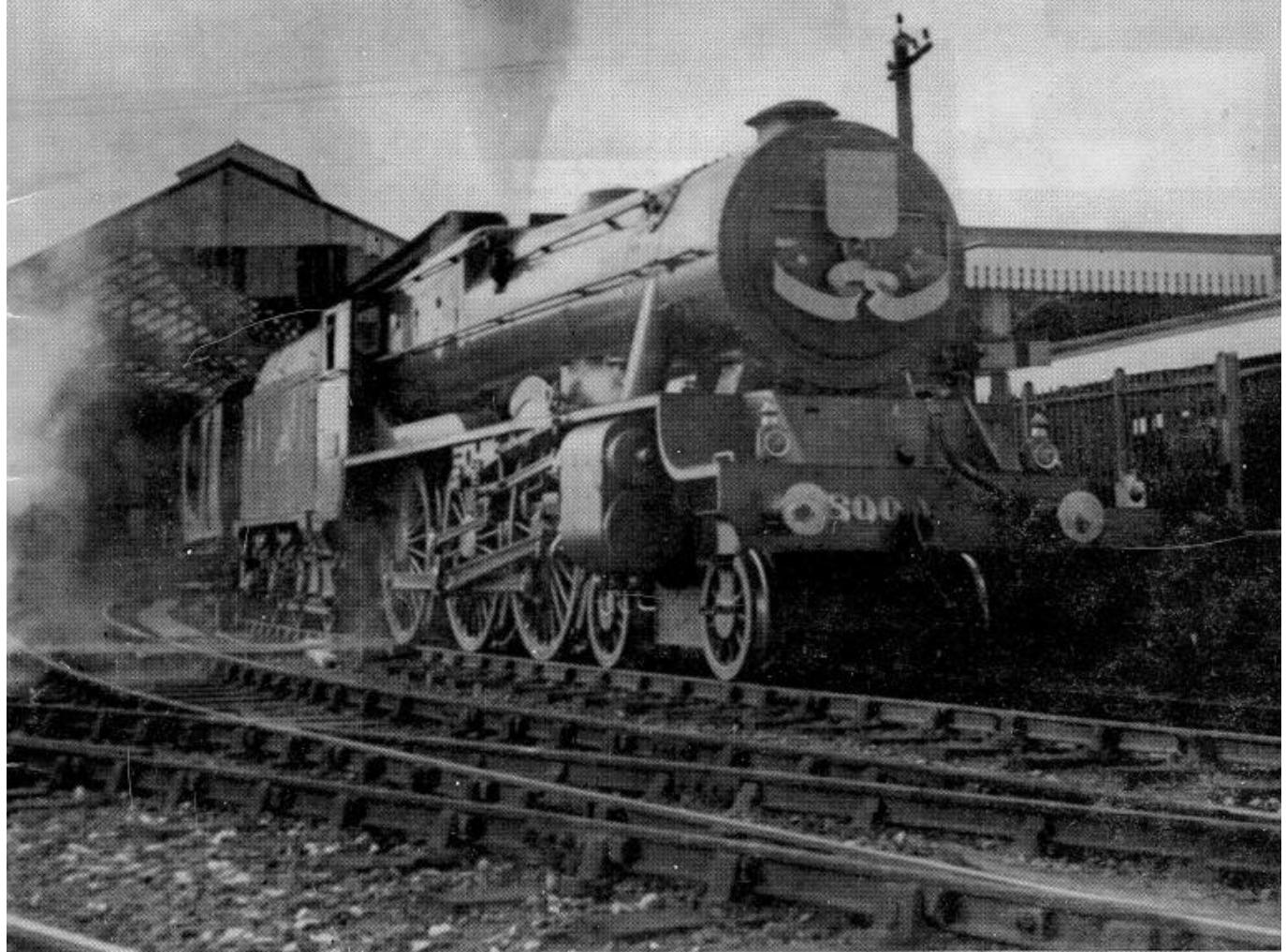
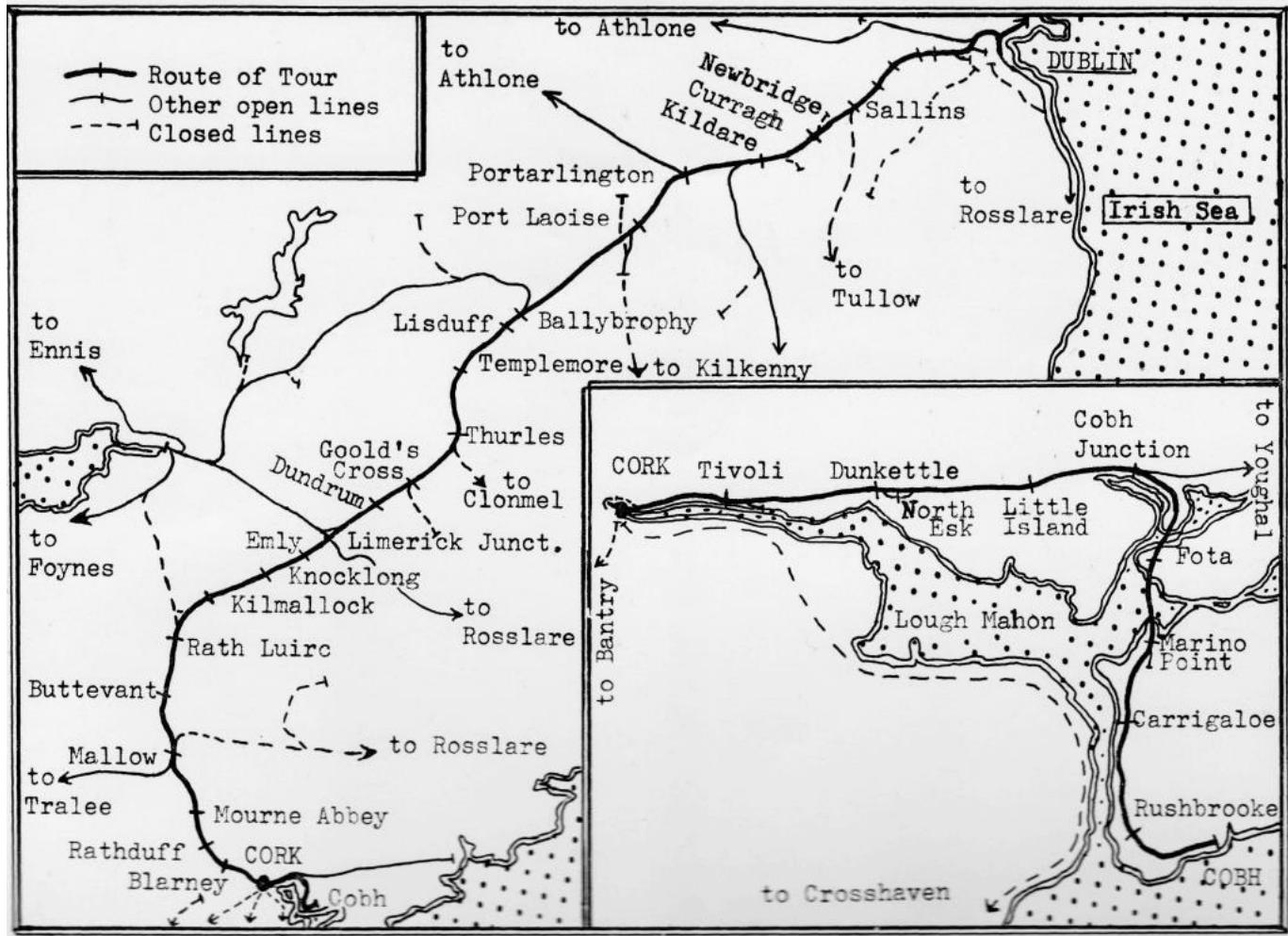


CORK 800



Souvenir Brochure



Front Cover: B1a class 4-6-0 800 arrives in Cork with the first of two trains run from Dublin to mark the Centenary of the opening to Cork. The train ran on 6th November 1949 and the all-in return fare was £1. (Photographer unknown)

Cork 800 Railtour

Saturday 11th May: Dublin - Cobh - Cork

Sunday 12th May: Cork - Dublin and Belfast

Monday 13th May: Belfast Central - Lisburn - Antrim - Belfast York Road - Larne Harbour - Whitehead (RPSI)

-0Oo-

Welcome aboard the Cork 800 Railtour, celebrating 21 years of the Society and 800 years of the City of Cork.

A special welcome is extended to two far-travelled parties. From the Federation des Amis des Chemis de Fer Secondaires (FACS) we welcome Chef de Groupe M. Dubray and Madame Dubray and their party of 39 including M. Merlin who will find his namesake at Whitehead. Vous êtes tous très bienvenus et nous espérons que vous allez trouver bon notre vapeur Irlandaise.

From Down Under we welcome Peter Keen's party from the Australian Railway Historical Society, direct from a 10-day Steam Safari in southern Africa. We hope you find it refreshing to get back to 'proper' 5 foot 3 gauge (sorry, we couldn't get an Australian translation of that bit!). All of the party are active workers for Steam Rail Victoria having just completed a 150,000 Australian Dollar overhaul of a 200-ton North British 4-6-4 of 1951.

Welcome, too, to all new supporters and RPSI regulars who have spread the word and helped make our big tours the success they have become. Your early indications of support this year were much appreciated. Thank you.

I should also say a big Thank You to both NIR and CIÉ for their continued co-operation in allowing our trains the virtual freedom of the island. We look forward to your continued co-operation and send our best thanks to railwaymen at all levels in both organisations for their valuable help.

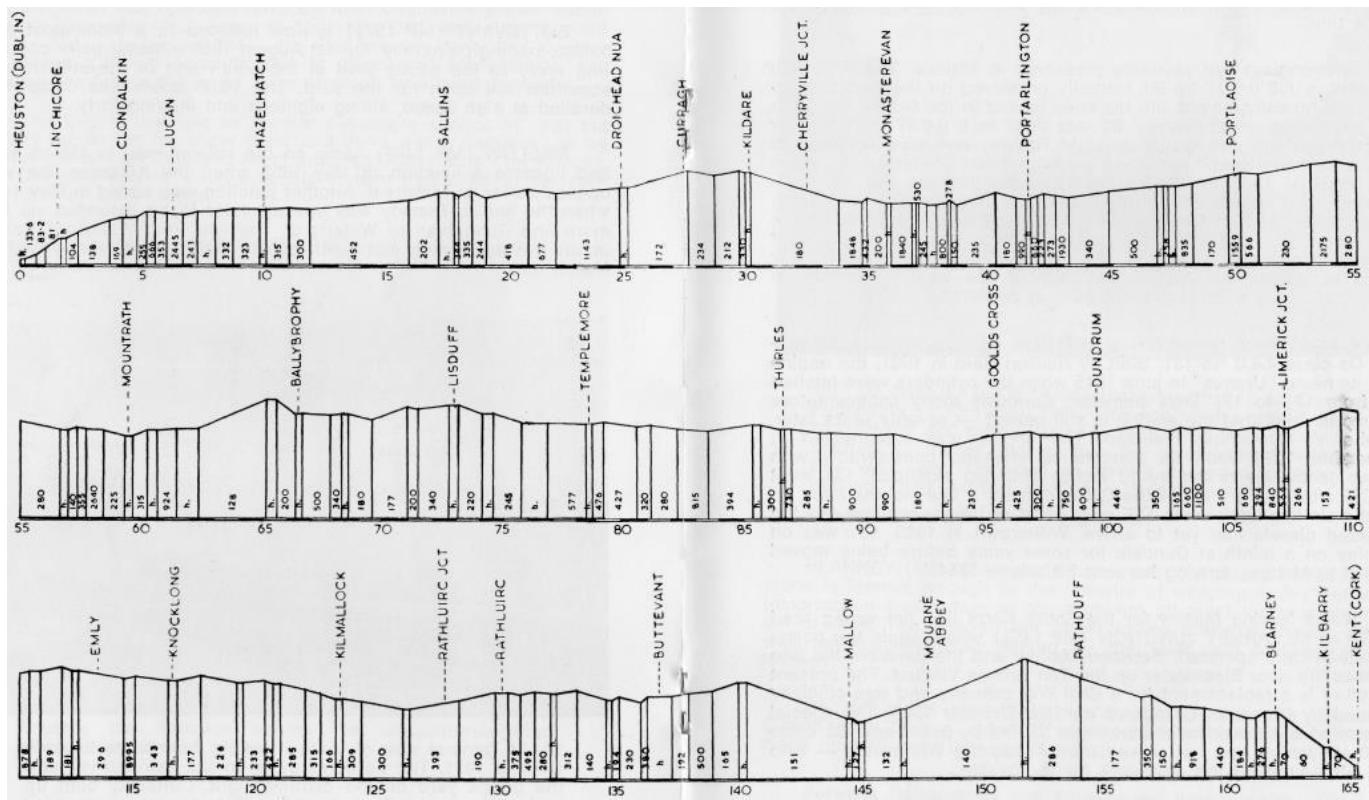
I wish you all a safe and enjoyable trip and trust you will find much of interest; if there is anything we can do to make things better, all you have to do is ask.

ERNIE GILMORE
RPSI Operations.

The Emigrant Trail

Connolly station is probably still settling into its new role as stopping point for the wee green trains that operate between Howth and Bray - the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) electrics.

Today's route leaves the Great Northern main line at West Road cabin where we begin to swing west and fall towards North Strand Junction to join the GS&WR line from North Wall. The mileposts on this section are on our right, measured from zero at Islandbridge Junction. Passenger trains operated between either Inchicore or Kingsbridge and North Wall between April 1901 and December 1906 when the service was diverted over the newly-opened connection to Amiens Street. Despite having seven trains each way, the service gave few connections and it was said that the trains never had more than two passengers! Not surprisingly the trains were withdrawn in October 1907. Rail Motor No 1 was transferred to this service from the Cashel branch (see later) and outlived the service, being scrapped in 1912. The North Wall to Kingsbridge boat trains ran until the onset of World War I while the other boat trains over this line (to Kingstown, later Dún Laoghaire) continued until Autumn 1980. The climb past DRUMCONDRA (MP 3½) is 1 in 95. Drumcondra and GLASNEVIN (MP 3) were both closed in 1907 but re-opening is possible under the Dublin Rapid Transport plan.



