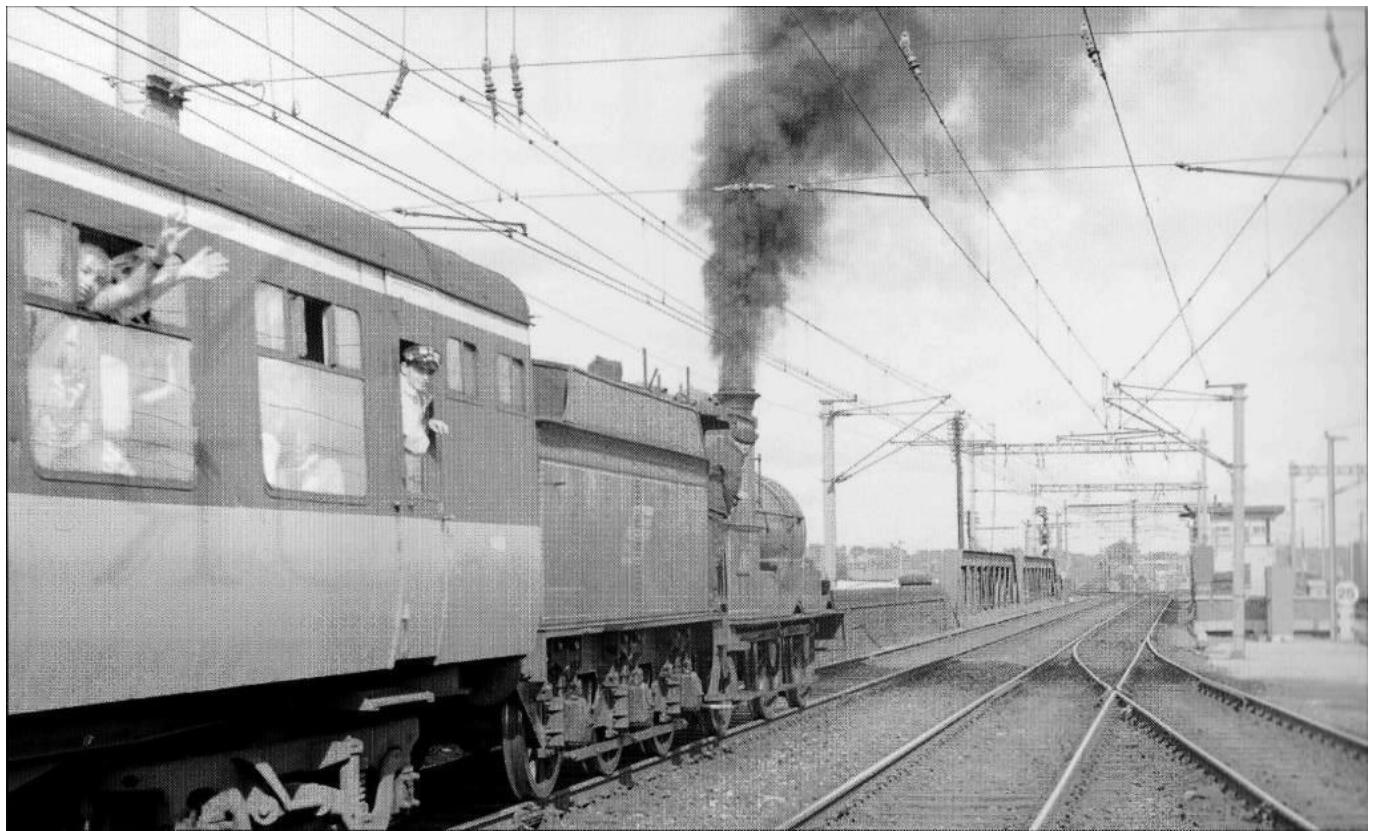


THE SPARE LINK RAIL TOUR



SOUVENIR BROCHURE

Front Cover: Enniscorthy - No.461 whistles as she crosses the river Slaney and approaches the tunnel with the southbound leg of the Sea Breeze excursion on 22nd August 1992. The station behind still sports a fine array of semaphores while, below, the piers of the bridge have captured a fair amount of floating debris. With a rake of CIÉ carriages and a couple of flying snails in view, who's to say that this wasn't some time in the 1950s? For your Brochure compiler, shots like this are the epitome of what we are about. CPF16580



Dublin Connolly: No. 184 gets away with the second of the day's three round trips to Clonsilla on 12th September 1987. The former West Road signal cabin is to the right of the picture. The train will swing to the left beyond it and the twin spans over the Royal Canal. CPF8740E



Drumcondra: Nos. 461 and 171 climb past Drumcondra on the GS&WR North Wall branch with the Saturday of the Lough Atalia railtour to Galway on 14th May 1994. In the background, the cranes are beginning to build the new Croke Park stadium. CPF9404F

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

Spare Link Railtour

Saturday 24 th March 2012	-	Dublin (Connolly) - Clonsilla - M3 Parkway - Dublin (Connolly) - Wexford O'Hanrahan) - Rosslare Harbour - Wexford (O'Hanrahan)
Sunday 25th March 2012	-	Wexford (O'Hanrahan) - Dublin (Connolly) - Howth - Dublin (Connolly)

Fáilte! Welcome Aboard!

May I extend a very warm welcome to you all on board “The Spare Link” railtour.

Many of you will have travelled with us before and know how enjoyable the weekend ahead is going to be. To those travelling with us for the first time, you are going to enjoy every minute of it.

The reason for running this railtour is simple. It is to give us all a chance to acknowledge the tremendous help and support given to the RPSI by recently-retired driver Dan Renehan. Dan has been a stalwart member of our footplate crew for many decades and without his dedication, along with others including his brother Tony, many of our tours simply would not have happened.

Dan’s knowledge of the workings of a steam locomotive knows no bounds. As well as maintaining the operation of our trains, Dan was always keen to carry on the crucial railway tradition of passing on that knowledge from one generation to the next. I am honoured to have been afforded that privilege and I know that I also speak for the rest of the footplate crew this weekend - each and every one a pupil of the Renehan school.

To Dan’s wife Rosemary, I would like to sincerely thank you for putting up with all the early starts and late finishes over the years and also for your understanding when some of our tours clashed with family commitments.

This railtour also sees the return of locomotive 461 to its home ground on the former Dublin and South Eastern line after major overhaul at the RPSI’s engineering base in Whitehead. Special thanks are due to our Locomotive Officer Peter Scott and his engineering team for a superb job.

This brochure has again been produced by Charles Friel and, as usual, the attention to detail is there for us to relish. As well as nostalgic photographs of times past, this brochure will be your entertaining and informative guide along the route. I am glad to record a sincere ‘thank you’ to Charles and to Joe Cassells, Michael McMahon and Eddie Creamer for their help and support.

As usual with all railtours, I would ask you all to stay safe, please. The stewards are there to help, so just ask if you need anything. Please do not go on the running lines at any time to get ‘that shot’. Some of the pictures in this Brochure were taken from ‘inside the fence’ at a time when such was tolerated; things are very different now. We hope that there will be ample time and opportunity during the weekend for good photographs.

Sit back, relax and enjoy what is going to be great weekend!

Gerry Mooney
On behalf of the RPSI

DAN RENEHAN - a tribute from Joe Cassells

Although two-year-old Dan and six-year-old Tony Renahan were too young to know it, 1950 marked the end of recruitment for steam footplatemen on CIÉ. But the railway bug bit both of them early on, and eventually shaped careers that lasted their working lifetimes. From their home at Fairview the boys saw plenty of steam passing on the Great Northern main line and Bill O'Reilly, one of the loco foremen at Amiens Street, was a friend of the family. The Renahan family later moved to "The Ranch", near the Khyber Pass gate of Inchicore Works and within a few minutes' walk of the Third Road Junction. Tommy Leahy, the Inchicore Loco Controller, and John Doyle, the Senior Works Policeman, were also friends of the family and Dan and Tony soon became familiar with more than just the sight of engines going up and down the Gullet into CIÉ's premier depot.

Although steam had finished on CIÉ, it was a foregone conclusion that both lads would become railwaymen. Tony began as a snatcher on the diesels, while Dan became a banking guard at the North Wall. With three goods yards and associated stores, ten shunting pilots and a huge operating staff, this was an ideal place for a young man to learn about railway operation. Dan must have been one of the last Iarnród Éireann employees to know what it was like to be in charge of a 24-wagon train banked to North Strand Junction - and heavier trains right to Cabra. Many of the drivers were men that he had met in his boyhood visits to Inchicore, and it wasn't long until Guard Renahan was doing some unofficial driving as well.



Renehan brothers Tony (left) and Dan (right) compare notes on the front apron plate of 2-6-4T No.4 while working Tony's farewell train, The Top Link. The picture was taken at Portarlington on Sunday 1st February 2009. DSCF1729

During his holidays, Dan also gained experience on steam footplates in the last years of steam in Northern Ireland. Friendships made then lasted a lifetime, and he treasures particular memories of days spent on "Jeep" footplates with Harry Ramsey, Davie McDonald and 'The Batman' Simpson, as well as on the last of the Great Northern 4-4-0s with men like Harry Loughlin and Willie McCaughley.

In 1965, CIÉ reached agreement with the unions which allowed men aged 21 to 40 from the Traffic Department to transfer to the Locomotive Grades. Tony went immediately, but it was 1969 before Dan became an Inchicore driver. Just over ten years later he moved to Connolly, finishing his career in

December 2010 in the No.2 Top Link.

Forty three years' service ended on Sunday 5th December 2010 as he stepped off the footplate of "Jeep" No.4 after working an RPSI Santa train. How fitting that three other friends and retirees - John Kealy, George Dunne and Ray Kearns - travelled in the train to show their respect.

But how did the fledgling diesel driver of 1969 become, with his brother, virtually synonymous with steam operation on Irish Rail over the next four decades? That story began with the RPSI's "Brian Boru" two-day tour to Cork and Limerick in September 1969 when Dan and Tony were selected to act as 'support crew' assisting with the operation.

Inspector Ned Comerford, Dan's gaffer at Inchicore, had in his time been a top link fireman in the Mail Links. He was an exacting taskmaster and a stickler for the rulebook, but he knew two enthusiasts when he saw them and he soon became a central figure in their professional lives. Thus Dan and Tony found themselves rostered to travel with the booked crews on every RPSI tour, learning the skills of firing and driving which many feared might have vanished from CIÉ altogether. The Renehans had more than simply a deep respect for their mentor; throughout their own steam footplate days they personified his rigorous and thorough approach to the art and craft of enginemanhood. They both passed out as steam drivers in 1991 and Dan worked his first turn as a driver (on 461) on 11th May 1991. In January 1996 the first of a succession of practical and theoretical courses were held for trainee steam crews on Iarnród Éireann and from the outset the Renehan brothers were formally involved in the training. Dan has driven and fired over the whole of the Iarnród Éireann network, and even to Belfast Central too!

His driving style has been skilful and economical, always with an eye to the schedule and with a marked aversion to abusing his engine. He has solved every kind of problem which the steam locomotive can throw up to its crews. He has soothed hot boxes, coaxed life out of sticking injectors, and even searched for fishplates to reinforce broken firebars. He has coaxed, cajoled and persuaded in order to get a clear run for an engine in difficulties. His talent for lateral thinking and his knowledge of people and places have often helped cope with problems before they became crises. Only one thing has ever defeated him - yes, that famously recalcitrant turntable at Claremorris!

As skilled with the pen as with the regulator, Dan is also a noted amateur railway historian. Over the years he has produced definitive histories of most of the CIÉ's diesel locomotive classes for the Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society. Equally extensive have been his articles on the steam age for both the IRRS and the RPSI. Under his own name and the pseudonym "Spare Link", Dan's writings have covered topics as varied as the last days of steam in the Dublin area, the operation of loose-coupled goods trains and the history of lodging turns on Irish railways. More particularly, he has over many years provided



Philadelphia?: Dan Renehan sands the rails ahead of No.85 Merlin so that brother Tony will be better able to get the train out of the Military Platform. The train is the Mount Brandon Railtour which the Compound worked as far as Mallow on Saturday 14th May 1989. CPF8905A

Charles Friel with detailed information on people, places and locomotives for the RPSI's justly famous railtour brochures.

On a personal level, Dan has a marvellous rapport with people, and in particular with those of us whose interest in railways is amateur rather than professional. In conversation, in personal correspondence, in company at social evenings after railtours, and most of all on the footplate with RPSI footplate representatives, he has been more than willing to share his knowledge, his experience, and his love of his work.



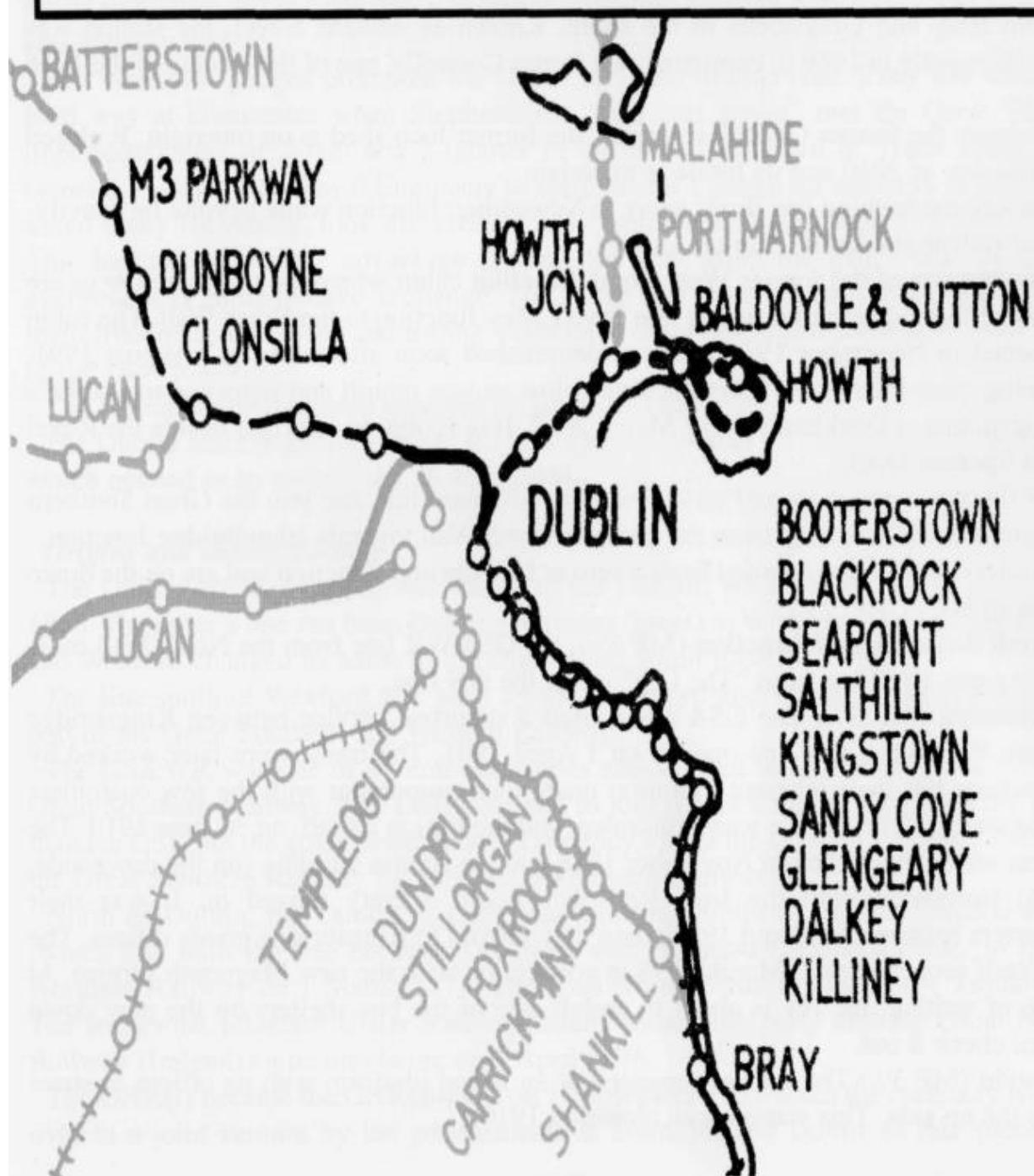
Dan Renehan on the left and Tony, centre, are joined by Inspector Don McLoughlin (on the right). The trio were photographed at Ballybroy during the William Dargan railtour on 20th May 1995. (Joe Cassells)

But there is a side of Dan Renehan known to few except his family. Like any wise man, he has a life and a range of interests apart from his work. Since boyhood he has developed a fascination for European history, architecture and music. On holiday in Europe he has explored the great Alhambra Palace and walked in the gardens of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. He has looked across the Pass of the Sigh of the Moors, empathising with the last Moorish King Boabdil who wept as he fled from its beauty. In Verona and Milan he has indulged his passion for opera, and he has sailed on Lake Garda, revelling in the scenery. To a man with such a range of interests, retirement will surely be an enriching experience.

Nearly half a century ago, the founders of the RPSI were determined to keep Irish steam alive in the post-steam era. Dan Renehan's retirement severs a link with those early days, but the memories and the friendship continue. And it is good to know that Dan has passed on much to the next generation of steam loco men. As we share the enjoyment of this weekend together, we wish Dan and his family many years of happy, healthy and fulfilling retirement, and we look forward to his company on steam trains for many years to come.

The Spare Link

ROUTE MAP



1. *Introductions*

A quick historical note or two before we get under way.

Gauges

Ireland's first railway, the Dublin and Kingstown, opened on 17th December 1834. It was built to Stephenson's gauge of 4 foot 8½ inches.

Further north, Ireland's second railway, the Ulster Railway opened the first piece of the present main line when the Belfast to Lisburn section opened on 12th August 1839 and it had reached Portadown in September 1842. This line was built to a gauge of 6 foot 2 inches. The line we travel on tomorrow towards Howth was built by the Dublin and Drogheda which (unusually for Ireland) operated between the two places named in its title. Its earthworks were laid out for the Ulster Railway's gauge of 6 foot 2 but John Macneill, when appointed as the company's engineer, favoured a gauge of 5 foot 2 and some track was actually laid.

The variety of gauges prompted the Board of Trade to intervene. They had learned the hard way at Gloucester when Stephenson's "coal cart gauge" met the Great Western's imperious gauge of 7 feet and a quarter of an inch. The Board of Trade asked Major-General Pasley of the Royal Engineers to recommend a gauge for railways in Ireland. He asked many for advice, took the average and recommended the gauge of 5 foot 3 inches. This had the immediate advantage that no-one was using the gauge and, as a result, everyone was going to have to change. The gauge was settled in an Act of 1846 and, since then, Irish main line locos and rolling stock have often developed separately from the rest of the known world.

The Dublin and Kingstown changed its gauge in 1856.

The Dublin and Drogheda adopted the new gauge, ahead of the Act, and used for their line which opened in its entirety on 26th May 1844.

Origins and amalgamations

The Dublin and Kingstown was leased to the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford on 1st July 1856. The latter's line ran from Dublin (Harcourt Street) to Wicklow. The Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford changed its name to the Dublin and South Eastern in 1907.

The line south of Wexford was built by the Waterford and Wexford which later became part of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

The GS&WR was one of several companies nationalised in 1924 to become part of the Great Southern Railway. The D&SER wished to join forces with the Great Northern rather than the GSR but the government insisted and they joined the GSR on 1st January 1925 when the Great Southern Railway became Great Southern Railways.

North of Dublin, the Dublin & Drogheda and the Dublin & Belfast Junction Railway (which had built the line between Drogheda and Portadown) came together to form the Northern Railway on 1st March 1875. The Irish North Western joined on 1st January 1876. The somewhat reluctant Ulster Railway finally joined the party and the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) came into being on 1st April 1876.

