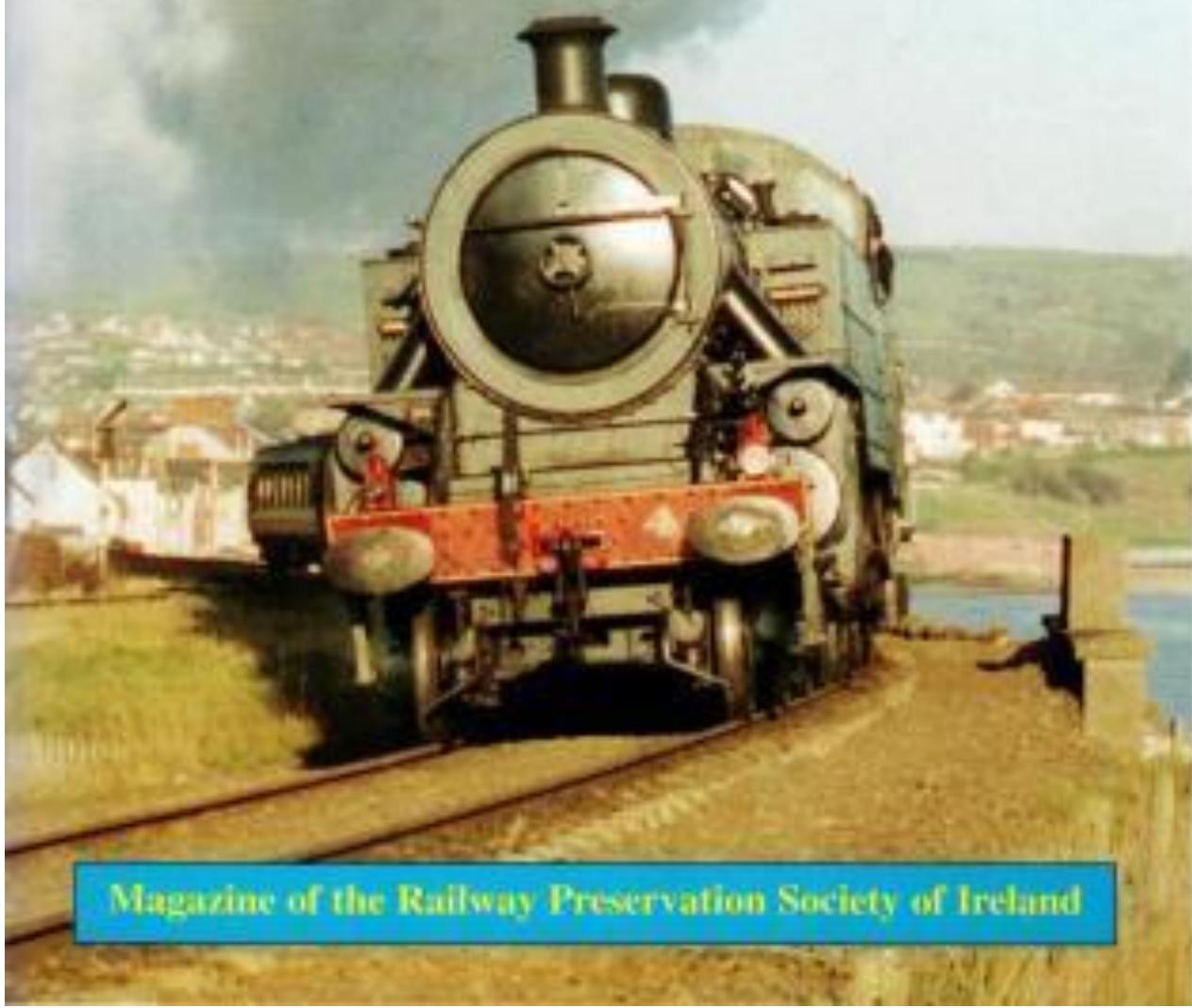


# FIVE FOOT THREE



Magazine of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

# FIVE FOOT THREE

## No.48

### Winter 2001/02

**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.

*Front Cover: Contrary to tradition, some of the Santa days produced excellent conditions for photography. Here, No.4 gets away from Whitehead in fine style on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2001. (I.C. Pryce)*

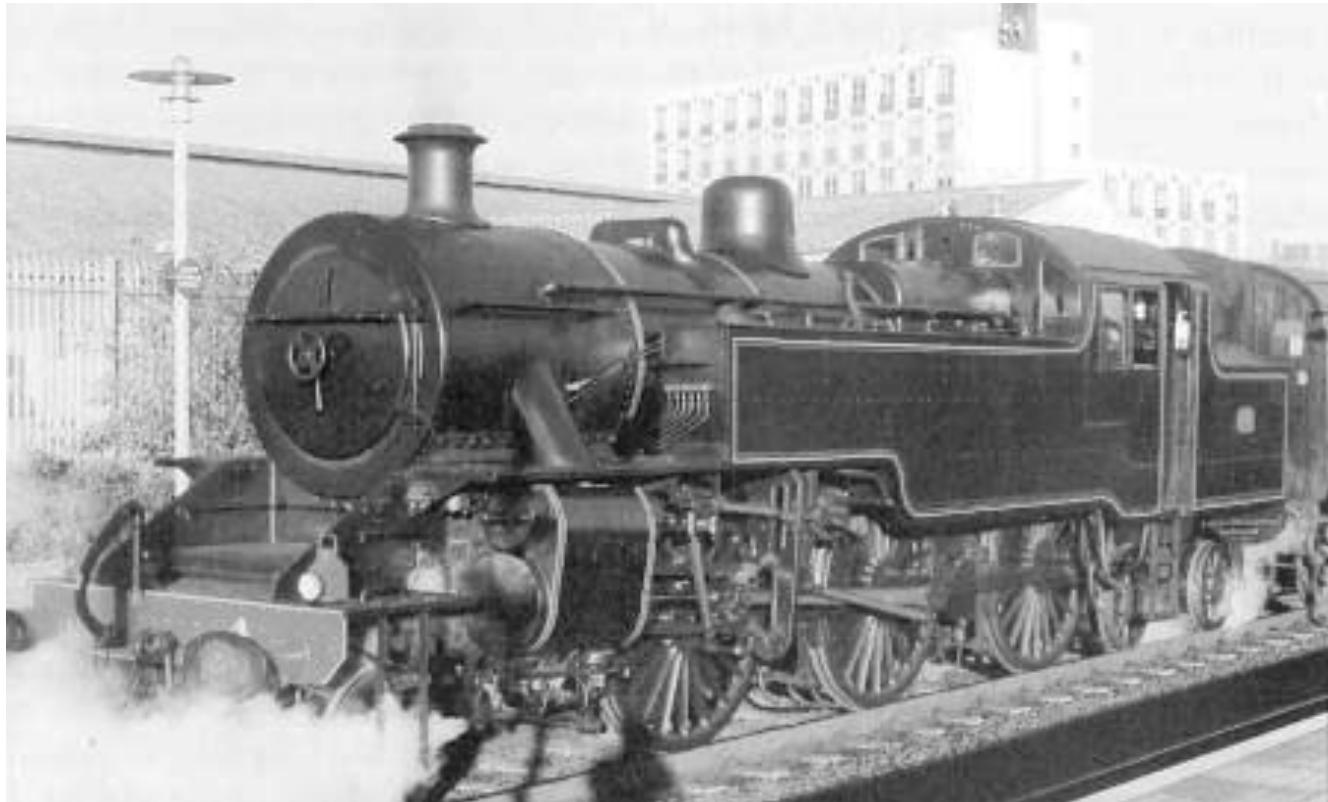
#### **EDITORIAL**

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About half a century ago a song-writer produced an opus entitled “Someone to watch over me”, in which some dewy-eyed damsel expressed a wish to be looked after (“seen to” could be misinterpreted!) by a husky male. Nowadays, while such sentiments would be denounced as sexist and generally politically incorrect, the song’s title seems an apt description of our modern way of life, in which “watching over” has become a major industry.

Paradoxically, at a time when, we are told, people are vastly better educated it appears that they have become devoid of common sense and the ability to carry out simple everyday functions without the

assistance of a greater power in some form or other. A minor example is the cigarette lighter which, for the benefit of the social leper, still using such items, now bears a label with, among other things, the startling information that the lighter contains a flammable substance and that it should not be operated while pointing at the face, etc. However, should one mishandle the device in spite of all this, it is fairly certain that some recompense for one's anguish could be obtained, thus demonstrating that stupidity, rather than virtue, is its own reward. Thanks to free legal aid, there is little reason not to take all sorts of ludicrous claims to Court, where they might well succeed. Since the defendant would have to go there at his own expense, the chances are that he will pay off the claimant in order to avoid throwing good money after bad. This situation is unlikely to improve until society in general and its leaders in particular gets round to accepting that everyone has responsibilities in addition to their much-vaunted rights.



*No.4 at Great Victoria Street, having gone there to turn one of the Santa trains. (I.C. Pryce)*

With this in mind, instead of "cigarette lighter" think in terms of "train" and you will get some idea why our Secretary's report opens as it does. The Society is now exposed to the full blast of Health & Safety and all that that involves. This is not because we have been found to have acted unsafely, nor are we as experienced and professional train operators in any way opposed to the concept of safety. What it does mean is that simply to act safely is no longer enough. We will now have to write about it, describing our safety procedures, who is in charge of them, who was told about them and by whom, have all things and the people working with them been certified and by whom, who certified the certifier, etc., etc.?

It is interesting to compare rail with road. On the former, despite recent high profile accidents, there is an excellent safety record compared to the roads where every year people are wiped out in their thousands. Despite driving a car being the most potentially lethal activity the average person will ever engage in, after being on best behaviour for less than an hour he or she is then free to exercise what appears to be looked on almost as a constitutional right. Avoid the demons of drink and speed and,

apart from sundry minor irritants, the world is your oyster. Relax, turn up the music, prattle on your mobile, go as you will when you will and no-one will bother you with tiresome demands that you should demonstrate any intentions as to competence, care or consideration. Instead of the latter, on television you will be exhorted to live a dream in which you may pass through burning cane-fields and volcanic eruptions before managing to pull up on an uncompleted viaduct which you might have noticed sooner if it hadn't been for the music, the mobile and maintaining eye contact with your glamorous passenger. By contrast, IÉ was recently taken to task by one of the many Euro-meddling bodies for not having taken certain action in relation to high-speed trains. IÉ responded that they did not have, and didn't intend to have, any such trains - but in vain. It's a funny old world!

Back in the real world, a tiny band of members have been doing their best to cope with burgeoning Health & Safety requirements, plus negotiations with NIR in relation to the new Operating Agreement. Since the old one expired at the end of 2001, time could not be said to be on our side nor, although some negotiation has been possible, could the fact that, realistically, we have more need of NIR than they have of us.

Meanwhile, as you will read in News From Council, there is an urgent requirement for a couple of persons with a talent for wading through paper in an orderly manner to take on the posts of Safety Officers, North and South. Hands need not be soiled nor muscles strained but a major burden would be lifted from already busily involved members and perhaps, after all, virtue could be its own reward!

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## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

**Norman Foster**

Opening on a sad note, during the last year the Society lost five active members: John Creaner, past Chairman; David Dillon, Vice-Chairman; Pat Walters, Dublin Catering; Philip Booth, Fund Raiser and Train Announcer and Arthur Wickham, Fund Raiser/Santa/Easter Bunny. The amount of work these people did for the Society was exceptional and will be well remembered.

On the brighter side, the return of Jeep No.4 was a very welcome attraction for the Three-Day Tour. As you will read elsewhere, this had to be re-planned at a late stage to run entirely within Northern Ireland. Congratulations to the Operations Committee and to Peter Scott and his dedicated team for the fine effort they put into No.4. The Tour was very satisfactory and I have never heard a Jeep sound so well.

Another bright spot was the re-opening of the Bleach Green to Antrim line - it's not very often that we see lines re-opening in this era.

As our Secretary reports, your Council are indeed very busy at present and the Sub-Committees dealing with Health & Safety and other negotiations with the Railway Companies have their hands very full. I would like at this stage to thank the various people in Irish Rail and Northern Ireland Railways for all the help they have given us in the past and particularly last year. Without their continued co-operation we could never move.

As the number of steam drivers has been gradually running down, discussions with Irish Rail have resulted in a driver and fireman training programme being arranged, to begin in the very near future.

Planning for the new season's rail trips is well advanced. Some exciting items are included and, as usual, I hope to meet many of you on these trips. Last year I reported that we had recruited new members to the catering section in Dublin, and I must say that these people have made life for the Chairman very much easier. So, once again, if there are people out there who can give even a few days help, please come forward. Our carriages always need attention and there is plenty to do in the coming few months.

Finally, a sincere welcome to Johnny Glendinning as our new Vice-Chairman, and to the rest of the Council may I say thank-you for all the time and work they have put in - they make my life and

position very simple. To all other volunteers over the year, well done - without you the Society would not be the same as it is.



*Some of its bearings having given cause for concern, No.171's bogie is removed under the sheer-legs at Whitehead. (J. Wolsley)*

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## NEWS FROM COUNCIL

**Paul McCann**

“Bureaucracy gone mad!” - an often heard expression in this day and age, but in 2001 it is how one tended to feel at times during the year.

In quick succession Council were tasked with responding to:

- A consultation paper on proposed railway safety legislation in the Republic. In line with all railway networks in Europe, Ireland must introduce legislation to deal with increasing health & safety issues and the whole track access/train operator scenario. As soon as it became known that a paper was being published, Council set up a Railway Safety Sub-Committee to deal with the requirements on the Society’s behalf. The Society was represented at a number of meetings open to the general heritage railway fraternity and has held private meetings with government officials.
- A consultation paper on proposed railway safety legislation in Northern Ireland. Not long after the Dublin government proposals, a similar, but more lightweight (in size but not in implications), document was published in Belfast. The Railway Safety Sub-Committee was expanded to take this into account. Again, similar meetings in a joint forum were attended by Society representatives. The role of the Heritage Railway Association must be acknowledged in bringing together a number of interested parties with the officials of both jurisdictions.

The implications of both proposals is that the Society will most likely have to carry out a Risk

Assessment of all its areas of activity, and from that a Safety Case will be drawn up to address those risks and to document the procedures in place to deal with them. The long-term consequences are that the Society should not only operate safely, as we believe we have been doing already, but will also be seen to be operating safely by those bodies which are responsible for ensuring that we do. In the short term, however, there is a tremendous task ahead of us to identify those areas to be addressed and to get the relevant paperwork in place. To that end, the need for a Safety Officer, north and south, has been identified.

- A proposed new operating agreement from Northern Ireland Railways. It was known for about a year beforehand that NIR were keen to revamp the operating agreement which has been in place since 1989 so it was not a surprise when the proposal appeared. The main changes required are additional levels of insurance, advance notice of operations, extra procedures involving safety, and changes to the crewing arrangements. At the time of writing, negotiations are still underway with the company. Separate from the operating agreement, other procedures are being drawn up which will lay down the training and certification necessary for steam crews.

- The nightmare of the last minute organisation of a completely new annual railtour due to cancellation of the original "Corrib" because of foot and mouth. Restrictions in the Republic appeared to be more stringent than in the UK and a consequence was a call from Iarnród Éireann to cancel April's "Steam Enterprise" and "Northern Belle" operations, and the May railtour.

A hasty re-scheduling exercise was undertaken and much credit must be given to the northern Operations team, and to NIR, for the massive task in organising what turned out to be a unique and very successful "Belfast & Northern Counties" tour.

- The postponement and re-scheduling of the Annual General Meeting. Usually held in March, the AGM was eventually called for June due to a reluctance from our southern members to travel under the foot and mouth restrictions. Vice-Chairman Sir Kenneth Bloomfield chaired his first meeting and everything went very smoothly. Old faces, Johnny Glendinning and Jeremy Saulters, were returned to Council, along with new boy Philip Cox. However, for the second year the post of Northern Operations Officer remained vacant and, while the northern committee struggles on valiantly, there are times when the absence of the Operations Officer is keenly felt.
- The administrative burden of changing the Society's financial system to deal with the Euro changeover. Hopefully, the changeover will not be too taxing after the initial period (January and February 2002) when the Punt and Euro are both valid currencies. The membership rates have been adjusted to Euros and are in effect a slight reduction for most members due to the rounding being down rather than up!

In 2001, discussion returned once again to the possibility of establishing a proper museum facility at Whitehead. The current proposals are that the Stables building will be converted from its current use as a store house to a museum building with public access, toilet facilities and, at one end, an upgraded tarry facility for those working on the site. Preliminary plans and costings have been obtained and these will be published when a definite decision has been made.

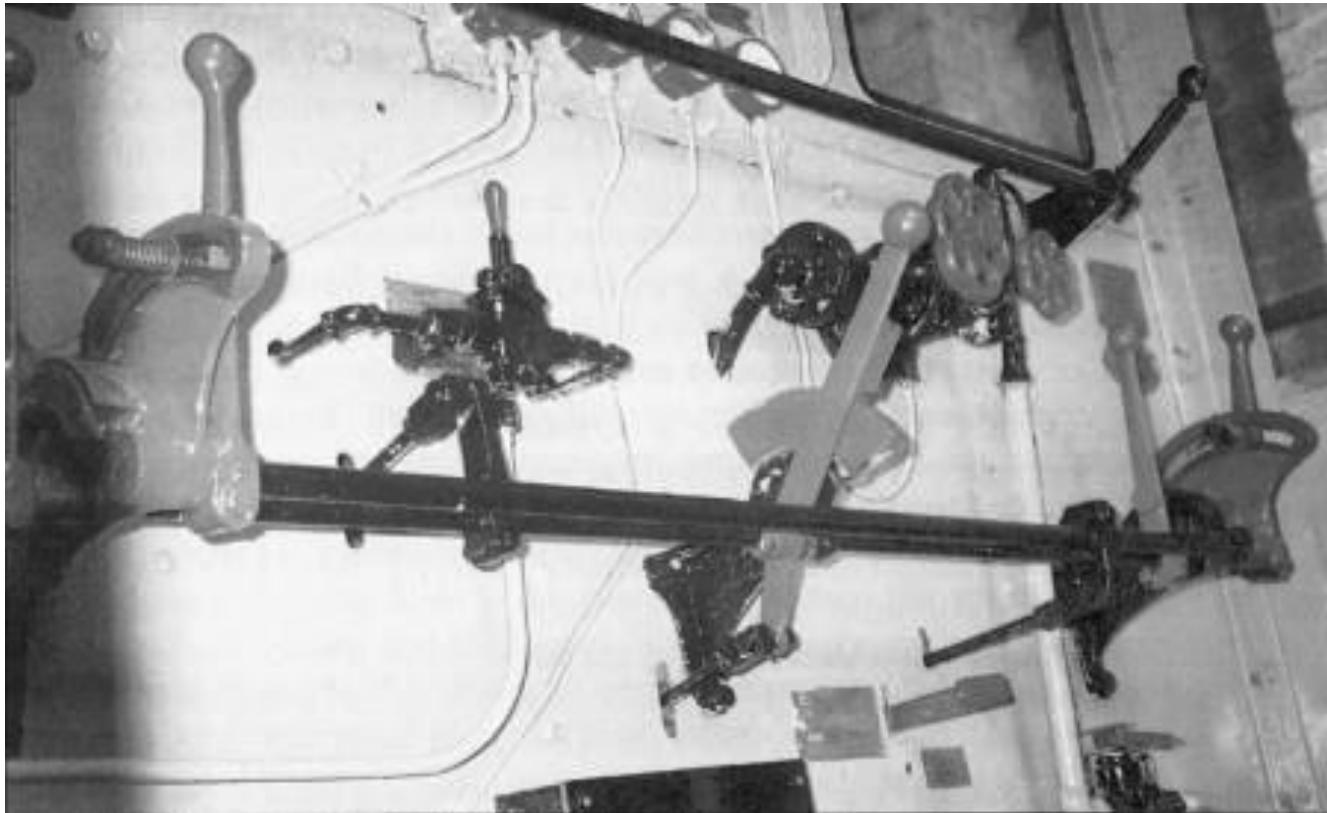
Locomotive No.4 made a much-heralded return to traffic on the revised railtour, and has been a very popular mainstay for the rest of the northern season, with the exception of No.85 operating to Dublin in September. Less heralded, but equally useful in its own way, was the return to traffic of the Carlow diesel, now splendidly numbered '1'.