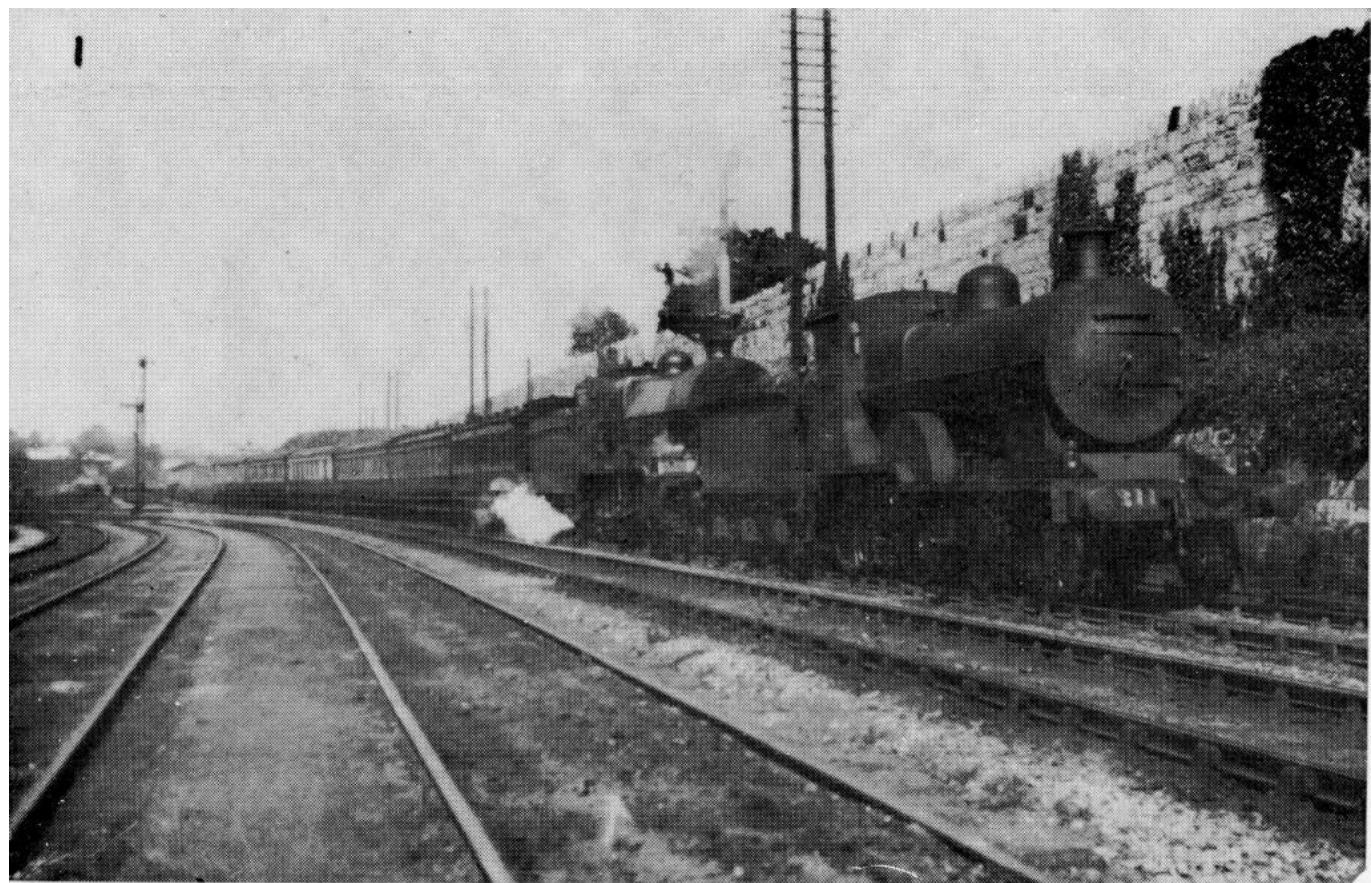
GLASNEVIN JUNCTION (MP 2¾) is electrically operated from West Road cabin. Originally the junction here faced the other way and gave a connection from Islandbridge Junction into the Midland Great Western's line to North Wall. But in 1901 the GS&WR built its own line (via Drumcondra) and the junction was disconnected for some years. In 1937, however, the GSR closed Broadstone and transferred all traffic to Westland Row. Trains now faced the prospect of climbing the 1 in 51 of the sharply curved Newcomen

Junction to Amiens Street link - a daunting task for a heavy Up train right at the end of its journey. To relieve the situation, Glasnevin Junction was relaid but reversed so that Midland trains could use the route we have just taken which is much more easily graded.

Our route now takes us below the Midland line and the remains of the line into Broadstone.

CABRA (MP 1 $\frac{3}{4}$) was once a busy cattle and livestock station but is now important as Dublin's principal bulk cement transfer point.

Immediately after the PHOENIX PARK TUNNEL (half a mile long) we cross the river Liffey and join the GS&WR Main Line at ISLANDBRIDGE JUNCTION (MP $\frac{3}{4}$). The layout here was altered at the end of 1983 to obviate the use of diamonds and slips; the trackwork now is a series of crossovers. The all-electric cabin at the junction controls Kingsbridge terminus and the main line as far as Inchicore (MP 1 $\frac{3}{4}$).



D10 class 4-4-0 311 pilots B2 4-6-0 406 past Islandbridge Junction with the 5 p.m. Down Cork and Kerry train sometime in 1934. 311 carries the N class boiler; 406 was involved in the Straboe collision referred to in the text. The fourth vehicle in the train is one of the Pullman Diners. The lines curving away to the left lead to Phoenix Park Tunnel.
(Locomotive Publishing Company, 87025)

Before leaving the locality mention should be made of CC1, Oliver Bulleid's Turf Burner of 1957. The loco made its main revenue-earning contribution while working freight transfers between North Wall (Point Store) and Kingsbridge. This happened in November 1958, six months after the great man had retired and at a time when the project was running short of energy, and a multiplicity of diesels was already to hand. The loco was finally scrapped in 1965.

A word about mileposts - quite simple on this tour. They are on the Down side throughout, from zero at Kingsbridge and numbered continuously to Cobh. The Down side is our left as we travel south.

Immediately after Islandbridge Junction, the 1 in 83 climb of the Gullet begins; the gradient eases to 1 in 138 at INCHICORE (MP 1 3/4) and continues thus to Clondalkin. The full gradient profile (as far as Cork) is set out in the centre pages.



A general view of the Cork end of Inchicore running shed in 1936 - the running lines are away to the left. Left to right the engines are D3 4-4-0 331; D2 4-4-0 322; J15A 0-6-0 704; D14 4-4-0 86 and J15 0-6-0 172. Another unidentified loco shunts coal wagons to the right of the coaling tower. 322 was the engine exchanged with the Great Northern in 1911 and 86 was to lose her original boiler and half-door smokebox just two years later. (Loco and General, 7572)

The first portion of the GS&WR to be opened was from Kingsbridge to Carlow in 1846 but the following year Carlow was on the branch when the line from Cherryville Junction to Ballybroughy was opened. The line reached Limerick Junction in 1848 (two months after the Waterford, Limerick and Western had passed the same spot). The temporary Cork terminus at Kilbarry was opened in 1849. It wasn't until late 1855 that the engineering problems with the 1,355 yard Cork tunnel were overcome and trains were able to use a terminus near the present station.

Before about 1877, it was the common practice to stop all Up trains at Inchicore and detach the engine. Special "Incline Brake Vans" were then attached to control the descent into the terminus. Although it simplified the shunting, the practice was frowned on by the Board of Trade who ordered that it be stopped.

At Inchicore we enter the section of line controlled by the Centralised Train Control (CTC) cabin at Dublin Connolly. When CTC was instituted in December 1975, all the cabins from Clondalkin to Mountrath (inclusive) were closed. Inchicore and Ballybroughy cabins control the main line extremities of the system. If the first section of the CTC (to a point near Lucan) is clear, our train will pass Inchicore down advance starter and from there forward our progress will be represented by a series of lights in the control box.

Running loops are provided at Hazelhatch, Sallins, Kildare, Portarlington and Port Laoise and these allow slower trains to be overtaken. The signalling allows for full braking from 90 mph. As our train approaches the last control signal before Ballybroughy, we will be offered in the usual way and from there forward signalling is by traditional block instruments.

The CTC also controls the Kilkenny line as far as Athy and via the ex-GS&WR Athlone branch to Ballinasloe as well as the Athlone - Knockcroghery and Athlone - Moate sections. There are plans to extend it along the main line to either Dundrum or the Junction.

The dip before HAZELHATCH (MP 10) often produced the first "sixty" in the Down direction - indeed, here in 1939, No.800 ran away with Joe Tighe to the tune of 74 mph.

SALLINS (MP 18) was formerly the junction for the Tullow branch which diverged on the Down side a little on the Cork side of the station. In 1900 the GS&WR began introducing slip coaches, all from Down trains. By 1914 the 18:15 from Kingsbridge slipped a coach here for Tullow. The branch closed to passengers in 1947 and to all traffic in 1959.

Specials were often run in connection with horseracing at Naas, the first station on the branch which was double-track to there. The stub of the branch was used for some years for storing disused coaches and there were rumours of a reopening to Naas in the late 1960s but nothing came of it. Sallins was the base for the Society's other J15, 186, for a while until the CTC trimmed the main line of many of its sidings and 186 moved to Mullingar.

NEWBRIDGE BALLAST PIT (MP 26½) on the Up side was formerly a quarry and after it was worked out its role changed to that of a dump. The cabin here closed in 1927 and the dumping of railway refuse stopped in September 1973. Access was by a facing point off the Up line controlled by a key kept in Kildare cabin.

CURRAGH (MAIN LINE) (MP 27½). The nearby Curragh Siding trailed from the main line a little on the Cork side of the station on the Down side. The siding was opened in 1856 by the GS&WR who also built the Racecourse Stand (designed by Sancton Wood who also designed Kingsbridge station, Inchicore Works and many of the main line stations). Nowadays the Curragh is famous for its racehorse breeding and training and the venue for many important races. Before independence it was the site of an important military camp. Old wagons were sometimes loaned to the Royal Artillery to practice loading and unloading their heavy equipment, [in 1904 the Company refused to loan the 11th Hussars a locomotive - they wanted to teach soldiers to drive!]

Before the advent of CTC, the Siding was visited on big race days by several specials (mostly from Dublin). A pilot engine was used to haul the specials along the Siding. In steam days Inchicore took a pride in turning out a brace of spotlessly-clean J15s to work

the specials. The pilot engine often finished the day off by double-heading the last return special back to Dublin. In latter days the A-class diesel pilot simply hung unimaginatively on the tail and got dragged home. Some trains still stop at the Main Line station for racegoers.

KILDARE (MP 30) is unusual in that the Up platform is on a loop off the running line apparently to allow large numbers of military personnel to entrain without blocking the main line. This loop was the scene of a sidelong collision, on 22nd June 1956. J15 No.122 was shunting at the Dublin end of the platform road and approaching the main line when it was struck by D2 4-4-0 No.328, returning from Port Laoise with the Inchicore Trial Train. The J15 was flung against the cutting and badly damaged but was repaired using bits off sister loco 147 and returned to traffic the following October. Loco 328 and the three leading six-wheel coaches were also damaged but less severely than the J15. Between 1900 and 1940, the 09:15 Down slipped a coach here - and another at Ballybroughy. This was the longest-lived slip working on the Great Southern. Until 1922 another slip coach came off the tail of the 06:40 Down Limited Mail here - it was worked forward to Waterford via Carlow at 07:24.



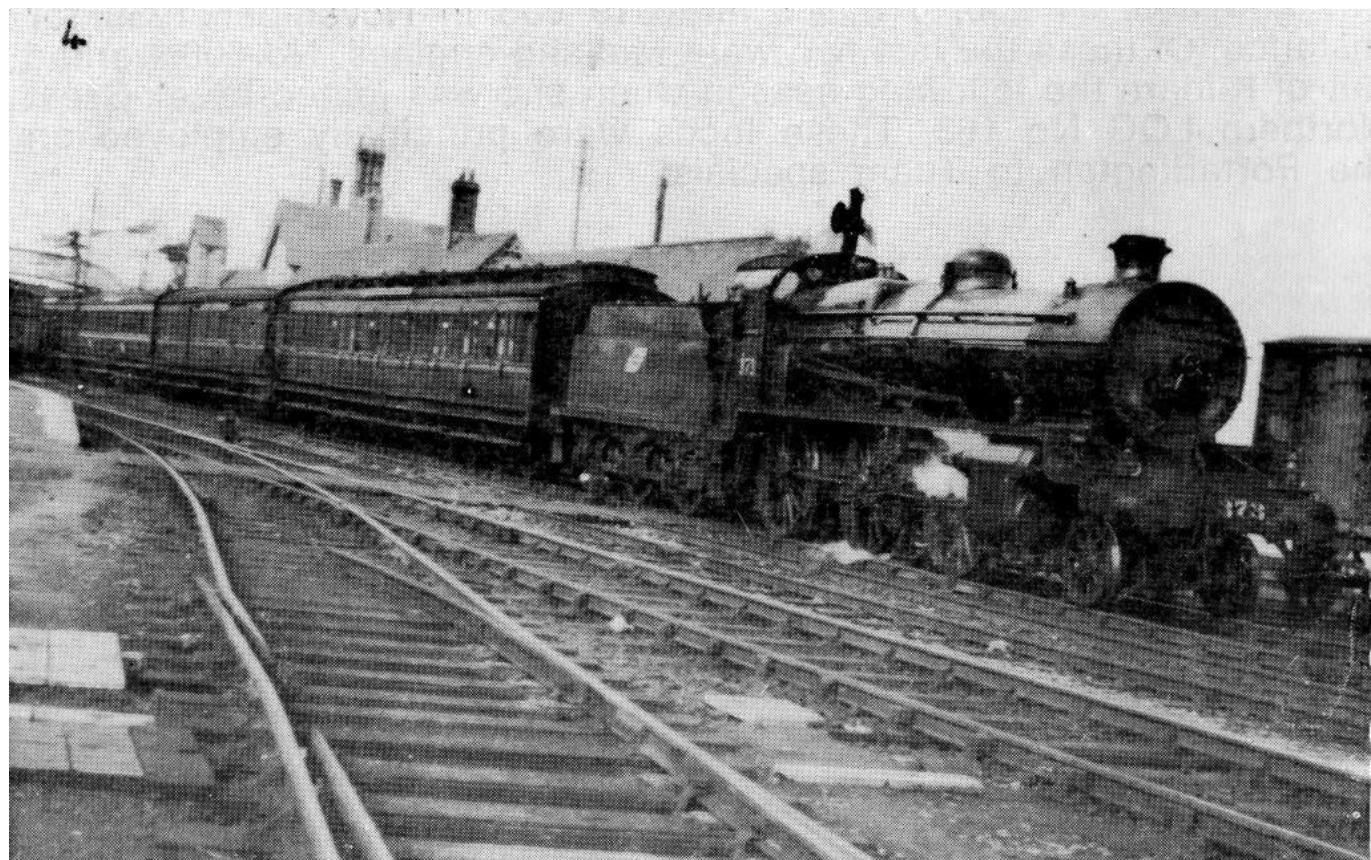
K1A class 2-6-0 398 stands in the Up platform loop at Kildare with a heavy train from the south in 1932. The loco is one of the Woolwiches assembled at Inchicore with six foot diameter drivers. The train may well be the 8:15 a.m. from Limerick via Nenagh and Bally (front portion) with a connection from Thurles on the tail. Again the distinctive shape of a Pullman diner is seen in the second vehicle. (Kelland Collection, 23156)

The Turf Burner's first trial run had been to Sallins on 13th August 1957 and next day it ventured as far as here. More conventional locos were shedded here during beet campaigns - J15s 171 and 255, J4 258, J18 588 and J19 606 in November 1959 for instance. Of these the last two were Midland engines. No.606 worked out of Kildare the

following season when she was joined by ex-Great Northern LQG No.163. These locos were principally employed on the Portarlington to Tuam specials.

CHERRYVILLE JUNCTION (MP 32½). Here the line to Carlow, Kilkenny and Waterford diverges on the Down side. Near here on 21st August 1983 the 17:50 Tralee-Heuston failed due to lack of fuel and the following 18:50 ex-Galway ran into the back of it killing seven passengers.

PORTARLINGTON (MP 41¾) is the junction for the Athlone branch (on the Up side) - the derelict cabin at the junction was Ireland's highest. At one time Portarlington could boast of a gas works near the junction and sidings on the Up side served Odlum's flourmills and McMahon's sawmills. There was enough work here, as recently as November 1961, to keep Deutz G602 permanently busy. The distinctive 'middle road' between the platforms was disconnected in September 1975. Sidings on the Down side at the Dublin end of the station once led to a turntable and this area was used to store the Athlone 'branch' train between turns; indeed the siding next the turntable was known as the "Tullamore Road".



