



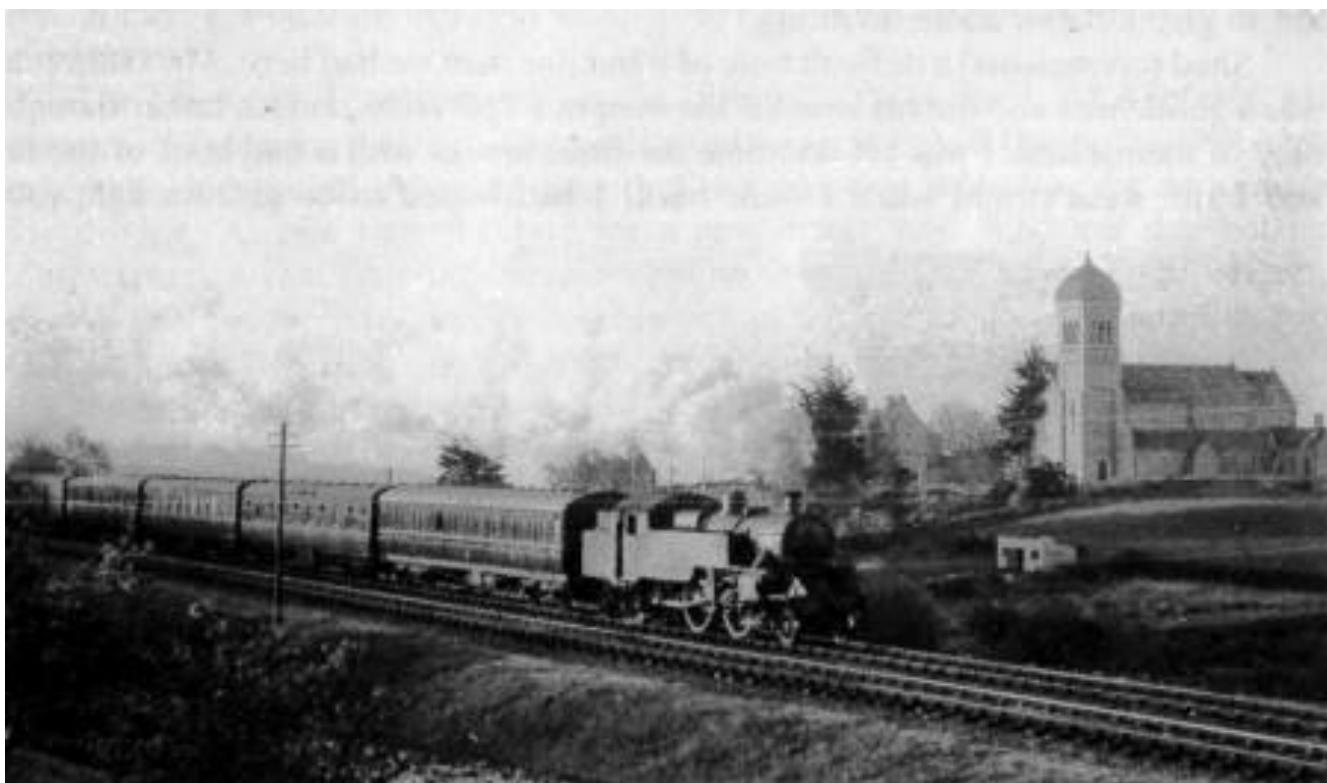
*A brace of Big Ds doing some pounding on Carrickmore bank. Class SG3 Nos. 20 and 97, renumbered No.33 and No.37 by the UTA, with a 3:30pm relief goods from Derry on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1964. (A. Donaldson/C.P. Friel collection)*

One of my favourite runs with the big engines was into Enniskillen via Clones with coal trains. These were lodging turns; the accommodation there was in an old carriage behind the shed. The foreman

there was a terror but he instilled a discipline and his engines were certainly clean. I remember once sitting in the middle road at Enniskillen on a train and there was a young cleaner on the footplate. He seemed very jittery about something and I asked him what it was. He said he was keeping out of the Foreman's sight for if he was caught up on an engine he would be made to pick up all the loose waste lying about the yard and then he'd be put into some motion for an hour or two.

When I was in Enniskillen, I used to often wonder how the Sligo Leitrim engines stayed on the road for nearly every sleeper was rotten.

Talking of overnight accommodation reminds me of the first dorm I used in Derry. It was simply a roofed wagon body, without the wheels, parked against a wall and you just made out as best you might. Later they gave us a coach fitted out with a stove and a table and a couple of bunks provided with bedclothes. They kept it on its wheels to keep the rats away.



*One of the final batch of NCC 2-6-4Ts passing Cloghogue Chapel, beside the Newry-Dundalk road where an Army checkpoint now makes such a photograph practically impossible. The trees have also grown a lot and one can only hope that the Army will be able to leave before "Father Murphy's" becomes invisible. (C.P. Friel collection)*

That other man you mentioned was a terrible tight man for money; he'd even stop the train for five minutes in the section to get a bit of overtime. I remember being in Cookstown one night after a big day in Bundoran and we were waiting for the second train to come in and the shunter asked us who was driving the second train. When he heard who it was, he said, "My God, we'll be here half the night waiting for him." And if I remember right, he did take an awful long time to come from Coalisland. You know he was that mean for money that there was one morning at Strabane when a taxi driver came over to the engine to ask for a bucket of hot water to get the frost off his taxi. The taxi man gave the fireman two bob for a tip and your man had to get the half of it!

The NCC tank engines were a great job. I used to look forward to a run to Dublin with one of them. But

they had one fault. If the tubes hadn't been cleaned for a while the ends of the tubes in the firebox would build up with dirt and the fire wouldn't draw. Now that was often the cause of me stopping on a passenger train between here and Dundalk, either at Cloghogue chapel going up from here or at Adavoyle coming home again.

The moguls were a good engine too but it was obvious they were long past their best when we got them. The cab on them was really too big; it was a cold cab to work in compared with our own and their big tenders made it awkward to water the coal. One nagging trouble was the flap-board between the tender and the cab. Now as you know our engines all had timber flap-boards but the moguls had metal ones and it banged away all the time.