In Dublin, No.171 ably replaced No.461 as she passed into temporary retirement. However, No.171 is due for her own sojourn in the shops in the middle of 2002, hence the push to get No.186 returned to traffic as soon as possible. To that end, an £85,000 appeal was launched in October to fund her restoration. Expectations are high that we will get a good response, and an early return to traffic is

anticipated.

Another new locomotive appeared at Whitehead during the year, being Hunslet 101 in storage for NIR.

An announcement during the year was made to the effect that the Society had been awarded a contract to overhaul the mechanics and oversee the re-commissioning of ex-GNR locomotive No.131. This had been the situation for quite some time before the news was made public elsewhere, and the reason why the Society had not released it was that the funding for the project had not been put in place. As of the end of 2001, nearly a year later, there is still no sign of that funding.



*Despite having been painted in various colours by Irwin Pryce, the controls of the Carlow diesel remain something of a mystery to the steam men, including the painter! (J. Wolsley)*

There has still been no significant move to obtain a set of steel coaches to operate on those lines currently barred to wooden-bodied stock. The date for the withdrawal of Cravens coaches from Iarnród Éireann continues to be pushed back as the growth of passenger numbers on that system continues - latest estimate is end of 2003. The fear still exists, however, that Cravens coaches might not be allowed to operate once they are totally withdrawn from everyday use. Although they are a step up from wooden coaches in structural rigidity, they are not of integral construction, nor are they air-braked, of up-to-date coupling systems, or with central locking. Nobody can yet answer the question as to whether the Society will be required to operate full 21<sup>st</sup> century specification vehicles, and the proposed legislation muddies the waters further. As an interim measure, we are looking at acquiring the remaining NIR Mk2 carriages, at least until it is confirmed what the future of Cravens stock is to be.

Having won the Heritage Railway Association Carriage Award, it was decided that the public should have a chance to admire State Coach 351. In November the carriage was put on display in Dublin's Pearse station for 3 weeks and, for a small charge, one could explore the wonders of royal travel a century ago. Members and public alike in the north will get a chance to see 351 as it is hoped to have her on display in the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum in Cultra for 6 months in 2002, probably from

April. This is being organised and funded by North Down Borough Council as part of their Titanic Festival celebrations, and their support is much appreciated, especially as they have also sponsored a number of operations to Bangor over the past few years.

After two seasons without a “Portrush Flyer” there was a bit of trepidation as to how the public would respond. No such worry - with a re-opened NCC loop line, the revamped No.4, helped by excellent weather, operated the three dates with capacity trains. The customary local afternoon trains to Castlerock also enjoyed successful patronage.



*At the St. Jude's meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2001 Tom McDevitte, railway raconteur extraordinaire, was presented with an appropriate picture to mark his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The picture was handed over by an old friend, Willie John Carlin. On the right is Charles Friel who has put so much work into these meetings over the years. (Belfast Telegraph)*

Of operational concern during the year were threats to the turntables at Drogheda and Cork. The future of that at Drogheda is still uncertain as it will at the very least be moved, but we are hopeful that Cork's table will be retained. There is a potential threat to the Society in the Dublin area with the proposed redevelopment of the yard area in Heuston Station where the southern set is currently stabled. A reduction in space at Inchicore is also expected and this will increase pressure on the Society. Already, the Dublin-based locomotive is stored in the open at Connolly shed.

It is sad to learn of the death of members, but to hear of the untimely loss of five such supportive members of the Society in a short period was hard indeed. Philip Booth, John Creaner, David Dillon, Pat Walters and Arthur Wickham are sorely missed by those who worked with them.

Over the past year the Society's website has gone from strength to strength. In fact, it is becoming as much a research source as a Society news service. More back issues of this journal have appeared

during the year, as has a list of film and television work, a Society pre-history, and a photographic gallery. Work is still continuing and a revamp and extra features will be happening over the coming months. Thanks are due to Philip Lockett for his great work here.

The Bulletin service via e-mail, which was introduced without much fanfare last year has continued to expand in popularity with nearly 350 members receiving it, up from 150 this time last year. Robin Morton has been a great help with news items, but it would be nice if members in the south could contribute a bit more.

The customary review of membership follows. Numbers were up again slightly for 2001, being 1,040 against 1,036 in 2000. The membership breakdown was: Northern Ireland, 383 (static); Republic of Ireland, 347 (up 1); Great Britain, 279 (up 3); Overseas, 31 (static). Alternatively: Adult, 721 (up); Senior, 196 (up); Junior, 22 (up); Family 18 (down); Life 64; Honorary, 13; Societies 5. The number of Family members reduced significantly, and presumably this is due to cost as some converted to Adult status.

A very satisfying increase this year was the take up of the new Gift Aid forms - 434 as against 245 last year. This resulted in a doubling of the rebate from the Inland Revenue. There are still a number of UK members who could join this scheme and I would appeal for them to do so.

As is also customary, I must thank those who helped Council cope with the burden of management: Leslie Dick of our insurance brokers, Marsh Ltd - Leslie has put a lot of work into dealing with the new NIR insurance requirements; Ashgrove House - ticketing and phone service; Wilma Cairns - ticketing, book-keeping, phone answering and general secretarial services.

Within the Society the Posts of Special Responsibility to the Secretary for 2001 were: Charles Friel (Belfast Meetings); Nelson Poots ("Five Foot Three" Editor); Johnny Glendinning (Museums Liaison Officer); Philip Lockett (Web Manager). Ciaran McAteer has been assisting with a number of legal issues. Other unofficial posts were Peter Rigney - provider of southern input to the Society news machine; Barry Carse collector and collator of membership payments from the south.

There are also a number of sub-committees which help take the load off Council, so thanks to the members who serve on them.

And finally to the management and staff of Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways - as always!

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## LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

**Peter Scott**

### **No.3 LPHC 0-6-0ST shunting loco. In traffic, Whitehead.**

Still operational and still in need of major refurbishment, No.3 sees even less use than formerly due to the appearance in traffic of the Ruston and Hornsby "Carlow" diesel. Her most recent duty, at the time of writing, was to off-load her namesake No.3 (Guinness loco BG3) after return from Downpatrick.

### **No.3BG A. Guinness Son and Co 0-4-0ST shunting loco. In store, Whitehead.**

The "Guinness Engine" returned to Whitehead on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2001 by low loader. After 13 years at Downpatrick, she had been out of use for some time awaiting boiler examination and repair, and will now be partly dismantled to assess her condition and estimate the cost of overhaul. Generally, 3BG appears in good condition - a slack tyre being one of the more unusual defects requiring attention.

For those unfamiliar with the Irish scene, the Guinness Brewery in Dublin had an extensive network of both broad gauge and narrow gauge (1'10½") lines, and the broad gauge locos used to shunt from the brewery along a street tramway into the yard at Kingsbridge (now Heuston) station. So there was a broad gauge No.3 and a narrow gauge No.3. 3BG was the Society's first loco, being donated by Messrs Arthur Guinness in 1965.

For street working, the loco was originally fitted with metal skirting to cover the outside motion, and a bell, operated from the cross-head, to warn passers-by. At Whitehead the skirts were immodestly removed, while the bell, though still present, was disabled so as to preserve our sanity and that of our neighbours.



*The Guinness engine, No.3BG (Hudswell Clarke 1152 of 1919), about to leave Downpatrick for Whitehead on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2001. (J. Wolsley)*

#### **No.4 LMS NCC 2-6-4T mixed traffic loco. In Traffic, Whitehead.**

No.4 returned to action for the “Three Day Tour” in May. This was spurred on by the decision, as a result of Foot and Mouth restrictions, to re-locate the planned tour within Northern Ireland, and to find as much as possible by way of additional attractions to make up for not getting to Galway as planned. The loco was first steam tested on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and gingerly set wheel upon the main line on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>, doing 5 return light engine trips to Carrickfergus by way of running in and crew familiarisation. There then followed intense last minute completion of a host of minor items, including the lining out and numerals, which were still being completed as the loco undertook test runs in earnest with a train to haul. Since May, No.4 has covered all her old NCC territory and has amply lived up to the succinct comment of one of her former drivers - “just point her in the right direction and she’ll go anywhere”. (The same driver was less than enthusiastic when it came to ex GNRI tender engines).

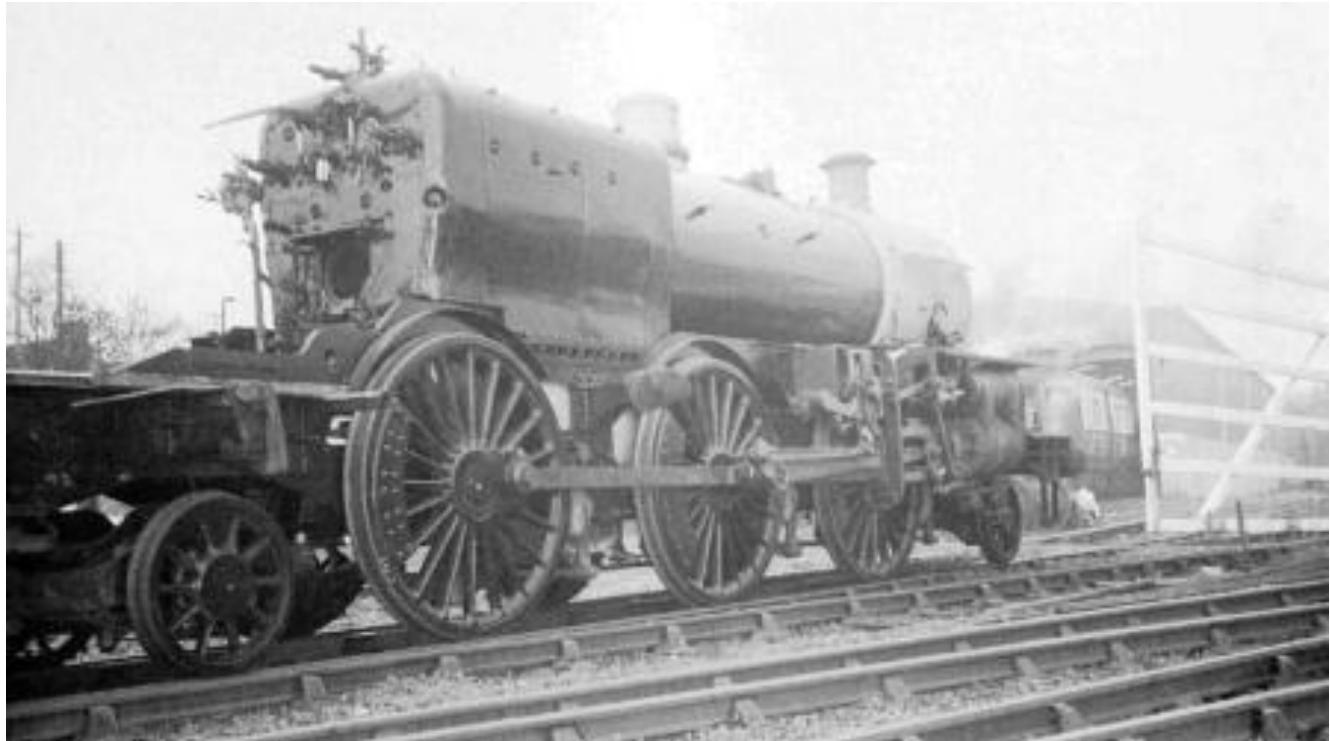
#### **No.27 SLNCR 0-6-4T. In store, Whitehead.**

#### **No.85 GNR(I) 4-4-0 compound express passenger loco. In traffic, Whitehead.**

No.85 did not see action on the Santa trains, mainly because of No.4’s suitability for bi-directional running and her comfortable cab, the result of which was a well-orchestrated chorus in her favour on behalf of the engine crews. In fact No.85’s only recent appearance has been for an “In House” training and competency session for Society locomotive personnel at Whitehead. It is unfortunate that No.85 sees so little use, bearing in mind the effort and expense that went into restoring her to operational status. The clock ticks away regardless of whether she is used or not, and in fact her boiler ticket is up at the end of this year!

### **No.171 GNR(I) 4-4-0 express passenger loco. In traffic, Dublin.**

No.171 took over as the Dublin based loco following withdrawal of No.461 at the end of her boiler validity. She has fulfilled the normal Dublin programme, working to Mullingar and Rosslare, and has required little attention. In turn, her boiler ticket expires in July next when it is anticipated that she will go into store for a period.



*Partly completed No.4 en route to the loco workshop in early 2001. (J. Wolsley)*

### **No.184 GSWR 0-6-0 goods engine. In Store, Whitehead.**

### **No.186 GSWR 0-6-0 goods engine. General overhaul, Whitehead.**

Overhaul of No.186 is the major locomotive project at present, and is of course the subject of an appeal for funds. To date, the response to the appeal has been encouraging and our best thanks are due to those who have contributed. But there is a long way to go, so with Christmas out of the way and wondering what to do with all that cash you were given - there's a suggestion! Seriously, the extent and speed of the overhaul and the return of the loco to traffic in time to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the other locos (which cannot be postponed) depends upon the available funding.

In last year's report, I stated that the plan was to give No.186 a "basic" overhaul - that is to say, everything essential would be dismantled, examined and rendered functional for further service, without any attempt at full restoration. Unfortunately, dismantling soon revealed a number of nasties which had not been apparent. The frames, for example, had been gradually parting company with the cylinder block, revealing broken bolts and serious corrosion. Rectification of this involved removal of the cylinder block for repairs to cracks. Both the motion plate and stretcher were found to be in serious trouble - the former with slack rivets and the latter misaligned due to a welded repair during its previous ownership. Bad corrosion damage was evident to the leading axle journals. And so on. As to the known repair work, the wheels have been re-profiled and all bearings are being overhauled. The boiler repairs are well advanced, including some re-staying and renewal of the tube plate. To facilitate fitting the new tube plate and other work, the boiler was lifted up on end where it now resembles a

super-gun or Easter Island statue.

As a result of the problems outlined, the target of later this year for a return to traffic may have proved a little optimistic - again underlining our need for funding since time is money.



*Super-gun or Easter Island statue? The boiler of No.186 positioned for welding of the front tubeplate and work on the firebox. It has since assumed a horizontal position. (I.C. Pryce)*

### **No.461 DSER 2-6-0 goods engine. In store, Whitehead.**

Preparation for overhaul of No.461 has been progressing whenever possible. The boiler has been opened up and tubes removed, and work is proceeding to detach the boiler and lift it out for thorough examination.

### **No.23 Irish Shell Planet diesel shunter. In traffic, Whitehead.**

This small but very handy and useful machine is in need of general overhaul, with engine and gearbox problems.

### **No.1 CSE Ruston Diesel shunter. “Carlow diesel”. In traffic, Whitehead.**

After much research and prevarication regarding the correct number for this locomotive, it is now designated as No.1 - this being the easiest numeral to paint (at the risk of offending the painter!). So that is that. The loco has carried out extensive shunting, still with an occasional gearbox problem rearing its head. There is no comparison between this loco and the “Planet”, which starts like a motor car. Starting the Ruston involves a major rigmarole involving first starting its “donkey engine” to build up air pressure, pre-lubricating the main engine, barring it round to the starting position and so on - it has already been remarked that firing up No.3 was infinitely easier and nearly as quick!



*With his Adelaide yard experience, Thomas Charters was an obvious candidate for the Unilok, seen here in overland mode. The driving position is reminiscent of South African narrow gauge locos.*  
(J. Wolsley)

### **“Unilok” UTA road-rail shunter.**

The Unilok was purchased some years ago from NIR. It had latterly been in use at the Lislea Drive Rail Welding depot near Balmoral. It lay out of use at Whitehead until recently made operational by Messrs Coastal Containers, through the good offices of our member Paul Newell. The Unilok is powered by a Volkswagen Beetle engine, runs on four wheels with hydraulically operated guide wheels at one end and a jockey wheel arrangement for steering at the other - so it can dismount itself from the track and run on level ground. It connects to a railway vehicle by catching it under its buffers, and thus transfers

the weight to itself for increased traction. The entire machine is about the size and appearance of a four-poster bed.

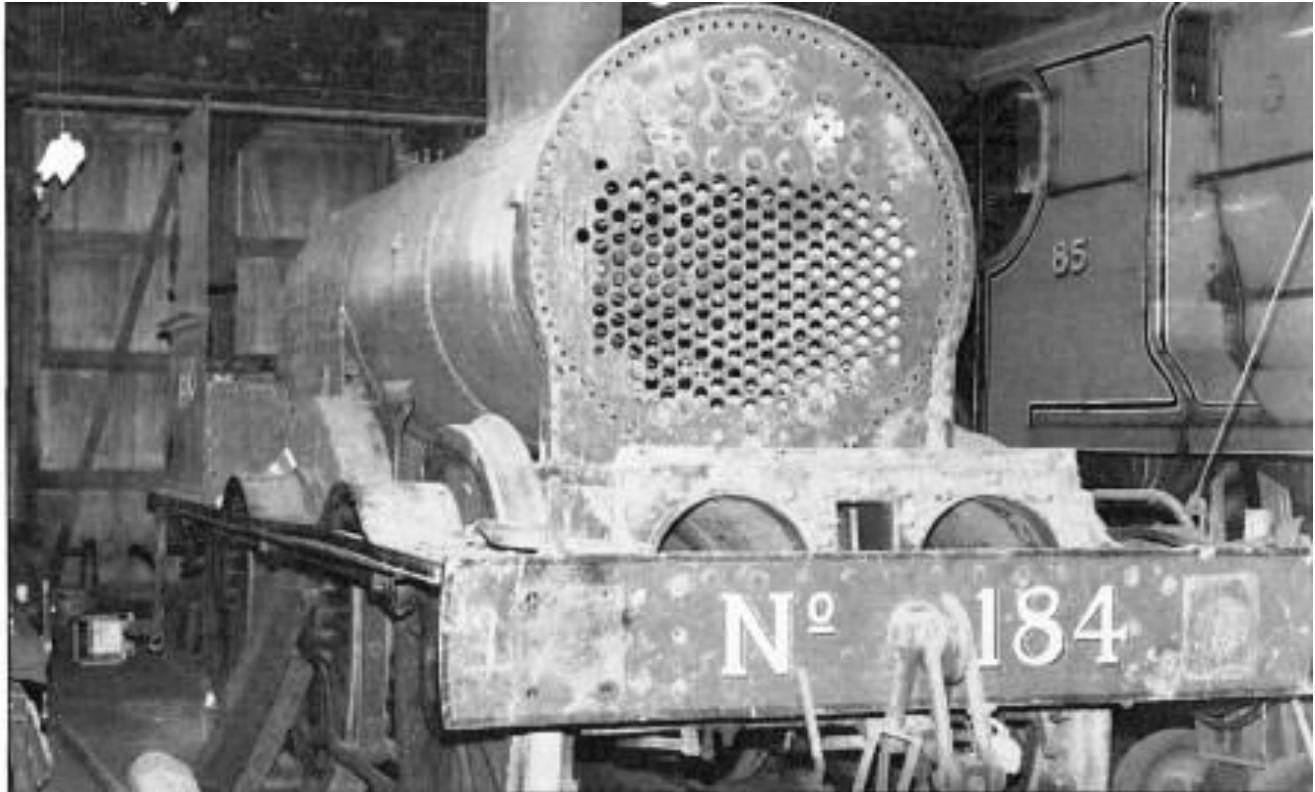
It has yet to be fully commissioned, but first indication is that in spite of its unusual appearance, it could be rather useful. Its traction power is certainly well in excess of what would be expected at first glance.