K1 class 2-6-0 373 waits at Portarlington with the 8:15 a.m. from Limerick to Dublin on 19th March 1951. The Thurles portion is the compo marshalled next the loco. 373 was one of the original, MGWR-purchased, Woolwiches and was assembled at Broadstone with 5 foot 6 inch drivers. (Drew Donaldson)

In latter steam days, Midland 2-4-0s and 0-6-0s worked the 'branch', being sometimes replaced by ex-MGWR D6 4-4-0s 541 or 542 or, for a spell, by ex-Great Northern UG class 0-6-0 No.145. At one time a coach was slipped here for Athlone.

STRABOE (MP 48) was the setting for the Great Southern Railway's only fatal accident on 20th December 1944. During the last War, coal was in very short supply in Éire and

goods trains had to try to steam on a mixture of low grade coal, slack and turf dust compounded with tar or pitch. This rubbish led to many problems with steaming and it became standard practice to 'bail out' the fire at regular intervals, sometimes even in mid-section. Bailing out was the locoman's term for a prolonged fire-cleaning exercise to get the massive clinker off the firebars and out of the firebox before trying to get a fresh fire going with whatever bigger lumps he could find. Engines working passenger trains were given marginally better fuel and the best available went to the Mail engines.

This is the background to the events of Straboe. Our own 184 was not long out of the shops and reportedly in first class order. She was working a twenty-five wagon special of cattle to Roscrea from the Dublin market and had to 'bale out' at Sallins. The job had to be done again at Portarlington after a fitful journey from Sallins caused by other engines ahead having to bail out too. After restarting, maybe with a 'green' fire, a blow-up was called for at MP 44 to let the pressure build up to 150 lbs. Even so another stop was made at MP 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ and this time another bailing out was in order.

Meanwhile Caprotti-valved 4-6-0 No.406 on the Down Night Mail was making better progress and arrived in Portarlington on time with her 546 ton train. The train make-up is of interest: three Post Office vehicles, two passenger coaches, two PO tenders, two "Motor Vans", six brake vans, three fish vans and three meat vans - all fully fitted. At Portarlington another horse box was to be added to the rear of the train and 406 pulled the train ahead so that it could be hand shunted out of the Tullamore Road. The loco was now over a hundred yards beyond the Down starting signal. Somehow the footplate crew and the guard thought they had the road and the cavalcade duly left Portarlington.

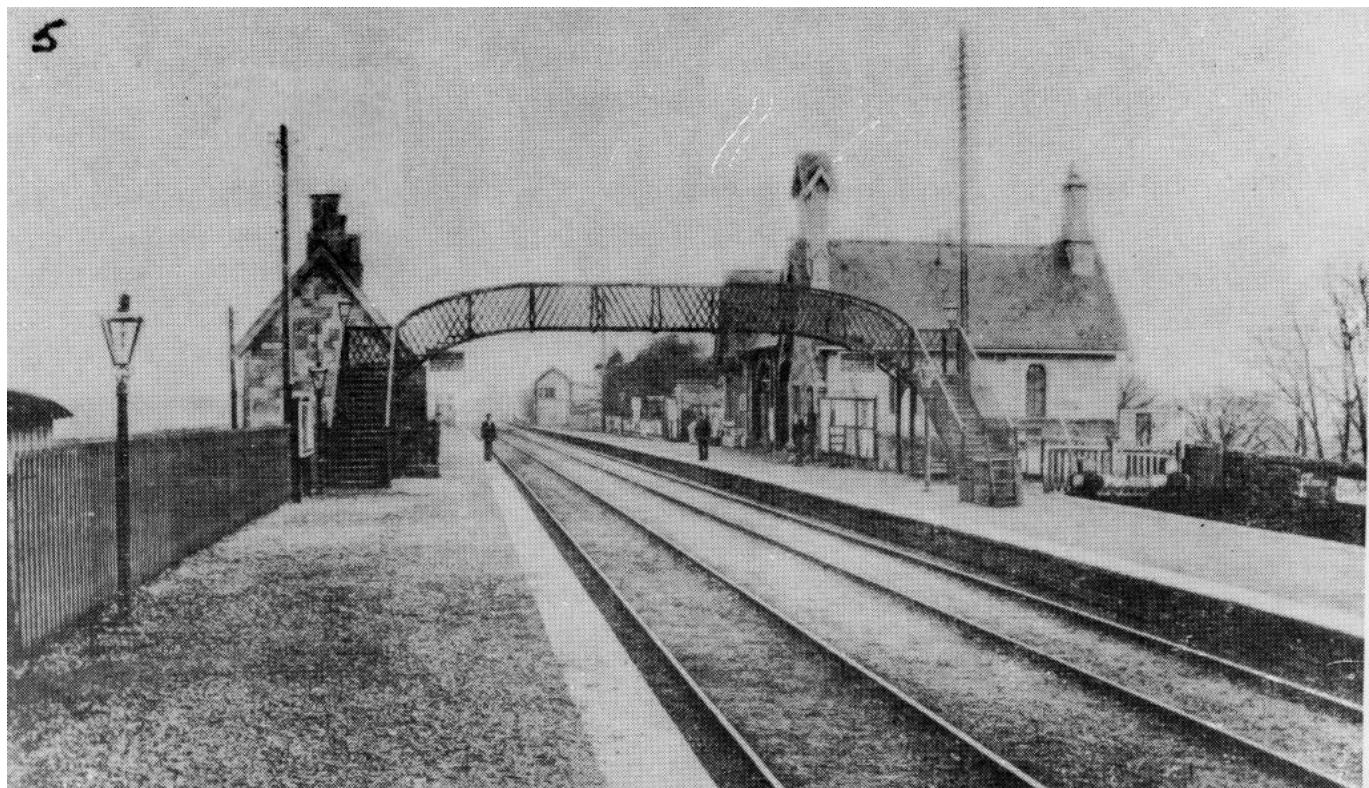
The cattle special was not protected by detonators and was overrun by 406. One postal worker was killed.

The line as far as PORT LAOISE (MP 51) was opened on 28th June 1847 when Sharp 2-2-2 "Grouse" arrived with a non-stop special from Kingsbridge in 76 minutes. Odlum's flour mill at the north end was served by a siding on the Up side, latterly worked by a three-lever ground frame. Originally the station was called "Maryborough" - after Mary Tudor - and the name was changed soon after independence; even so you will still hear railwaymen use the old name.

The branch to Kilkenny diverged on the Down side at the Cork end of the station and fell steeply to Conniberry Junction where the Mountmellick branch made a trailing connection. This latter branch then passed under the main line on its way to a busy cotton and wool town. At one time a through coach for Mountmellick was daily slipped at Maryborough and, passing through the station and onto the Kilkenny line, came to rest clear of the points for the Mountmellick branch. There a loco was waiting to back onto the coach and work it to Mountmellick. The branch was closed to regular traffic on 25th January 1947 but beet and occasional excursion traffic remained until final closure in 1962.

The Kilkenny branch itself was closed in 1962 also but a two and a half mile stub remains in use as the connection to Bord na Móna's Coolnamona bog. At one time Coolnamona was despatching thirty wagons of peat moss per day to the south of England. A fine three-road shed was built in 1912 on the Down side, below us near

Conniberry Junction. Although closed in 1958, the locos off the Works Trial Trains continued to use the turntable and water tank.



A postcard view of Maryborough, looking north from the Up platform with the Kilkenny bay just visible on the right.

The three-foot gauge lines visible around here, and which pass under the main line at CLONKEEN (MP 53½), are operated by Bord na Móna (Irish Turf Board).

The Kilkenny to Port Laoise line was built from the Kilkenny end and was originally destined to meet the main line at MOUNTRATH (MP 59½). Once the line reached Abbeyleix, however, it was decided to build a longer but more easily graded line to Maryborough.

In 1873 there was a railway-operated peat works at Mountrath powered by Bury loco 22 of 1847. The works produced compressed sods - some were tried in locomotives while others were used in a Siemens regenerative gas furnace at Inchicore.

After five years, McDonnell admitted that simply compressing the turf had added nothing to its calorific value. It took 100 tons of turf to do the same work as 44 tons of coal. The plant was dismantled in 1878 and nothing further was heard of turf as locomotive fuel until the chronic shortages of 1940.

Mountrath's other claim to fame dates from the days of 'bailing out' referred to earlier. One of the 800 class 4-6-0s was bailed out here, was parked in the yard on the Down side behind the goods store and forgotten about when the crew booked off and went home. The engine was effectively "lost" for a few days!

BALLBROPHY (MP 66¾) opened on 1st September 1847 and became a junction in 1857 when the branch to Roscrea was opened. The high cabin on the Down (island) platform is a 1922 replacement for two cabins (North and South). Until the late Thirties

the 00:15 Down dropped its second slip coach here for Limerick. Before the coming of mainline railcars in the mid-1950s, Dublin to Limerick (via Roscrea and Nenagh) trains often carried a Thurles or Clonmel portion - usually a twelve-wheel compo like the Society's 861. This was marshalled next the engine leaving Dublin and worked forward from Bally by a mogul or even a 4-6-0. After the Limerick train was turned over to the railcars, a Coey 4-4-0 worked a connecting train along the main line. This often involved twenty miles of hard running in order to keep in front of the following Cork train, booked non-stop to Thurles.

LISDUFF (MP 72½) is CIÉ's main ballast quarry (the other being Lecarrow on the Athlone-Claremorris line). This quarry opened in 1913 when the Company failed to extend its Laffans Bridge quarry on the Thurles-Clonmel line and moved operations to here. Lisduff's platforms were demolished in early 1984, having been closed to passengers in 1963.

Near here, the line subsided shortly before it was due to be opened and MacNeill, the civil engineer, bought up a plantation of young fir trees. These he had cut and laid as a raft over the offending bog for something over half a mile. Special trains of "eminent personages" were stopped there and shunted over and back along the section to demonstrate the floating motion of the raft!

TEMPLEMORE (MP 78¾) is now the location of the principal police (Gardaí) training school.

Several mileposts are out of place in the next section, so be warned not to claim excessive speeds.

THURLES (MP 86½) was for many years the principal steam shed between Dublin and Cork and remained a steam outpost long after many another had closed, providing engines for the Clonmel branch, Lisduff ballasts and beet specials. Loco 114 regularly worked a one-coach workman's special to the quarry at Laffan's Bridge; a working curiously without an obvious return. During the 1960/1 beet season both 461 and 462 visited here with the beet specials from Waterford. In April 1962, J15 195 was the local pilot and J9 251 was working ballast trains. The 1962/3 beet season saw no less than seven J15s shedded here - 116, 118, 124, 125, 186, 195 and 253 along with J9 249. At the end of steam on CIÉ, 104, 125, and 195 were left "in store" at Thurles and were later joined by J4 262. All four were hauled to Inchicore for scrapping in January 1965 when the shed was converted to a bus garage.

For some time 800 "Maedhbh" was stored here, to be joined later by 801. On 25th August 1962, A48 hauled the pair to Port Laoise and B112 took over, but the latter expired at Portarlington and the two 4-6-0s were marooned for some days.

Until 1901 the GS&WR Signalling Department had its works on the Down side just north of the road overbridge. At one time the 06:40 Down Limited Mail slipped a coach here for Clonmel.

THURLES SUGAR FACTORY (MP 87¼). These extensive sidings are reached off the Down line and serve the factory of Comhlucht Siúicre Éireann (Irish Sugar Company). Once three Orenstein and Koppel 0-4-0Ts were based here. After Thurles No.3 was scrapped, its place was taken by No.3 from Mallow factory and was the last CSÉ loco in

steam at the end of the 1962/3 beet campaign. Recently CSÉ diesels by Ruston & Hornsby and CIÉ G class engines have shunted the yard.



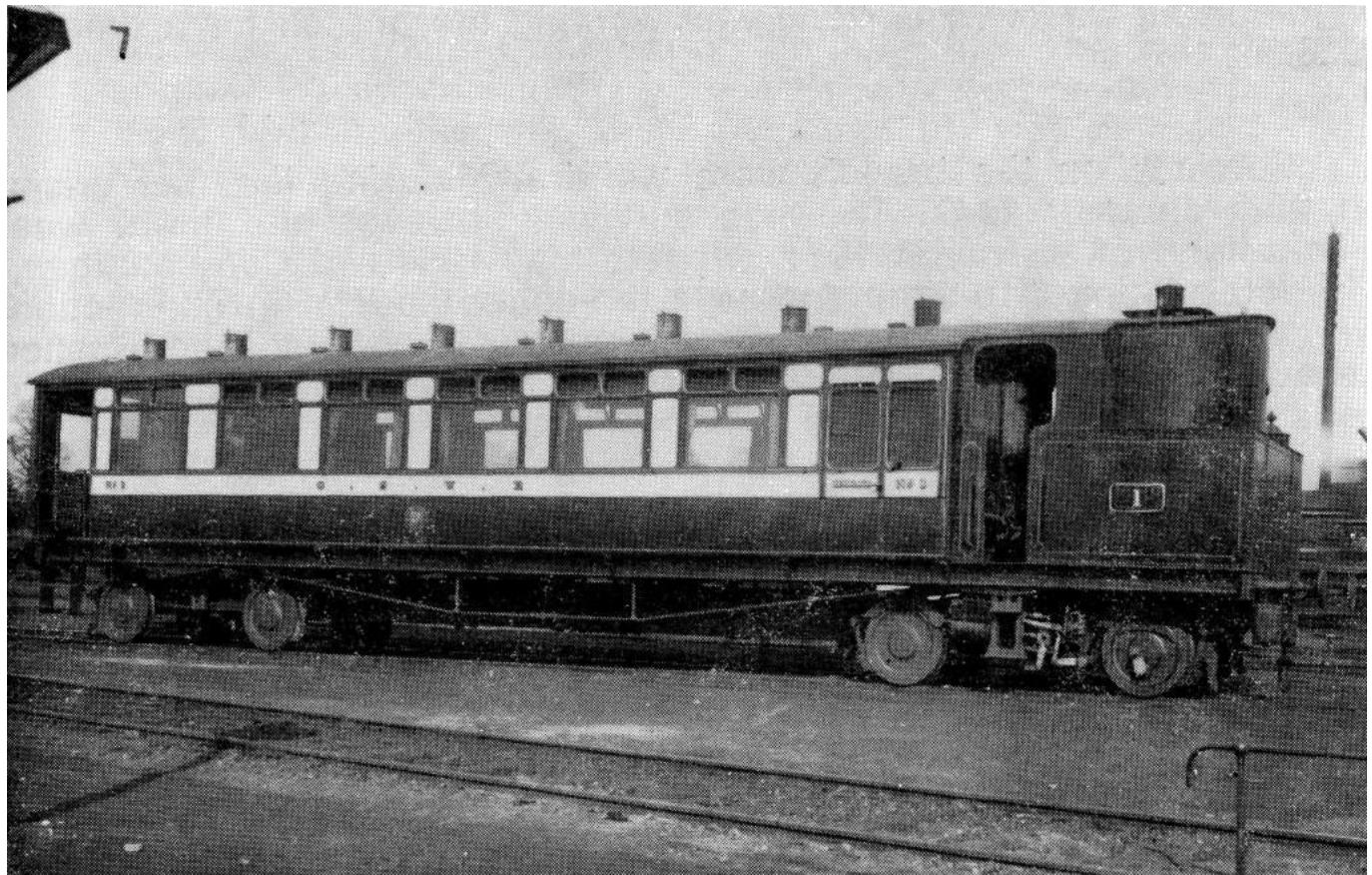
B1A class 4-6-0 801 "Macha" pauses at Thurles with an Amiens Street to Cork IRRS special in 1949. The smokebox door has been disfigured with the mountings for the Centenary headboard. (Kelland Collection, 23281)

THURLES JUNCTION (MP 87¾). Here the Clonmel branch diverged on the Down side. Despite having a railbus on it in the early 1950s and being very busy in the beet season, the line closed to passengers in 1963. The last train consisted of A22 hauling a two-piece railcar previously displaced when the Harcourt Street line closed. An alternative passenger service was provided by Shamrock Bus Company. The line closed completely in 1967.