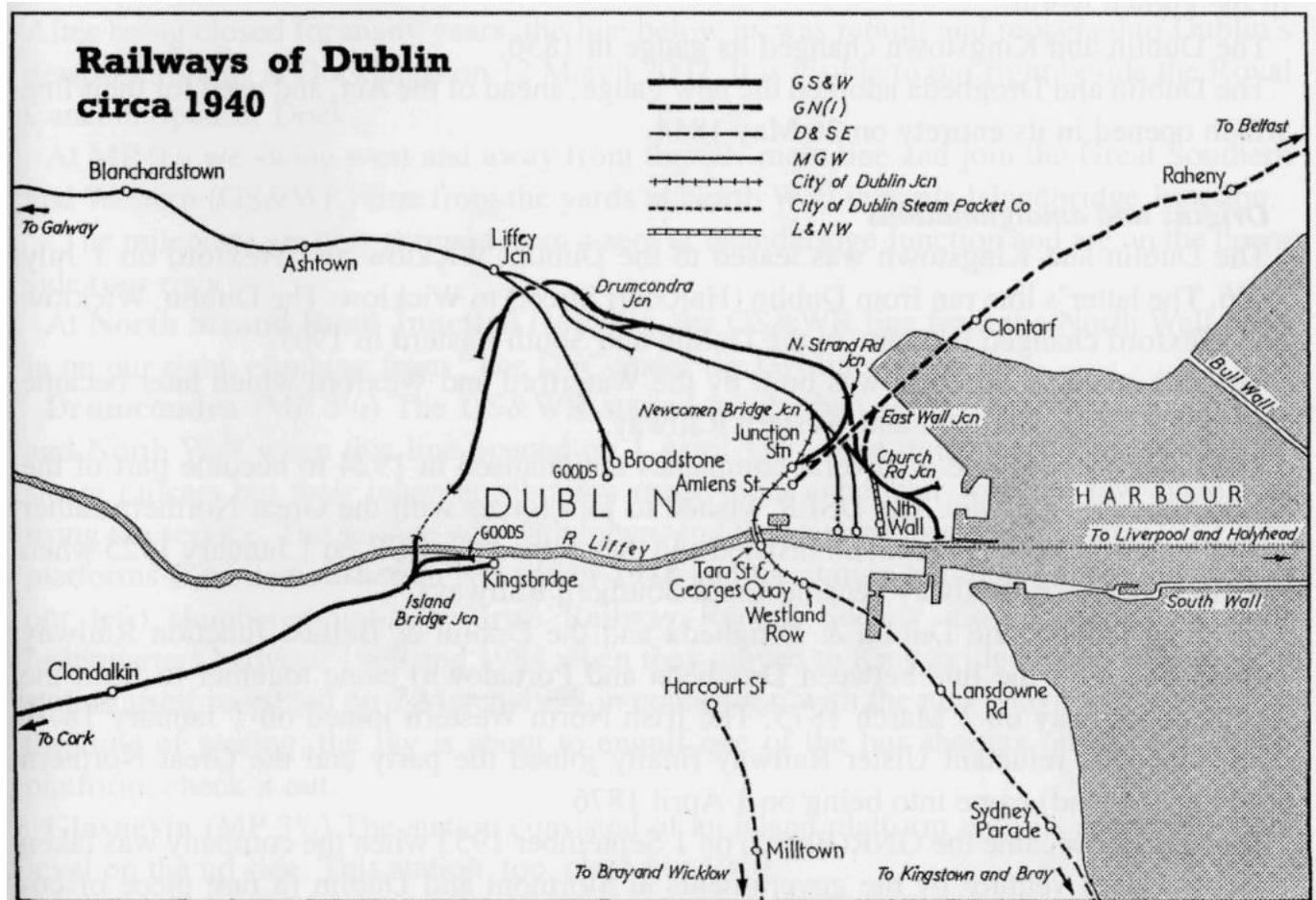
The GNR(I) became the GNR(Board) on 1st September 1953 when the company was taken over in a joint venture by the governments at Stormont and Dublin (a rare piece of co-operation for the time). Things continued much as they were until 1st October 1958 when the spoils were divided between Córas Iompair Éireann and the Ulster Transport Authority.

CIÉ had been formed on 1st January 1945 when the already nationalised Great Southern Railways was merged with Dublin United Tramway Company.

CIÉ was divided into three separate operations which began trading on 2nd February 1987. The railway operation was named Iarnród Éireann or Irish Rail.

2. Connolly to M3 Parkway

Dublin (Connolly) is the terminus for trains to and from Rosslare, Sligo and Belfast as well as being an important station for suburban trains to Drogheda and Maynooth and DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) electric services between Howth and Malahide in the north and Bray and Greystones in the south. Known as Amiens Street, the station was renamed Connolly in 1966 to commemorate James Connolly, one of the leaders of the 1916 Rising.



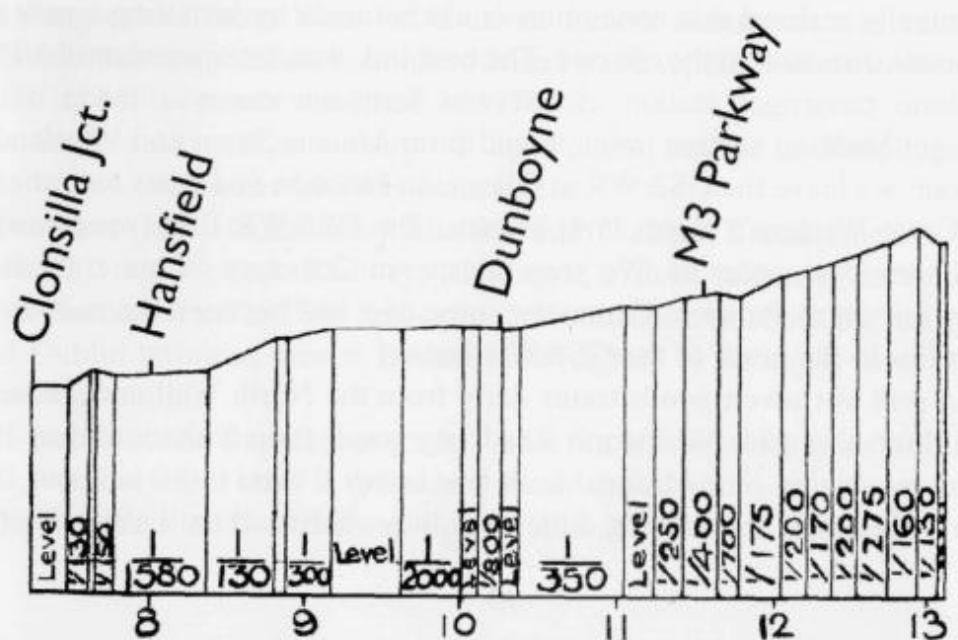
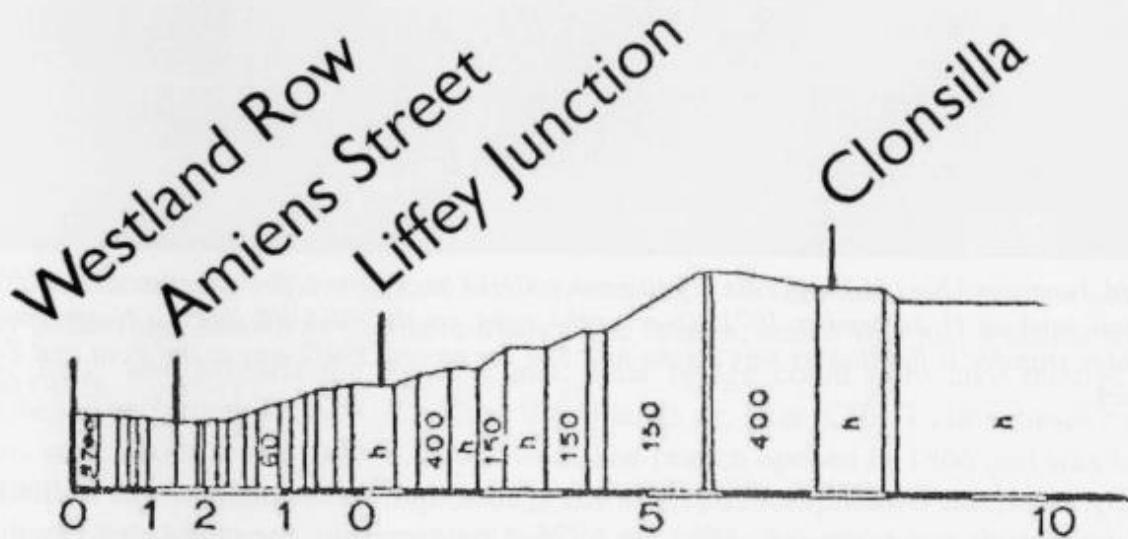
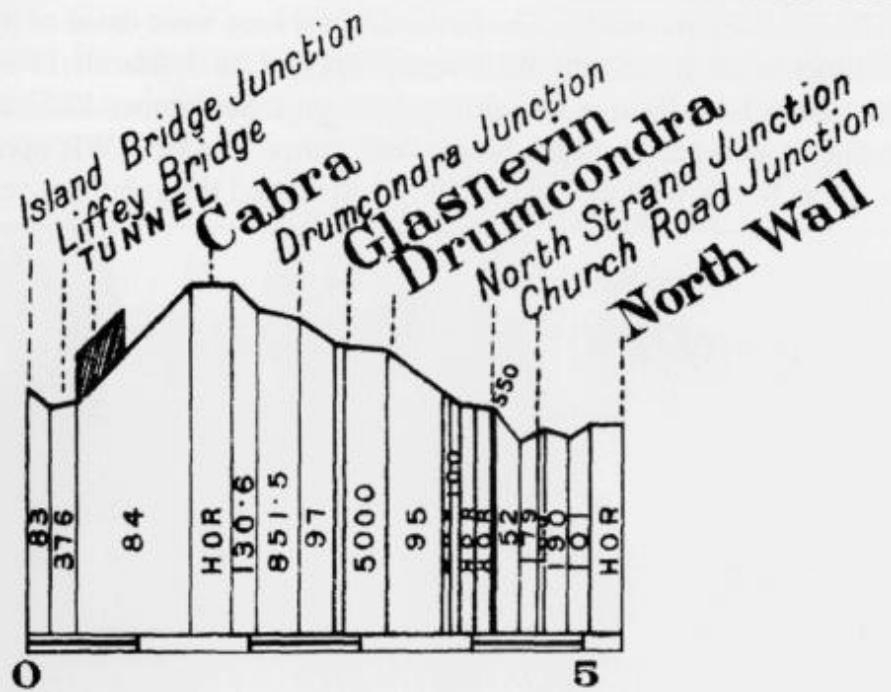
As we leave the former GNR(I) terminus, the former loco shed is on our right. It closed on the last day of 2010 and its future is uncertain.

On our left, the running line drops away to Newcomen Junction while beyond lie heavily-protected railcar and DART storage sidings.

We pass the site of the former **West Road Junction** cabin where the tracks below us are the former Midland Great Western's line from Liffey Junction to the North Wall. The cabin here opened in November 1936 and was demolished soon after closure 2nd August 1991. After being closed for many years, the line below us was rebuilt and reopened to Dublin's newest terminus at Docklands on 12th March 2007. It is visible to our right beside the Royal Canal at Spencer Dock.

At MP 0 1/4 we swing west and away from the GN main line and join the Great Southern and Western (GS&WR) line from the yards at North Wall towards Islandbridge Junction. The mileposts are now counted from a zero at Islandbridge Junction and are on the Down side (our right).

GS&WR North Wall Branch



At North Strand Road Junction (MP 4 $\frac{1}{4}$), the GS&WR line from the North Wall trails in on our right, climbing from “The Dip” under the GN line.

Drumcondra (MP 3 $\frac{1}{2}$). The GS&WR started a suburban service between Kingsbridge and North Wall when this line opened on 1st April 1901. The trains were later worked by steam railcars but their inherent vibration made them unpopular with the few customers using the service. The service was withdrawn, and the station closed, on 30th June 1910. The platforms were demolished in November 1918 and the station building (on the Down side, our left) slumbered until the Irish Railway Record Society moved in. It was their headquarters between 1969 and 1984 when they moved to Kingsbridge goods offices. The station itself reopened on 2nd March 1998 in connection with the new Maynooth service. At the time of writing, the ivy is about to engulf one of the bus shelters on the new Down platform; check it out.

Glasnevin (MP 3 $\frac{1}{4}$). The station consisted of an island platform with its offices at street level on the Up side. This station, too, closed in 1910.



Glasnevin Junction: No.186 brings the St Manntan railtour back from Liffey Junction to the LNWR North Wall yard on 11th September 1971. Over to the right, on the GS&WR lines, a North Wall to Kingsbridge transfer is fighting its way up the hill. For the record, E402 was at the front and E426 at the back. CPF7183D

Glasnevin Junction (MP 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ on the GS&WR and MP 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ on the Midland Great Western as measured from Liffey Junction). The first rails past here were those of the MGWR’s line from Liffey Junction to the North Wall which opened on 1st March 1864. The GS&WR opened its line from Islandbridge Junction to here on 2nd September 1877 and, at first, used the MGWR line to gain access to the North Wall yards. The GS&WR opened its own line from Glasnevin to North Wall on 1st April 1901 and started the suburban service mentioned above. By 1921, the GS&WR and the MGWR agreed that the connection was redundant and the pointwork was taken out. After the 1925 Amalgamation, the new Great Southern Railways eventually realised that economies could be made by installing a new crossover but in the opposite direction to the old one. The new link was not opened until 1936. A year later, Broadstone passenger station closed and frequent use was made of the new connection to get Midland section trains to and from Amiens Street and Westland Row.

On this railtour, we leave the GS&WR at Glasnevin Junction and cross onto the metals of the Midland Great Western's North Wall branch. The GS&WR line swings away to our right and will soon pass under us. We keep Glasnevin Cemetery on our right as we head west. Properly known as Prospect Cemetery, some of it lies between the railway lines but the larger part lies to the north of the GS&WR lines.

The Midland sent out seven goods trains daily from the North Wall and, because of the fierce 1 in 50 climb alongside Whitworth Road, any goods train with more than 15 wagons required a banking engine. The Midland built five heavy P class 0-6-0 tanks in 1881 (later GSR J10 Nos 614 to 618) for banking duties and they continued until 1959 when 617 was the last survivor. The line is now in use to gain access to Docklands.



Near Glasnevin Junction: No.186 climbs towards the junction on the MGWR North Wall branch with the St Manntan railtour of 11th September 1971. The train was working from Bray to Liffey Junction and later visited the North Wall. The track on the right is that of the North City Mills branch, to the right of the North Wall branch. CPF7183A

As we head westwards, we soon cross over the GS&WR Islandbridge to North Wall line. Almost immediately on our left, at MP 0½, a siding trailed in that used to serve the **North City Mills** (also known as Clonliffe Mills). The branch, which was just 4 chains short of a mile long, also crossed the Royal Canal. That bridge could only take relatively light engines. The former MGWR J26 class 0-6-0 tanks or, later, CIÉ G class diesel-hydraulic locos were about as heavy as were allowed. The branch opened in 1866 and was last used in 1972. A substantial fire and explosion at the bakery at 9:45pm on 3rd October 1961 caused the wall of the mill to fall across both lines of the Liffey branch, severing the main colour light signalling cables from West Road cabin. Severe disruption was caused to traffic; normal service was resumed early on the 5th and track repairs were completed by the 9th. The North City Mills branch was lifted in 1977.

We cross the Royal Canal on a sharp left-hand curve, limited to 20mph, and then swing sharp right to join the former MGWR main line at **Liffey Junction** (MP 0 from Liffey Junction and 172 from Broadstone).

The Midland Great Western Railway, “that most Irish of railways” in the words of E.L. Ahrons, was incorporated in 1844 and opened for business in 1847. Its headquarters, main works and Dublin terminus

was at Broadstone (rightly or wrongly, most of us often put “the” before the name).

The main line from the Broadstone trailed in on our left here but there is little to mark the site of the junction other than a redundant water tower and a fence across the trackbed towards the Broadstone. The 65-lever signal cabin of 1923 was demolished in June 1991 when the line from Connolly as far as Clonsilla came under the control of CTC.

Liffey Junction once had island passenger platforms on either side of the main line and a long cattle beach on the Down side (our left); little now remains. Such was the cattle traffic on the Midland that there was a link of 18 goods guards here.

The amalgamations of 1924 and 1925, and the very depressed Irish economy, led the Great Southern Railways to close Broadstone on 18th January 1937. Broadstone’s passenger trains were diverted to Westland Row and the layout at Glasnevin Junction was reversed as mentioned above. Broadstone remained open for goods traffic until 10th July 1944 and the loco shed remained open and became home to many non-MGWR locos, as well as natives, until it finally closed on 8th April 1961 when the crews were transferred to Grand Canal Street and Amiens Street sheds. The line from Liffey Junction to the old terminus remained in occasional use for departmental workings, in connection with the bus depot, for some time and the stub of the line was visited by No.186 and the “Eblana” railtour on 7th October 1972. The line was disconnected and lifted in March 1977.

The MGWR established a creosoting plant here in 1864 served by a horse-worked 3ft gauge tramway and there was a dual-gauge siding. The plant closed about 1930 and the work transferred to Inchicore. The Midland also had two two-ton rail-mounted steam cranes supplied by Wilson in 1879 (Nos 4111 and 4112). They were built for the Russian State Railway but were diverted to the Ministry of Munitions in 1919. They refused them as being too big for the British loading gauge but the always bargain-hunting MGWR got them in 1920 and regauged them. Until recently, 4112 was at West Rail in Tuam. One of the cranes was used to unload coal from lighters on the Royal Canal and the other to handle coal at the engine shed. Little is known about a third crane which was used to shunt a small wagon repair shop (it held 6 wagons and closed in early GSR days) and an adjoining siding (near North City Mills) where ash was loaded into barges and brought out to sea for dumping.

In steam days, the banking engines from North Wall continued to Ashtown but, in diesel days, the bankers dropped off here. By 1960, almost any type of loco could be used for banking and Driver John Callery had a 400 class (Watson, 1916) which disgraced itself by getting derailed at Glasnevin. The last of the Woolwich class of 2-6-0s in service, No.376, was often used and what a sight she was as she blasted up the bank, tightly buffered up to a long goods train which usually had an A class diesel-electric on the front.

The MGWR bought the ailing Royal Canal in 1844 for £289,000 and built their railway along the canal bank. You may notice several instances of gradient boards reading “1 in 150”; presumably these apply only to the railway?

From here, the mileposts are on our left, from zero at Broadstone. Before we go any further, a quick word about Midland mileposts. While many have been replaced with standard mileposts, many of the MGWR pattern ones still survive and deserve explanation. Whole miles are denoted by a square white-painted plate with the appropriate number in black. The quarter miles are denoted by a square plate which is half the width and half the height of the whole plate - hence the quarter. These are mounted with the diagonal vertical. Half miles have the whole plate divided along a diagonal and the resulting triangle is mounted with the diagonal as the base. The three-quarters plates are the whole plates minus a quarter plate. They are mounted so that they look like a V. The whole scheme has a simple grace to it, don’t you think?

Broombridge (MP 1³/₄) opened on 2nd July 1990 beside the canal bridge of the same name (originally Brougham Bridge, No.5). A plaque inserted on the canal bridge commemorates Sir William Rowan

Hamilton, Astronomer Royal at the nearby Dunsink Observatory, and his theory of Quaternion Multiplication: $i^2 = j^2 = k^2 = ijk = -1$. This came to him as he was walking from the Observatory (on the hill across the canal) to a meeting of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin and he scrawled it into the stonework of the bridge. Nowadays there is little evidence of such scholarship, indeed most of what was provided on the platforms has been burned or destroyed.

The level crossings on this line are prefixed XG and you will that many are still manually operated.

The level crossing at **Reilly's** (MP 2) is about to be replaced by an overbridge some 70 metres long across both rail and canal. A 2007 survey showed that these gates were closed to road traffic for up to 36 minutes in the hour.

Ashtown (MP 3). This is where the steam banking engines from the North Wall used to drop off, though in bad weather they would continue to Clonsilla. Fireman Andy Irwin was once firing to Driver Maurice Costelloe on 614, one of the J10 tanks. Andy got a very bad fright when the injector kicked at Ashtown and he found that the water tanks were empty! They galloped back to Liffey Junction for replenishment - the longest five minutes of his career. A siding on the Down side, which once led to the flour mill of Todd & Co, was closed about 1890 but was left in situ and was later used to store derelict steam locos awaiting scrapping.

The signal cabin here was closed on 4th April 1960 and demolished in September 1967. The station was the rail head for a vast volume of passenger traffic which arrived here on the morning of 29th September 1979 when Pope John Paul concelebrated Mass in the Phoenix Park. A temporary block post and crossover were installed and proved both useful and busy. Since then, housing and associated commuter traffic have transformed this once-sleepy station. The footbridge was replaced and the platforms extended when the station was reopened on 11th January 1982. The level crossing remains hand-operated.

Phoenix Park (MP 3 $\frac{3}{4}$) opened on 21st January 2008 but, for clarity's sake, was renamed **Navan Road Parkway** in September 2011. Anyone seeking a stroll in the Park is best advised to detrain at Castleknock.

Blanchardstown (MP 4 $\frac{1}{2}$) once had another flour mill siding but everything was demolished in 1988 and the site is now dominated by a roundabout on the M50. Back in 1867, there were special trains to trials of steam ploughing engines and reaping machines in nearby Abbotstown. This was a welcome boost to traffic which had suffered from, in the Chairman's words, the effects of "lack of Exhibition traffic, cholera, Fenian activity, the issue of Third Class and 'market' tickets." Discuss.

Castleknock (MP 5) opened on 2nd July 1990 as Granard Bridge, mainly to serve yet more housing development.

Coolmine (MP 5 $\frac{3}{4}$) again dates from 2nd July 1990 though it had been a block post before 1906. The height of its footbridge might point to future electrification.

