

South Kerry Railtour



Souvenir Brochure

THE RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF IRELAND

SOUTH KERRY RAILTOUR

Dublin - Dun Laoghaire - Dublin - Kildare - Mallow - Killarney -
Tralee - Killarney - Mallow - Limerick Junction - Dublin -
Dun Laoghaire - Drogheda - Belfast

Saturday & Sunday, 17th & 18th May 1980

SOUVENIR BROCHURE

Acknowledgements: To our authors, K.A. Murray and D.B. McNeill, and Barry Carse; to Charles Friel, who prepared the map, a gradient profile and supplied the photographs and captions from his collection; to Wally Gamble for the other gradient profile; to Denis Grimshaw for the schedule; to Bob Edwards for duplicating work and to the squad who collated the brochure; and to the Ulster Cancer Foundation for provision of an office. Thanks to all, Robin Morton.

COVER PICTURE: Killarney. B2 class 4-6-0 No.401 with a return excursion train in the late 1940s. This loco was built at Inchicore in 1921 as a superheated four cylinder machine. By the late 1920s the class were proving expensive to maintain and several permutations of rebuilding, valve arrangements and re-cylindering were tried. 401 was given Caprotti valves and in 1939 she was fitted with the successful K boiler, and given the distinctive short cab roof. In 1949 she was converted back to standard piston valves, and she was considered one of the best 400s, surviving until 1961. About 1930 a 60ft turntable was installed at Killarney to accommodate the 400s. (Lens of Sutton)

WELCOME ON BOARD

Welcome on board this steam-hauled railtour operated by the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland. We hope you have an enjoyable weekend and that in the future we will welcome you on board again.

The Society's first weekend steam railtour was to Athlone in 1968 and since then we have, year by year, been gradually working our way round the Irish rail system. This tour is the first steam train over the Mallow - Killarney - Tralee section since steam was withdrawn in the early 1960s, so it is a historic occasion.

Only the Mullingar-Sligo line remains to be covered - and we hope to do that in 1981 - before we start all over again! We are grateful for the continued co-operation of CIÉ and NIR in operating this tour, and also for the support of Bord Fáilte.

For your enjoyment and safety, please observe these:

- Railtour marshals wear red armbands; please obey their instructions.
- At photo stops, please step back as soon as you have taken your photo - don't get in the way of others.
- In Dublin, please keep off the railway tracks. At other stations, don't cross the tracks near moving trains and take care if we cross another train.
- At runpasts the train reverses out of the station, steams through at full speed, and then returns to the platform. Keep your eyes open!

Don't forget to visit the sales shop in coach 861.

At Tralee, one bus will be available to transport a limited number of passengers to the Mount Brandon Hotel. Priority will be given to the elderly and those with baggage. On Sunday morning, a self-service breakfast starts off at 07:30 in the Mount Brandon.

Have a pleasant trip!

Denis Grimshaw

A WELCOME TO TRALEE

From Mr Jack Lawlor, Chairman of Tralee Urban District Council.

"It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the people of Tralee and district to welcome most heartily the participants on the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland's South Kerry railtour. For some of you this will be a first visit to Ireland - particularly for a group which has travelled from as far away as Australia - and I trust that your stay here will be a pleasant one. I am sure you will take home with you happy memories of the town and area and I hope that at some stage in the future you may return and spend a longer holiday with us."

THE MALLOW-TRALEE LINE - A HISTORY

Killarney, with its mountains, lakes and jaunting cars, has long been synonymous with holidays in Ireland. Its already established popularity with tourists made Killarney town an obvious destination for the railway pioneers.

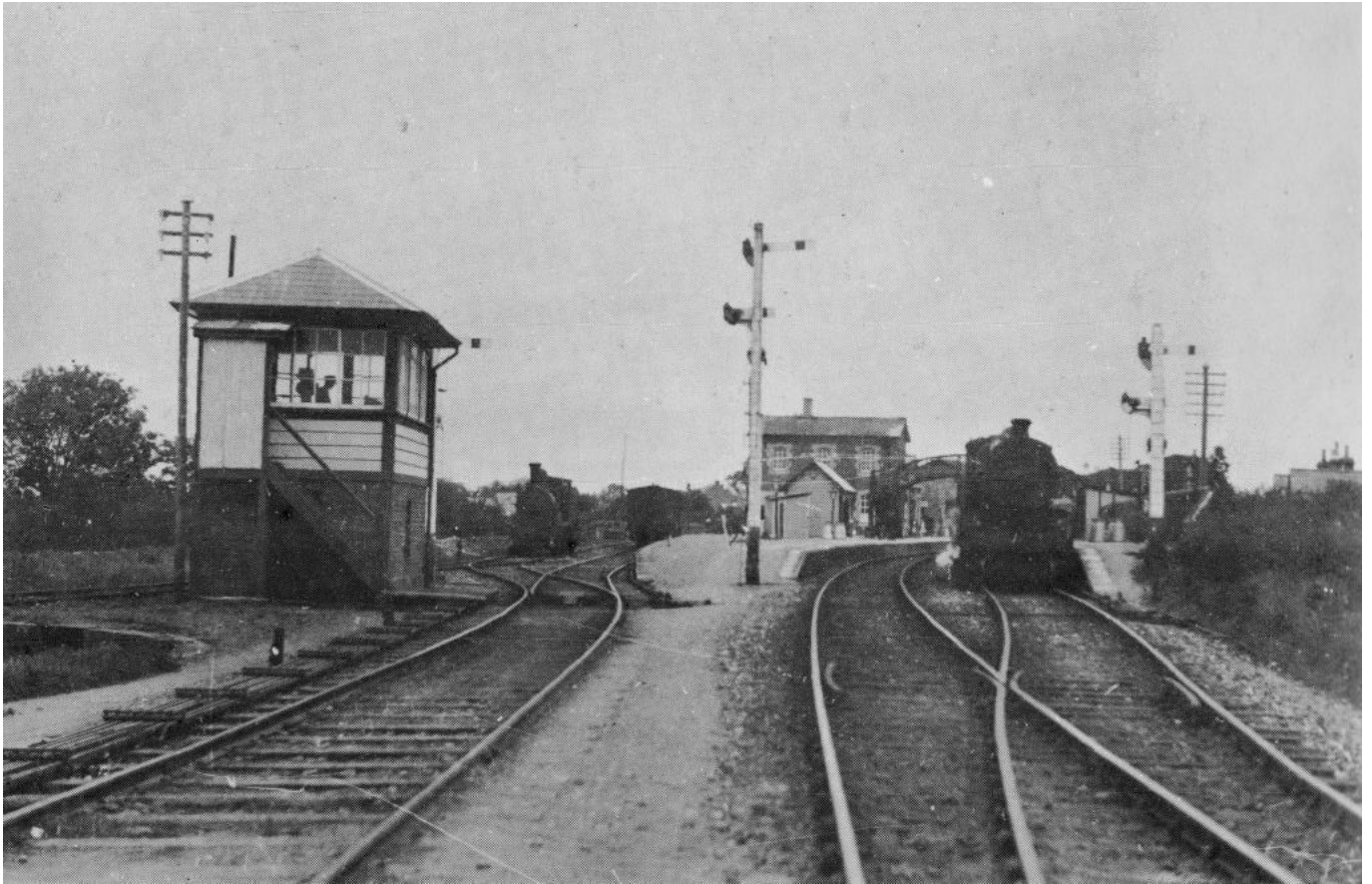
The Killarney Junction Railway was sanctioned as early as 1846 for the Mallow-Killarney line, and it was opened in stages between 25th May and 15th July 1853. The Tralee & Killarney Railway, sanctioned 1853, was opened on 18th July 1859, and both companies were absorbed by the GS&WR on 1st May 1860.