*The Portadown relaying, in 1932. Left to right are the Dublin, Armagh and Derry lines. Mr Girvan commands some 40 men, some of whom appear to be wielding their implements in a strange manner - presumably for the photographer. (C.P. Friel collection)*

Coal was a very variable thing, proper steam coal had a habit of going away to slack if it was handled too much but it burnt well if it was in good lumps or fired very lightly. Just after the strike we had Polish coal and it was the best we ever used. An engine would run for two or three days and not need her tubes run at all and it gave you plenty of steam and no clinker. *[The exact opposite of the RPSI experience of some 40 years later. - CPF]* Some of the coal we had in my firing days was only slack and the heavy driving I mentioned earlier didn't help either. I often used to bring a second shirt with me

on a passenger turn to Belfast and would have to go into the toilet there to get a change. You would think I had dipped the first one in a bucket of water. 'Whaling' was the term we had for this sort of nonsense driving.

In the photograph of Portadown relaying, the big man in the bowler hat is Frank Girvan, an ex-Army man whose motto was "Keep the shovels a-rattling" whenever the permanent way men felt like taking a break. The small buildings on the left were a pump house for the water supply to the old shed and an office for Hollands who had a coal business at that beach. Coaling in the pre-1924 shed was done by a hand crane and a square tub which you filled and wound it up, swung it over the tender and tipped it. I never knew of engines being serviced over by that Mary Street beach.

I spent my last years working railcars and I didn't like them much for you got very sleepy just sitting there with one hand on the deadman's handle, one on the gear selector and a foot on the clutch. You were very lonely too sitting up there with nothing to do. I was sorry I didn't get staying on for a couple more years but they wouldn't let men do more than their time. A driver in Newry ruined that by suing the company for back pension during the time he had been working over age and he was successful. That ruined the thing for later on.

But sometimes company on the footplate could be a bit of a mixed blessing. There was Nelson Hall, a wild talker, and he would be over to your side of the cab every few minutes with some bit of a yarn and he'd stand there for ages telling you some story you had little interest in. I would often say to him to cut out the big bit in the middle and get to the end of the tale. Even sitting with my bottom towards him and my head well out over the cab side didn't help, he would be round the other side of the pillar shouting forward at you about something. He meant no harm and was a good engineman for all that. His father, Bill, was suspended after the strike and missed the railways for the rest of his life.

During the strike there was a man in Enniskillen who organised everyone to go out on strike and then he went back to work himself. He was made a foreman soon after that.

I have to smile now when I hear people complain of shift work for my life was always on shift work, booking on and off at all hours of the day or night. I still can't get quite used to going to bed at half eleven every night and going straight to sleep. Often I lie awake until six in the morning before I go over and then I can sleep until dinner time.

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## COMMENTS AND RECOLLECTIONS

Laurence Liddle

I am sorry that my notes on the second part of "A conversation with Harry Wilson" did not reach Ireland in time for inclusion in the last issue of "Five Foot Three", particularly in view of the editor's courtesy in letting me have a copy of Charlie Friel's typescript in advance of publication. Any blame must be shouldered by the Australian and/or Northern Ireland postal authorities, or perhaps by Qantas, British Airways or whatever other operator of flying machines whose responsibility it was to convey the Australian/Irish mail in December 1990.

However, better late than never so here we go again with a few more of my septuagenarian thoughts and reminiscences.

The first point I have to make concerning the second part of Charlie's article refers to the photograph entitled "The last GNRB Board Meeting". If this is a picture of any last Board Meeting it refers to the GNR(I) and not the GNRB. The seated gentleman wearing the bow tie, on the extreme left of the picture is indeed Lord Glenavy, who was the last chairman of the independent GNR but who was never a director of the GNRB. Then too, the second man from the left in the back row is G.B. Howden, who at the time of the dissolution of the GNR(I) was General Manager, and hence in that capacity was photographed among the ranks of the senior officers, whereas if the picture had dated from GNRB

times GBH, as co-chairman, would have been sitting at the table. The small man with glasses beside Howden (third from left in the back row) is P.H. (Harry) Patterson, Chief Accountant. Fifth from left among the officers may be Campbell Baillie, Traffic Manager. Among the directors the man sitting beside Lord Glenavy is possibly Sir George Clarke.

On page 25 Harry Wilson is quoted as saying, “When we were designing the Vs engine I moved the cylinders in to give us an extra half inch on each web, and thereby give us a strong axle”. There is a mistake here: obviously one cannot speak of “each” crank web in the case of a three cylinder engine. On the other hand, I well remember, when discussing the U and UG engines with Harry Wilson, that he said that one of the few differences between the first and the second series of each type was that the 1947 locomotives had their cylinders closer together thereby causing the boilers to be pitched higher than was the case with the earlier machines. So, when speaking to Charlie Friel HW must have by a slip of the tongue said Vs when he meant U. Apart from the side window cabs the only other significant difference between the newer and the earlier Us and UGs was that the former had an improved type of tyre fastening.

The story of George Glover’s not wholly trouble free trip with a Compound during the 1933 strike was a well known and often told tale of on the Northern. The version I knew was that the abandonment of the locomotive at Goraghwood was due to the Mechanical Engineer and the Belfast Locomotive Superintendent, driver and fireman, between them managing to drop a lead plug. Whether this was the case or whether it was an embellishment on the original tale I do not know; in any case the episode was greatly relished by the enginemen of the day and for some time afterwards.

The account of Glover’s breakaway with the breakdown train reminds me that the rule on the Derry Road with its numerous vertical curves, holes and sudden short steep gradients, was that all goods trains had to be double coupled. I have a half recollection that a similar regulation applied on the Irish North between Dundalk and Ballybay, but I cannot be dogmatic about this.

The account of enginemen ‘on the mat’ offering to polish the Boss’s apple is a new one for me. I suppose it goes to show that over-strict discipline attracts its own reward. I never knew, nor even met, Glover, nor did I hear very much about him from my many Great Northern friends and acquaintances of all grades. Harry McIntosh (“Big Mac”) who became Mechanical Engineer after G.B. Howden (who for a while after Glover’s retirement was both Civil and Mechanical Engineer), was more easy going than Glover. I was told by Driver Billy Hawthorn of Enniskillen that on one occasion, McIntosh, walking along the line from his house to the Works, passed an engine off the road, surrounded by a group of men. His comment was, “I haven’t seen this.” During the Second World War, when main line trains were crowded to capacity in First and Second Classes as well as Third, members of the company’s senior staff who held first class passes were instructed that they should not occupy seats if this meant that fare paying passengers had to stand. It was said of “Big Mac”, who indeed was a large man, that, for whatever reason, he never seemed to lack a seat even under the heaviest traffic conditions.

Mention of Enniskillen reminds me that the locomotive department there had two drivers who rejoiced (?) in two of the more personal but least complimentary nicknames on the Great Northern. These were “The Bum” (Kelly) and The “Dough-head” (Armstrong). How or why these names were given I never knew.