Porterstown gates (MP 6 $\frac{1}{4}$) is near the Canal's very deep cutting known as the "Deep Sinking". This was the scene of a boat tragedy in 25th November 1845 when a boat overturned and 16 unfortunates were drowned; the cabin boy was in charge while the helmsman was at his dinner.

Clonsilla (MP 7). The line was originally double track all the way to Mullingar but was singled west of here as an economy measure by the cash-strapped GSR. They lifted the former Down line on 10th August 1930 leaving Clonsilla at the end of the double track from Dublin.

The upgrading of the line to Maynooth led to the double line being reinstated on 4th December 2000. This is now well-used by the intensive service of suburban trains to and from Pearse.

Approaching the station, there is a siding on the Down side and a signalling equipment room which controls the line from Liffey Junction to Maynooth. Clonsilla signal cabin, on the Up side, was a fringe

box for the CTC until the Maynooth upgrading. The cabin now controls the level crossing gates (XG010) and the approach signals. The cabin also has the last Irish survivor of level crossing gates controlled by a wheel mechanism.

The footbridge here is by George Smith & Co of Glasgow and was at Midleton (on the Youghal branch) until 1981. It was first erected here on concrete blocks to be high enough for electrification but it was rebuilt at a more normal height after refurbishment in 2000. It is about to be enhanced with lifts, etc., for the less able passengers.

Clonsilla was the junction for the branch to Navan and Kingscourt which diverged on the Up side (our right as we look west).

The line north of Clonsilla was originally built by Dublin and Meath Railway and it was opened on 29th August 1862 throughout the 30½ miles to a temporary station in Navan. The line opened north of there on 15th December 1862 to make a connection with the Dublin and Drogheda Railway which had opened from Navan to Kells on 11th July 1853. The D&MR built a branch from Kilmessan to Athboy which was opened for passengers on 26th February 1864. The D&MR line to Navan was eventually extended by the Navan and Kingscourt Railway and reached Kingscourt on 1st November 1875. This, and their declared plans to build north through Armagh to Cookstown (sic), sparked a very expensive legal battle with the Irish North Western Railway and the Ulster Railway who felt that their territories were under threat. Kingscourt remained a terminus (though built as a possible through station).

An accident occurred at the junction here on 2nd June 1869 when a train of 41 wagons and a van was derailed at the exact junction between the MGWR and the D&MR. While one wagon ended up in the canal and six others were damaged, the only casualty was an injured herdsman. Changes to the permanent way, including the installation of two reverse curves, were recommended.

The line between Clonsilla and Navan was laid as double track but was singled between Dunboyne and Drumree in 1918 and between Clonsilla and Dunboyne on 27th July 1926. Both the line from here to Kingscourt and the Athboy branch lost their passenger trains on 27th January 1947, during the coal shortage. The Athboy branch closed to goods on 15th January 1954.

The Clonsilla - Navan line experienced a revival in late 1954. The Tolka Bridge, at MP 1 on the Great Northern Railway's main line just north of Dublin (which we will cross tomorrow) was washed away in a flood after torrential rain. The washout happened on 9th December 1954 and the GN main line did not fully reopen until 12th January 1956. In the interim, most goods traffic from Dublin to Drogheda (and points north), and vice versa, was routed along the Midland from the North Wall to Clonsilla and on to Navan. There the trains were reversed and ran to Drogheda where they reversed again before heading north - 57½ miles (including two reversals and some heavy work on single lines) instead of 32 on the GN main line. The inevitable dispute arose - the GNR accused CIÉ of working much of their own traffic in the trains that they were charging the GNR for. The MAK diesel-hydraulic loco, GNR No.800, was delivered to the North Wall on 14th December 1954. After a trial trip to Bray and back, the new-fangled loco set off for Dundalk via Clonsilla, Navan and Drogheda - pictures, anyone?

The line from Clonsilla to Navan was closed completely on 31st March 1963. The branch was lifted by a contractor who used former Great Northern Railcar A as motive power. The materials were removed by CIÉ, towards Dublin and the usual motive power was ex-Great Northern SG2 class 0-6-0 No.181. The Kingscourt branch remained in use for gypsum traffic but that traffic was routed over the GNR lines to Drogheda and the North Wall until lost to the roads; the last train ran on 30th October 2001.

Part of the branch has been relaid as far as M3 Parkway which began life as Pace Interchange, just north of Dunboyne, on the M3 at MP 7½ measured from Clonsilla. It is near the former MP 11½ which was measured from Broadstone. The relaid line was officially opened by the Minister for Transport on 2nd September 2010 and services began next day.

Clonsilla is having a “turnback platform” installed on the Up side - what we used to call a bay platform. It seems that the branch train will operate from and to this bay at off-peak times and thus save costs.

Leaving Clonsilla today, we leave the Midland main line on our left at MP 7½. The former Dublin and Meath Railway shed at Clonsilla stood in the angle here. Later converted to a dwelling house, Inchicore Driver Fran Green lived there in the early 1960s, after which Signalman Mick Henderson lived there.

We cross the Royal Canal on the new skewed span bridge 284, close to MP 7¾.

The new branch is double track throughout with fences set well back from the trackbed though there is little sign (yet) of accompanying shrubbery or hedges. The mileposts are on the Down side measured from zero at the Broadstone. The new posts are rectangular stone pillars with the number engraved on two sides.

You will notice that the bridges have retained their MGWR numbers - and the many new additional bridges given the number of the bridge nearer Clonsilla but with suffixes for the new bridges so as not to upset the old system. There is a 286F but you might spot a G somewhere? Answers on a postcard, please.

Hansfield (MP 8) has yet to be opened, largely because the local developer did not build the access road as agreed. It is truly a green field site. The Minister for Transport has given IÉ €1m to help rectify the situation even though land ownership issues are not yet resolved.

Dunboyne (MP 10½) has the main building on the Up side with a huge car park. Like the other new stations, Platform 1 is on the Up side and the platforms here are linked by a new footbridge (291). The former water tower is on the Down side after the 10½ post, before the station, and has been extensively refurbished. The one-storey former station building is on the Down side just north of the bridge though with a high fence between us and it.

M3 Parkway (MP 11½) is a new station which began life as Pace but received its new name in October 2010. There are two platforms, of course, but the tracks extend beyond the station to a headshunt which allows for running round. The new footbridge is numbered 295A.

The railway service between here and Docklands, at the time of writing, is 24 weekday trains from Docklands to here and 25 returns. During the day, all trains from Docklands run non-stop to Clonsilla, arriving anything between 4 and 15 minutes after a Connolly to Maynooth stopping service. The 15:55 from Docklands, though, begins a new pattern of stopping everywhere and this persists until the last train out of Docklands at 19:25. The inbound weekday service begins with the 06:50 from M3 Parkway and it stops everywhere to Docklands as do the next 6 inbound trains. Beginning with the 10:05 from M3 Parkway, the services run non-stop between Clonsilla and Docklands in both directions. The outbound trains follow those for Maynooth while the inbound trains run ahead of trains from Maynooth. The wait at Clonsilla can be anything between 5 and 23 minutes though, with the M3 Parkway trains running more frequently, there is sometimes no connecting main line train at all. After 20:00, there is a shuttle service between Clonsilla and M3 Parkway. Saturday’s service is similar but at hourly intervals rather than roughly half-hourly.

Docklands station is closed at weekends, so the trains run from and to Connolly on Saturdays and Sundays. On Saturdays, there are 12 outward and 13 inward trains, all running non-stop between Connolly and Clonsilla. The Sunday service is 10 trains each way, again all running non-stop between Connolly and Clonsilla. The weekend connections into and out of Maynooth trains at Clonsilla are not as convenient as weekdays. All the trains are single-manned with occasional announcements by the driver to remind folk that the train will run non-stop between Docklands and Clonsilla.

Patronage of the new station has been disappointing and two causes have been identified by some observers. Like many other IÉ stations, passengers have reacted adversely to the charges for using the car park. In addition, many cars heading for this station have to pass a toll-booth on the nearby road and that,

too, deters passengers.

The present M3 Parkway station here is roughly half way between Dunboyne and the closed station at Fairyhouse. Both were block posts in a previous life but Fairyhouse cabin was closed on 2nd February 1931 and the station closed to all traffic, except traffic for the nearby eponymous racecourse, on 27th July 1931.



M3 Parkway: No.186 visited here with the Province of Leinster railtour on Sunday 11th September 2011. Ahead lies the yet-unrebuilt line to Navan. This was the first steam passenger into the station but today will be the first steam departure. CPF - DSCF6788

Today, the tracks continue tantalisingly beyond the overbridge at the north end of the station (thankfully ending in a headshunt unlike Kilkenny, Howth and others). Planning is well in hand for re-opening north of here to Navan. It is anticipated that the 34km line will have stations at Dunshaughlin, Kilmessan, Navan Central and Navan North; the latter at Windtown with a 500-space car park! In 2007, the then-Minister for Transport, a Meath TD, promised rails to Navan by 2015.

The plan is that No.461 will use the headshunt to run round the train here and, although No.186 was here with last year's Province of Leinster Railtour, today will see the first steam departure from the new terminus. We are still making history!

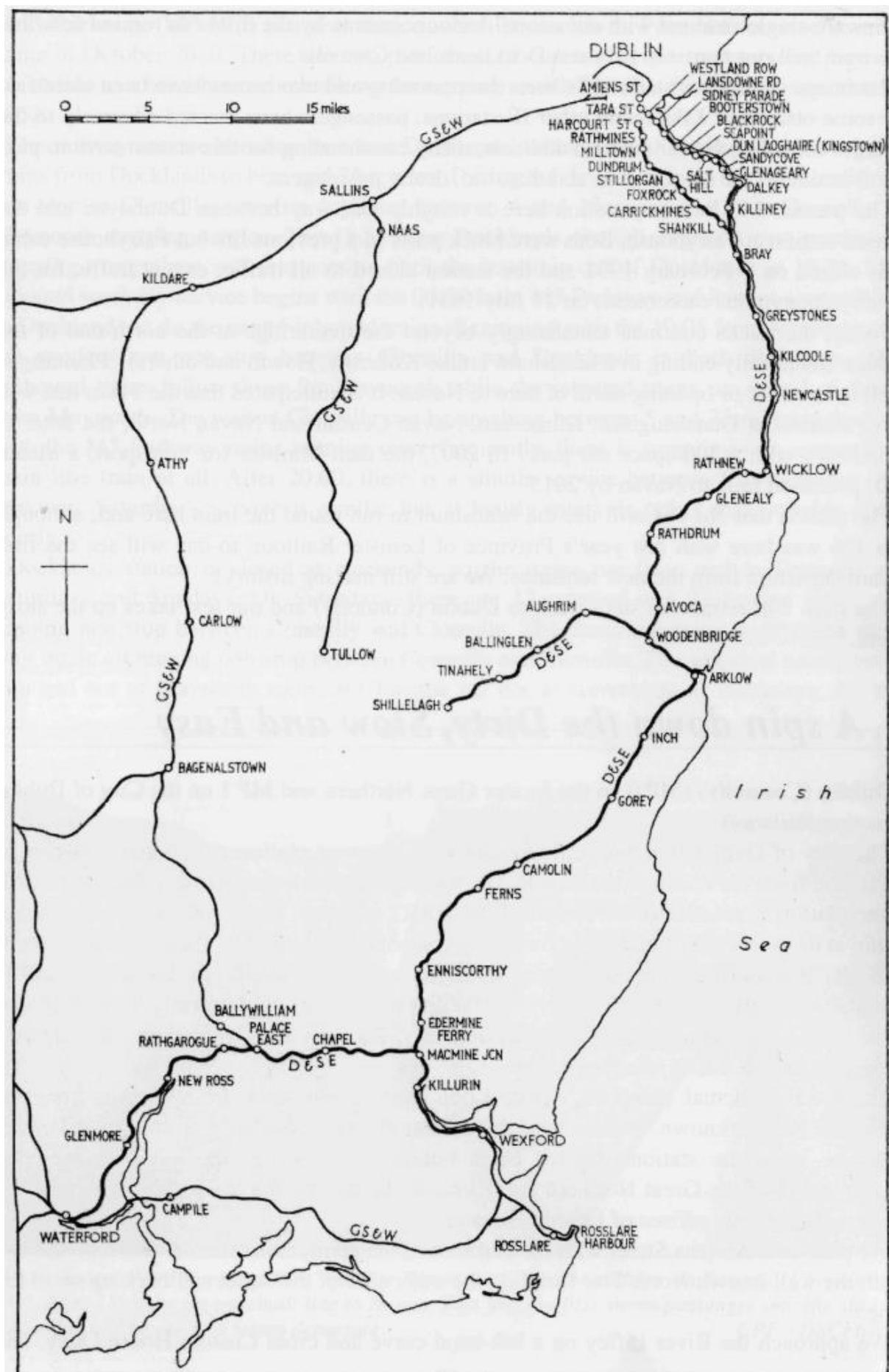
The train will retrace its steps back to Dublin (Connolly) and our text takes up the story there.

3. A spin down the Dirty, Slow and Easy

Dublin (Connolly) (MP 0 on the former Great Northern and MP 1 on the City of Dublin Junction Railway)

The City of Dublin Junction Railway owned the present platforms 5, 6 and 7 as part of their line from Newcomen Junction to Westland Row which opened on 1st May 1891. All three platforms are electrified as part of the DART network. The GSR had its own signal cabin at the north end of platforms 6 and 7 to control the busy ex-Dublin and South Eastern (D&SER) part of the station; it lasted until the arrival of

DART in 1984. The D&SER maintained a turntable and loco servicing facility to the west of platform 7 in an area now used by the Maintenance of Way inspection cars. Recently track recording car 721, out-stationed from Kildare, was based here.

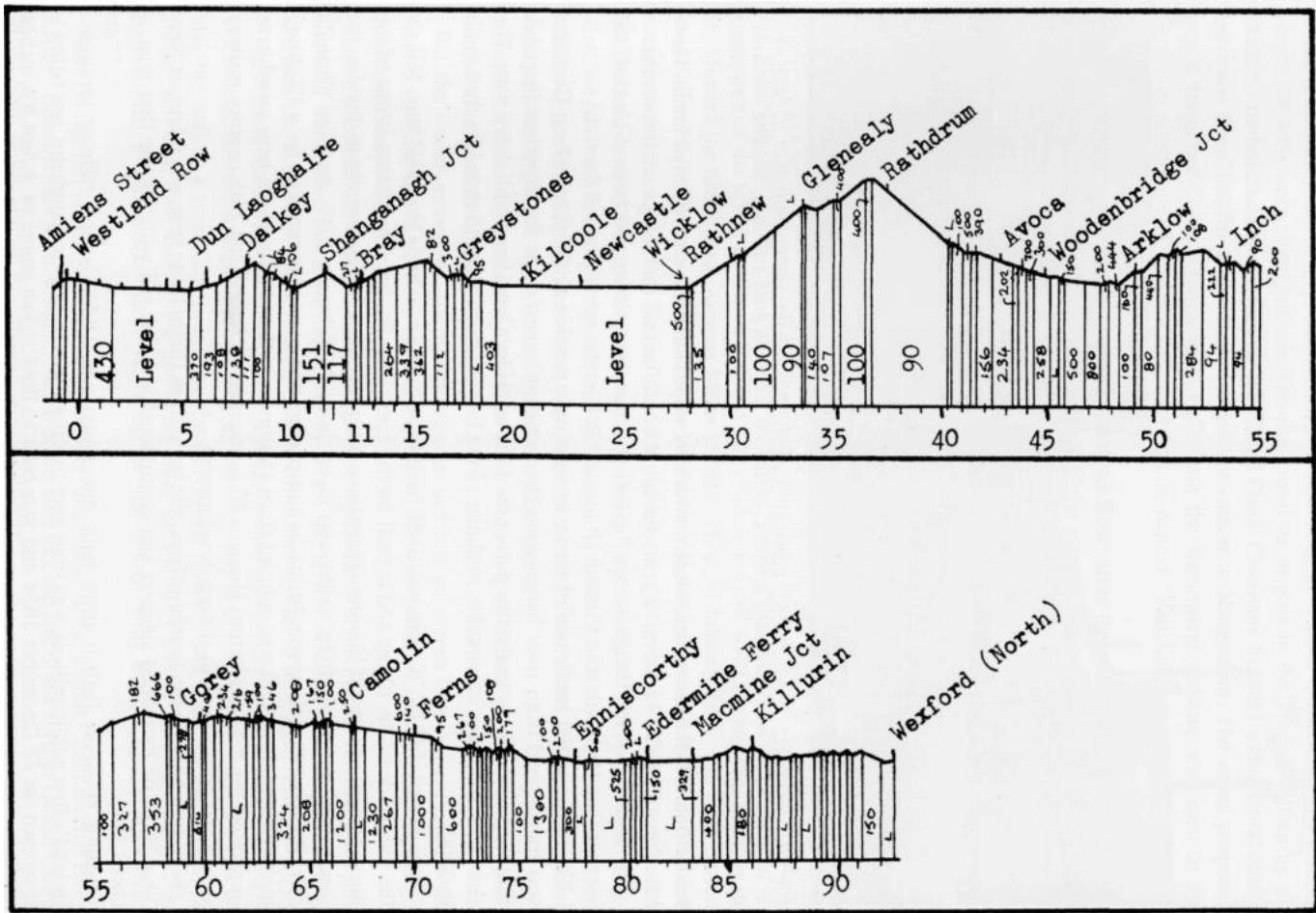


There are no actual mileposts on the Loop Line, as the track from Amiens Street to Westland Row is known. If there were one, Connolly would be MP 1 from zero at Pearse.

As we leave the station, the red brick building near us on the left was once the headquarters of the Great Northern and its crest still adorns the main door. It is now the principal operating offices of Iarnród Éireann.

We pass over Amiens Street with the entrance to the eponymous station visible to the left with the well-known North Star Hotel on the other side of the street and backing on to the line.

We approach the River Liffey on a left-hand curve and cross Custom House Quay. The bridge below is the second-most-often struck by stupid lorry drivers with high loads. There have been 70 strikes here in 10 years though it has to be said that things are improving.



The building of the bridge across the Liffey created great controversy as it blocked the view of Gandon's splendid Custom House of 1791 on the north bank of the river.

The quays on the south side of the river were once notable as the place where Guinness was transhipped from river barges onto the company's own ships for export to England. Shipping cannot now access this part of the river as bridges have been built down river. The newest of these is a remarkable rotatable swing bridge, named after Samuel Beckett, built in 2009.

Tara Street (MP 0 1/4 if there was one), used to be Tara Street and George's Quay. It is on the south side of the Liffey and is built on the Loop Line Bridge. The station is one of the busiest on all of Iarnród Éireann. There have been several schemes recently to develop the commercial potential of the station and its environs. In February 2010, An Bord Pleanála (The Planning Board) over-ruled its own inspectors and granted permission for a 12-storey high building. Its height was reduced from 15 storeys so that it "would not have an adverse impact on the nearby Custom House". IÉ is required to protect the 19th century railway arches and platform walls during development.

To reduce noise in the nearby offices, the track from Connolly to here was relaid, at New Year 2005, on hardwood sleepers and continuously-welded rail with, for the first time, a check rail.



Dublin (Connolly): No.186 waits at what is now Platform 6 with the Slaney railtour of 10th April 1976 to Wexford. To the left, re-engined former C class loco 206 is on push-pull duty, heading north with de-engined AEC railcars. CPF7610A

Dublin (Pearse) (MP 0 from both directions) was Dublin's first railway terminus. Ireland's first public railway was from here to Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire, see below). It opened on 17th December 1834 and was built to the English gauge of 4 foot 8½ inches which was understandable, given the huge influence of Liverpool Quakers on the Dublin proposers who were also Quakers. The line owed its origins to the gradual silting up of Dublin's harbour and an attempt by the Grand Canal Company to build a ship canal along the coast from Dublin to the Irish Sea packet station at Kingstown. The canal proposal would have been very expensive to build and the then-novel railway was seen as an attractive alternative. The line's first locomotive, named "Vauxhall", was built by George Forrester of Liverpool.

Pearse station was originally named Westland Row, after the street which runs at right angles below the tracks at the northern end of the station. The station's overall roof is a remarkable piece of work by Dubliner Richard Turner. It is based on his roof of Liverpool's Lime Street and, like its cousin, is noted for its lightness and strength. At first, the station was a terminus of course, built to the Down side, but it became a through station on 1st May 1891 when the Loop Line was opened between here and Amiens Street station.

Westland Row had two through platforms and three bay platforms at the southern end of the station. The bay on the Down side (our left as we travel south) has now been lifted. It was once used to store DART sets though it was never electrified. The bays on the Up side used to be occupied by overhead line maintenance vehicles and equipment of various and interesting origins. These sidings have now been cut back and finish at a buffer stop near the platform ramp. The two through platforms became more intensively used after the formation of the Great Southern Railways in 1925. The GSR soon moved the terminus of its Meath Line trains from Amiens Street to here. Then, in January 1937, the GSR closed the Midland Great Western terminus at the Broadstone and transferred all the other Midland section services to here too. To facilitate this, of course, the layout of Glasnevin Junction had to be reversed (see earlier).