B2 class 4-6-0s Nos. 407 and, probably, 405 at Mallow with the Up Mail, the coach next to 405 being the TPO. Both locomotives were built by Armstrong Whitworth in 1922, 405 with a superheated boiler and 407 saturated until May 1925. Both locos retain the original four cylinder layout but with the outside steam pipes of 1930 - one of many attempts to cure the class's poor performance. Just three years later 405 was rebuilt with the distinctive "asymmetric" running plate. 407 retained the four cylinder arrangement until late 1938, when she left Cork shed after a long period of virtual idleness to be rebuilt. The later re-boiling did much to redeem the class, seen by some commentators as an Irish equivalent of the GWR "Star" or L&NWR "Claughton". (Real Photographs, X623)

The KJR was unique in several ways. It was one of the cheapest standard gauge railways in the British Isles, costing less than £5,000 per mile. It was one of the earliest Irish railways completed at the

same time as its associated telegraph line; and it was the owner of the country's first railway-operated hotel. This was opened on 11th July 1854, and is well known today as the Great Southern Hotel, Killarney. The story goes that its site was given by a former Earl of Kenmare on condition that certain trains waited for him at the station.



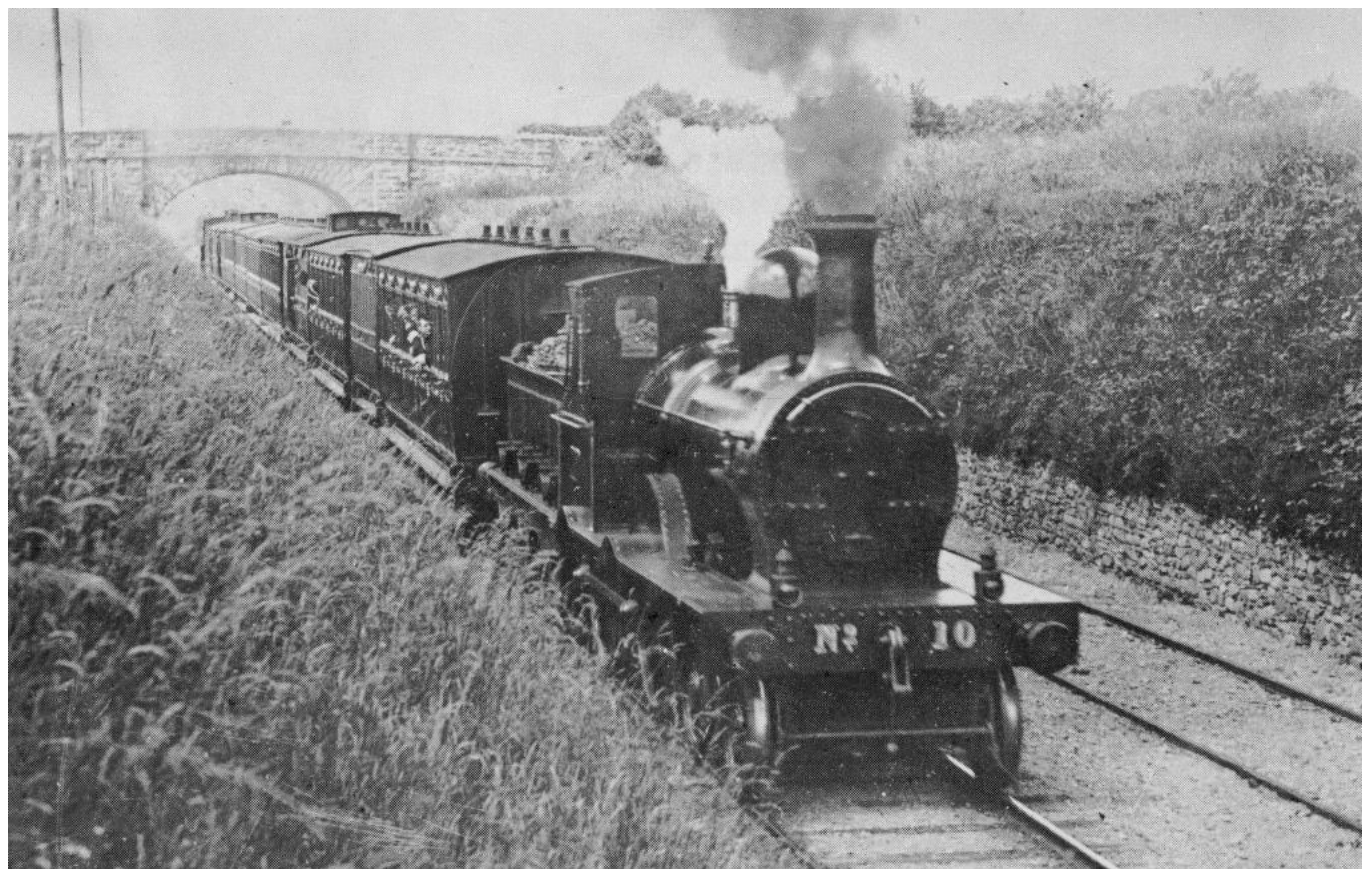
Banteer, the junction for the Newmarket branch. In this 1930s view, K4 2-6-0 No.370 (right) is working the main line, while D19 4-4-0 No.10 runs round the branch train of two six-wheelers. (Real Photographs, X7051)

William Dargan received the contract for building the KJR. Building a viaduct over the Quagmire River and a cutting at Bower delayed the opening of the line by two months. The first stage of the line to open was from Mallow to a temporary terminus at Freemount (28 miles). Then the full 41 miles to Killarney was opened. During the interval, folk went by road to Killarney, the journey from Dublin taking nine hours for first and second class passengers and 12 hours for third class clients who had to catch a 7am train from Dublin. When through working to Killarney started, these times were cut by an hour.