Although the GNR was not as prolific in nicknames as was the GSR/CIÉ, quite a few enginemen from various parts of the system were more commonly known by the appellations bestowed on them by their mates than by those which they had received at baptism. Strangely perhaps, I cannot remember any Dublin nicknames, nor any from Belfast other than one exception, referred to below. Here however are a few from four provincial sheds, which I still recall. At Drogheda there were “Stinks” (Campbell), another somewhat uncomplimentary title, and “Derry Charlie” (Kelly); Dundalk had at various times

“The Buck” (Hamill), “The Yank” (Duffy), “The Basher” (Rogers), “Tash” (Curtis) and “Flyer” (Donnelly). In the late forties I heard this last name applied to Joe Donnelly of Adelaide. There were other Donnellys at Dundalk, including father and son Gerry and Paddy, neither of these so far as I recall had a nickname, but mention of Gerry reminds me that I think that the man pictured standing between the driving wheel splashes of S2 4-4-0 No.190 on page 58 of “Five Foot Three” No.36 may well be Gerry Donnelly in his firing days. To return to nicknames - the only name I remember from Newry was “The Bacon” (Quinn), originally from Drogeda.

Portadown had “The Count” (Fowler) formerly at Clones; “Hitler” (McShane) and “Bruno” (Doyle), both Dundalk men, and “The Irish Guardsman” (Perry) a very short man who had been earlier at Banbridge. It would be interesting to know if any older readers remember further nicknames.

Finally, I recently re-read the article “Fireless Bulleid?” by “Linkman” in “Five Foot Three” No.18 (Summer 1975). This most interesting contribution suggested, with some supporting evidence, that when he was at Inchicore O.V.S. Bulleid may have been considering the possibility of producing fireless steam locomotives for use on CIÉ.



*Among the last main line outings of the Society’s J15 No.186 was the Lough Foyle railtour on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1979. Apart from one train worked by No.171 in July 1980 this was the last steam passenger train to Derry until No.4 worked the excursion of 21<sup>st</sup> September 1991. (J.M. Allen)*

The basic principle of a fireless engine is that steam is supplied at very high pressure to a storage vessel (not a conventional boiler) from a stationary source. In his article Linkman stated, “We have had fireless locomotives for many years.” I recall an article on the fireless engines in use at the gas works in Beckenham, South East London in an issue of the Railway Magazine at some time between 1933 and

1937. From memory the accompanying illustrations showed conventional looking industrial shunting engines without chimneys. I have never come across anything written about fireless locomotives other than this Railway Magazine piece of over 50 years ago, and Linkman's article. May I suggest the title "Fireless Steam Locomotives" for a contribution by Linkman or other knowledgeable person in the next issue of "Five Foot Three"?

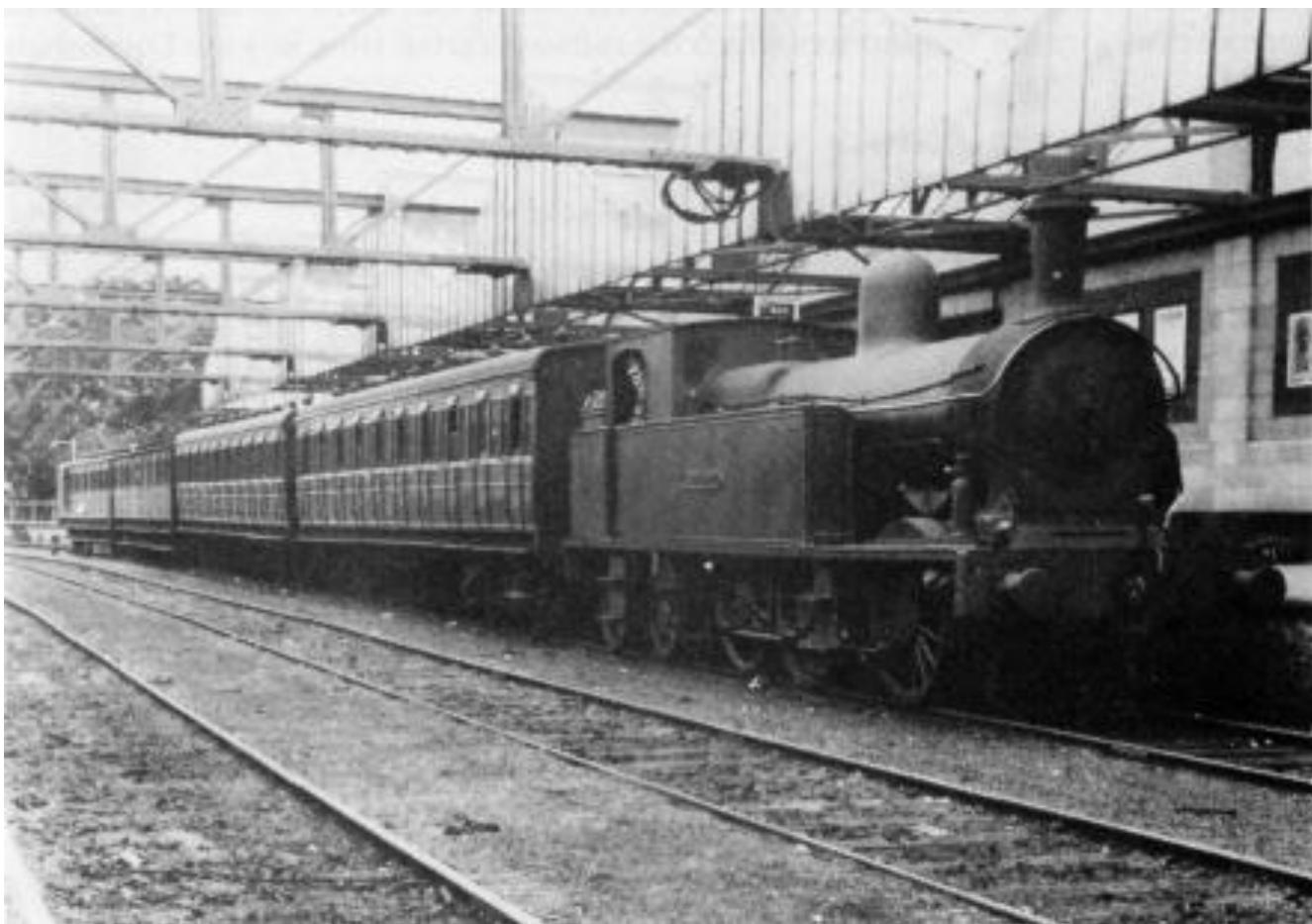
## **THE SLIGO, LEITRIM AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY**

**R.G. Morton**

*The following article, from a Belfast Newsletter of November 1955, is reproduced by kind permission of the Belfast Telegraph.*

The railway which connects Enniskillen and Sligo is a fascinating survival from a more leisurely and less road-conscious age.