Nowadays, things have changed again and most long-distance Midland trains now operate into and out of Kingsbridge / Heuston. The exceptions are the Sligo trains (which now start and finish at Amiens Street) and the heavy Midland suburban traffic which uses Amiens Street and here too.

Westland Row was renamed Pearse in 1966 when 15 of Ireland's main stations were named after leaders of the 1916 Rising.

For the timers among us, the mileposts start again from a zero here but are somewhat erratic and appear at random on both sides of the line between here and Shanganagh Junction. Sorry!

Leaving Pearse, there used to be a bridge-type signal cabin spanning the running lines just south of the station but it was swept away when the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) services began in April 1984 (isn't it hard to think that it was so long ago?). On our right is the Boston Yard which was a carriage storage area and one-time home for the Society's Whitehead-based carriages immediately before two-day tours. It is now used for railcar stabling and as a turn-back siding for the Maynooth railcars, and some of the Drogheda railcar services, thus leaving the platforms clear for the busy DART service. The yard is named after a lime works which occupied the site before being bought by the railway in 1877.



Boston Yard: This was the view from the footplate of No.171 working the Rosslare to Connolly part of the Sean Rí railtour on Sunday 9th May 1993. To the right, loco 048 is lying over with a Marino Point to Shelton Abbey ammonia train until we have passed. In the distance, Pearse station beckons beyond 171's smokebox. CPF 17680

Next on our left is Grand Canal Dock, an interface between the Grand Canal and the river Liffey. Immediately to its south is, on the Down side too, the site of the former Grand Canal Street shed of the Dublin and South Eastern Railway.

At one time, D&SER coal supplies were brought to the Grand Canal Dock in lighters and unloaded by crane and bucket. Jack O'Neill tells a tale of a relief craneman who used a grab crane instead of the usual bucket. On one dip into the lighter's hold, the grab closed firmly on part of the craft's bottom. Unaware of this, the craneman (and the crane) made a valiant effort to lift the whole lighter out of the canal. Lighter One, Crane Nil!

Grand Canal Dock is the newest station on our route. It opened for business on 22nd January 2001 and comprises a Down platform, which is cantilevered over the dock mentioned above, and an island platform on the Up side. The inland side of the island platform is not in regular use for passenger trains but is used to store spare DART sets.

The new station is alongside the site of Grand Canal Street shed, mentioned above, which was on the Down side of the line. The shed closed to steam on 27th March 1954 when most of the steam locos were transferred to the Broadstone. The shed area was then used for steam heating vans before the Maintenance of Way department moved in in 1972 but they decamped to Kildare in 1984, ahead of DART work.

The D&SER's main works were on the inland side of the line, on the Up side. The buildings began life as a distillery but were derelict when bought by the Dublin and Kingstown in 1836 for £5,000. The financially-canny D&K realised a profit from the deal by selling off the brass and copper stills. The D&K produced the first Irish-built carriages here in 1837 and, in 1839, the Works made history by being the first in Ireland to build its own locomotive. The distillery, though, did not make an ideal works for the locos were built and repaired on the first floor - which says something about the strength of the floor joists!

The amalgamation of the D&SER and the Great Southern and Western to form the new Great Southern Railways in 1925 led to someone spotting a bit of duplication (the eternal horror of the time and motion obsessionists) so Grand Canal Street Works were closed quickly in 1926 and the work transferred to Inchicore and Broadstone. The Works later metamorphosed into a meat processing plant but the site is now a block of luxury flats.

Look out on the Down side for a block of flats built into a former (and now stationary) gas holder.



Lansdowne Road: No.184 comes under the old stand (now replaced) at the IRFU headquarters with the first of the day's three Dublin Bay shuttles between Connolly and Bray on 24th September 1983.
CPF8344G

Lansdowne Road (MP 1) was formerly Lansdowne Road and Ballsbridge. Approaching the station, our route lies under the West Stand of the Irish Rugby Football Union's headquarters. The rugby ground has

been substantially rebuilt over the past few years and the stand spanning the tracks is entirely new. The ground is now known as the Aviva Stadium. The station's signal cabin, at the north end of the Down platform, is now used to locally control the level crossing during rugby internationals. At the south end, the platforms cross the River Dodder.

Just beyond this, on the Up side, were the sidings serving the nearby Royal Dublin Showgrounds; the sidings were closed on 19th September 1971. The Dublin and Kingstown had an "Engine Hospital" here (on the Down side) from 1834 to 1839, after which all efforts were concentrated at Grand Canal Street - and those lifts!

Sandymount (MP 1 $\frac{3}{4}$) was closed in 1960 but came back to life with the DART. The Up platform was extended towards Dublin in late 2003.

Sydney Parade (MP 2 $\frac{1}{4}$) was the setting for James Joyce's play "Death of a Lady at Sydney Parade". Our own 184 was used in a film version of this but the filming was done at Moate (Ireland's most schizophrenic station - unless you can think of another?). The station was also mentioned in Joyce's short story "A Painful Case" which concerned a spurned widow who threw herself under a train, something that has become all-too-common in DART days. The station closed on 12th September 1960 but reopened on 6th September 1972.



Merrion Gates: The South Kerry railtour started with No.184 working a boat train connection from Dunn Laoghaire Pier to Connolly on Saturday 17th May 1980. Here No.184 gathers speed after picking up a large party of participants at Booterstown. CPF8018A

There was an accident here on 25th September 1868. The stationmaster had closed the gates for a cart to cross but forgot to open them for the railway. Later a boy was driving two cows across the line when they were struck by the 6:30am Down Express mail from Westland Row. The loco was travelling bunk-first at about 20mph, hauling a Post Office van and a second class carriage. The loco derailed and "injured" some 50 feet of the Down platform. The train driver was cautioned for not keeping a good lookout, and the reporting officer was scathing about "rotting and decaying longitudinal railbearers". The Dublin, Wicklow and Western's response on 5th November 1868 stated "both the stationmaster and driver have been fined", but fails to make any mention of the poor permanent way!

Booterstown (MP 3½) seems to have been a crossing point in early D&K single line days but, like others, was closed in 1960 and reopened in 1975. Both of the platforms here have been extended to the north.

Blackrock (MP 4) has a very ornate building on the Up side designed by J.S. Mulvaney, mainly thanks to the insistence of local land owner, Lord Meath, who was no great fan of the railroad (as it was first called). There were once sea-bathing baths on the Down side (of course).

Monkstown and Seapoint (MP 4¾) began life as Seapoint but became Monkstown and Seapoint in 1964 before reverted to simply Seapoint in June 1991. There was a collision here on 3rd November 1899 when two locos (Nos. 30 and 54) met head-on during single line working. Twenty eight passengers were injured, and £8,500 compensation had to be paid out. The stationmaster here and his foreman at Blackrock were both dismissed over allegations of poor communication about the single line working arrangements. Loco No.30 was a 2-2-2WT built at Grand Canal Street in 1873; it was finally withdrawn in 1902. The other loco, No.64, was a 4-4-2T built by Sharp Stewart in 1893. It was rebuilt in 1913 and survived until 1953 as GSR and CIÉ C3 class No.459.



***Seapoint:** No.186 is working the return journey of the Slieve Cualann railtour on 4th May 1968. The tour had started from Belfast behind Jeep 56 and, after an official handing-over ceremony at Connolly, No.186 worked to the Murrough and Wicklow before returning to Connolly. The loco was turned at Bray after being piloted around the Head by B147. The day concluded with Tommy Carroll in cracking form down the GN main line. Here, the former railway hotel (now gone) dominates the skyline to the left as 186 completes her first big adventure south of Dundalk. Electrification was then only a gleam in someone's eye. CPF6850*

Salthill (MP 5¼) is another station with an identity problem. It began life as Salthill and Monkstown but became plain Salthill in 1960 before being closed later that year. Nearby Seapoint later acquired the Monkstown part of the title. The station reopened on 23rd July 1984 as Salthill but was renamed Salthill and Monkstown in June 1991.

The closeness of the Irish Sea has led to the sea frequently invading the trackbed. Many years ago, the 294-ton sailing schooner Hampton was driven ashore here in a storm and ended up with her bowsprit overhanging the railway.

Dunleary (MP 5½) is, literally, where Ireland's public railways began. It was here, on 11th April 1834, that William Dargan began the building of the Dublin and Kingstown - and launched his epic career of building a high proportion of Ireland's railways. The original, but now-untraceable, D&K southern terminus was near here where there was a level crossing until 1983.

Approaching Dun Laoghaire, we pass the piers built by the Board of Works. Work started in 1814 though the last of the four piers, the Carlisle, was not completed until 1859. One of these quays was used to unload coal and the pre-1983 level crossing was known as "the Coal Gates". There was a 4ft gauge tramway in use to move the stones which came from Dalkey Hill. The Commissioners of Irish Lights once had a 3ft 6in system for moving buoys about; they used a steam crane to shunt the place until about 1975. Their new headquarters is the circular modern building on the Down side.

Dun Laoghaire (MP 6) replaced Dunleary in 1837 - the original station is on the Down side, behind the main station buildings. Originally the place was called Dunleary but the name Kingstown was adopted after the visit of King George IV in 1821. The present name is closer to the original but in Irish. The station had Mallin added in 1966; another commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Rising but, in all honesty, the new name does not seem to have passed into the vernacular yet. Remarkably, the station had only one platform until the new Up platform materialised in 1957; before then, the section through the station and south to Sandycove was single track. The congestion caused by trains to and from the Pier, at the south end of the station, was described as "appalling".



Dun Laoghaire: No.184 is captured approaching the north end of the platforms as she gallops past with the second of the day's three well filled Dublin Bay shuttles between Connolly and Bray on 12th April 1980. CPF8013C

The main station buildings, on the Down platform, are to another Mulvaney design. Railway business is now conducted in a Belfast Botanic-style glazed bridge, complete with escalators to the original platforms behind the booking office. The upper floor housed the railway-owned Restaurant na Mara (latterly Brasserie na Mara) but it is no longer railway owned. It was the venue for the Presidential receptions after the launch of our loco 461 on 16th April 1991 (by President Mary Robinson) and of State Coach 351 on 18th October 2000 (by President Mary McAleese). The steps up to the booking hall from the Down platform are the last remnants of the Kingstown and Dalkey Atmospheric Railway (of which more soon). Both platforms have been extended at the Dublin end recently.

Leaving the station, the branch to Dun Laoghaire Pier went through the wall on the Down side. The Carlisle Pier, opened in 1859, was used by the ships of the London and North Western and the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. The branch closed in 1980 with the arrival of DART.



Dun Laoghaire Pier: On Saturday 17th May 1980, No.184 got the South Kerry railtour under way with this boat train to Connolly where No.171 took over for the long trek to Tralee. The white-hatted Customs official and barrier are reminders of a stricter regime at the port. CPF8017F

The deep cutting south of here was where Drumm railcar set A was derailed on 25th June 1935 by a landslip. The resulting fire badly damaged the batteries and the set was out of service until 7th January 1936.

The first railway south of Dun Laoghaire was a two-mile long tramway, known locally as The Metals, that was used from 1816 to bring stone from a quarry at Dalkey to the new harbour. The tramway ran for just over two miles to the East Pier and a further mile to the West Pier. The two-mile section included three self-acting incline planes and the “trains” were rakes of four four-wheel wagons chained together. Then, in March 1844, the trackbed was transformed into the first atmospheric railway in these islands, and the only one in Ireland. Laid to a gauge of 4 foot 8½ inches, like the Dublin and Kingstown, the vacuum was maintained in 15-inch diameter tubes laid between the rails. The vacuum was created from a 36-foot diameter flywheel at Dalkey which was driven from three Cornish boilers. The working vacuum pressure of the line was a mere 40 lbs psi but this was the equivalent of 110 horsepower. The trains were usually two-coach affairs though up to 12 vehicles were reported. The leading vehicle up the hill from Kingstown was a “piston carriage”. On the opening day, the spectators were in two camps - those who said that it would not start from the bottom and those who said that it would not stop at the top. The vacuum tube did not, however, extend all the way to Dalkey and trains had to be doing 30mph at the end of the tube to have enough momentum to cover the final 500 yards into the station. Trains to Dalkey sometimes stopped short and “the third class passengers were asked to push and the others walked”! On other occasions, the trains sailed clean past Dalkey and ended up in the soft earth beyond but, apparently, without coming to much harm! The Atmospheric’s Dalkey terminus was a little on the seaward side of the present line. The last atmospheric train ran on 12th April 1854 and the line was soon converted to 5 foot 3.

The Kingstown to Dublin line began converting its gauge to the Irish standard on 10th October 1855 and completed the job in the early days of 1856.

Thus, the Dun Laoghaire to Dalkey section can claim to have been worked by horse, air, steam, battery, diesel electric and overhead electric - not counting the gravity by which atmospheric trains returned from Dalkey to Dun Laoghaire.

The track from Dun Laoghaire to Sandycove was laid in a concrete base in 1981. This was to avoid either difficult excavation of the trackbed or expensive raising of overbridges (for which the local authority refused planning permission anyway) to get the necessary height for the overhead electric knitting. It has been reworked over the last New Year period when up to 18 rock-breaking excavators were at work smashing up the concrete slab and lowering the trackbed. The Down road was relaid with jointed rail on hardwood sleepers. The Up line will be dealt with in December 2012.

Sandycove (MP 6 $\frac{3}{4}$) was once called Glasthule and Sandycove and is noted for having its booking office on the overbridge at the Dublin end of the station. At one time, all Up goods and cattle trains had to stop here; presumably to make sure that all was well before descending on Dun Laoghaire.



Glenageary: With her first public train after her restoration for the film “The First Great Train Robbery”, No.184 has steam to spare as she charges up Glenageary bank with the second of three Dublin Bay shuttles between Connolly and Bray on 22nd September 1979. CPF79761

Glenageary (MP 7 $\frac{1}{4}$) is, perhaps, the most attractively refurbished station on the DART system. At one time there was a siding here on the Up side which allowed stone to be transhipped to standard gauge wagons for either Kingstown or export via Wicklow. On 9th February 1858, two loaded wagons ran away and finished up in Kingstown, blocking the place for two hours while an engine was found to move them.

Dalkey (MP 8) was once the atmospheric terminus and was a sometime terminus for suburban trains in steam days. The Up platform has recently been extended at the south end. Dalkey was to be a terminus for some DART trains. As part of that idea, a siding was put in on the Down side at the Bray end and equipped with overhead equipment but it has since been lifted.

Just south of the station, on 16th November 1979, the 08:27 from Bray, headed by ex-C Class No.207, ran into the rear of the 08:17 from Bray to Howth which had stopped because of a broken signal wire. Three

carriages were badly damaged - 1481, 1414 and 1461. The damage to Bulleid-designed Park Royal Open 1414 was significantly reduced by its triangulated underframe. The resulting enquiry led to a review of signalling arrangements.

Dalkey tunnel is just south of the station. It is 160 yards long on a curve and was constructed to the design of I.K. Brunel himself. A more recent giant, O.V.S. Bulleid, lived near here while he was at Inchicore. The view over the sea here, with the sweep of the bay and Slieve Cualann in the background, has been compared to the Bay of Naples - your call.

Killiney (MP 9¾) was closed in 1892 when the next station opened.

Killiney and Ballybrack (MP 10) replaced both Killiney and Ballybrack in 1882 when the line was moved inland to avoid costal erosion. The sea attacks have continued and the line around MP 9 has recently had rockslide detector fences installed.



Killiney Bay: No.184 has a small audience as she climbs away from Killiney towards Dalkey Tunnel with a Bray to Connolly Dublin Bay shuttle on 22nd September 1979. CPF7976K

Ballybrack (MP 10¼) closed in 1892 when the previous station opened.

Shankill (MP 11) opened on 10th June 1977 to serve the locality previously served by the station of the same name on the Harcourt Street line which had been short-sightedly closed on 31st December 1958. The platforms here were extended in late 2003. There had been a siding here in the early 1860s to load ore for the nearby Ballycorus lead works.

Shanganagh Junction (MP 12 measured from Westland Road and MP 10½ measured from Harcourt Street). The former Harcourt Street line trailed in on our right (the Up side). There had been exchange platforms here between 23rd August 1861 and 7th October 1876.

For some time, there were three running lines between here and Bray with the Harcourt Street line being the most inland of the trio. Some of the underbridges still show signs of the third line.

From here to Wexford North, the mileposts are measured from zero at Harcourt Street and change from the Down side to the Up side (our right as we travel south). The modern mileposts include the legend

“Harcourt Street Line” below the large digits.

Woodbrook (MP 11, from Harcourt Street of course) served the adjacent golf course of the same name. It was opened in 1910 with one platform on the Harcourt Street line. It was later moved to the Westland Row line. During a big golf competition in the mid-1960s, coaches 1397 and 1399 were equipped with roof boards reading “Next time let CIÉ do the driving”. Closed on 1st October 1960, the platforms were used occasionally afterwards and nature is slowly reclaiming the area.

We cross the river Dargle about a quarter of a mile before **Bray** (MP 12 $\frac{1}{4}$) opened on 10th July 1854 and was renamed Bray (Daly) in 1966. The station name boards have “Bray” and, as its Irish equivalent “Bré” rather than the more correct “Brí Cualann”. North of the station were sidings on both sides of the line, used to store carriages used for excursion traffic though those on the seaward side were used to store (and recharge) the Drumm battery trains. The busy level crossing at the Dublin end of the station has been known locally as “The White Gates”. The footbridge at the north end of the station was not railway connected; it was removed earlier this year. The 64-lever signal cabin, on the Down side, was extended in 1927 when the Down platform was added. Before then, Bray managed (like Dun Laoghaire) with just one platform on the Up side but Bray once had a scissors crossing midway along the long platform which was worked as two separate entities. Even in the early 1990s, the Down platform was known to many railwaymen as the “new platform”. It now boasts a series of railway-related murals and the footbridge at the south end now has lifts for the less able.

As the 9am to Dublin was about to leave Bray on 16th September 1872, the boiler exploded, killing both the driver, Patrick Dowling, and his fireman Patrick Smith. The locomotive was 2-2-2WT No.4 which had been built by Fairburn in 1855 had its boiler certified for 105 lbs pressure. The Inspecting Officer’s report found that the cause of the explosion was because “the lever of the safety valve was wedged down where it passed through the weather board of the engine”. Driver Dowling had been previously cautioned about this offence when he had been caught covering his pressure gauge glass with a “fist” of waste. That gauge was reading 160 lbs! After the explosion, “21 bits and pieces of boiler plate” were picked up.

Bray’s steam shed was on the Down side at the south end of the station. In August 1948, there were 14 locos based here. Ex-GS&WR J15 0-6-0 185 and D12 4-4-0 306 were joined by 5 ex-D&SER locos, 1 from the Cork Bandon and South Coast, 4 from the Midland Great Western and 2 Great Southern types. The D&SER locos were F1 2-4-2T 436, J8 0-6-0 446, C2 4-4-2Ts 456 and 457, and C3 4-4-2T 459. The CB&SCR locos was B4 4-6-0T 466 while the MGWR locos were all G2 2-4-0s, 650, 651, 652 and 661. The two GSR locos were 13 0-6-2Ts 670 and 672.

The D&SER was very much in the front line during both the War of Independence and the following Civil War. Many of its trains were ambushed, derailed, robbed and/or burnt. The D&SER lost two engines and 18 others were damaged. Apart from that, there was an arrears of maintenance to be caught up with and D&SER motive power was in poor shape. Dundalk helped out by overhauling four locos in 1924 - 2-4-2Ts Nos 3, 10, 27 and 44. Despite that, neither 10 nor 44 managed it into GSR days. At the formation of the Great Southern in 1925, many of the D&SE locos were in poor order and, as early as January 1925, several ex-GS&WR and ex-MGWR locos were drafted in to work the D&SE section. Many D&SE locos were repaired at Inchicore and Broadstone but it was 1930 before D&SE locos were back in numbers on their home line.

The area of the steam shed was cleared in May 2004 and new DART sidings opened the following July. The site of the turntable, on the Up side at the south end (where even the tank engines were turned and where there was another Drumm charging point) is now partly occupied by the bay platform (No.3) and partly by a car park.

At the southern end of the station limits, the sidings below the running lines, on the Up side have been upgraded for DART sets and now have some of the surplus diesel railcar sets.



Bray (Daly): No.184 backs onto her train at the Up platform while working three Dublin Bay shuttles on 22nd September 1979. The loco had been turned on the turntable. In the middle road, 6105 heads an out-of-service push-pull set. CPF7977F

The town of Bray is almost a railway creation. The arrival of the line brought great development to an otherwise sleepy settlement. William Dargan did a lot to develop “the Brighton of Ireland” and built hotels and boarding houses as well as baths and the 1½ mile esplanade.