### **101 NIR Hunslet Bo-Bo diesel electric loco.**

Partly to facilitate NIR, who needed the space, and partly with eventual preservation of a Hunslet loco in mind, the remains of 101 have been temporarily stored at Whitehead. The loco was hauled down by rail, and the engine/generator was brought by road, and subsequently lifted into the loco for storage. Some other components have been collected for storage. The loco is in seriously incomplete and damaged condition.

### **Other Locos**

For the last two years, I have had the frustrating task of writing a locomotive report which refers to the possibility of other locos making an appearance, but without actually saying anything concrete. Although there has been some positive movement, even now I must limit my comments to state that the Society is engaged in on-going discussions on the subject.



*A much-dismantled No.184 at Whitehead, showing the front tubeplate and cylinder casting. Not apparent in the photo is the serious corrosion of the cylinder block. (J. Wolsley)*

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### **Northern Operations**

**Mervyn Darragh**

The Belfast Area Operations Committee took a devastating blow with the sudden untimely death of its member and Society Vice Chairman David Dillon in March. David had over the preceding year involved himself with the Committee. His cheerful friendly personality continues to be much missed.

The 2001 operating season got off to a bright start with the ever-popular Easter Bunny trains to Bangor

on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April. Two days previously No.461 worked light engine north to Whitehead prior to her boiler certificate expiring in late April. The opportunity was taken to use No.461 on the Bunny trains, this her final duty prior to withdrawal for heavy overhaul. A mention must be made of North Down Borough Council for their continuing support in bringing steam trains to Bangor. With the Bangor line track relay scheduled for completion by spring 2002 this should permit once again spirited climbing up Holywood bank.

A very successful charter train operation followed on the evening of 25<sup>th</sup> April to Cultra and return to Belfast hauled by No.171. The Committee is pushing to develop the private hire/corporate market. A policy of affordable pricing and positive promotion on our Web Site is certainly beginning to bring forward the bookings.



**No.461, on her final outing before overhaul, arrives at Bangor with the Easter Bunny train on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2001. (J. Wolsley)**

By early April the Corrib Railtour was well advanced and bookings were very strong for the popular Galway destination. Disaster unfortunately struck as the foot and mouth disease outbreak spread to Ireland. The Southern Irish authorities took a very strong line and as intended participants are aware the Society was prevented from running the railtour as planned. A Steam Enterprise scheduled for April also had to be cancelled at very short notice. The Committee was determined to see if anything could be salvaged in respect of the railtour. NIR were approached at short notice to see if a railtour could be based and operated within Northern Ireland. A positive reaction was received. Intending participants were sounded out and a decision was made to operate over the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May as intended. An attractive programme that included Bangor, Lisburn, Ballymena and Larne on the Saturday, and Portrush and Londonderry on the Sunday was agreed. The railtour, appropriately named the "Belfast and Northern Counties" was blessed by operating on a weekend of glorious sunny weather conditions. The Committee is indebted to the party of over 200 who kept the faith and travelled, mainly from Britain. I think everyone enjoyed themselves. The ambience of the wooden bodied stock certainly assisted. Particular thanks must be made to former Committee member Evan Pamely who drove the railtour forward and to Seamus Scallon, Railway Services Manager, NIR for agreeing to our proposals, and to his staff for keeping the railtour moving over the weekend. A special word must be made to Peter Scott, our Chief Locomotive Engineer for providing a sound but barely run-in No.4, along with

No.85 and No.171. This railtour was Evan Pamely's last as unofficial Operations Officer. He is not lost to the Society but is taking time out to build a new property in Co. Donegal. The Committee appreciates all his efforts over recent years.

The WT tank locomotive had taken her first tentative moves on Company metals on 28<sup>th</sup> April and a number of other trips were organised, one being as late as the evening of Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May. Railtour participants who visited the Whitehead site to observe locomotive preparation and avail of photographic opportunities were offered the added bonus of early evening trips along the Larne line with No.4 and two carriages.



***Peter Scott with NIR and RPSI personnel involved in the running-in trips of No.4, at Carrickfergus. (J. Wolsley)***

On 20<sup>th</sup> May No.171 travelled light engine to Dublin to take up duties there to cover for the withdrawn No.461.

In a bid to develop our core business it was agreed to persist with two Steam and Jazz train arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> June. This market continues to expand. The first train was moderately busy but the second was filled to capacity. A decision has been taken for 2002 to operate both on back-to-back Fridays in June. The thinking being that mid-summer is most appropriate for such operations and one advertising effort only will be required, with the bookings more evenly spread over both dates.

The long awaited reopening of the Bleach Green to Antrim line to the public took place on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June. NIR invited the Society to provide a train to take VIPs from Belfast (GVS) to the opening ceremony at Newtownabbey's new Council Office grounds at the former Mossley Mill on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. This was via Antrim, detraining on return at the new Mossley West station. A series of trains operated for Translink families on 10<sup>th</sup> June. The Society was delighted to be associated with the opening programme. It was great once again to experience the crisp exhaust of a tight, sound No.4 tackling Mossley Bank with gusto.

The arrival of summer saw the introduction a new Working Time Table. Earlier negotiations with the Company bore fruit. For the first time agreed steam 'Q' paths were printed for trains to Portrush and Londonderry. The formal pathing proved very beneficial and the Portrush Flyer was kept moving and arrived and returned from its destination on time. This was the first series of trains to the 'Port' since 1998 (Central Railway relay in 1999 and Portrush branch relay in 2000). No.4 performed faultlessly on 4<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August. All trains were comfortably full as too was the Atlantic Coaster afternoon excursion to Castlerock and back.

Nerves of steel are required when operating any Society train as the public and members are notoriously slow in firming up their travel arrangements. Nothing could be truer as was experienced in the operation of the Steam Enterprise on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Much effort had gone in to securing Cravens coaches from Irish Rail and organising the diesel transfer to and from Belfast. Bookings, however, were very slow coming in and rumours from other sources suggested the train was being cancelled. I must thank the Committee for holding firm as an avalanche of bookings was made in the week prior to the excursion, so ensuring its operation. Irish Rail had been asked to provide five Cravens but presumably for operational reasons sent the entire six-carriage Dublin based Arklow set. This on the day was welcome as the extra carriage gave that little additional space for everyone. I must mention with thanks those Dublin members who manned the bar and provided stewards. An 04:45 start off Dublin is not for the faint hearted. Everybody had a good day out with No.85 performing well but she unfortunately sustained a bout of slipping while ascending the Wellington Bank on the return journey. This did not detract from the overall enjoyment of the day.



**No.4 at Mossley West on the NIR charter. Initially the platform signs read "Mossley" and by climbing the steps on the left one reached Mossley West. Prior to the special trains the depredations of local vandals had been repaired and the whole place had become Mossley West. Due to access problems, it was some months before the station was brought into use. (I.C. Pryce)**

Due to printing delays with the summer Working Time Table the Committee had unfortunately to cancel the intended Atlantic Coast Express to Londonderry scheduled for June. This was because of

insufficient market lead in time. The operation was rescheduled and operated successfully on 30<sup>th</sup> September. An opportunity to organise an afternoon excursion from Londonderry to Coleraine (turn locomotive No.4) and return was arranged. This proved very popular with residents from the North West who filled the train to capacity.

The Committee continued with the Broomstick Belle operation, which ran on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October. Locomotive No.85 performed the duty as No.4's steam heating equipment had yet to be commissioned. This train is proving financially rewarding with the overall loading to around 85% of capacity. The provision this year of on-train children's entertainers has helped enhance this operation.

The Committee is aware that there is a very large untapped market in the Londonderry region. To help satisfy the demand and raise the profile of railways generally in that area a decision was taken to operate Santa Trains out of the Maiden City on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Two Castlerock and return trains were proposed. Unfortunately the schedule proved just too tight for the Company to permit two trains to operate. The one train that did work had the maximum 6 coach rake filled to capacity with 283 passengers. A second train could easily have been filled. With NIR's agreement efforts will be made to secure tweaking of Sunday train schedules so permitting both Company and Society operations to maximise track occupancy between Castlerock/Coleraine and Londonderry.



**No.85 leaves Whitehead on one of her infrequent 2001 outings. (I.C. Pryce)**

The Belfast area Santa Train season to Whitehead has just concluded. Operating on 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December the Committee continued to experiment with running a third late afternoon train to Carrickfergus on the three latter dates. This proved invaluable, taking up the excess demand from the day's earlier full trains. It appears certain that the third train is here to stay. An additional (third train) was organised at four days' notice on behalf of the Sargent Cancer Care Charity for Sick Children on 9<sup>th</sup> December. The Charity was able to organise a party of around 132 at very short notice. I am reliably informed that they will be back next year to fill a train. The party comprised mainly very sick children accompanied by families and close friends. The pleasure and delight on the children's faces made the organising very worthwhile. 2001 has no doubt been the busiest Santa Train season ever with up on

3,200 travelling out of Belfast. Many thanks to all who helped in any way and particularly to Santa Clause for taking the time to visit the Society at a very busy time of year.

As the season closes I must thank everyone who has attended the monthly Belfast Area Operations Committee meetings. Many members have taken on defined roles and this makes life easier for everyone. A particular thanks should be made to Rita and David and everyone else who manned the Dining Car, not forgetting Carol and wee David who particularly assisted with the sales, and Nicola for stocking and manning the Whitehead shop and ordering up presents. I must not forget Wilma Cairns who "mans" our Larne Office. She too has helped to ease the burden for the Operations Committee. A mention also must be made of the NIR footplate crews and Traction Inspectors who, as always, have been a pleasure to work with. Without their enthusiasm nothing would operate.



***Coach cleaning squad at work at Whitehead. (J. Wolsley)***

What does 2002 hold? A new operating agreement with NIR hopefully will be agreed and signed by the time you read this article. One of the terms of agreement is that the Company will provide directly the crews, i.e. the crew will be employed and paid directly by the Company, rather than as has been the case since 1989 when the NIR crews were employed and paid by the Society. This should enable a much-needed NIR led driver-training programme, working to EWS guidelines to be organised in conjunction with the Society. There is also the likelihood that GSWR locomotive No.186 will return to traffic after an absence of 22 years! Work, I am told, is advancing rapidly. The rescheduled Corrib Railtour to the very popular Galway destination should create a lot of interest, not least that this definitely will see together for the last time, for a considerable period, two blue GNR(I) 4-4-0s. "Slieve Gullion's" boiler certificate expires in early July and the locomotive will be retired from traffic for a not unexpected considerable period.

To you the members, friends and general public who have supported the excursions during 2001 the

Committee thanks each of you and we look forward to seeing you again in 2002.

## SOUTHERN OPERATIONS

**Peter Rigney**

The year started as is customary with an Easter special on Good Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> April. The train was well filled as usual, and the only glitch was the crop of frost bursts in coach plumbing, always a risk on the first operation. Park Royal 2423 was worked empty to Mullingar by No.461, where it was shunted into the shed. This was No.461's last Dublin-based revenue earning trip. It is to be hoped that its absence from traffic will be short.

It had been planned to run a "Northern Belle" railtour to exchange No.461 and No.171. However, the foot and mouth regulations meant that this could not be, and the swap went ahead as a light engine move. While the "hit" the RPSI took may seem severe, it was in fact less so than that taken by most other sporting, cultural and voluntary organisations. Like it or not, steam locos attract chasers, and chasers will traipse through farmland.

27<sup>th</sup> May saw our Dublin shuttles, with two trips to Maynooth and one to Greystones.

This was due to PW works on the South Eastern. It was obvious from the levels of patronage that Greystones is the more popular destination.



**No.461 on the turntable at Inchicore. (P. Rigney)**

The Midsummer's Night steam ran on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. All seemed set for a successful operation, which was filled to capacity. However, by Maynooth it became apparent that diner 88 had a serious hot box. The train was split, and the diner shunted into the long siding in Maynooth. After a delay of about 50 minutes, the very full train ran to Mullingar, completing the operation in the normal manner. The big driving wheels on No.171 really made a difference compared to No.461. The diner was subsequently recovered on the Inchicore skid, and brought to Inchicore for attention. A replacement wheel set had to be procured from Whitehead, as the diameter of 88's wheels was larger than the capacity of any lathe in Inchicore's machine shop.

In the absence of 88, a tea serving area was made up in 1383, in time for the "Strawberry Fair" which

ran on 7<sup>th</sup> July. The operation of this train was uneventful to the casual observer, but at Gorey it became apparent that the rear driver's side tender axlebox was carrying about 10 degrees more heat than its counterparts. Things had got worse by Enniscorthy, with an alarming level of heat on the end of the journal.

The crew proposed repairs in the manner specified by the late Inchicore loco inspector, Johnny Maguire; packing the space under the bearing pad with oil-soaked cloths and dousing everything liberally in oil. By the time we reached Wexford, the bearing was running cooler. Our return journey was delayed by a late-running down passenger train, which had lost a door. Despite a 25 minute late departure from Enniscorthy we arrived on time in Connolly that evening, with the bearing running as cool as the rest. The offending axle box continues to be kept under scrutiny.

A planned charter in connection with the Mullingar festival was scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> July, but in the event did not run.

On 11<sup>th</sup> August, our second Rosslare trip ran. This trip was uneventful, save for the presence of a fashion photographer and his crew, who photographed a gaunt young model against the background of the loco at various locations.

Our September shuttles ran again to Greystones and Maynooth, and were reasonably well patronised. 88 rejoined the set after the repaired hot box, only to suffer another. Again the coach was left in Maynooth, but on this occasion it was vandalised, with windows and lights being broken. The unlucky vehicle was moved to Inchicore, where the bogie concerned was removed for examination and repair.



**No.461 at Connolly station with GS&WR coach 1142 and State Coach 351. (P. Rigney)**

It is always pleasant to get repeat business. This year, our two charters were repeats of 2000 contracts. On 3<sup>rd</sup> September, the day after the shuttles, we ran an incentive group charter to Greystones and back. This was a very convenient day, with a 13:00 return to Connolly. The loco then brought the 5-coach train (1916, 1463, 1143, and 351) to Heuston, from which 351 was hauled by pilot to its home in Inchicore.

On 14<sup>th</sup> October, we ran three packed return trains between Leixlip and Enfield, running round in

Clonsilla. The increased flexibility of the double track to Maynooth is apparent in running a service like this, where one now co-exists with a busy Saturday service to Maynooth.

A considerable amount of effort this year has gone into promoting State Coach 351. Part of our strategy with coach 351 is to ensure the maximum visibility of the vehicle. This allows us to showcase a world-class restoration job, which in turn highlights the leading role of the Society in the railway heritage scene. This approach was vindicated by the award of first prize to the Society for the restoration project in the Heritage Railway Association's biennial Carriage and Wagon competition. Most of the opportunities for RPSI members and the public to see this vehicle will not involve a loco in steam. There will be further opportunities for Society members to see this coach in 2002.

As part of this strategy, a two-week exhibition of 351 was arranged in November. Our thanks are due to Green Property for sponsorship of this project. 351 was hauled to Pearse station in the company of restored TPO 2977, which acted as a ticket-selling and display area. Our thanks are due to the members who were on hand over the two weeks to staff the exhibition.



***TPO No.2971 at Inchicore, with two withdrawn "A" class locos in the background. (P. Rigney)***

Our sole film this year was a television drama called "Cake", which involved moving 1463 to Inchicore for a day in mid July. This film was being shot digitally, so a large green sheet was hung outside the coach window, with the passing countryside scenes being taken from stock and added in post-production. Application of this technology would have cost us a day's work if it had been used in the Michael Collins film.

The original Santa train plan was for two Sunday operations on 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December, but the Inchicore Sports and Social Club chartered a train, thus enabling an additional day's operation on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>. The more intensive suburban service on a Saturday only allows for 2 paths. The 3 days operation was a success, with suitable attendant publicity in the national newspapers. The operating efficiency of these operations was enhanced by two innovations: the new public address system allows an announcement of imminent arrival to be made, thus facilitating quicker detraining, while an individual allocation of seats, combined with station posters marking out roughly where each coach

will arrive allows for much quicker entraining, and for more seats to be sold. These trains are our most successful, and normally fill by the end of October without any advertisement.

During the year, a consultative process was undertaken by the Department of Public enterprise in connection with the preparation of a new Rail Safety Bill. The RPSI has been involved in representations to the Department both on its own and in conjunction with other heritage operators. The Bill will impose on all railway undertakings the duty to submit a safety case. Work has commenced on this. The Bill was published on 20<sup>th</sup> December, and contains no surprises from our point of view. It is worthy of note that the proposed Rail Safety Advisory Council will have one seat allocated for heritage operators. This piece of legislation will govern our operations for the foreseeable future. It will come before the Oireachtas in the next session, and assuming a general election is not called in the interim, will be enacted before the summer recess. We then have six months to prepare a safety case.

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## COACH MAINTENANCE

**Peter Rigney**

The shed in Inchicore which houses 351 has space for another coach. This means that work that would normally have to go to Mullingar can be undertaken in Dublin.

Work undertaken before the start of the season was as follows:

**2421:** Two gangway tunnels replaced.

**1416:** One gangway tunnel replaced, some panel replacement, full repaint including roof.

**88:** Attention to springs, partial repaint, chairs re-upholstered.

The following work was undertaken in Heuston during the season:

A train public address system has been fitted. Work commenced in the summer, and the system was commissioned on the Santa trips. This work has been undertaken by Charles McDonnell and Donal Murphy and represents an improvement in passenger convenience and safety. Other work of this nature has been the fitting of lights in gangway tunnels, which is not yet complete, although each pair of gangways now has a light.