The Railway Age, to the infinite regret of many people, ended with the increasing return of traffic to the roads after 1920, and with it all hope of the prolonged or prosperous survival of such a small line as this. One can but regret the change, and admire the tenacity of the Company in keeping on its wheels for so long in the face of increasingly complex difficulties.

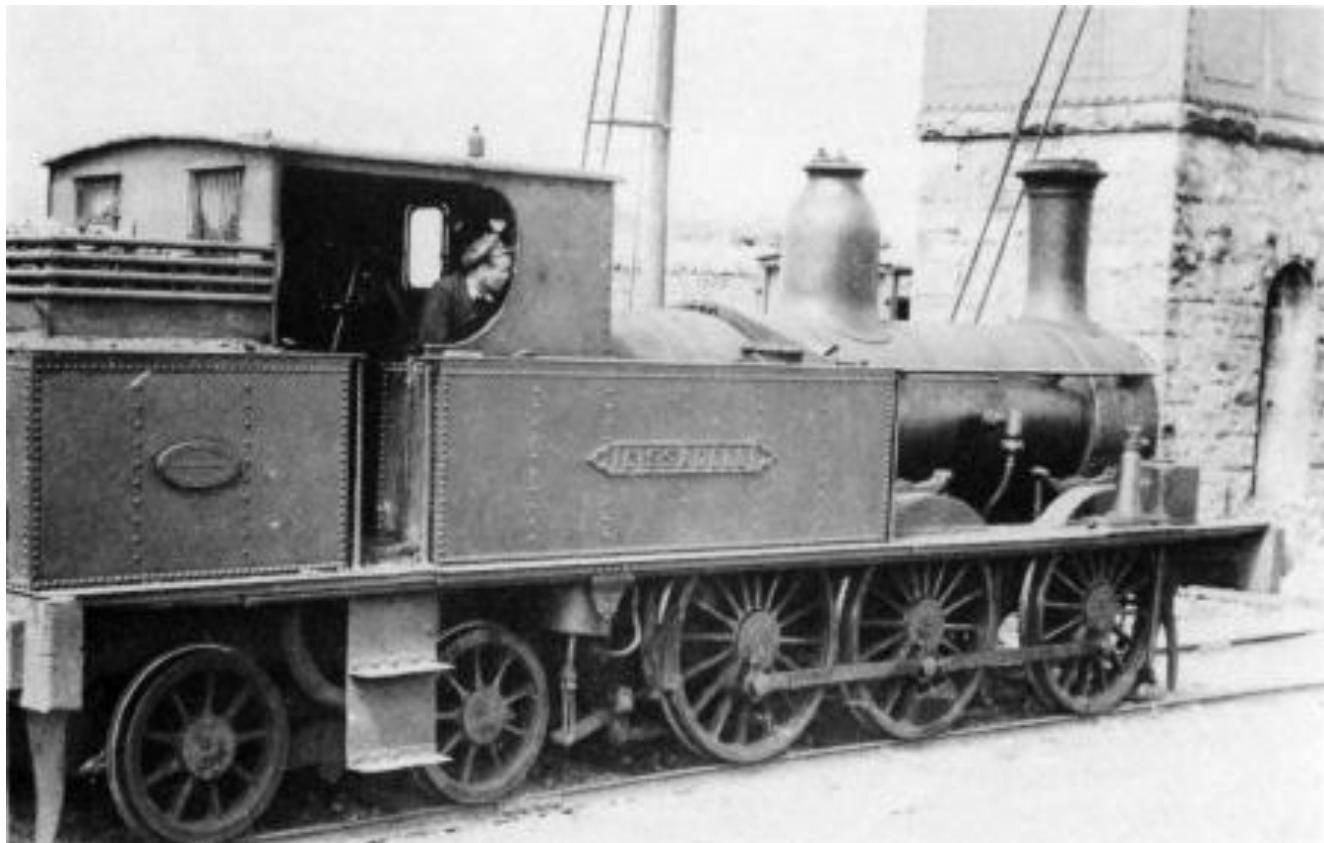


***"Sir Henry" at Sligo with a special, the first two coaches of which have been borrowed from the GNR. The rear coach will be SL&NCR 9 and the third could be 10, since it is daytime and 10 had no lighting! (W.T. Scott collection)***

The Sligo Railway was first projected by Arthur Tottenham, of Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim. An Act to permit the construction of the line from Enniskillen to Manorhamilton was passed in 1875 and work

was accordingly begun. By 1879 the line was open as far as Belcoo, Co. Fermanagh, and soon after it reached Manorhamilton, which became the central point of the railway. Another Act of 1880 enabled the Company to build the line on to a junction with the Midland, Great Western Company's line at Ballysodare, Co. Sligo. Thence running rights were obtained into the terminus in Sligo.

Although the line passed through hilly country and consequently had some long gradients to negotiate, particularly between Dromahair and Collooney, it was singularly free from costly engineering works such as tunnels or deep cuttings, the only major work being the well-known Weir's Bridge over the Erne.



*“Lissadell” pauses at Belcoo with the morning Sligo-Enniskillen goods. The five locomotives of this class were similar to a batch built about 1880 for South Australian Railways. “Lissadell”, built in 1899, was sold in working order to Hammond Lane Foundry in 1954 and survived until broken up at Manorhamilton in 1957. (W.T. Scott collection)*

In spite of this advantage it never really paid its way. The mainstay of the line has always been the traffic in freight and store cattle from the West of Ireland. Local passenger traffic is small, for the populace in this back-country is sparse, and has declined since 1880. As for tourists, they do not seem to have ‘discovered’ the superb and, at times, desolate scenery through which the line passes!

The history of the Sligo Railway seems to have been uneventful. No major accident marred its operations, and it soon acquired for itself the homely nickname of “Slow, Lazy and Never Comfortable.” During the “Troubles” Sligo station was attacked by the IRA who showed their patriotism by running several locomotives along the harbour branch line into the sea. Some signal cabins and level-crossing keepers’ cottages were attacked and burned, but these difficulties were quickly dealt with and normal working was resumed.