GOOLD'S CROSS (MP 95) was once the junction for the Cashel branch which diverged at the Cork end of the station on the Down side. The Rock of Cashel was the ancient seat of the Kings of Munster, dating back to the fifth century though the oldest building surviving is a tenth-century round tower.

Steam railmotors originated in Autumn 1902 on the London and South Western Railway to the design of Dugald Drummond and entered service on the Fratton to East Southsea branch the following June. In December 1904 Coey produced a very similar rigid-framed, railmotor at Inchicore for the opening of the Cashel Branch. Unfortunately Railmotor No.1, like almost all of its kind, suffered from excessive vibration, the seats were uncomfortable and the lighting was by "noisome oil pots", In any event the railmotor's six first-class and 48 third class seats were insufficient for the traffic and in mid-1905 Railmotor 1 was transferred to the Drumcondra Link Line and the worthy citizens of

Cashel began to travel in six-wheelers hauled by 47 class (later E3) 0-4-4 tanks. Cashel was troubled by a poor water supply and it was the custom to use a redundant engine tender to bring the day's supply from Goold's Cross. Water was transferred from tender to loco tank by means of a hand pump. Drewry petrol-engined four-wheel railcar 386 was working the branch for a time in 1928.



Railmotor 1 photographed in 1904 when new - the motion has been dismantled, perhaps for delivery to Thurles. The forward-driving 8¾" x 13" cylinders are visible behind the loco footstep. (Locomotive Publishing Company, 87083)

Services on the branch were withdrawn during the fuel crisis on 25th January 1947. The line survived, however, and there was a final flurry of activity in 1954. On 16th May 1954 two Coey engines, J15 256 piloting D10 311, worked a ten-coach special in connection with a festival on the Rock. Two football excursions from Cashel were organised before final abandonment in September 1954. Lifting began in November 1958.

It is of interest to note that originally the line to Cork was planned to run via Cashel and thence south of the Galtees via Cahir and Mitchelstown. Detailed surveys showed this apparently obvious route to be unsuitable and the line was built as we know it. Although the official name of the Company was always Great Southern and Western, it was sometimes known as the Dublin and Cashel Railway. Remarkably GS&WR shares on the Dublin Stock Exchange were known as "Cashels" until the amalgamation of 1925.

A derailment at DUNDRUM (MP 99½) led to an unusual diversion in 1958. The 15:30 Day Mail from Cork was diverted via Limerick and Nenagh to Ballybrophy. Meanwhile the 14:25 down and 18:00 from Cork were diverted via Clonmel and Thurles. Curiously the latter arrived in Kingsbridge two hours ahead of the Mail, which had left two and a half hours before it!

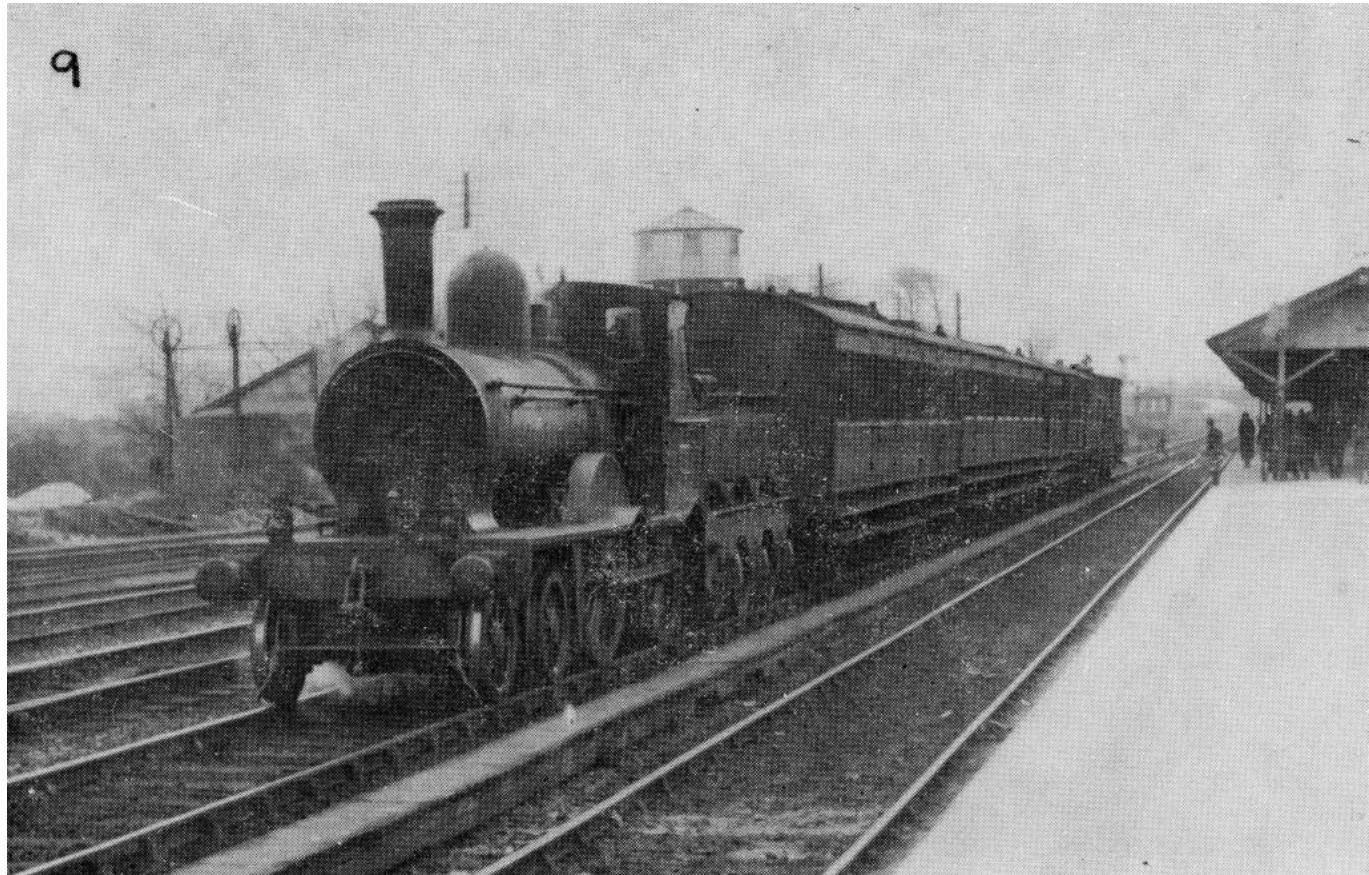


K1 class 2-6-0 372 wheels a Cabra to Rath Luirc empty cattle train through Dundrum on 7th July 1957. This was the original Woolwich which, although completed on 9th April 1925 (four months after the Amalgamation), was painted in MGWR glossy black, lined red and lettered MGWR with crests on the tender and numbered MGWR 49. It was to be the first of Class D2. Apparently the engine was wheeled out for a photograph and just as promptly brought back into Broadstone Works and repainted as GSR 410 though it was renumbered 372 before entering traffic. The tender, however, retained the number 410. Has anybody got a copy of the 9/4/1925 event? (Drew Donaldson)

KYLE LEVEL CROSSING (MP 106½) marks the junction, on the Up side for the Limerick Direct Curve. This line was opened to freight traffic in October 1967 and passenger traffic (following a delay in delivery of equipment) in June 1968.

LIMERICK JUNCTION (MP 107) must be well known to anyone who has ever read a book on Irish railways. The reversals once required of each main line train were obviated in May 1967 when additional crossovers were laid. At the end of steam on CIÉ, in January 1963, the shed here had five J15s in store - 106, 125, 130, 164 and 186 together with J9 351. By early 1964 all except 106 and 125 had departed but these too went for scrapping in July 1965.

For those regular railtours patrons who have been following the saga of ex- Sligo Leitrim railcar B in recent brochures, you will be pleased to know that the vehicle is stored here - though it is only fair to say that it is in poor condition these days. In happier times, 2509 (as she is now) had a regular working out of the Junction. For a very short time, between 16th and 23rd December 1964, 2509 worked the 13:33 to Mallow. This was a connection out of the 10:45 Down but had no balancing work and the car returned light to the Junction. Sadly 2509 failed on the 23rd and the turn was subsequently worked by an A-Class and compo, though this was later replaced by a bus to Buttevant.



D19 class 4-4-0 8 arrives at Limerick Junction with an Up main line train and prepares to set back to the platform probably sometime in the mid-thirties. Known as either "Kerry engines" or "Kenmare engines", the 2 class were Ireland's first examples of the swing link bogie - an idea imported from America by McDonnell. 8 was later rebuilt with a superheated boiler and worked as Loco Store pilot at Cork, sometimes assisting to Blarney. (Photographer Unknown)

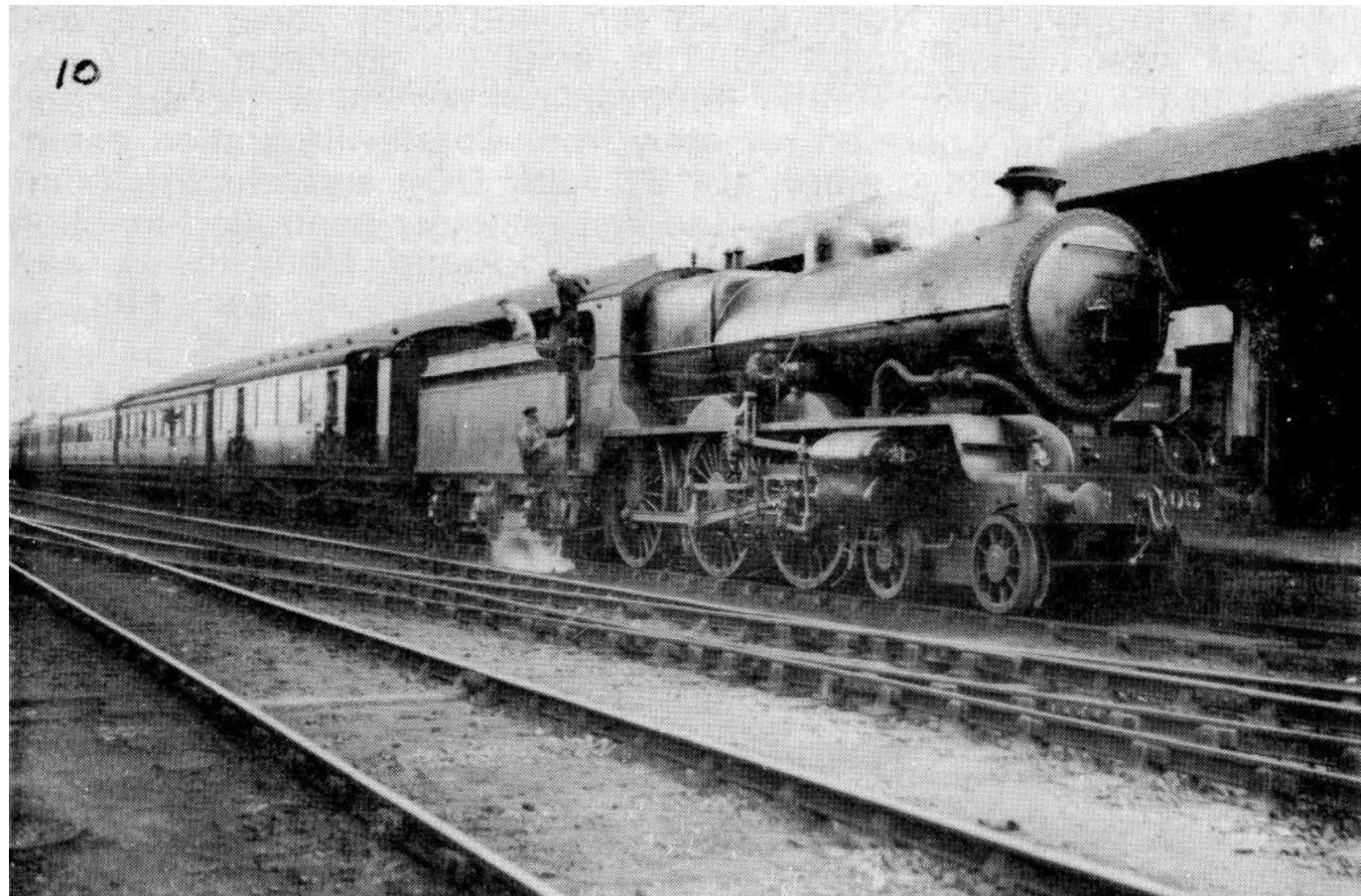
The cabin at EMLY (MP 113½) was closed on 17th July 1964, when the level crossing at the Dublin end of the station went automatic.

Both KNOCKLONG (MP 117) and KILMALLOCK (MP 124) were closed to traffic on 7th March 1977, the crossovers at Kilmallock were removed in early 1978 and the cabin closed on 20th April 1982.

The falling grade through Kilmallock was the setting for the record-breaking speed exploit of No.800 while on trial; her maximum speed has been variously quoted as 93, 95 and 98 mph.

At CHARLEVILLE JUNCTION (MP 128½) the "direct" line from Limerick via Patrickswell, Croom and Bruree came in on the Up side. The line was built to give the GS&WR access to the Waterford, Limerick and Western stronghold of Limerick. Between 1871 and 1908 the junction was triangular; this allowed goods trains to run directly from Dublin to Limerick and vice versa. Once the GS&WR had taken over the WL&WR in 1901, the need for this North Curve disappeared though the North Cabin remained until about 1906 and the track wasn't lifted until 1908. The remaining junction cabin was burned in the Civil War. Rather than replace the cabin, the junction was simplified and operated remotely from Charleville station cabin. A hand-generator (1.2 amps at 100 volts DC) and electric point motors came into use in 1924 - the first remotely controlled junction in

Ireland (though soon copied at Sligo and Monkstown) and possibly the first in the world to be powered by a hand generator.



B2 class 4-4-0 405 stands at Limerick Junction with the Up Day Mail sometime in the early 1930s. This was the engine which worked the re-opening special for the Blackwater Viaduct. Delivered as a four-cylinder superheated engine in 1922, here 405 has the distinctive outside steam pipes fitted about 1930 in an attempt to make her more economical without an expensive conversion to two cylinders. Just such a rebuild was completed in July 1933. (Photographer Unknown)

The Croom line lost its regular passenger service in 1934 but a daily goods ran for some years and there was a frequent use by pilgrim trains from Cork and Kerry areas to Claremorris (for Knock). The line also carried a considerable cement traffic during the construction of Cork airport.

The branch was unexpectedly visited by 800 returning to Inchicore from Cork on a proving run; fortunately the engine stopped before reaching the first overbridge which certainly wasn't built with 800 in mind.

While Charleville Junction is in County Limerick, CHARLEVILLE (RATH LUIRC) (MP 129½) is in County Cork.

BUTTEVANT (MP 137¼) is now reduced to a block post and ballast loading point only. On 1st August 1980 a facing point controlling entry to the goods yard at the south end of the station was somehow left open for the yard. The 10:00 Down was completely derailed at high speed, killing eighteen and injuring forty.