1916 also had its share of attention and in addition to being re-upholstered, a new generator set was fitted.

In Mullingar, work proceeds on 2423, and the stripping down is now complete. It is hoped to fit this coach with a brake compartment and a wheelchair-accessible toilet.

88 is now in Inchicore, and repairs to the vandal damage are under way. The entire coach is being re-glazed with safety glass, and new window rubbers fitted to replace the old ones, which are perished. The opportunity will also be taken to entirely repaint the exterior, having stripped it back to bare metal. This, it is hoped, will overcome the problems which have plagued this coach, i.e. large areas of paint bubbling and falling off, exposing a previous brown livery.

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## WHITEHEAD SITE REPORT

**Dermot Mackie**

With No.171 and the Santa train 'trapped' in Belfast because of a rock fall, we got the opportunity, in the New Year, to do a monster shunt to bring out all of the material for scrapping to more accessible positions. The first candidate was the laminate body of 255 which, with the help of the JCB and Trevor Mounstephen and Alan McRobert, was soon stripped of its aluminium shell and the wooden body frame reduced to firewood. The metal raised £90 as scrap while Philip and Tim Lockett turned the latter into a good bonfire in early February.

The lack of operations at this time of year gave us an ideal chance to dig out and extend the concrete

apron in front of the coal-bunker, which had become a shovel driver's nightmare. We also helped Johnny Glendinning and Tony Ragg to pull through the main electricity supply cable for the loco workshop. This supply now feeds both the overhead crane and the wheel lathe. The first Saturday in March almost emptied the carriage shed for a charity charter so with a good squad, including John Wolsley and Robin Morton, we laid 12 cubic metres of concrete down the centre road. Later that month the weather was dry and I was able to replace the old skylights in number two shed road. This transformed a dark and dingy corner.

In April the usual helpers, plus Thomas Charters and Rob Davison, were on hand to help the loco department to lift No.186's frame off its wheels and to move it all into the workshop. Next, came a massive scrap drive using a container supplied by Paul Newell which, after transport costs, still managed to raise £60. This, plus a spray of weed killer, meant that the site was looking spruce for the Friday Open Day just before the B&NC Tour.



*A gang of seven, at least one of whom has been enticed away from locomotive work, prepares to enhance the floor of the Carriage shed. (J. Wolsley)*

May, and the longer evenings, meant we could start our Tuesday night summer work programme. This year we had set ourselves the target of returning the Carlow diesel to operational use. Initially we replaced the old brake blocks with new ones cast in the RPSI foundry and then we set about looking at the control mechanism on the gear box. Trevor Wood gave us crucial guidance here and the parts were stripped, cleaned and reset. The petrol driven donkey engine, which drives a pump for compressed air to start the diesel engine, had carburettor problems, which were sorted out by John Sloan. Peter Scott made crucial modifications to the petrol tank and an oil return pipe. The gearbox oil was changed to

one of a higher viscosity and the unit is now used successfully on assorted shunting duties. Irwin Pryce has done a great job of painting the inside and outside of the cab and Gordon Buick has skilfully repaired the wooden floor.

In June with the help of new recruit, Mark Buchanan, we made a short temporary siding at the back of the site to hold coach bogies awaiting repairs. Later in June we installed reconditioned bogies on coach 91, using the heavy lift area, but had to return to one of the sets in July to replace the springs which were too weak for the job. However, all was finished in time for the Portrush Flyer season. On one trip a small group, including Jeff Spencer, Donal Murphy and myself did a much needed 'tidy up' of the jungle which had grown up in the Coleraine turntable pit.



*Perhaps already weakened during their service with NIR, the former Antrim level crossing gates did not emerge unscathed from a tidying-up operation at Whitehead. (J. Wolsley)*

August saw the usual suspects, and the welcome return of John Lockett, tackling much needed sleeper and chair replacement in the point crossing of the sidings between the workshop and carriage sheds. A further 5 crossing timbers were also replaced with 10 interlaced concrete sleepers outside the carriage shed in time for the Broomstick Belle at Halloween. A Saturday in November was spent checking track before the Santa season and, in the middle of the month, we were able to bring the last of the NCC style crossing gates by road from Antrim to Whitehead. We would plan to set them up in 2002 so if you have any bright ideas about a possible location, the work gang would like to hear from you. We can also offer you track maintenance that will work your muscles as well as your brain. When you add to that a load of concrete sleepers expected from NIR and you would still like to try exercise in the fresh air with good craic why not join us - it's as good as a gym and it's FREE!!

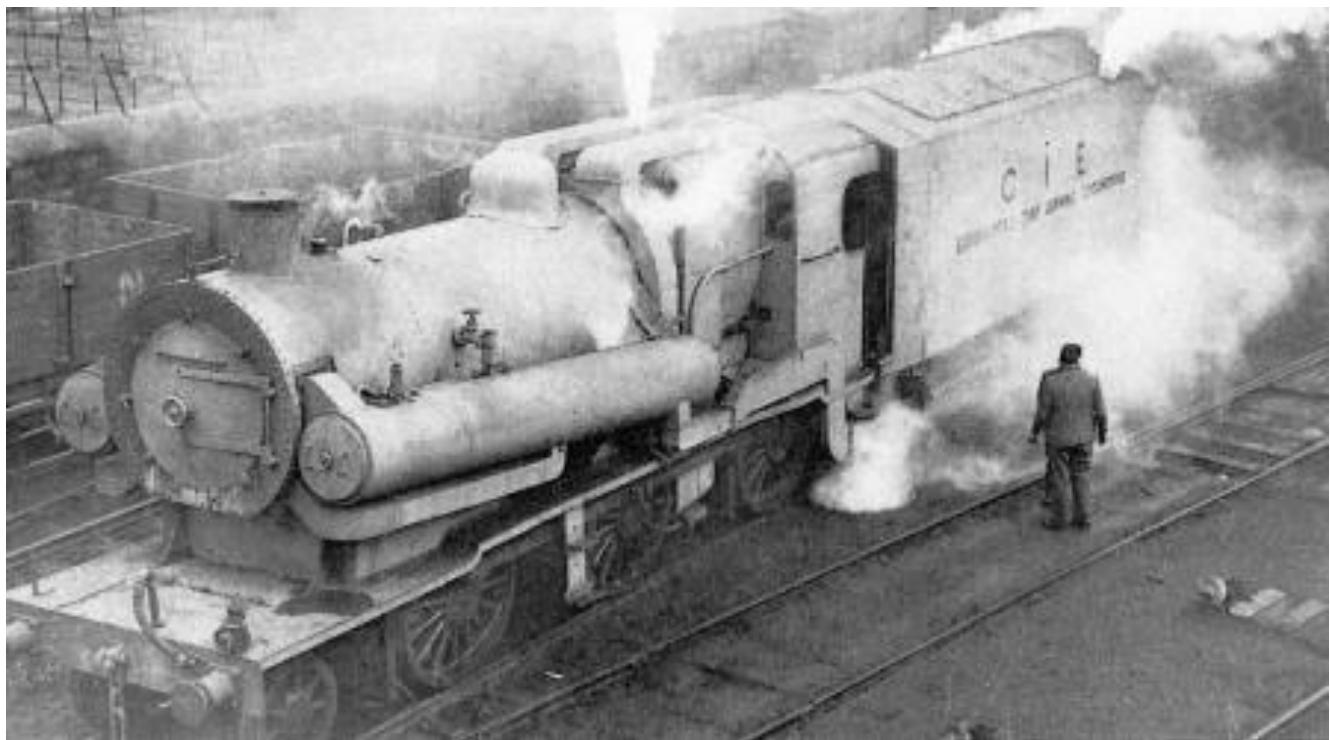
## SUNSET OF STEAM ON CIÉ (Part 1)

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Born in 1882, Oliver V.S. Bulleid, after serving for some years under Nigel Gresley on the London & North Eastern Railway, had been appointed Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Southern Railway in 1937. On his retirement in 1949 from British Railways Southern Region, as it had then become, he was appointed Consulting Engineer to Córas Iompair Éireann and, at the age of almost 70, their CME in 1951.

He was obviously gifted with powers of persuasion since, in addition to producing what was undoubtedly an “Austerity” 0-6-0, he managed during wartime to convince the Southern Railway management that their system, already much electrified, required over 100 Pacifics of a hitherto untried design. Whilst their boilers were excellent steam-producers, other aspects of these engines gave many problems, with the result that after nationalisation most were rebuilt into a more conventional form.

Having got away with the Pacifics, Bulleid then proceeded with what he perceived to be the next stage in the development of the steam locomotive, i.e. the “Leader” class. In its wheel arrangement this was a forerunner of the now common two-bogie Co-Co diesel locomotive, except that its bogies were powered by several small steam engines. This was alright in itself but the rest of the locomotive was all wrong: the boiler was offset, the loco requiring ballast on the opposite side, and the fireman was required to work in the middle of the locomotive in unbearable heat. The thing was also of gigantic proportions compared to the engines it was intended to replace. The prototype having produced less than impressive results in service, the project was killed off after BR took control.



*The experimental locomotive, K3 class 2-6-0 No.356. The remarkable object on the right appears to be a boiler with a firebox at each end and may well have been part of the experimental process.  
(C.P. Friel Collection)*

When he joined CIÉ Bulleid revived his brain-child. An incentive was Ireland’s abundant resources of turf (peat). A Coey inside-cylinder 2-6-0, No.356 of 1907, was used as a test-bed which, in addition to sundry other attachments, trailed an extra tender carrying a diesel-powered compressor to create draught. In 1954 this machine’s eventual excursion on to the Cork main line ended in failure.

Nothing daunted, Bulleid managed to persuade the CIÉ authorities to allow him to proceed with an Irish version of his ill-fated "Leader". This was designed to be stoker-fed with turf, with potential conversion to oil-firing which in those pre-OPEC days may have seemed attractive. There are no records as to what kind of turf the designer had in mind but, if raw turf was intended, its appetite for this must have been considerable. A prototype was produced in 1957 and, within its limitations, performed reasonably well but had the same drawbacks as the "Leader" and, although smaller at a mere 60 ft long, was still enormous when compared to the locomotives which it was to replace on secondary duties.

By the middle 1950s CIÉ, in advance of BR, had decided to go down the diesel-electric road. Given their predominantly ancient steam stock, they had little choice. Despite this, Bulleid's Turf/Oil burning machine - proposed to be multiplied to 50-70 units - was obviously still considered to be among their future types of motive power. However, Bulleid finally retired in 1958; the turf-burner was never tried with oil-firing and languished around Inchicore until it was finally broken up in 1965.

The report which is reproduced below, prepared by the CIÉ Running Superintendent for the information of the CME (Bulleid) in September/October 1954, should be read in the context of the above. By 1955 diesel railcars had already taken over several former steam workings, and the "A" and "C" class diesel-electrics, successful for the time being, were employed on main- and branch-line workings respectively. On top of this, the creation of the Great Northern Railway Board in 1958 resulted in CIÉ acquiring numerous well-maintained GNR locomotives which, of course, had not been considered in the 1954 report. This meant that several of the CIÉ classes originally recommended for retention could then be scrapped.



***Bulleid's Turf-Burner at Inchicore. (C.P. Friel Collection)***

On reading the 1954 report it is obvious that the first D/E locos ("A" class) were intended to replace steam on the principal main-line duties and appear to have done so successfully. At that transitional stage it was not known to what extent intensive rostering could be put into effect and there was concern as to what locos would be available for all sorts of other duties such as special passenger, overload

goods and, not least, cattle and beet special workings. Whilst all of the rest have dwindled away, much of the special passenger traffic still remains. Very apparent in the report is a situation of "horses for courses", whereby the retention of various steam classes was recommended on the basis that they were the only locos which combined the power and axle-loading to work the traffic then on offer over certain routes.

In their early years the Crossley-engined "A" & "C" classes represented an improvement on the steam locos they replaced, although it is debatable whether the expense of the feeble "C" class was worthwhile as compared to ancient steam engines which must long since have been depreciated to zero in the accounts. Taking everything into consideration, it is somewhat surprising that CIÉ tried out English D/Es (did Bulleid have a hand in that as well?) rather than going direct to General Motors whose "B" class Bo-Bos turned out to be reliable all-purpose machines which, re-engined, are in regular use to this day. Despite a later start, British Railways (or perhaps more accurately, their suppliers) apparently learned little from this and put into service all sorts of unsatisfactory designs.



**No.801 "Macha", with burned smokebox door, on the 10:30am from Kingsbridge to Cork and Kerry. This train will divide at Mallow, the Killarney and Tralee portion probably being worked forward by a 321 class 4-4-0. Few CIÉ engines carried a lamp iron on the smokebox but that on 801 was for the headboard of the short-lived Belfast - Dublin - Cork Enterprise. (Kelland Collection)**

At the time of the report, it was apparently assumed that Turf/Oil burners would begin to be produced within about 6 years to replace conventional steam locos on secondary duties, although this turned out to be a complete non-event. However, in 1954, all that was in the future and this article will deal with the proposals in relation to the principal classes involved in main line passenger work, as these were the first to be considered for replacement. Those who have kept an eye on such matters will be aware of the rapid extinction on CIÉ - contrary to the report's recommendations - of various competent classes of 4-4-0, due, no doubt, to the unexpected acquisition from the GNR of similar engines in better condition. How they employed their acquisitions is a story for another day.

*[Although, as was common on CIÉ, the report refers to each class by its "first-of-class" number, the official class designations have been added for the sake of completeness - Ed.]*

The report begins:

- (1) What is an economic proposition from the point of view of the CME?
- (2) What is necessary from an operational point of view?

It has been suggested in the past that all that is necessary will be to retain approximately 70 of the existing steam locomotives and that these 70 should be of the standard goods type. This is of course an attractive line of thought, because the standard goods type represents the largest numbers per class, although there is not a very high degree of standardisation between one locomotive and another. It has also the advantage that it will be possible to carry out general repairs in the existing Limerick loco shops, thus releasing the Inchicore shops for the diesel programme. The Limerick shops cannot, of course, deal with heavier engine classes at the moment.

It is my opinion, however, that arrangements will have to be made to maintain in service quite a number of engines of the larger classes for goods working. A decision to retain standard goods engines only would adversely affect the working of cattle and beet specials during the period when diesel electric locomotives are being introduced and slow up goods services which, in turn, would retard passenger working, more particularly on single line sections.



*No.500 departs from Kingsbridge with a passenger train in 1949. (Kelland Collection)*

Assuming that all of the D/E units are in service within 2½ years from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1955, and that the first of the new turf oil locomotives will not be available for a period of six years from the same date, the demand for existing steam engines - whilst reducing sharply during the next 2½ years, will continue for at least six years, probably more. In terms of service life that will represent, under current conditions, two general repair stages but I accept Mr Collins's definition of 1½ repair stages because one full general repair followed by an intermediate repair at a later stage would probably enable the engine to work out its service life economically. I would have no hesitation in agreeing to scrap the 800 class immediately the 1,200 hp D/E units enter service. I would not, however, suggest scrapping the 500 class and 400 class directly they are replaced on passenger services. Instead, I would suggest that

they be relegated to main line goods working and thereafter to cattle special work, etc., until withdrawal at the expiry of their service life. They cannot be retained for the 6-year period because they are not interchangeable with other sections as their axle-load and clearances limit their use.

For these reasons I feel that we must arrive at a decision to retain a considerable number of the larger goods engines and on the attached document I have indicated those which should be maintained from an operational point of view.

In putting forward the detailed proposals for each class I have the following in mind:

- (1) During the introductory stages of diesel electric traction the most economic use cannot be made of a mixed stock of diesel and steam locomotives.
- (2) I understand from a telephone conversation that I had with you some time ago that it is your desire that the first diesel electric locomotives delivered - I think you mentioned the first 20 - should be confined to the Dublin-Cork service. That will, of course, release the 800, 500 and 400 class engines as their mileage expires.

In this connection I do not think that any difficulty will arise in working trains to Galway, Sligo and Westport as the numbers of diesel electric locomotives increases because they can still be based on Inchicore which, I think, is your desire. If the new locomotives are too strictly zoned it will not be possible to release engines off other sections in proportion to D/E replacement.



*No.401, in ex-works condition in green livery, at Inchicore in 1949. Readily distinguishable from other members of the class by her different cab side-sheet with small cut-out and high handrail. (Real Photographs)*

- (3) In considering the number of steam locomotives which will have to be retained over the next 6 years at least, it will not be possible to strictly relate this number to the new turf oil locomotives because it is anticipated that the turf oil locomotives will provide a much greater efficiency than the existing locomotives. Therefore, a larger number of the present locomotives will have to be retained than envisaged in the final programme.
- (4) The working of many of the smaller branch lines and of the Dublin South-Eastern service will have to be performed by standard goods engines to release, where possible, odd uneconomic tank

classes and other classes it seems desirable to scrap.

- (5) The delivery of the new diesel electric locomotives will not affect to any marked degree the working of the 1955-56 beet season, which will need the customary 50/60 locomotives on and above the normal service which will, during that period, be only partly worked by the diesel electric locomotives.
- (6) I am not taking into account the fact that the company may decide to add to the number of diesel electric locomotives purchased for ordinary day to day special traffic, a matter which is under review as you are aware.
- (7) I am not aware of what the proposed output of general repaired engines from the Limerick Shops will be but, as per conversation with Mr Collins, I suggest that if any difficulty should arise at the end of this year, when all general repairs at Inchicore are discontinued, it might be feasible to repair the larger classes of locomotive in the running shed and Shops at Inchicore and Cork, which have adequate crane equipment to lift the heaviest engines, and if the Works at Inchicore could undertake such work as renewal of axleboxes, connecting rods and outside bushes, etc., the work of carrying out quite extensive repairs could be performed expeditiously in these Shops for some years.

It would also seem desirable that what constitutes a general repair should be revised so that no more work should be carried out on the steam engines than is necessary to maintain them in service, bearing in mind that progressively these locomotives will be relegated to goods traffic and later to special traffic as soon as tentative agreement can be reached on the classes of engine which can be economically maintained from your point of view.

Once tentative agreement can be reached regarding the locomotives which it seems desirable to retain, a quick check can be made of special life-limiting parts, such as boilers and tyres, to ascertain how far existing stocks will economically cover the repairs anticipated for approximately 7 years.

**800 class:** It is anticipated that by May next (1955) the mileage will be as follows:

(B1a)	800	7,000
(3 engines)	801	45,000
	802	125,000

As these engines become due for withdrawal they may be scrapped. I am not recommending the withdrawal of locos 800 and 801 immediately the D/E units come into service because undoubtedly the manufacturers will need a trial period and two engines of this class can be very usefully employed on Sunday special work. If they have not completed their mileage by the end of September the question of withdrawing them against direct D/E units can be reconsidered.

**500 class:** By May next year loco 500 will have run, I estimate, 100,000 miles. It can be withdrawn as soon as its condition dictates the necessity to withdraw it.