After 1920 the Sligo Railway maintained a precarious independence of the large groupings of transport

in both North and South. Traffic was affected by the establishment of the Customs, but the line still retained considerable importance as a link between the GSR and GNR(I). This enabled through running of freight and livestock from the West to the Belfast docks. Passengers were catered for more fully by the bus services which the railway started from Sligo to Dromahair and Blacklion, through the Company was hampered, as was the Great Northern, by being refused permission to operate bus services in Ulster.

Rail travellers were accommodated in delightfully Victorian eight-wheeler coaches with clerestory roofs, which were divided into three large compartments, the 1<sup>st</sup> Class being sandwiched between the other two. These vehicles gave an excellent view through the large windows.

Steam power was provided by 0-6-4 tanks, bearing the names "Sir Henry", "Lissadell", "Hazelwood", "Enniskillen" and "Lough Gill" instead of numbers. Four of these veterans are still in service. In addition the company acquired two more locomotives in 1951 - "Lough Erne" and "Lough Melvin." These now undertake most of the heavy steam working on the line.

At present the Company, like the Donegal Railway, makes use of rail-buses for passenger traffic. Here one may note the oddity that there are three trains a day from Enniskillen to Sligo, but only two in the opposite direction. The principal services are worked by two railcars, one a small rail-bus of old-fashioned and simple design, the other, built in 1947 at Wigan, which would form the pride of any branch line. The exemption is the 'mixed' steam train from Enniskillen at 7:20pm which only returns on the working timetable!

It is with a feeling of entering a rather Emmett-like world that one dives into the small green rail-bus, which, humanely, waits for those who are late! To gaze out along the track as we jolt along at a steady 25 to 30 miles per hour, is to experience a sense of the adventure of rail travel, which is lost on larger and more efficient systems.

The life of the countryside surges up as we pass - we are part of it. The crossing keepers wave and children and goats trot by the side of the line. At Belcoo the kindly Customs officer hardly disturbs our concentration of the Hanging Rock, lowering darkly over the blue waters of Lough Macnean. On then into the remoteness of West Cavan, passing two more bays of the lough - an unspoiled angler's paradise, surely! - stopping for another unruffled Customs examination at Glenfarne, then on to Manorhamilton, the Swindon of the track. Here there are two water hydrants, a large signal cabin, and a locomotive shed, where stabling and repair work takes place! Here "Sir Henry" stays, his fires out, a noble derelict.

From Manorhamilton the railway winds southwards, down the valley of the Bonet River, to the village of Dromahair. Here fishermen, artists and those in search of the Lake Isle of Innisfree leave the train. The rest move off under a magnificent archway of beeches, which stretches for half a mile or more.

Beyond this we run down the long gradient into Collooney, from which superb views of the western mountains unfold. Collooney, a small market-town and nodal point of the cattle trade, boasts - like Londonderry - three separate railway stations: one on the Sligo Railway, one on the former MGWR main line from Dublin, the third on the former Waterford, Limerick and Western Railway from Limerick and Ennis. At Ballysodare the rail-bus leaves its native metals and rejoices in the excellent roadbed of the trunk line to Sligo. Triumphantly we come to rest, having covered the 48 miles from Enniskillen in 2½ hours.

It seems a pity that this railway must go, with its record of steady service to the communities it links, a service carried out with a good-humoured equanimity and kindness. No longer will folk be able to alight at the laneway of their choice, no longer will the cattle specials rumble through the lonely night, no longer the curious see the charms of the terrain as they rush through in rattling buses or limousines. But, for those, who, like myself, believe that it is more important to travel than to arrive, there will

always be the happy memory of the Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway.

## THESE ENGINES GOT TO MOIRA

W.T. Scott

*[On 4<sup>th</sup> November 1991 locomotive No.4 set out from Whitehead to work a charter train to Moira in connection with the official re-opening of the restored station there. This was to have been her final trip before overhaul but it was a case of a few bridges too far and ended prematurely with a failure at Lisburn. This prompted Bill Scott to delve into his archives to find a couple of engines which fared better. His title is perhaps a little unfair to No.4 since the GNR were not in such dire straits for motive power as the RPSI! - Ed.]*



In the first picture No.105, class P 5' 6", halts at Moira with the 4:05pm Belfast to Armagh train in 1956. No.105 made surprising but welcome appearances in Belfast on Cavan and Armagh trains at this time, frequently working in on the 12:45 from Armagh arriving Great Victoria Street at 2:07pm. No.105's usual area of work was around Clones - her home shed - substituting for railcars on the Cavan trains and working cattle specials to Portadown.

I made several runs with her during her period on the Armagh trains and the timekeeping on the admittedly slack suburban schedule was excellent though 58 was best speed I got from her. The load was only 3 bogies and the acceleration away from stations excellent.

No.105 was built at Dundalk in 1906 and carried the name "Foyle" until WW 1. ("Foyle" must be the most common locomotive name in Ireland - the GNR had two, the NCC one and the CDR used the name twice.) No.105 was superheated in 1925 and scrapped by CIÉ in 1960, the last of her class and just five years too soon for preservation.

The lower photograph shows No.157 of class QL pausing at Moira with the 2:20pm Warrenpoint to

Belfast train in 1956. The QLs if not so rare as the P 5' 6"’s were nonetheless welcome visitors. No.157 was built by North British in 1904 and superheated in 1919, the first of the Clifford locomotives to be so dealt with. The older GNR men claimed that superheating ruined the QLs but this oversimplification is another story! No.157 was again rebuilt in 1924 and ran for a time with an indicator shelter.



The QLs never seemed to carve out any particular niche for themselves on the GNR but appeared erratically on a variety of trains. Such work as they did in the 1950s seemed to be on trains far beneath their capabilities and runs that I had with them lacked sparkle, though they had the traditional GNR passenger engines' ability to 'slog' with a heavy excursion train. When built, No.157 was named "Orpheus" and until the arrival of the S class in 1913 the QL was the GNR's principal express engine.

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## THE GREAT NORTHERN IN WARTIME

Geoffrey Wigham

*[Back in 1985, Geoffrey Wigham (then in his eightieth year) came down from Dublin to talk to a Belfast meeting of the Society. His main topic, in connection with Rail 150, was the Dublin and Kingstown. His second topic concerned trains in and around Belfast at about the time of the Second World War. He left me a copy of his speaking notes and these are reproduced below, with as little alteration as I think is necessary to convey the sense of what he told us that night. - C.P. Friel]*

The second subject I wish to talk about is nearer here in both time and space. Only those who are five eighths of my age or more can remember them - you don't need a computer for that.

The district I want to speak about is Belfast to Lisburn and further afield to beyond Portadown.