J15 class 0-6-0 164 is signalled off the Croom Branch at Rath Luirc Junction with 15:00 Limerick to Cork Cement special on 2nd August 1957. The main line curves away towards the Junction behind the uncounterweighted, electrically-operated signal. (Drew Donaldson)

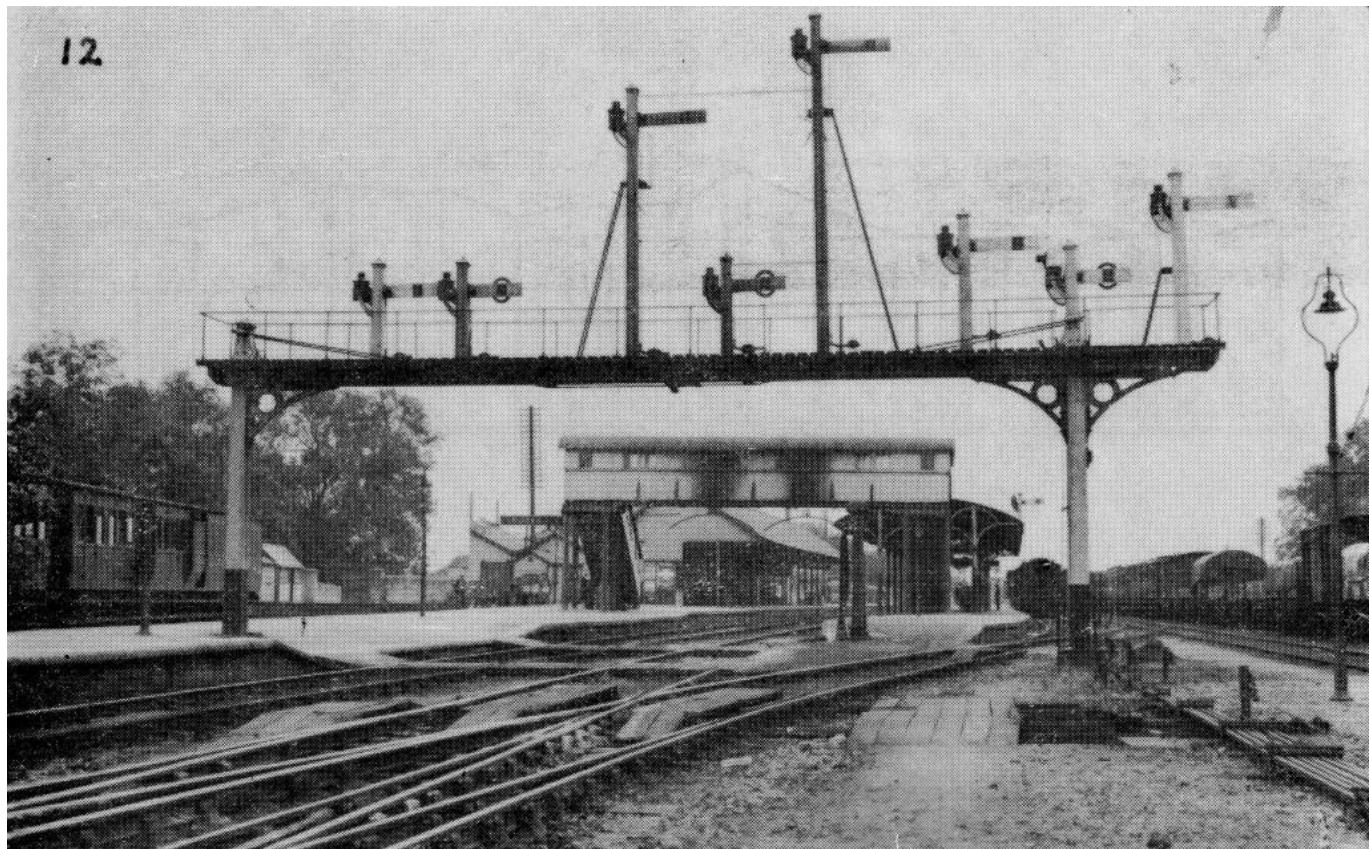
MALLOW (MP 144½) came on the railway map in March 1849 and became a junction in May 1853 when the Killarney line was opened as far as Millstreet. Another junction was added in May 1860 when the line to Fermoy was opened, later to be extended via Lismore and Dungarvan to Waterford. The line from Waterford trailed in on the Down side just north of the station and was closed in March 1967.

In March 1961 J15 255 was the station pilot here while the 19627 63 Beet Season saw J15's 105 and 133, J9 250 and J4 262 in use. At the end of steam on CIÉ J15's 109 and 116 were stored here for a time.

Two engines are currently preserved in Mallow. The 1875-built resident is J30 0-6-0T No.90, formerly preserved on the Fermoy platform but recently moved into the shed leased to the Great Southern Railway Preservation Society. 90 was built as a 0-6-4T railmotor for the Castleisland and Gortatlea Light Railway and was designed to haul a six-wheel coach and a few wagons. It was converted to a more conventional loco in 1890. It spent some time on the Fermoy-Mitchelstown branch and, in the fifties, was shedded at Rocksavage, Cork, and worked on Cork quays and Ford's siding. It achieved some fame working the Timoleague and Courtmacsherry branch in West Cork with sister loco No 100. Withdrawn in 1959, there were early plans to display the engine at Cobh but she went to Fermoy in early 1962 before coming to Mallow in September 1965.

A much more recent arrival in Mallow has been ex-Great Northern Qs class 4-4-0 No.131. Built by Neilson Reid in 1901, the engine lost its name "Uranus" in June 1915

when the cylinders were bushed up from 18½ to 17½ inch diameter. Curiously many commentators seem to think that the engine is still named - seventy years later; maybe it's something Freudian. The engine was superheated in November 1920 when its appearance changed considerably with boiler centre-line raised by 10 inches and cab extended. 131 went to CIÉ after the demise of the GNR and spent a few months back on hard main line work when CIÉ were short of bigger engines and the dreaded diesels had yet to arrive. Withdrawn in 1963, 131 was on display on a plinth at Dundalk for some years before being moved by rail to Mallow, arriving here on 30th June 1984.



A general view of Mallow looking from North towards Cork in 1931. The Fermoy bay is on the extreme left and the goods yard on the extreme right. Curiously both Up and Down main lines have loading gauges suspended from the footbridge - each with a little bell attached. Note too the tarpaulined wagon in the yard and the gantry shunting signals with rings attached. (Locomotive & General, 7081)

Trains leaving Mallow for the South Kerry line run wrong road as far as KILLARNEY JUNCTION (MP 145½) where again the points are electrically operated. Between Mallow and the junction, the line crosses the river Blackwater on the Ten Arches Viaduct. The present structure is a replacement for a Civil War casualty and was officially opened by President Crograve on 16th October 1923. The special conveying the Presidential party was hauled by brand-new B2 class 4-6-0 405 which had just arrived from Armstrong Whitworths - who had also supplied the steelwork for the bridge.

The signal cabin at MOURNE ABBEY (MP 148½) was closed on 4th December 1960 when automatic intermediate single-aspect colour light signals were installed. Access to the goods siding on the Down side was controlled by a ground frame until the station was closed to all traffic in 1963.

BLARNEY (MP 159½) was a block post but closed in 1963. The place is famous enough in the laments of weeping exiles but was important in steam days as the dropping off point for pilot engines out of Cork. The village itself (away in the valley on the Up side) was more conveniently served by the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway.



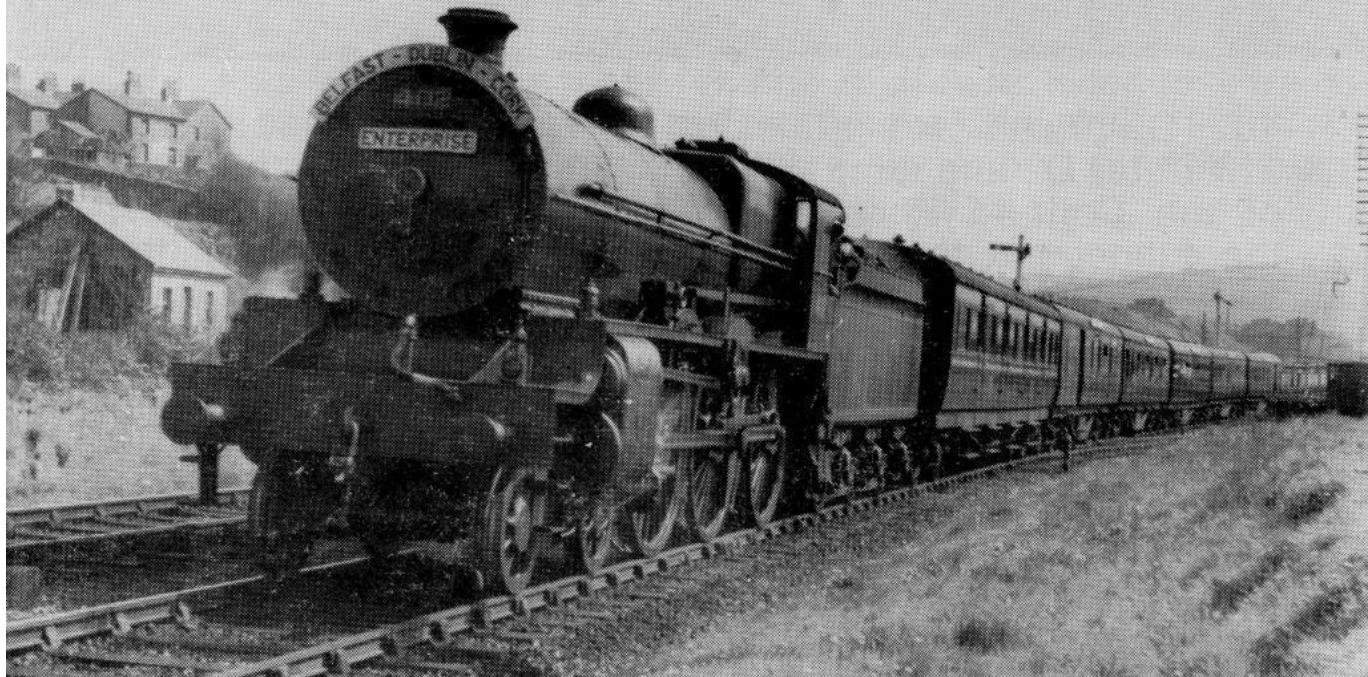
D2 class 4-4-0 332 passes Blarney with 7:15 a.m. Down Perishable on 13th April 1955. This engine was rebuilt with superheater and piston valves in 1926 when the boiler was pitched 2½ inches higher than her superheated sisters. She was later described as having a tendency to roll, making firing difficult and not a free steamer. (Drew Donaldson)

RATHPEACON (MP 161½) was the terminus for the 'runs of goods' from Cork - rakes of wagons were worked up to here and made up into main line goods trains.

Between Rathpeacon and Kilbarry, we pass over the 100 foot high KILNAP VIADUCT.

At KILBARRY (MP 163½) were sidings on either side of the line for the Electricity Supply Board; that on the Down side lasted longer than the Up and was removed in mid-1965. Kilbarry was the original Cork terminus from 1849 until the tunnel just south of here was opened in 1855. Some remains of the original terminus can be seen on the Up side.

Although not the first tunnel in Ireland (that was on the Cork and Bandon), this was the longest and most difficult yet made. It is built through hard rock and the engineer once reported that progress was "only three and half feet per week, working day and night". 'Work on the tunnel was suspended for three years but, despite some fatalities and disputes about the site of the station at the lower end, the tunnel was completed in April 1855. Delays in building a passenger station meant that arrangements had to be made to receive passenger trains in the goods yard.



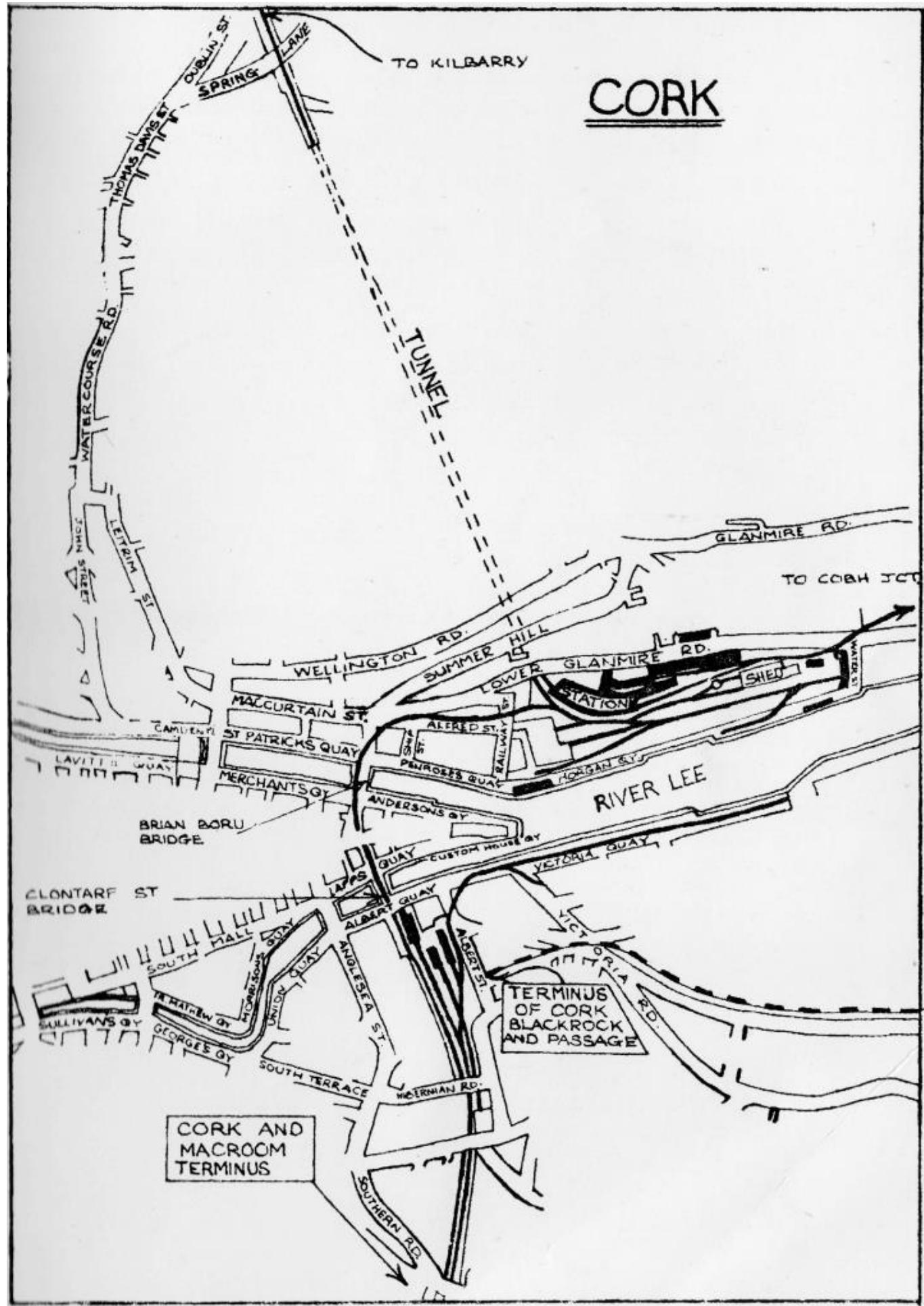
B2 class 4-6-0 402 climbs past Kilbarry with the Up Enterprise (1:15 p.m. ex-Cork) in April 1952. The five-coach Great Northern set of coaches has been strengthened by the distinctive MGWR all-first next the engine. Mark Foley's epic run with this engine is described in the text. (Kelland Collection, 23164)

It is quite an experience to rush down the 1,355 yard tunnel with the brakes hard on, imagining the train accelerating on the 1 in 70, away and down, only to burst suddenly upon the bright curving station and race round the platform before coming to a stand. As one driver put it after a particularly hectic arrival with a Woolwich mogul (not noted for their good brake), "Ah, sure it's not really a terminus anyway!" As recently as 12th March 1983, however, the theory was put to the test when diesel-electric 032 ran away with the 23:30 North Wall - Cork liner. The train ran through the goods yard, through the buffer stops, demolished a boundary wall and came to rest embedded in an oil storage tank - which was fortunately empty for maintenance work.