Dargan also built the T&KR, on which work began on 29th May 1856. The labourers went on strike for an increase on the rate of 7½p per day, but the dispute was soon settled. Construction was delayed by the company's shortage of capital, however. Three men were killed and several injured when a cave-in occurred at Cookcoran near Killarney during building.

With the aid of a government £50,000 loan, work was completed and on 16th July 1859. The directors went by special train from Dublin to Tralee, returning to Killarney to stay at the Railway Hotel. The GS&WR had contributed £1,000 towards the cost of installing a Turkish bath at the hotel - and it was in this the directors relaxed upon arrival.

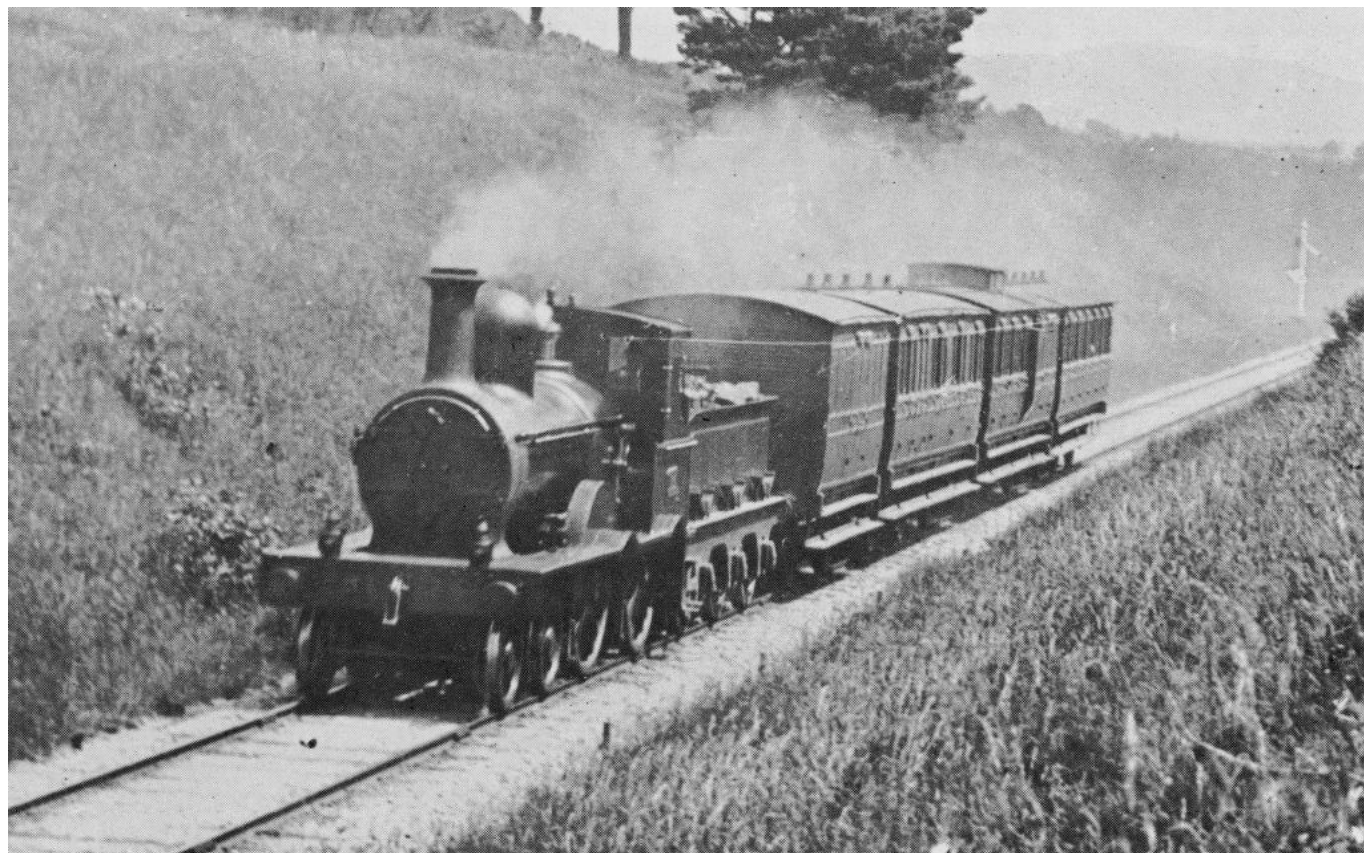
After leaving the main line at Killarney Junction, at the south end of Mallow viaduct, the Tralee line climbs gradually for 28 miles to a summit near Freemount and then falls, less steeply, to Killarney. The station here is at the end of a 300-yard stub which leaves the through line by a junction facing Tralee. Through trains have to reverse out to the junction before resuming their journey. Tralee-Mallow trains pass the station and then reverse.



Tralee Junction: D19 class 4-4-0 No.10 has brought her train to a stand before reversing into Killarney station with a Tralee-Mallow working on this occasion in 1900. 10 here carries her original boiler with double-door smoke-box and raised firebox and is coupled to a 1,864 gallon tender similar to that used by the RPSI's J15 No.184. Built in 1880, the same year as 184, "Kerry Bogie" 10 survived until 1951. (Locomotive and General, 21734)

The Killarney-Tralee section is undulating, with heavy gradients as far as Farranfore, the remaining 11 miles to Tralee being fairly level. Single track throughout, there are passing loops at most stations. Four stations - Banteer, Headford, Farranfore and Gortatlea - were given bay platforms for branch trains as well as Down and Up platforms on the through lines. Killarney has one long platform and a shorter bay. Tralee had two standard gauge stations, the older of which was that of the T&KR which was about 200 yards from that of the

Limerick & Kerry Railway, opened 1880. Three years after that the GS&WR laid an end-on connection between the two stations. After the amalgamation of 1901, the Kerry station was closed and since then all traffic has been worked from the older station.