I was for many periods between 1942 and 1946 the Relief Member of Staff running a hostel near Derriaghy for old age pensioners blitzed out of Belfast.

Railway conditions were very different then than they are now. There were no private cars, only

skeleton bus services but there were trams, trolley-buses and masses of trains!

The area was controlled by manual signal cabins at Great Victoria Street, Central Junction, Adelaide, Balmoral (north of the station), Finaghy (including a siding south of the road bridge containing an Ambulance Train), Dunmurry crossing, Lambeg, Hilden (for a refuge siding south of the halt), Lisburn, Knockmore Junction, Broomhedge Halt (and a siding as at Finaghy), Moira, Lurgan, Boilie, Seagoe and Portadown North, South and Junction. In addition, there was traffic control at Belfast.

Younger people may wonder why all this organisation was needed, but here are some of the answers. There were all-station locals to Lisburn taking 25 minutes, locals for both the Banbridge and Antrim lines, Portadown and Warrenpoint trains mostly non-stop to Lisburn and then all-station semi-fasts to Armagh and Cavan and expresses to the Omagh line and Londonderry. Then there were expresses to Dublin and specials to Gortnagallon beyond Crumlin plus goods trains to all these sections and empty and full cattle trains for Belfast and shipping. And there was the famous "Enniskillen Shipper" which got preference over all locals and many semi-fasts as it had to be unloaded and through the Customs at Maysfields by 5pm.



*A pre-war and far from unkempt No.33, then named "Belfast", leaves Derry (Foyle Road) with a goods. (C.P. Friel collection)*

The trains consisted of all the coaches that were able to be operated irrespective of their age!! The locals were worked by 4-4-2 tanks hauling the special Lisburn local coaches and many others. *[The "special Lisburn local coaches" were probably the converted railmotors, numbered in the 200 series. - CPF]*

The Banbridge and Antrim line trains were run by two lots of very unkempt locos. The 0-6-0s were PGs 10, 11 and 100, As 33 and 60 and ALs 29, 32, 55, 56, 78 and 151. The 4-4-0s consisted of Victoria and Albert (88 and 89) which had become 5' 6" Ps from being 4-4-2 singles, along with 104 and 105 - genuine 5' 6" Ps. These locomotives seemed incapable of ever putting a foot wrong and went on for ever (No.11 until 1960!).

Other 5' 6" and 6' 6" (or rather 5' 7" and 6' 7") Ps and PPs did their share on the semi-fasts to Portadown and beyond. Remember Portadown was also a three-way junction, like Knockmore. The Portadown lines were (clockwise) Newry and Dublin, Armagh and Cavan, Omagh and Londonderry. The Dublin line trains were worked by 130s, 170s and 190s and the Birds [*the Compounds, of course - CPF*]. The Omagh line trains were mainly run by the 120-128 class [*some confusion here of Q and QL classes - CPF*].



***The Enniskillen-Belfast "Shipper" passes through Killylea on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1956 behind class SG2 No.181. The closure in 1957 of the GN line through Enniskillen put an end to the Shipper and indeed to the SL&NCR, source of most of the cattle traffic. (A. Donaldson/C.P. Friel collection)***

There were several interesting notes attached to the Working Timetables such as the 8:50am ex-Belfast which spent three minutes at Dunmurry unloading laundry and two afternoon trains spent 2 and 4 minutes respectively and the 5:20pm ex-Belfast spent 2 minutes at Derriaghy loading people.

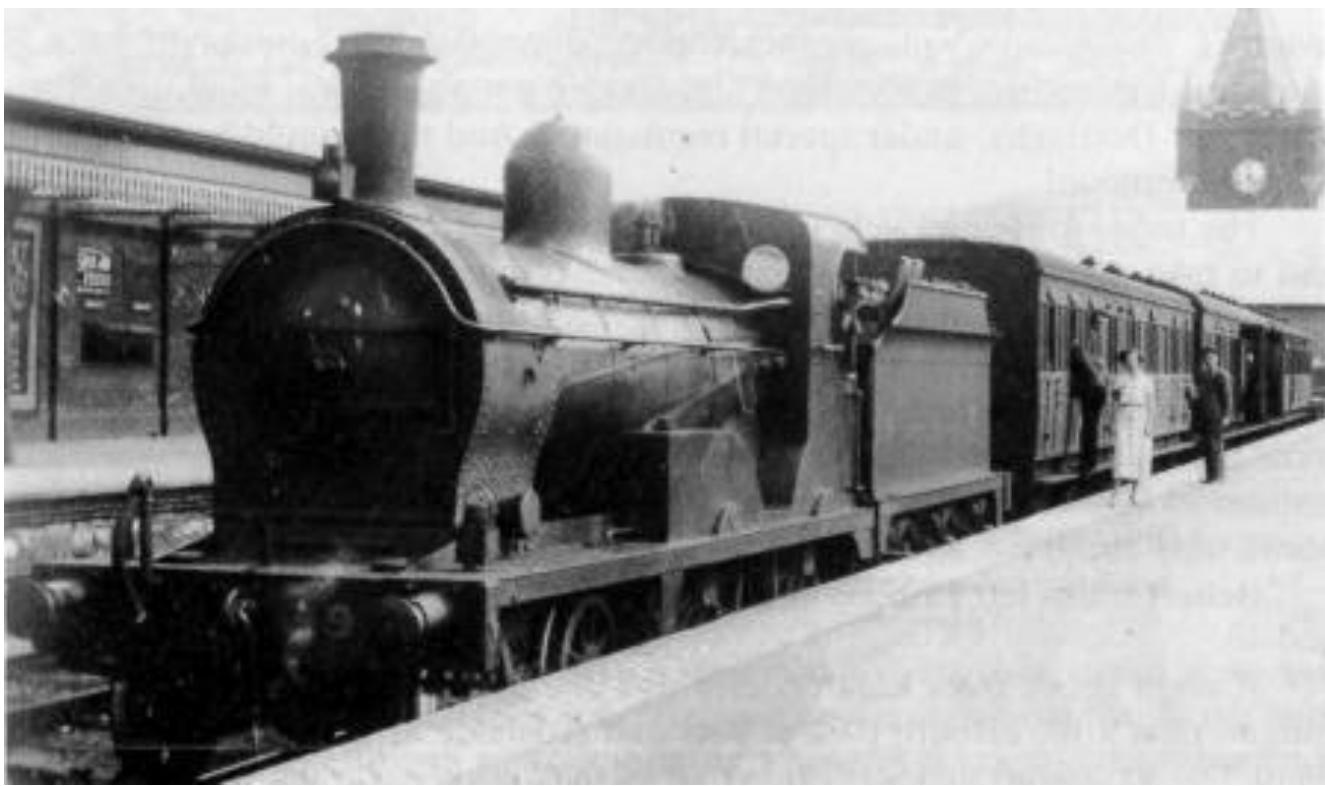
The tea-time service out of Belfast was as follows:

- 4:20 Gortnagallon Workmen consisting of ancient six-wheelers.
- 4:30 Londonderry express non-stop to Portadown with 7 or 8 bogies.
- 4:45 Stopping at Balmoral, Lisburn, the Maze, Moira, Lurgan and Portadown.
- 4:55 To Newcastle, first stop Lisburn, usually 5 bogies and usually over-full.
- 4:59 All stations local to Lisburn.
- 5:15 Dublin express, first stop Goraghwood, 8 or 9 bogies.
- 5:20 To Armagh, special stop of two minutes at Derriaghy, about 6 bogies.
- 5:25 To Banbridge calling at Adelaide, Balmoral, Finaghy and Dunmurry then Lisburn, about 6 bogies.
- 5:40 To Warrenpoint, first stop Lurgan, about 7 bogies.
- 5:44 To Portadown, first stop Lisburn then all stations.

- 5:49 All stations to Lisburn then to Antrim.
- 6:00 Selection of stops to Moira then on to Warrenpoint.
- 6:03 To Balmoral, and back by the Third Line.
- 6:15 To Lisburn and then all stations to Armagh, again 6 or 7 bogies and overfull
- 6:20 To Lisburn and Ballinderry.
- 6:25 To Dunmurry, Lisburn and Antrim.
- 6:30 All stations to Lisburn.
- 6:45 Lisburn then all stations to Portadown.

It only took, say, the attaching of an extra carriage to the 4:30pm to Londonderry to cause many of the following trains to be stopped at Dunmurry advanced starter and at Lambeg if Hilden wasn't switched in. I spent many occasions watching this happen.

There was one gorgeous train to Belfast in mid-morning consisting of an engine, livestock and guard's van, another engine, shipping traffic and guard's van plus another engine, some goods wagon and a guard's van. This was some sight drilling along past Derriaghy, under special regulations. And there could be a similar one in mid-afternoon!



*P class 5' 6" No.89, formerly 4-2-2 "Albert", waits to leave Newcastle with a train over the GNR route to Belfast, the first few miles of which, to Castlewellan, were owned by the BCDR. (C.P. Friel collection)*

The trains to Belfast were interesting also. The Newspaper Train from Dublin had to take passengers from Portadown and Lisburn to Belfast at 4:45am. The 6:40am out of Portadown had to be duplicated; the 6:32 out of Portadown stopped at Lurgan and all stations to Finaghy, then into Belfast; the 6:40am served Lurgan and Lisburn only and set down only at Balmoral. Other trains out of Portadown were the

6:05 and 7:00 all stations to Lisburn then Dunmurry only; the 7:17 all stations to Lisburn then Dunmurry and Finaghy; the 8:10 stopping at Lurgan and Moira only and the 8:28 stopping at Lurgan, Moira and Lisburn only.

Belfast trains left Lisburn at 8:05, 8:10, 8:17, 8:23, 8:30, 8:46 and 8:53, then 9:03, 9:08, 9:24 and 9:40.

A night goods from Londonderry was due to run thus: Portadown depart 8:50, Lurgan pass 9:10, Lisburn pass at 9:45 and Adelaide arrive 10:05. The train was limited to 50 wagons and was often part of the 'gorgeous train' that I mentioned earlier.

There were several workmen's trains to other places besides Gortnagallion. On one occasion in very unpleasant weather a train from beyond Portadown was stopped for 35 minutes between Moira and Knockmore because the train had previously been vandalised by the occupants, including the wrenching of doors off their hinges. These had been removed and the coaches were without them on the occasion of the 'wayside stop'. That was the end of the vandalism.

Leave was given [*by the Government? - CPF*] for the production of Austerity Coaches which had bare wooden (though shaped) seats and the single light bulbs in the ceiling so placed that they could not be reached by standing on the seats!

## BOOK REVIEWS

Michael McMahon

### **Irish Railways in Pictures No.2, MGWR - IRRS London Area.**

At last volume 2, some 14 years in the gestation since the GNR volume in 1976.

I was really looking forward to this MGWR publication, but unfortunately it does not come up to the excellence of volume 1. I do not wish to heap dismay on the IRRS London area but the publication lacks real depth - especially when waiting for 14 years. The captions are thin, so much more detail could easily have been inserted to make the book at least "a bit of a read".

For example on page 13, "loco 134 on a down train", what about a time or destination? What about the nearby MGWR hotel at Recess Station on page 19 - the main source of early traffic at this isolated spot. Vague captions like "the goods yard at Galway Station" convey little, especially when little of actual railway interest is evident, the letters on the lorry side could have at least been explained.

Photographs on pages 6 to 10,12,14, 30 and 311 would class as pure locomotive studies and do little to show the interesting locations on the MGWR system.

However do not let this ramble put you off this worthwhile booklet, hopefully the next one will appear before 2004 - a map like Broadstone so well drawn and explained is worth the 14 year wait!

### **The Cork Bandon & South Coast Railway, Vol.3, 1951-1976 - C. Creedon, Cork.**

Volume 3 has very recently appeared and covers the final stages of this fascinating line - dieselisation, resurgence and sudden closure make interesting reading. The book layout is an improvement on previous volumes and at some 250 pages is 100 pages bigger than Vol.2.

There are lots and lots of photographs, which are very varied and interesting, but in my copy the reproduction quality in places is best described as shockingly poor. However the numerous shots of diesel railcars and "C" class Metrovicks struggling through West Cork make up for photographic quality, just sniff that DERV! [*Deplorable sentiment. - Ed.*]

Laid out in year order like a diary, it is more easily read than the previous volumes and you will learn quickly about this remote system. I feel that a good detailed fold out map would be excellent when looking out for specific locations as detailed in the text.

Volume 3 closes with an update to volumes 1 and 2 creating a nice final farewell to this once large

system.

### **Signalman's Reflections - Adrian Vaughan, Silver Link Publishing, £19.95**

An excellent study of signalling, signalmen, equipment, locations and amusing anecdotes. The Irish input includes mostly photographs of Gort (Grot or Trog depending on the weather), and Ballingrane Junction.