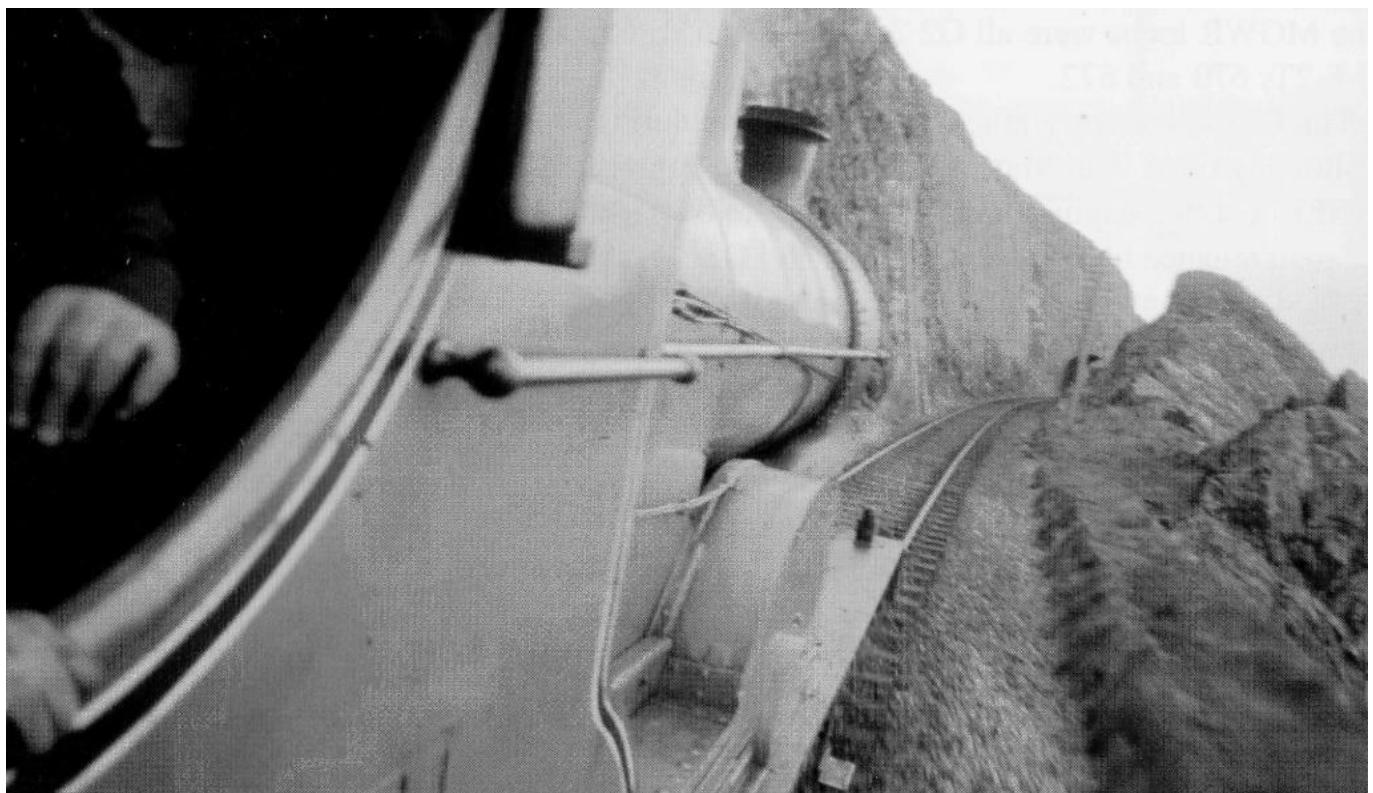
Naylor's Cove (MP 13) is the first station on the single line south of Bray. There was a platform on the Down side, built in 1906 to serve some of the then-fashionable seawater swimming baths. The halt has been known as either Bray Head Halt or Bray Cove but closed in 1929.

The line around Bray Head was surveyed by no less than Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The original line was a great statement of his self-confidence but, in time, the timber trestle bridges were inadequate while new tunnels were needed to move the line further back from the ravages of the Irish Sea. There is a story that a Director of the line was heard expressing the wish that Brunel had choked on his sixpence. This was a reference to when Brunel was visiting as part of a Great Western party who were interested in the Dalkey Atmospheric line. At a Hallowe'en dinner party in Dublin, Brunel ate a piece of apple tart with a sixpence hidden in it. Brunel choked on the hidden coin but recovered - and the line was surveyed and built, much to the chagrin of that Director.

Even today, the line is prone to rock falls. It is patrolled by a lengthman and equipped with many movement detectors. You will see signs of older trackbeds, including disused tunnels, on our left.

On **Bray Head** itself, there are four tunnels.

Tunnel No.1 (MP 13¾) is an 1876 Diversion Tunnel which replaced the Brunel original which was the Brabazon Corner Tunnel, named after Lord Meath who allegedly donated the land around Bray Head rather than have the railway run through his land. This tunnel is really two tunnels with a short gap, known as Rams Scalp, between them. The combined length is 307 yards.



Bray Head: This was the fireman's view ahead as No.171 approached the Twin Arches between Tunnel Nos 2 and No.3 with the Sean Rí railtour on Sunday 9th May 1993. CPF17674

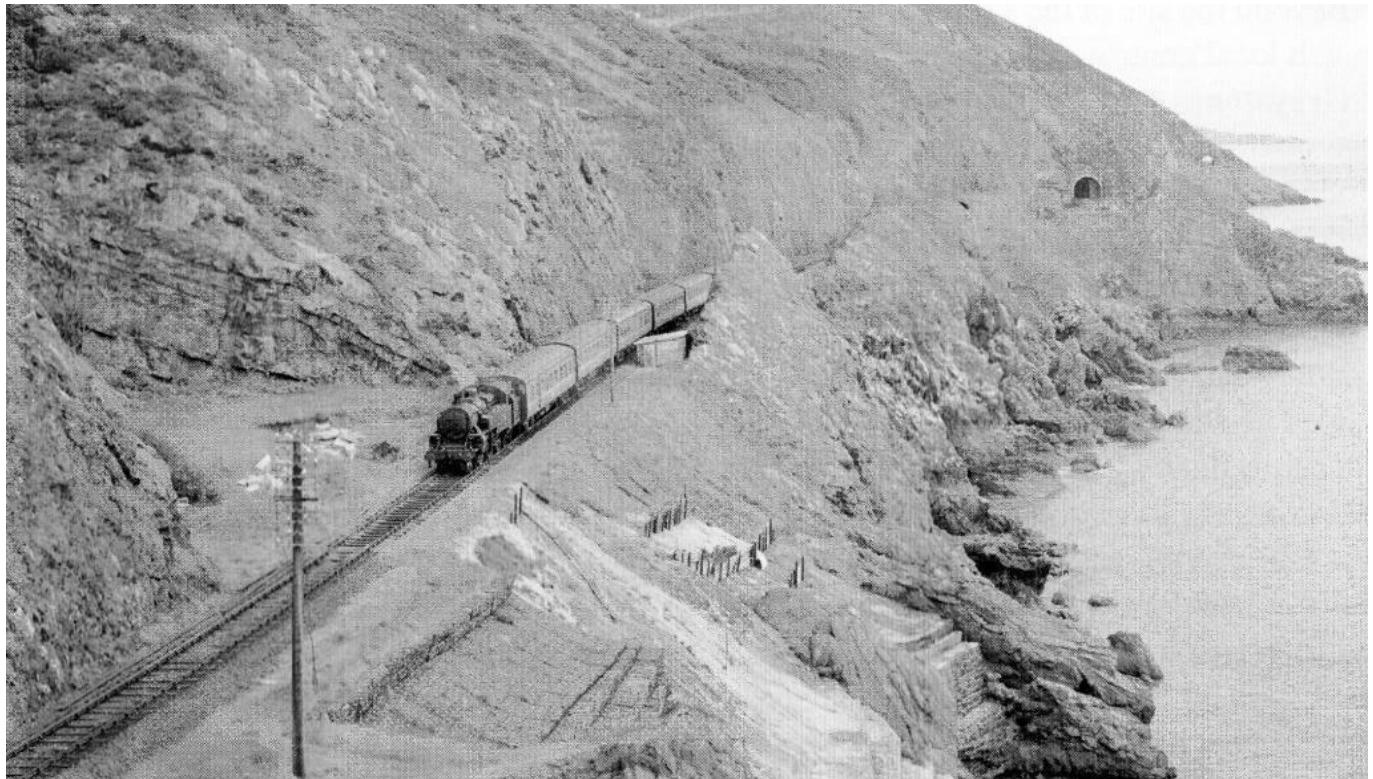


Bray Head: No.461 is seen emerging from the Brandy Hole tunnel and approaching the Twin Arches with the Decies railtour on Saturday 11th May 1991. Visible to the right is the redundant Brabazon tunnel. CPF9127G

The gap in the stone wall on our left is the site of a trestle bridge where, on 9th August 1867, the 6:20am Enniscorthy to Dublin train derailed and fell to the landward side of the bridge. Two people died and 20 were injured. The site has been filled with an embankment.

Tunnel No.2 (MP 14½) is 143 yards long and known as the Brandy Hole tunnel. It is named after the stony beach just below the northern end of the tunnel. The beach is now covered with reinforcing boulders.

Between this and the next tunnel, there are two arches which were built in 1879 to support the rock face and a stone arch over a chasm.



Bray Head: No.4 is seen approaching Cable Rock tunnel (No.3) with one of three Bray to Greystones trains as part of the Bray Seaside Festival on 7th July 1990. In the background is the Brandy Hole tunnel with the abandoned Brabazon tunnel beyond; the three original Brunel tunnels have light-coloured granite rings at their mouths. CPF9014E

Tunnel No.3 (MP 14¾) is known as Cable Rock. It is 210 yards long and, like the other original Brunel tunnels, was made for double track though only a single track was ever laid.

Tunnel No.4 (MP 15) is 1,084 yards and known as the Long Tunnel. The line had previously run on the sea side of this tunnel and had been diverted on one earlier occasion before the tunnel was made. There was much work done here between 1909 and 1915 by Naylor Bros of Huddersfield. The D&SER grew impatient with their progress and seized two of the contractor's four locos. They were Manning Wardle tanks named Percy and Blackburn. Tunnel No.4 finally opened on 17th December 1917.

Jubilee Siding (MP 16½) is where the D&SER had a creosoting plant on the Down side. The two sidings here were controlled by an Annett's key on the six Bray - Greystones staffs. The yard was later used for storing redundant carriages or for permanent way vehicles.

Beyond the site of the siding is the new Greystones Marina whose construction has caused much local controversy. It has yet to open.

Greystones and Delgany (MP 17). The footbridge north of the station does not connect the platforms. Quiz question - which other Irish stations have or had a similar footbridge?

Since 14th March 2000, this has been the southern terminus of the DART trains which has led to Greystones being used as a long-range park and ride station for Dublin. For a time in the late 1980s, a Bray to Greystones shuttle service was provided by a three-piece NIR 80 class railcar (in NIR livery but

bearing IR logos). The station buildings, on the Up platform, have been tastefully upgraded and the ground floor has had a sort of conservatory added on the platform side.

The original signal cabin had been on the Up platform but it was burned in 1923. A new cabin was built on the Down platform which used the frame recovered from Tinahely, on the Shillelagh branch, which had closed in May 1924. That frame was extended to 18 levers for use here. Greystones has been a fringe box for the CTC (at Connolly) since 1983 and was the first home for the Rosslare Line computerised signalling console which came into operation on 27th April 2008. The technology comprises two solid-state interlocking, though they appear as one to the signalman (or woman). One is for Greystones to Arklow and the other is for Gorey to Rosslare Europort. The signal cabin proved to be unsuitable and the modern building was added to its south.

The yard behind the Down platform, now a car park, used to have a loco turntable. It was enlarged from 32 to 45 feet in November 1955. The last loco to use the turntable was our own ex-Great Northern Q class 4-4-0 No.131 which turned here after working the 1:07pm from Amiens Street on 11th July 1962. The turntable was lifted out the very same day.



***Greystones:** No.186 was working the Three Rivers railtour on Saturday 15th September 1983 when she met B129 on an Up working from Rosslare Harbour. A local lad is taking his chance to get on 186's footplate while everyone's attention is elsewhere. The man with the pipe in the bottom right corner is none other than the late R.N. Clements to whom we owe a huge debt for sharing with us his tireless researches into Irish steam locomotives and their workings. CPF73035A*

South of Greystones, the line runs very close to the sea and much protection work has been carried out - note the four-legged stars of concrete, for instance. In 1971, the line was moved inland by up to 60 feet between MP 18½ and MP 19½. Athlone's 20-ton steam crane was involved, as was Inchicore's 30-ton crane and Lisduff's ballast train.

Kilcoole (MP 19¾) began life as "Kilcool and Newtownmountkennedy". It now has one platform, on the inland side (naturally). The original station building, on the seaward side, was washed away in a freak storm in February 1890. The replacement, on the inland side, was damaged by a storm in 1894 but survived until 1980 when it was completely rebuilt. There were plans for a 9-lever signal cabin here but this did not materialise. The station closed on 31st March 1964 only to reopen on 9th June 1980. A large

granite slab at the south end commemorates a gun-running incident of 1912.

Milepost 19 marks the start of the longest stretch of level track in Ireland. It was along here in 1960 that braking trials were conducted using diesel loco A3 and 43 laden wagons of coal - a case of coals to Newcastle (boom, boom!).



Kilcoole: No.4 was in fine form as she flew past here with the Sea Breeze train to Rosslare Harbour on 11th August 1990. The bleak platform and the huge sea defences are clearly evident although the Irish Sea was very calm on this day. CPF9023H

The Breaches. The trackbed here is on an ancient sandbank with much bog and marsh on the inland side. The river Vartry passes under the line about midway between Kilcoole and Newcastle, near MP 20^{3/4}, at a place known as “The Breaches” (sic). The bridge here was originally of timber and was replaced by three 50-foot lattice girders and wrought iron in 1887. This work was replaced, in May 1962, with three steel plate girder spans.

These had been recovered from the closed Irish North. It is thought that they came from Ballynure which was one of four viaducts renewed by the Great Northern in the mid 1920s between Castleblaney and Clones; Ballynure was renewed in late May 1925. The Irish North had finally closed on the last day of 1959 and the line was lifted from near Dundalk towards Clones and reached the latter in December 1960. The recovered material, including these bridge spans, was worked to Mullingar via Cavan and Inny Junction. The recovered spans were brought to Inchicore where they were extended by about 5 feet and generally refettled before being brought to their new location.

The replacement involved two steam cranes on two Sundays, 20th and 27th May 1962. The four girders forming the two end spans were each lifted into place, the cross-members and decking fitted and the trackwork reassembled. The work on the 20th lasted from 6am until 3am on the Monday as there was some difficulty with the centre span. That part of the job was left until the following weekend. On the second Sunday, the wagon carrying the fully-assembled centre span was marshalled between the two steam cranes and the ensemble parked on the partly-replaced bridge. The cranes, sitting on the spans replaced the week before, first lifted the new span and placed it on temporary supports in the riverbed. The wagon that had carried the span was lifted out of the way and then the old centre span was lifted and deposited in the river. The new span was then lifted into place, complete with its decking and trackwork.

The new spans necessitated raising the track by up to one foot. The work was finished by 4pm and the line re-opened.

Newcastle (MP 22½) has two platforms but once had a goods loop on the seaward side of the Down platform. On 6th July 1962, though, part of that loop and a siding off it were washed away by high seas. In November 1963, the station had the opposite experience when high seas deposited many tons of shale and sand onto the track. Then, in March 1964, another storm reduced the Down refuge siding from 65 to a mere 14 wagons. The station closed on 31st March 1964 but its 21-lever cabin remained in use until 21st April 1968. Until 21st July 1927, the line was double track south from here to Wicklow.

Five Mile Point (MP 23½) is the site of a Hot Box Detector.

Killoughter (MP 25½) was only open between 1856 and 1st April 1867 but, in 1864, a cargo vessel mistook one of its lamps for the light on Wicklow Head and the vessel was wrecked with the loss of several lives. The coroner requested that the station lamps be made to shine downwards only.

Wicklow Junction (MP 27¾) marks our divergence from the original route of the line. As we approach, on the inland side here, is a long-disused balloon tank, a mere track width from the main line. You can also see some evidence of sidings serving various factories before the early 1960s. These included a fertiliser factory whose sidings were worked by a horse (which, presumably, made its own contribution to the output).



Wicklow Junction: In another timeless scene, No.461 eases away from the passenger station and across the Broad Lough with the homeward leg of the Sea Breeze excursion on 22nd August 1992. Looking over the cab side is Driver Nicky Moore. CPF9247B

When the line opened on 30th October 1855, it continued straight ahead to a terminus at the Murrough. When the line was extended to Rathdrum in August 1861 the Murrough was left on a short branch. For some time, trains called at the Murrough but had to reverse back to here before continuing south. Northbound trains did the opposite, of course; a situation something similar to Killarney today. After 1885, when the present Wicklow station was opened, the branch was used for goods traffic and the occasional excursion train.

The Murrough once had one of Ireland's rarely-photographed harbour extensions. Wicklow Harbour

Commissioners had a line on the south pier from 1859, worked by a steam crane. The D&SER connected to the quay in 1906 and took over the operation until the GSR closed it in 1929. One important traffic was the export of pit props from the Shillelagh estate of the Earl of Fitzwilliam.



Wicklow Murrough: No.186 brought the St Manntan railtour here on 11th September 1971 and seen just after arrival. On the left, R.M. Arnold races off to get a good photograph before the crowds detrain while, on the right, Mary Friel takes a more relaxed approach. CPF7181F

Since the Murrough was much nearer the town than the present passenger station, its passenger service was revived on 16th March 1969 with a morning train to Dublin and return working each evening. The experiment was not a complete success and was discontinued from 1st November 1976, partly prompted by the track being condemned as being sub-standard. The goods traffic had already been withdrawn on 6th September 1976. The branch was latterly controlled by a key on the Newcastle to Wicklow staff but the last train was the spray train in June 1985. The junction and sidings were finally removed on 30th April 1989. The trackbed is now obliterated by part of Wicklow's ring road.

The signal cabin at the junction (13 levers) was on the Down side. It closed in 1927 and survived until recently as a summer home. Sadly, it was gutted in a vicious fire in 2010.

The line swings inland here and crosses an inlet of the sea, the Broad Lough, towards **Wicklow** (MP 28½) This station opened on 6th August 1885 and, until recently, had a number of fine lattice signal posts but it still has the station's name picked out in pebbles and concrete in both English and Irish on the bank behind the Up platform where the waiting room is finally boarded up and replaced by a bus stop-style shelter. The former signal cabin (22 levers) is on the Down side; it was accessed from the footbridge. Back in September 1932, 3,354 passengers travelled on five trains from Harcourt Street to here at a return fare of one shilling; in today's coinage that would be 5p Sterling or 7 cents in Euro money. In the late 1940s, two men were killed here and there have been some unsettling reports of ghostly appearances and happenings since then.



Wicklow: An unusual view across No.171's cab as she waits for 164 on the Down Rosslare train to clear the section to Greystones. This was during the Sean Rí railtour on Sunday 9th May 1993. CPF17669



Wicklow: No.461 unfortunately ran hot while working the Decies railtour on Saturday 9th May 1993 and returned Light Engine from Gorey to Connolly at reduced speed. Here she waits in the Up platform for 134 and another B121 class loco to pass with a Down Rosslare working. CPF9132A

Rathnew (MP 29 $\frac{3}{4}$) was just a one-platform halt (on the Up side) under Wicklow's control but it closed in 1964. Naylor Brothers had a siding here, also on the Up side, and a horse-operated tramway here to connect with their brickworks.

Ballymerrigan crossing (MP 30 $\frac{3}{4}$) was the scene of an accident on 24th May 1966 when a set of ex-GNR BUT railcars was working the 09:00 from Westland Row to Rosslare. There were three power cars in the set up; C904N was leading and C712N and C714N were behind. Marshalled behind the leading car was C24N which had started life in Dundalk in 1935 as one of five F16 corridor First/Thirds built that year. In 1958, it was converted for use with BUT railcars. The space for the Third class compartments (which had become Seconds) was converted into a guard's compartment and a large van area with a train heating boiler. The train had van 2738 on the tail. On this day, the train struck a tractor at Ballymerrigan and killed the unfortunate driver. The whole railcar set was derailed and two breakdown cranes were required to clear the line. The Grand Canal Street crane worked at the northern end of the train while the Inchicore crane was worked via Rosslare Strand to the southern end.

A further accident happened at the same crossing on 6th October 1968. This time B128 was working a Sunday excursion when it hit a car and the driver was killed. It transpired that the driver was the father of the tractor driver killed here in the May 1966 accident.