Killarney: D19 class 4-4-0 No.15 of 1880 gets away from the station with a train of four and six-wheeled carriages, a very much lighter load than that being tackled by 10 in the previous picture. This scene dates from 1900. (Locomotive and General, 21746)

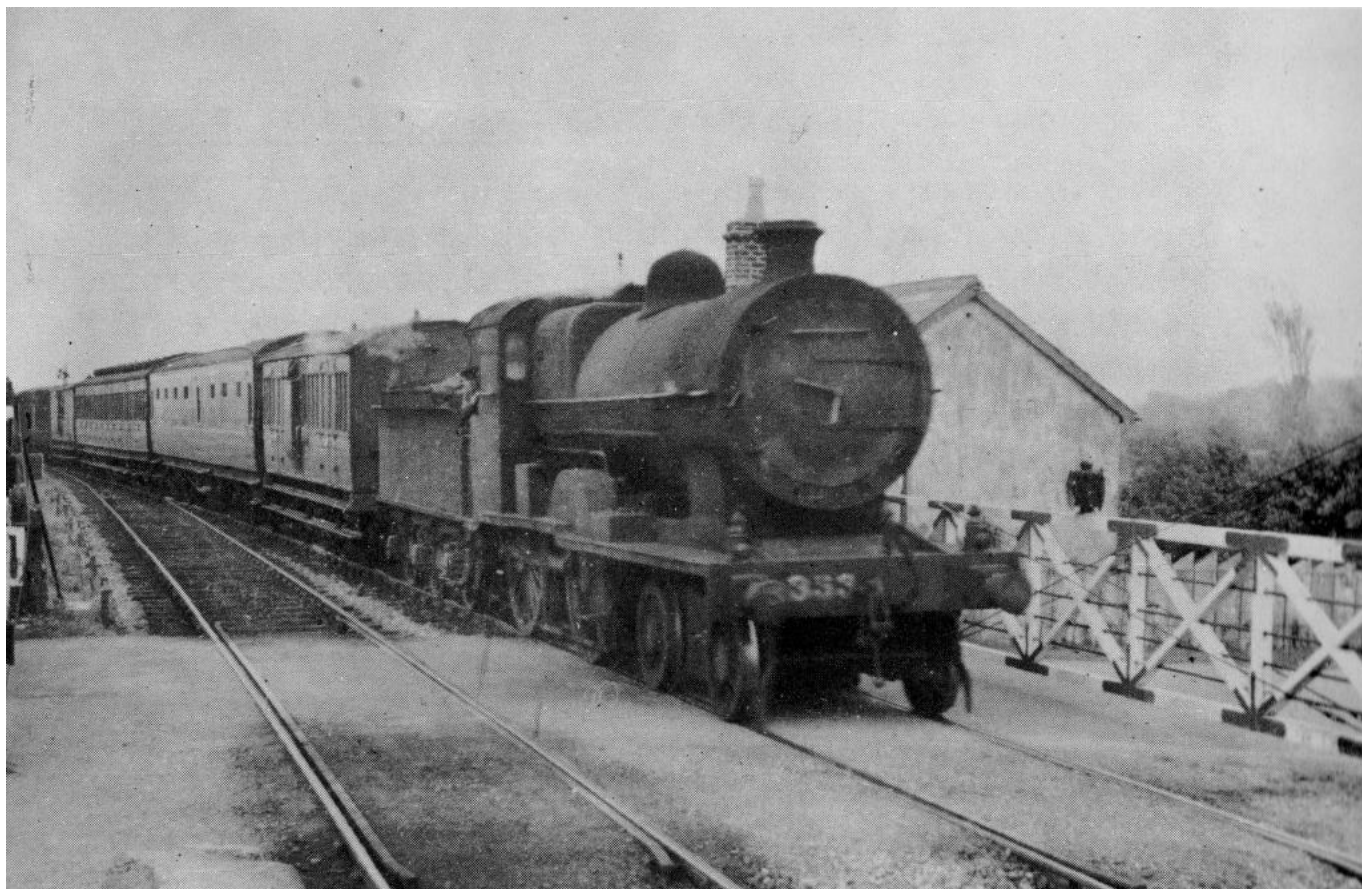
The original station at Tralee has been rebuilt, and has one through platform (covered) and two open bays facing towards Mallow. The site of the Tralee & Dingle narrow gauge interchange station is now used as a terminus for bus connections.

At first, two trains were provided on weekdays between Mallow and Killarney, taking 1 hour 45 minutes. After the opening to Tralee there were two through trains and one short working Mallow-Killarney. By the 1880s, the pattern was five Mallow-Tralee trains on weekdays (one on Sundays) taking 2½ hours for the 62 miles. Some of the trains from Killorglin on the Valentia branch and Castleisland ran on to Tralee, giving the town a good local service. This was the picture until World War I and again in the early 1920s. Top train on the route was the Killarney Express, which ran summer-only every year from 1898 until 1914.

The first of three serious accidents on the branch occurred on 5th May 1870, when a passenger carriage on the rear of an Up freight derailed near Tralee, because the axle of a wagon further up the train had broken. Nine passengers were injured after the coach was dragged for a quarter of a mile through a cutting. Because of the heavy damages

which were paid out, a new rule was brought in by the GS&WR refusing to carry passengers on goods trains.

Tralee was the scene of a bad runaway smash on 24th April 1901, when a freight train ran into the buffer stops at a bay platform, killing the driver and two other railway workers.



Farranfore: D4 class 4-4-0 No.333 brings the 6pm Mail Train ex Tralee into the station on 30th May 1955. Built by Coey in 1907 to work the Rosslare expresses on the scenic route from Cork, via Mallow and Waterford, the class were fitted with large sandboxes, clearly visible here. The train includes a couple of six wheel vans, a Bredin third a 1906 12-wheel third (similar to the RPSI's own 861) and a handful of fitted vans. (Drew Donaldson)

The worst accident was at Lombardstown, five miles from Mallow; it took place on the evening of 5th August 1912, and involved a train carrying English excursionists from Killarney to Dublin. The station had one platform and a passing loop and the platform was occupied by a stopping train, held to allow the excursion to pass. The driver of the latter misread signals and entered the loop at 40mph. The train was derailed, one passenger being killed and 96 injured.