There are two very pleasing photographs of Harcourt Street and the 'beefy' caption even includes the signalman, Larry Glynn, and goes on to tell us where he transferred to when Harcourt Street closed! The photo on page 104 of Gort is incredibly rural - an excellent shot - one can just hear the world, especially CIÉ, being put to right!

A very good book with good photographs. I would love to see a completely Irish version - imagine the stories you could, or even better, not include!

### **Encyclopaedia of Narrow Gauge Railways of GB and Ireland - Thomas Middlemass, P.S.L.**

This 270 page book covers the Narrow Gauge railways - by regional chapters - Ireland gets some 75 pages covering each Irish railway system in turn, each with a very clear (if scanty) map, photographs and easily readable tables. The Cavan and Leitrim is covered in just over 4 pages, the Swilly gets 8, the Guinness lines are covered in an industrial section - giving current locations of the Geoghegan engines.

Obviously to deal with the total narrow gauge system in 75 pages you cannot expect great detail, the photographs are mostly previously unpublished and for that alone are worth seeing. The style of writing and presentation is clear and easy - similar in style to "Irish Standard Gauge Railways" by the same author, a good base source which can only make you want to research individual railway histories.

PS - Sorry to those of you who are expecting another go at Mr. Fergus Mulligan, I was 'pruned' by the editor last year, but not deterred. Hopefully I will not be able to review a second reprint of 150 years next year - or any time come to that. *[That's very like another go! - Ed.]*

### **Rail Freight Today - Exploring Ireland - Tele-Rail Productions, Carnforth.**

An RPSI first - a video of which hopefully there will be lots more.

This excellent 55 minute programme explores in great depth the Freight scene of Irish Rail. The producers, cameramen, etc., have really excelled themselves and have obviously had good co-operation from Irish Rail and private customers - IFI, and Cement to name a few.

Picture quality is superb; commentary is detailed and informative - brief subtitles could have been used as the commentary explains the location, but usually at the end of a film clip. Locations flashed up for a few seconds would help place the shot for those not very familiar with the network.

Sound is, in places, poor; the microphones have at times not coped well with the full sound effects of engines working hard. Twice in the video 141 class engines produce noises very similar to A class which sounds suspicious.

Little attention is paid to the 121s and 071s but they are not often seen on freight in daylight hours, a pairing of class 121 and 141 in the video did not get a mention.

Surprisingly the cross-border freight traffic - at an all time peak - receives very scant attention; some nice shots of trains over the Wellington Bank would have been worthwhile.

The geography of the maps contains minor errors and the commentary concerning Navan becomes confused about cross-border lines, but these minor flaws do not detract from an excellent product.

My recommendation is to purchase this tape. I should expect an Irish Passenger video by next 5' 3" and who knows, if demand is enough, perhaps we may even have a preserved steam video in the future. Just imagine being able to see two blue GNR 4-4-0s in steam together, storming out of Dundalk, at the

flick of a switch!

*[For those interested in less recent matters, a video and a colour album featuring Irish steam in the 1950s and 1960s are due to appear early in 1992. - Ed.]*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Dear Sir,

I would like to appeal for information about locomotives and rolling stock which worked the former 5' 3" gauge Ballyclare branch of the NCC. I would also be interested in any photographs of the branch during its operation, particularly Ballyclare station and its environs. I am trying to build a 4 mm finescale (21 mm gauge) model of the station and any assistance which the readers of Five Foot Three could offer would be very much appreciated. Costs re any material will be met.

I am also in the process of having some coach sides etched for the following NCC coach diagrams: H1, Z2 and I2. For anyone interested these will be available from Bill Bedford Models, Leebitton, Sandwick, Shetland, ZE2 9HP. I have no idea of prices at this time. If anyone modelling in 7 mm wishes or would be interested in one of the above prototypes Bill will consider one-off runs of etches at affordable prices. I must point out that I have no connection with the company other than as a satisfied customer, but the one-off etching service may be of use or interest to modellers of the Irish prototype who are rarely catered for by the trade.

Yours,

*Chris Aspinwall*

Carrickfergus

## A RUSTY LOVE AFFAIR

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<i>In a sun-baked shed</i>	<i>Black lovers, unquestioning</i>
<i>With black grained hands</i>	<i>In their complete adoration.</i>
<i>These iron men of steam</i>	<i>In this brown station yard</i>
<i>Sweat oil pursuing an ideal.</i>	<i>Carriages grey with old age</i>
<i>There she sits in state,</i>	<i>Retired queens, proudly wear</i>
<i>This queen of the past,</i>	<i>The grandeur of another day.</i>
<i>Waiting for her archaic</i>	<i>Here, a dream in creation,</i>
<i>Limbs to be greased</i>	<i>An old train being reborn</i>
<i>Into motion, her joints</i>	<i>When men become gods</i>
<i>Soothed gently by her</i>	<i>Breathing life into dead iron.</i>

Something in the above must have struck a chord with Rev. Eddie Creamer, who sent it in. A lot of what was inside No.171's boiler came out attached to Eddie!

The poem is from the book "To School through the Fields" by Alice Taylor, published by Brandon Book Publishers, Dingle, Co. Kerry.

## PUZZLE PICTURE

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The picture produced here, kindly sent in by Mr Niall Torpey is from the Lawrence Collection and is reproduced courtesy of the National Library of Ireland - cabinet 10842. Mr. Torpey was struck by the similarities and differences between it and the front cover of FFT No.37 and initially sent me a photocopy. I replied, venturing a few opinions as to date, time, class of locomotive, etc. Mr Torpey's response was overwhelming in its erudition and included tables of solar altitudes and azimuth angles which he had used to calculate the time of day based on the shadows cast by the couple in the foreground!

So, to cut a long story short, it is suggested that the photo is of the 12:50 ex-Larne on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1895, hauled by a 2-4-0 of BNCR class C, with possibly 2 bogies plus 8 6-wheelers. If anyone thinks it isn't, he or she will need to make out a very strong case!

Incidentally, Mr Torpey has made a comprehensive study of the NLI collection and has prepared an index of the railway views in it which include numerous photos of Whitehead.





*No.4 leaves Rathdrum with the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1991 "Sea Breeze" excursion to Wexford and Rosslare.  
(Irish Times)*



*Framed by the Grand Canal aqueduct, No.4 crosses the River Barrow at Monasterevan on the Kildare-Tullamore trip of 12<sup>th</sup> May 1991. (N. Poots)*



*The trials of Mountpleasant behind her, No.461 crosses the Craigmore viaduct on a rather bleak 24<sup>th</sup> February 1991. (N. Poots)*