(B1)  
(3 engines) Loco 501 will come from Shops shortly and it can operate goods services when D/E units have displaced it off passenger services, after which it can be relegated to main line specials such as cattle trains. Its life will be approximately 2½ years.

Loco 502 has a small mileage and has an approximate life of 2 years from October. It may be withdrawn in the same circumstances as Loco 501.

**400 class:** Loco 401 has a small mileage and when displaced by D/E units will revert to Goods and Passenger specials during next summer. It will have a life of approximately 2 years and can finish its service life on cattle trains, overload specials, etc. No further general repair required.

Loco 402 may be worked to a similar programme. No further general repair required.

Loco 403 recently received a minor overhaul and may be allowed to work out its mileage. No further general repair required.

Loco 405 will probably be withdrawn in a couple of months when it has completed its life on Goods working.

Loco 407 will probably be withdrawn in a couple of months when it has completed its life on Goods working. Whilst their withdrawal is a little premature I do not feel that I could commend a further general repair.

Loco 406 (Caprotti), I estimate, will have a mileage of approximately 100,000 by May next and if still in service can revert to Goods and Special working. No further general repair required.

Loco 409, recently ex-Shops, may expend its service life on Passenger specials and then Goods and livestock. Estimated life of approximately 2½ years. No further general repair required.

It will be obvious from the above that the imminent arrival of the A class diesel-electric locomotives meant that what had hitherto been CIÉ's front-line steam locomotives had a maximum life expectancy of about 2½ years, during which period their duties would be gradually downgraded. The recommendations relating to other passenger classes and all of the goods and suburban locomotives will be dealt with in Part 2 of this article.

#### 4-6-0 CLASSES ON CIÉ

W.T. Scott

##### 800 class

The 800s were, to misquote Churchill's reference to Russia, a mystery, an enigma and a riddle all rolled together. The mystery is why they were built at all. The facile explanation is that their building was to overcome double- or triple-heading out of Cork, but a little research shows that few trains out of Cork were beyond the capacity of a modern two-cylinder 4-6-0 such as the LMS Black 5. The start out of Inverness and the subsequent climb to Slochd Summit was 22 miles of hard slog, most of it between 1:60 and 1:70 - far more than Cork yet the Black 5s could handle 270 tons over this if required.

The enigma of the 800s was to estimate how good they really were; there was nothing of this power or weight in Ireland to compare them with, so one has to look further. In size and main dimensions the engines were very similar to the LMS Royal Scots and the SR Lord Nelsons, both of which types could handle with ease trains of over 450 tons and even tackle much heavier loads. One note by O.S. Nock survives of 800 taking 450 tons out of Cork, but time was lost between Mallow and Limerick Junction due to poor steaming, though good work was done on the favourable stretch from Maryborough to Dublin. Trains of this weight were few on CIÉ and most of the 800's running was done with trains of 300 tons or less - even the late Drew Donaldson, who tracked the Cork line assiduously, admitted that it was difficult to find performances consonant with their size. The verdict on their performances must be the canny Scottish one of "Not proven".

The riddle of the 800s is their weight and draughting. Comparing once again with the Scots and Nelsons, the former with  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " frames weighed 85 tons, the latter with 1" frames  $83\frac{1}{2}$  tons, but the 800 with massively thick  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " frames only 84 tons. A friend on an unofficial visit prowl round Inchicore saw an 800 being weighed and coming out at about 90 tons, with a maximum axle load, quickly adjusted, of 23 tons.



**No.800 at Cork in 1949. Although the boiler was parallel, its cladding was tapered. The graceful lines were somewhat marred by the outside rodding to the regulator from the duplicating levers in the cab. One might have expected the rodding to have been on the driver's side, resulting in less potential slack in the linkage. (Sean Kennedy)**

The engines had a twin blast pipe and a double chimney, with the inside cylinder exhausting through the forward blast pipe and the outside cylinders through the rear one. This was an arrangement never, to my knowledge, used anywhere else and may not have been totally successful as single chimneys were tried on the engines in the 1950s.

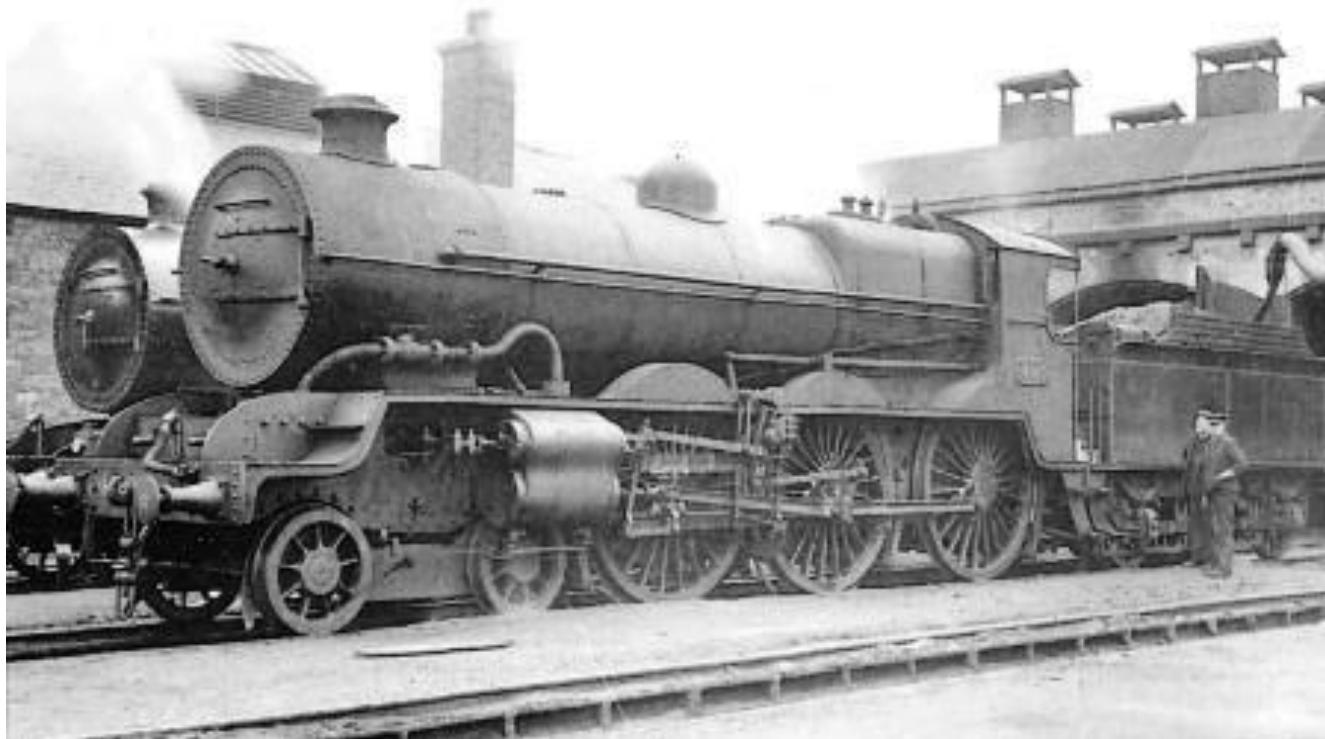
One field in which the 800s were undoubtedly winners was that of publicity; they were used on timetable covers, posters and other types of advertising literature. Drew Donaldson constructed a model of 801 specially for exhibition in Dublin (it is now in the Transport Museum at Cultra). The centenary of the GS&WR was another opportunity to display the class on special trains with radio communication from the footplate. The 800s earned more free publicity for the GSR and CIÉ than any other form of advertising and this culminated in their appearance at Amiens Street to work the short-lived Belfast - Dublin - Cork Enterprise between the latter two cities. Bulleid was not among their fans and is reputed on his first sighting of one to have said, "Scrap it!" One story, possibly apocryphal, concludes the tale. The CME's house at Inchicore overlooked the line and Bredin's maid took an interest in the trains. On sighting the Down Mail she is said to have rushed in to her master shouting, "Maeve's flying up the Gullet and she has no pilot!" Sadly, Bredin's reply is not recorded. Despite Bulleid's view, the favourable publicity gained by the 800s was of more value to the railway than their actual performance.

#### **400 class**

The 400 class started life as a 4-cylinder 4-6-0, the brainchild of E.A. Watson who came from Swindon as Works Manager in 1911 and succeeded Maunsell as Locomotive Superintendent in 1914. Watson

was an unpopular and difficult man to work with and inclined, as Maunsell commented, "to think that all Swindon geese were swans". When Maunsell left to go to the SECR Watson stopped work on the 341 class of large 4-4-0 and instead started work on a 4-cylinder 4-6-0, No.400. Joynt, the Chief Draughtsman, thought the engine totally unsuitable for the GS&WR.

No.400 appeared in 1916 and, due to shortage of supplies during World War I, soldiered on alone, handicapped by problems with superheater elements and fractured steam pipes, until 401, 402 and 406, similar though heavier, appeared in 1921. 403-405 and 407-409 were delivered in October 1922. The controversy which had begun in 1916 with No.400 now appeared in a different guise - 407-409 were saturated engines! The value of superheating had been proved on most lines over the previous ten years so why Inchicore should then want three saturated types will probably never be satisfactorily resolved. The saturated engines, which burned more coal, were used as little as possible and by 1925 were fitted with superheated boilers.



**No.407 in original 4-cylinder condition at Inchicore in 1936. (Loco & General)**

The extent of the failure of the 4-cylinder type was shown by an edict in 1926 that money was to be found for their rapid conversion to 2-cylinder types. 402 was converted in 1927 and 401 and 406 in 1930. 405, 403, 404 and 407 received a less expensive conversion in the 1930s, using the original wheels and frames. A 26" piston stroke was achieved by using deeply recessed ends on the original 28" stroke cylinders. These four engines again were a compromise and never reckoned as good as the earlier full conversion. Bazin, who succeeded Watson, had had enough of the 4-cylinder engines and instituted the rebuilding. 400, 404 and 408 were broken up as four-cylinder engines.

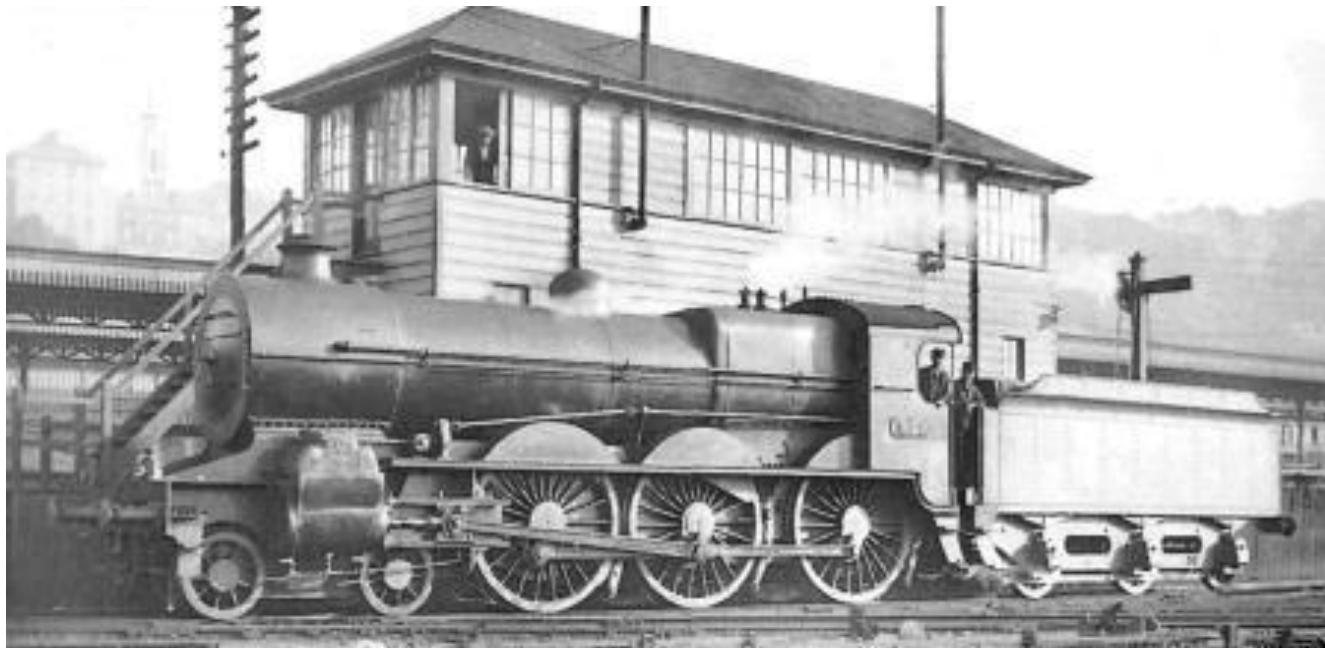
The 2-cylinder engines were certainly an improvement on the originals. Their trains were neither fast nor heavy and they coped, but their scrapping in the 1950s was fair on the basis of their limited route availability. They could and did go to Killarney on the Radio Train and would have been accepted for the Midland though they never worked there. Their looks, especially with the K class boiler, suggested

power but in fact they rarely did anything that a GNR S, V or Vs class could not have done with more economy.

One story, similar but diametrically opposite to the 800 one, concerned the 4-cylinder type. When 400 appeared, stories were told of her power and speed but a more likely one was that of Watson at Inchicore listening as 400 struggled up the Gullet and, according to Bob Clements, saying, "She will, she won't", in time with each exhaust beat as she laboured past.

### 500 class

The 500s were the only 4-6-0 class which the GS&WR got totally right. They were intended as goods/mixed traffic engines, with a 5'8½" wheel but a thoroughly modern front end - 10" piston valves, 1½" lap and 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" travel provided a fast and free-steaming engine. Bazin here revealed his Doncaster training as the (English) GNR K3 2-6-0s had similar valve events. Sadly, there were only three of the 500s; five would have covered the Cork line well while the "A" class diesels were made to work. The tone of the above CIÉ report suggests less of a hurry to get rid of the 500s than the other classes. One sign of a good engine is that there is little to say about it and over their 30 years of life the 500s worked without problems on all trains. Conservatism in the matter of wheel size kept them off the Enterprise and they were rarely used on the Mails, which was a shame as they were the type of engine the GSR should have been building.



*Seen here at Cork around 1950, No.406 was one of the three of her class rebuilt with Caprotti valve gear. The others were 401 and 402, the former being converted back to Walschaert's motion in 1949. (Kelland Collection)*

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### BALLAST WAGONS

**Peter Swift**

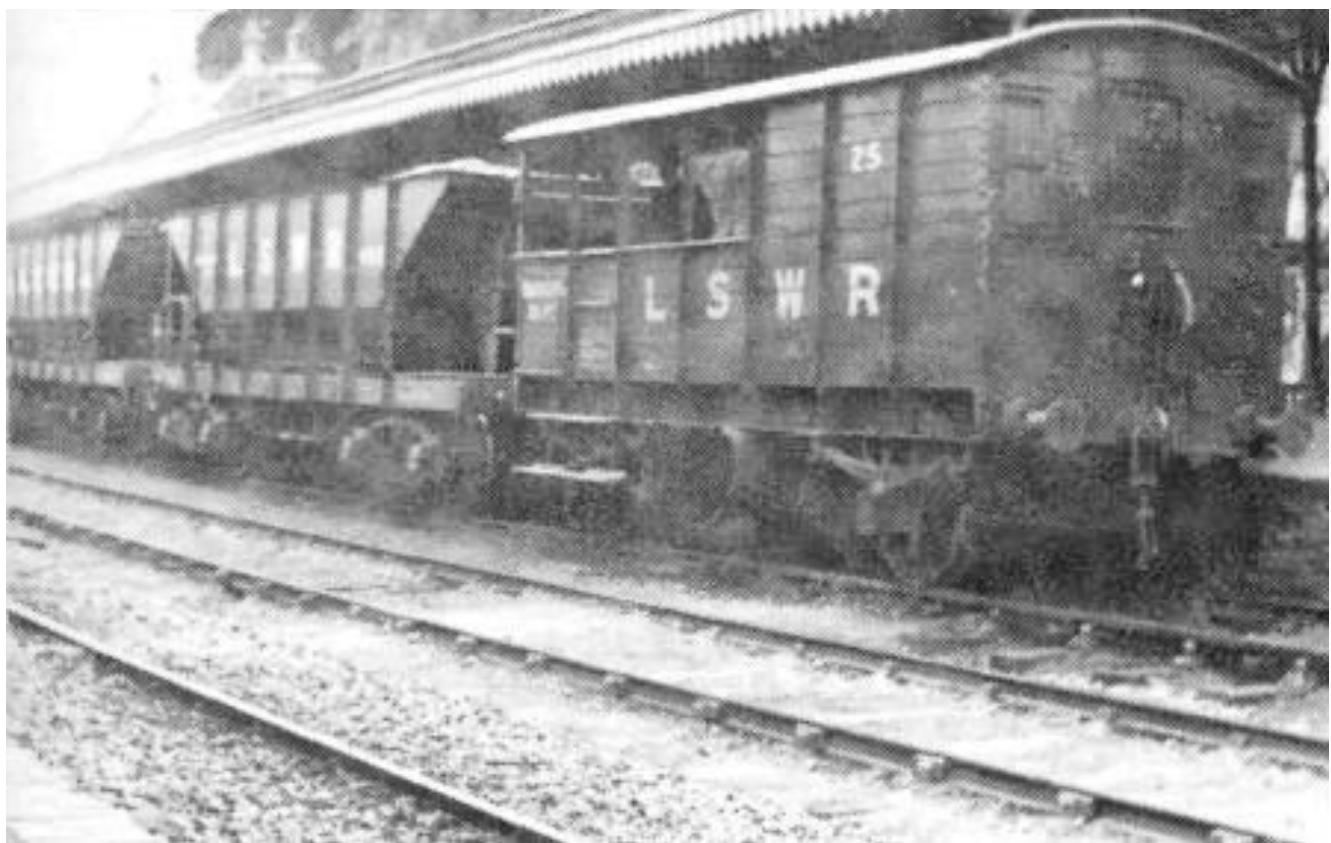
I was interested to read the article "Boot & Ballast" in the last issue of Five Foot Three as it confirmed my impression, on seeing three bogie ballast hoppers at York Road in May 1991, that they were ex-Southern Railway wagons.

The origin of the design goes back to 1903, when the London & South Western Railway bought sixteen 40-ton centre discharge bogie ballast wagons from G&R Turner of Birmingham, to bring granite ballast from the railway's own quarry at Meldon, on the north side of Dartmoor. Four more wagons were bought in 1911. These wagons, LSWR 488-503 and 505-508, became SR 61892-61911 and lasted until

about 1960. I enclose a copy of a photograph from South Western Circular (the quarterly journal of the South Western Circle, dealing in matters LSWR) for January 1978, which shows a ballast train at Barnstaple Junction in LSWR days. Our printer misread the Editor's writing, so the photo is captioned "Belfast Train at Barnstaple Junction". Was he trying to predict the future of the wagons?