The Tralee branch, being of considerable length, was operated as a secondary main line. Almost every type of GS&WR locomotive was used on it, and the company's first 4-4-0 engines, built in 1877, were specially designed for the branch and were known as the "Kerry Bogies".

They were the first 4-4-0 locomotives in Ireland, and were designed by Alexander McDonnell. Similar to his small 2-4-0s, they had a swing-link bogie to suit them to the Tralee line. Very successful engines, they were still in operation at the end of steam operation on CIÉ in the early 1960s.

Of interest are the branch lines off the Mallow-Tralee line, all of which are now closed. These are:

Banteer-Newmarket. Nine miles in length, the line opened on 1st April 1889. With the decline in traffic, a Sentinel-Cammell steam railcar was tried on the branch in 1928 but proved popular with neither public nor staff, and was taken off. Passenger services were suspended during the 1947 fuel shortage, the branch remaining open only for the occasional excursion and monthly cattle special. In 1957 a daily diesel goods was put on, but it could not prevent final closure on 1st January 1963.



Cahirciveen: J5 class 0-6-0 No.179 with the 3:50pm from Tralee to Valentia on 25th May 1954. A feature of workings on this branch was the stabling of branch stock here rather than at the terminus. This gave the final 2¾ mile stretch of the branch as many trains as the rest of the line. 179 is in her final superheated form here.

(S.C. Nash)

Headford Junction-Kenmare. 20 miles in length, opened on 4th September 1893. The line wound through the mountains, with many sharp curves and gradients as steep as 1 in 70. The countryside was wild and barren, and the few stations had spartan accommodation. By the 1950s, services had reduced to two trains per day. Closed 31st December 1959.

Farranfore-Valentia Harbour. Opened just eight days after the Kenmare branch, on 12th September 1893. Both branches were built with State assistance, with the aim of fostering tourism and industry in thinly populated areas. The middle 16 miles, from Glenbeigh to Cahirciveen, included some of the steepest gradients and most spectacular engineering works on any of Ireland's railways. There were a number of tunnels and a 70ft high viaduct curved across the Gleensk River valley. Valentia Harbour, at the end of the 39½ mile branch, had the distinction of being the most westerly railway station in Europe. It had one platform and was close to the landing stage for the ferry to Valentia Island. Traffic was light, and the branch survived until 30th January 1960.

Gortatlea-Castleisland. This 4½ mile-long branch survived the longest, not closing until January 1977. It opened on 30th August 1875, and services were suspended during the 1947 fuel crisis. The only traffic for the next few years was the monthly cattle special for Castleisland fair. Services were resumed on 7th January 1957, with a diesel-operated goods service, the branch handling fertiliser traffic.

The above article is largely comprised of excerpts from the book "The Great Southern & Western Railway" by K.A. Murray and D.B. McNeill, published by the Irish Railway Record Society in 1966. The excerpts are here reproduced by kind permission.

THE KERRY ROAD TODAY

By Barry Carse

The points at Killarney Junction, ¾ mile south of Mallow, are controlled electrically from Mallow South cabin. Right beside the junction there used to be a siding to Webb's flour mills. The beet factory sidings are little used nowadays, most of the beet being brought in by road. At the very end of the last two beet campaigns several trains, from places such as Navan and Enfield, were brought to Mallow. In the extensive sidings adjacent to the running line, a large amount of track has been stored in recent months because the relaying programme has been operating in the Banteer section.

At Banteer, which is open only for passenger traffic, the remains of the Newmarket branch can be seen. G class diesels were used on the goods only service until final closure in 1963.

Continuing the steady climb which started at Killarney Junction, we come to Millstreet. This station, with its unusual low island platform between the Up and Down lines, is a block post open for passengers and bagged cement traffic.

The most scenic part of the South Kerry route comes after our train leaves Rathmore. At Freemount (MP28), which is now just a level crossing, we are at the summit of the line between Mallow and Killarney. This was the temporary terminus of the line in 1853 while the section on to Headford Junction (4¼ miles on) was under construction. The major task was the Quagmire Viaduct. A high

embankment on the Killarney side of the viaduct was the scene of a severe landslip in 1973.

Headford Junction is used as a temporary block post on particularly busy days, such as when there are football finals at Killarney. Last year, a new facing crossover was laid at Killarney, a treat for those who like unusually laid out stations. The new crossover means trains not serving Killarney do not have to reverse.