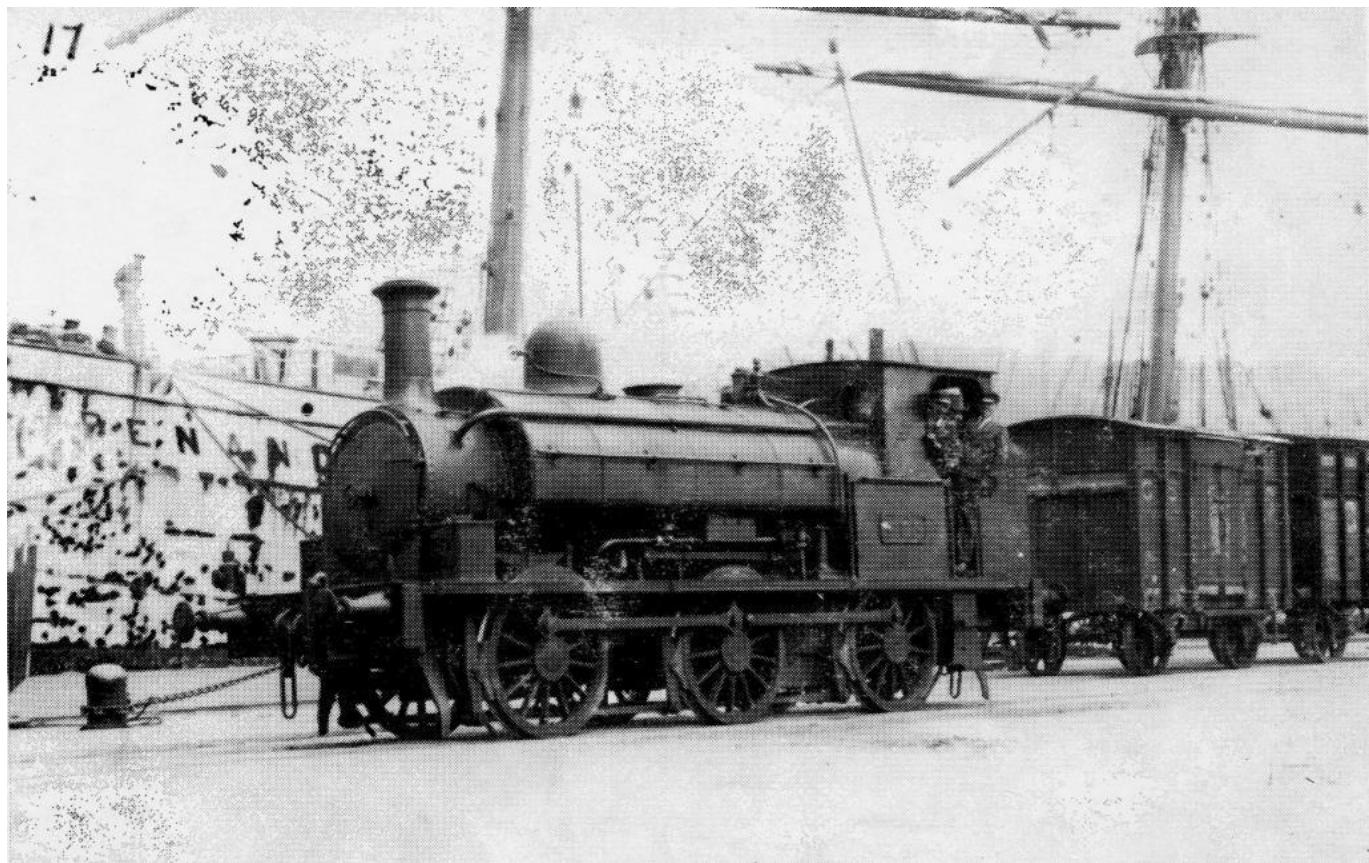
As we emerge from Cork tunnel we pass under the former Cork and Youghal Railway whose terminus was at Summerhill, high above the present track level, but more of this in the section dealing with the Youghal and Cobh lines.

Originally trains up through the tunnel were banked but later double-heading was the order of the day and sometimes the heavy Up Day Mail required triple-heading - perhaps a J15 and Coey 4-4-0 assisting a 400 class. The J15 would drop off at Blarney and the 4-4-0 at Ballybroughy. The 800s changed all this and succeeded in lifting mammoth loads up the notorious bank which starts right at the platform ends.

CORK



When diesels began to work on the main line, banking was again resorted to but numerous derailments in the tunnel put a stop to that. Since the diesels are not fitted with sanders, it was the practice for a time to run a 30-ton brake van through the tunnel before the departure of main line trains to sand the road for them.

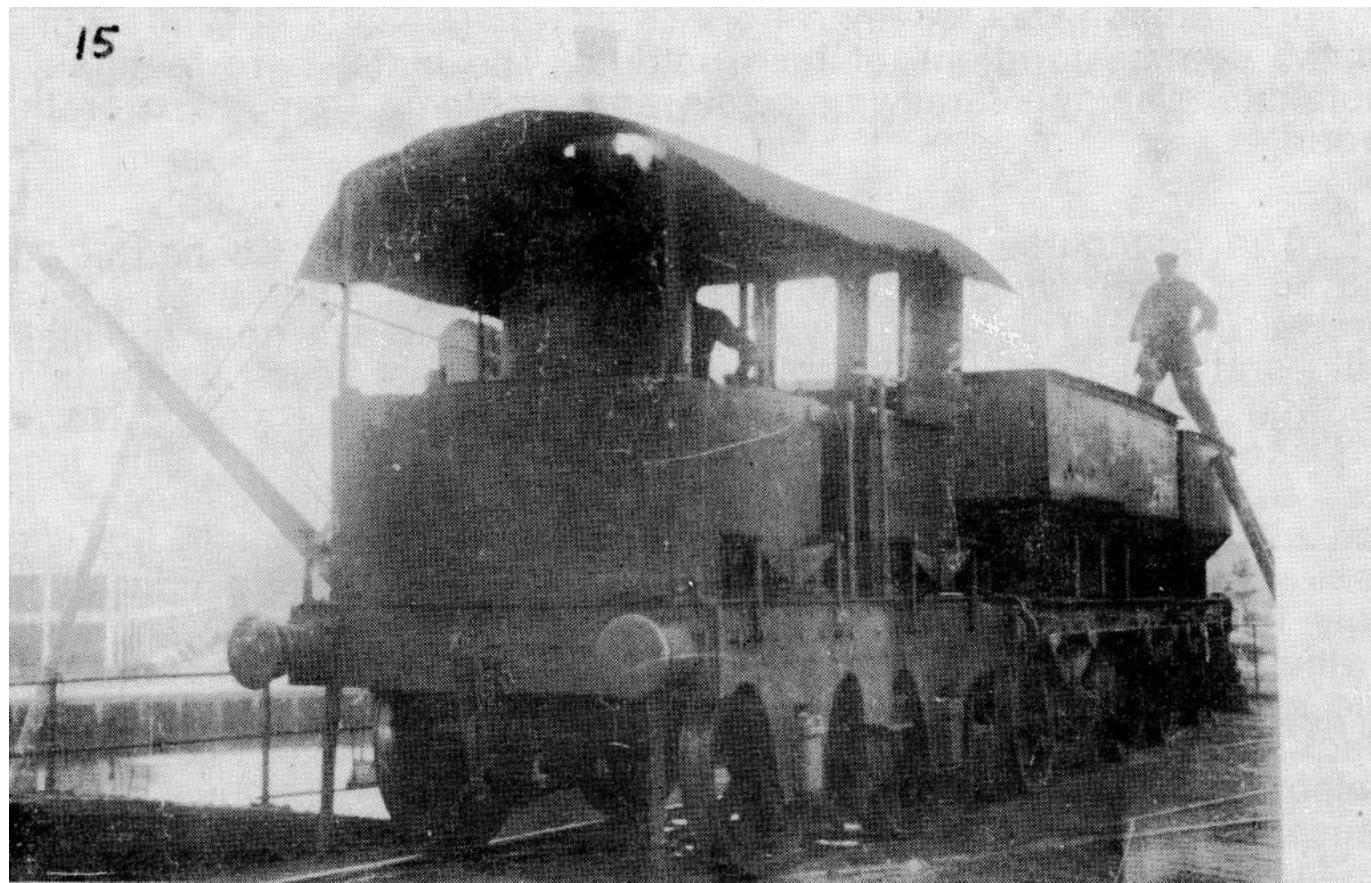


J21 class 0-6-0ST 475 pauses between shunts with an attractive backdrop of sailing ship (can anyone identify?). The loco is a standard Beyer Peacock design - many similar locos were supplied to Sweden and to the London & South Western where they were known as 330 class. 475 was the last survivor of a class of five and although withdrawn in 1935, she survived until 1945 on the washout at Inchicore. Originally 475 was Cork Bandon and South Coast No.5. (Real Photographs, X782)

The station was renamed Cork (Kent) or (Ceannt) in 1966 as part of the commemorations of Irish patriots. The buffet here features a notable display of railway crests and emblems from all over the world. The concourse is dominated by Bury Curtis and Kennedy 2-2-2 No.36 of 1848 which reputedly ran half a million miles before withdrawal in 1879. The engine was displayed on a plinth near the main offices at Inchicore - probably without the tender which was similar to that which can still be seen behind Furness Railway No.3 ("Copperknob") at the National Railway Museum, York. The loco was sent to Cork for an exhibition in 1902 and stored afterwards in the running shed. In October 1908 36 returned to the plinth but was removed in 1923 when the space was needed for more offices. In July 1925 the engine was sent to the Stockton and Darlington celebrations where it was displayed with one set of wheels on a rail and the other supported on wood outside the other (4'8½" gauge) rail. Back home, 36 was displayed at Inchicore in the 1949 Centenary celebrations along with two Dublin and Kingstown coaches. One of these (No.48 of 1840) survives in the museum at Witham Street, Belfast.

After a period when it seemed that the engine might be cut up, 36 moved to Cork in November 1950 and was mounted on some original heavy-section bridge rail. She was back in Dublin for the June 1958 exhibition held to mark the official handing over (after three years of "teething troubles") of the Metrovick diesel locos. This time she was coupled to another now-Witham Street resident, Dargan's saloon (No.47 of 1844). Incidentally, marshalled in front of 36 was J15 184 and 800 "Maedhbh" while CC1 was alongside.

Cork shed continued to carry out steam repairs long after both Waterford and Limerick had closed to steam and indeed "our own" 461 came here for repairs from Waterford in June 1962. Another mogul, K1 388, had minor repairs done and steamed north on 26th September 1961 to pick up J15 154 and J19 607 at Portarlington. The trio then made their last journey to Mullingar for scrapping. After being deposed from the passenger links, 801 "Macha" continued to work goods trains to Limerick Junction on a semi-regular basis and even Dublin on a couple of occasions. During the 1961/62 beet season, 801 banked beet specials for Mallow as far as Blarney and is recorded as having reached Limerick on three occasions in that winter. Similarly 402's last main line duty had been working beet specials to Mallow at the end of 1960.

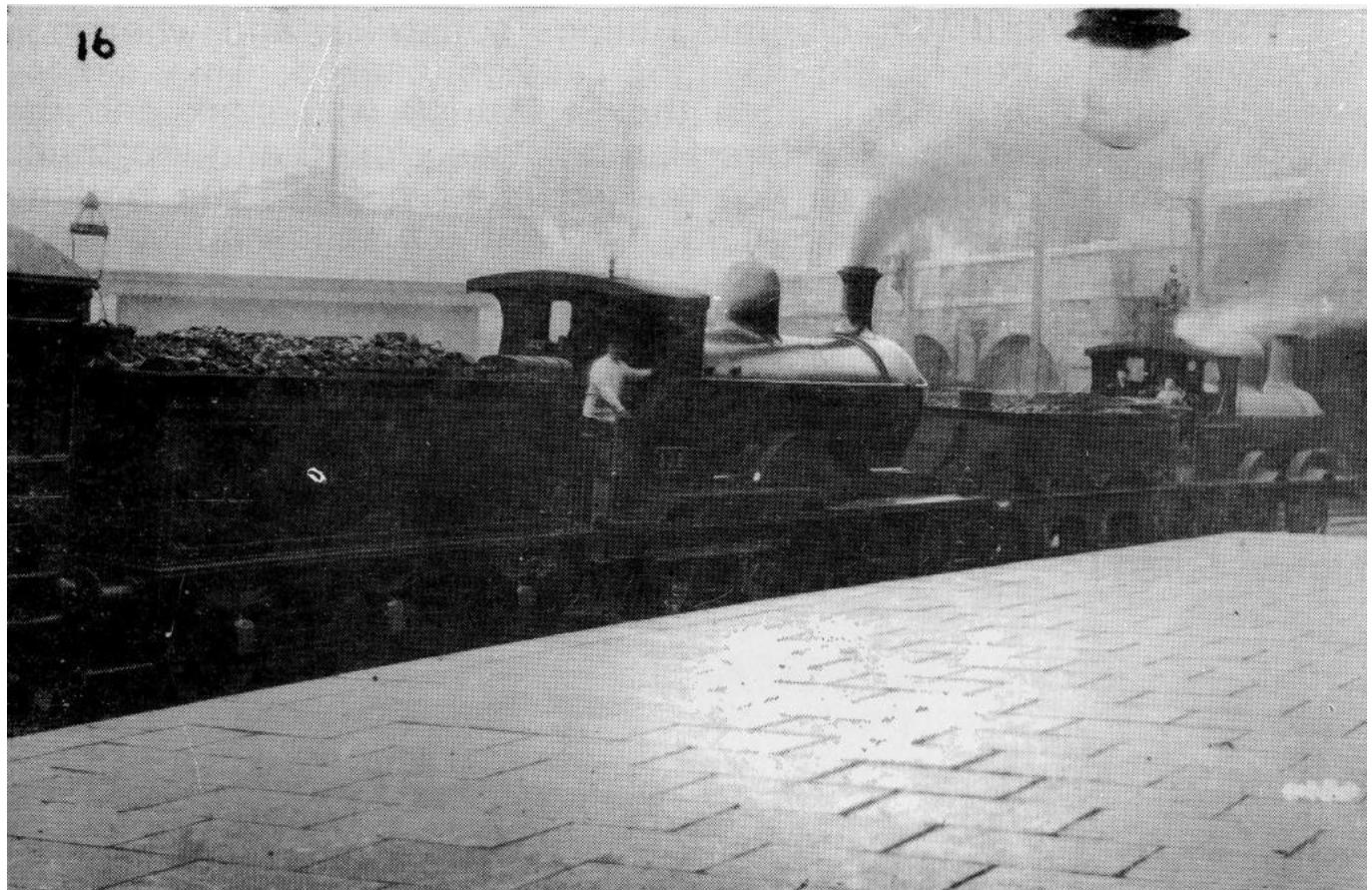


Cork's vertical-boilered 0-4-0 "Pat" at the seaward end of his (her?) gantry at Penrose Quay. (Real Photographs, X7028)

A much less glamorous Cork engine was "Pat", the 0-4-0 vertical-boilered tank used on the gantry which transferred coal from colliers on Penrose Quay to the coal bunkers beside the shed. This 380-yard standard gauge line remained in use until the end of 1963. Pat was built at Inchicore in 1884 (some sources suggest that the loco was built on a Wakefield tender) and was scrapped here in November 1963. At that time, J15 118,

J9 251, J4 262, B4 463 and J26 560 were in store but all soon moved to Inchicore except for 262 which dallied a while at Thurles. For some time local J15 128 was noted for having its number emblazoned on the front buffer beam in green. J4 251 was used for carriage heating but was unable to move herself and was shunted by the diesel pilot. 118, the last engine in steam outside Dublin, was still at work carriage heating in January 1965.