The Southern Railway developed the design, to discharge outside the rails as well as between. 25 wagons (62005-29) were bought from Metro Cammell of Birmingham in 1928, followed by 25 more (62033-57) in 1937. The 1928 wagons have discharge wheels at one end only, while the 1937 ones have them at both ends. These wagons all ran on diamond frame bogies. In 1947 the Southern bought 20 more wagons (62058-77), on cast steel bogies. The design was further extended in BR days with the Walruses, Sealions and Seacows, many of which are still in front line ballast duties on Railtrack.

Your photographs appear to show two 1928 wagons (the outer ends of the body have a section of vertical plating at the top) with a 1937 wagon in the middle. I assume that the comments about discharge in the article relate to malfunction, not design. [Correct. - Ed.] The roller bearings were presumably fitted when the wagons were re-gauged, and the strengthening ribs along the body sides are a recent addition. Does anyone know the original numbers of these wagons? The SR cast numberplates (on the left hand end of the solebar) have gone.



*In this strangely captioned photo the SR ballast wagons stand with a backdrop not unlike Waterford! (Courtesy South Western Circle)*

#### **SLIP CARRIAGE OPERATIONS ON THE BCDR**

**Brian McDonald**

In 1902 Donaghadee Golf Club wrote to the Belfast and County Down Railway to ask them to run a Golfers' Express to their town, similar to that which had been operating to Newcastle since the autumn of 1892. For operational and economic reasons it was not possible for the company to agree to the request. Instead they offered to provide a slip carriage. This would be attached to the rear of the

Golfers' Express which left Belfast each Saturday at 12:01. The carriage would be slipped at Comber from where it would be taken on to Donaghadee.

Slipping was the name given to the practice of detaching passenger carriages from a moving train without stopping it or reducing its speed. The first slip carriages were introduced on the Brighton Railway in England in 1858. It wasn't until 1895 that the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway introduced them into Ireland. Within a few years they were operating on all the main Irish railways.

Slip carriages were attached to a passenger train by means of special couplings. It was a simple operation for the guard in the slip portion to uncouple from the train and to bring the carriages under his control safely into the station. Special automatic valves prevented the vacuum brakes from operating when the train was divided and bringing both parts to a stop.

The BCDR began operating its slip carriage, a converted third class brake, in November 1902. After being slipped at Comber it departed the junction at 12:15 behind the engine off the 10:35 train from Belfast. This arrived in Donaghadee at 11:30. The engine returned to Comber immediately to collect the slip. From there it ran back non-stop to Donaghadee which was reached at 12:40. The carriage later returned to Belfast as part of an empty stock working which left Donaghadee at 15:25 and arrived back in the City at 16:22.

The new service soon became very popular and the BCDR were often slipping as many as six carriages at Comber. The third class brake remained the only carriage specially adapted to perform the slipping operation. If more than six carriages were to go to Donaghadee then the express had to stop at Comber and detach them in the normal way.



**BCDR 4-4-2T No.12 passes Neill's Hill Halt on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1920. While the 12:12pm train referred to in the text was still in the timetable after WW2, the information with this picture suggests that this train is the 12:20 to Newtownards. It seems rather strange to run two trains so close together over the same route. (Ken Nunn Collection/LCGB)**

Strict rules and regulations governed the slipping of the carriages. Before the train left Belfast the guard of the Newcastle portion had to ensure that the normal tailboard or lamp was placed on the rear of the last carriage of his train. Along with the Donaghadee guard he had to make sure that the correct signals were attached to the rear of the slip portion. These consisted of two tailboards, one red and one white,

placed side by side with the red to the left. In the unlikely event of carriages being slipped at night then similar coloured tail lamps were to be provided.

The guards had also to make sure that the slipping apparatus was in working order and that the carriages were attached correctly to the main train. The Donaghadee guard had to ensure that the controls in the slip carriage, a hand brake and a vacuum brake, were also working properly. If there was any problem or defect with the slipping apparatus or brakes then the train had to stop at Comber and detach the carriages in the normal way. If there was permanent way work near Comber or the weather was especially bad so as to make slipping dangerous then the stationmaster could order the express to stop by keeping the signals at danger.

On approaching Comber the guard of the Newcastle portion had to check that the signals were clear for the train to proceed and that the train was running at its normal speed. If all was well then he uncoupled the slip carriages and signalled to the guard in the rear portion that the uncoupling had taken place. This procedure was different from that carried out on most railways where the guard in the slip carriage was normally responsible for the uncoupling.

Marker posts were provided at the side of the tracks to help the guard to judge when to slip. However, he was instructed to exercise great care as to the exact time of uncoupling having regard to the number of carriages to be detached, the gradient of the line, the weather and the state of the track. Before slipping, the Newcastle guard had also to disconnect the brake pipes and check that the automatic valves had worked and that the brake was not being applied to the train.

Once the guard of the Donaghadee portion knew that his carriages had been uncoupled he had to apply his hand brake briefly to allow the Newcastle express to get some distance in front. He then used his brakes to bring the slip carriages safely into the platform. This was quite a skilled and responsible job, made more so by the fact that the express had to reduce speed when passing through Comber station because of a sharp curve at the South Signal Cabin. The guard had to be extra vigilant to ensure that his carriages didn't catch up with and collide with the train in front.

The signalman in the south cabin had to ensure that the line was set for the passage of the express and that he didn't alter the line between the passing of the train and the arrival of the slip carriages at the platform. The slip couplings had to be removed from the Donaghadee portion in Comber and from the express when it arrived in Newcastle. The guards then had to ensure that the couplings were returned to the stationmaster in Belfast.

The Golfers' Express and the slip carriage continued to operate until April 1918 when they were withdrawn as a war-time economy measure. The express was eventually reinstated but not the slip. Donaghadee Golf Club tried to have the service restored but the railway company refused. Instead, Donaghadee got its own train which left Belfast each Saturday at 12:12. Stops were made at Bloomfield, Dundonald, Comber, Newtownards, Ballygrainey and Millisle Road Halt with arrival in Donaghadee at 12:56.

The train remained in service, with only slight alterations, until the closure of the line in 1950. Other Irish railways continued to operate slip carriages for some years after the First World War but the Donaghadee branch had seen its last such operation in the spring of 1918.

## A VICTORIAN LITIGATION CASE

James Scannell

We appear to live in a litigation era, given the number of television ads advising people who have been injured in an accident (usually a trip or fall) that they may be able to claim compensation even though no-one was at fault. Usually promoted on a "No win - no fee" basis, viewers are encouraged to make a phone call which will decide if their claim is worth pursuing.

Our Victorian ancestors were also very litigation conscious and frequently went to Court to resolve a variety of issues. Reading through the *Bray Herald and Arklow Reporter* for 29<sup>th</sup> February 1896, I came across the following case, involving the Dublin, Wicklow & Waterford Railway, which had been heard in the Dublin Courts during the week.

In 1895 James O'Reilly, who was a shopkeeper and Town Clerk in Cootehill, Co Cavan, travelled by train with his sons to Amiens Street, Dublin, where they changed trains to continue their journey to their final destination of Blackrock, Co Dublin. However, the carriage which they entered had not been coupled to the train and when the train departed their carriage ran backwards and collided with some empty wagons. As a result of this impact Mr O'Reilly was thrown against the seat and an upright bar, receiving a terrible shock in the process.

He subsequently sued the railway company for £500, claiming negligence on their part, which the company denied but admitted contributory negligence instead. The jury found in favour of O'Reilly but only awarded him £100. Given that at that time a labourer could expect to earn £60-70 per year, the £100 represented a reasonable award.

As I have said before, while the times may have changed, some of the issues haven't ...

*[What a strange little tale. The offending vehicle appears to have sat quietly at the platform until setting off in the opposite direction when the train left - maybe there was a rough start. No doubt the Amiens Street layout is different nowadays, but it would have been interesting to know where the coach went on its northerly wanderings, apparently unimpeded by any railway employee. Unless it made its way down to Newcomen Junction it is hard to imagine how it managed to gather enough speed to administer the terrible shock to Mr O'Reilly. Although the runaway was obviously the railway's fault, Mr O'Reilly's shock may have been exaggerated. - Ed.]*

## COMMENTS AND RECOLLECTIONS

Laurence Liddle

In last year's Comments and Recollections I asked if an MGW/GSR/CIÉ locomotive ever worked north of Cavan. Although I am no wiser as to whether this ever happened in Great Northern days I am indebted to Pearse McKeown for the information that in 1959, when the Irish North between Dundalk and Clones and the Monaghan - Clones - Cavan lines were still open for goods and mail traffic, CIÉ J15 0-6-0 No.172 appeared one day in Dundalk at the head of the weed spraying train, having travelled from Cavan, and presumably Mullingar, via Clones. This incident excited some comment in Dundalk since the Inchicore enginemen had made the journey without a conductor driver. I understand that strong words were spoken by AUTHORITY to the effect that hanging, drawing and quartering were the very least that the errant enginemen could expect should they attempt to go out onto the main line without a conductor. I am afraid that I have forgotten the name of the driver involved, but the fireman was the late Morgan D'Arcy whom older Society members may remember appearing several times on No.184 during the seventies, in particular during the filming of The Great Train Robbery.

Here I digress to relate a mildly interesting piece of trivia. The only time that I saw the film of The Great Train Robbery was during a flight from Australia to Europe.

I doubt if anyone will be surprised to learn that the only known foray by a "Southern" engine from Cavan to Clones, and over the eastern end of the Irish North was made by a J15. However, in view of the long standing relationship between the "Northern" and the "Midland" at Cavan, it is a pity that this could not have been by an ex-MGW loco. Apropos of the Northern/Midland relationship at Cavan, and the similar one at Navan, it is interesting to speculate on what might have happened had an amalgamation between the two companies, which had reached the stage of serious negotiations during the nineteen twenties, come about. (The discussions collapsed because the two concerns could not agree on the relative values of their shares.) An obvious outcome of a merger, one which was

particularly attractive to the Great Northern, would have been a diversion of a significant amount of the export cattle traffic from Dublin to Belfast.



*No.184, alias 134, with the Great Train at Castletown on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1978, prior to its Robbery. Morgan D'Arcy, on the right, and Joe Byrne of Mullingar are in their “period” dress - note Joe's white trousers. Since preparation and disposal were carried out by RPSI staff, the trousers could remain white(ish) for several days. (N. Poots)*

A strong proponent of the proposed amalgamation was H.G. Burgess, General Manager of the LMSR, an Irishman who had started his railway career with the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway, but had soon moved to the London and North Western in Dublin. Something of a grey eminence as regards Irish railways in the twenties and early thirties, he seems to have exerted a disproportionate amount of influence generally, and was very closely involved with the Free State Government in the labyrinthine manoeuvrings which eventually produced the amalgamation of 1925. Even after this latter event, and after he had retired from the London, Midland and Scottish, HGB retained a seat on the GSR Board for several years. Specifically as regards the GN/MGW proposals he envisaged a “Northern and Western” company under strong LMS influence, and closely aligned with the latter concern's existing system in the north of Ireland. Interestingly neither the Free State nor the Northern Ireland governments appear to have had any serious objections to such an outcome. Indeed, and in marked contrast to the views of the Stormont authorities in the fifties, Sir James Craig (later Lord Craigavon), Prime Minister of Northern Ireland was in favour of a merger because of the likely increase of traffic to Belfast.

But let us return to the amalgamation that never was, and indulge in a little speculation about its possible consequences. Apart from obvious ones such as “Woolwich” moguls heading goods trains on the Great Northern main line and an almost inexhaustible supply of six-wheeled coaches being available for Orange Order and Sunday School specials, what about the continued existence of the MGWR line between Clonsilla and Navan? Would the SLNCR have been swallowed by the new company? Would the availability of the smaller but less constricted Broadstone erecting shop, in addition to the one at Dundalk, have led to an enlarged GNR producing some 4-6-0s rather than the 4-4-0 compounds? Could Amiens Street (Connolly) have accommodated the admittedly sparse passenger traffic in and out of Broadstone during the twenties? (Apropos of this latter question: when

the Great Southern was contemplating the closure of the Broadstone it asked the Great Northern if the latter company could accommodate the ex MGW main line traffic at Amiens Street - the Cavan and Meath line trains were already using Amiens Street Junction - but the answer was no.) Anyone who is interested in learning more about the proposed Northern and Midland merger, Burgess's influence on Irish railways and indeed the involvement of English railways in Irish railway affairs generally, is strongly recommended to read the three articles by D.E. Delaney entitled "Irish and English Railways", which appeared in the Irish Railway Record Society Journals numbers 106, 110 and 112, in June 1988, October 1989 and June 1990 respectively.

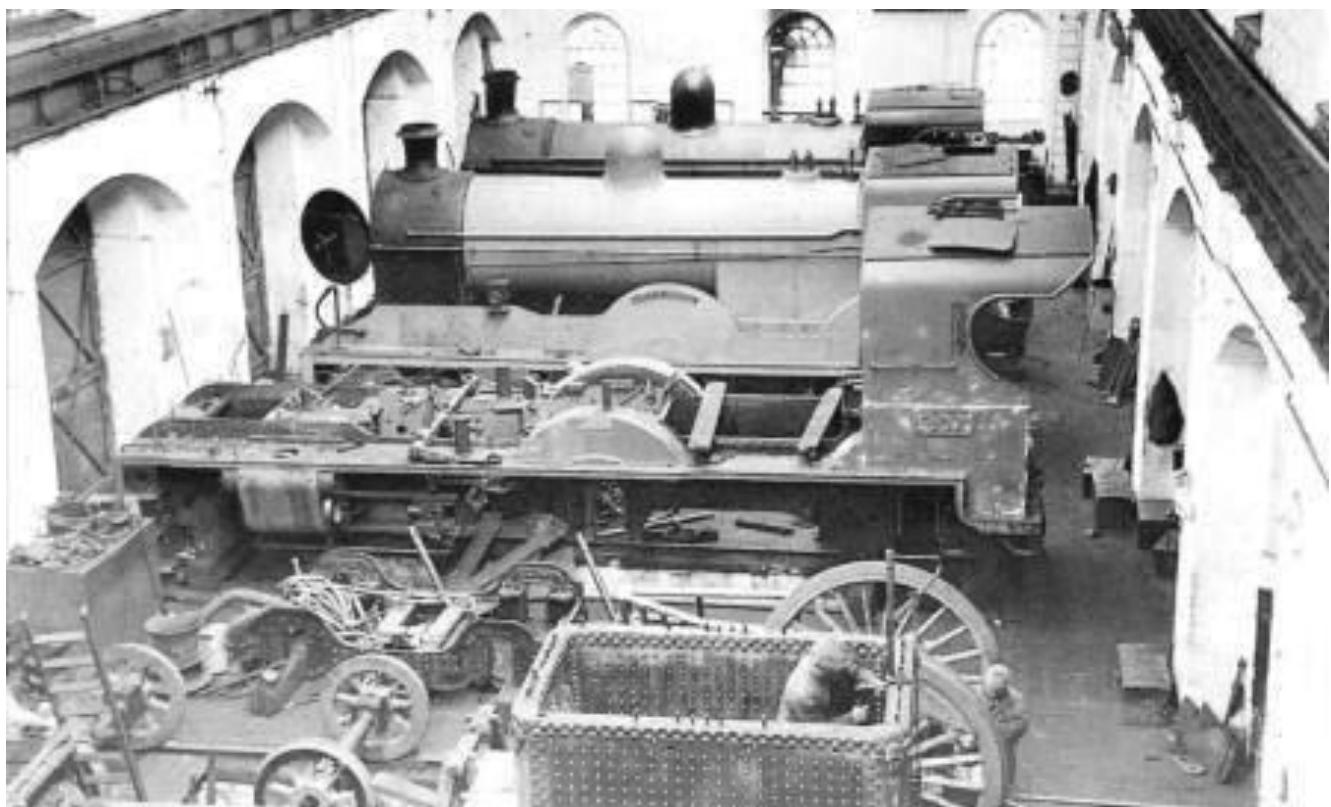


*On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1964, GNR VS class No.208 "Lagan", renumbered 58 by the UTA, arrives at Lisburn with a local on either a running-in or "warming up" turn. (I.C. Pryce)*

Reading Mark Kennedy's "The LMS in Ireland", which was reviewed in the last issue of Five Foot Three, I was reminded of an aspect of locomotive operation on the NCC which obtained until the introduction of the Jeeps, namely the working of short distance passenger trains by 4-4-0s, thus entailing an appreciable amount of tender-first running. This practice even extended to the Moguls on occasion, as the picture on page 72 of one of these engines with a high sided tender entering Portrush with a train from Coleraine shows. This illustration reminded me of early UTA days on the former Great Northern lines when the surviving class Vs 4-4-0s were used on Belfast-Dublin specials and little else. On the occasion of, say, a Rugby special to Dublin on a Saturday, a Vs which had perhaps been sitting idle in Adelaide shed for the past two or three weeks, would be steamed to work Lisburn locals on the Friday, "to warm her up", before the heavy Saturday job.

To revert to the NCC and tank engines - or more correctly, that company's almost total lack of these useful machines before the late 1940s - I have often wondered why the (English) Midland never provided some tank locos for the services between Belfast and Greenisland, Carrickfergus, Whitehead and Larne; after all the company had plenty of tank engines on its "home lines". There were the ubiquitous 0-4-4s, the ungainly looking 0-6-2s (the "Flatirons", though these were subsequently taken off passenger traffic), and, after the takeover of the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway, a number

of excellent outside-cylindered 4-4-2Ts. Whether the Tilbury's imposing 4-6-4Ts were significantly better engines than the "Baltics" of the Glasgow and South Western or those of the London, Brighton and South Coast, I do not know. General opinion on the various types of British 4-6-4Ts in the earlier years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the Lancashire & Yorkshire inspired ones on the LMS, seems to have been that whilst they were excellent as vehicles, as machines they were nothing spectacular. I once read, I think in one of the late Cecil J. Allen's books, of a footplate journey made by the author on a "Baltic" tank heading a non-stop "one hour" train from London to Brighton. Once the driver had got his train under way out of Victoria Station he set his regulator and reverser and did not touch either of these controls again until approaching Brighton, despite the pronounced switchback nature of the route. I have seen the same procedure applied to a Great Northern class SG2 0-6-0 on a Portadown-Belfast goods, when time was meticulously kept throughout the journey. It has to be said however that the driver, the late Fred Moore, a Clones man, but for many years stationed in Portadown, was fully aware of the potential of expansive working as he demonstrated to me more than once on ex-NCC moguls.