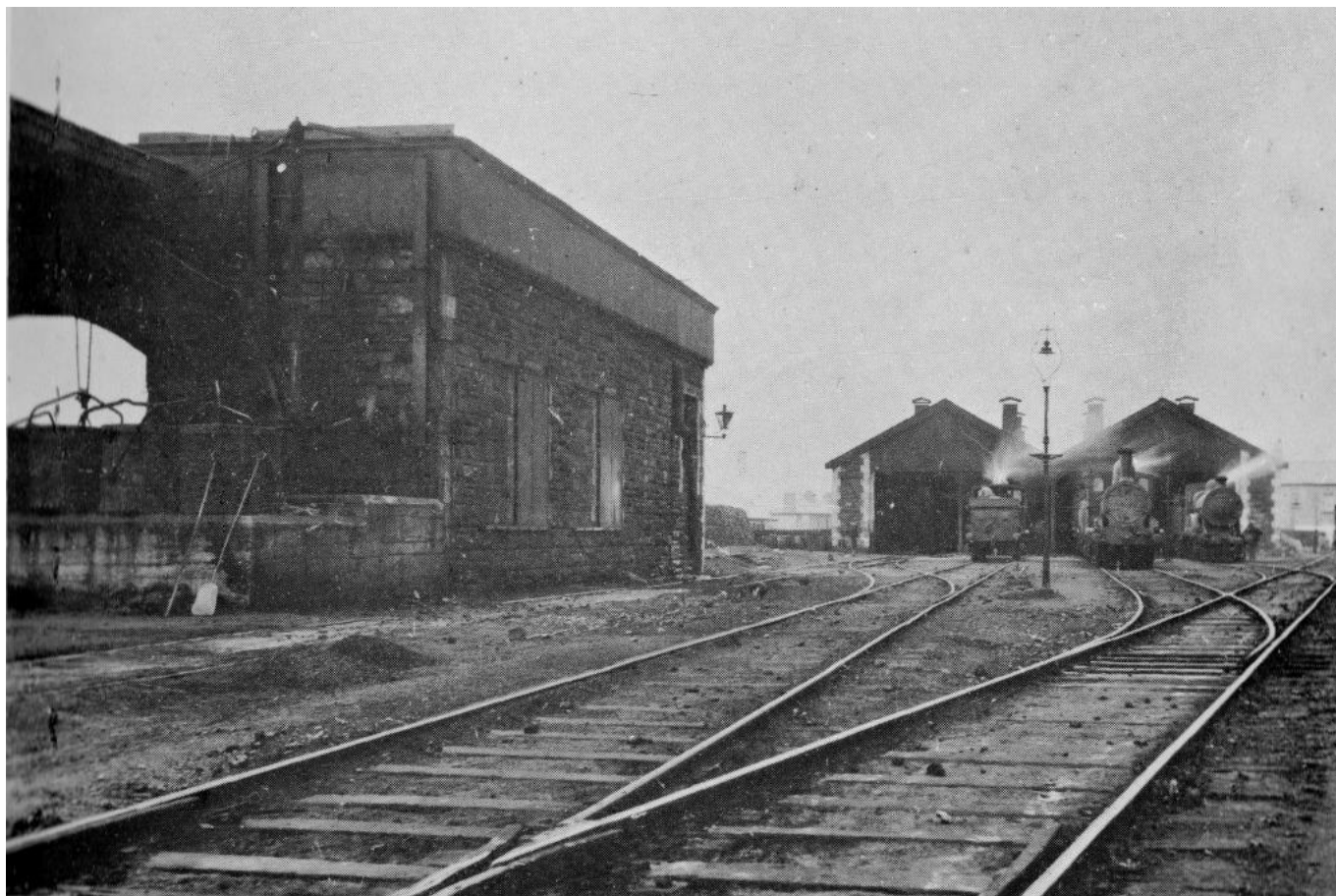


Castleisland: J30 class 0-6-0T No.100 is dwarfed by her two coach train, pictured before departure to the junction at Gortatlea. This diminutive tank engine later found fame on the Timoleague and Courtmacsherry in south Cork, usually partnered by No.90 (now preserved on a plinth at the north end of Mallow station). The story is told of two Tralee drivers bemoaning their lot. One complained of having to work 20 cattle wagons from Castleisland to Tralee (11½ miles) with 100. Not to be outdone, the other dismissed this tale of heroic deeds and boasted of really showing what could be done by working a similar load with the same engine all the way from Fenit to Tralee - all of 12 miles! (Real Photographs, X7063)

One of Ireland's most famous trains, the Radio Train, operated to Killarney. Complete with commentary and entertainment, and steam haulage, it started on 6th June 1950. With stops at Thurles and Mallow, journey time was 4½ hours. The fare of £3 first class, £2.25 second, included a tour of the Lakes. Sadly, support for the Radio Train has dwindled and it seems it may not run this year. Another factor is CIÉ's shortage of stock - coaches from the Radio Train, including the studio vehicles, can always be used on regular service trains.

The Valentia Harbour branch, rated among the country's most scenic lines, trailed from a bay platform on the down side at Farranfore. The station is still open for passenger traffic and in 1978 fertiliser trains from Arklow started running to a new siding here, serving North Kerry Co-operative Society.

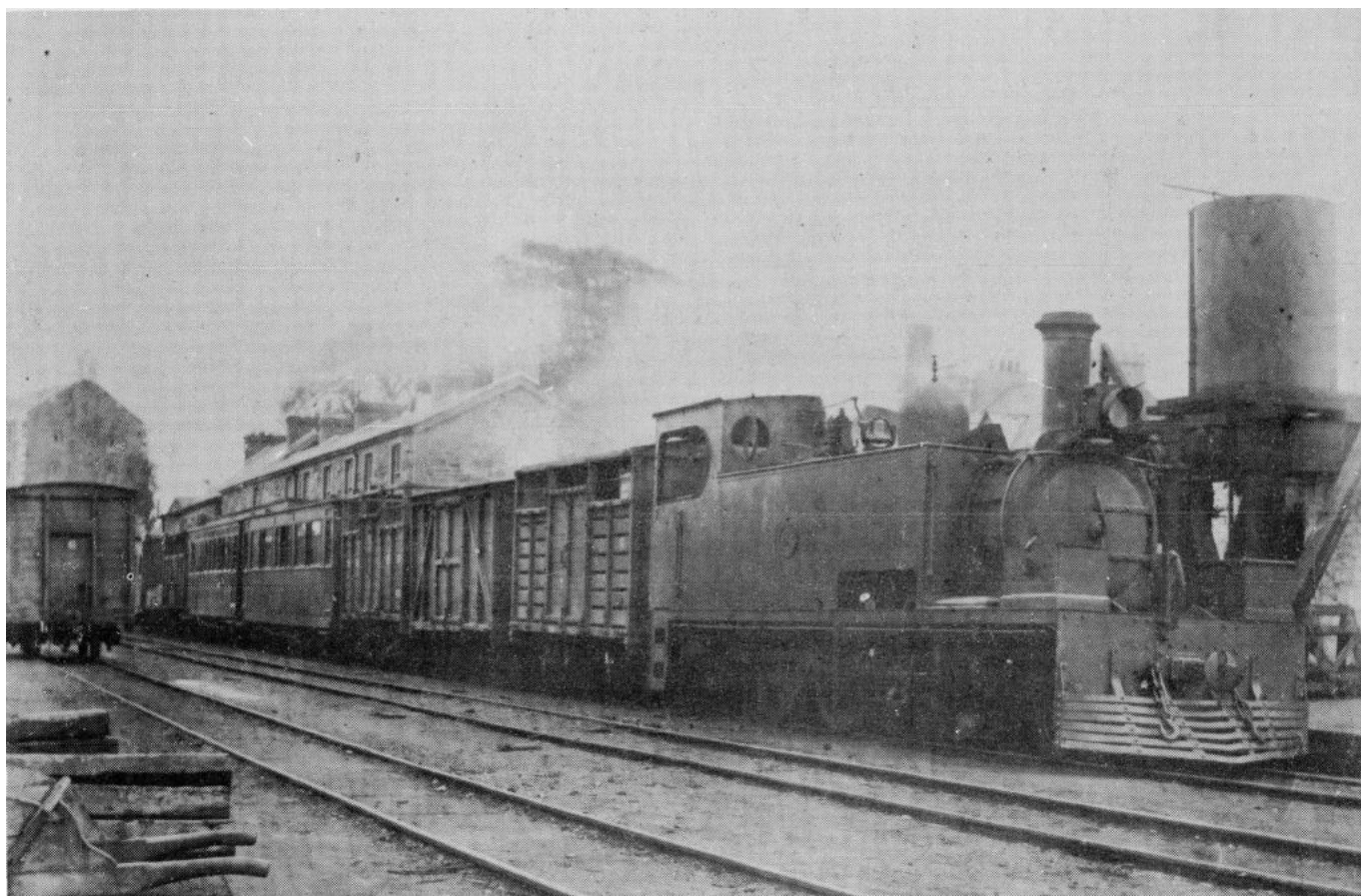
The Tralee-Mallow night mail called at Gortatlea (MP54½) until fairly recently. It was in January 1977 that the Castleisland branch lost its goods service.