Kelly's accommodation crossing (MP 31 $\frac{1}{4}$) was replaced by an underpass on 10th May 2000. Accommodation crossings always hold a special terror for drivers for there is no possible warning of someone acting stupidly. There is a policy to replace these crossings where possible by either an overbridge or an underpass. Another approach has been to clear bushes to create a better line of sight for the road user.

Glenealy (MP 33 $\frac{1}{4}$) had one platform on the Up side but the loop and the 12-lever cabin here were removed before the station closed on 30th March 1964. There was an accident here on St. Patrick's Day in 1900. As the 6:10pm Down passenger train from Dublin to Wexford was leaving the station, it ran into the engine of an Up special goods train. Little damage was done as speed had been low. The Glenealy signal man and driver of the passenger train were both dismissed. The stationmaster was not in the clear either, and was transferred to Killurin under protest (he wanted to go to Edermine); he was threatened with loss of pension if he did not co-operate!



Glenealy: The Saturday of the Decies railtour, 11th May 1991, brought No.461 back to her home ground for the first time since, probably, the Beet Campaign of 1963. Here she puts on a fine show as she tackles the 1 in 100 climb. CPF9128A

Rathdrum Old Station (MP 36) was in use in 1862 and 1863 while the present station was being

completed. The station building survives as a private house on the Down side.

Rathdrum (MP 37 $\frac{1}{4}$) is just south of the five-arched Rathdrum Viaduct; each arch is 44 feet in diameter. The Avonmore River which rises in Lough Dan is 88 feet below us. The station itself is dominated by the former railway hotel on the Up platform. Built in 1863 as the “Royal Fitzwilliam”, the hotel was to accommodate tourists for Glendalough but the expected rush did not happen. The hotel was popular, though, with some of the famous who came to visit Charles Stewart Parnell who lived nearby at Avondale. The hotel fell into disuse in 1911. It revived after being sold in 1915 but it closed again in 1933. The present station buildings, high on the Up side, were built in 1965 to replace the facilities within the hotel which was being threatened with demolition at the time. The hotel is still there though it has suffered a major fire. The goods yard on the Down side was lifted in 1965. Thankfully, the water tank at the south end of the Down platform is still operational. The footbridge here (No.180) came off second best in a tussle with an Atlas machine. It was removed, repaired and re-erected to be returned to traffic on 18th March 2001. The 13-lever signal cabin was accessed from the footbridge; the cabin’s mechanisms were refurbished in February 2002. The Down platform was extended in November 2003.



Rathdrum: No.186 took water here while working the Slaney railtour of 10th April 1976 and waited for an Up Rosslare train to cross us. In those more relaxed days, no one panicked when the Society’s Chairman Lawrence Liddle, CIÉ’s Charlie Pemberton and our Dublin Agent Sam Carse dandered down to the end of the Wood Siding to watch diesel-electric 166 on the incoming train from Rosslare.

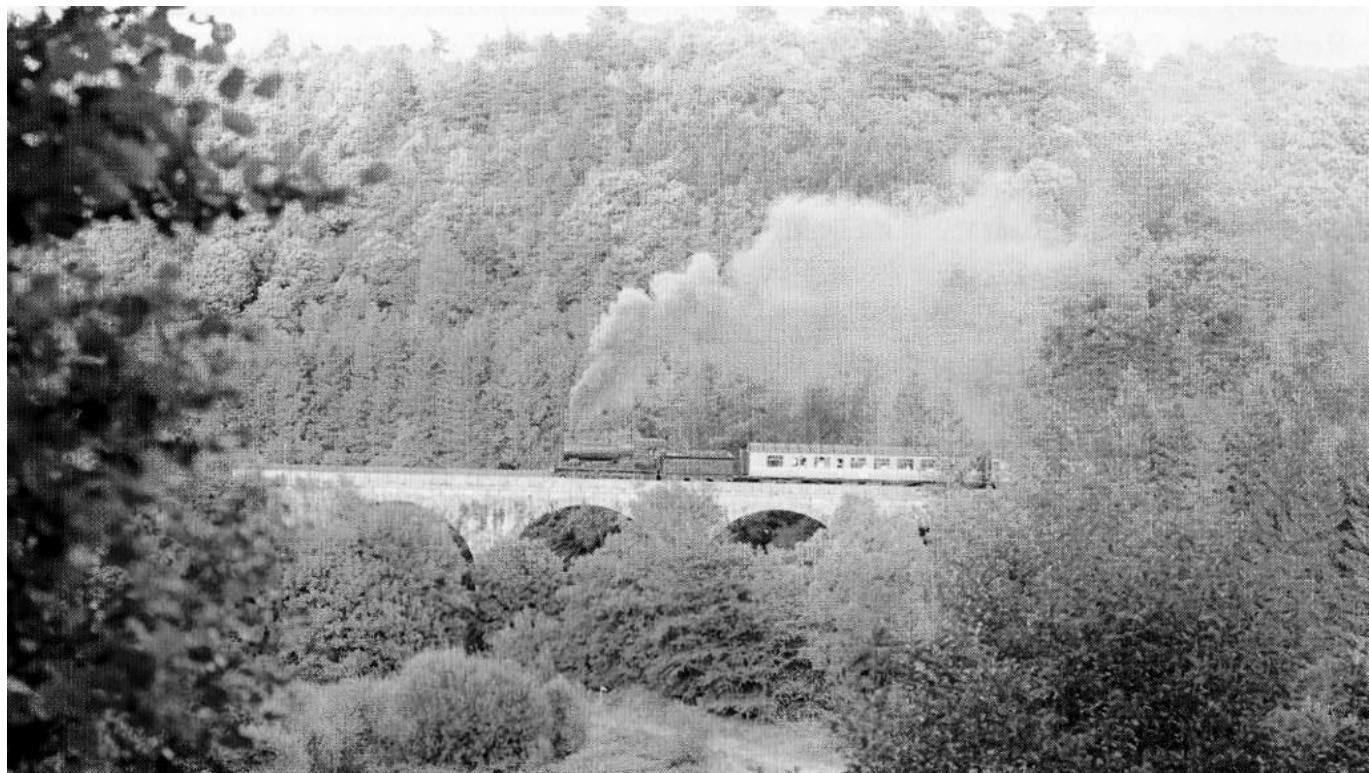
CPF7610G

South of Rathdrum are three Rathdrum Tunnels. Numbered 1 to 3 as we go south, they are, successively, 190, 25 and 50 yards long.

Corballis Viaduct (MP 37 $\frac{3}{4}$) is just over a quarter of a mile south of Rathdrum No.3 tunnel. It too crosses the Avonmore River and has five arches, each of 40 foot span and 45 feet high. The viaduct itself is 80 yards long.

Belleece Siding (MP 38 $\frac{1}{4}$) was on the Down side. It handled limestone from the eponymous quarry. The rock was very hard and suited for road making. The quarry was busy enough for the D&SER to build special 12-ton wagons for the traffic but that ended in February 1937. There was a resurgence of stone

traffic from this site in July and August 1994, when stone was moved to Killinick (on the South Wexford line) for coastal defence work for the nearby Rosslare Harbour. Low-sided wagons from the Silvermines - Foynes traffic were used. The empty train worked from Waterford to here and returned empty to Waterford after a JCB had emptied the train near the former junction platform at Killinick. The stone completed its journey to the coast in large road lorries.



Corballis Viaduct: No.461 battles up the 1 in 90 through the Avondale Woods with the return Sea Breeze excursion on 22nd August 1992. CPF9246G

MP 39^{3/4}. A collision took place here on 6th August 1895, when an empty train of 13 carriages from Arklow to Bray was struck by the 8pm Down goods. The driver had shunted even more empty carriages into the train at Ovoca but he left without the ETS. He stopped when he realised his mistake but his train was struck by the Down goods running at about 20mph. There was considerable damage to the tender and 4 coaches of the empty carriage train. Several wagons of the goods train were badly broken up and scattered around the trackside. The locos involved were Nos 48 and 50. No.48 was a 2-4-0T built at Grand Canal Street in 1889 and was withdrawn in 1934 as GSR G1 class No.423. No.50 was a 0-6-0, named "Arklow", built by Vulcan in 1891. It was withdrawn in 1930 as GSR J7 class No.447.

Connoree (MP 40^{1/2}) The Connoree Mining Company had a siding here from 1865 to load on ore for export via Kingstown. It seems that they had a 3ft 6in tramway as well.

The relatively level track hereabouts was often used, by Up goods trains in steam days, to get up a head of steam for the climb ahead, some of it with sharp curves.

Cronbane (or Cronebane or Tigroney) (MP 41^{1/2}) had a siding on the Down side, used to export copper, iron and sulphur from nearby mines. The chimneys of some can still be seen in the area.

Avoca (MP 42^{3/4}). The station was known as Ovoca until 1912 at a time when the goods yard on the Down side had a cattle bank, a carriage dock and a coal yard as well as the usual goods store. Between 1868 and 1887, a huge amount of sulphur ore was loaded here into purpose-built side tipping wagons for export to South Wales via Kingstown. On Fair Days, Avoca often sent 25 wagons of sheep or cattle to Dublin for export. The Up and Down Wexford Night goods trains usually crossed here. You may know that our engine today, No.461, and sister No.462 were built for this traffic. The still-operational 7,700

gallon water tank at the south end of the Down platform is gravity fed. The 18-lever signal cabin on the Up platform here closed on 10th January 1931 and the station closed in 1964 though some excursion trains called until about 1979. The former station is now the village Post Office. Had the station survived it might have featured in the sometime soap Ballykissangel which was filmed here; an Irish “Heartbeat”?



Avoca: No.171 paused for water here while working the Sean Rí railtour from Rosslare Harbour to Connolly on Sunday 9th May 1993. The station building is to the left. Because the station is closed, none of the passengers could get a photograph here but your photographer was also the Loco Representative on the footplate! CPF17668

Hodgsons. Before the arrival of the DW&WR, Hodgsons had a 3ft 6in gauge mineral railway which paralleled the line from near Avoca to Ballyraine at MP 48. They used three converted agricultural steam road engines to haul the trains of sulphur ore to Ballyraine where horses took over for the rest of the journey to Arklow harbour. The DW&WR bought the tramway and most of the ore traffic was diverted to Kingstown.

There were several other mining companies in this area, each with a narrow gauge railway and some of them underground. Some lines were modern enough to have battery or diesel locos and, while all are closed, there is still much left to explore and discover.

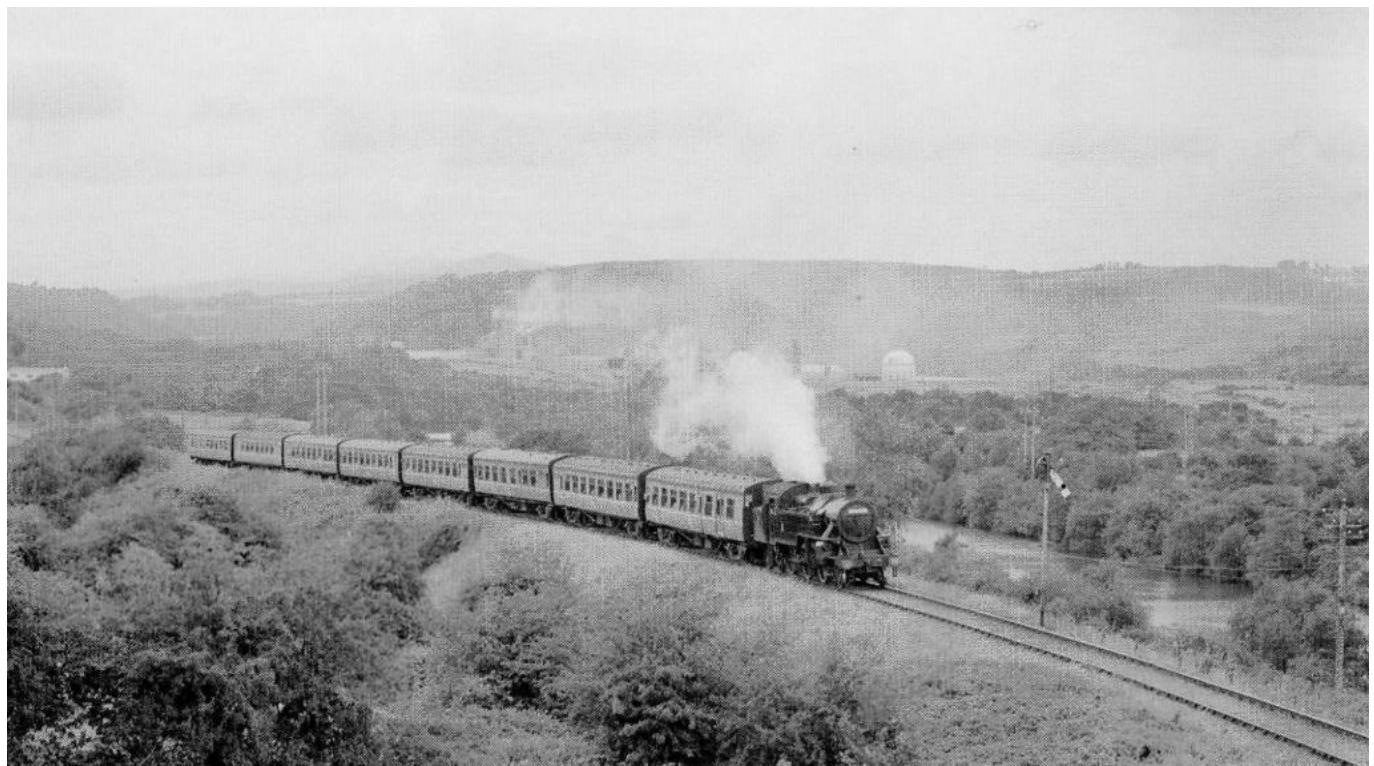
Woodenbridge Junction (MP 44½) was the junction for the 16½-mile Shillelagh branch which diverged on the Up side.

In the early 1920s, the branch was worked by 422, ex-D&SER 2-4-0 No.24 “Glenmore”, but this was later replaced by No.44 “Dunleary” which did not live long enough to get a GSR number. In the branch’s final years, the loco was either F2 2-4-2T No.430 (which had been loaned to the B&CDR for its Ballynahinch branch during the War) or ex-Midland J26 0-6-0Ts.

Curiously, the bridges on the branch were numbered from the terminus towards the junction. Partly prompted by the coal shortage, the branch lost its passenger service on 23rd April 1944 but goods trains continued, as far as Aughrim, until April 1953. The last train out of the terminus at Shillelagh was in March 1945 when J15 No.143 worked a steam crane to the terminus. After the loco had turned, the turntable was lifted out and brought to Inchicore along with the hand crane from the goods bank.

Woodenbridge was reduced to a halt in June 1947 and closed in 1964. The footbridge was removed but was combined with the footbridge from Woodbrook and re-erected at Howth Junction in April 1968. The 19-lever signal cabin here remained in use until 21st April 1969. Soon afterwards, the loop was removed and the single line realigned through the platforms. The yard was retained for wagon storage (to supplement the sidings at nearby Shelton Abbey) and the branch platform was used for loading large stones for coastal defence work. These were accessed by a 2-lever ground frame released by a key in the Arklow - Rathdrum miniature staff.

Shelton Abbey (MP 46^{3/4}) had sidings on the Down side to serve the fertiliser works of Nítrigin Éireann Teo. The automatic barriers at the junction were the first installed on a single line. The first turnout was laid on 19th January 1964 and the first loaded departure was 27th June 1965. At first, working the sidings included running round a train by using the main line. Later, the sidings were entered from the Dublin end only, were self-contained and shunted by a G class diesel loco. Later still, train engines did their own shunting. The sidings received two block trains of anhydrous ammonia from Marino Point in Cork daily while the output was trains of fertiliser in bogie pallet wagons which seemed to reach every part of the system. The factory closed on 16th February 2002 and the last movement was a clearance of wagons on 8th November 2002. The rail connections have been removed and the factory dismantled and, supposedly, exported to China. The yard is planted in young trees and two towers survive.



Approaching Arklow: No.4 is seen treading the Slaney valley with the southbound Sea Breeze excursion on 11th August 1990. Visible above the train is the fertiliser factory at Shelton Abbey. CPF9024B

Arklow (MP 49) was a block post with the cabin on the Down platform, entered from the footbridge. Arklow was the destination for the pre-RPSI Sea Breeze excursions with two or three trains frequently needed. A plaque at the Dublin end of the Down platform commemorates Driver Ollie Ivers who died aged just 27. A dormitory on the Up platform accommodated Grand Canal Street crews who worked the Shelton Abbey pilot on a two-week temporary transfer basis but it was unpopular with the crews and the rosters were changed. The Up platform was renewed in mid-2001.

On 3rd October 1979, a train of palletised bagged cement wagons was making a shunt at the south end of the station. The 17:40 from the Harbour to Dublin, worked by 082 hauling 5 bogies and a Dutch heater, collided with the cement train. Twenty-seven passengers and two crew were injured. Loco 082 was back in traffic by the following Christmas.

On 8th November 2002, locos 185 and 187 were left on the Up loop while the driver took a break. Somehow, the locos ran away and managed to roll into the Rathdrum section.



Arklow: The Sea Breeze excursion on 20th August 1994 was worked by No.461. Here Driver Ray Kearns offers Up the Rathdrum - Arklow miniature train staff and hopes to get the Arklow - Gorey staff from the signal man. Johnny O'Meara keeps a fatherly eye on proceedings from the first window of the train. CPF9424D

Kish Siding (MP 50^{3/4}). The loading bank and siding on the Up side were used to load granite setts for the Dublin tramway system (Mark One), produced by the Parnell Whinstone Quarries. During the First World War, there was a horse-worked two-foot gauge line between this siding and the nearby Kynoch munitions works. They had a Kerr Stuart Wren class 0-4-0ST to move shell cases and cordite about the factory itself and to a tip area on the beach. A massive explosion in 1918 shook both the factory and the town and the plant was closed. The loco, some of the wagons and the line to the tip area survived until 1947 for the gathering of sand for export. Some of the tracks and at least one wagon are still buried in the sand dunes and reappear from time to time - you did bring your metal detector, didn't you?

Inch (MP 53^{1/2}) had one platform, on the Up side, and was closed to all traffic on 30th March 1964. Inch's moment of fame came on 16th November 1863 when the Mail engine failed and the contractor's loco, William Dargan, was commandeered to work the train forward to Kingstown.

Gorey (MP 59^{1/2}) had a small goods yard on the Up side at the Dublin end. The signal cabin on the Down platform was another Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford survivor of the off-the-footbridge genre; the footbridge is No.284. Plates below the windows used to commemorate Thompson Brothers, Wexford, 1891 and Mackenzie & Holland Ltd, Worcester. The still-in-service water tower is at the Dublin end of the Up platform which has been extended.

Hoary old puzzle - why are Arklow and Gorey the closest stations in Ireland? Because there's only an Inch between them!

Clogh Bridge (MP 63) was the scene of a bad derailment on the last day of 1975. The road underbridge (No.292) had been displaced by a mechanical digger on a lorry but there was no time to warn the

oncoming 08:05 from the Harbour. A local lady did run along the track waving a tea towel but it was too late. B132, driven by Jack O'Neill (a long-time contributor to RPSI publications) left the road and five people died; four passengers and a snatcher, Richard O'Neill. More recently, on 21st January 1998, one axle of the EGV on the 07:25 from the Harbour derailed here and wrecked 400 yards of track.

Camolin (MP 67) was another one-platform halt which closed, along with the signal cabin, on 30th March 1964.

Ferns (MP 70) is a cathedral city but the station closed to all but excursion traffic on 6th March 1977. Trains continued to call for a few weeks when a local Driver staged a one-man protest by continuing to stop! The signal cabin here closed on 22nd September 1976 and the loop and other connections were removed in April 1977. North of the road overbridge, on the Up side, is a grass loading bank that was used for coal and turf traffic during World War Two (or The Emergency as it was officially known here). South of the station, on the Up side, are the remains of sidings serving a large grain store belonging to J. Bolger and Co which survives though derelict and a tar depot.



Ferns: During the Slaney railtour on 10th April 1976, Loco Inspector Arthur Toner is about to collect the large Ferns to Enniscorthy electric train staff from an apprehensive signal man. The staff has a key on the end. CPF7611A

Scarawalsh (MP 73½) owes its place in history to several attacks during the Civil War. The most damaging was on 18th January 1923 when the 6:05pm from Dublin to Rosslare was ambushed. Loco 68 Rathmore was derailed when a rail was removed. Firing broke out and the train was completely destroyed when one of the gas tanks exploded.