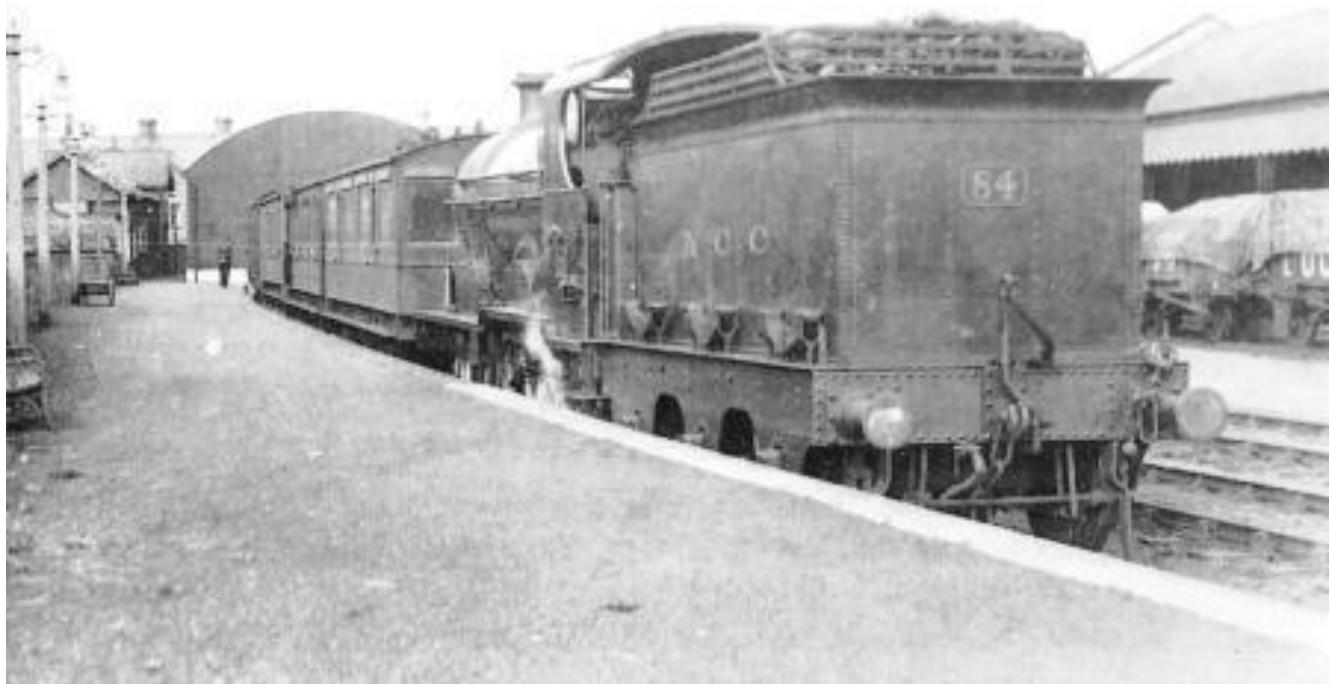


*Illustrating why the GNR never had a 4-6-0, VS 207, S 174 and LQG 158 are seen here in Dundalk Works on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1959. The man working in the firebox is Pat Wynne. (C.P. Friel Collection)*

Here I am reminded of another former Great Northern driver, Ned ("The Yank") Duffy. Commenting on the working of Up Main line trains out of Dundalk Ned remarked, "When I get to the top of Hainestown I pull her up two and a half turns and let her make her own way".

The picture on page 85 of "The LMS in Ireland" showing a through coach from Donegall Quay Belfast to Larne being boarded by a party of tourists raises some interesting questions. The picture's caption states that not only were specially long couplings used on such vehicles, on account of the severe curves on the dock lines, but that the vacuum bags were disconnected. Question number one: Was a dispensation given by the Railway Inspectorate, the Northern Ireland Ministry of Commerce or other relevant body absolving the NCC from the legal requirement to provide passenger trains with fully automatic brakes? Question number two: Was the Harbour Tramway, or that part of it over which the

Larne through coaches ran, officially passed for passenger traffic? Question number three: Considering that the short flight of steps up to the coaches was devoid of any hand rail and that at least one person is pictured carrying a quite substantial suitcase, were there ever any accidents, followed by claims for damages?



*Rebuilt in 1929 from BNCR "A" class No.20 of 1905, U2 No.84 "Lisanoure Castle" is on a local at Ballyclare on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1933 with what must even then have been "vintage" coaches. The loco coal wagon on the right appears to have been commandeered for other duties, while one of the lamp irons on the tender supports a spare coupling. (W. Robb)*

The GNR had several halts (at Retreat between Richhill and Armagh, and at Millar's Bridge on the Antrim branch for example) at which, in the absence of platforms, short flights of steps were used to give access to trains. These steps were either carried in the vans, permanently fixed to the vehicles in the case of some railcars, or kept on site by the halt keeper. In all cases assistance was available to passengers from the guard of the train or the keeper. However in the NCC picture there is no sign of any railway official giving a helping hand. What the picture does give however is some indication of the general traffic confusion that attended the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers at Donegall Quay in the days of the conventional shipping services. On any weekday evening at the Glasgow, Liverpool and Heysham sheds there would be a confused mass of arriving taxis and private cars, porters touting for custom, passengers threading their way through lorries and railway wagons, maybe a shunting engine with open cylinder cocks and roaring safety valve adding to the general noise and confusion, whilst not infrequently there would be a small herd of cattle attended by shouting drovers not far away. On a dark winter night this scene could well be called impressive, but it was probably interesting only to railway and shipping devotees. The author proudly counts himself among the devotees of each of these interests, but he has to admit that on one occasion, when accompanying a sister-in-law and her small baby to Liverpool he realised that there was a negative side to land and sea travel, from Belfast at any rate.

Mention just now of unbraked passenger train working reminds me that I once was involved in such an operation. One evening in the early summer of 1970, I was travelling from Dublin to Belfast by the Down Enterprise service, the UTA set involved was a railcar train. Between Castlebellingham and Dundalk, immediately past a slight curve in the line we ran into a herd of cattle. It was one of the very few times that I have experienced a sudden full brake application; I was travelling in the dining car (the former GNR 403), and the results there were spectacular, and demonstrated the disadvantage of moveable chairs in a railway vehicle. Fortunately I was travelling "back to engine" against the partition between the saloon and the kitchen, and so was unaffected. And it was not only inside the diner that the results of the collision were apparent; what was scattered all over the windows (the remains of some of the cattle) while possibly being of interest to veterinary students both looked and smelt extremely unpleasant. But what has this to do with unbraked passenger trains?, the reader may ask. The answer is, quite a lot; among other damage to the leading railcar was the fact that the brake was disabled, and so we sat there admiring the pastoral Co. Louth scenery until help arrived in the shape of an "A" class D.E. driven by the above mentioned Ned Duffy. The loco was attached, and brought us to Dundalk at an appropriate funeral pace. Even had the brake not been disabled it would not have been compatible with the vacuum installation on the engine. *[Readers may recall that No.85, on one of her early running-in trips, rendered similar assistance in exactly the same circumstances! - Ed.]*



**SLNCR "Lough Erne"/UTA No.27 at York Dock circa 1967. The running rails for the swan-neck crane can be seen on each side of the wagon replete with coal from one of the more recent additions to the John Kelly fleet. How the ship got its name is a puzzle since Ballyloran is a townland near Larne. The fact that coal used to pass through it on the Larne-Ballymena narrow gauge line is hardly reason enough. (I.C. Pryce)**

Some years after this accident I had a second experience of a collision with a large animal; this time on the South Eastern main line just south of Arklow. This time I was travelling on the leading loco of a

two-engine consist (both 141 class) heading the Up evening Rosslare train, and so was granted a grandstand view of the entire happening. After rounding a curve a solitary horse was seen walking along the Down side of the track. The driver sounded the horn but carried on slowly; it looked as if we would pass the animal without mishap, however that horse obviously had suicidal tendencies as, just as we were approaching, it veered left on to the track. The thought flashed through my mind “Are we going to be derailed”, and then we struck him, looking back I was just in time to see the dead beast complete a graceful rollover on to the side of the line. Whether any human damage occurred in the train I never heard, the only damage “up front” was that the shock had disconnected the jumper cables between the locos, which was easily put right.

But it is time to return to the LMS. It is rather surprising that standard bogie coaches were able to negotiate the Belfast dock lines, particularly the notorious chapel curve whose tight radius was the main reason for the cut-outs made by the UTA at the rear of the frames of the ex SLNCR 0-6-4 tank engines, when these machines were acquired for use as shunters. It is interesting to compare the dimensions of the latter engines with those of the Great Northern’s class RT 0-6-4Ts which were built specifically for use in that company’s Belfast goods yards, and on the harbour lines. The Sligo engines had an overall wheelbase of 24'7" whilst the coupled wheelbase was 11'6". The corresponding figures for the RTs were 23'9" and 13'6".

Mention of the Sligo Leitrim engines “Lough Melvin” and “Lough Erne” brings us back again to the topic of “long boiler locomotives”, which was briefly referred to in the last “Comments and Recollections”. The purpose of the long boiler design, which had a considerable vogue in the early days of steam locomotive development, was to avoid having to place the grate over or between driving wheels. There was for many years, and possibly still is, a fine example of a long boiler 0-6-0 with outside cylinders preserved on the English East Coast main line station (Bank Top?) in Darlington. The design of this machine was attributed to Timothy Hackworth, a contemporary of Robert Stephenson.

I began this article with a reference to a Great Southern and Western/Great Southern/ Córas Iompair Éireann J15/101 class 0-6-0. Perhaps I may finish with one or two reflections on these long-lived machines (note the succession of owners just listed). Why, when many of these engines were rebuilt and superheated in the 1930s, were they not provided with decent cabs? Granted that in earlier days Inchicore was parsimonious in the provision of shelter for enginemen on even its express locos, as is evidenced by the 321 and 333 class 4-4-0s, built in 1904 and 1908 respectively. However when these were rebuilt in the twenties they were given much improved cabs, very similar in appearance to those of the MGW “mixed traffic” 0-6-0s (later GSR 623 class), which appeared at around the same time or a little earlier. In 1936, when what might be called a revised edition of the 333s (the 342s or D4s) appeared, an even better cab, with side windows was provided. There were therefore precedents for putting better cabs on the rebuilt J15s. And do not forget that class D14 4-4-0 No.89, a small engine more or less contemporary with many of the J15s, when rebuilt was given a cab of the same type as those on the rebuilt 321s making it, in the words of the late first editor of Five Foot Three, “a very stylish engine”.

The reason given for not fitting the other rebuilt D14s with better cabs (all they got were deeper side sheets), was the need for economy, which was doubtless true enough, but one wonders whether there were not in the thirties other areas where a certain degree of economy might have been effected by the Great Southern. I am thinking particularly of the new “steel train” for the Cork Mail and the new coaches for the South Eastern section suburban services. Certainly the provision of improved stock for both the main and suburban lines was long overdue; the ex Midland Great Western six wheelers, many with only half-height partitions between their compartments, and roof lights with water slopping around the bottoms of the glass shades were endured rather than loved by their long suffering patrons. And even the compartment stock which Inchicore turned out for main line use in the twenties provided

pretty spartan conditions for third class passengers. (The Great Northern did not do much better for its “thirds”, but at least that company offered second class accommodation to those travellers able to afford a few pence more than the basic fares.) The main line vehicles which the Great Southern did build in the later thirties were extremely comfortable, indeed they could have been described as luxurious compared to what had hitherto been available, particularly for third class passengers. Consider the “Bredin” thirds, happily and thanks to our society still not quite extinct. Why provide three doors on each side? Surely two would have been enough, and why such large toilet compartments? Would not the elimination of the centre doors, and a modest reduction in the length of the lavatories combined with slightly less leg room in the compartments enabled seats for a further eight passengers to have been provided? The same basic arguments can be used in relation to the new suburban stock, though in this case the centre doors were probably justified. However the extremely generous amount of leg room and, arguably the two plus two seating rather than two plus three were not what was required for vehicles designed for suburban services. (The word commuter was unknown outside North America in the 1930s.) These points were tacitly conceded when the luxurious “steels” (and many is the comfortable ride I had in them) were taken off the Bray routes, given corridor gangways and transferred to main line use. However they were not ideal for this role as they had no lavatories.



*GS&WR D2 class No.321. One wonders why a cab like this could not have been fitted to the J15s, which must have spent much more time standing around or running tender-first - maybe they were just too numerous! (I.C. Pryce Collection)*

Finally on the subject of possibly extravagant expenditure by the GSR in the 1930s, there was a school of thought which maintained that the money spent on the magnificent B1as {the 800s), could have been better used on more generally useful, albeit less impressive locomotives. But what a morale booster the appearance of “Maedb” was! It has to be said however that the “steels” and the 800s did nothing for the comfort of the crew of a J15 at the head of a down train between Greystones and Wicklow on a January night with a south-easterly gale blowing, or in a similar situation on one of the exposed

sections of the Valentia branch with a Force 10 coming from the south-west.

In view of the above comments is it hypocritical of me to end this article by hoping that before too long I may once again journey to Rosslare in a Bredin coach with No.186 at the head of the train. *[Provided the crews haven't been put off by the previous paragraph - not to speak of the NIR men now spoilt by No.4! - Ed.]*



*1335, last survivor of the four Bredin coaches acquired by the Society in the 1970s, is seen here at Inchicore where a buffer was being replaced. (P. Rigney)*

## THE WHITE HARBOUR

W.T. Scott

Situated on the curving coastal section of the Belfast-Larne line between Kilroot and Whitehead, the White Harbour is a magnet for railway photographers and probably an enigma to both them and travellers. Until a few years ago it was quietly falling to bits until a local man, with the aid of a Government grant, took on the task of restoration. Whilst not yet completed to original condition, it is now much improved and houses several small boats.

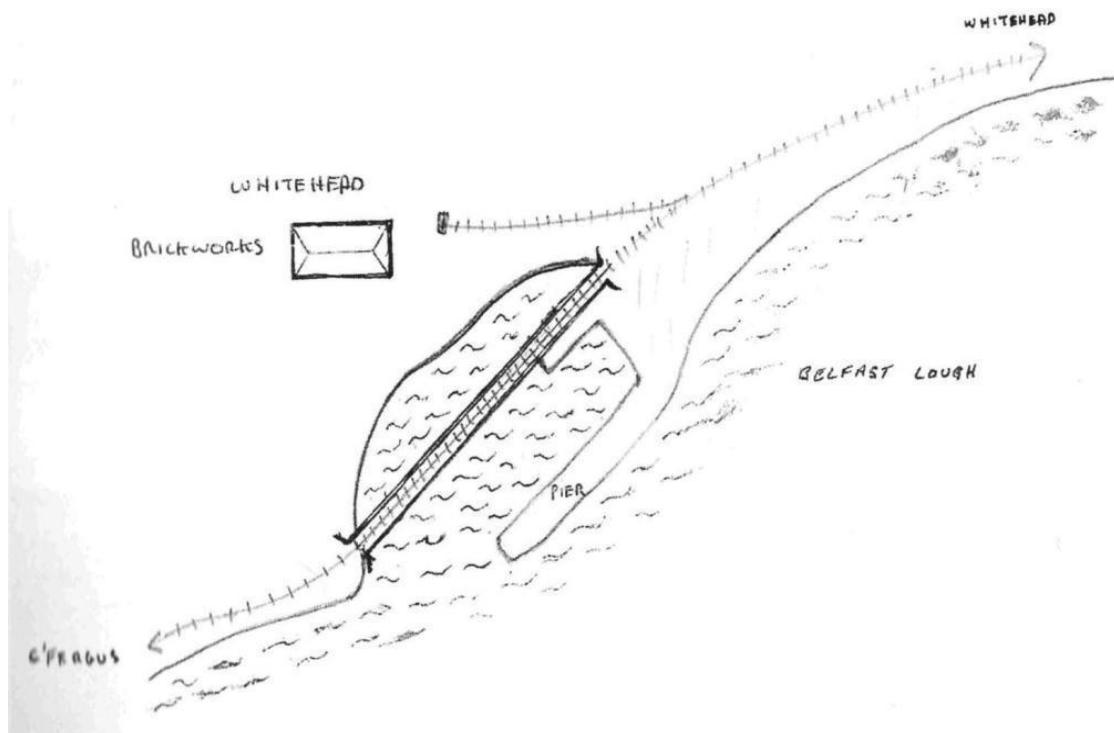
However, the average passer-by must wonder why it came to be there at all since it is in the middle of nowhere, at the bottom of a cliff and with a handful of cottages close by, the only habitations on the coast between Whitehead and Kilroot. A clue to its original purpose may be seen nearby, where there is an outcrop of the layer of limestone which runs from Portrush all the way down the Co. Antrim coast. Also close at hand are slopes of red clay whose instability over the years has often caused problems for the railway. On the landward side near the harbour can be seen, among the undergrowth, the foundations of what used to be a brickworks.

The harbour was built in 1850 by D. Stewart Kerr, who owned a limestone quarry in the same townland. It was hand-built of blocks of limestone by masons who, as in the case of the recent works to improve the railway's sea defences, could only operate at low tide. Some of the metal ties securing the blocks together can still be seen. Between 1850 and 1890 the harbour flourished, the limestone from the quarry being exported in sailing ships of 60/80 tons to Scotland and Cumberland, where it was used

as a flux in the smelting of iron ore which used to be mined in those parts.



*No.171 passing the White Harbour in 1993. On the left is new stonework placed at the entrance to give protection and (unsuccessfully) to stop it silting up. The train is passing over where the viaduct used to be. (N. Poots)*



Looking at the harbour, one might wonder how vessels of that size managed to get in, as in recent times the entrance has been so obstructed by a bar of shingle that even pleasure craft can only enter at high tide. However, as can be seen from the sketch, it originally had a wider mouth, which faced towards Belfast, rather than the later situation involving a right-angle turn. Current efforts appear to involve an attempt to restore the original entrance. Whilst the present harbour is entirely on the seaward side of the railway, the sketch also shows that the original harbour extended further inland and was crossed by the railway over a wooden viaduct. The inner part of the harbour was gradually filled in, and this process was completed by the doubling of the railway line in 1929.

The Whitehead brickworks was built in 1898 but its products were sent out by rail, using the siding shown on the sketch. Research has not so far revealed when this traffic ceased.

## GS&WR COACH 1142

Charles Meredith

The First World War had a major impact on the finances of all British and Irish railways. Lack of maintenance, reduced new building and rampant inflation all combined to leave the railways, at the end of the war, in very considerable financial and logistical difficulties. The rapid development of the internal combustion engine and road transport added to the railways' problems.

On the Great Southern & Western Railway a number of bogie passenger coaches were built in 1915, a few in 1916 and only one in 1917, but all these were almost certainly a pre-war construction decision and financed by funds allocated before war broke out. These coaches were the last to be constructed in the classic GS&WR pattern, with recessed panels with rounded ends at cantrail level over the doors and windows and with rounded corners to the windows.

Post-war construction commenced in 1920, with two first class and two composite 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> side-corridor coaches and two full-length bogie brake vans. 1921 produced two more of each of the same three designs; 1923, one brake/third coach and 1924, one composite 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> class coach and two further bogie brake vans. This ended GS&WR coach construction. All these vehicles had plain flat bodysides from the waist to the roof and had square corners to the windows, resulting in a plainer and more utilitarian-looking coach.

The composite carriage from the last batch built in 1924 (1097, in the Society's running set at Whitehead) was built with folding arm-rests in the two 1<sup>st</sup> class compartments but, probably for financial reasons, the four all-firsts built in 1920 and 1921 had plain seat backs with no arm-rests.

Our own 1142, in the Dublin running set, is one of the two 1<sup>st</sup> class coaches built in 1920. This vehicle is still substantially as-built, and has a side corridor and seven compartments intended to seat three-a-side, although this can be pushed to four if some of them are children!