Tralee shed: A line up of (mostly) J15 class 0-6-0s, but also including (second from right) D11 class 4-4-0 No.301, a Coey design built in 1900 and once enjoying the rare GS&WR accolade of being named. 301 "Victoria" was the precursor of several generations of Coey 4-4-0s and was the last 4-4-0 shipped by CIÉ. She survived until 1962 and her final duties included the Dun Laoghaire - Kingsbridge boat trains. (Locomotive & General, 6860)

Big changes have taken place at Tralee since the RPSI's last steam tour here, the North Kerry from Limerick in 1972. The main platform has been extended to handle the ever-increasing number of 14 bogie trains operating through from Dublin. Services on the North Kerry were cut back from a daily goods to just seasonal beet traffic. But this ceased on 2nd June 1978. Since then the only movements over the North Kerry have been the annual weed-spray train and permanent way inspection trains. Passenger services on the Tralee-Mallow road remain good, with four trains each way. The 08:00 Tralee-Dublin, an air conditioned set, takes 3 hours 45 minutes.

A Dublin-based set operates the 08:50 from Heuston, returning from Tralee at 13:55. The other four services run either only to Mallow or to Cork.



Narrow gauge. Tralee & Dingle 3ft gauge 2-6-0T No.6 at Tralee with the 8:50am train for Dingle on 24th July 1914. Typically, the train includes cattle wagons, vans, plus coaches. (Ken Nunn Collection, H2205)

Weekend and especially bank holiday weekend traffic is heavy. On Fridays, a special runs from Heuston at 17:42. Despite a good service on the Dublin-Cork line, it is now standard practice to run the following series of trains to Dublin on the Monday of a holiday weekend: 13:20 and 13:55 ex Tralee; 17:10 ex Killarney; 17:10 and 17:30 ex Tralee.

--ooOoo--

Dublin Heuston - Mallow: Descriptions of this part of our route have been published in previous railtour brochures, some of which are available from the sales shop in coach 861.

RAILTOUR SCHEDULE

Saturday 17th May

Arr. Dep.

No.184 & tour train

Dublin Pearse		06:45
Dun Laoghaire Pier	07:00	07:28
Dublin Connolly	07:52	

No.171 & tour train

Dublin Connolly		08:10	
Glasnevin Junction	pass	08:16	
Islandbridge Junction	pass	08:24	
Hazelhatch	pass	08:44	
Sallins	pass	08:55	
Droichead Nua	pass	09:05	
Curragh Mainline	pass	09:07	
Kildare	09:11	09:27	Shunt for 08:50 Heuston-Tralee.
Cherryville Junction	pass	09:31	
Portarlinton	pass	09:42	
Portlaoise	pass	09:55	
Ballybrophy	10:15	10:25	Water stop.
Lisduff	pass	10:34	
Templemore	pass	10:41	
Thurles	pass	10:50	
Goold's Cross	pass	10:59	
Dundrum	pass	11:05	
Limerick Junction	pass	11:15	
Knocklong	pass	11:29	
Rathluirc	11:50	12:00	
Buttevant	pass	12:10	
Mallow	12:25	13:35	Water stop.
Killarney Junction	pass	13:37	
Banteer	pass	13:56	
Millstreet	14:14	14:21	
Rathmore	14:35	14:52	Cross 13:55 ex Tralee.
Headford Junction	15:06	15:22	Runpast.
Killarney	15:35	16:00	
Farranfore	16:25	16:32	
Gortatlea	16:39	16:46	
Tralee	17:05		

Sunday 18th May

No.171 & tour train

Tralee		08:40	
Farranfore	pass	09:00	
Killarney	09:35	09:55	
Rathmore	pass	10:35	
Millstreet	pass	10:47	
Banteer	11:03	11:10	
Killarney Junction	pass	11:27	
Mallow	11:30	11:45	Water stop. Cross 11:35 to Tralee.
Buttevant	12:00	12:15	Runpast.
Rathluirc	pass	12:26	
Knocklong	pass	12:40	
Limerick Junction	13:00	13:40	Water stop.
Dundrum	pass	13:53	
Goold's Cross	pass	15:59	
Thurles	pass	14:10	
Templemore	pass	14:20	
Lisduff	pass	14:28	
Ballybrophy	14:45	15:00	Water stop.
Portlaoise	pass	15:22	
Portarlinton	pass	15:32	
Cherryville Junction	pass	15:43	
Kildare	pass	15:45	
Curragh Mainline	pass	15:48	
Droichead Nua	pass	15:51	
Sallins	pass	15:59	
Hazelhatch	pass	16:08	
Inchicore	pass	16:17	
Islandbridge Junction	pass	16:20	
Glasnevin Junction	pass	16:27	
Dublin Connolly	pass	16:40	

No.184 & tour train

Dublin Connolly		17:10
Dun Laoghaire Pier	17:30	17:50
Dublin Connolly	18:10	

No.171 & tour train

Dublin Connolly		18:30	
Drogheda	19:10	19:20	Water stop.
Dundalk	19:50	19:55	
Portadown	20:45	21:00	
Lisburn	21:25	21:35	Water stop.
Belfast Botanic	21:56	21:57	
Belfast Central	22:00		