Rocksavage shed at Albert Quay (closed in late 1958) had been the salvation of many a despairing photographer. One visitor tracked down eight different classes from six originating companies.



Saturated 101 (later J15) class 0-6-0 188 pilots 310 (later D2 and later still D10) class 4-4-0 312 at the head of the Cork to Rosslare Express sometime about 1907; the tunnel mouth is on the extreme right. 312 still has her Neilson Reid maker's plate on the leading splasher (not surprisingly these were known as Scotch engines). 312 carries the taper boiler fitted by Coey to improve the class's steaming. Note the lawn jackets of the firemen. (Locomotive Publishing Company, 87026)

The former Great Northern MAK diesel (seen during last year's tour) was renumbered K801 in June 1959 and began working Cobh and Youghal trains on 2nd July 1959. A year later she returned to Inchicore for attention and her place was taken by Bandon tank 466 which had spent many busy years on Dublin suburban work. 466 returned to Dublin in November 1960 and the following February K801 reappeared on Cobh trains but was back in Inchicore in June 1962. CIÉ took their time contemplating repairs and it was December before the MAK was once again despatched for Cork. However the engine failed at Sallins and was hauled back to the works.

One of the first diesel shunters, 1003 (later D303), was at work here in May 1955 and C class engines had taken over yard shunting and the 'runs of goods' from late March 1957.

DIVERSIONS: Two unusual Cork lines should be mentioned before we look at the Cobh line.

In October 1889 Ireland's first overhead electric railway ran in the Old Corn Market at Anglesea Street near the Cork Bandon and South Coast terminus, A twenty-four (or maybe twenty-six) inch gauge circular line, 300 yards long, was laid and on this ran an open roofless, two-section 'tramcar' seating 18. The voltage was 110v. The line was part of an international exhibition to raise money for the North Monastery School of the Christian Brothers and it seems likely that the tramcar was built at the School where its Curtiss motor is preserved.

Another Cork exhibition in 1932 was held at Carrigrohane Straight Road near the route of the Cork and Muskerry. For this, two German narrow-gauge 4-6-2 tender engines of main-line outline were imported. The locos had "Brangschen, Leipzig" on the tenders and hauled toast-rack vehicles fitted with side and end curtains. Neither the gauge nor length of the line are known. The equipment was sent back to Germany when the exhibition closed after six months. COBH LINE. Now to get back to our route, the last leg of many an emigrant's last journey in Ireland - hence the subtitle at the start or our text. No less than four and three-quarter million people left Ireland for the United States between 1847 and 1925. One can but wonder how many of them left from Cobh (Queenstown).

When built the line to Youghal and Queenstown was physically separate from the main line. The Youghal line was built on the rebound after plans to get to Waterford came to nothing. The line was surveyed by no less a personage than I.K. Brunel but he died before the opening. It is tempting to remark that the section around Tivoli, with its steep rock faces, resembles Brunel's other Irish line around Bray Head.

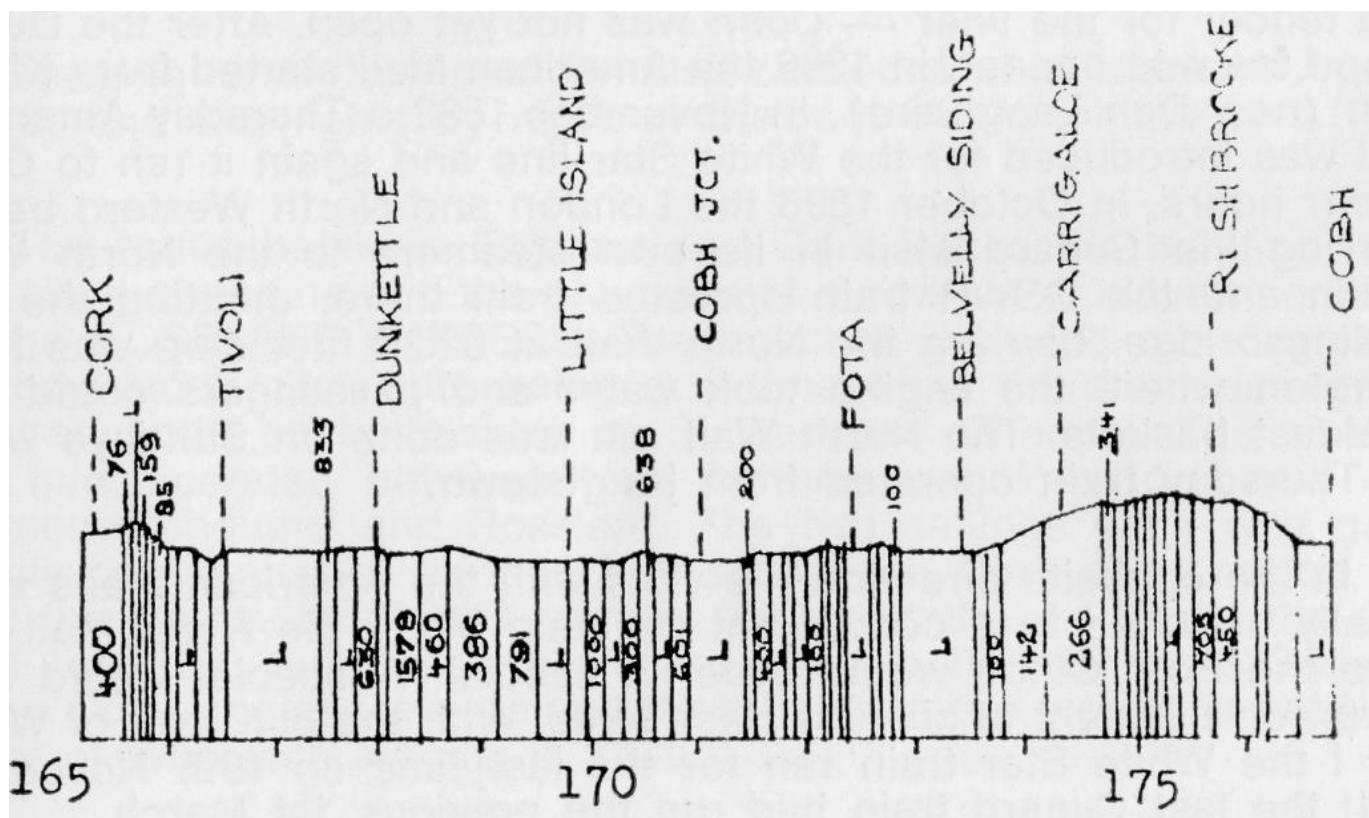
The line was opened as far as Dunkettle on 10th November 1859 and to Killeagh (on the Youghal line) in February 1860 and to Youghal on 23rd May 1860. The Queenstown branch was opened on 10th March 1862 and proved difficult to construct with its many sea walls and embankments.

After the sudden financial collapse of the Cork and Youghal in 1866 and its speedy purchase by the GS&WR, a physical connection between the line and the main line was effected three-quarters of a mile from the C&Y's Summerhill terminus. The connection was opened in 1868 but Summerhill remained in use until 1893 when the present (Glanmire Road) station was opened. For some time afterwards, though, a train was sent up to Summerhill just to keep the right-of-way intact.

Leaving CORK (MP 165½) we pass the bay platforms on the Down side, with the carriage sidings and engine shed on the Up side. The line swings sharp left and climbs steeply to the trackbed of the Cork and Youghal beyond the road bridge. After an equally steep fall the line is almost level to Cobh Junction.

TIVOLI (MP 166¾) was closed in 1931 and DUNKETTLE (MP 168¼) in February 1966, though the cabin had been closed in late 1961. Until 28th April 1982 there was a regular

and heavy traffic of magnesite from Ballinacourty to Tivoli for export. Beside the magnesite plant, the siding continues to the Burmah oil depot from which a small fleet of blue four-wheeled oil tank wagons operated to Limerick.



NORTH ESK (MP 186½) is now the principal freight yard for Cork. Opened in May 1975 the yard is equipped with a 30-ton gantry crane spanning four running lines and a roadway. The yard is connected to the main line at both ends and the main line at the Cork end was lowered to accommodate this.

COBH JUNCTION (MP 171¼) is the junction for the Youghal line. Regular traffic on the Youghal branch ended on 2nd February 1963 when B159 and B101 officiated. Since then Sunday and Wednesday excursions have continued to run to Youghal - for instance five trains ran on one Sunday in August 1973. A few weeks later the Wednesday 11:00 Cork to Youghal was so overloaded that the loco and stock for the 11:10 to Cobh were commandeered and the Cobh service provided by a bus. As recently as 1979 there were two well-patronised seven-bogie trains to Youghal plus a well-filled "Empty Coaches" in each direction in the middle of the day.

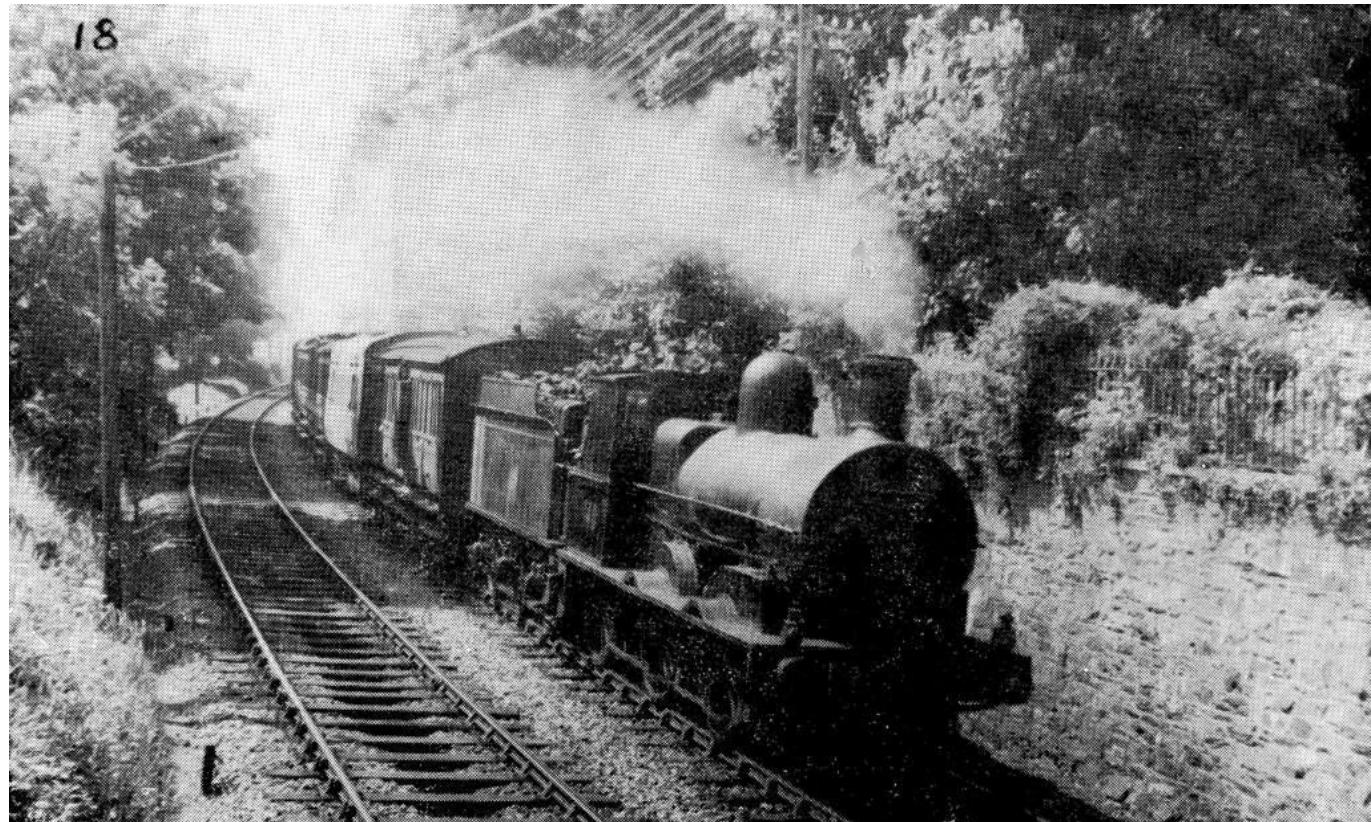
The junction is now off the Down line only and since June 1981 it has not been possible to run round at the junction.

FOTA (MP 172½), situated on the island of the same name, is approached by a six-span girder bridge. The station, once private, now serves public gardens, a large mansion and a wildlife park. The platforms are staggered.

Fota Island is connected to Great Island by Belvelly Bridge - a Civil War casualty whose lightweight reconstruction precluded the use of 400 class engines on the final portion of the Mail working.

At MARINO POINT (MP 173½) on the down side are the sidings serving the Nitrigin Éireann Teoranta fertiliser factory (situated on the Up side a little nearer Cobh). Opened in August 1979, the yard daily despatches two six-wagon trains of anhydrous ammonia to the fertiliser works at Shelton Abbey, north of Arklow on the South Eastern. The liquid ammonia is carried in 75-tonne 17.04-metre tankers marshalled with a barrier wagon containing 16 tonnes of water at each end. The siding is controlled from Cobh cabin.

RUSHBROOKE (MP 175½) used to handle a heavy traffic of workers for the nearby Verolme Dockyard which is now closed.



Superheated J15 0-6-0 140 passes Rushbrooke with the 15:50 to Cobh on 14th June 1957. The train has GS&WR 1900 and CIÉ 1957 vans next the engine. (S.C. Nash)

The original Queenstown station was a little short of the present one. A large and spacious station was built to handle the emigrants who transferred to tenders at the nearby quayside before going to meet the trans-Atlantic liners on the horizon. The station has been reduced to one platform and engine release road with a breeze-block wall masking off the rest of the station. The lever frame in the cabin was recovered from Monaghan.

Cobh was the starting point for one of Ireland's longest recent excursions (our own trains excepted, of course). In April 1983 Cobh Ramblers soccer team were playing at Sligo and a fourteen-bogie special left here at 07:40, arriving in Sligo at 14:25.

Three important passenger trains on the Cork Main Line need to be mentioned in some detail - the American Mails, the Rosslare Express and the Enterprise.

The first AMERICAN MAIL SPECIAL ran on 6th November 1859 and took four hours 30 minutes to Cork where passengers transferred to a tender for the liner - Cobh was not yet open. After the Dublin Loop Line was opened in 1892 the American Mail started from

Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire). In November 1892 a Thursday American Mail was introduced for the White Star line and again it ran to Cobh in four hours. In October 1896 the London and North Western began carrying the Cunard Mail in its own steamers to the North Wall, Dublin and the GS&WR train operated from there, omitting the call at Kingsbridge. Leaving the North Wall at 02:20 first stop was Portarlington where the engine took water and passengers could buy breakfast baskets. The North Wall run was done on Sundays while the Thursday train operated from Kingstown.