Each of the seven compartments has its own external door, but the side corridor has only three external doors, opposite the second, fourth and sixth compartments. The coach has a toilet at each end, with an angled doorway to leave room for access to the gangway connection to the next coach. A pleasing reminder of earlier quality construction is that the side corridor has its own curved ceiling; later side-corridor construction settled for the simpler and less expensive process of leaving the side corridor ceiling with its own segment of the overall elliptical roof profile.

GS&WR 1142 remained in the forefront of GSR and CIÉ rolling stock until the 1960s, when it was downgraded to standard class and classified as "reserve" stock. In this form it was re-numbered 4012 and survived until the RPSI purchased it, direct from service, in 1973.

During 1980 the Society renewed the roof covering and at that time Alan Edgar, then Carriage Officer, commented that she was about the soundest coach the Society possessed. This is not now the case.

Although 1142 is running on excellent refurbished bogies and has had her brake and draw-gear attended to, the bodywork is in need of considerable renovation and renewal.

At present 1142 is painted in an approximation of turn-of-the-century GS&WR livery, to match GS&WR Royal Saloon 351. Despite her somewhat worn appearance, 1142 is much admired and remains a valuable historic representative of her period. Hopefully, proper restoration can take place in the not-too-distant future and 1142 can be the next step in the slow progress towards a complete GS&WR train!



*GSWR coach 1142 at Inchicore in 2001. (P. Rigney)*

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#### **PADDY MALLON - A TRIBUTE**

**Charles P. Friel**

With the unexpected death of Paddy Mallon, the Society has lost a valuable friend.

Paddy spent most of his working life in the GNR's Dundalk Works and ended his railway career as foreman in the Loco Erecting Shop. He was a keen historian who, at one time, could be found as much in churchyards and monastic sites as in harbours, under traction engines or about a railway.

One abiding interest was in anything to do with steam. Indeed, I first heard of him when he and a couple of friends resurrected an ex-Tyrone County Council steam roller where it lay along the Omeath road in Newry and steamed it over the hills to his old home outside Dundalk.

Paddy always took a deep interest in anything to do with GN locos and, when the Works was being run down and abandoned, managed to mount a one-man rescue operation of much now-invaluable material. That archive played a vital role in Norman Johnston's monumental book "Locomotives of the Great Northern Railway". It was only fitting that the book was dedicated to Paddy. With typical modesty,

Paddy thought that the book should have been dedicated to the late Harry Wilson. How very fortunate we all are that Norman wrote the book when he did; how more difficult it would be if he were to start now.

When I began to build up my own collection of photographs, Paddy was always willing to help and, I am very glad to say, was always appreciative of anything I managed to find for him. We used to meet regularly at meetings of the one-time Great Northern Society in Dundalk where the post-meeting chat was never less than intriguing. One of these chats led to his article on proposals for a GN 4-6-0 in *Five Foot Three* No.25.

Paddy was always generous to visitors to his home too, within sight of Dundalk station. I remember when we were working on No.184 in Mullingar and would call in on the way home. Paddy and his wife Peggy always made us feel most welcome - and most visits were punctuated by Paddy announcing, "Wait 'til you see this", as he disappeared to unearth his latest discovery. It might be a photograph or a drawing but once, from an old notebook, it was the formula of white metal used for GN passenger engines. It was a very timely discovery for it helped Peter Scott cope with No.171's then recurring axlebox problems.

Paddy's help for the Society and its locos deepened when No.85 went to Harland and Wolff's for dismantling and Paddy came down to have a look. My brother John and I provided his transport for that visit, and what an education that was. Paddy's practical assessments were laced with stories of things that happened in Dundalk or comments on how various jobs were done. I remember him graphically describing how Dundalk used a telegraph pole as a monster lever and had half a dozen men straining on it to lift a driving box into place. This was because Dundalk fitted driving boxes that were almost an interference fit in the horns. Regrettably, I hadn't the foresight to have a tape recorder. But Peter Scott was able to consult Paddy at various stages of the work on an ongoing basis and always found him to be a great help with advice over the years on the overhaul of any of our locos. For many years, my phone calls to Paddy had to start with a report of what was happening at Whitehead.

When No.85 was on the GN main line, Paddy would join a Steam Enterprise at Dundalk and spend the day with us. In more recent years, though, his hips gave him great trouble and the operation to fit artificial joints never seemed to be a great success; "Rough in the boxes" was his description. Even so, Paddy was always on the platform when we went through and, I discovered recently, had phoned many friends and relations to make sure that they too turned out to see *Merlin* doing what she was designed to do.

Just last year, I was asked to do a talk for the Old Dundalk Society but, sadly, Paddy wasn't well enough to attend. That was a great pity for, without his help down the years, there would have been no talk or, at best, a very pale one.

It was during a spell in hospital to (again) try to rectify his hips that Paddy contracted pneumonia and died on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2002.

The Society was represented at the removal of his remains to the church, at his funeral Mass and at his cremation later in Dublin. There is a growing practice now that the deceased's life is symbolically represented during the funeral Mass at the presentation of the gifts. It was poignant, during Paddy's funeral Mass, that the symbols were a coloured picture of Q 113 that hung opposite his favourite chair, a spanner and a copy of Norman's GN Locomotives book.

Paddy's daughter Margaret was heard to comment, at his funeral, that she would now never get the swing he had promised her. One of Paddy's friends said that she might have had more of a chance if she had asked for a steam-powered one!

To his widow Peggy and daughter Margaret, we extend our sincere sympathy.

May he rest in peace.

## UNHAPPY NEW YEAR

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*The following seasonal tidings were sent by the Adelaide Shed Foreman to the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the GNR(I).*

21<sup>st</sup> January 1941

McIntosh, Esq.,  
Dundalk.

Train Delays: Snowstorm

Sir,

I endeavoured to communicate with you per 'phone on several occasions yesterday, the communications are still out of order.

The train service has been very badly disorganised by a heavy snowstorm since 6pm Saturday; all lines were open until Monday morning but the early goods train to Antrim could only get to Glenavy, this line is still open to this part. The 2:15am Goods Train opened the line to Banbridge but it took six hours with Engine and Van with permanent-way men to open the line between Banbridge and Newcastle and the latter part of the line remained open all day, but the 1:25pm Passenger Train, Banbridge to Belfast, got stuck in a drift the Banbridge side of Dromore and the 1:40pm Passenger Train, Belfast to Banbridge, got stuck at Dromore.

Permanent-way men endeavoured to clear the line and a light engine was sent out from Lisburn, but this engine could not even get to Hillsborough and had to return. The engine and crew are still on the line and a special with Permanent-way men is going out this morning.

The public roads are also impassable, therefore it was not possible to have the men brought home.

The 5pm Passenger Train, Belfast to Newcastle was sent via Scarva, but this train is still somewhere between Scarva and Banbridge. Engine No.188, after working the 5am empty carriage special to Banbridge for passengers, failed at Banbridge and the fitter who was sent out to examine engine reported crank axle broken. Engine No.151, sent out to replace No.188, got derailed in Banbridge yard. The tender of No.123 engine got derailed at 11pm last night in Maysfields.

It stopped snowing at 1am today and is now thawing.

## BOOK REVIEWS

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**Railway Records, A guide to sources, Cliff Edwards**

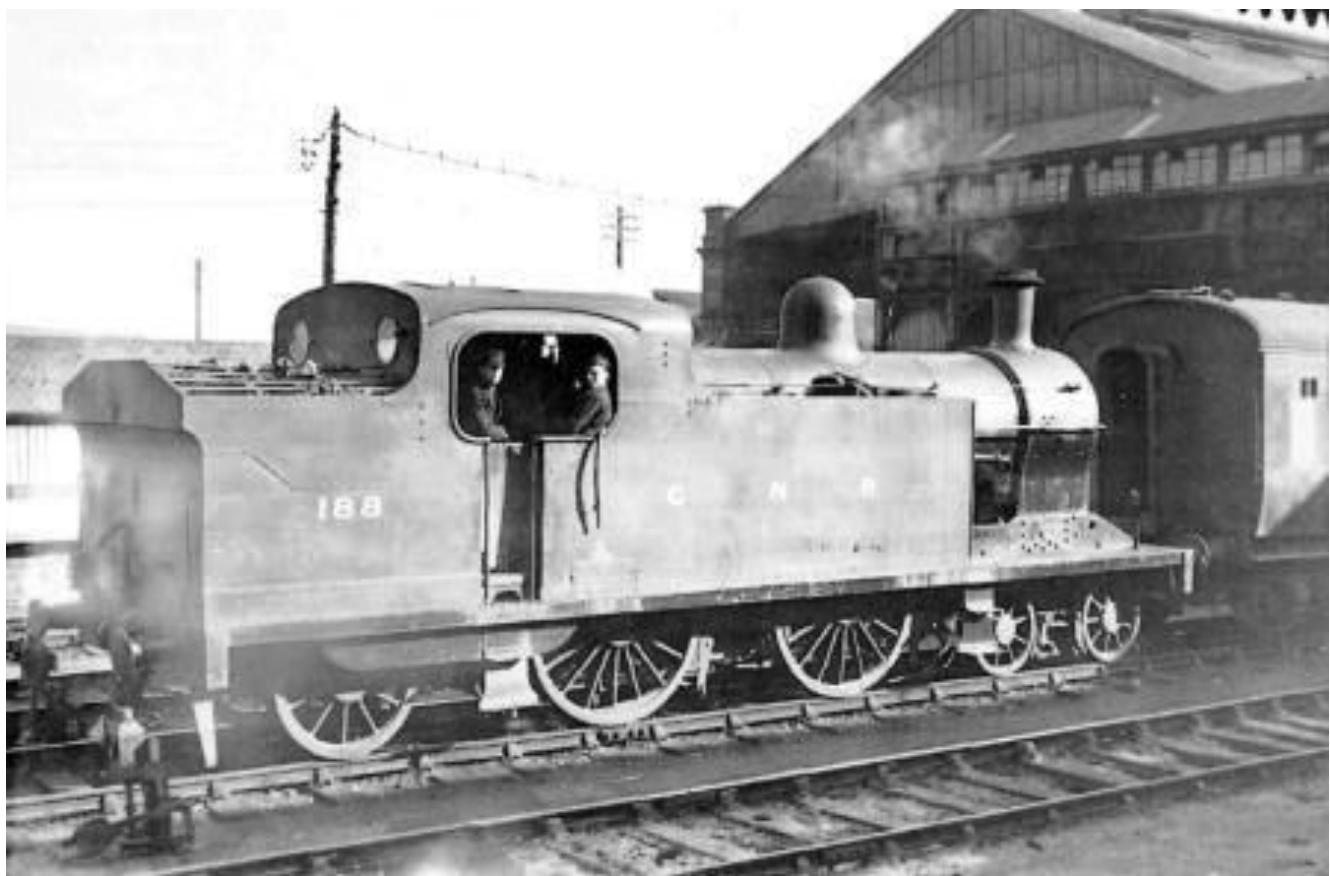
**Public Record Office, Richmond ISBN 1 903365 10 4, 222 pages, £14.99**

The Public Record Office at Kew is easily accessible from London by the District Line, and readers' tickets are freely available. I gather that the heaviest use of its archives is by amateur genealogists tracing their family history. However, the collection also holds much of interest to the transport historian and Mr. Edwards systematically describes these sections in his new book. This work is aimed at the student of social history as well as the dyed in the wool railway enthusiast, so there is a useful opening chapter sketching an outline of British railway history to put the collections in context, explaining terms like the Railway Clearing House and the Grouping. There is also an outline guide to other national archives holding transport files, such as the House of Lords Record Office, for Acts of incorporation.

The main guide begins by covering records created by the companies, with a detailed index laid out as

an appendix of the individual companies, in alphabetical order, listed with the relevant RAIL and AN department class numbers, running to 90 pages and including some 110 Irish concerns, some of which never progressed beyond proposals. The next chapter covers government documents, largely military reports from the war years, Board of Trade inspections and Ministry of Transport papers. There is a fascinating chapter on staff records, which really puts a human face on railway operation, and is lavishly illustrated with facsimiles, my favourite being a testimonial to George How, who joined the Eastern Counties Railway in 1851, and had a somewhat eventful career, being run down twice. A rather tough character, one suspects, this did not stop him working until the age of 69, and living another sixteen years to draw his pension! For the technically minded, there is a concise survey of maps and drawings in the collection, with reproductions of some Eastern & Midland Railway locomotive and rolling stock plans to whet the appetite (although as the author points out York is a richer source of mechanical diagrams) and a list of the photographic series.

The only point where I disagree with the author is over his comment that the PRO holds relatively little on Irish railways (p.13). Quite to the contrary, especially in file MT6 (including Board of Trade inspections of new lines), there is much useful material which, because of the destruction of records in the Civil War, may no longer exist in Ireland. This is however a minor point, and Mr. Edwards has produced a clear guide, which should prove very useful for the serious railway historian. **AJOR**



*GNR T1 class No.188 at Dublin in May 1948. (C.P. Friel Collection)*

**Locomotion: Two centuries of Train Travel, P.J.G. Ransom**  
**Sutton Publishing, 216 pp., £20**

This is the book which was mentioned in the Editorial in our last issue. It is an anthology of historical accounts, memories of railwaymen, etc., on a worldwide basis and going back some 200 years. These are grouped under several broad headings which overall make interesting and, at times amusing,

reading.

Ireland gets a mention in the inclusion of extracts from two articles (by Joe Magill and Charles Friel) which were published in Five Foot Three some years ago - for which the author made a generous donation to RPSI funds.

For me, one of the high spots of the book was an account of an Army unit being stationed on the Kent coast at a time when German invasion appeared imminent. The joy of the C.O. and Adjutant knew no bounds when they found that their area included the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Rly, which they promptly commandeered as vital to the defence of the realm and had a jolly good time. Eventually some spoil-sport turned up and informed the C.O. that demolition charges had been laid under a bridge where he had chosen to clean his fire! NP

### **Athlone Railway 1851-2001**

**Athlone Railway Anniversary Committee, 64pp, £5**

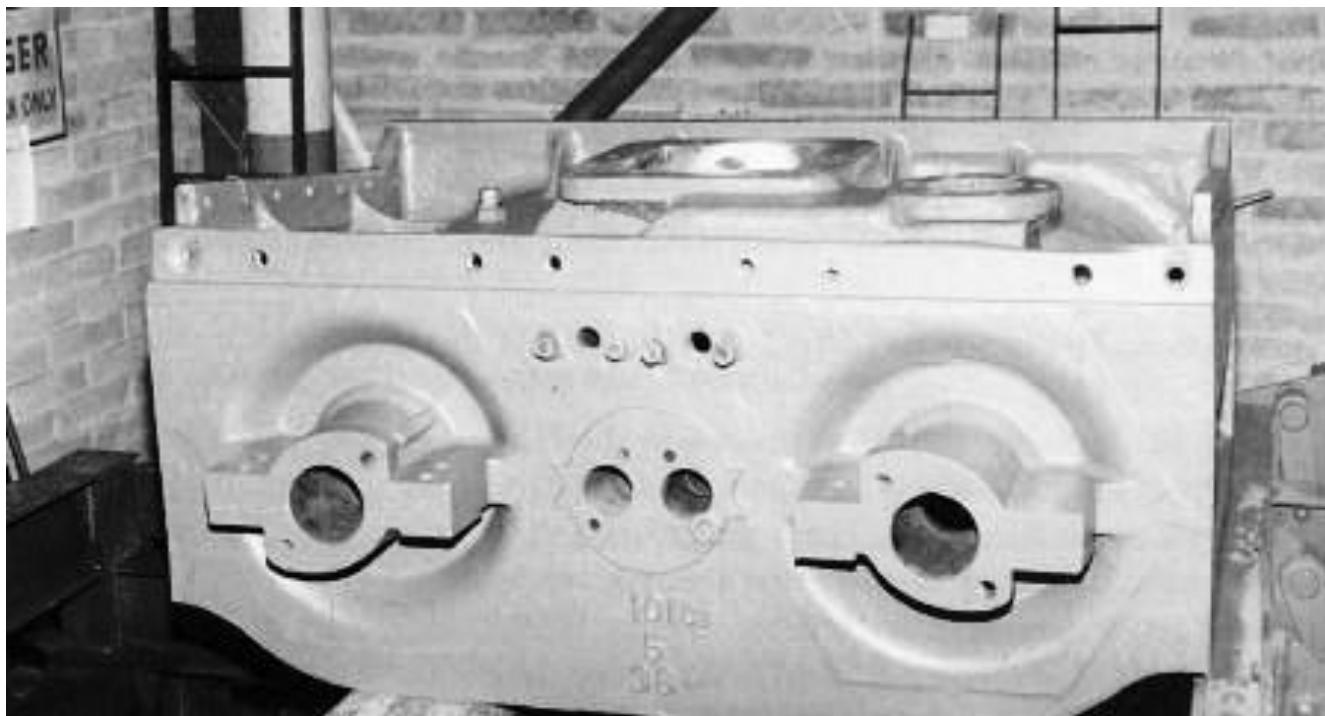
As its title would suggest, this little book, similar in format to Five Foot Three, was produced as part of the celebrations of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Shannon Bridge.

It contains an account of the extension of the MGWR to Athlone and the construction of the bridge, noting that brewers and distillers were well represented in the original sponsors of the line. Among reminiscences by various railway people is an article by ex-CIÉ Inspector Eamonn Lacken, a good friend of the RPSI. Sadly, his obituary is also included.

The letter which accompanied the review copy mentioned that the anniversary special train had been hauled by 210 "River Erne" whereas 201 "River Shannon" would have been more appropriate. The thought occurred that a change of plates might have been possible, as happened when Queen Elizabeth visited N. Ireland. However, while the wool might have been pulled over the Royal eyes it is doubtful whether the railwaymen of Athlone would have been so easily "codded"!

The book is available from Mr Brendan Smith, Assistant Station Manager, Iarnród Éireann, Athlone.

NP



*The cylinder block of No.186, showing the front tubeplate and cylinder casting. Not apparent in the photo is the serious corrosion of the cylinder block. (J. Wolsley)*

## **LETTERS**

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Dear Sir,

Referring to Mr Scannell's letter in Five Foot Three No.47, the Irish Engineering Company's Seville Ironworks took its name from its location in Seville Place, Dublin. The company first appears in Thom's street directory for 1848 and its final mention is in the 1863 edition. In the following year the premises were occupied by the General Rolling Stock Company Ltd. It is unlikely that there was any connection with Irishenco.

A few of the more notable products of the Ironworks were some 800 tons of castings for the River Wye bridge at Chepstow and for the extension to London Bridge station, London, by 1851. In 1857 they built the magnificent beam engine which drove a land drainage scoop wheel on Wexford's South Slob. This engine was unfortunately broken up in August/September 1957.

Yours sincerely,

*Tom Wall*

Dublin

*[Next question: who knows anything about the General Rolling Stock Company? - Ed.]*



*No.4 leaves Castlerock en route to Derry on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2001. (I.C. Pryce)*



*The Society's Avonside 2021 of 1928 awaiting loading of the wagons described in Peter Swift's article. (I.C. Pryce)*