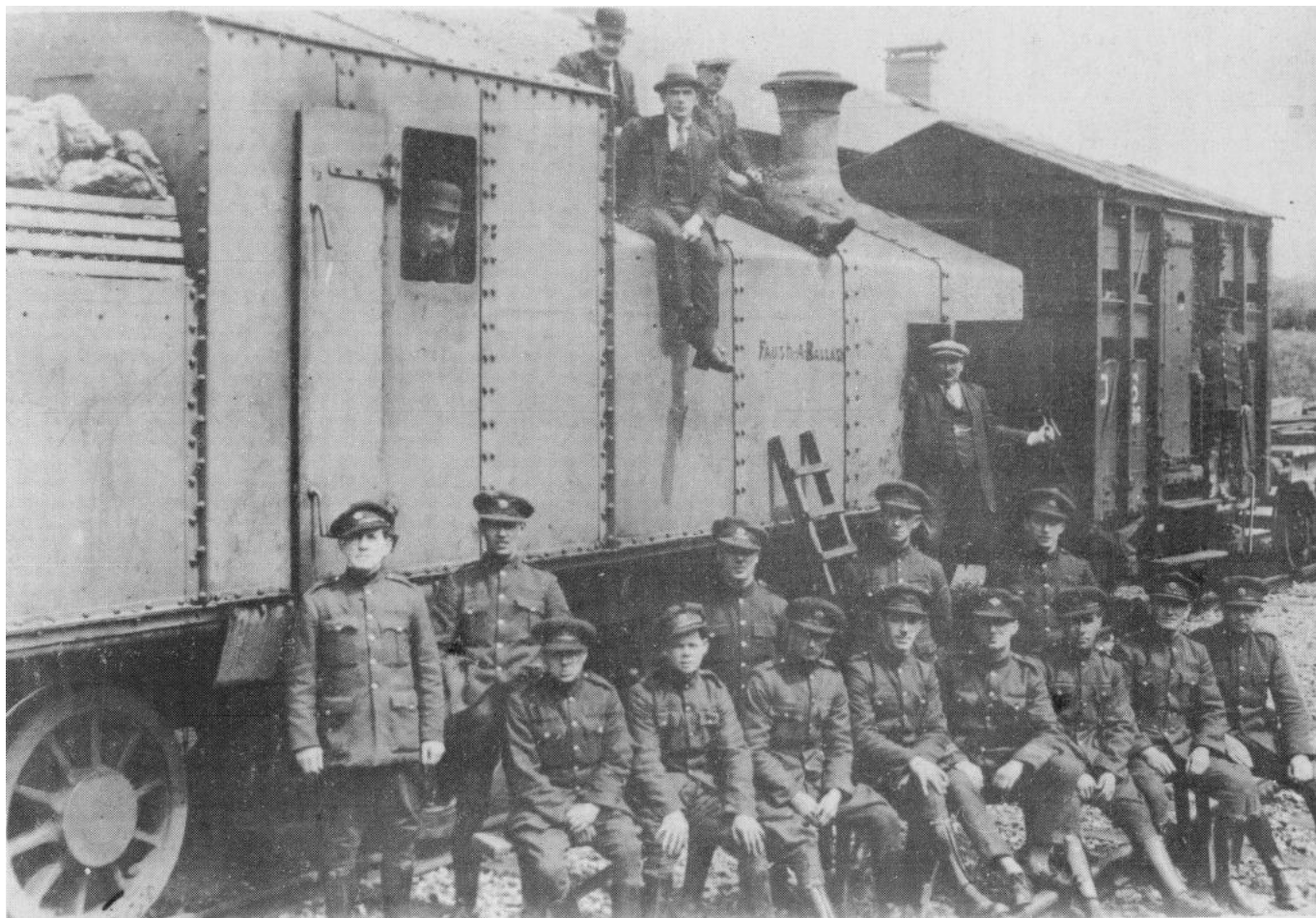
THE TOUR TRAIN

SOME NOTES ON THE LOCOMOTIVES AND COACHES

No.171 "Slieve Gullion". A class S 4-4-0, built by Beyer Peacock in 1913 for the Great Northern Railway (Ireland). 171 worked expresses on the main Belfast-Dublin line. She was rebuilt in 1938 and survived until 1966, when she was secured by the Society. The restoration programme included an overhaul in 1968 at Harland & Wolff. Since then, 171 has been a regular performer on RPSI tours and recently her impressive GNR blue livery has been restored. In the absence of the RPSI's other express locomotive, 2-6-4T No.4, which is undergoing an overhaul at Whitehead, 171 has been handling the popular "Portrush Flyer" excursions.

No.184. A class J15 0-6-0, built by the Great Southern and Western Railway at Inchicore in 1880, and celebrating her centenary this year. 184 is one of two J15s in the RPSI fleet - she is saturated and 186 is superheated. The class was Ireland's most numerous, with 111 members. No.184's round-topped firebox and boiler date from 1921 and her outside-spring tender from 1871. Retained for preservation by CIÉ, she was used in the film "Darling Lili" in 1968. In 1977 184 was given to the RPSI on permanent loan and was restored for "The First Great Train Robbery" film.

The most historic coach in use is 861, the gas-lit, clerestory-roofed, 12-wheel Rosslare brake. Dating from 1906, it has two first and five second class compartments, and houses the RPSI sales shop. Our dining car is ex GNR 88, built in 1938 for Belfast-Dublin trains, and converted in 1958 for use with diesel railcars. The bar section was rebuilt by the RPSI, complete with facilities for draught beer and stout. The other carriages are a combination of ex GNR, Great Southern and Northern Counties Committee stock, dating from the 1920s and 1930s.



Killarney rarity. During 1922, Dublin and south Eastern F3 class 2-4-2T No.64 "Earl of Bessborough" was fitted with armoured plating and despatched to South Kerry. She was based at Killarney and ran coupled to a DSER van fitted with firing hatches for machine guns and rifles and fitted, too, with a pitched roof to deter hand grenades. The loco was renamed "Faugh a Ballagh" (Irish for "Clear the Way"). Pictured with a detachment of Free State soldiers. (Locomotive & General, 9262)