Enniscorthy (MP 77½) is now reduced to Up and Down platforms which bear signs of having been at four different heights over the years. The otherwise disused goods yard on the Down side was used to store redundant wagons or permanent way vehicles though one siding survives for occasional PW use. The loco shed was on the Up side at the north end of the station. Engines shedded here in 1926 were two ex-D&SER 0-6-0s, J8 0-6-0 446 (old 66 "Dublin"), and J7 447 (old 50 "New Ross"). A year later, there were two different 0-6-0s - J15 159 and D&SER No.4 "Lismore" which was properly GSR No.448 but still bore the D&SER livery. The other D&SE-liveried survivor was 4-4-2T No.34, later C2 456. In later

years, two J18 class 0-6-0s were shedded here - 575 and 584 (formerly MGWR 135 "Bittern" and 130 "Ajax"). After the shed closed, an engine was sent daily from Wexford to shunt the place. The last steam pilot at Enniscorthy was our own 186 which shunted here on 28th February 1959 before leaving for Waterford in a fusillade of detonators.

We cross the river Slaney just south of the station. If you look quickly to the east, our left as we travel south, you will catch a glimpse of the historic Vinegar Hill, scene of the last stand of the 1798 Rebellion and where, it is alleged, the Irish Tricolour was first raised.



Enniscorthy: No.461 brings her train past the many semaphore signals here and through the Down loop for the staff exchange as she works the return leg of the Sea Breeze excursion on 20th August 1994. Leaning from the cab are Driver Mick McGuinness and Loco Inspector Don McLoughlin who seem well pleased with the world. CPF9427E

On our right, the line of wall shows where there was once a siding for the nearby Roche's mill. Indeed, Enniscorthy used to have three other private sidings; Buttles Bacon Co and two merchants, S. & A.G. Davis and J. Donoghue & Co.

We immediately enter the 406 yard long **Enniscorthy Tunnel**.

St John's Siding (MP 78½). A siding from a nearby corn mill trailed in on the Up side. It closed in 1962 and was lifted in June 1965; it featured on the cover of Five Foot Three No.10.

Across the River Slaney stands the now-closed St Senan's Psychiatric Hospital. This was opened as the Enniscorthy District Lunatic Asylum for the Insane and Poor of Mind in 1888, four years before the railway was extended from Enniscorthy to Wexford. Built in by local contractor N. Fortune at a cost of £40,000, there is a local belief that the plans were really meant for an army barracks at Pretoria in South Africa. It was meant to accommodate 300 patients, but there were 457 by 1904 and 500 in 1960. There was an extensive farm too but the whole lot was closed in 2011 and now awaits its fate.

Edermine Ferry (MP 81) had one platform on the Up side and was another 1964 closure victim. The level crossing here and at Ballymanus (MP 32¾) are the only ones on the line still controlled by crossing keepers. Control of the others is now from Mallow Level Crossing Control Centre.

Macmine Junction (MP 83 $\frac{1}{4}$) The line from Palace East opened to Macmine, a mile short of here, on 26th October 1870 by the Waterford, New Ross and Wexford Junction Railway. The intervening line was opened by the same company on 1st April 1873 when the place was called Ballyhoge. The connection from Palace East to Waterford via New Ross was not completed until 27th April 1904.

The line from Palace East used to sweep in from the north on the Down side at the Dublin end of the station. Macmine was the setting for several incidents in the Civil War and the cabin was burned on 9th September 1922. There was an elaborate ambush on 27th January 1923 when four trains were caught at the station and were burned. The engine of the Up Mail, 4-4-0 No.68 "Rathmore" (later D8 No.454) was sent off up the line and ran nearly twenty miles to Camolin. In more recent times, on a day in August 1958, J15 183 was reported on the Macmine to Waterford train while our own 186 was on a Waterford to Wexford train and 114 worked the 10:40 passenger from Waterford. The branch closed on 31st March 1963. Its last passenger working was a special for the Inst Railway Society (progenitor of the RPSI) on 23rd March 1963. The special consisted of J15 151 with three bogies, 1478, 1457 and 1487, and van 2709. Its return to Dublin was reported to be a mere 194 minutes late at Bray! The signal cabin here was closed in 1964 and little remains to remind us of its existence though a hut and chimney are still on the Up side at the south end.

Killurin (MP 86 $\frac{1}{4}$) was closed in 1964 when only the Up platform was in use. Before 1922, there had been a signal cabin here.

Just south of here, the blowing up of Bridge 399 on 19th July 1922 marked the start of a spate of serious damage done to the railway in these parts during the Irish Civil War of 1922 and 1923. In addition to the loco losses, noted at Bray above, the D&SER lost 17 carriages and 45 were damaged along with 24 wagons totally lost and 45 damaged.

Killurin Tunnel is at MP 86 $\frac{1}{4}$; it is 88 yards long.

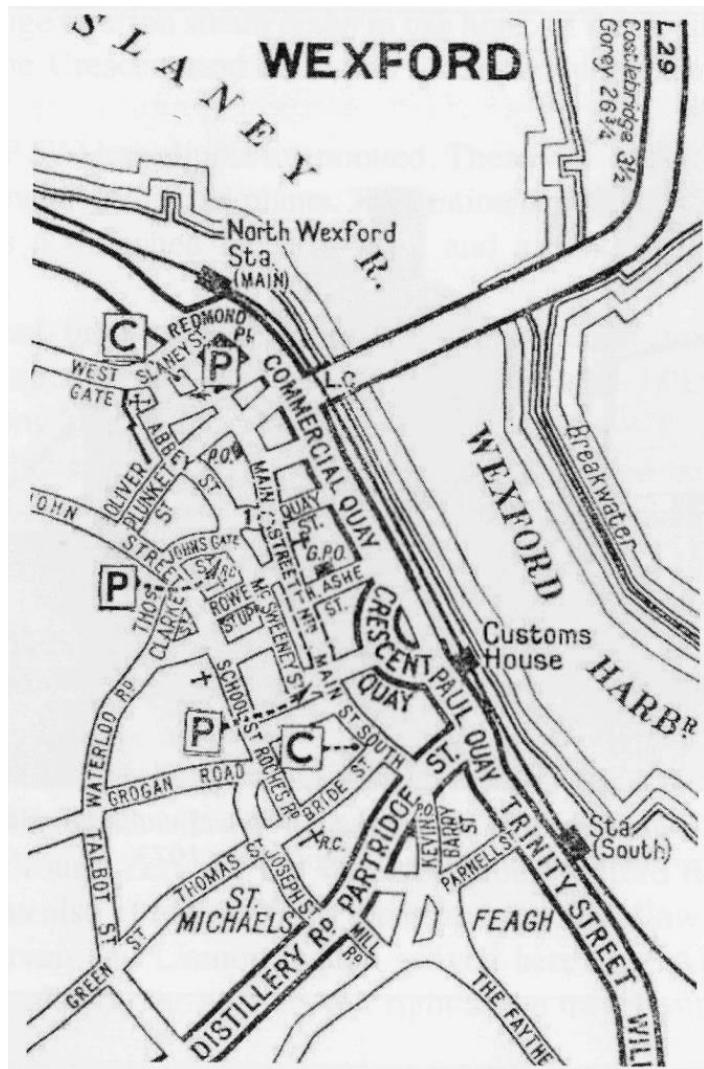
Ferrycarrig Tunnel is at MP 90 $\frac{1}{2}$; it is 296 yards long. Look out for the plastic elephant and plastic giraffe on the Down side. Suggestions on the usual postcard.

Wexford (O'Hanrahan) (MP 92 $\frac{3}{4}$ and MP 6). The 92 $\frac{3}{4}$ is measured from Harcourt Street while the 6 is measured from Rosslare Strand on the former Waterford and Wexford Railway. The latter opened the line south of here in 1882 but it closed again on 17th May 1889 the line was reopened on 6th August 1894 by the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways Harbours Company which had been formed by the Great Southern and Western and the Great Western (of England) to operate the shipping service between Fishguard and Rosslare. The Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford operated the line between February and October 1898, after which the GS&WR assumed control.

Wexford was given the additional name of O'Hanrahan in 1966.

It is difficult to see much of Wexford's former glories in what remains today though the timbers in the station canopy were renewed in 2000 (it dates from 1891 and still boasts a maker's plate). The cabin has closed and the ETS section was formerly Enniscorthy to Strand, a sometimes-tiresome 22 miles! More recently, thankfully, a passing loop has been put in to the north of the platform and there are storage sidings on the Down side too.

Opposite the platform were loops, goods yard and loco shed where once our own 461 was the principal occupant for so long. The ring of the former turntable is still discernible. The shed once had a D4 4-4-0 for the Mails and ex-D&SER D9 4-4-0s 450 and 452 for the stopping passenger trains along with GS&WR D14 4-4-0s 87 and 94. Goods work was in the hands of J20 0-6-0 440 and J14 0-6-0 441. Both were D&SE engines; 440 is probably better known as No.17 "Wicklow", the engine that passed Harcourt Street and ended up in Hatch Street in that famous crash of 14th February 1900 when she was working a goods with 29 wagons and a van. Also here, for the workings to the Harbour, were E3 0-4-4T 83 and ex-Waterford Limerick and Western 4-4-0 No.296.



Wexford (O'Hanrahan): Driver Tommy Blackwell has things well in hand as he brings No.4 and the Sea Breeze excursion into the platform on 11th August 1990. On the left, some people wait to join the train for the spin to the Harbour. CPF9024H

As mentioned earlier, when the D&SER reluctantly joined the GSR in 1925, most of its locos were showing the strain of the Civil War. Our own 461, and sister 462, had been delivered from Beyer Peacock to Dublin, in green livery, but they spent the Civil War years in the safety of Adelaide shed, Belfast. They arrived in Adelaide on Tuesday 14th November 1922 and stayed until late May 1923. No.461 was repaired at Limerick in 1925 and at Inchicore in July 1927. We do not know why but, just one month later, 461 was under repair again but this time in Waterford. After this she worked the Waterford to Macmine goods for a while before resuming duty here on the last day of 1927. Sister loco 462 was sent to the Broadstone in October 1927 and was there until the following June. While the sisters were away, their places were taken by J8 0-6-0s 444 and 445 - the former D&SER 18 "Enniscorthy" and 65 "Cork".

Wexford is probably best known, internationally, for its Opera Festival when several very top-drawer trains are run for the patrons. The trains are serviced at Rosslare Harbour.

Leaving the station, we emerge onto **Wexford Quays** with the 1960 "New Bridge" over the River Slaney on the Down side. The level crossing at the end of the bridge is protected by flashing lights but familiarity breeds contempt and drivers have reported several hairy escapades both at the crossing and along the quays, despite the railway's 5 mph speed limit (or whatever that is in Euro). The Quays have been substantially rebuilt and nowadays the boats are far from the line. The quays once boasted their own sidings and J.W. Stafford, coal importer, had a 7ft gauge Grafton steam crane in use here. At the southern end of the Quays, we pass an inlet at the Crescent and its statue to Commodore John Barry, father of the American Navy.



Wexford Quay: The Three Rivers railtour was No.186's first trip back to her old stomping ground and here she carefully treads the line along the tidal Slaney with its tied-up lightship. This was on Saturday 15th September 1973, long before the redevelopment of the quayside and the double track was still there in places. RPSI Railtour Organiser Tony Ragg, in grease-top hat and armband, keeps an eye on the bicycle-riding locals who escorted the train towards Wexford South. CPF73035J

Wexford South (MP 5½) has almost evaporated. There was once an island platform here and sidings to serve several industrial plants. The station ceased being a Block Post in 1982. The signal cabin was demolished in early 1999 and a container was then used as the crossing-keeper's hut.

Drinagh (MP 3½) had, until 1918, a siding serving Cooper's Cement Factory on the Up side. 'The siding had opened in 1882 and, between 1885 and 1895, the enterprising Mr Cooper worked his long siding with a vertical-boilered 0-4-0WT, a rare item in Ireland. There is reason to believe that, while the main line

was closed between May 1889 and February 1894, Mr Cooper ventured onto the main line with trains of cement for export! The cement factory had an internal tramway of the unusual gauge three foot seven inches.



Wexford South: No.186 paused here to let the photographers catch up and reboard the train while working the Three Rivers railtour on Saturday 15th September 1973. CPF73035K



Wexford South: The South Wexford railtour brought passengers here for the overnight stop on Saturday 10th June 1978. No.4 had worked the train from Waterford to here via Rosslare Harbour but she was not allowed on the Quays. No.186 followed Light Engine and worked the train to Wexford North for stabling. Both locos spent the night at Rosslare Harbour. CPF7835C

Felthouse Junction (MP 2) was once the northern apex of a line which connected the Wexford to Rosslare Harbour line with the Rosslare Harbour to Waterford line at Killinick. The place was originally known as Killane Junction. Although only a triangle between 1906 and 1912, it still appears on some maps and is a life-saver in those quiz questions about the longest possible non-stop journey on Irish railways.

Rosslare Strand (MP 0 and MP 110 $\frac{3}{4}$) Again, double mileposts call for explanation. Rosslare Strand was Ground Zero for the Waterford and Wexford Railway which opened on 22nd July 1892. It was also at MP 110 $\frac{3}{4}$ as measured from Mallow and over the route of Waterford, Dungarvan and Lismore which arrived here on 1st August 1906. That line makes a trailing connection on the Up side, our right as we travel south, immediately north of the platforms. The signal cabin was at the north end of the Down platform; it dated from 1908 and replaced the original (1906) cabin whose base was used as a turf store. The footbridge at the south end of the station came from New Ross.



Rosslare Strand: Loco Inspector Jack Ahern keeps an eye from the cab as No.461 brings the Sea Breeze excursion into the Up platform on 22nd August 1992 when there were still semaphores to be seen.

CPF9242B

On Tuesday 13th August 1974, the 16:00 from Limerick to Rosslare, headed by B176, was in the loop when it was rammed by B192 working the 18:30 Rosslare to Limerick passenger. About 60 people were hurt, including the five occupants of a wrecked compartment in carriage 1352. Eight people needed hospital treatment. The line reopened on the Thursday. The locos absorbed most of the damage and were worked to Inchicore on the following Sunday with each loco being taken separately around Bray Head.

Towards the end of April 2008, all signalling was converted from semaphore to electric lights. Since our most recent visit here, the passenger service on the South Wexford line ran for last time on 18th September 2010. “Withdrawal of passenger services does not equate to line closure” according to National Transport Authority, so that’s all right then.



Rosslare Strand: This is something that we may be able to do again one day. On Saturday 14th May 2005, as part of the Suir Valley railtour, No.4 and train worked across the South Wexford line. Here Conductor Driver Ray Collins from Waterford collects the miniature train staff for Wellington Bridge from the signalman. CPF0513F



Rosslare Strand: During the Sea Breeze excursion of 26th August 2007, the crew took a breather here. Left to right are James Friel, RPSI Loco Rep; Inspector Joe Meagher (IÉ Training School); Driver Tony Renehan and Driver Dan Renehan of IÉ; and Edward Friel, RPSI Loco Rep. The combination of two pairs of brothers on the footplate is probably unique - unless you know better? CPF35679

Killrane (MP 113) was once the terminus for the Waterford and Wexford and boasted a platform only 140 feet long - incredibly, Annacotty's was only 30 feet long!

An accident here on 18th September 1907 was caused by loco No.84, running light engine from Wexford, colliding with the standing 9pm from Kilrane to Wexford (loco No.75). The plan had been to cross the two in the loop but a combination of unlit signals, fog and "very irregular working" all contributed to the collision. Both locos were 0-4-4Ts built at Inchicore, No.75 in 1887 and No.84 in 1884. There was considerable damage to both locos. No.84 was withdrawn soon after this collision but No.75 survived to become a GSR E3 class while keeping her number; she lasted until 1931. We should mention, too, that carriage 828 (a non-vestibuled clerestory-roofed open Third built at Inchicore in 1902 and seating 63) had "the body end completely smashed and the floor was missing from 6 feet from the point of collision".



Ballygeary: No.461 passes the splitting signal with the Sea Breeze excursion of 22nd August 1992 and loco rep Rory McNamee prepares to give up the Rosslare Strand - Ballygeary miniature train staff. CPF9242C

There was once a siding here for cattle inspection. The loop and signal cabin lasted until 1935 but only the Up platform remained in use on 10th October 1970 when the station closed to passengers. At that time, the sidings were lifted and the beet loading bank was extended to the main line and wagons were loaded while occupying the section. The beet traffic, though, finished in 1978.

Rosslare Harbour Mainland (formerly Ballygeary) (MP 113 $\frac{3}{4}$) is where the running lines used to swing towards the Pier while we continue along the foot of the hill to the new station which opened on 27th April 2008.

The junction here was controlled by Ballygeary cabin but it burned down at Christmas 1996. Until the year before, the cabin was in the shadow of Ireland's first reinforced concrete bridge, built in 1907 by the redoubtable McAlpine - with some locally-recruited "fusiliers". That bridge had replaced a very busy and dangerous level crossing which was, at that time, the only road access to the Harbour.

Before 1990, there was a fan of six sidings in the yard alongside the foot of the hill; five of them could hold 40 wagons each. Until 1964, cars heading for the Fishguard boat were loaded onto flat trucks for transportation along the Pier which did not include a roadway. Incoming cars had to endure a short train

trip too. Our own No.461 was noted working the car trains in 1961.



Ballygeary: No.4 brings the Sea Breeze excursion towards Ballygeary cabin at the end of the long run from Connolly on 24th June 1989. CPF8924A

Since April 2008, the area has been extensively remodelled so that the line to the relatively new station at Rosslare Europort and the pier beyond is now abandoned. The line now hugs the bottom of the hill to a new station built alongside the line to the turntable.

The former two-road engine shed still stands, trackless, on the Down side. At the far end of the station and run-round loop is the still-operational turntable which is regularly used by locos on our Sea Breeze excursions from Dublin.

The concrete engine shed here could accommodate six locos and there were ten engine crews stationed here. Among Rosslare's engines were our own 184 and another J15, No.199. Having found that his 301 (D11) class 4-4-0s were not capable of working the expresses over the hilly line from Rosslare to Mallow, Coey designed his D4 class of 0-4-0s for the job and they first appeared in 1907. Rosslare had Nos. 333 and 334 from that batch. Rosslare also had two of the 1908 batch, 337 and 340. These had outside bearings on the bogie in an attempt to keep boxes cool on the relatively small bogie wheel. These engines were moved to the Westland Row trains when the Woolwich moguls arrived. Nos. 374, 377 and 380 came here when new to work the boat trains to and from Cork. The crews found the right-hand drive awkward at first and boat trains out of Waterford sometimes had a pilot, at least as far as Ballycullane.

Rosslare's complement of engines also included "the Gallant 44". This D19 class 4-4-0 dating from 1878 was the Ballygeary pilot engine which achieved fame in Pat Duggan's eponymous epic song. The custom had been that Llandore would wire Rosslare with the numbers travelling, so that, if necessary, a pilot engine for the Boat Express to Cork could be steamed in good time. In the incident described in the song, though, word came too late and the local shunting engine was suddenly promoted to pilot the Express.

"Skipper" Jack Cotter was the driver of 44 and his fireman was Paddy Lucey. All we know about the train engine is that its driver was Heffernan and the fireman Kelly. The poem, at a mere nine verses and each eight lines long, is a mock-heroic tale of surviving without steam and managing to keep the brakes off. They had only 60 pounds at the Strand though Cotter "had her well in hand"! They had a mighty 70 psi at Wellington Bridge as they prepared for Taylorstown. But, rather tellingly, by Ballycullane (the top of the

bank) “the buffers were near wore”, presumably by the train engine pushing them on. By Abbey Junction, the needle was “pointed to the ground”. There’s much more to the tale than that and it is well worth reading in the original. You will find it the IRRS Journal No.30 (Spring 1962). Incidentally, the song can be sung to the same tune as “The Cruise of the Callabar” - no need to tell you what that is!



Ballygeary: On the Sunday of the *Gall Tír* railtour, the late Irwin Pryce watches No.461 approaching the terminus with the train from Waterford while No.171 waits to take over for the journey to Connolly. No.171 was then in GNR(I) lined black livery for her role in the film “Michael Collins”. In the foreground, the frame from the burnt-out Ballygeary cabin awaits recycling. CPF9805G

The Loco Foreman here was John L Crosthwait and he was involved in an interesting postscript to 44’s run. He devised a system of tubing that could act as a blower if it was attached to the whistle stand of an engine in steam and the other end introduced into the chimney of a “cold” engine. The system was proven successful in an experiment but, according to Martin White’s highly informative article, was not used in anger.

Crosthwait left here in 1912 to become Loco Foreman at Waterford. He later achieved fame as the Loco Superintendent of the Belfast and County Down. His replacement at Rosslare was Edgar Bredin who later became Chief Mechanical Engineer at Inchicore and was responsible for some very fine coaches as well as the splendid 800 class.

Near the shed is a long flight of steps which give access to Rosslare village which was established by the railway back in 1906. The railway provided 44 houses for its workers, arranged in four streets, and there was a social club as well as dormitory for visiting engine crews. If this sounds reminiscent of Greenore on the L&NWR-owned Dundalk Newry and Greenore, then you should know that Rosslare was once known as Greenore Head!