In the opposite direction the vans with the American Mails were usually attached to a convenient Up train but if the Night Mail had gone the Post Office would order a special. A special would also be run on payment of six first-class fares. With the outbreak of World War I the White Star train ran for the last time on 19th November 1914; the last Cunard train had run the previous 1st March.

The engine of the American Mail carried a white diamond board by day and two lights by night at the foot of the chimney.

The traffic between England and Cork led to the building of a new class of engine and the provision of a new set of eleven coaches for the ROSSLARE EXPRESS. The coaches included our own 861. The new stock came into being at a time when the steamer service changed ports on both sides of St George's Channel. The service that had operated between New Milford and Waterford now ran between Fishguard and Rosslare. The two sailings each way gave a daily connection of thirteen hours between Cork and London. To work the trains the GS&WR slightly lightened the 4-4-0s of the 301 class (of 1900) but these were superseded in 1908 by the 333 class. These Coey engines maintained their hold on the workings until the arrival of Woolwich moguls in 1930.

The First World War disrupted things somewhat and when one ferry was sunk before the daylight sailings ceased. This service was maintained until 1941 when the St Patrick was sunk and the service was suspended. Rosslare Harbour was closed and the trains stopped running until the service was resumed in 1947. The working of the train fell to the railcars in 1954 but the following stopping train remained steam worked for a few years. When introduced, the Cork-based train worked both Limerick and Dublin portions between Rosslare and Waterford. The Dublin train ran via Carlow. Cork-Rosslare was Ireland's last train to have a Pullman Diner – No.100. By early 1960 sister vehicles 102 had been scrapped, 103 was out of use in Cork and 101 had been converted to carry Heinkel bubble cars between the ex-GNR Works at Dundalk and Dublin. How are the mighty fallen!

In the autumn of 1950 the ENTERPRISE was extended to Cork. The 10:30 from Belfast ran in to Platform 2 at Amiens Street as usual and then was shunted to Platform 5 by the Cork engine. Departure was at 1:40 (shown to the public 10 minutes earlier).

At first two GNR rakes worked the trains but in 1952 CIÉ supplied a set of mostly post-war flush-sided stock, though older brakes were used - one of these was a 66ft Rosslare-type clerestory at first. As CIÉ had yet to build any buffet cars, GNR B9 class buffet car No.124 was used in the CIÉ set and was painted green to match. While a GNR set was based in Cork it was used on a variety of additional turns including Sunday trains and Cobh locals! At the beginning of the 1953 summer timetable CIÉ turned the

Cork Enterprise set over to railcar stock and through traffic was handled in a single through coach. Coupling difficulties, however, compelled a reversion to steam after a few days. During that last summer (1953) the Cork Enterprise became very popular, often loading to ten bogies but thereafter it disappeared from the timetables.



The wheel turns full circle. Single-chimney B1a class 4-6-0 802 "Tailte" stands at Platform 5, Amiens Street, with the Up Enterprise from Cork - again a Great Northern set. Soon the Great Northern pilot engine will transfer the stock for the 5:30 p.m. departure to Belfast. The engine seems to have acquired a large piece of shrubbery in the crank of the outside regulator rodding. (Photographer unknown)

Enterprise running on the Cork road was, at first, erratic - the 800s seem to run away on the drivers, though some drivers nursed their engines to Kildare (presumably to save water) and then found they hadn't enough time left at Thurles. These tactics, of course, produced good running from the Junction forward. On other occasions, drivers seemed to be in trouble from Thurles to the Junction and water stops were sometimes made. Once the 400 class took over, they were only supplanted on occasions when the load was very heavy; they were officially rostered for it in the Working Book. There was a sort of hierarchy of engines - the best two went on the Enterprise and the next best on the Up Mail; whenever the Radio Train ran, it got the best engine and the other trains moved down one. No instance is known of a 500 class working the Enterprise though both single and double-headed 321 class engines have been observed on it as a result of loco failures.

As examples of Enterprise running, a couple of instances north of the Junction. The best Down time to Sallins, for example, was 33.05 and the worst 36.14 - both with 800 class engines. Running was more lively in the Up direction; a notable performance being that of Ned Sheil and 802 in 1953 when, with 360 tons, he ran from Limerick Junction to Amiens Street in 120.36 (119 net) covering the 85.9 miles from Thurles to Islandbridge

in 86.37. In 1951 "Pop" Kelly and 800 with just 190 tons covered the 89.1 miles from Dundrum to Hazelhatch in 86.59 but suffered permanent way and signal checks afterwards. Gross time to Amiens Street was 122.52 (116 net).

The first regular non-stop service on the main line was introduced on 20th September 1954 when a railcar set ran Cork - Dublin in three and a half hours. The following summer railcars worked non-stop trains in both directions taking three hours Up and three hours five minutes Down.

The Metrovick A class diesels began regular work on 26th September 1955 working 12:15 and 20:00 Down and 11:55 and 21:15 Up. By the end of 1955 all Cork line passenger trains were diesel. Only the 15:40 Saturdays Only was diagrammed for steam through to Cork and even this working sometimes went diesel too.

In June 1960 expresses on the Cork line were named. The 08:45 Down and 18:00 Up were named "Sláinte" - literally "Health". At the same time the 09:00 Up and 14:25 Down were named "Fáilte" meaning "Welcome". The carriages carried small nameplates in cast aluminium (?) with raised polished lettering on a red ground. These were fitted below gutter level at the end doors.

In October 1960 A33 and A59 - specially fitted for multiple working - ran Dublin to Cork non-stop with 320 tons in two hours 37 minutes while in November a five-piece railcar beat that by four minutes. More recent speed trials, in May 1984, specified that "100 mph running is to be tried only north of Templemore".

Nowadays the line speed limit is 90 mph between MP 3 and MP 75 near Templemore with some exceptions between Dublin and Kildare. The limit from Thurles to the Junction is 80, thence to Mallow 75 and on to Cork generally 65 with some stretches limited to 60. The fastest regular train is 2 hours 35 for the 17:30 Up with stops at Mallow, the Junction and Thurles. The train is powered by an 071 class and the stock a set of Mark IIIs from BREL Litchurch Lane. Currently Mk III sets operate 07:30 Down, 11:40 Up and 17:30 Down on Day One and 07:30 Up, 12:55 Down and 17:30 Up on Day Two.

Let us conclude this brochure with two speed exploits from the legendary Driver Mark Foley of Cork.

In September 1917 a special was run for members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians travelling to a convention in Belfast. Driver Foley had 321 (later D2) class 4-4-0 No.328 and a six-coach train weighing 137 tons. 328 got away to a flying start and cleared the Junction in 60 minutes. The secret lay in the fact that the train was banked as far as Rathpeacon but the train didn't stop to detach the (unidentified) banker; instead a slip coupling was used. The 78¾ miles from Thurles to Cork were run in 76 minutes start to stop. After a ten minute water stop, the 79 miles to Islandbridge Junction were reeled off in 72 minutes (average 65.8 mph). The special arrived in Amiens Street (169¼ miles from Cork) in 2 hours 54 including the Thurles stop.

The record Cork - Dublin time of 2 hours 27 minutes was achieved in March 1934 and again Mark Foley was at the regulator, America's new Ambassador to Ireland landed at Cobh and a special was laid on to bring him to Dublin. At that time D10 class 4-4-0 309 (the last of the class with the taper boiler) was kept at Cork for special duties and narrowly missed being used for the run. Driver Foley and his mate, however, calculated

that they could run the train non-stop with 402 - something that had never been done before. 402 had been built as a four-cylinder engine in 1921 and was the first of the class to be rebuilt with two cylinders in 1927. When rebuilt she was very popular with everyone except the permanent way people who had their own private nightmares about increased hammer-blow. The load was a light one consisting of the ex-MGWR saloon, now running on six-wheel bogies (later numbered 346 by CIÉ), a diner and a bogie van, weighing a total of 93 tons - the engine weighed 75½ tons. It seems that the driver was anxious about his water supply at first, for he took 58 minutes to the Junction - about the same time as with the much smaller 328 and a load half as heavy again. After the Junction, however, things began to happen and 402 was given her head. The 107 miles to Kingsbridge were run in a mere 87 minutes, average 73.7 mph pass to stop; the 15¾ miles from Ballybrophy to Port Laois taking a bare eleven minutes, an average of 85.6 mph. The overall time, non-stop from Cork, was 2 hours 27, an average 67.4 start to stop.

On what better note could we finish?

Timetable Section

SATURDAY 4th MAY 1985

No.171 and carriages

WHITEHEAD RPSI		07:35	
Belfast York Road	08:08	08:55	
Antrim	10:00	10:10	
Ballinderry	10:34	10:37	Cross 10:10 to Portrush.
LISBURN	10:50	11:15	Water stop.
Portadown	11:42	11:45	
Dundalk	12:30	12:40	Water stop.
Malahide	13:45	13:46	Pick up pilotman.
Dublin Connolly	13:57	15:05	Water stop.
Enfield	16:00	16:07	Cross 13:25 ex Sligo.
MULLINGAR	16:55		

FRIDAY 10th MAY 1985

No.184 Light engine

Mullingar		08:30	
Athlone	09:25	10:10	Water stop. Cross 08:10 ex Westport.
Geashill	12:05	12:10	Cross 11:10 to Galway.
Portarlington	12:25	12:35	
Limerick Junction	14:25	15:10	
Mallow	16:15	16:40	
Cork	17:30		

SATURDAY 11th MAY 1985

No.171 and empty coaches

Mullingar		05:30
Enfield	pass	06:15
Liffey Junction	pass	06:57
Dublin	Connolly	07:10

No.171 and 91 + 1142 + 87 + 68 + 1327 + 238 + 114

DUBLIN CONNOLLY		08:30
Islandbridge Junction	08:45	08:55 08:50 to Tralee precedes.
Inchicore	pass	09:01
Sallins	pass	09:21
Kildare	pass	09:36
Portarlington	09:55	10:35 Water stop.
Port	Laoise	pass 10:50
Ballybrophy	pass	11:10
Thurles	pass	11:40
Goold's Cross	pass	11:55
Limerick Junction	12:15	13:10 Water stop. Bus E1 departs 12:40.
Rathluirc Junction	pass	13:40 Bus E1 arrives 13:35, departs 13:48.
Rathluirc	13:45	14:00 Runpast. Bus E1 arrives 13:58 and reconnects.
Mallow	14:25	14:55 Water stop.
Cork Kent	15:30	

Columns a and b: No.184 and CIÉ stock

Column c: No.184 and 91 + 1142 + 68 + 87 + 1327 + 238

Column d: Lineside Bus E2

	a	b	c	d
Cork Kent	09:45	11:45	16:05	16:00
Little Island			pass 16:22	
Cobh Junction	pass 09:57	pass 11:57	pass 16:24	
Marino Point			pass 16:28	16:25 16:30
Cobh	10:12 10:25	12:12 12:25	16:37 16:49	16:40 16:51
Rushbrooke			16:53 17:00	
Carrigaloe			pass 17:04	16:58 17:05
Cobh Junction	pass 10:40	pass 12:40	17:19* 17:40	17:18 17:40
Little Island			17:44 17:51	17:44 17:55
Cork Kent	10:52	12:52	18:05	18:10

* Train sets back down Youghal branch for 17:20 ex Cobh to overtake then Runpast through Cobh Junction.

SUNDAY 12th MAY 1985

No.171 + No.184 and 114 + 238 + 1327 + 87 + 68 + 1142 + 91

Cork Kent		09:15	Bus E3 departs 09:00.
Kilbarry	pass	09:24	Bus E3 arrives 09:20, departs 09:30.
Rathpeacon	pass	09:30	
Rathduff	09:45	10:00	Runpast.
Location A	pass	10:10	Bus E3 arrives 10:05, departs 10:15.
Mallow	10:15		Water stop. Bus E3 arrives 10:30.

	No.184 + 3		No.171 + 5		Bus E4	
Mallow		10:45		11:13		10:35
Location B	pass	10:50			10:45	10:55
Buttevant	pass	11:05	pass	11:28		
Location C			pass	11:32	11:20	11:35
Rathluirc	11:25	12:00	pass	11:40	11:45	
Knocklong	12:18	12:25	pass	11:57		
Limerick Junction	12:45		12:15			

No.171 and 114 + 238 + 1327 + 87 + 68 + 1142 + 91

Limerick Junction		13:15	
Thurles	pass	13:45	
Ballybrophy	pass	14:25	
Port Laoise	pass	14:55	
Portarlington	15:10	16:25	Water stop.
Kildare	pass	16:45	
Sallins	pass	17:00	
Inchicore	pass	17:20	
Islandbridge Junction	pass	17:25	
Dublin Connolly	17:40		

No.184 Light engine

Limerick Junction		13:45
Portarlington	15:35	15:50
Athlone	18:00	18:15
Mullingar	19:10	

SUNDAY 12th MAY 1985

No.171 and tour train

DUBLIN CONNOLLY		18:45	
Howth Junction	pass	18:53	
Malahide	18:58	18:59	Set down pilotman.
Rush and Lusk	pass	19:06	
Skerries	pass	19:12	
Balbriggan	pass	19:16	
Gormanston	pass	19:18	
Mosney	pass	19:20	
Laytown	pass	19:22	
Drogheda	19:28	19:40	Water stop.
Dunleer	pass	19:56	
Dundalk	pass	20:10	
Newry	20:35	20:41	Customs examination
Poynzpass	pass	20:51	
Portadown	21:05	21:10	
Lurgan	pass	21:19	
Moira	pass	21:27	
Lisburn	21:35	21:38	Calls as required to Botanic.
Botanic	21:51	21:56	
BELFAST Central	22:00	22:10	Empty to CSD.
Service Depot	22:15		

MONDAY 13th MAY 1985

BELFAST CENTRAL		10:20	
Lisburn	pass	10:34	
Ballinderry	pass	10:46	
Antrim	11:12	11:25	
Belfast York Road	12:30	13:45	
Whitehead NIR	14:13	14:23	Cross 14:00 ex Larne Harbour.
Larne Harbour	14:39	15:02	Cross 14:20 Boat Train.
WHITEHEAD RPSI	15:25		

PLEASE NOTE: While every effort will be made to maintain the timings shown in the Brochure, please remember that some alterations may be forced upon us at very short notice. You will, of course, be kept informed of any changes and announcements will be made at the first opportunity.

Please co-operate at photo-stops, runpasts, etc. - obey the Marshals and avoid spoiling other people's photographs. Your customary common sense and courtesy will, as always, do a lot to ensure a safe, punctual and happy tour.

Thank you for your co-operation.

This brochure has been written and compiled by Charles P. Friel who would like to dedicate it to the memory of the late Drew Donaldson whose enthusiasm for the Great Southern main line inspired others to take a close interest in it; similarly Drew's model track night recreations of the mid-fifties did much to convey the finer detail of the line's operations. Some of Drew's own writings have been quoted in the section on running; may it form a fitting tribute to his inestimable contribution to our knowledge of Irish steam.

Additional material came from Ernie Gilmore, Barry Carse and Michael McMahon. Many thanks go to them for their help and to the several unidentified writers on Irish railways whose publications have been scoured for information and confirmation. Any inaccuracies are entirely due to the present writer. A special thanks goes to those who made available the illustrations and to you, the participants, whose support has made this Brochure both necessary and possible.