On the now-abandoned section to the Pier, first came **Rosslare Mainland Terminal** (MP 114) which was new in 1989 but the name was changed to **Rosslare Europort** in early 1996. Its design had much in common with an air terminal in that passengers were provided elevated walkways to the ship’s gangway.

The mainland was originally connected to the actual pier by ten metal spans but so much filling-in has been done that the metal spans are now quite inland - indeed the coping stones of the 1989 terminal’s

platforms were laid directly on the old metal structure.



Rosslare Europort: No.461 approaches the station with the empty stock for the homeward trip of the Sea Breeze excursion on 22nd August 1992. CPF9244H



Rosslare Pier: No.461 is prepared for the homeward journey of the day's Sea Breeze excursion on 22nd August 1992. CPF9244E

Rosslare Harbour (MP 114½). Construction of the harbour started in 1872 and seemed to go forward in fits and starts. The Board of Works got involved between 1878 and 1882 when they used a Chaplin (of Glasgow) steam shunting crane. William Murphy took over the work to extend the inner harbour in 1882. He seems to have knocked up a vertical-boiled loco from equipment left on site! The Commissioners

took over in 1885 and, soon after, the contractor Charles Brand of Glasgow used several locos to haul stones from the quarry some miles away.



Rosslare Pier: The place still looked like a railway terminus when No.171 was preparing to work from here to Waterford on 15th September 1973, the Saturday of the Three Rivers railtour. CPF73036G



Rosslare Pier: No.4 has just worked the Sea Breeze on 26th August 2007 and is seen here after working the empty stock on to the Pier for storage before going to turn. CPF36817

The Earl of Aberdeen, Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, officially opened the Pier on 30th August 1906. His special train for the occasion included the State Coach 351 which is now in the Society's care. On the pier itself, today, almost nothing remains of the railway buildings apart from the lighthouse and some small

buildings on the end wall; all else has gone, including the station buildings and refreshment room as well as the electric dockside cranes.

Railcar 2509, the ex-Sligo Leitrim railcar B, was here in the summer of 1969 to work carless passengers to and from the Normandy Ferries vessels. On 29th August 1969, the Irish Railway Record Society chartered 2509 from here to Waterford and then a round trip on the Ballinacourty line. Just to bring the story up to date, the railcar now resides in Downpatrick though its condition is, in estate agent speak, a development opportunity. Thankfully, the Downpatrick and County Down is appealing for help with its refurbishment - consider yourself volunteered to help!

The tracks on the Pier itself had been used as sidings for some time before closure - the last steam movement on the Pier was our Sea Breeze excursion on 26th August 2007 when No.4 and train stabled here.

The last train away from Rosslare Europort was the 07:40 to Dublin on 14th April 2008 and this left just loco 077 there to test the new layout, circuits, etc., when they were in place on the 23rd.

It's hard now to imagine the Boat Train from Cork arriving here and disgorging up to 25 tons of mail for the boat and, on some Saturdays, up to 1,000 passengers.

The tour will retrace the route as far north as Wexford North on Saturday and back to Dublin Connolly on Sunday.

4. Bucket and spade to Howth

Dublin Connolly has already been described earlier here - twice - so let's skip to the recent developments.

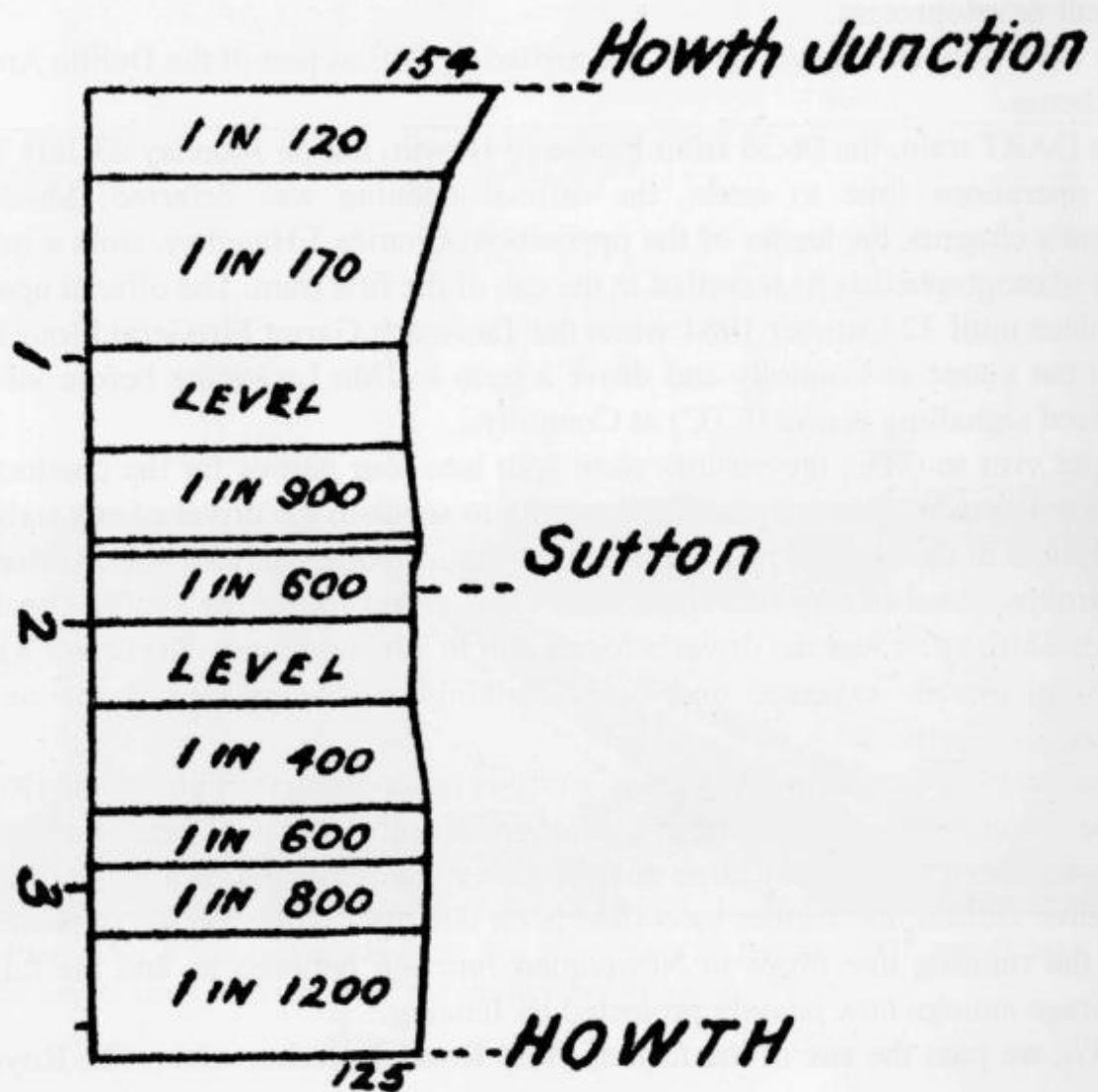
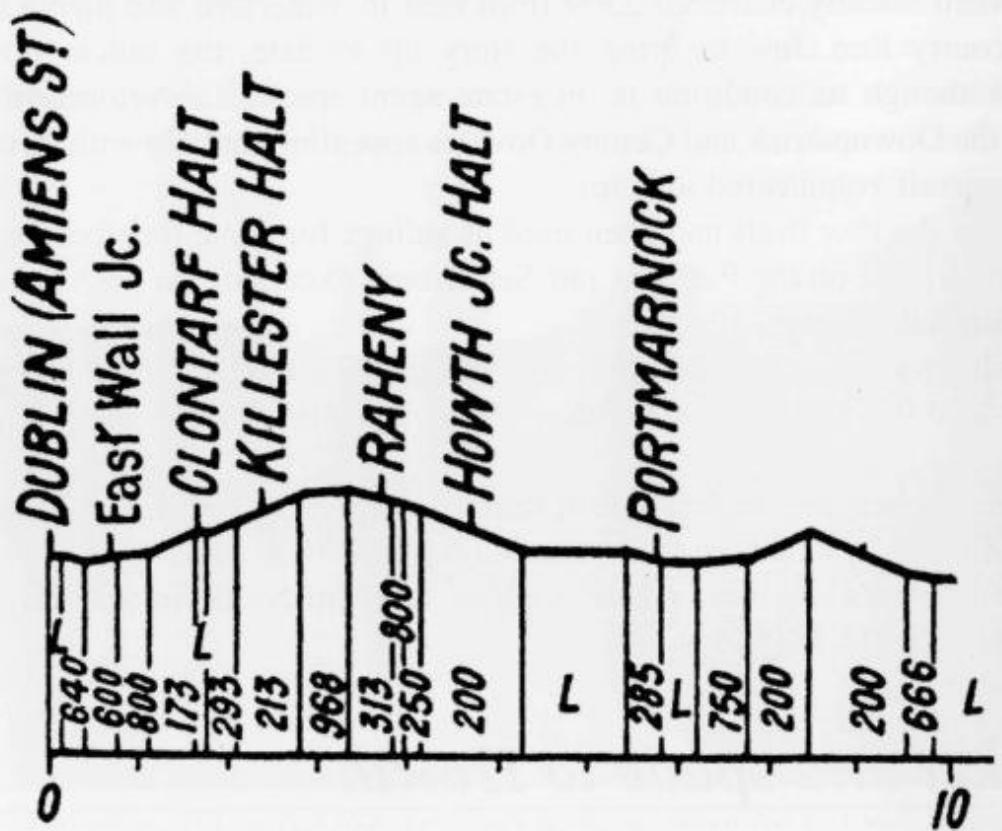
The line we are about to travel on was electrified by CIÉ as part of the Dublin Area Rapid Transit scheme.

The first DART train, the 06:35 from Pearse to Howth, ran on Monday 23rd July 1984. To give the operations time to settle, the official opening was deferred. Much to the Government's chagrin, the leader of the opposition, Charles J. Haughey, stole a march and was much photographed as he travelled in the cab of the first train. The official opening did not take place until 22nd October 1984 when the Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald (our late Vice-President) cut a tape at Connolly and drove a train to Dun Laoghaire before visiting the computerised signalling centre (CTC) at Connolly.

During the visit to CTC, the visitors were split into four parties for the conducted tour. Part of the tour was to demonstrate CTC's ability to speak to the driver of any train. Garret got so involved in the technology that the other groups soon overtook him. Unfortunately, all three groups ahead of him had chosen the same driver to ask for a radio check. When Garret called him up, it was the driver's fourth call in a few minutes. The driver's response was not what anyone expected and could certainly not be printed in the next day's newspapers!

Before we set off from Connolly, a quick word on mileposts - they are on the Down side, our left as we travel north, and start from a zero at Connolly. The GN pattern of small cast-iron plates has been replaced by large enamel plates, black figures on a white background.

As we leave Dublin, the former loco shed is on our right while, on the opposite side of the train, the running line drops to Newcomen Junction between us and the railcar and DART storage sidings now heavily protected by fencing.



At MP 0 $\frac{1}{4}$, we pass the site of the former **West Road Junction** cabin. The Royal Canal is below us as are the tracks of the former Midland Great Western's line from Liffey Junction to the North Wall. It opened for goods traffic on 1st March 1864. After being closed for many years, the line was rebuilt and reopened to Dublin's newest terminus at Docklands on 12th March 2007 - three months early and, at €20m, was €4m under budget! It is visible to our right beside the Royal Canal at Spencer Dock. The service from and to here was described above.



Dublin (Connolly): No.85 "Merlin", with Driver Billy McCaughey in charge, coasts in past the shed with the Steam Enterprise on 12th September 1987. CPF8739E

A MP 0 $\frac{1}{2}$, the lines below us form "The Dip". These connect North Strand Junction (on the Down side) to Church Road Junction (on our Up side). At the latter, they are joined by a connecting line from East Wall Junction. Church Road cabin is just visible on the north side of the tracks.

East Wall Junction (MP 0 $\frac{3}{4}$) is where the GNR's North Wall branch trails in on the Up side, (our right as we head north) though it was/is better known to railway men as "the Curve". The former signal cabin here, on the Up side, has disappeared.

Almost immediately, we cross the River Tolka on bridge No.3. This was the scene of a dramatic wash-out on the night of 8th/9th December 1954 when the swollen river carried away the piers. At first, the passenger terminus was moved out to Clontarf and trains between there and Drogheda were worked by tank engines - the GN's Glover tanks (classes T1 and T2) and by UTA Jeeps 4 and 7 which happened to be at Adelaide shed at the time. Collen Bros built a temporary Bailey bridge inland of the breach and trains were diverted onto it between 4th January 1955 and 12th January 1956 when the present bridge opened. Between 9th December 1954 and 4th January 1955, GN goods trains to and from Dublin were worked by way of Drogheda, Navan and Clonsilla, as mentioned above. The MAK diesel-hydraulic loco No.800 was landed at the North Wall and had to be delivered to Dundalk by the same route.

Fairview DART depot (MP 1) is on the Down side. It began life as a railcar servicing depot which opened on 3rd April 1957 and has been extended at both ends for the DART sets. Its trackwork includes some complexities normally avoided by the modern civil engineer. At one time, the waters of Dublin Bay lapped the embankment on the Up side but a huge area has been reclaimed and extensively built upon.

Look out for the four-road storage yard for DART sets on that side.



East Wall Junction: No.4 is on the last leg of the southbound Steam Enterprise working on 6th September 1986. The GNR(I)'s Directors' Saloon is the first of the eight carriages. Over to the right, an unidentified A class waits for the road on the Drogheda Curve. CPF8637E

Seven suburban stations follow in quick succession. None has ever had goods facilities though each has had its platforms extended in recent years to accommodate the eight-car DART trains and modernised to facilitate the less able.

Clontarf Road (MP 1 $\frac{1}{4}$), at the north end of the DART depot, opened 1st September 1997.

Clontarf (MP 1 $\frac{3}{4}$) opened in 1844 but closed in 1850 on weekdays and from 1852 on Sundays. It was reopened in 1898 but succumbed on 3rd September 1956 when its signal cabin also closed. Towards the end of its life, Clontarf was the southern terminus on the GN main line between 9th December 1954 and 4th January 1956 when the Tolka Bridge was washed out (see above).

Killester (MP 2 $\frac{1}{2}$) opened in 1923. The signal cabin here closed in 1960 when colour light signalling was installed.

Harmonstown (MP 3) dates from 7th January 1957 (and known to some railwaymen as Pramtown).

Raheny (MP 3 $\frac{3}{4}$) goes back to the earliest days but it lost its signal cabin on 3rd September 1956.

Kilbarrack (MP 4 $\frac{1}{2}$) opened on 6th June 1969 when it received the footbridge formerly at Straffan on the Cork main line.

Howth Junction and Donaghmede (MP 4 $\frac{3}{4}$) is another original station (though called "The Junction" until 1912 and "Howth Junction" until recently).

We diverge eastwards here on to the Howth branch.

The branch was built by the Dublin and Drogheda Railway and opened throughout (to a temporary station short of the terminus) on 30th July 1846. The final half mile to the present was opened on 30th May 1847.

The mileposts on the branch continue to be on the Down side (our left as we approach Howth) but start again from zero at the junction.



Harmonstown: No.184 is dwarfed in the cutting as she returns from Howth with one of the day's three round trips between Connolly and Howth on Sunday 13th April 1980. (Joe Cassells)

Bayside (MP 1) opened on 9th June 1973 to serve the many housing developments nearby.

Sutton (MP 1 3/4) has been both "Sutton and Baldoyle" and "Baldoyle and Sutton" in its time. The Great Northern's Hill of Howth Tramway (17th June 1901 to 31st ay 1959) had its principal tram shed here on the Up side (our right as we head towards Howth). The former power house was later used as a paint factory. The tramway ran from a terminus behind the main station buildings on the Up platform. The area of the tram shed had a long goods bank (or "beach" to many railway men) which was later used for releasing racing pigeons. There was a plan in 1951 to use the tram shed to service the new AEC railcars but little came of it other than some work on railcar engines. The former signal cabin survives at the level crossing at the Howth end of the station.

Cosh Siding (pronounced Cush) used to run alongside on the Up side towards Howth. It was the longest refuge siding on the system and was latterly used for storing a wonderful variety of redundant GNR carriage stock.

Howth (MP 2 3/4) was the site of the original terminus but nothing remains.

Howth (MP 3 1/2). The present terminus opened on 30th May 1847 but, for many years, it had only one platform - and the running line ended at a loco turntable. The second platform was ready by October 1980 and the Down platform was raised to the new standard height in February 1981.

Before 1960, the 550v DC Hill of Howth Tramway (having turned through almost 180 degrees) approached the station forecourt from the east on a viaduct across the main road and, at one time, the trams of the Clontarf and Hill of Howth Tramroad. The viaduct was 135 feet long and 16 feet high. The approach was always an exhilarating one for the trolley pole would be taken down on leaving the Summit and the tram controlled by the tram's air brakes. Many drivers felt that they had to use the hand brake as well and this gave many of the trams a humped or hog-back look. You can catch up with preserved Hill of Howth trams at the National Transport Museum, Howth (No.9), Cultra (No.4), the National Tramway Museum at Crich (No.10 which has been regauged and ran some years ago in Blackpool) and at Perris in Orange County, California (No.2, also regauged). All four are in the liveries that they carried in traffic;

Nos. 2 and 4 are in the blue and cream livery while Nos. 9 and 114 are in the mahogany livery.



Kilbarrack Gates: These gates are about 1½ miles along the branch from the Junction and we see No.184 heading for Howth with one of the round trips on Sunday 13th April 1980. (Joe Cassells)



Howth: No.184 blows off as she waits to run round the train on one of her visits here on Sunday 13th April 1980. Note the foundations for the new Down platform on the right and the two-lever ground urn to control the turnouts of the engine release. (Joe Cassells)



Howth: No.184 is seen running round the train on one of her visits here on Sunday 13th April 1980. Note the signal cabin on the right and the casual approach to trespassing. Heating Van 3154 was one the last batch of 4-wheel HVs built at Inchicore in 1964. (Joe Cassells)



Howth: No.184 is seen approaching the Claremont Road bridge, about half a mile from the terminus, as she heads back to Connolly on Sunday 13th April 1980. Both sides of the running lines are being used to prepare new trackwork for the branch. Preparations for the DART electrification were then gathering pace and, soon after this trip, many weekend trains were replaced by buses. (Joe Cassells)

The Brake Van

Your brochure for this Railtour has been compiled by Charles P. Friel who would like to thank Michael McMahon, Joe Cassells and Eddie Creamer for their enthusiastic help and support. A special thanks goes to Andrew Waldron for his notes on industrial railways along our route.

All of us are delighted to be able to be part of this tribute to the hard work, professionalism and companionship of one of the footplate's gentlemen.

Dan, we hope that these pictures up and down the D&SER will bring back happy memories of people, places and events in your long footplate career. We send you a sincere Thank You for making so much possible!

Dan, we will miss your cheery banter about the railway and particularly from the footplates of our engines. We very much hope that your retirement will be a long, fulfilling and everything you wish it to be. Some of the Brochure team have already reached their years of maturity and they can assure you that retirement really is "a job for a young man". We wish you the health to enjoy it in full measure.

You will have seen that most of the pictures were taken by myself. I want to record my grateful thanks to Joe Cassells for his valuable photographs.



East Wall Junction: No.186 worked a tour of various non-passenger lines around Dublin on 11th September 1991. In this view from the steps of the signal cabin, the train gains the Great Northern main line from the Drogheda Curve. CPF7185A

While these pictures have been Photoshopped, this been only to remove blemishes and repair damage; nothing has been done to create any sort of misrepresentation.

I would like to echo Gerry's opening words about keeping safe on the railway. Many of the pictures in this Brochure were taken in very different times, so please do not try to replicate some of the places that I got to years ago.

And finally, my thanks (as always) go to Christine for her continuing and unstinting support and to James and Edward for their help with graphics and proof reading. Team Friel hopes that this Brochure will be both a helpful companion on the tour and a useful read in the future. All errors are entirely mine.

All enquiries, comments or suggestions about this brochure should go to Charles P. Friel.



Howth Junction: Sunday 13th April 1980 was the last time that RPSI steam visited the Howth branch. Here No.184 enters the branch while running bunk first with the first of three Dublin Bay round trips. CPF80131



Howth Junction: This is one of the three Howth to Connolly workings of Sunday 13th April 1980 paused at the Junction. (Joe Cassells)



Tolka River bridge: J15s Nos. 186 and 184 wait for signals on the morning of Sunday 16th April 1978 when they were working from Fairview to Heuston for camera rehearsals for their roles in "The First Great Train Robbery". The pair had worked in from Mullingar the day before with a goods van full of gear and a brake van. CPF7811H